

DESTINATION

DEAFLYMPICS



UK Deaf Sport



HAVE A GO DAYS

IMPACT REPORT

2025

INTRODUCTION

UK Deaf Sport's vision is for every deaf person to be active and inspired by sport and physical activity.

There are currently 50,000 deaf children in the UK (National Deaf Children's Society). For children who are less active, 43% of deaf children participate in no physical activity at all compared to 26% of children with no disability (Sport England, Active Lives Children and Young People Survey, 2024).

In 2025, UK Deaf Sport and Destination Deaflympics launched the Have a Go Day fund to subscribers of the Destination Deaflympics programme. It was hoped that proposals would be received from areas of great need, with high projected impact and actions leading to sustainable increases in physical activity for participants. Bids forming connections within the deaf community would demonstrate this sustainability.

Applicants were required to outline planning for a Destination Deaflympics Have a Go Day, event, activity or festival. The requirement was to provide deaf young people aged 8-16 years with an opportunity to come together to participate in physical activity inspired by Deaflympic sport. Successful applicants would be required to complete an organisational survey and provide supporting images.

Advice was provided to applicants around providing deaf role models, collaborating with local Active Partnerships* and pan disability or deaf sports organisations. Encouragement was given to consider a legacy to the event via signposting to inclusive clubs in the participants' local area as well as involving deaf students studying sports or coaching wherever possible.

• Please see Appendix 1

HAVE A GO DAY

FUNDING RECIPIENTS

UK Deaf Sport and Destination Deaflympics approved bids from 6 organisations which had subscribed to UK Deaf Sport's Destination Deaflympics programme.

- Heathlands School
- Manchester Deaf Centre / Thomasson Memorial School
- St Margaret's School Torbay
- Deaf Kids Connect
- Worthing Table Tennis Club
- iPASS Sensory Services / Christopher Pickering School / Sirius West Academy

A total of 104 deaf young people in the target age range of 8-16 years attended the Have a Go Days.

