



Sports Inclusion Development Programme 2025

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Fáilte / Welcome

The context for the delivery of Offaly SP's Sports Inclusion Development Programme (SIDP) in 2025 is as follows: -

- The SIDP has a focus on supporting the increased participation of people with disabilities, additional needs, etc in sport and physical activity
- The SIDP is made possible with funding from Sport Ireland, Healthy Ireland, the Health Services Executive and miscellaneous other funding agencies
- Jean Brady (pictured) continued in her role as Sports Inclusion Development Officer; and was supported in her SIDP work by various tutors of Offaly SP



The following pages will give an overview of the SIDP to the end of 2025...

Quarter 1

Adaptive Mountain Biking session on the Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Trails

I was delighted to be present at Cycling Ireland's Adaptive Mountain Biking session in January.

10 wheelchair users experienced mountain biking on the day.

Two of the adapted mountain bikes used on the day will be stored in Kinnitty so that people with disabilities can access them and use them on the Slieve Bloom Mountain bike trails.



Heathy Choices / Healthy Community

Once again, we teamed up with the Bannon Centre and the Offaly Local Development Company to deliver the popular 10-week "Healthy Choices / Healthy Community Programme" in Tullamore.

The programme began on January 20th and included indoor circuits on Mondays in St Mary's Youth Centre, and a walking / running group in the town park on Wednesdays.

Over 40 people attended the programme, and a follow-on sports programme is planned for the summer.

Diversity Games / Future Stars



Offaly Sports Partnership in association with Athletics Ireland and TUS Athlone hosted the second annual Future Stars festival, incorporating Diversity Games and Para Athletics events, for primary and post primary schools in January.

Over 700 students from 36 schools across 10 counties took part across the two days

Therapeutic Horse-Riding Programme

In February, students from the first year Laochra class in St Mary's Secondary School Edenderry began a horse-riding programme in Annaharvey Farm.

The programme has been a huge success, with students enjoying the interaction with the horses and growing in confidence with most progressing to riding independently by the end of the programme.



HER Moves Boxercise programme



As part of our HER Moves programme, a six-week Boxercise programme for 15 girls commenced in February in Killeigh Community Centre.

The programme concluded during Women in Sport month in March.

Women in Sport month Boxercise programme

As part of Women in Sport month in March, a six-week Boxercise programme for 40 women commenced in Killeigh Community School.



TY Future Leaders' programme

On March 6th, I commenced delivery of a “*Future Leaders*” training programme in Tullamore College. Offered to TY students, this programme involves a mix of theory and practical work with a focus on leadership skills, fundamental movements skills and adapted physical activity skills. The programme also aims to give the students an insight into the work of the sports partnership.

On the final day of the programme, the students delivered a multi-sport session for children with additional needs attending St Joseph’s National School. Both the students and pupils had a fantastic day.

Well done to all involved



Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) Boccia League



The annual IWA / Banagher College Boccia League commenced on March 4th.

The League ran over five weeks with three teams each from the IWA and Banagher College participating.

Team points were calculated over the five weeks, and the final week saw semi-finals and finals taking place with the Banagher College being awarded the prestigious trophy on this occasion.



This is a fantastic programme where the TYs gain experience in disability awareness and learn how to organise and run an event themselves. In addition, the IWA participants enjoy the competitive games and the interaction with the students

Special Education Needs (SEN) Units - Multi Activity Programme

SEN units from six primary (and two post primary schools (Coláiste Choilm and St Brendan's Community School, Birr) commenced their six-week multi-sport programme in March.

The primary schools participated in fundamental movement skills programmes while the post primary schools enjoyed activities such as basketball, dodgeball, soccer, boccia and target games.



Quarter 2

Cluny Soccer Blitz:

I was delighted to link with and support Gallen School with their inaugural Cluny Soccer Blitz.

The Blitz took place on April 2nd to mark Autism Awareness Day.

It was a wonderful day which saw 50 students from centres in four other schools compete for the trophy. The idea stemmed from a pupil in Gallen Community School who said he would love the opportunity to compete in a soccer tournament. That student spoke before the event kicked off welcoming all teams on the day; and he thanked his wonderful SNAs and Offaly Sports Partnership for making his suggestion / dream a reality. He concluded with 'May the best team win'.

The day was a great success, and it is hoped that the event will become an annual event in the sports inclusion development programme and Gallen Community School calendars.



Easter Multi Sport Camp for Children with Additional Needs

I organised a two-day Easter camp for children with additional needs in the Mucklagh Sports Hub.

30 children with varying additional needs enjoyed a variety of activities including boxing, pickleball, soccer, athletics, and dance. We also had a surprise visitor pop in to say "hello".

Great fun was had by all.



