



Learning through sharing

Case studies written by schools for schools

Name:	Beacon Community College
Title:	Opportunities for young sports-people with talent and aspiration and their impact on our partners and community
Context:	Mixed, 11–19 comprehensive



“ At Beacon, we wish to ensure that all students feel valued and that they aspire to achieve their ‘Personal Best... As a Sports College we are established at the heart of the community, our Gifted and Talented (G & T) programme has helped us to strengthen our community links... Through collaboration we have been able to develop a G & T programme that spans Key Stages 2-5 and it is this partnership working that is evidenced by this case study. ”

Headteacher, Beacon Community College

encouraging
 action leadership
 achievement
 innovation
 development

School context

Rural, mixed, 11–19 comprehensive

76 or our 1770 pupils are entitled to free school meals

24 students are statemented

Last year we had 47% 5 A*–C GCSEs

Target group: initially students in KS 4 from across the partnership according to their ability in specific team games.

Later extended to students in KS 5 at Beacon and finally involved students from local primary schools

Why this project?

The rationale for the development and the identification of need were:

- We felt there was a need to raise standards in PE at Beacon. Also, we wanted to raise the aspirations of our talented young sports people as it was felt that this would increase other students' aspirations and attainment.

- G & T was seen as a vehicle that could help raise achievement in all Key Stages. Further, it was seen as a common theme which could provide meaningful links between subject areas across the college. It was also felt that a good G & T programme could contribute to raising our Sports College profile within the local community.
- We had recognised that the poor transport infrastructure in our rural catchment area meant a lack of provision for more able athletes.

The starting point

We held a meeting for local Heads of PE and it became clear that staff were keen to improve the performance of their school teams. As a result, we decided to offer the programme to all students who were in school teams for rugby, hockey, netball and football.

Aims

We wanted to achieve the following:

- Improve and extend provision for G & T students.
- Raise all students' levels of aspiration and attainment in sport and in academic work.
- Improve student recruitment and retention.
- Improve our links with partnership schools.

Action

We did the following:

- Developed workshops and a 'Multi-skill Academy' for G & T students in KS3.
- Initiated a 'Talented Athlete Programme' (TAP) for elite performers in KS4. This is a programme, delivered by professional sports scientists from the University of Brighton Sports Science Department, which is designed to support young elite athletes and includes sport-specific education on topics such as nutrition, psychology, physiology and fitness

testing. The students are also mentored by sports science undergraduate students from the university throughout their involvement on the programme.

- Created 'Sporting Academies' in football, rugby and golf for elite athletes who want to continue their KS5 education at Beacon. They spend five hours per week studying personal fitness, sport psychology, specific game development, coaching and leadership awards (which are UCAS point accredited) and City and Guild Progression awards. In addition, we timetabled KS5 students to access varied sporting opportunities one afternoon per week.
- This good practice in PE was used to initiate reflection and whole-school debate on G & T provision in other subject areas. A strategic framework for the development of G & T work by the SMT and governors was presented by the Director of Specialism.
- Our Advanced Skills Teacher (science) was appointed as the G & T co-ordinator for the whole-school.

- Our LEA advisor ran CPD on G & T for staff at Beacon, including SMT.
- We instigated a primary school talent identification process and an eight-week long 'Multi-Skill Programme' for G & T primary students.
- We extended the TAP to G & T students in KS4 and 5 from all the partner schools: Beacon, Chailey, Uplands, Uckfield and Heathfield Community Colleges (HUUB). In addition, we began to offer training and support to the teachers/tutors at these schools, both internally and in conjunction with the YST through the Junior Athlete Education (JAE) programme.
- Finally, we pioneered increased collaboration between several local post-16 institutions through our G & T work across the HUUB group and through regular meetings with Heads of PE across the partnership. More recently, we have been considering running courses at one college which would then be accessible by students at the others, particularly at our partner schools in the HUUB group.

“PE staff reported that students’ behaviour had greatly improved when they came back to school after a TAP session.”

