

KEY CONCEPTS: School/Club Links

- Definition
- Why we need
- Benefits
- How do we establish links
- What makes a successful?
- Who else can make a link successful

School-Club Links

What is a School-Club Link?

"Club-School links" is a term often used in strategic documents, grant applications and general discussion within Sports Development/PE and School Sport and National Governing Body Organisations.

It is becoming more and more used and there is a great need for schools and clubs to work more closely together - if only just in communication!

Subtopic

Young People

- Improved opportunities to access sport in their local community
- Opportunity for their talent to be identified and nurtured
- Wider range of sporting opportunities
- Move confidently between school and club Opportunity to develop coaching and leadership skills
- Understand how their experiences in school and at the club complement each other
- Recognise how PE prepares them for their involvement in clubs at junior age and beyond
- Introduction to healthy living
- Feel comfortable with a range of people from different backgrounds and of different ages
- Choose club programmes that are suited to them

Club Benefits

- More young people in the club
- Increased participation in the club
- Raised base level participation in club
- Opportunity to identify talent of the future
- Potential access to school facilities and equipment
- Raised profile within the sport
- Raised profile within the community
- Financial opportunities
- Opening up club access to wider community
- Increase the potential to recruit new volunteers
- Co-operation, support and resources from other partners
- Pool of young leaders, coaches and officials of the future

School Benefits

- More active, and ultimately healthier, pupils
- Raised profile within the community
- Increased funding opportunities
- Community Links - social benefits
- Pathways for sport - easy exit routes for children into ongoing involvement
- Increased standard in school teams due to increased coaching received by pupils
- Recognition as an institution that supports development beyond the school environment (Value Added)
- Support and assistance with extra curricular teams/activities

Benefits - Creating partnerships between schools and clubs helps to create continuity between school sports and sport in the wider community.

Why should we make a club - school link

Establishing School-Club links gives young people the opportunity to continue participating in worthwhile sporting and physical activity throughout their lives. It allows youngsters to make the most of their experiences in both settings, to try out new sports, feel comfortable in a club setting and as a result makes them more likely to continue participating once they leave school.

Most communities do not know what clubs are in their area - personal contact is the best way to promote your club. Posters are not enough!

Youngsters are more likely to get involved if they know what they're dealing with - if they have already seen club coaches in the familiar surrounding of their school they are more likely to attend the club! (As they already know the coach!)

Unless young people know where opportunities exist to take part in different sports, they will never engage them.

Schools and clubs can work together to promote local sporting opportunities much more effectively.

What makes a club - school link effective and successful?

- When a school and sports club are working well together, they:
- Talk to each other regularly
 - Communicate well with young people and parents
 - Respect each other
 - Have a shared vision and approach
 - Find ways of enabling young people to take part in club activities
 - Agree expectations and goals
 - Build on what young people learn in both settings
 - Recognise, share and celebrate achievements
 - Share and develop teaching and coaching expertise
 - Share facilities, equipment and resources
 - Understand the roles and responsibilities of other agencies that contribute to and support the school - club link

Who else can assist with developing club-school links?

- Other organisations in the community can also be of value to clubs. RST - E.g Harbour sport - Active School, Project interactive. These officers can support the club in a number of ways:
- Keeping clubs informed of wider sporting opportunities that are taking place locally and nationally
 - Providing training opportunities for coaches, administrators and other club personnel
 - Helping with applications for funding
 - Creating links with schools
 - Sourcing facilities or accessing time in facilities
 - Linking with other sports and community programmes
 - Supporting club promotions
 - Helping in the writing of development plans
- Each Local Authority also has a network of Dragon Sport Coordinators or 5 x60 officers who work in Primary and Secondary schools and whose role it is to:
- Develop current and new ways to get children participating in regular, fun and safe physical activity, before, during and after school
 - Establish effective partnerships with clubs, community groups and other organisations at a local and national level.
 - Lead the recruitment and ongoing training of coaches, leaders and volunteers (in particular, young people) whilst providing ongoing training opportunities
 - Disseminating information on sport and physical activity.

Strategies - How Can School Club Links work? What do you do to Create a Club?

GOOD COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BOTH PARTIES IS THE MAIN CONTRIBUTING FACTOR FOR A GOOD SCHOOL/CLUB LINK

It would help initially if a meeting takes place between the school and club to develop an understanding of the Club - School links programme and to provide a mutual commitment to the way forward and the development of the link.

A programme of regular meetings between the school and sports club is a good way to review the effectiveness of the link.

Utilise their contacts, resources & skills to build links

Work with RST Active Schools Facilitators

Focus for Juniors in Club Development Plan

Work Hard to Establish link with schools - key find benefits for both parties

Club

- Provide the school with information and promotional material about the club
- Assign a liaison contact to liaise with and provide info to the schools
- Run a festival/display at the school
- Run a club open day/fun day at the school
- Provide coaches to assist with the extra curricular clubs (even if it's just once per term)
- Link with the School's to help assist links with primary schools
- Run a satellite club on the school site during a term where the club goes to the school (familiar surroundings for the children) then after that the children attend the normal club night and venue. (This would have time to become familiar with the type of training and the coaches by then)
- Tell the schools about their pupils achievements (e.g in a school newsletter)
- Advise school of relevant events and activities that might attract youngsters to the club
- Provide officials for some school fixtures /tournaments
- Make school visits
- The club provides the school with letters of support for funding applications

School

- Promote the Club within the school - maybe immediately after a unit of work that matches the sport or during after school clubs
- Provide facilities by offering the school site for the club to run sessions
- Nominated a club liaison representative is identified to liaise with the clubs schools liaison officer
- Offer the same sport as an after school club in order to introduce the children to the sport in a familiar surrounding
- Distribute any promotional material that the clubs may have
- Invite club coaches to speak about their club in school assemblies/PTA meetings so that everyone is aware of what's on offer
- Dedicated a notice board at other point of notice to the sports club
- Provide advice to pupils about getting involved
- Provide the club with letters of support for funding applications
- Regularly communicate local club opportunities and information to parents