

SCHOOL GAMES



General Information

Names	Dave Rohman, Highfurlong School - Lead Inclusion School for Lancashire and Louise Hewitt, Young People Manager at Badminton England
Title of case study	Using Data to Drive Positive Participation for SEND and Disabled Young People
SGO Area / County	Blackpool SGO Area
Please indicate whether you are an SGO, or completing as an Active Partnership, NGB or a school	NGB working in collaboration with a Lead Inclusion School

Context, Intent and Target Group

Provide context about your area and what motivated this work, including the data / insight that led you to it and how you identified the target group(s) most in need.

Please outline the intent of the work – what was your purpose, which outcome(s) it focuses on and who the target group were.

Context/Evidence of need

Badminton England introduced the Junior Disability Championships 3 years ago. The event is for junior players aged 9-16 yrs with a physical disability, including wheelchair users and was delivered with the support of the GB Para Badminton Squad & Coaches. This competition structure has helped to engage new disabled players, providing them with their first introduction to disability competition. This event is part of Badminton England's Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy, which includes increasing disability provision.

In 2025, to extend the reach of the event, Badminton England wanted to pilot a school disability offer. They wanted to focus on providing more disabled young people with an appropriate opportunity to facilitate long-term engagement in the sport.

A link was formed between colleagues at Badminton England and the Youth Sport Trust's Lead Inclusion Schools Network (LIS). There are 54 Lead Inclusion Schools across England who act as champions for inclusion by offering advice, guidance and local support to practitioners with aim of delivering high-quality PE, school sport and physical activity opportunities for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) The Lead Inclusion School for Lancashire is Highfurlong School.

Working with a special school with young people with physical disabilities in a deprived community in Blackpool gave Badminton England the opportunity to pilot their disability offer and learn what it takes to support young disabled people to engage in activity.

Target Group

The initial target group was young people with physical disabilities. However, this focus proved quite narrow, so the scope was broadened. Schools were invited to allow each young person with a physical disability to bring a friend from the SEN register to help them to feel comfortable, supported and to ease any anxieties. This also helped increase participation and enabled schools to justify attending. Ultimately, the event expanded to include young people with physical disabilities, mild learning disabilities (MLD), and social and emotional needs.

Implementation

Tell us what happened in the event / intervention / project you delivered.

Consider what you did, when and where you did it and how the target group were engaged. Did it reach any other students not in the target group?

This needs to be written so that others can easily replicate what you did and how you did it.

In summer 2025, Dave Rohman at Highfurlong School, Lead Inclusion School for Lancashire and Louise Hewitt, Young People Manager at Badminton England began discussing how best to identify the young people they wanted to work with. This collaboration by the NGB and the LIS was the critical step as the two co-created the event together to meet Badminton England's agenda, whilst the LIS brought their data and knowledge insights along with their expertise in working with young disabled people. By September 2025, using census data from the Lead Inclusion School programme—alongside national, county, and SGO datasets—they mapped Lancashire to pinpoint their target cohort. The expertise of the Lead Inclusion School was invaluable in being able to identify the right young people. The data and insight lead created a map of all schools where? Lancs or just Blackpool?, using colour coding and marker size to show the number of pupils in the target group at each site. This analysis highlighted 13 schools with the highest numbers of young people they aimed to reach. The Lead Inclusion School let the SGOs locally know which schools to invite from the data analysis. The collaboration between Dave and the SGOs was key to the success of the project.

The SGOs then contacted these schools directly, drawing on the data to demonstrate their understanding of the pupils' needs within the schools and inviting them to attend the event. Schools were asked to bring pupils with physical disabilities, each accompanied by a friend from the SEN register to remove barriers to competition such as confidence, as 43% of young people with SEND report confidence barriers to participation. Based on the location of these schools, a suitable local venue was secured—a sports hall with 10 badminton courts and an available breakout room. The breakout room was a safe, calming space to help the young people to manage their emotions if things became difficult during the event.

