SCHOOL GAMES IMPACT AWARDS

Character Building in Bolton

Overview:
When SGO Bernadette O'Hare noticed that only six Alternative Provisions (AP) and Pupil Referral Units (PRU) were engaged with the School Games, she immediately wanted to change that in her area.

She identified two local AP boy schools to contact and set out to deliver a unique programme over three days. With one focused on coaching new young leaders and the other a chance for pupils to experience Pantathlon training.

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Character Building

Objectives

- Motivate Children and Young People (CYP) and build confidence and resilience through physical activity
- Inspire CYP with activities based on developing their skills and working in a team
- Provide a positive influence for boys from a low socio-economic background

Who was the target audience and how were they engaged?

The target audience was Y10/11 boys with moderate to severe behavioural needs from AP schools. Many of these were from low socio-economic backgrounds where statistically there is a danger of falling into local crime.

Many had not experienced a physical activity workshop before or the opportunity to experience the positive impact the School Games offers. Given their behavioural issues there were early challenges in engagement and cooperation. However, Bernadette resolved this by consulting with the schools and identifying ways to engage with each participant based on their individual needs.

Why was the activity unique?

This was an activity truly driven by insight. The national and regional data saw a clear gap between AP/PRU schools and the School Games. The SGO's own research identified that Bolton AP schools were lacking PE and sports provision and used this a route in to engage with the local schools.

But most importantly, the team recorded feedback throughout the programme set-up and delivery, leaving a framework for how SGOs can succesfully engage with AP/PRU schools across the country.

What was the impact felt in schools and by CYP?

The project created a sense of pride and belonging in the boys as well as teaching the skills of how to be effective leaders. The schools believed it empowered the boys to make their own choices and to be proud to make the right decisions. It also helped raise the aspirations of the boys, with all leaders asking about other opportunities to lead School Games event. By providing a new opportunity to the target boys, Bernadette and her team have potentially opened new career paths or ambitions, with one boy even asking for advice on how to become a coach in the future.

It worked very well and the leaders did a very good job. The children wore their medals all day!

- School

All the children involved loved it and we have had nothing but positive feedback from staff and children.

- School

Why is this an example of School Games best practice?

This project was a collaboration with the Greater Manchester Active Partnership, the two participating schools and Bolton Wanderers FC, all working towards the same goal.

By collaborating with other parties, the SGO was able to craft a hyper-targeted programme, which not only identified those in greatest need and provided positive experiences of sport to a completely new audience of CYP, but also benefited the schools through better engagement and belonging. More information on Bernadette's work and why it can be rolled out across the country can be found here.

For more information please contact the entrant on bohare@thornleigh.bolton.sch.uk