

Insight driving innovation and impact

BE Football Case Study: Pencoed Comprehensive School

Increasing girls' confidence to play football.

July 2022

Believing in every child's future

Introduction

Pencoed Comprehensive School is located in South Wales. It is a mixed school that caters for around 900 young people aged 11 to 18 years old.

In 2021, Pencoed Comprehensive School joined the BE Football programme. BE Football is delivered by the Youth Sport Trust (YST) and funded by the Football Association for Wales (FAW) Trust. It aims to bring football to schools through a life skills approach for female pupils. BE Football explores how teachers can engage girls in curriculum physical education (PE) through football, identifies and develops life skills and supports girls to be empowered to lead football-related activity for others.

Background

Prior to BE Football, the Pencoed Comprehensive School taught football on the curriculum and they had a weekly extra-curricular football session at lunchtimes that was run by sixth form students and supported by a member of school staff.

Six girls were selected to join the BE Football programme as young leaders, known as Influencers; two were in year eight and four were in year seven. The girls were a mix of abilities and personalities, but all played and liked football. Only one of the girls had any previous leadership experience which had been gained through a local netball club. The girls were identified by the PE Teacher and the sixth form students that ran the extra-curricular club and they were selected based on their commitment to football training and their potential to be role models to others.

Activities

Training

Six BE Football Influencers took part in two training courses, which inspired the girls and gave them the skills and knowledge to become young leaders. One training course was delivered virtually and one was delivered face-to-face. The Influencers enjoyed both training sessions but preferred the face-to-face delivery because they enjoyed a more visual and interactive learning method. The face-to-face delivery also took place at a local stadium and gave them the opportunity to try out delivering activities with their peers. This practice helped them to feel more confident delivering when they came back to school.

Supporting football in the curriculum

The BE Football Influencers have supported the PE Teacher in delivering PE lessons. The year seven students were focusing on leadership as part of their health and wellbeing studies so BE Football aligned well with this. The Influencers lead the warm-up sessions at the start of the lesson and there is now interest from other pupils who would also like to lead sessions.

Supporting Football Fridays

The BE Football Influencers have supported the delivery of the extra-curricular club on Fridays, helping to run drills, matches and penalty shoot outs for year 7s and 8s. They have also delivered a session for year 6s as part of the school transition day. The girls felt this was particularly beneficial as it helped to raise the profile of girls' football to the young people that would be joining their school in September.

Benefits

Increased confidence to participate in football



BE Football has increased girls' confidence to play football and to play with who-ever they would like to (boys or girls), rather than feeling that they should focus on sports that are more traditionally aimed at girls. The training that the Influencers attended included a number of key speakers, who helped them to realise that if football is something they want to do, then they can follow their passion and play without worrying about stereotypes or what other people might think. Since BE Football, there has also been an increase in girls attending the extra-curricular football club.

“They [the Influencers] listened to some of the speakers at the training which helped them to realise that if this is what I want to do, then I can do it.”

PARIS NICHOLAS, PE TEACHER AT PENCOED COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

“It [BE Football] has given the girls confidence to just play football if that's what they enjoy.”

PARIS NICHOLAS, PE TEACHER AT PENCOED COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

“BE Football is a way to encourage girls' to play football”

BE FOOTBALL INFLUENCER

The opportunity to lead and deliver to their peers has also helped to develop the Influencers confidence.

“We are more confident taking part in the sessions”

BE FOOTBALL INFLUENCER

Improved leadership skills



BE Football is helping the girls to develop their skills and confidence as leaders. The Influencers identified that their communication skills had improved and they are able to work together as a team better. They feel confident to help others develop their football skills. What is more, they are role models to other young people and are inspiring others, including those who do not normally play football, to become

leaders too. Young people are seeing that even if they don't play football, they can still take on leadership roles such as supporting delivery or coaching others.

“We like encouraging people to do more of what they like”

BE FOOTBALL INFLUENCER

“We are getting more people involved and we are learning stuff as they learn stuff!

BE FOOTBALL INFLUENCER

Increased empowerment and sense of belonging



The BE Football Influencers wear their programme hoodies with pride. BE Football has given them a sense of belonging and empowerment.

The best thing about taking part in football activities run by other girls was... “feeling more comfortable playing football because we are all girls.”

YOUNG PERSON, PARTICIPANT

Future

In the next academic year, the BE Football Influencers plan to use their leadership skills to support the extra-curricular football club at the school. The Influencers are keen to continue to raise the profile of girls' football, running assemblies and putting up posters about the girls' football club.

The Influencers would like more frequent, in person events and opportunities to network with other BE Football Influencers in other schools to learn about what they are doing.

Top Tips

- ✓ Give the young people the opportunity to lead parts of lessons or extra-curricular sessions to help them to build their confidence and develop their leadership skills.
- ✓ Maximise the role of Influencers as role models to inspire other young people.



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