



SET FOR
SUCCESS

Set for Success Case Study: Bluecoat Beechdale Academy

Second year of taking part in Set for Success

Empowering young people and increasing their ambitions.

July 2022

Introduction

Bluecoat Beechdale Academy (BBA) is a mixed co-educational secondary school for 900 pupils aged 11 to 16 in Nottingham. The school is located in one of the most deprived areas of the UK, and has high proportions of young people who qualify for Free School Meals and come from ethnically diverse communities.



*IMD Decile (Index of Multiple Deprivation); measured on a scale of 1 (most deprived) to 10 (least deprived)

**IDACI Decile (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index); measured on a scale of 1 (most deprived) to 10 (least deprived)

In 2020, BBA joined Set for Success, a two-year youth leadership initiative that aims to provide young people from disadvantaged backgrounds with the opportunity to develop valuable life and leadership skills through mentoring sessions delivered by inspirational athletes. Set for Success is funded by the Wimbledon Foundation and delivered by the Youth Sport Trust (YST). As this is the second year that BBA has been involved with Set for Success, the following case study is an accumulation of learning which has evolved over the span of the two years of taking part in the programme.

Background

The Enrichment Manager at BBA highlighted that Set for Success offered a valuable opportunity for a group of young people to develop their independence, personal skills and confidence. The programme would allow them to do something they would enjoy and give them an opportunity to do something new that they had never done before.

Activities

Recruitment

BBA recruited 15 young people in year ten in 2020 to be part of Set for Success. Covid-19 led to delays to delivery at the start, so the programme activities were extended into the 2021/22 academic year. In 2021, a second cohort of young people from year nine were recruited.

The school selected the year one cohort based on their attendance scores at school, however their low attendance at school made participation in the programme also challenging. For the second year, the school chose to focus on young people who demonstrated behavioural challenges during lessons. This cohort tended to lack motivation and enthusiasm at school but still attended school and therefore were able to, and willing to, participate in the programme.

Athlete Mentor sessions

At the time of writing this case study, the young people in both cohorts had taken part in five Athlete Mentor sessions. These were delivered by Tom Davis who competed and represented Great Britain in Judo winning British and Commonwealth titles. The Enrichment Manager highlighted that having an Athlete Mentor come into the school and work directly with the young people was hugely beneficial as this was an opportunity that the school would not normally have.

“Tom has been absolutely brilliant. The way he’s come across to the kids; he’s been honest. He’s come from a similar sort of background that these kids come from which has had a huge impact on a lot of them.”

ALAN BUTTERS, ENRICHMENT MANAGER, BLUECOAT BEECHDALE ACADEMY

The sessions were viewed positively by the pupils, and they look forward to them. It was good for the young people to have someone different to come in and talk to them. The sessions focused on developing employability skills, including leadership, teamwork, self-confidence and communication.

Teacher sessions

Teacher sessions were delivered between the Athlete Mentor sessions to give young people the opportunity to reflect on the skills they were developing. As part of these sessions, the young people completed a survey about what they like, dislike and want to change about their local community. This kickstarted their work on planning the social action project together.

Social action project

As part of the programme, the young people will complete a social action project. At the time of writing this case study, this has not happened yet as the pupils are still at the early stages of planning and mapping out topics. However, they planned to continue with the project after the summer break.

Benefits

The key benefits to the young people are as follows.

Increased empowerment



At the start of the programme, the Enrichment Manager highlighted that the pupils struggled to see the impact they could have on their community. Set for Success has given these pupils a unique opportunity to get involved with a social action project; none of them have ever done a project like this before. When the young people were asked what the best thing about taking part in Set for Success has been so far, one responded:

“The fact that all of us as youth can change the community.”
YOUNG PERSON AT BLUECOAT BEECHDALE ACADEMY

This shows that the planning of the social action project has shifted their perception of not being able to contribute to society.

Improved attendance and engagement



The Enrichment Manager emphasised that the biggest success of the programme was the engagement from the pupils. Indeed, he highlighted two examples here. One girl in the first cohort had very low attendance, but the Athlete Mentor sessions with Tom, in particular, had a big impact on her:

“Her attendance went from 29% right up to above 60% before she left. Her whole attitude around school changed and she turned up to every exam which shocked everybody. I think that was solely down to the stuff that she did with Tom.”

ALAN BUTTERS, ENRICHMENT MANAGER, BLUECOAT BEECHDALE ACADEMY

Before the programme, the girl did not have any plans for after school. Now, she is going to college. Instead of drifting away after school as was predicted for her, she was more motivated, and seeing her “turn around” was rewarding to see and the Enrichment Manager emphasised, “I know it made a difference”.

The Enrichment Manager also said that the programme encouraged the pupils to engage in more physical activity. Indeed, girls that the school normally cannot engage in PE lessons took part in the Set for Success activities as it was like “hidden sport” and they did not “realise it was sport”.

Improved ambitions



For another pupil, a boy from the year one cohort, the sessions with Tom also made a big impact on his future path outside of school:

“He was worried about moving forward, he had nowhere to go, no apprenticeship. Me and Tom sat down with him and had a good chat with him. He has secured a college space now. I think if Tom didn’t have those meetings, kids would’ve just left after exams.”

ALAN BUTTERS, ENRICHMENT MANAGER, BLUECOAT BEECHDALE ACADEMY

Increased communication and teamwork skills



Set for Success has helped to build the confidence of the young people that took part. The Enrichment Manager said that the pupils come up regularly to him and ask when the next sessions are, showing that they look forward to them.

While the group of young people already knew each other before the programme, they have grown closer and have enjoyed spending time together. As a result of this increased teamwork, they were also able to talk more, and as a consequence they have improved their communication skills.

“I thought it was really nice that we could just all work together and be able to talk and have fun.”

YOUNG PERSON AT BLUECOAT BEECHDALE ACADEMY

Future

As part of the social action project, the Enrichment Manager is keen to give pupils the opportunity to step away from their school environment to support others and broaden their horizons.

Top Tips

- ✓ Carefully selected the young people to take part in the programme; for BBA, students who needed support with their motivation and engagement at school were selected.
- ✓ Plan at least one session outside of the school to get pupils out of their comfort zone; they will listen more and it exposes them to something different.

“I’d tell them [other young people] to take part because it’s a really fun experience and it gives them a lot more skills in life.”

YOUNG PERSON AT BLUECOAT BEECHDALE ACADEMY



Youth Sport Trust
SportPark
Loughborough University
3 Oakwood Drive
Loughborough
Leicestershire
LE11 3QF

01509 226600
research@youthsporttrust.org
www.youthsporttrust.org



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