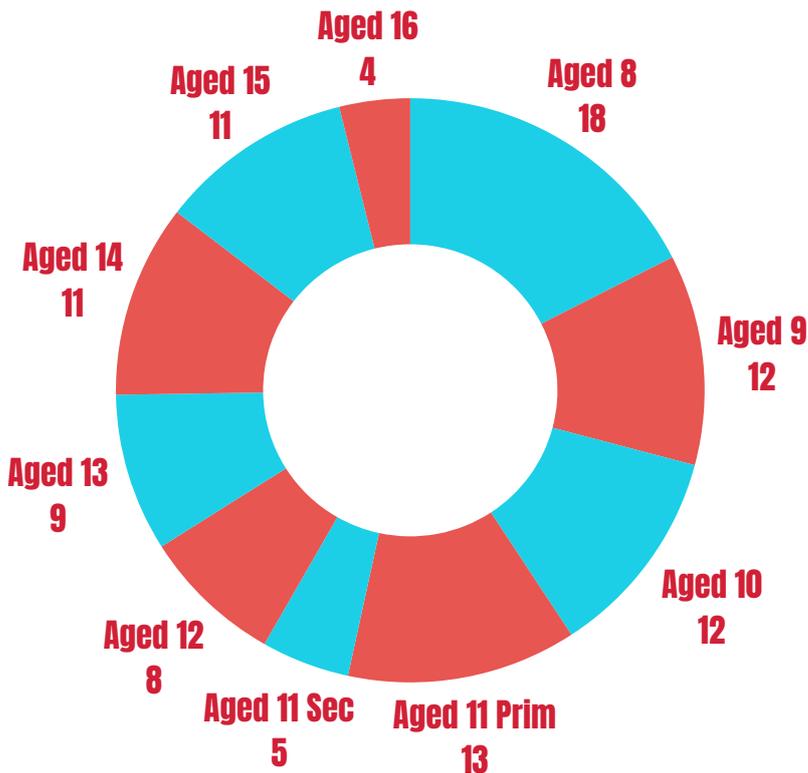
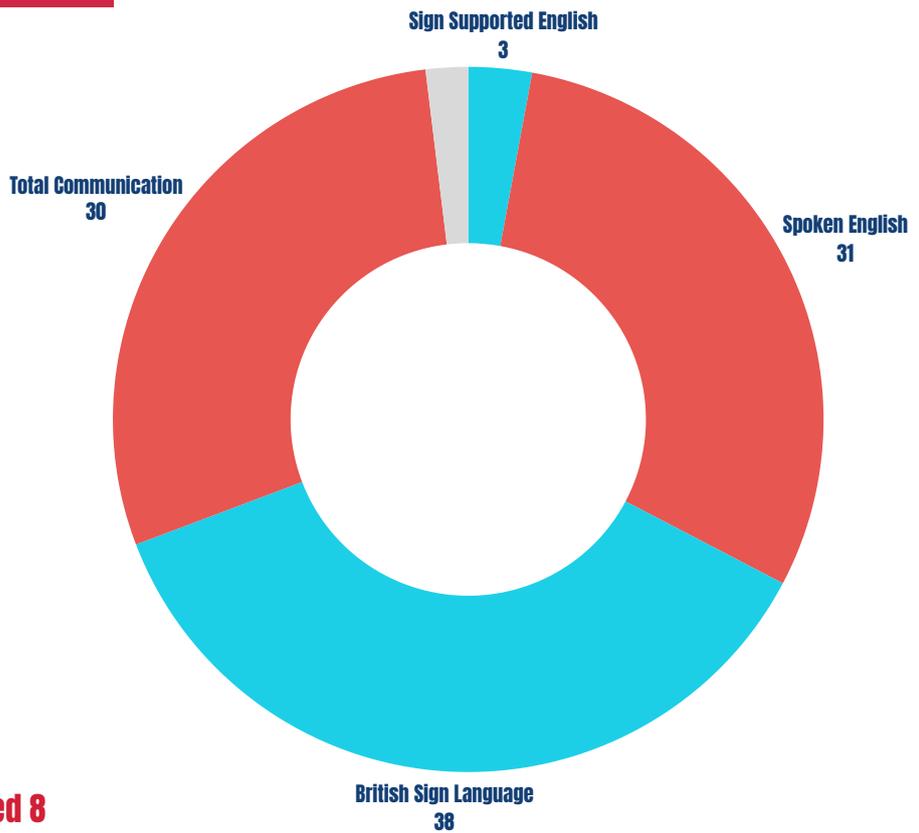
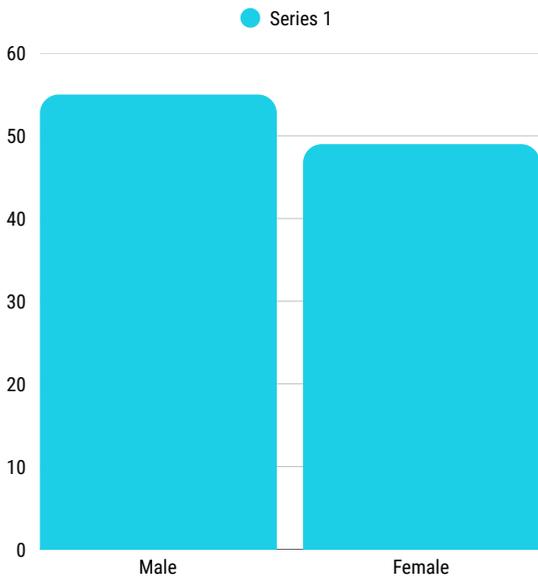
Additional deaf and hearing students from local colleges were involved in some of the delivery.

Deaf and hearing coaches and Deaflympians numbered among the delivery team across the 6 events.

