

BwD Sports School of the Year 2026

Just like a diamond, sporting excellence isn't created overnight – it is shaped through dedication, resilience, teamwork and determination. At Avondale, every pupil is given the opportunity to shine.

Following consultation with Sports Leaders, we introduced new clubs including pickleball, American football, archery and New Age Kurling, broadening access to sports that appeal to a wider range of pupils.

Inclusion has been central to our provision:

- A girls-only football club inspired 10 girls to form a team in the Darwen League. Eight players had never played football - developing confidence, teamwork alongside a love for football.
- Pupils with SEND accessed many inclusive festivals including boccia, tenpin-bowling and multi-skills events. One pupil described representing Avondale as "the best day of my life."

Participation has continued to grow - we have entered several competitions across many sports. Particular highlights:

- 8 football teams enabled 61 pupils to compete in competitions.
- Year 3/4 & 5/6 athletics teams won the BwD events to then represent the borough at the Lancashire finals in Blackpool.
- Year 5/6 boys' team won the Darwen League before representing BwD in the Lancashire Finals at Fleetwood.

Increasing the number of pupils achieving 30 minutes of daily physical activity remains a challenge, but Avondale has made significant progress towards becoming a more active school through:

- The digitally tracked WOW Walk to School initiative.
- Sports Leaders delivering playground activities.
- Two hours of high-quality PE each week for every pupil.
- Staff completing the Ready Set Move Programme to embed movement across the curriculum.
- Increased outdoor learning and active teaching strategies.

To ensure high-quality provision, all staff completed 4 hours of specialist gymnastics CPD alongside training in inclusive/adaptive teaching.

Our commitment has been recognised through the School Games Platinum Mark and the afPE Quality Mark with Distinction (until 2027). These awards reflect our dedication to inclusive, high-quality sport. By removing barriers, listening to pupils and creating meaningful opportunities for all, we have increased participation and inspired more children to lead active, healthy lives. As our school motto reminds us, we continue to Learn, Smile and Remember through sport at Avondale.

See our end-of-year sports video: <https://www.avondaleschool.co.uk/sports-media>