

Sporting Legacy supports school improvement and gets more students active

Schools across Dudley and the Black Country are benefitting from increased Government and Sports Lottery investment following the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, which is enabling them to provide a broader range of opportunities to students including leadership, links with local sports clubs and using sport to support literacy, citizenship and numeracy at every Key Stage.

Primary School Children are already seeing a difference with each Primary School receiving over £9,000 Government Primary School Sport Premium funding to hire specialist PE teachers, buy equipment, accessing CPD opportunities or pooling funding with other schools. Commenting on this funding, Simon Hall, BeActive Partnership Director for the Black Country Consortium Limited said “We know schools have been inundated with requests from organisations outlining how they can help schools use this funding, but where we are seeing as best practice are those who are focusing on addressing areas of improvement identified through Ofsted including CPD as well as using sport to inform numeracy priorities. We are here to help schools to make the best informed decisions on how to use their investment.”

The Consortium plays a key role in this and many of priorities set out by Government and Sport England’s Strategies to get a million people more active by 2017, with a real focus on 11-24 year olds, through its work to connect national strategy to local need, getting organisations working better together and targeting investment programmes.

Working alongside the School Games Organisers, the Consortium is also responsible for providing young people with school sport competition opportunities through the School Games. Over 10,000 young people have already taken part in mass participative intra and inter school competition leading to the prestigious Black Country School Games Festival which will be taking place on 27 June 2014. Mary Keelan, Head of Our Lady’s and St Chad’s Wolverhampton and Chair of the Black Country Local Organising Committee stressed “it’s important to stress that this is not about just supporting those with talent, but providing a broader range of competitive opportunities such as through our Leadership programme”.

There are a number of Black Country School Games successes including over 350 young leaders “graduating” from a leadership camp to work on the Festival undertaking media, scoring, reporting, filming as well as officiating and organising events. All leaders this year undertook a customer services course run by Dudley College and 15 Black Country students represented the Midlands or Central area at the UK School Games, which last year took place at the Olympic Stadium.

In addition, every Black Country Secondary school has the opportunity to have a Satellite Club on site, working with local sports clubs to provide opportunities for the community.

Many schools are also looking to access capital funding through Sport England's Inspired Facilities programmes or connect with National Governing Bodies of Sport.

"We know many schools are looking at their role in the community, doing something different costs and our or Sport England funding can really make a difference" added Simon Hall.

For further information, advice and guidance contact Simon Hall at Black Country Consortium Limited or sports@blackcountryconsortium.co.uk
www.blackcountrybeactive.co.uk.

[We are grateful to Simon and to the Black Country Consortium for providing this article. Your Association has repeatedly supported initiatives which enable or encourage more young people to participate in physical activity, being all too well aware that this not only creates a healthier population, but also that it can both enhance social activity and stimulate 'learning' processes.]