Learn to Ride: Giving SEND children the opportunity to try Bikeability

Overview:
Julia Youens and Jon Rye, the SGOs for Gravesham and Ebbsfleet respectively, identified that local SEND children and young people (CYP) weren't getting the same opportunities as other pupils to learn how to cycle - a key lifeskill.

The duo worked together to develop an eight week Learn to Ride course for two local SEND schools. An opportunity that was fully adaptable for CYP needs and trained a new instructor workforce to continue supporting SEND with cycling for years to come.

Learn To Ride

Objectives

- Upskill the instructor workforce in adapting to the needs of SEND children
- Provide SEND children with the same opportunities to learn how to ride a bike
- Use cycling to show the positive benefits of activity for physical and mental wellbeing

Who was the target audience and how were they engaged?

The SGOs conducted Pupil Insight work and found that Kent's CYP with SEND had not been given the same opportunities to develop cycling skills as those without. This was confirmed by local Ofsted findings.

Taking this insight, the SGOs engaged two local SEND schools, Ilfield and Rowhill, working closely with staff at each to develop a fully adaptable Learn to Ride programme for their pupils.

By working closely with the schools and upskilling instructors they crafted an engaging, fully-flexible programme that easily adapted to each individual CYP's unique needs and abilities.

Why was the activity unique?

Given CYP wellbeing and comfort levels was essential for their engagement with the programe, the SGOs ensured that the instructors were coached beforehand on how to adapt quickly to different needs.

This meant that when the programme started the instructors could build a rapport with each CYP quickly and identify the best way of working with them.

Some required more one-to-one coaching, others progressed independently, and thanks to the upfront coaching the instructors were able to seamlessly adapt regardless of the situation.

This forward-thinking is what makes Julia and Jon's work stand out.

What was the impact felt in schools and by CYP?

The progress the children made and the confidence they built towards cycling is testament to the programme's success. Some children learned how to cycle from scratch. Others learned how to ride a balance bike. Others built the confidence to put a helmet on for the first time. Each of these achievements are unique to the child but each add to the positive experience and the long term impact the programme achieved.

The programme has been highly effective in its delivery and impact, not only for the students, but also the staffing body involved.
- Senior Leader, Rowhill School

I am very proud to say that all students who have taken part in the Level 2 training all passed.
- PE Leader, Rowhill School

Why is this an example of School Games best practice?

The SGOs not only identified an issue by looking at public data, they also undertook their own research to understand what was causing it and what solution the School Games network could offer. They had a clear target audience from the outset and the programme's success in impacting CYP is testament to that.

Also, the instructor training means the programme can be delivered in any SEND school, without the SGOs direct involvement. This means that even more SEND children will be able to build cycling confidence – a key objective that Julia and Jon set out to achieve.

For more information please contact Julia on sgocobhamhall@gmail.com or Jon on ryej@theebbsfleetacadamy.kent.sch.uk