

## **Calls 4 Action: Black and Minority Ethnic Pupils – what do we know?**

### **Why are we focusing on BME communities?**

Research shows that people from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities are less likely to take part in sport or to get involved in sport as a volunteer, administrator or spectator compared with white British population<sup>1</sup>. Despite showing a positive increase in participation levels overall, recent findings from the School Sport Survey 2013 showed that the inequalities in participation that have been in existence for more than a decade still remain. We know that white and mixed race pupils are more likely to be regular participants in sport and physical activity compared with black/black British and Asian/Asian British pupils. The latest data show that Asian/Asian British girls are the least likely of all pupils in Wales to be regularly active.

If we can get every child passionate about sport at an early age and provide them with the skills and confidence to take part, then they are far more likely to reap the long-term benefits that taking part in sport can bring. Sports participation and regular physical activity has a positive impact on health and well-being, but evidence clearly points to the fact that opportunities to take part in sport are not as accessible to BME pupils as they should be. Being a member of a BME community is associated with higher incidences of disadvantage stemming from long-term employment, low income, poor living conditions and poor health, which act as material constraints on participation.

While BME communities experience a number of common barriers to accessing sport, it is important not to make generalisations - there are different patterns of participation and attitudes between ethnic groups that need to be taken into account when planning and delivering sport. Culturally-appropriate opportunities should be considered as part of the planning process. We do not accept that any barrier is insurmountable when it comes to providing high quality sporting opportunities to our communities, although we recognise that for some it will take time and a focussed commitment to overcome them.

### **The current picture of participation**

Since 2011, the School Sport Survey has captured frequency of participation, allowing us to explore the number of occasions per week pupils take part in organised sport and recreation, outside of the curriculum. In Wales, 40% of pupils across Years 3 to 11 take part in organised activity other than in curriculum time (i.e. extracurricular or club sport) on three or more occasions per week. The Vision for Sport in Wales refers to this as being '*hooked on sport*'.

Table 1 below shows the percentage of pupils who are hooked on sport by ethnic group and gender.

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<sup>1</sup> A Systematic Review of the Literature on Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in Sport and Physical Recreation: Carnegie Research Institute (2009)

Table 1: *Who is 'hooked on sport'?*

	% Boys	% Girls	% All
White	44	37	41
Mixed	46	36	41
Black/Black British	42	30	37
Asian/Asian British	37	20	29
Arab/Other	31	26	29
OVERALL	44	36	40

### **What do we know about BME pupils and their attitudes to sport?**

There are many barriers and factors that motivate pupils to take part in sport, and some have a greater bearing according to someone's ethnicity, gender, income level, disability, age or religion and the ways these characteristics interlink.

Evidence from the School Sport Survey shows that among pupils in Wales, higher levels of enjoyment, ability and confidence are associated with more frequent participation in sport and physical activity. These are not surprising associations, but it is concerning that certain groups of pupils are telling us they have the exact opposite attitudes to sport – they don't enjoy it, they don't feel they are good at it, they lack confidence and they don't feel comfortable taking part.

Generally, pupils enjoy their PE lessons, and there is little difference according to ethnic group. However, pupils are less likely to enjoy extracurricular sport (sport in school clubs), particularly female pupils of secondary school age. Asian girls and Arab/Other girls were proportionally the most likely to say they didn't enjoy it at all. Approximately a third of these girls felt this way about extracurricular sport, which means that the current offer has little chance of increasing its take-up among a more diverse population.

There are strong differences in levels of perceived ability. Among the less active pupils, there is a clear gender gap around the numbers of pupils who said *'I'm not good at sport'* - 14% of boys and 25% of girls give this as a reason for not doing more across Wales. Again, the issue is most prevalent among Asian/Asian British girls (27% said this). Pupils are likely to do more if they feel they are good enough and have confidence and the appropriate skill level to take part. Almost a quarter (24%) of Asian/Asian British girls also said they would do more if they were *'better at sport'*. A focus on physical literacy and improving and measuring pupils' skills and physical competence from an early age may alleviate this as a barrier in the long term.

There are other 'practical' barriers that sports deliverers need to take account of. White and Asian/Asian British girls are most likely to give 'lack of time' as a reason for not taking part (43%). Linked with this is an increased focus on studying when reaching secondary school age. On average, 18% of boys and 32% of girls gave 'studying' as a reason for not doing more sport. The groups most likely to give this as a reason were Asian/Asian British girls (37%), white girls (32%), Asian/Asian British boys (27%) and mixed race girls (26%). The importance placed on study was reinforced by the answers pupils gave on how they spent their leisure time. Over 60% of white and Asian/Asian British girls said they did homework and studying in their leisure time and 20% of Asian/Asian British girls gave this a top three leisure time activity.

