

## Increasing engagement in school games

Paul Wickens

### WHICH AREA OF THE SGO TASK LIST DOES THIS IMPACT?

1	Increasing engagement in School Games
2	Developing competitive opportunities
3	Increasing and sustaining participation
4	Workforce – Broadening the range of participation opportunities

### ABOUT PAUL

Mid Wiltshire SGO Paul Wickens works four days per week as an SGO plus one day per week for his host secondary school. Paul works across 90 schools, but has support to increase competitive opportunities by local SSCos in all but one secondary school. Mid Wiltshire is rural and the cluster Calne is within is a deprived market town in Wiltshire.

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### WHY

- There was a high turnover of post holders for the SGO post.
- One cluster in the SGO area was not engaged with the School Games. This cluster was based around the old sports college, which was in special measures. The SSCo post within the school was no longer a high priority and activity levels had declined.
- Previous SGOs had not been able to engage with schools within this cluster.



### ACTION

- The SGO's first task was to understand why the schools were not engaged. This was due to a decline in opportunities offered by the host school and loss of trust between the schools.
- The SGO decided to host a competition that he thought would be well received – a football tournament.
- In order to promote the competition he hand delivered entries to each school so that he could formerly introduce himself to the school and to avoid any emails being ignored.
- The SGO secured the use of the local football foundation facility for free.
- The SGO wanted to ensure this competition was as high quality as possible. The participants' motivations, competence and confidence levels were all considered when planning. Leaders were all appropriately trained, the environment was safe and created opportunities to learn, and the facility was new and appropriate for the level of competition.
- Eight teams entered into the competition. Lots of parents came to watch. This was the first time the SGO had met some of the staff from the school.
- The competition was a huge success. The children enjoyed the competition. The competition level was appropriate to the children's competence and confidence levels. The event ran smoothly, fairly and on time.
- At the end, the schools started to ask: "What next?"
- The SGO planned a meeting for the eight primary schools and together they designed a calendar of events for the rest of the year for their cluster.



## IMPACT

- Calendar of events for the remainder of the academic year and this has extended to non-traditional sports too.
- 100% of the cluster schools are now actively engaged with the School Games and with the SGO.
- The schools are identifying different children to take part in different levels of competition.
- The schools were successful with School Games Mark applications.
- The host secondary school has started to get back involved.
- A new link has been made with the private all girls school. This school are now offering their facilities for free, to host events.



**Ben thoroughly enjoyed himself at the kurling event yesterday. He loved the whole day and to top it all off, he was so delighted that he won! This is the first sporting event that he has ever won or come remotely close to winning, so it's just fantastic for his self-esteem."** Parent



## NEXT

- Increase the number of events for the cluster so that all children will have access to some form of competitive opportunity.
- Work with the host secondary school to see if they can develop an SSGo post for this cluster via some form of 'buy in' from their feeder primary schools.



**My PE Coordinator enjoyed the meeting and has certainly come into school with enthusiasm about the possibility of entering into some competitions."** Head Teacher after first meeting



## TIPS

- Make sure you put your face to your name. Don't hide behind an email.
- Build relationships with your schools.
- Ensure your first event is something you can do really well. Stick to something you know you can organise easily and that it will run smoothly.
- Ensure that you develop a level of trust with your schools. They want to ensure an event will be run well.
- Schools vote with their feet! If the events are good then they will keep returning to future events.
- Don't be afraid to ask for 'stuff' for free or at a discounted rate. Local authority facilities/private clubs/private schools/sports clubs/county associations etc. All should be contacted and will cooperate if local children will benefit.



**"What can we do next?"** Y6 child after the first event