

ACTIVE SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER



October 2024



And we're back! Summer, if we can call it that, has been and gone and we are already half way through our first term of 2024/25 - how is that even possible? Over recent weeks, the Active Schools Team has been through, and continues to go through, a period of change, as we move back to SBC from Live Borders. Despite changes in structures and changes in management, the team is still very much focused on the delivery of a comprehensive Active Schools programme, providing more and higher quality opportunities for our young people to take part in sport and physical activity, and to develop pathways between schools and sports clubs in the local community.

This year, the team celebrates 20 years of Active Schools! For two decades, Active Schools has been dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of school-aged children across Scotland, fostering a culture of physical activity and healthy living. Keep an eye on our social media channels over the year, as we share the memories, reminisce about the good times, celebrate the successes, and shine a light on our wonderful volunteers who have made it all possible! As we look forward to the next 20 years, here we share this term's stories, centred around the SportScotland themes of **Role Models**, **Using Sport to Develop Skills** and **Delivering Diversity in Sport**.

Role Models

Introducing our **Young Ambassadors (YAs) for 2024/25!** Eight senior pupils make up our YA line up for 2024/25. The youngsters, from Duns, Earlston, Eyemouth and Peebles, have a key role to promote sport and motivate and inspire other young people in their schools to get involved in sport in their school, clubs and local communities. At the heart of the programme is the principle that their views, and those of other young people, are heard, valued and influence decision making, and that they are engaged in driving change. As role models and leaders for other young people, we hope this year's team are going to have a pivotal role within their school and communities! Watch this space!



Fit For Girls Ambassadors

The Fit for Girls (FFG) programme, developed in partnership between SportScotland and the Youth Sport Trust, aims to increase girls' engagement and enjoyment in PE, physical activity and sport. It seeks to enable girls to take part in ways that suits them best, as well as aiming to build positive relationships between adults and girls and between girls themselves. We are delighted to get on board with the programme this year, with 30 FFG Ambassadors across eight of our high schools taking part. We have loved getting to know the girls this term, understanding their experiences as a girl in sport and hearing what commitments they are going to take forward this year part of their role. The girls helped celebrate the recent Scottish Women and Girls in Sport Week 2024 and over the coming year, we look forward to them delivering extra-curricular girls-only opportunities and celebrating the achievements of those women and girls in school, the local community and on the world stage, who are acting as role models and inspiring our girls to be the best they can be! We are very excited for the year ahead and to see what a difference the team can make!

Borderers Inspire Future Generations

We certainly haven't been short of role models in the Borders over the last couple of months! The spectacle that was the summer Paralympics in Paris, saw Gordon's golden girl Samantha Kinghorn pick up one gold and two silver medals on the track, while Newcastleton's Stephen Clegg collected two gold medals in the pool! Shortly after, ex-Broomlands and Kelso High School pupil Oscar Onley put on a show for local crowds, finishing second overall in the 2024 Tour of Britain, as well as claiming the White Jacket for the Best Young Rider! Not only was it fantastic to have this event come through the Borders, but to see home grown talent speeding by too, made it extra special!



Not to be outdone, over in the west, we are in complete awe of Peebles High School teacher Miss Hadjitofi who, on 13 September, tackled a monumental 16km (10 mile!) open water swimming challenge from Elie to North Berwick harbour! Following a horrific speed boat accident while abroad in August 2017, Rachael was left with life threatening and life changing injuries. This challenge has raised a phenomenal £18k for charity 'Climbing Out', which works alongside people who have gone through life changing trauma. This charity works on people's mental health and develops them as a person throughout different programmes. An absolute true inspiration Rachael! How lucky we are to have such incredible role models in the place we call home!

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Using Sport to Develop Skills

Sport is a fantastic vehicle for transferring skills from one part of life to another, be it through participation, coaching, officiating, volunteering or other leadership roles. Active Schools provides a number of leadership opportunities, which allows the development of so many skills and behaviours which can then be used elsewhere. Term one is always a busy term, which sees the kicking off of many different leadership programmes in both primary and secondary schools.

Young Leader Academy

In August, our 18 new S5 Young Leader Academy pupils set off on their coaching journey. During their induction day, they completed a Mental Health workshop with by Susan Falconer, Live Borders Headstrong Coordinator, and a First Aid certificate, with local company First Aid Borders. Monday 21 October, saw the group complete their second day of training, achieving two more certificates in Disability Inclusion Training (Scottish Disability Sport) and Introduction to Coaching Children (SportScotland). As well as the four workshops, coaches will be put through a Level 1 (or equivalent) National Governing Body course for their chosen sport. Already the team have made a great start to the year, actively coaching in their schools and communities and we can't wait to see how they progress, now they have all these shiny new skills and qualifications!



College Partnership

Active Schools will continue its partnership with Borders College this year, helping sports students secure coaching placements within local primary schools. Students will deliver 4-6 week blocks of activity over a variety of age groups and sports. As well as school placements, students will also help at Active Schools events such as athletics, netball and basketball.

Community Sports Leadership

Our two Active Schools-led Sports Leaders courses have got off to a flying start in Earlston and Selkirk High Schools this term. Pupils have been working on their team building and communication skills, ahead of working with primary school groups this term. They will build on the key skills and behaviours required to be a successful leader. As the year goes on, pupils will delve in to the factors that contribute to a healthy lifestyle; they will plan, lead and evaluate their own festival; and they will deliver five hours of physical activity/sport in their local community.



Playground Leaders

We have been busily delivering our primary leadership programmes again this term to primary 6/7 pupils. These programmes give pupils the opportunity to learn about leadership, confidence, organisation, safety and making activity sessions fun. A total of 158 pupils from Kelso, Gala, Selkirk, Jedburgh and Eyemouth are currently delivering or are in the process of being trained, ready to start delivery this term!

Delivering Diversity in Sport

The team is delighted to be continuing with the *Secondary Netball League* this year! With six schools and 19 teams signed up across four leagues, we can't wait to see how this year's matches pan out! Good luck to Berwickshire, Earlston, Gala, Hawick, Jedburgh and Peebles who will be coming to a court near you soon!

Paralympic Festivals

Duns and Chirside Primary Schools were delighted to try their hand at a number of Paralympic sports this term! Tasters of boccia, goalball, seated volleyball, para table tennis and para athletics certainly helped extended the excitement of the recent Paris Games and gave pupils the opportunity to understand how everyone, regardless of ability, can be included and have fun in sport!

More fun was also to be had in Duns, as Greig Shortreed, Disability Development Officer, delivered an Inclusive Sportshall Athletics event in early October. Primary and high school pupils once again enjoyed trying out a variety of running, jumping and throwing activities!

Dates for the Diary

Smalls Schools Netball: Thursday 31 October

Area Netball Competitions: Tuesday 12 November - Friday 29 November

Borders Primary Netball Final: Thursday 5 December