

# Much Birch Primary School: Engaging all children

## Background and rationale

Having previously used the sports premium to successfully improve behaviour across the whole school through forest school and PE, we wanted to enhance this by making PE more appealing to those children who were less engaged and get to the root causes of why they didn't enjoy it. We wanted children to understand the physical and mental benefits of sport and being active for life.

The impact of Covid has been significantly detrimental to children's engagement in PE and has had the effect of compounding the issue of lack of engagement. The effects seem to have lasted a lot longer than we were expecting and has had a significant impact on children's physical and mental wellbeing – even children who were higher achievers in PE have been adversely affected.

## What did you do and how did you do it

Charlie Yr1 asks everyday  
"Is it PE today Mr Bullock?!"

We first identified the less engaged children; this was done through observations and informal chats not just with the less engaged but the whole class. We also started using Koboca (online survey platform) to conduct surveys with the children. It gave the pupil's an additional chance to feedback about PE and what we offered and we have been able to fund this through sports premium.

### What did we find out?

Children preferred coming in dressed ready for PE and forest school rather than having to change in class; a practice that was started as a direct consequence of Covid. They felt more comfortable not having to change in school so this was adopted as normal practice. Not only were the children happier doing this, it also gave us additional PE time outside, improvement at no cost!

Children wanted PE to be fun with lots of game time, lots of opportunity to play and a variety of sports. We already use small sided games as part of PE but did not have enough pitch/court areas or equipment to create a great learning environment. Sports premium was used to remark the main netball court and 3 mini courts have been marked across the main court, providing more areas to play, keeping the children more active and engaged. This also provides opportunities to develop leadership skills as the children have to self-regulate the games by acting a referees whilst playing, with many activities children do these days being adult lead. Finally, it has allowed us to pick teams where the children are matched by ability allowing for high, middle and lower ability games.

With the sports premium we have been able to replace old battered kit (it's amazing the effect of having new netballs, bibs, nets etc has on the children) as well as introduce new sports to the curriculum. Cross curriculum orienteering has been a huge hit and offers teachers the chance to get outside and active whilst still doing maths, spag, topics etc. It also means that the fastest children don't always win as orienteering doesn't just rely on physical attributes.

## The Impact

Those children that were less engaged have become more confident during PE with the opportunity to practice and develop. It's clear from using Koboca to survey the children's views that PE is becoming more appealing to everyone. Through chats with the children, Koboca surveys, Governors (PE Governor) visits and our recent mock deep dive, the children expressed a love of PE and an understanding that PE has health benefits. They also say that PE is fun and that they get a good variety of sports to try.

Children that 12 months ago would have tried to avoid PE are now enjoying PE and asking to do more and represent school more with KS2 afterschool sports club being oversubscribed with 35-40% of children attending.

Sports Premium has been a game changer in how we improve pupil engagement in PE.

## Sustainability

The type of PE session and the policy of offering all children the opportunity to represent school before Yr7 transition are easy to embed. Transport would be more difficult to sustain if sports premium were to stop. However we have links with the Mental Health charity 'We Are Farming Minds' and we are able to use their mini bus for transport if needed.

Over several years we have built up our PE resources and equipment so we should be in a good position to replace a little each year to keep these resources in good order. New sports introduced may need to be done on a rotating/year group basis as curriculum time would not allow all of them to be done.

## Pupil Feedback

Eleanor Yr6, 12 months on from saying she didn't like PE  
"Netball has changed my enjoyment of PE because it is fun and you work as a team, I'd like to go to some tournaments"

Isabella Yr6, has always been disengaged but is now starting to enjoy PE  
"Tag rugby has changed my view of PE because it is fun and exciting as you have to run from one side to the other"