

Case Study (2014/15)

Gateshead School Sport Partnership



School –Club Links

Fellside Community Primary School

Julia Knox

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO ACHIEVE?

The aim was to further develop existing hockey provision for pupils currently attending Fellside as well as those leaving to continue to provide opportunities to play. I wanted to offer provision that would hopefully bridge a gap between primary and secondary provision as well as local clubs. Numbers playing hockey in after school provision have always remained high, however it was identified that very few children continued in secondary school. Another aim was to establish links with another local/cluster primary school and help provide a useful tool for transition. Links between Fellside and Front Street are continuing to strengthen and pupils from year 5 and 6 initially were invited to join this new club every Friday evening on the astro turf at Whickham School.

Another aim was to provide further opportunities for children to play at a level other than intra school competition as well as signpost to Gateshead Hockey Club provision should they wish to progress further.

WHAT ACTIONS WERE TAKEN?

Using Sports Premium funding, I undertook England Hockey Level One as well as Proud to Coach allowing me to coach children up to 12 year old inclusive.

Supplementing an already well-established extra-curricular provision in Fellside, I wanted to find a way of increasing and further developing the provision of hockey in and out of school. Having spoken to Karen Sutherland from Front Street Primary School and Graham Bell from Gateshead Hockey Club, I trialled the provision of offering hockey sessions during a few weeks of last year's summer holidays with existing Fellside and Front Street Year 4,5 and 6 pupils. Once establishing an interest from children I decided to continue to offer an extra after school session where children from both schools could attend as well as ex pupils who had progressed through to Whickham School and Emmanuel College. I talked to staff from Whickham School and discovered a 'gap' on a Friday evening from 5.00-6.30pm where facilities were not used as frequently. The session runs every Friday except during December / January and costs £1 per session which helps facilitate new equipment (we recently purchased two goalkeeping sets).

The club was initially supported with staff from Front Street while introducing the children to the sport as well as other pupils and staff. A few Year 12 and 13 leaders from Whickham School have committed a lot of time to our hockey provision since last summer. Many parents regularly stay to help out and join in occasionally. Gateshead Hockey Club continue to play a huge role in our delivery on both a Monday and Friday where Graham and Denis regularly help to coach and umpire. They have also provided coaches to assist with sessions during holiday periods including the first team goalkeeper who recently trained three of our children in this exciting and challenging role.

Since starting last summer, the session has gradually been introduced to younger children, mainly siblings of those already playing. Regularly, parents help support the club. Leaders from Whickham School have made a huge difference to the operation of the club due to reliability and enthusiasm.

WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS THIS MADE?

WHAT WAS THE IMPACT?

Attendance figures since starting the Friday session last September are attached. Many children have 100% attendance and are very committed. Attendance during holiday periods is relatively high. New friendships have been established not only across children from different schools but also across supporting adults. Older children are keen to help younger/newer members and often demonstrate skills during sessions. Opportunities are provided to help deliver warm up to improve confidence. Signposting has been effective and some children attend additional sessions with Gateshead Hockey Club on a Tuesday evening. Recently we have introduced a basic programme to measure fitness alongside learning skills. Many children have had the opportunity to play for Gateshead Hockey Club on a Sunday in their league fixtures. Many Fellside pupils also attend after school provision on a Monday which has proven to be a big advantage during competitions this year. Our Y5/6 school team won the Regional Finals as part of the Sainsbury Level 2 School Games.

Following this success, members of the team have become role models to other pupils in school who are keen to try the sport. Our success even managed to get a mention in the local press (evidence attached).

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HOW HAS THIS BENEFITED PUPILS?

I am currently helping children in this session to measure their own fitness including stamina where they are timed as part of the warm up. Children are also set basic challenges to achieve where they can collect points and compared at different intervals throughout the year. Many children have already displayed higher levels in confidence when playing, new skills are learnt when they are not always playing with their peers and relying on friends. Children have made friends with others across schools which they will hopefully build upon when transitioning to secondary schools.

One of our Year 6 boys has been selected to play for North East England U13s in National Championships in June. His commitment to training twice a week as well as enthusiasm and skills displayed in recent competitions for both Fellside and Gateshead Hockey have warranted this selection and opportunity. He has played hockey in school since Year 4.