Four coaches were recruited to deliver the event, and a nearby sixth form college provided 20 young leaders to support delivery. The Young leaders received training prior to the event, so that they were fully up to speed with the activities they would be supporting. The students were from the local Leadership Academy and this was their first event of the year so it was a great one to start with.

On the day, the event followed the Shuttle Stars festival format. Eight activity stations were set up, and schools rotated around them as a group. Keeping pupils together enabled coaches to tailor activities at each station to meet the specific needs of the young people attending. On one side of the space, coaches taught a skill, while on the other side, young leaders facilitated a game that incorporated that same skill. Teachers moved with their groups throughout the day, observing what their pupils could achieve and gaining ideas to take back into their own school environments.

Impact

What was the impact on the target group?

Present your evidence of impact with data and by telling the story of the change created.

Consider the impact on the whole school (behaviour, attainment etc.) and any long-term impact of your intervention/event/project. Include any unintended impacts you have seen.

Share quotes, video's, photo's etc. to bring to life the benefits of your work and the difference made.

- A total of 64 young people from seven different schools attended the event. One young person even came with their mum because their school had an inset day—they didn't want to miss out, and it was the first time they had ever represented their school.
- Using data-led targeting, 13 schools expressed interest in attending, although the event capacity was limited to eight. A waiting list was created due to high demand.
- All participants remained active and engaged throughout the event.
- Family engagement contributed to a positive and supportive atmosphere.
- Young people, their teachers, and their families gained a stronger understanding of what these students can achieve.
- Badminton England will now refine this inclusive offer and expand delivery to other areas, as the model was effective due to the accurate targeting of the right young people. Each of the six Badminton hub regions will analyse its own data to replicate the model.
- SGOs have begun to examine their own data in greater depth to better target support and address inequalities.
- Through collaboration and informed decision-making, the right young people were successfully identified and engaged.

Quotes:

"Thank you very much! My pupils loved it." Teacher.

"I just wanted to personally thank you for inviting us to this morning's event. It was fabulous and the pupils absolutely loved it. We have one young lady who is keen to find a Badminton Club following her attendance, so a big thank you!" Teacher.

"Thank you for today, we had a fantastic time!" Pupil.

Challenges

Discuss the challenges you experienced and how you overcame these.

Consider what these challenges allowed you to learn, and what you subsequently have achieved from these learnings.

Would you do anything differently if you were to do this work again in the future?

The strong relationship built between the Lancashire Lead Inclusion School and Badminton England was crucial in identifying the right young people, helping to reduce potential challenges during this event,

The delivery of the event was highly agile, supported by experienced staff and capable Year 12 leaders. A key learning is that future guidance for similar events must account for the unusually high level of expertise present in this instance. To ensure future events are deliverable with younger leaders and without coach support, the format may need to be simplified and scaled down accordingly.

Sustainability

What measures have you put in place to ensure this work is sustainable? Include details around the funding and support required.

Consider how the young people you have worked with can continue to experience the impact, and whether the project can be utilised for future cohorts of young people.

For schools, this wasn't a one-off opportunity. They can use the event format to continue playing badminton within their own setting. The event will run again next year, with priority given to schools that were previously on the waiting list.

Leadership training will also be offered alongside the format, enabling SGOs to deliver this locally to their young leaders. The local coach involved is interested in developing badminton within the community to strengthen the school-to-community pathway.

A video from the event will be used to share the model with other schools, and there are plans to deliver this offer in additional regions across the country.

Top Tips

Outline the top tips you have for the network.

Consider how replicable this study is, so that any guidance can be used by others.

- Creating a relationship between a NGB and Lead Inclusion School at the concept stage is key
- Strong relationships between Lead Inclusion Schools and SGOs are essential for success.
- Data is your most powerful tool.
- Investing time to understand the data pays off, as it ultimately reduces the number of conversations you need to have.
- Be clear about your objectives and the specific group you are targeting.
- Be confident—reach out to schools directly based on the insights the data provides.
- Communicate effectively by involving all key school contacts, including the PE lead, headteacher, and SEND Lead.
- Clearly articulate what you need and make your requests specific and straightforward.