## Sports

As well as considering various attitudes to sport in general, the level of participation and the appeal of specific sports can vary according to ethnicity. Despite the barriers, the majority of pupils are keen to do more sport, even those that don't currently access it. It is not the case that BME pupils have consistently lower participation levels in sports compared with white pupils. There are several sports - particularly basketball, cricket, badminton and athletics - that show proportionally higher percentages of BME pupils taking part in extracurricular and club settings compared with the average for Wales. These sports also show high levels of demand from BME pupils who want to do more, which means they have high potential to expand their participation base.

### **Sport-specific findings from the survey for girls show:**

- There is clear demand for swimming and dance among girls from all ethnic groups, along with potential for tennis and netball to increase their participation levels.
- Basketball is in demand among almost a third of girls who are Asian/Asian British, Black/Black British, or Arab/other pupils. Dodgeball is also popular with these ethnic groups in comparison with white and mixed race pupils;
- Asian/Asian British girls have high levels of participation and demand for badminton;
- Football is a popular extracurricular and club sport for black/black British girls compared with other ethnic groups.

### **Sport-specific finding for boys:**

- Mixed race and black/black British boys are more likely to be doing extracurricular football compared with the Wales average;
- Extracurricular and club-based basketball is far more popular among BME boys than other ethnic group, and is ranked second most popular extracurricular sport in terms of participation for Asian/Asian British and black/black British boys. Basketball has higher demand among all BME pupils compared with white pupils, with particularly high proportions of Asian/Asian British boys and almost a third of all other ethnic minority categories wanting to do more;
- Dodgeball has high levels of demand among all ethnic groups but currently doesn't have as strong a participation base as other sports.
- Almost half of Asian/Asian British boys want to do more cricket and a quarter want to do more badminton;

Whilst taking note of the current preferences for these sports, there should be a broad offer in place to give young people the chance to engage with sports that maybe they'd never considered before. The way sport is currently delivered suits some groups of pupils very well, but not others - who may be interested, but think that the sport is not for them. Taking account of pupil voice to address these issues is important. Black/black British girls were the most likely to say they would do more sports *'if there were more sports that suited them'*. Pupils are asked how often their ideas about PE and school sport are listened to. Across Wales, 19% of pupils say 'never'. The proportion of black/black British and Arab/other pupils who say 'never' is higher. Around a quarter of black/black British boys and Arab/other pupils, and over a third of black black/British girls say they

'never' feel pupils are listened to. If we are not taking account of the needs of our customers, we are unlikely to increase participation among under-represented groups.

Given these findings, increasing the emphasis we place on listening to and understanding the needs of different pupils is likely to have a positive impact on participation levels in schools and in the longer term, and should routinely be part of the teaching, coaching, planning and delivery of sport.

### **What are we doing to address these issues?**

Sport Wales is seeking to generate positive action to address the issues of inequality within sport. We believe that everyone in Wales should enjoy the positive benefits that regular, weekly participation in sport brings, regardless of background and circumstances.

A BME Network has been established. The network aims to:

1. Make recommendations to organisations and stakeholders who deliver sporting opportunities throughout Wales.
2. Raise the profile of both local and national BME sport and its role models.
3. Challenge and support key partners such as National Governing Bodies of Sport, Local Authorities and Sport Wales around the impact they are making.
4. Bring groups together to enable them to apply for funding and additional resources to impact on opportunities and provision for BME communities.
5. Be a positive advocate for BME sport.

### **Calls 4 Action Funding**

Via the *Calls 4 Action* programme, Sport Wales is now seeking applications to fund innovative, high impact projects that will make a real difference in breaking down the barriers that prevent these underrepresented groups from regularly participating in sport, creating a lasting legacy opportunity from Glasgow 2014 for everybody in Wales. Sport Wales wants bold, new approaches, and wants to provide assistance to individuals and organisations that bring fresh ideas and ways of getting more people involved in sport.

Inequality in participation between differing groups is not inevitable and can and must be tackled. This year the whole of Wales has the opportunity to get behind our Commonwealth Team and be part of a team three million strong. *Calls 4 Action* will look to ensure that everyone one of us also has the opportunity to take part in sport on a grassroots level.