Another Year 8 boy who originally started when his sister in Year 5 at Front Street joined has also been chosen to play for the North East U13s team. His commitment has allowed his skills to develop and improve to a level where his selection was an easy decision to make. He has also recently started attending extra sessions with Gateshead Hockey to develop further.

Both boys, fully supported by schools, friends and family, are currently undergoing extensive training to prepare them for the national championships. They are currently acting as role models and will hopefully encourage others to want to develop and hopefully have similar opportunities in the future.

WHY DID IT WORK?

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

Existing effective partnerships and links to Whickham School and Gateshead Hockey Club. We have very supportive parents and staff as well as high levels of interest from pupils. We have also been very fortunate to have interest from some very keen, reliable and able leaders from Whickham School who have established fantastic working relationships with all linked to our school.

These leaders have played a key role in the success of many sports in Fellside but in this last year have been very committed to help hockey develop and continue to go forward.

Many parents have found themselves helping out and joining in with the sessions where now I host sessions where the whole family can have a try at this sport. With the continued support I currently have younger siblings taking part in a smaller, basic version of the game while older children play at a higher intensity.

With the continued support over the last year, the provision of this new hockey session has reached a level where it can be sustained in the future. Interest is high among younger children across both Fellside and Front Street Primary Schools due to the high profile this club and successes individuals have achieved. Such is the strength of the links we have developed with partner schools that we are now delivering other shared extra-curricular activities, including athletics trials. Capitalising on the success of the partnership with Gateshead Hockey Club this year, they have committed to mutual support next season when we will enter teams at both U10 and U13 league competitions.

TOP TIPS

Provide something which is reliable and can be sustained. My numbers remain high and interest exists because I offer this session almost every week of the year. I left school wanting to provide opportunities for children to take part in sport, especially in hockey – a sport which I played only in secondary and not primary school. Because I have the commitment and support I am quite happy to continue to give up my free time to provide the opportunities.

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HEAD TEACHER COMMENT

“The extra-curricular provision in hockey continues to go from strength to strength at Fellside. This year, Julia Knox (who runs and coaches the hockey club) has really sought to expand its horizons, branching out to involve partners from Gateshead Hockey Club, Young Sports Leaders from Whickham School and Front Street Primary.

As well as offering the usual training session on Monday afternoons, this year’s extra-curricular provision included additional Friday sessions which would be opened to Year 7 pupils from Whickham School (many of whom – but not all – at ex-Fellside pupils) and pupils from Front Street Primary (from where Miss Knox now also enjoys the support of parent helpers).

Attendance at the club is indisputably successful with up to 40 regular attenders whose motivation and commitment to their sport is undeniable. In addition to their commitment to term-time sessions, club members are now beginning to attend sessions laid on by Miss Knox during school holidays, such is their enthusiasm for their sport.

The profile of sport has always been high at Fellside but the ‘buzz’ in school from the successes of the hockey team (which we seek to share in whole school assemblies) has been hugely evident this year. Our players are not only ambassadors for the sport of hockey, but they are admirable role models for our school and for the younger children who attend Fellside. Those who attend the club are paving the way for what is sure to be a long-standing legacy for the continued excellence in the sport and our pupils’ commitment to it. Furthermore, through the hockey club, children have seen that their aspirations to excel in sport in a wider arena can be realised after a member of the team was selected to represent the North East of England in the National Championships.

The club has contributed significantly to the following priorities that were identified for sport and PE at Fellside:

- *To raise the profile of PE and sport both internally and externally*
- *To improve community links in sport*
- *To increase the contribution of physical activity and sport in pupils’ overall achievement*

Going forward, Miss Knox continues to be highly ambitious for the club, hoping to seek further partners and perhaps sponsors to support its development. I wholeheartedly commend her application for the Gateshead School Sport Innovation Awards. Julia is truly passionate about the sport and seeks to nurture the skills and talents of children who both excel and simply want to take part in equal measure”

Kerrie Hood (Head Teacher)

PE CO-ORDINATOR COMMENT

“Having an extra session on a Friday for both Fellside and Front Street has been a very effective partnership and tool to enhance extra-curricular provision. Allowing Year 7 pupils to attend has enabled children to continue their interest and given them the chance to achieve their full potential. This has been a very popular and ever progressing part of our extra-curricular programme.”

Steven Connelly (PE Co-ordinator)