

# High Quality School / Club Links

## Durham Gilesgate School Sport Partnership Engaging Primary School Talent

### Why this project?

Through ongoing monitoring of our Multi-skill programme and gifted and talented strategy we discovered we had high levels of young people, especially in primary schools, who were talented in PE and school sport but did not attend community clubs or sporting activities outside of school. This trend was common across all schools in the partnership.

The SSCo team talked to a range of young people in PE lessons to find out why this was. They found that:

- pupils were unaware of community clubs in the district
- they liked PE but lacked confidence in their own skills and abilities and many felt that they wouldn't be as good as others attending clubs.

### Aims

We wanted to provide Year 5 and 6 talented pupils with a Multi-skill Academy programme which develops fundamental skills and allows them to regularly experience community sports clubs, undertake a JAE programme and develop greater

### Action

We first consulted with gifted and talented young people in schools to discover the reasons for their lack of community participation and the type of activities they would like to participate in. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 across the partnership were then nominated by their schools and letters were sent out to young people telling them about the programme.

The school sport partnership worked closely with the University of Durham and Durham Sporting Club (alliance of seven district sports clubs, sports college, school sport partnership and Local Authority) to submit an Active England bid to develop our proposed programme as

confidence and self-esteem.

We also wanted to provide Step into Sport coaches and young leaders with an opportunity to develop their coaching and mentoring skills and provide access to a range of CPD opportunities.

part of a wider development programme. Coaching staff were then recruited from the University of Durham, with Step into Sport students chosen to act as student mentors. Students were offered a programme of CPD which included sports coach UK (scUK) Child Protection and Welfare and the scUK Multi-skill courses.

Due to the number of young people nominated, two sessions per month with two groups of 60 young people were delivered. The after-school Multi-skill sessions included skill improvement activities, junior sport education and a club session followed by a nutritious meal. Minibus transport was offered to those who needed transport from school and then home after the sessions.

To expand on this success, two Multi-skill Academy School camps, one during the Spring term and one during the Summer term, were established providing new sporting experiences for pupils.



“The Multi-skill Academy programme has enabled young people to successfully join and regularly attend Junior Sports Club in the City of Durham. Through enjoyment, the young people are now telling their friends, brothers and sisters about the clubs which is increasing membership all the time... it is excellent to see the enthusiasm and great behaviour displayed by such a group of young people and we are really pleased to see many now attending our Junior Club sessions.”

**DR PETER WARBURTON,  
UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM**

## Impact

Having discussed pupil achievement and feedback with teachers, many indicated that the young people's confidence had grown, along with the development of leadership and communication skills. Pupils said they *“Really enjoyed the sessions, especially tea!”* and described how the coaches were *“great and have helped me learn new skills”*. Some pupils with ADHD have exhibited more focused and improved behaviour as a result of participating in the programme.

Following involvement in the programme, 35 young people have now joined community sports clubs. There are also now five pupils involved with county squads and development squads.

We now have regular communication with parents regarding their children's development, further sporting opportunities and entry to NGB pathways along with a regular

team of 10 university and sixth form students who have worked throughout the year on the programme. They have achieved a range of qualifications ranging from Level 1 / Level 2 coaching qualifications to a First Aid award.

Our partnership PESSCL data has also shown improvement in relation to school / club links with more young people aware of local sporting opportunities within the district.

## Why it worked

This programme worked because it involved ongoing regular work with a group of young people and not a one-off event. The sessions enabled friendships to develop and successful relationships to be built between young people and coaches.

All partner organisations had an input into the planning and

organisation of the programme to ensure all outcomes were achieved.

Headteachers and their school staff were supportive of their children attending the Academy and regularly encouraged and discussed pupils' development with them. All messages were reinforced back in school.

## Sustainability and Development

The Multi-skill Academy is now a mainstream annual programme with gifted and talented provision extending across all schools within the partnership.

An ongoing coach and volunteer recruitment programme is in place within our Sixth Form Colleges and the University of Durham. We will be working with some of the same coaches this coming year.