



# Table tennis to be cut from School Games

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Table tennis will no longer feature at the School Games from 2018 after the Youth Sport Trust decided to change the make-up of the event based on a government-commissioned review of the Games.

In an announcement, the Trust said: "A new-look programme for the 2018 will see a number of current sports making way for sports which haven't previously featured in competition.

"The full programme for 2018 School Games National Finals at Loughborough University will be announced later in the year."

While table tennis is not specifically mentioned, Table Tennis England can confirm that the sport will be one of those to make way.

It follows a formal review of the Games, commissioned by the Government, aimed at broadening the focus from Olympic and Paralympic sports.

Table tennis has been in the School Games since the first event in 2006, when only five sports were included – by 2017, 14 sports have been involved.

The inaugural table tennis champions were Paul Drinkhall and Kelly Sibley. Other individual champions since then include Rio Olympian Sam Walker and England mainstays Karina Le Fevre and Tin-Tin Ho.

**Table Tennis England Chief Executive Sara Sutcliffe said:**

As one of the original School Games sports, we are disappointed to lose our place, but we understand and respect the refreshing of the format of the event. We wish those sports which will be in the School Games from 2018 every success.

This is nevertheless a positive time for schools table tennis, with Table Tennis England and the English Schools

Table Tennis Association having recently merged, creating opportunities to increase the number of schools and students playing the sport.

We are committed to providing a pathway for talented school-age athletes to perform and excel at top-level competitions, both domestically and feeding into international competitions.

This includes the British Senior Schools' Invitation International next June, which will be hosted in England.

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