IMPACT IN NUMBERS

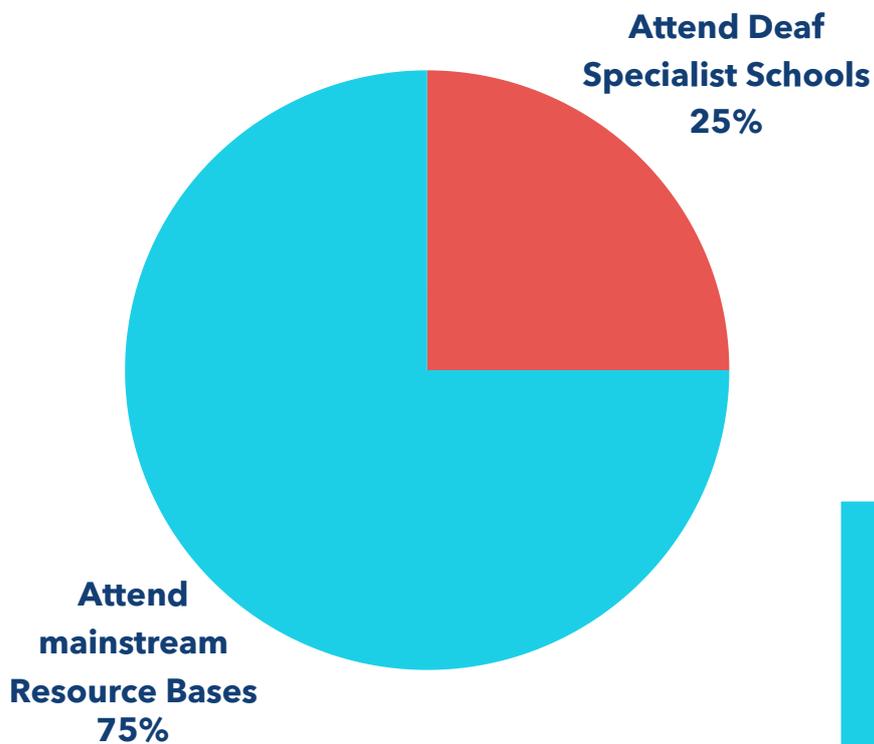
104

Deaf young people attended

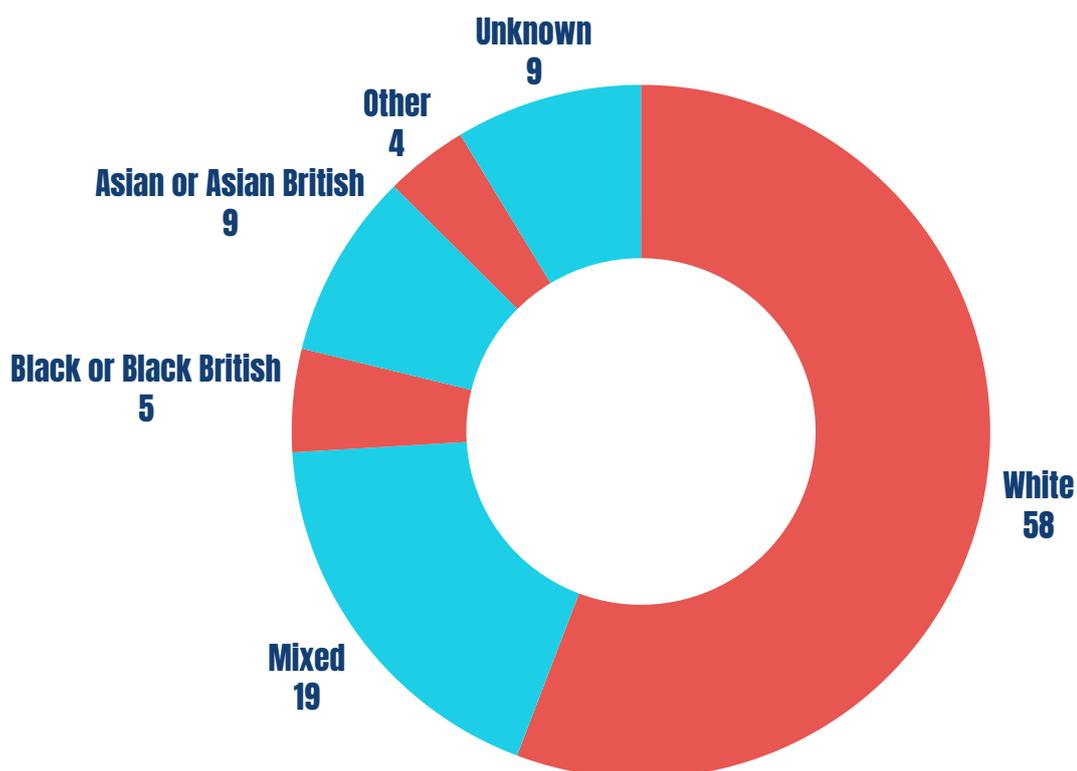


Please see Appendix 1 for further details

PARTICIPANTS



had another disability or long term health condition



HEATHLANDS SCHOOL

This deaf school wanted to try out pickleball across the PE curriculum for 13-16 year olds. Currently very popular in the deaf community, the sport is a gateway to the Deaflympic sports of badminton, tennis and table tennis. Equal numbers of boys and girls participated, with 21 of the 23 being BSL users.