Therapeutic Horse-Riding Programme



May saw the delivery of a second six-week therapeutic horse-riding programme for 24 students from Gallen Community School, Killina Secondary School, and Tullamore College.

The feedback from the programme was fantastic. The programme has proven to be a real highlight of the students' year.

Well done to all; and thanks to the Athlone Equestrian Centre for facilitating this wonderful programme

Learn to Swim programme:

Shinrone Primary School took part in a five week "Learn to Swim" programme in Birr Leisure Centre. Students with physical disabilities and those in the Autism Unit really enjoyed the programme each week. They learned valuable skills and gained confidence in the water.

Athletics for All event

May 15th saw the hosting of our inaugural *Athletics for All* event for post primary schools. Five schools were in attendance with participants taking part in a 60m sprint, long jump, ball throw and javelin throw events.

A fantastic day was had by all with great feedback received from students and teachers.

It is hoped that the event will become an annual event in the sports inclusion development programme calendar.

Hi Jean,

I am writing to thank you so much for the wonderful day we had at Tullamore Harriers. It was fantastic. The students were so happy and relaxed coming home. Their parents will be thrilled with the day. Everything was so well organised, and it was so lovely to use the facilities at a local track.

Chat soon, Aine



Inclusive sports day



St Mary's Primary School in Edenderry were supported to deliver an *inclusive sports day* for their pupils on May 27th

1:1 physical activity supports programme for young people with additional needs

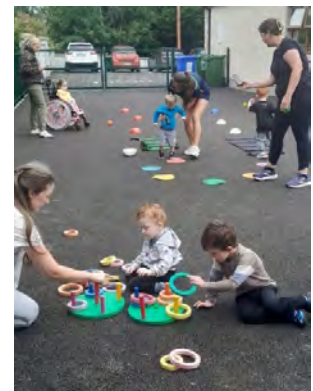
June saw the return of our ever popular 1:1 physical activity supports for young people with additional needs. Funded through the Laois / Offaly Child and Young Persons Services Committee, over 50 young people with additional needs will be supported to participate on the programme between June and September: -

- 28 will be availing of 1:1 physical activity supports
- 10 will participate in a therapeutic horse-riding programme
- 12 will complete a "Learn to Swim" programme

Marian Pre School – multi sport programme

A 10-week multi-sport programme with a focus on fundamental movement skills was delivered for the Marian Preschool in Clara.

The pre-school offers specialised, tailored support for children with a global developmental delay such as neurodivergences with additional physical and/or complex needs



St Hilda's Services – gym programme



St Hilda's Services were supported with the delivery of an eight-week gym programme in Ferbane GAA in June.

St. Hilda's is a voluntary organisation that provides a comprehensive quality service to people with mild, moderate and severe intellectual disabilities

Quarter 3

July provision

Three sports days were hosted in Leah Victoria Park, Tullamore, while several schools were also supported individually.

In total, 300 pupils across 16 schools were supported to participate in the programme. Thanks to all who attended, and our fabulous tutors who assisted on the programme



Multi-Sport Programmes

Two multi-sport programmes were delivered in July: -

1. Multi-Sport Programme, Tullamore Town Park

As a follow on to the Healthy Choices programme delivered in January, a summer multi-sport programme took place in Tullamore Town Park. Over 40 participants from the Bannon Centre, Phoenix Centre and Rehab Care enjoyed sessions in basketball, Olympic handball, pickleball and tai chi.

2. Multi-Sport Programme for children with physical disabilities

Working with occupational therapists in Riverside, I piloted the delivery of two multi sport programmes for children with additional needs in Shinrone and Tullamore. While the numbers participating were low, the actual programme went well, and I hope to be able to roll the programme out again in the future.

Summer Camps

Three summer camps for children with additional needs were delivered in July: -

1. Football for All

In association with FAI Offaly, 12 children with additional needs took part in our annual Football for All camp at the end of July.

As well as learning new skills, the participants also enjoyed a visit from former Ireland player and current u21 Ireland Team Manager, Jim Crawford.

Thanks to Gary, Sarah and all in FAI Offaly, and several of our tutors who supported delivery of the programme.



2. Multi-Sport Camp

30 children, aged 5 to 15 years, with additional needs participated in our annual multi-sport camp in Daingean GAA. Participants enjoyed activities such as athletics, boxing, cycling, games, pickleball and soccer as part of the camp.



3. Laois / Offaly Families for Autism camp



Once again, I was delighted to link up with the Laois / Offaly Families for Autism group and support them in the delivery of their summer camp. 80 children took part in the camp across the three days. A specific session for children with complex needs was delivered as part of the programme.

