

Insight driving innovation and impact

# BE Football Case Study: Queen Elizabeth High School

Building co-operation and responsibility through new football opportunities.

May 2022

**Believing** in every child's future

## Introduction

Queen Elizabeth High School, in Carmarthen, is a mixed, bilingual community comprehensive school for around 1,500 young people aged 11-18 years old.

In 2020, Queen Elizabeth High 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 school already had a number of keen female football players but, although there was extra-curriculum football provision for boys, there was no regular extra-curricular football provision for girls. In terms of the curriculum, all pupils in year seven to year nine, were offered around six weeks of football each year. The school already had a small number of sports leaders but these were predominantly older pupils (i.e. in year ten and in sixth form). The lead teacher felt that BE Football would provide a valuable opportunity to upskill herself in football delivery and to create a pool of young leaders that could support more football sessions across the school.

Eight girls in year eight who already had an interest in football were recruited as BE Football Influencers. The lead teacher highlighted that the kit that the girls received as part of BE Football was a good incentive for them to sign up to the programme.

## Activities

### Training

Eight BE Football Influencers took part in a virtual training course<sup>1</sup>, which inspired the girls and gave them the skills and knowledge to become young leaders. A key challenge was keeping the girls engaged during virtual training.

### Football sessions

Through BE Football, the lead teacher and the BE Football Influencers have set up an extra-curricular football session for girls on a Friday after school. The BE Football Influencers are all given clear roles to support the session, for example one is responsible for football skills, another is responsible for kit etc. Around 20 girls in years seven and eight regularly attend the club; around five of these had not played football before. Many of the other girls that attend the session play football in clubs outside of school.

**“By giving them all roles, it brings in those life skills. They’ve got this clear role and they can take responsibility.”**

**(CAROL JONES, PE TEACHER AT QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL)**

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<sup>1</sup> Covid-19 meant that the training was delivered virtually, instead of face to face.  
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## Curriculum delivery

BE Football has helped the lead teacher to build a greater emphasis on life skills into football delivery in the curriculum, for example she highlights that in order to be successful in a tackle, the young people will need to build their resilience so that they don't give up. The lead teacher also highlighted how this aligns well with the new curriculum in Wales, which focuses on the development of life skills. The BE Football resources have supported her in doing this.

**“I thought the resources were excellent to show how you can embed the life skills.”**

**(CAROL JONES, PE TEACHER AT QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL)**

## Benefits

### Practitioner



The lead teacher that attended the BE Football training enjoyed taking part in the activities herself and felt that she has improved her skills and knowledge of football delivery. She learnt new, fun and engaging activities that she can do with the pupils back at school and BE Football has helped her to have a greater emphasis on life skills through football delivery.

**“I enjoyed it [the training] and I got a buzz out of doing it.....I just have to remember that buzz and that's what I want to give the new kids that arrive...you want to make them feel happy.”**

**(CAROL JONES, PE TEACHER AT QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL)**

### Young people

#### Football opportunities



BE Football has created new opportunities for girls to participate in football. The lead teacher believes that by offering girls-only sessions, rather than mixed sessions, it has encouraged some of the girls to participate in football. A sample of girls that took part were asked to use one word to describe the football opportunities; the word that was most frequently mentioned was “fun”. “Amazing” and “friendly” were also mentioned. The weekly extra-curricular session is well attended by girls at the school and the school is now entering more football competitions, for example they have already had success at the

English Football League (EFL) Cup competition. Some of the girls have also now been invited to take part in the boys' football training sessions.

**“It’s a really good place to come and have fun even if you’re not that good at football.”**

**(PARTICIPANT)**

**“We finally got to do football.”**

**(YEAR 7 PARTICIPANT)**

### Co-operation and responsibility



The lead teacher emphasised that the Influencers have come a long way since the start of the programme; she described how they now work together as a team, they take greater responsibility for their actions during the football sessions, and they take on leadership and influencing roles in the sessions. As examples, they would no longer just kick a ball over the fence as they have a greater understanding of what this means for the whole team, or they have learnt that it is a team effort to get the sessions set up, or that someone has to take responsibility for different elements, such as organising the bibs. Importantly, the BE Football programme has helped the girls to develop key life skills and to mature as individuals.

### Connections and relationships



The lead teacher highlighted that in recent years, relationships between girls at the school have been more of a challenge than they have ever been. The BE Football sessions bring together girls from different friendship groups and they have helped to develop key character traits among the girls, such as patience and kindness.

What is more, for the first time, BE Football has brought girls from the two local community football clubs together. Even within each community club, girls of different ages tend to play in different teams so rarely mix at the clubs. At the BE Football sessions, the girls all play together.

**“It’s a chance for the girls from the two teams to try to gel and bond.”**

**(CAROL JONES, PE TEACHER AT QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL)**

**The best thing about taking part was “getting closer to people and becoming better at football.”**

**(YEAR 7 PARTICIPANT)**

## Future

The school plan to continue delivering the extra-curricular football club next year and are hoping recruit new pupils in year seven into the club. They are also writing their scheme of work for the new school year and will build on BE Football to help shape this.

## Top Tips

- ✓ Make it fun to encourage girls to participate; consider fun warm-ups at the start rather than technical drills.
- ✓ Carefully consider the BE Football Influencers that you recruit to ensure they are representative of the girls that attend the school, for example influencers could be selected from multiple year groups or be a mixture of girls that do and do not play football.
- ✓ Ensure that the lead teacher has sufficient time to support the BE Football Influencers and the delivery of the programme. Two lead members of staff from different departments could be recruited to support delivery and help embed the programme across the school.
- ✓ Consider building in reward and recognition to help motivate and acknowledge the achievements of the girls involved in the programme, for example new kit or local football trips.



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