

Isobel Wilcox

Girls Active Wellness Transformation Winner, Central Region



Isobel, 16, from Slated Row Special School in Milton Keynes, was once a nervous teenager who avoided sport of any kind. That is, until she attended a Girls Active camp in 2016. There she was introduced to a wide variety of sports, which led her to realise there was something out there for everyone – even her!

Her teachers describe the manner with which she approaches her schoolwork as ‘determined’, and upon returning from the camp, Isobel began to apply this same determination to her involvement with the Girls Active programme. She began by supporting the sessions led by the older girls, by drumming up involvement and handing out flyers in the playground. This marked the first real hurdle Isobel overcame through her involvement with sport – she had found something which she was passionate about and this enabled her to overcome her nervousness as she pursued an activity that really mattered to her.

This was only the beginning of Isobel’s transformation. Once she overcame her initial nerves, she was surprised to discover she was a natural leader, and now leads her lunchtime sports clubs. She is only too pleased to fill in for others, even if it means improvising the entire session! Being part of a team means everything to Isobel and she cares deeply about helping others. Showing people what she is capable of through sport helped her to combat her nerves and worries. Now, she enjoys diverse activities - from yoga and dance to athletics, Tae Kwon Do and basketball.

As the months have passed, Isobel has become incredibly mature and increasingly self-reliant. She acts on her own initiative and has increased her self-confidence. Nowadays Isobel can stand up and speak in assembly – she is a changed student. Every Friday she bounds into school in her Girls Active T shirt and hoody, proudly showing off her status as a leader and will pass students in the corridor saying, ‘see you at lunchtime’ and ‘don’t forget Girls Active today’. Isobel is determined to make sure that sport is a positive and enjoyable experience for the other girls, especially those in younger years, by offering sound advice and gentle persuasion. Isobel has a very positive attitude and is ready to try anything in her characteristically cheerful manner. Her enthusiasm is contagious.

Isobel was nominated in the Wellness Transformation category in the Girls Active Awards 2017. The Wellness Transformation award recognises a notable improvement in a student’s wellbeing from increased confidence and improved social skills, to a more positive body image and improved physical wellbeing. Isobel epitomises this and her teachers have seen a huge increase in her self-confidence since she became involved with lunchtime sport clubs.

‘Sport is important to me because it gets me out of my comfort zone and shows other people what I can do,’ says Isobel. ‘It doesn’t matter about your size or what you look like, it just matters that you enjoy yourself and have fun.’

‘After a nervous start, Isobel has become a natural leader,’ says Lesley Byrne, PE Teacher. ‘Through being involved in Girls Active, she has developed increased self-confidence and is now applying it in everyday situations. She loves being part of the team and wants all the younger students to be involved too.’

