

ACTIVE SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER



December 2022



#ActiveGirls

October celebrated the progress being made around women and girls' participation in sport, while acknowledging that barriers and stereotypes continue to have an influence. By profiling role models who are making an impact, and highlighting local school and community club opportunities, the Active Schools Team jumped on the back of Scottish Women and Girls in Sport week and celebrated girls' participation.

In Jedburgh, secondary lunch clubs ran daily, with 20-30 S1-S6 pupils attending. Sports Leaders also helped lead primary dance and dodgeball clubs, which saw no fewer than 50 P4-7 girls attend. In Hawick, the team focused on getting girls' rugby up and running, so held a special S1 girls session with coaches from Scottish Rugby, which 26 girls joined in with. Off the back of this, a new after school club is going to start. Hawick and Jedburgh also met up to play in S1 and S2 girls netball matches.



In Kelso, Active Schools worked alongside Rugby DO Murray Hastie to build on the success of the girls' rugby programme, by adding in a lunchtime skills session and a kicking club. These were thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. Meanwhile in Earlston, tennis, netball and table tennis were on offer over three lunchtimes. Led by senior pupils, the sessions gave S1-S6 girls a taster of some of the extra-curricular opportunities that are on offer over the year. It was great to see, as a result of these sessions, some new faces at lunchtimes and after school. **#SheCanSheWill**

#ChangingLivesThroughSport

November focused on the wider benefits of sport and transferable skills, which can be developed through participation, coaching, officiating, volunteering and leadership roles. Active Schools has a huge role to play when it comes to leadership, both in the primary and secondary setting.

Playground Leaders

The Active Schools Team has had a busy first term working in partnership with its primary schools to deliver Young Leadership Programmes. The young leaders learn how to work as a team, to safely deliver fun and inclusive sessions to younger pupils, all whilst improving their own confidence and communication skills. This term, 216 primary 6/7 pupils across the region have successfully completed their training, with many already actively delivering during break and lunchtimes.



Young Leader Academy

The Young Leader Academy has kicked off once again, with our secondary coordinators currently mentoring 50 senior pupils who have been selected to be part of this year's programme. The majority of the Academy pupils have completed their First Aid Training and are working towards NGB Level 1s in their chosen sport. Some have already completed Level 1s and are now actively coaching and providing extra opportunities for the young people in their local schools and communities.

Rock Up & Ride

Selkirk Active Schools teamed up with Scottish Cycling and Selkirk Cycling Club to pilot the second 'Rock Up & Ride' programme. The initiative is part of the Scottish Government's commitment to providing greater access to bikes for school children. The programme involved a series of four fun, free and easy to access sessions, which included 26 local children aged 7-14 years, and were delivered by qualified Selkirk Cycling Club coaches and Selkirk HS senior pupils. On completion, all children received their own free bike, helmet, gloves and padlock. One parent said, **"I'm so grateful my children were selected to take part in the programme, they love their new bikes!"**.



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#LetsCelebrateSport

December is a time to look back and reflect on the successes of the year. It is a time to highlight the fantastic work that has gone on in and around our schools and communities and celebrate the sport that has helped our young people become healthier, happier and stronger.

The team were excited to be able to return to normal with regards to their festival and events calendar when schools returned in August. No fewer than 23 primary festivals and competitions have taken place since the start of term. We kicked off with our traditional P6/7 hockey and P4/5 rugby festivals, which saw over 1500 pupils from across the Borders attend!



Next up came netball! Border Smalls Schools once again proved popular, with 14 teams (140 pupils) stepping on to court at the Queens Centre in Galashiels. It was a great day in the office for Denholm and Newtown Primary Schools who came first and second respectively! Then came Area Netball, which saw just short of 600 pupils taking part across the seven cluster competitions. This was followed by the Border Finals, which brought together the top seven area competition winners. This time it was Priorsford Primary School who came out on top, closely followed by Chirnside!



In addition to the above, we have also seen RSCDS ceilidhs in Galashiels and Hawick, which saw 420 pupils take to the floor. Balmoral Primary School also took the title at the first ever Galashiels Small Schools Netball competition!

We can't wait for the return of Sportshall Athletics, Cross-Country, Area Basketball (and Border Finals!) and our first ever Small Schools Basketball in the new year!

New Beginnings

In mid-October we excitedly waved cheerio to Kendal, our Eyemouth Coordinator, as she started her maternity leave. She will be a huge miss, but we wish her all the best in her time off! We were delighted to hear that on Friday 18 November, Kendal and her partner Ross, welcomed beautiful baby Alba in to the world! Huge congratulations from all the team!



While Kendal gets stuck in to changing nappies, we are delighted to welcome Niamh Westwood, who has got stuck in to covering the Eyemouth cluster! Niamh studied Sports Coaching at university, before going on to deliver Active Schools classes through the Gold and Gray Soccer Academy. She is a qualified football referee and spent this summer coaching football in California. While in post, Niamh is *"looking forward to building on what Kendal has done in previous years, getting out and meeting the people of the Eyemouth cluster and helping to create positive experiences through physical activity"*.

Christmas Wishes

What a term one it has been! We hit the ground running in August and it feels like we haven't stopped since! From extra-curricular clubs and targeted curricular programmes, to a full-blown festival and events calendar – there's not much more we could have fitted in! We have loved working in, and with, our local communities again, delivering our full programme of activities and events. Like everyone, the team are all very much looking forward to their Christmas holidays, a time to re-charge, re-focus, and ready to come back with a bang in January. We wish all our young people, school staff, parents, clubs, coaches, volunteers and partners a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