The funding provided indoor and outdoor pickleball equipment to learn the sport over 4 weeks, with the playground adapted to create 3 outdoor courts. It also provided for hire of 6 courts at Batchwood indoor tennis centre for a competitive Have a Go event. Using a league scoring system motivated students with playing engagement and skills.

A survey revealed that the majority of participants liked playing pickleball, found training sessions to be enjoyable or very enjoyable and a good workout. 6 students enjoyed the opportunity to play on proper pickleball courts. Most students found the serving, movement and footwork, volley and teamwork skills challenging. Reflecting on their experience, most students wanted to improve their playing skills. Nearly half stated they would join a pickleball club in the future. *"Some students have asked me to organise this event again at least three times a year!"* Neal Caws, PE Teacher

Pickleball will now be embedded into the PE lessons at Heathlands School for all ages of deaf children, where they can learn and develop their playing skills. Increases in fitness, movement agility and hand eye coordination will benefit the students at Heathlands school to learn and enjoy playing pickleball or any other racquet sports.



MANCHESTER DEAF CENTRE THOMASSON MEMORIAL SCHL

Manchester Deaf Centre partnered with Thomasson Memorial School to host a Deaflympics family fun day. The aim was to grow awareness of the Games and support young participants to try out Deaflympic sports.

3 aspirational deaf role-models, including 2025 Deaflympian Nathan Young, taught dry land swim techniques which the young people could practise independently at a pool. Destination Deaflympics activity card sessions linked to running and bowling and focused on balance, strength and coordination, providing the opportunity for 13 youngsters to learn games and make friends.

Through athlete testimony, young people saw that deafness doesn't prevent participation in sport and that barriers can be overcome. Signposting to local accessible sports clubs and activities in the Greater Manchester area was well appreciated (see Appendix 2).

One 10 year old was highly engaged with all sessions, confidently using BSL and the interpreter to ask Nathan Young about his sporting career.

Families rated the Deaflympics event as good and said they would come again.



ST MARGARET'S SCHOOL

Twenty one 8-12 year olds attended the Deaflympics Day which was organised alongside a Sports Leader from Active Devon. The aim was to bring deaf children together from school resource bases in Plymouth, Exeter and Torbay.

This Deaflympic inspired, multi sport event included Deaflympic sports football and volleyball, certificate awarding and a medal ceremony. The school collaborated with a local college, inviting teenagers studying Sports Coaching to deliver the activities. Importantly, 2 of these students were also deaf, providing accessible role models to the participants.

The day was successful in its aim to provide an opportunity for deaf young people of a similar age and communication need to extend their social circles, build confidence in their deaf identity, play and do sport together.

"I liked playing sports with other deaf children." "It was a great day and nice to see other people like me." "It was nice when we sat down for lunch together."

Now that the communication similarities between children within travelling distance are known, it is hoped that similar future events will take place, with college students returning to support and inspire participants.



WORTHING TABLE TENNIS CLUB

Worthing Table Tennis Club in Sussex is an inclusive and accessible club which has attracted deaf adult members. It offers adaptive scoring equipment and a volunteer BSL interpreter.

The club was interested to attract younger deaf players. Funding allowed staff to try an event for a group on which the club could not normally focus.

8 deaf children took part in the Have a Go Day which aimed to introduce them to basic hand/eye coordination and bat and ball skills.

The young people enjoyed a range of basic exercises. A games circuit included aiming to knock cups down, balancing the ball on the bat, rolling the ball across the table into a cup and keeping a rally. Success was demonstrated by the fact that one child simply didn't want to go home!

Based on the club's experience at the Have a Go Day, communication will be improved to ensure inclusivity. More varied and creative ways to introduce children to table tennis will be designed. Using feedback collected, the team plan to put on another similar event in 2026.



DEAF KIDS CONNECT

An inclusive and accessible workshop was run in Sussex by deaf coach William Bricknell of Brighton and Albion FC and Oliver Pritchard, 2025 Deaflympian triathlete. The aim was to introduce sport to those who thought it not possible for them, or who had had negative experiences in the past.

