



NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

A sporting future for blind children across the UK

With less than 30% of visually impaired children meeting the Government's requirement of two hours PE per week*, Action for Blind People have been running the largest national sports project for blind and partially sighted children and young people by setting up sports clubs all over the UK.

Action for Blind People recently launched its 26th Actionnaires sports club and over 250 blind and partially sighted children have already benefited from attending one of these clubs. Action is continuing to develop its Actionnaires project by planning to have opened 56 clubs by 2010.

Former Football European Cup winner, John McGovern, who attended the Nottingham Actionnaires launch said: I think it's fantastic to see blind and partially sighted children being given the same sporting opportunities as their sighted friends. It is so important to enable these children to build self-confidence and realise their own potential. There should be nothing stopping Actionnaires kids potentially becoming sports heroes of our future. I'm glad to be a part of helping Action for Blind People achieve this."



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Despite a real love for sport 11 year old Max does not have a very active participation in his PE lessons in school. His mum, Anna Gordon, believes the school doesn't do enough to meet Max's specific needs: "Really a lot of what is done in PE is unsuitable for Max and he spends a lot of time not really knowing what is going on".

Since joining an Actionnaires club, Anna has seen great improvements in Max's sporting participation: "Max is always so excited about going to Actionnaires and since he started going we have seen such great changes to his social life and his physical fitness. Max is one of the lucky few children who get this second chance".

The 26 clubs are open to all visually impaired children and young people aged eight to 16 – although younger children may attend with a parent or guardian. Sighted siblings and friends are also welcome. Actionnaires provide sporting activities ranging from karate to cricket.

Colin Vince, National Sports Development Manager at Action for Blind People, comments: "We are aware of the government's targets in getting more children involved in sport in school, out of school and generally more physically active. This can very often be difficult for children and young people with a visual impairment. Our sports clubs across the country are very successful in providing the same sporting opportunities to blind and partially sighted children as their sighted peers. They are accessible, have adapted sports equipment and trained and caring staff."



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For more information on Actionnaires please call 0800 915 4666 or visit

www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk

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For further media information please contact Debbie Flatley, press office on 020 7635 4921/ 07739 819954 or email: debbie.flatley@actionforblindpeople.org.uk

Notes to editors:

* "We want to play" British Blind Sport 2005

- There are now 26 Actionnaires sports clubs run by Action for Blind People across the UK in Ashford, Birmingham, Blackburn, Carlisle, Coventry, Dorset, Essex, Huddersfield, Hull, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool (2), Manchester, Middlesbrough, Nottingham, Oxford, Peterborough, Portsmouth, South London, Southampton, Sunderland, West London, Swindon, Scarborough and Sheffield.
- Action for Blind People is an expert national organisation, ensuring blind and partially sighted people get practical support in all aspects of their lives. Contact Action for Blind People's National Freephone Helpline on 0800 915 4666 or www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk
- Action for Blind People is breaking down barriers that prevent visually impaired people from achieving the same opportunities as sighted people.
- 2007 marks Action's 150 years of transforming the lives of blind and partially sighted people.
- If abbreviating "Action for Blind People", please use "Action" rather than AFBP or ABP.



Action for blind people

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