



29 May 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

**Subject: Remove ‘No Ball Games’ Signs to Unlock Sport, Play and Physical Activity for All**

We, the undersigned organisations, call for immediate action to remove outdated and restrictive **‘No Ball Games’** signs that stifle play, physical activity, and community connection across London and England. These signs—commonly placed in housing estates where children live, parks, and public spaces—send a damaging message: play is not welcome. This discourages children and young people, particularly those in deprived areas, from engaging in play, physical activity, and sport, worsening health inequalities and limiting opportunities for active childhoods.

**Sport, play and physical activity are essential for healthy, thriving communities.** Yet, the data shows that in London:

- **Over half of young Londoners don’t meet recommended activity levels** and are missing out on the vital benefits of play, movement, and wellbeing.
- **Communities with high levels of deprivation** are disproportionately affected by limited access to play and recreation.
- **Every ‘No Ball Games’ sign removed helps 80 children be more active and play outside.** Over 7,000 remain in place in London alone, reinforcing barriers to play and physical activity for around 560,000 children and young people.

We emphasise the need for urgent action to ensure that children and young people—regardless of their background, household income or postcode—has access to free spaces where they can play, move, and be active close to home. However, this will not be possible without policy shifts that remove barriers, starting with the removal of ‘No Ball Games’ signs.

We call on policymakers, local authorities, and housing associations to:

- **Take down ‘No Ball Games’ signs** and actively promote play as a fundamental right, alongside the benefits of being active.
- **Reimagine public spaces** so they are open, inclusive, and accessible for all forms of play and movement, ensuring opportunities for both structured and unstructured activities.
- Engage in the debate and **commit to removing systemic barriers** to play, sport and physical activity, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

Removing these signs is just the first step. **We must drive a culture shift that places play, sport and movement at the heart of healthy childhoods, thriving communities, and public wellbeing.** Play is not a luxury—it is a necessity for every child’s development, happiness, and future success.

We invite your office to meet with us to discuss how we can work together to remove individual and systemic barriers to sport, play and physical activity in London and England, and create a future where everyone—no matter their income or postcode—has the right to play, move, and thrive, and in turn lead longer, healthier and happier lives through being active.

We look forward to your response and stand ready to collaborate to make this vision a reality.



Sincerely,

**Emily Robinson**, Chief Executive, London Sport.

**Alice Ferguson** and **Ingrid Skeels**, Associates and Board Directors, Playing Out.

**Eugene Minogue**, Executive Director, Play England & Founder, Know Ball Games.

**Fiona Sutherland**, Director, London Play

**Paul Lindley OBE**, Chair, The Raising the Nation Play Commission

**Co-Signatories:**

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Outdoor People  
ParkPlay  
Parkwood Leisure  
Rethinking Childhood  
Rise North East  
Skateboard GB  
Skate Nottingham CIC  
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Sport Excel UK  
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