The role models showed the children that with the right support, they can do sport. The young people enjoyed being in a room full of deaf peers, fully participating in activities, taking part equally and having fun without barriers.

The coach's feedback was incredibly positive: *"I wish we'd had something like this when I was growing up! I can't believe how many deaf children there are here, in one room."*

The event was very popular with many joining in last minute. Most of the 8-16s came from mainstream schools. Football was a clear favourite among participants so, alongside a planned summer camp, the hope is to create a deaf youth football squad locally, as deaf sport leagues are lacking in the area.

"I loved doing sport with all my friends. I liked using the coloured cones to know when to start and stop, instead of listening to a whistle or voices. It was fun learning about the other countries and what they do." Participant, aged 8.



IPASS SENSORY SERVICES, SIRIUS WEST ACADEMY, CHRISTOPHER PICKERING SCHL

The Have a Go Day's aim was to bring together young people from several resource bases, to meet others with deafness, try some fun new sports, raise awareness of the Tokyo 2025 Deaflympics and to meet deaf role models.

This was a well attended Deaflympics event, with 32 young people from all over Hull. Each of the age categories 8-16 years was represented and equal numbers of boys and girls were involved, two thirds of whom were English users.

Meeting role models demonstrated that there are no barriers to their future and that the young people can achieve anything they wish. Trying new sports means young people can keep active. New friendships were formed and feedback was universally positive, all wishing to return annually.

One male participant with profound deafness who attends a mainstream school said: *"I have had a great day; it was the first time I have met others like me"*.

The Destination Deaflympics funding means that equipment purchased is now in place for an annual event, with plans to link with other disability sports providers in the city, for example, Tigers Trust.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Destination Deaflympics and UK Deaf Sport would like to thank 3i for the funding and resource to support deaf young people in developing confidence to become more active and move towards community or competitive sport.

We would also like to extend our thanks to the staff at Heathlands and St Margaret's School, iPASS, Sirius West Academy and Sir Christopher Pickering School, Manchester Deaf Academy and Thomasson Memorial School, Deaf Kids Connect and Worthing Table Tennis Club for all their work in organising the events we are reporting on here.

For some, it was the first time they had ever embarked upon anything similar, so we, and the young people who benefitted, are grateful for their leap of faith!

For further information on how to get involved in sport and physical activity, or how UK Deaf Sport and Destination Deaflympics can support your organisation's deaf young people, please go to the Destination Deaflympics page of UK Deaf Sport.

www.ukdeafsport.org.uk/destinationdeaflympics



APPENDIX 1

Preferred communication methods

- British Sign Language (BSL)
- Sign Supported English (SSE)
- Spoken English (with or without hearing assisted technology)
- Total Communication (voice, lip-reading, hearing assisted technology, sign language)

Ethnicity

- White (including British, Irish, any other white background)
- Mixed (including white & black Caribbean, white & black African, white & Asian, any other mixed background)
- Black or Black British (Caribbean, African, any other Black background)
- Asian or Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese or any other Asian background)

***Active Partnerships** are physical activity and sport networks. They represent a nationwide movement to make active lifestyles the norm for everyone.

APPENDIX 2

Signposting

Manchester Deaf Club flyer signposting to local community clubs



DEAFLYMPICS FAMILY FUN DAY



Accessible Sports in Manchester



What: McDonald's Fun Football
Who: 5-11 year olds
Where: Radcliffe Deaf Football Club, M26 4PB
When: Saturdays 1-2pm
20.09.25 - 08.11.25
More info email:
deafteam@radcliffefc.com



What: Disability and Inclusive Tag Rugby
Who: 6-11 year olds
Where: Sale Sharks, M31 4AB
When: Every other Sunday
More info email:
louisa.smith@salesharks.com



What: Inclusive swimming
Who: Any age
Where: Lots of locations
When: Lots of times
More info: contact@levelwater.org



What: Manchester Thunder Netball with deaf coach
Who: 11-25 year olds
Where: M18 8RL or M22 1QW
When: First and third Saturdays of the month- check location
More info email:
katie@manchesterthunder.co.uk

What: MDC CYPS Groups
Who: 0-24 year olds
Where: MDC and surrounding areas
When: Weekends
More info email:
cyps@manchesterdeafcentre.com





Scan for BSL Video: