

HERE GIRLS CAN

IMPACT REPORT SPRING 2026



Supporting girls' physical activity in Herefordshire

Delivered in partnership



OVERVIEW

Here Girls Can is our localised version of the national This Girl Can campaign.

Here Girls Can is co-designed by girls. It incorporates the things that motivate girls to be active and helps to overcome the barriers that can sometimes stop them. The festival is the catalyst for creating sustainable change to girls' physical activity levels, through changing attitudes, increasing confidence and creating a sense of belonging. Delivered in a safe and inclusive environment, the Here Girls Can festivals provide a space for girls to have a positive and unique experience of physical activity.

Nine festivals have been held since September 2022. During this time, over 600 targeted participants and 55 schools have experienced Here Girls Can.



Our 2026 festivals were funded by Mumford Memorial Trust and supported by local deliverers: The Core, The Starlight Company, England Netball, Pure Studios, Hereford Yoga Centre, Hereford Combat Academy, 3 Degreez Cheerleading and Silent Disco Hereford.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

1

Judgement-free

- Being active with girls similar to them.
- Individual rather than team activities.
- No pressure to be good.

2

Feeling comfortable

- Choice of clothing - comfier and baggier than PE kit.
- Safe environment.

3

Choice & mood

- Different activities that vary in intensity, to support different moods.
- Shorter bursts of activity.

4

Fun

- With friends.
- Time for chatting.
- Music included.

The design principles were formulated through a co-design process with girls. They guide all Here Girls Can festivals.



TARGETING PARTICIPANTS

Target audience

Schools were asked to identify girls from years 5-8 who may have low confidence, who struggle to engage with PE and have shown barriers to participation. Before the festival we asked schools to share the barriers the girls faced, so we could help to address these and meet their needs.

148

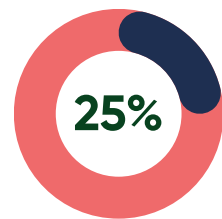
Participants

supported by

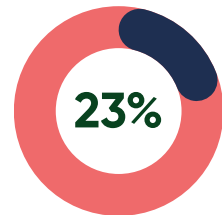
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Girls' Champions

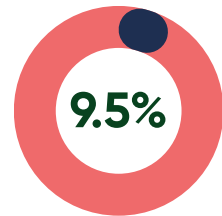
Participant breakdown



SEND



Free School Meals



English as an additional language

"We have many Indian children in our school and find that they are often disengaged with sport. They are often limited with what they have access to and believe many sports are designed for boys. This would open their eyes to more opportunities."

"We continue to face challenges with girls' participation in physical activity, particularly around confidence, self-belief and feeling inspired to take part. Many of our girls are hesitant to engage fully in PE due to worries about ability, fear of judgement or a belief that sport 'isn't for them'."

"We have also noticed a drop-off in engagement among older girls, with some citing anxiety or negative perceptions of sport as barriers."

"Being in a rural area, we do not have many local clubs or sporting opportunities nearby, and as our community is not very affluent, even when options do exist they aren't always accessible to all families."

GIRLS' CHAMPIONS

Girls' Champions play a vital role at the festival, but are also an important way of ensuring the project is sustainable. For the first time, selected girls from years 9-10 attended a Here Girls Can Student Conference in September 2025. This provided an opportunity to learn more about the programme. They participated in educational workshops on periods, sports bras and using their voice to make a difference. Girls were encouraged to support younger peers in their school and ahead of the festivals in January and March, selected Champions received further training on 'creating a positive environment' and safeguarding.

Girls' Champions made a significant difference to participants' experiences during the festival. Participants said:



"I like how they got the teen girls to help with activities."

"I loved my day, thank you so much, I tried so many new things, the girls were friendly."

"When I did roller skating the older girls helped me for skating and I really want to come again."

"The people are so nice and friendly."

"I had a really great day, I loved Lexi (Girls' Champion)."



“We get to support other people and make them more confident [...] to show other children that they can love sport and making them confident in themselves.”

Girls' Champion

Girls' Champions supported younger girls in a range of ways:

“Tried to involve all the children in the sports we did. Talk to them about being girls.”

“Took the slower approach in activities so they could get the hang of it.”

“Encourage them to step out of their comfort zone.”

They identified a number of ways to continue in their role after the festival. This will enable more girls to receive support from a Here Girls Can Champion:

“Help more girls love sport and find the one that works for them.”

“Talk to the younger girls about their experiences.”

“Help younger years express themselves and to feel comfortable.”

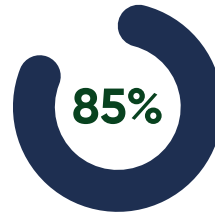
OUTCOMES

Measuring impact

We asked all participants and Girls' Champions to tell us about their experience of Here Girls Can, including any changes to their feelings and attitudes.



After participating:



Girls felt more confident



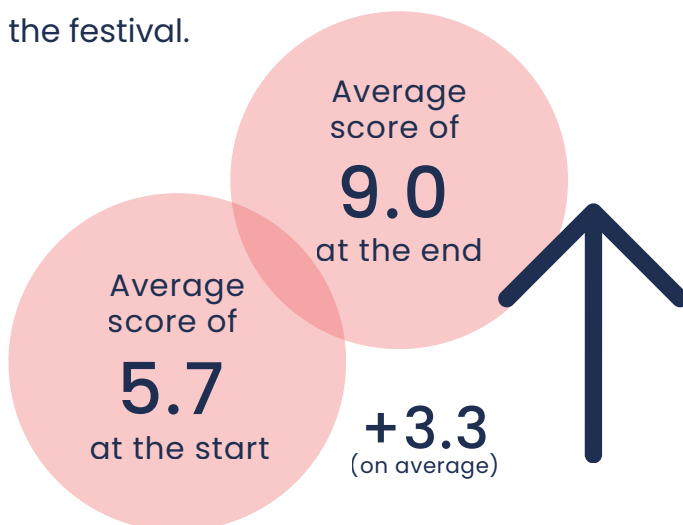
Girls felt inspired to be more active

100%

said they 'definitely' enjoyed being a Girls' Champion.

Confidence boosted

Girls rated their confidence from 1 to 10 at the start and end of the festival.



OUTCOMES



The primary aim of Here Girls Can is to increase girls' confidence and motivation to be more physically active. Through the programme we also want to promote self-belief, positive body image and help girls link physical activity to good mental wellbeing. Girls shared their feelings and personal outcomes with us at the end of the festival:

"That totally boosted my confidence and inspired me to be myself."

"We wouldn't have done any of this if the boys were here."

"I would like to come here more often at Here Girls Can. It made me feel really motivated."

"It made me feel like a wash of happiness lifted me up to a giant girl group with all my friends."

"I had so much fun and found it amazing with all of the fun activities and now I feel like I can believe in myself more."



We asked teachers and school staff to share any differences they saw in their pupils during the festival.

"It's been great to see their confidence grow. Some of the girls were quite nervous coming into today, but they have been so engaged as the day has progressed and really flourish. Some of the girls have really come out of their shell, and it's been a joy watching them get that sense of achievement."

"Braver in getting involved. Relaxed about having a go and not worried what others think. High engagement throughout each activity. Thank you!!"

"As the day has gone on, both have talked & engaged more with the coaches as well as the girls in the other school in our group. Confidence has grown. After dance they both said 'that was the best!' Usually a nod or a smile is their answer."

"Engagement and talking about the barriers they have not wanted to talk about in school. Today has provided a safe space to talk with the girls - thank you."

"All joined in. Resilience developed. Improved self-esteem. Pupil comments - 'Best day of my life, these people are like me!' 'Made new friends'."



CREATING CHANGE



The secondary objective of Here Girls Can is to create change within schools, inspired by young people and the festival. This will ensure sustainable outcomes are generated and more girls benefit from Here Girls Can.

During the festival, teachers were asked what they would like to change, implement or improve in their own school to increase girls' participation in physical activity.

Girls-only

"Give the girls regular opportunities to do things separate to the boys. Girls Talk has been really powerful and is something we could do to allow girls to be heard and be themselves."

"Boys PE groups and separate girls groups may help with confidence."



New activities

"Loved the period fact/false cards and how they promoted conversations. Focus more on how the details, will re-look at RSE lessons to include this type of activity."

"Introduce yoga in school life."

"Integrating alternative sports at school."

Kit

"What they wear when participating in physical activity at school (bring leggings in as part of their PE kit)."

Champions

"Look to appoint a Here Girls Can Champion in our staff and encourage more girls to extra-curricular clubs."



LASTING LEGACY

Schools that have previously attended Here Girls Can have introduced a number of changes to create long-term impact and a Here Girls Can legacy within their school.

Curriculum

"New PE curriculum that includes dance which they enjoy."

SFX Primary School

"Changed curriculum to encourage girls to choose their activity in KS4. They now do shorter, more intense blocks of 1 activity." **Fairfield High School**

"Greater student voice – especially at KS4. What do girls want to do in PE lessons?" **BHBS**

Extra-curricular

"Girls only PE clubs and outside activities." **Clehonger Primary School**

"Girls only extra-curricular sessions & Girls Champions used to assist at clubs." **BHBS**

"Introduction of cheerleading club after school in autumn term 2025 – regularly 40+" **St Mary's High School**

"Run a 'this girl can' club at lunchtime where they have the choice of activities or just come and eat their lunch." **Kingstone High School**

We implemented a 'girls connect' lunchtime club for year 6 girls to chill, socialise and be active (yoga, mindfulness art, lunchtime walks etc). **St Mary's Credenhill Primary School**



PE Kit

"Change of uniform (PE kit). Tshirt changed from white cotton to black 'dry fit' material. Has given girls more confidence in what they wear." **Fairfield High School**

Period Products

St Mary's High School, BHBS and Kingstone High School all reported the introduction of free period products in the changing rooms.

Alongside changes at environmental and policy level within schools, behaviour change in individuals who previously attended Here Girls Can has also been reported.

“Increased participation in extra curricular clubs – specifically girls only sessions that have been offered. More ‘open’ to PE after their experience – engaging in lessons to a greater extent and a more positive relationship with PE staff.”

“Yr 5+6 girls who attended previously all attended [girls connect lunchtime club] and positive attitude to PE lessons in school improved.”



“Uptake of extra-curricular activities numbers has increased – Poppy yr 9 last years participant regularly now does trampolining extra-curricular.”

“Girls who have been given an opportunity to attend a HGC have engaged more positively in sport as a result. Previous years’ groups spoke highly of the day which gave this years’ participants confidence in attending.”

After attending Here Girls Can, some participants have accessed community clubs provided by the deliverers who support the festival. Kickboxing & karate and aerial hoop are two known examples. We have also been told by a parent that her daughter “now has so many new activities that she would like to try” in the community.



THANK YOU

For taking the time to read this report.

If you would like to find out more or support Here Girls Can in the future, please get in touch.

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