

Learning for Sustainable Futures: Project Summary

Who was involved?

Megan Crawford (CDT teacher and Eco-Schools Coordinator), Rab Ure (Active Schools Coordinator) and all the students of the Basketball Club, in particular the club leaders, senior students Adrian, Phoebe and Jonathan.

The Learning Context

Liberton High School is on the outskirts of Edinburgh. Students within its catchment come from very different backgrounds and homes.

As a teacher I have observed that at Liberton, finding an inclusive community and somewhere they feel safe can be difficult for young people already dealing with the usual challenges of being a teenager.

Several years ago, Kwaku Adjei from Intercultural Youth Scotland founded an Anti-Racist Lunchtime Club which was well attended by students, but when he moved on, the club stopped running. Now, the Basketball Club seems to have replaced the Anti-Racist Club both in popularity and the sense of community it offers.

Clubs and Community Identity

The key theme of the project was to identify the ways in which sports clubs help students to build community and feel a sense of belonging.

When thinking about community and inclusion at Liberton, I was struck by how popular the Basketball Club was in comparison to all other clubs. It has at least 60 students who attend every week and their ages ranged from S1 all the way up to S6. Everyone was taking part and engaged, and there was an atmosphere of people being part of something. Students weren't afraid to ask others for help.

I interviewed the founding members of the club to learn more about how they have achieved this sense of community.

SECONDARY PHASE: Liberton HS



Liberton
HIGH SCHOOL
Where Everyone Matters

Learner Outcome Focus: Cooperation and Competition

While learning together, and in leadership situations, I can:

- *experience different roles and take responsibility in organising a physical event*
- *contribute to a supportive and inclusive environment*
- *demonstrate behaviour that contributes to fair play.*

HWB 3/4-23a

Curriculum for Excellence:

HWB 3/4-13a; HWB 3/4-14a;
HWB 3/4-24a

Related policy & initiatives:

UNCRC Article 2

SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities

HGIOS: Learner Voice

National Improvement

Framework: Outcome 6

Evidence and Impacts

Speaking with the leaders of the Basketball Club, it was incredible to hear them reflecting on the impact they had on other students and that fact that they have been role models.

They were amazed at the club's popularity and the range of year groups they had succeeded in attracting, showing that it is difficult to plan for such success, rather several factors combine to make a club so effective.

Without more extensive data gathering, it is difficult to pinpoint the recipe that has made the Basketball Club the unspoken successor of the Anti-Racist Club. It is clear, when there are weeks that the club doesn't run, that it is the highlight of many students' week and perhaps one of the places in school where they feel that they belong and can be themselves.

It seems that the club's development by students for students has been the reason for some of its success, with Adrian, Phoebe and Jonathan becoming positive role models to many fellow students.

The club also allows for self-improvement regarding sporting skills. I have observed that students who are hesitant in classes are more confident in the safe environment of the

Basketball Club and keen to push themselves in terms of physical skill.

Next steps

A barrier to success for co-curricular clubs is raising their profile across the school community; you do have to have committed members of staff to support students who are keen to take them on. Rab Ure, Liberton's Active Schools Coordinator, has ensured the students have a space and equipment for the club to run.

As Eco-Schools coordinator, I encourage students to plan and implement changes themselves as much as possible to avoid projects getting lost in the busy school year, and to give them the skills to take changemaking on to the rest of their school career and beyond.

The student leaders of the Basketball Club are making sure that they are building up the next generation of club leaders, so that the club will not diminish when its leaders leave, as the Anti-Racist Club did.

Within the club, workload is managed by giving students roles and responsibilities in terms of setting up, tidying up, facilitating practice and refereeing games.

Practitioner Reflections

Sport can get a bad rep these days, especially with the rise of ultras in football, for example. It was refreshing to find a group of students who loved playing others with a range of skill levels, who wanted to see their peers do better and ultimately wanted a safe place to be themselves.

I loved how open and honest they were and how they were willing to share their experiences. They were looking out for one another and taking on the challenges of when you don't agree with decisions and working through these challenges.

-Megan Crawford