#Breakthebias: A School-Wide Drive for Inclusive Sport

Overview:
After a number of children's health and wellbeing noticeably declined in lockdown, PE Coordinator Claudia Leicester used the slogan #Breakthebias to tailor a new, inclusive vision for the school.

She carried out a survey of pupils' views and opinions about inclusion in sport and physical activity, and canvassed the parents' opinions. She identified the areas to be tackled initially as girls' football, boys' dance and sport for children with a disability, and implemented an activity programme which addressed all three.

#Breakthebias

Objectives

- Inspire inclusion within all pupils and improve their health and wellbeing after COVID-19
- Deliver an activity programme that addresses the children and young people's (CYP) varied needs

Who was the target audience and how were they engaged?

Although the target was the full school, Claudia and her team were very specific in their targeting to ensure a fair and inclusive offer that matched the varied needs of CYP with SEND. The school ran a pupil survey which revealed frustrations at their limited choices at school and pathways into clubs and competitions. Parents also shared their desires for their children to be treated equally and be offered appropriate competition and external events. Other areas identified to be tackled included girls' football and boys in dance.

From there a vision was tailored for the whole school to be more inclusive in sport and PE.

Why was the activity unique?

The programme's breadth and variety was exceptional. Examples of activity included; tailored Table Cricket coaching sessions with Sussex Cricket steered to SEND CYP, a football festival for KS1 girls, and dance taster sessions from a local dance group for boys at the school.

Claudia also worked with other local schools to widen the promotion of SEND inclusion in dance. This led to a Jubilee performance with another local school. One final example is Brighton & Hove FC providing tailored sessions for SEND children.

The sheer amount of tailored opportunities available for CYP at St Margaret's is what makes #Breakthebias stand out.

What was the impact felt in schools and by CYP?

The impact is evidenced by the engagement levels of CYP.

For SEND pupils there was a steep increase in engagement in physical activity.

One #LetGirlsPlay event saw 90% of the girls across the whole school take part, and girls-only lunchtime football participation has increased.

The programme has resulted in a more inclusive approach to PE from all perspectives. Parents of pupils from the special support centre were "incredibly grateful" of the opportunities that were being made available to their children, and the project has brought the school community together.

Why is this an example of School Games best practice?

Claudia and the School Games turned the #Breakthebias vision into a reality for the school. This in part is due to the amount of relevant partners they worked with. This collaborative approach meant a high-engagement rate from their target audience as well as the opportunity for future partner activity, given the close links the school has now forged.

Also by surveying the CYP, Claudia and her team were able to identify the exact areas they needed to make more inclusive. By taking this step they were able to create a fully engaging, tailored positive experience for their target CYP.

For more information please contact the entrant on claudia.leicester@stmagsifield.co.uk