

FRIARS ACADEMY

SCHOOL PARTNERS:
FRIARS ACADEMY AND SCHOOL GAMES ORGANISERS (SGOS) ACROSS NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

THE CHALLENGE

Historically, students with Special Educational Needs/Disability (SEND) very rarely got the opportunity to represent their school at a sporting event, and often were not fully included in PE lessons. We wanted to engage more primary and secondary schools through Project Ability, reaching more young people and creating opportunities available to them in their local area.

WHAT WE DID

- As the Project Ability lead school, Friars Academy set each SGO the challenge of running an innovation project in their district with the aim of engaging new schools and students in Project Ability. Each SGO had ownership over making their innovation project bespoke to their district, and had access to a set amount of money after providing an action plan outlining their innovation and the schools they were going to impact on.
- The SGOs had more ownership within Project Ability, meaning that their knowledge and understanding have grown, thus developing their skills and confidence in this area.

Some examples of innovation projects:

- A coach working with targeted young people within their own school on one sport in the lead up to a competition which students then attended.
- District Project Ability taster day to feed into Project Ability competitions.
- Taster sessions within individual schools to feed into Project Ability competitions and local inclusive clubs.
- After-school inclusive club.
- Whole-school inclusive sports taster days.

Two inclusive competitions were incorporated in the Project Ability calendar this year, aimed at students with and without SEND. Friars Academy advised mainstream schools that were entering these competitions to target non-SEND students who had either never previously represented their school in a sporting competition or those who were considered to be 'low ability' in physical education.

WHAT WAS THE IMPACT?

- A rise in the number of schools signed up to work with Project Ability from 19 in 2012-2013 to 35 in 2013-2014. Every district now has at least one primary and secondary school signed up.
- The number of schools engaged in Project Ability competitions has increased directly as a result of the innovation projects and the incorporation of inclusive competitions in the Project Ability competition calendar.
- Due to the inclusive competitions (archery and sitting volleyball) in our calendar we have had five new mainstream schools participating in Project Ability competitions and sign up to work with us. They have been involved in bespoke district innovation projects, two of which have gone on to be included in Project Ability competitions for the first time.
- 38 young people have taken part in their first Project Ability competition, with a further 30 of these representing their school for the first time.

SUCCESS FACTORS

- Collaborative work with SGOs and the County Sports Partnership.
- Making the work of Project Ability bespoke to districts/individual schools in order to engage them and form a positive working relationship.
- Individual meetings with schools.
- Project Ability on the agenda at all SGO meetings to promote and improve knowledge and understanding.

TOP TIPS

- Lend schools equipment to try new sports and activities.
- Provide training sessions for staff on new activities.
- Link schools up for competitions where they do not have enough numbers to attend.
- Work with your Project Ability school who can provide advice and support.
- Hold taster sessions in schools prior to competitions.

RESOURCE LINKS

- Sainsbury's School Games inclusive competition formats.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

'Project Ability has had such a positive impact on the individual students involved that we have now established a weekly club to continue to offer the varied opportunities. It has enabled us to celebrate the achievements of students that might otherwise not get the opportunity to compete in sports events. The effect on self-esteem has been profound for these individuals representing their school, district and receiving awards in assemblies.'

Andrea Curtis, Headteacher, Nicholas Hawksmoor Primary School