



Ability vs Ability Paralympic Education Case Study

Study Name: Spen Valley

Quotes

"I feel that lack of awareness about issues faced by disabled athletes has been the major factor in hindering progress. The assemblies presented by Andy Atkinson in conjunction with the *abilityvsability* resource has really helped both staff and pupils to see exactly what is possible. Explanation of the ways that activities can be differentiated and made fully inclusive will, I believe, open many doors."

Shaun Fox – PDM

"The children learned that having a disability doesn't stop you from participating in sport and that disabled athletes can enjoy a career in the sport that they love."

Andy Atkinson - paralympic athlete

About the school

What is the context of the school?

- Spen Valley School Sport Partnership is now entering its fifth year. The partnership includes 5 secondary schools, 5 middle schools, 2 special schools, 13 primary and 11 first schools. The partnership is geographically compact and serves mainly semi-rural communities. There are pocketed areas of deprivation within some families of schools. Around 12% of pupils are from an ethnic minority background.

The challenge

What was the issue and how was this identified?

- To raise awareness of disability sport across all ages of both mainstream and disabled young people.
- Staff in the partner schools felt inadequate in addressing needs of pupils through a lack of knowledge in providing differentiated activities and disability sports.
- Lack of knowledge of exit routes and pathways for young disabled pupils.
- Poor understanding of Paralympic Movement and the issues faced by disabled athletes: as a result staff felt ill equipped to deliver aspects of curriculum addressing this and other barriers to participation.
- Above identified through consultation with the SSCo who has an inclusion role for the partnership. These then a focus of discussion when putting together a development plan for young disabled gifted and talented pupils.

Meeting the challenge

What we did

- Audit of current practice and curriculum support materials used across the partnership.
- Completion of disability awareness development plan to obtain funding from BPA.
- Used funding to buy in paralympic athlete to deliver assemblies in all partner schools to raise awareness of disability and introduce pupils to BPA website.
- Athlete spent time with senior management on how to use BPA resource (*abilityvsability*) across curriculum and to motivate staff into delivering lessons relating to disability issues.
- Some schools booked athlete to come back into schools for a day to offer practical have a go sessions in new age curling, boccia, wheelchair tennis, wheelchair rugby, wheelchair basketball, bean bag games and slalom activities for both wheelchair and non wheelchair users. Both disabled and non disabled students took part in these activities.



- The athlete shared information about his own website to promote exit routes for some students.
- The inclusion SSSCo worked with athlete to gain knowledge about *WhizKids*, which she then disseminated into the partnership and applied to them for funding.
- *WhizKids* funded some wheelchair mobility, road safety, orienteering and wheelchair sports sessions – which proved so popular that partnership funded further sessions to develop these activities.
- Application to obtain electric wheelchairs funded through *WhizKids*.
- This work has been tied into G&T programme to extend the sports offered, provide coaching, identify talent, track progress and support athletes on the player pathway.
- Celebrated achievement to raise awareness that young disabled pupils can be gifted and talented.

Impact

The difference this has made

- All young people in the partnership have attended assembly presentations.
- 350 young people have taken part in 'have a go' days.
- Staff now feel confident to deliver the *abilityvsability* resource across curriculum, enabling schools to meet outcomes for several subject areas, especially PSHE/Citizenship.
- School club links have been formed, providing exit routes into wheelchair sports.
- A new after school club has been set up using new wheelchairs for mobility training.
- Pupils focus on ability and not disability.
- There is a raised profile of disability sports and disabled athletes within the partnership.

Why it worked

- A dedicated and pro-active SSSCo for inclusion.
- Use of a Paralympic Athlete.
- Staff have supported programme and used resources.
- Senior management have got involved to help drive it forward.
- The partnership has funded aspects of the work to make it sustainable.