

Playground to Podium – developing young disabled athletes West Yorkshire

What is Playground to Podium?

Playground to Podium (P2P) is a National initiative to get more young disabled people playing sport. The initiative also aims to give young people a route to maximise their potential in sport. Those young people showing the most potential in their county will be invited to a County Athlete Assessment Day (CAAD) to help them progress from PE and community sport to high-level performance and competition. In West Yorkshire, West Yorkshire Sport (WYS) is tasked with delivering a number of the P2P projects to ensure there is a structured pathway for these young people.

What is the aim of Playground to Podium?

To produce our next Paralympians and elite disabled athletes, by focusing on the identification, development and support of young disabled people. However, it's essential that all young disabled people get the chance to take part in high-quality sports provision through their time in education and through community sports clubs.

Who is Playground to Podium aimed at?

Young disabled people from mainstream and special schools (KS 2&3 Aquatics / KS 3&4 Dry-side) who are eligible for disability sport classification. **This predominantly means that the focus is on those participants with a physical or visual impairment, as this allows for current Paralympic classification.** However, we will not exclude any participants from the programme.

There are four groups of athletes:

- Physically impaired athletes
- Blind or visually impaired athletes
- Deaf or hearing impaired athletes
- Athletes with a general intellectual/learning disability (with an IQ less than 75).

How will Playground to Podium be delivered?

- (1) Engaging young disabled people in the initiative:** promotion of activity to eligible impairment groups through school, community sport and community organisations that represent disabled people.
- (2) Connecting young disabled people to targeted opportunities:** hosting activity based on National Governing Body (NGB) objectives and local need, providing an opportunity for participating NGBs to assess young people to determine appropriate exit routes and promote continued participation within sport.
- (3) Supporting young disabled people to progress from PE and community sport to high-level performance and competition:** advice and support of those young people identified for participation to be driven by County Sport Partnerships (CSPs) and for club and fastrack opportunities to be driven by NGBs following County Athlete Assessment Days.

How has Playground to Podium changed since last year?

In light of changes to the school sport landscape there have been some fundamental changes to the Playground to Podium framework:

- (1) Removal of pre-screening prior to County Athlete Assessment Day (CAAD) element, focussing on those young people who are eligible (governed by NGB pathways) and have the desire to reach their potential within sport
- (2) Recruitment of participants to CAAD activity driven by CSPs through both school and community networks

(3) A higher degree of flexibility in designing CAAD delivery to address local need

What is a County Athlete Assessment Day (CAAD)?

A CAAD provides an opportunity for participating NGBs to assess whether young people have the potential to further progress within that sport and along its Paralympic or impairment appropriate pathway. It is a full day of activity where young people take part in up to 6 sports to promote participation opportunities and assess their potential. This will usually mean that individual participants or small groups will attend from schools, rather than a whole group or class.

There are 2 WY CAAD events – One for the dry side activities and one for the aquatics swimming activity. The Swimming CAAD is organised and delivered by the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) and has a focus on younger participants from Key Stage 2 and 3.

Which sports and NGBs are involved in Playground to Podium?

At present, six NGBs are involved in the programme: athletics, boccia, football, table tennis, swimming and wheelchair basketball. Each sport has a slightly different priority in terms of their talent selection and impairment groups. This is determined by the representative teams and competitions at an international level.

How does Playground to Podium align with other initiatives?

A number of initiatives have been introduced this year targeted towards improving the opportunities from school to community sport for young disabled people. Partners at a national level have been working together to ensure activity is complimentary to and builds on existing initiatives.

- Playground to Podium, the School Games and Project Ability – we are hoping to build on existing relationships with schools, utilising new networks to promote CAAD activity and to explore how competitions held through the School Games at levels 1 to 3 can identify young people for CAAD activity. This will be assisted by the inclusion of a West Yorkshire Parallel Winter School Games event on Tuesday 28th February 2012 to help signpost young people to the CAAD on Tuesday 15th May 2012. The Swimming CAAD has been booked for Monday 21st May 2012.
- Playground to Podium and DfE Disability funding for identified CSP areas – The Department for Education (DfE) has invested in targeted interventions to support young disabled people to access competitive sports and the School Games. Each of the P2P sports has positioned P2P activity and DfE activity to ensure best impact for young disabled people and the development of their sport. There is also additional support for cricket and the Yorkshire Cricket Board (YCB) across West Yorkshire. The two initiatives are seen as complimentary and will add value to the overall programme of opportunities for young disabled people in West Yorkshire.

CSPs have a huge role in ensuring the most appropriate model for delivery of P2P alongside these initiatives at a local level. Plans have been discussed and outlined through the West Yorkshire disability sport steering group.

What will happen?

1. Parallel Winter Games - Tuesday 28th February 2012

Parallel Winter Games held at Batley Sports & Tennis Centre to include athletics, football, table tennis and inclusive zone basketball. This event is open to all schools across West Yorkshire and is aimed at young disabled people.

2. Registration open for the County Athlete Assessment Days

The dry side CAAD will take place on Tuesday 15th May 2012 at John Charles Centre for Sport, Leeds. Sports will include athletics, boccia, football, table tennis and wheelchair basketball –

swimming will have its own dedicated event at a later date. Young people can be identified through schools, community groups and on an individual basis. See additional registration form for event details. There are limited places available at the CAAD and we have a maximum of 108 places available for participants. These will be divided up across the districts as per previous years (based on 6 young people per SSP):

- Bradford – 30 young people
- Calderdale – 12 young people
- Kirklees – 24 young people
- Leeds – 30 young people
- Wakefield – 12 young people

All young people in attendance will be encouraged into regular participation at a local community sports club. More details will be provided by the sports at the CAAD event.

The Swimming CAAD will be delivered on Monday 21st May 2012 at the Aquatics Centre, John Charles Centre for Sport, Leeds. Final participant numbers will be assessed by Chris Armstrong from the ASA. The registration form will remain the same and please indicate on the form if you wish to be included in swimming activity.

3. Individual sport talent squads and events

Following the delivery of the CAAD a number of sports will run their own individual talent days to support the development of local participants. This will be done on a sport by sport basis and individuals will be sent the information by the NGBs and CSP.

What difference has Playground to Podium made?

Since its launch, Playground to Podium has provided a means of identifying and supporting potentially talented young disabled athletes. It has also enabled the development of an infrastructure to support more young disabled people to engage, remain and excel within sport.

Case Study:

Josh Percival (Wakefield) – Football

“I was surprised when my school invited me to take part in the West Yorkshire CAAD 2010. I had already been playing some CP football but thought it was a good idea to get involved in new sports and have a go. It was good to have some more experienced players (athletes) there to give confidence to those that are new. It was a real boost to my confidence as I was with players with similar levels of disability. I am now playing lots of football with the Yorkshire CP Football Club and attend the FA Centre of Excellence in York.”

Parents comments:

“Josh found the speaker inspirational as he could see and meet someone who has competed at the highest level and could tell people about it. We also think that his own confidence has improved as a result of going through the P2P process. He has even asked about coaching qualifications – possibly as a result of being involved in the coaching sessions himself.”

How to get more information about Playground to Podium?

For further information on the Playground to Podium please contact James Brown on the details below:

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