Results

These are the main achievements and impacts:

- The new approach to G & T students has led to a change in whole-school policy, which in turn, has led to whole-school improvements. The programme has evolved and changed dramatically since 1997 as a result of the feedback and results we have had.
- We have received very positive feedback from interviews and focus groups held with students, parents, lecturers on the programme, Heads of PE and other staff across the partnership. For example, PE staff reported that students’ behaviour had greatly improved when they came back to school after a TAP session. Four out of five stated that they had noticed a

“... marked improvement in the behaviour of the students that were on the TAP, in theory as well as practical GCSE, and for some students a change in the way they acted in all classes”.

- They also noted that the improved behaviour in some of the more difficult students had had a positive effect on their peers’ behaviour and therefore attainment, for instance in theory lessons. A further example comes from the mother who claimed the TAP programme had changed her son’s attitude to school, his behaviour, his organisation and planning, and his motivation to succeed.
- By providing an opportunity for the G & T students in PE we have raised their levels of attainment academically as well as within their sport. This provision, in turn, has raised the athletic and academic aspirations of younger students in school.
- Flexible Individual Education Plans (IEPs) have enabled students to continue with their education while competing at a high level. For example, Katherine Stevens, now in Year 11, has over 12 weeks out of school per year in order to train and compete at national level in gymnastics. Setting coursework in advance and flexible dates for handing in homework have enabled her to continue at a high level in her GCSEs. Also, Felix Kelly, now in Year 12, who competes at an international level in Tae Kwon Do, puts his academic and sporting successes down to the extra flexibility provided by his teachers and the planning he has done through JAE workshops.

- The programme has had a positive impact on the behaviour of students involved as well as the behaviour of students who aspire to be on the programme in the future. For example, a group of 23 boys with previously poor behaviour records were given places on our ‘Social & Kinaesthetic Programme’ (SKIPS) for four lessons a week where they gained a wide variety of skills through participation in sport with great success.
- As part of our whole-school inclusion policy this work on G & T has raised the profile of the college in the community. As a result, we have experienced higher numbers of student applications and an improved retention rate, especially in the sixth form. 301 students are currently on sports-related courses, including 21 students joining us from other institutions at post-16. Numbers on the CSLA course have risen from six in 2001 to 35 in 2004.
- The football academy numbers have also increased from six in 2001 to 21 in 2004. The rugby academy numbers have remained consistently high with 19 in 2001 and 22 in 2004. Further, representative honours for students at the school have increased. In 2000, we had four students represent the county; whilst in 2004, we had nine at county level, four at regional and one at national level.
- In general, there is a heightened sense of achievement within the school and this is reflected through the attainment of the students and the celebratory events held, such as the prestigious annual ‘Sports Award Dinner’.

challenges

Further challenges

We would now like to achieve the following:

- A fully differentiated curriculum including fully integrated and flexible IEPs.
- G & T policies to be better incorporated into the whole-school development plan.
- Increased ownership of the G & T programmes by the various partner schools involved.
- Improved programming and opportunities for girls, for example, the provision of sports academies for females.
- An improved transport network between institutions in this rural area.
- On-going evaluation to ensure that the programme is meeting both individuals' needs and whole-school targets.

Sharing and celebrating success

We have promoted and disseminated this good practice with others in the following ways:

- Development of a 'Performance Sports Development Plan' that links into the 'Sports College and Whole-School Improvement Plan'.
- Promotion, by the SMT and governors, of G & T provision and its achievements across the school.
- Use of Sports College and Training School funding to help departments with self-evaluation, monitoring, training and opportunities to extend their provision.

- Workshops run at conferences and other events such as the Sports College conference, the AAA Regional Conference, the University of Brighton QTS Conference, Partnership Sports College meetings, and Partnership Cluster Secondary meetings.
- Production of promotional videos and DVDs. Footage from the school video showing the successes of our work on G & T will be used to develop a further video aimed at teachers, head teachers, school governors, community providers, and potential sponsors, parents and students.

Maintaining progress

Means by which we hope to ensure sustainability and development of improved standards are outlined below:

- Links between our 'Performance Sports Development Plan' and the 'Sports College and Whole-School Development Plan'. The former also outlines the intended action and funding needed to sustain the development of opportunities for G & T students.
- The college is fully committed to embedding provision for G & T within the whole school and has now employed a G & T co-ordinator to help plan its strategic development.
- The monitoring and evaluation of this developmental work will be undertaken by the DoS, the SMT, colleagues in the Higher Education Institutions we work with, as well as the G & T Advisor from the LEA.

success