



WPT School Report

GIRLS SPORT: Is it equal in schools?

Written by **Erin, Kiral, Eryn, Eva and Sehaj**



Since the Women's Euros 2022, women's sport has erupted into the lives and has become much more popular in society as a whole. However, because women have been seen as inferior in society for centuries it is becoming apparent that there are still some gaps in the development of women's sport in comparison to men's sport.

Across Wickersley Partnership Trust, the schools and staff are actively working for change in sport, challenging stereotypes against gender-specific sports, and trying to fill in gaps in the curriculum where there is room for improvement.

We're going to dive into the world of sports and discuss whether there are still some improvements needed within schools as a whole.

Equality

The Suffragettes fighting for the vote is one of the ways women have battled against sexism, and gender roles and stereotypes, but these problems are still seen today with unequal pay and unfair standards and opportunities for women. These are also reflected in sport.

There are still stereotypes about what women can and can't do because genetically men have higher muscle mass so the stereotype is that they are 'better' at sports. But this isn't necessarily true.

Funding is also a massive issue that has been raised in women's sports - it has much less funding than men's. To put it into perspective, out of a total of £35 million of support given to football, women's football got allocated less than 10% (£3 million).

We interviewed Miss France, Citizenship Teacher at Wickersley School & Sports College, and she commented: "We are constantly breaking through barriers to get more opportunities and we do have them, but women need support to access them so it isn't going against the grain to be a part of it."

Inclusion and Diversity in school curriculum and extra curricular

Equipment plays a huge role in school sport but many schools only have access to limited equipment due to lack of funding. Some families struggle to get their kids into clubs and sports due to the cost of living and lack of disposable income so schools are used as a major outlet for children's sports - this lack of funding and equipment poses disadvantages when it comes to diversity and inclusion. But this is a problem across the board.

When we break it down into gender inequalities, it's evident that boys still have more opportunities than girls don't when it comes to tournament progression. But there are still gaps when it comes to specific sports. For example, boys are able to play table tennis in PE, but girls can't. Girls are able to play netball in PE, but boys can't.

Mr Hall, PE Teacher at Wickersley School & Sports College, says: "The problem isn't just with the school in general but the lack of girls doing sports in society. There has been an explosion in the amount of people playing historically 'boys' sports'. An example of the progression in society is the girls' cricket team and them going to their first competitive game as a girls team against Worksop because of girls' sports becoming much more talked about."

Progression in school sport



The drastic increase in positive talk around women in sport is really improving and creating a better environment in school and outside in the wider world of sport.

In professional sport, women are becoming much more seen as a group, thanks to the Lionesses (England Women's team) winning the Euros in 2022 and consequently selling out stadiums across the UK!

Within schools, there is active improvement in the opportunities girls have. Rotherham School Games has recently held a football tournament that involved 12 schools and over 120 girls playing football across the region. It's even part of a national #LetGirlsPlay initiative.

We caught up with Mr Walker, School Games Organiser, to talk about the major developments in the school curriculum: "The gap is closing year on year, particularly in primary schools, where the majority of girls now have equal access to PE and school sport both curriculum and extra-curricular activities."

Although girls' sport still has gaps, it's good that they are being talked about and changed for the better - there is an obvious positive increase towards girls' sports and the opportunities they get.

It's something that Wickersley Partnership Trust, and sports partner, Rotherham School Games, is working hard to challenge to broaden the opportunities for boys and girls.