

High quality competition environments

Empowering girls... BUCKS GIRLS CAN

Rachel Hutchinson

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 RACHEL

Alfriston SGO Rachel Hutchinson works three days per week as an SGO and covers Inclusion Lead School and SSP work on her fourth day. Rachel works alone across 39 schools in the South Bucks area. There are pockets of deprivation, but generally the rural area is affluent.

Rachel Hutchinson, Alfriston SGO
rachel.hutchinson@alfristonschool.com



WHY

- The SGO is based in an all-girls special school. The SGO started to recognise girls within the school that weren't really engaged or motivated by sport or physical activity, but took part in PE because they were told to.
- The SGO is so passionate about ALL young people getting more active, therefore wanted to create something that would engage, motivate and excite these girls about being more active.

other and the SGO, but also got them working together as a team.

- At the team building session it became apparent that the girls had differing levels of communication and some girls did all of the talking. The SGO decided to then split the girls into two focus groups to allow for all of the girls to fairly have their say.
- Within the focus group sessions, the SGO worked closely with the girls to find out what motivated them, what their likes and dislikes were, how confident and competent they felt, etc. The SGO asked the girls to help her plan an exciting day for other girls 'just like them'.
- The girls decided to host a 'Girls in Sport' day, which they branded as 'BUCKS GIRLS CAN'.
- One girl designed a logo for the day. Others helped with ideas of activities, what type of coaches and leaders they wanted at the day, etc.
- The SGO took all of the ideas and planned five activities for the day from the list of 40 suggestions. The SGO invited local clubs and coaches that she felt had the skills to work with the girls with SEND and had

pathways for the girls to attend further sessions if they enjoyed the activity.

- An all-female staff, leaders and coaches team was recruited as per the focus group's wishes. (The girls lacked confidence and informed the SGO that they would feel better if the coaches were all female.)
- Special schools and mainstream schools with SEND units were invited to bring a group of girls that do not normally take part in festivals, competitions or sport.
- Upon arrival to the event the girls were placed into mixed groups, so that the event encouraged more social interaction with new girls. The focus group feedback was that the girls like to make new friends. Each group was given a group name. The names of the groups were all famous female athletes.
- Activities at the event included football, zumba, gym fitness sessions, cheerleading and tag rugby. The girls rotated around each activity.
- Each coach or leader provided the girls with further information on how they could do the activity again outside of school. Leaflets were provided for the girls to take home.



ACTION

- The SGO set up a focus group of girls aged 14 years and above from across two special schools. Staff within the schools helped to identify the girls that were within the target group.
- Before the SGO started to utilise the focus group for its main purpose (consultation), she decided to do some team building and confidence building activities with the girls. This helped the girls to feel more confident with each

SCHOOL GAMES



IMPACT

- 95 girls attended the event. 44 of them came from a special school and 39 of them came from a black or ethnic minority background.
- One girl with Down's syndrome who normally avoids PE loved the gym session and is now attending her local gym through some support and conversations between the school and the gym provider.
- Another girl kept calling the event 'BUCKS GIRLS CAN'T', but by the end of the day she had definitely changed her mind and called it 'BUCKS GIRLS CAN'.
- The mixed group sessions at the event encouraged the girls from the mainstream schools to step up and support the girls from the special schools. These girls don't normally enjoy being physical active, but enjoyed the day and loved having a leader role so the SGO is now encouraging these girls to go on to train to be sports leaders.
- The cheerleading instructor runs a Para Cheer (inclusive cheerleading club). She has informed the SGO that there are now at least three girls attending her club regularly outside of school since the event.
- Girls that really hated football before the event really enjoyed it at the event. The session was so fun and the girls felt confident and competent in the session with other girls at their ability level.



NEXT

- To train mainstream female leaders to run the different activities.
- Offer the event to younger children – possibly Key Stage 2 – as it has become noticeable that girls are dropping out of sports at this young age.



TIPS

- Consultation is key – having some sort of focus group or student voice. Listen to what your young people want. Allow them to help design the activities and the logo. This allows them to take ownership of the project or event.
- Make everything FUN!
- Ensure that the event is really well organised. Allow plenty of time to book venues, the right coaches and ensure the recruitment of participants isn't left too late that schools don't have enough time to invite the right target audience.

