Batley's 'Team Samoa' Tour with Perry

Batley Parish CofE Junior Infant School, West Yorkshire, utilised the B2022 Commonwealth Games to inspire long-term educational and cultural learnings in their pupils. Together with their local SGO, they developed and embraced a B2022 initiative throughout the summer term of 2021/22 which placed Perry (the B2022 mascot) and the nation of Samoa, at the forefront of their school, to help encourage the children who were least engaged to participate in both lessons and sport.

To drive increased pupil interest, the school adopted their assigned B2022 country of Samoa and became known as 'Team Samoa' for the whole term. As a school-wide campaign to promote and engage in the Commonwealth Games, students learnt about Samoan culture, religion, sport, history, geography, cuisine, and dance. Children who had historically struggled with homework were involved in research relating to Samoa and produced amazing facts, figures and pictures, and would then reflect on the work they had done.

Batley's 'Team Samoa' Tour With Perry

Objectives

- Utilise the B2022 Commonwealth Games to inspire physical activity and exercise, as well as educational and cultural learning elements.

Who was the target audience and how were they engaged?

Initially the school's pupils but this rapidly spread to the whole community. The Perry mascot and Samoan flag played a central role in school life throughout the summer term and was used to inspire physical activity, and curriculum and outdoor learning. Children used Perry in the classroom, PE lessons, and outside of school in local communities to keep motivation and engagement high, and pupils embraced the spirit of taking Perry and flag 'on tour'!

The school's Young Sports Leaders planned scaled Commonwealth Games sports for students, staff, and parents to take part in with support from local community clubs, establishments and organisations who supported with delivering the activities. Team Samoa took part in a host of local events against other B2022 countries.

Why was the activity unique?

The local area community were actively engaged in the project, which involved support from parents, local community and sports clubs, and other organisations (including the police, ambulance service, mosques, churches, brownies, etc.). Hundreds were involved overall.

Everyone from pupils, staff members, SLT, governors, parents, school visitors and individuals from the local community took part in the B2022 sport Activity Stations, which were in part, designed and developed by but solely delivered by the school's young Sports Leaders.

What was the impact felt in schools and by CYP?

Every child was engaged in some aspect of the programme, be it from a sporting and / or educational perspective. A Twitter account (@PEBatleyParish) was created to capture the impact. The interest the initiative generated was phenomenal, and Team Samoa and Perry's influence within the community and on pupils surpassed expectations, with pupils and parents alike requesting Perry's support for an evening or weekend to do an activity with them.

Throughout the course of the programme, school staff noted that nothing had previously held pupil attention as this initiative had over the course of the term, and that Perry helped pupils to learn and stay on task in lessons.

Why is this an example of School Games best practice?

Young Sports leaders were at the forefront from a physical and sporting perspective to provide inspiration and support to their fellow students, and the school fully embraced the concept of Team Samoa to create a sense of teamwork in pupils, and even hosted Samoan breakfast clubs. At the end of the term, the Year 6 students performed the Siva Tau (Samoan Haka) to parents and the local community at their Commonwealth Games Sports Festival.

There was absolutely no doubting who Perry was, where Samoa is, or what the B2022 Commonwealth Games were in this part of the country.

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