‘Active 30’: Using 60 Active Minutes to Build School Skills

Overview:
After almost two years of COVID-19 restrictions and home-learning, New Brancepeth Primary School recognised its children’s physical fitness, teamwork skills and gross-motor skills had been negatively impacted.

The Senior Leadership Team and PE Lead, Amelia Robertson, recognised that time needed to be prioritised to combat this so they created a timetabled session for 30 minutes of activity every day, with children in house teams for a carousel of five different activities. These rotated each week depending on the skills and areas of improvement needed.

‘Active 30’

Objectives

- Develop children and young people’s (CYP) physical fitness, teamwork skills and gross-motor skills
- Implement 60 Active Minutes into the CYP’s daily lives
- Counter the negative impact of COVID-19 on the CYP

Who was the target audience and how were they engaged?

Although the target audience was the whole school initially, Amelia and her team used both teacher and data assessment to identify skills to focus on during ‘Active 30’ time. Teachers noticed children engaged most when staff joined in the activities and so they ensured they were involved on a rotation basis. Later, the activities were organised into five categories: teamwork, throwing skills, stamina/endurance, core strength and mental health support. The categories were selected based on teachers’ feedback about areas of development needed and the skills children felt they needed to develop.

Why was the activity unique?

This activity stands out due to the school’s commitment to instiling daily activity into their CYP’s lives. By timetabling ‘Active 30’ they were able to ensure the CYP felt the benefits of daily activity and counter any inactive behaviours brought about by COVID-19.

The way they ensured the activity remained engaging to CYP also led to its success. They carried out pupil voice assessments every half-term to identify what worked well and what could be improved. By adapting the ‘Active 30’ sessions regularly, offering new ways to be physically active, ensured that the sessions remained enjoyable and fun and removed any risk of the CYP disengaging with the project.

What was the impact felt in schools and by CYP?

CYP sentiment towards ‘Active 30’ was tracked during assessments. All pupils said they liked ‘Active 30,’ with Young Leaders saying they enjoyed supporting younger children and the added sense of responsibility. Every child also could share at least one key skill developed during ‘Active 30’ Staff observations found that participation and engagement has increased in class. For example, KS1 data showed that 0% of pupils were working at age-related expectations at the start of the year. This has now steeply increased to 55% working at age-related expectations. This increase is evidence that daily activity has a direct positive impact on CYP attainment and development in the classroom.

Why is this an example of School Games best practice?

This programme shows the school working with the School Games and outside partners to address a recognised need. To support whole school delivery of ‘Active 30’, Amelia and colleagues worked with the School Games and other partners to identify the needed areas of physical development based on assessments of their pupuls. In these lessons, school teaching staff worked closely with the coaches to develop skills and identify areas that can be targeted in ‘Active 30’. This collaborative approach, coupled with the regular pupil voice assessments are certainly a key factor in the activity’s success.

For more information please contact the entrant on a.robertson300@discoveryfederation.net