1:1 Physical Activity Support Programme for Young People with Additional Needs

August saw the delivery of three elements of the 1:1 physical activity support programme for 50 young people with additional needs: -

1. Therapeutic Horse-Riding

10 young people with additional needs participated in a therapeutic horse-riding programme in Athlone Equestrian Centre. The participants really enjoyed getting comfortable around the horses and learning to ride



2. Learn to Swim

12 young people with additional needs participated in a six week Learn to Swim Programme in Birr Leisure Centre

3. 1:1 physical activity supports



28 young people with additional needs participated in a six week 1:1 physical activity support programme with their assigned Offaly Sports Partnership tutor across the county. Various activities were supported as part of the programme depending on the participants' individual interests.

The “Learn to Cycle” element of the programme will commence in quarter 4

DIGA (Disabled & Inclusive Golf Association) Golf

In association with the DIGA, I supported the delivery of a come try event in Tullamore Golf Club.

The 12 participants took part in several golf activities prior to competing in an end of day event.

Many thanks to Liam, the DIGA tutor, who supported the programme. Congrats to all the winners.



Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA) Midlands Boccia Tournament

In association with IWA Ballinagar, I was delighted to support the delivery of the inaugural IWA Midlands Boccia Tournament in Muckalgh Community Centre.

Teams from Laois, Longford, Offaly and Westmeath participated in a fantastic day with some close games and great skill on show. Longford were victorious on the day, taking home the “Greta Egan” memorial cup.



Quarter 4

Tullamore Tennis Inclusion Programme



Commencing in September, I was delighted to support the delivery of an “Inclusion Tennis” programme in association with Tullamore Tennis Club.

Initially delivered as a six-week programme, following its success, the programme continues to run every Saturday morning with an average attendance of 8 to 10 per session.

The “**Learn to Cycle**” element of the *1:1 Physical Activity Support Programme for Young People with Additional Needs* commenced in November.

Six participants are participating on the programme in Mucklagh Community Centre on Thursday evenings, with three already cycling unaided





Additionally, a schools' **"Learn to Cycle"** programme was also delivered for children with additional needs in Killeigh National School in November / December 2025.

Children from the two SEN units as well as children from 4th class are participating on the programme. Many thanks to Seery Cyclewise for their support in delivering these programmes.

The final **"Learn to Swim"** programme for 2025 began on the 13th November in Birr Leisure Centre. A further 14 children with additional needs are participating on the programme.

Movement through Dance

Following the success of the gym programme with St Hilda's Day Centre in Ferbane, a new four-week movement through dance programme commenced at the end of November.

Mucklagh Sports Hub – sport inclusion development programme supports

Throughout 2025, Mucklagh Sports Hub supported the delivery of: -

1. Activator pole sessions for over 30 older adults weekly
 2. Adapted physical activity programmes for the Muiriosa Foundation and St Anne's Services in Birr. Over 50 people with additional needs attended the programmes throughout the year
 3. An eight-week adapted physical activity programme for four primary schools in the catchment area of the hub
 4. Chair Pilates for over 60 older adults weekly
 5. 55s fitness programme for over 60 older adults weekly since September
 6. Pickleball for adults and older adults twice weekly
-

Advocacy work:

Throughout the year, I met various clubs and organisations to support them in the development of their sport and physical activity programmes. Support was provided to the following groups: -

- the Bannon & Phoenix Centres
- CHIME (the national charity for deaf and hard of hearing people) Offaly
- Clara Gaa 'All Stars'
- Irish Wheelchair Association
- Laois / Offaly Families for Autism
- the Muiriosa Foundation
- the Offaly Centre for Independent Living
- Offaly Special Olympics
- Rehab Care
- St Anne's Services, Birr
- St Hilda's Day Services, Ferbane

I also attended several networking and training events including: -

- TUS Athlone - PA and Chronic Disease training programme
- Consultation meetings for the new County Offaly (five year) Sports Plan. A specific consultation meeting for people with disabilities was held with over 50 people in attendance
- Cycling without Age (rickshaw bike) training in Lough Boora
- CYPSC learning and development subgroup meetings
- First Aid training
- National Sports Development Officer Conference
- Ready to go Orienteering training
- Safeguarding 1 & 2 training
- Social inclusion week
- Sport Inclusion Development Officer network meetings
- the Vision Sport Ireland launch



Congratulatory note



As the Sports Inclusion Development Officer with Offaly Sports Partnership, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Nicole Turner on her selection as Offaly Person of the Year 2024.

Nicole was born with hypochondroplasia (short limbed dwarfism); and was involved with the Sport Inclusion Development programme in the early days. We are delighted to see her successes on the national and international swimming stage in recent years; and wish her well in her professional retirement from para swimming.

For more information on the Sports Inclusion Development Programme, contact Jean on 086 7912508 or email jbrady@offalycoco.ie