

ACTIVE SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER



December 2023



And just like that, we are almost at the Christmas holidays! Yet another whirlwind of a term full of events, clubs, upskilling, successes, celebrations and most importantly, fun! It has had its challenges, but as always, the Active Schools team has adapted, improvised and overcome, ensuring pupils across the Scottish Borders have the opportunity to become healthier, happier and stronger, both in their schools and their communities. Our run down for this term focuses on the SportScotland themes of **Inclusion, Celebrating Sport** and **A Year in Sport**.

October: Inclusion

Monday 16 October saw 24 secondary pupils from the Active Schools Young Leader Academy and Young Coach Programme take the opportunity to upskill themselves, as they came together at the Volunteer Hall in Galashiels. Pupils were taken through Disability Inclusion Training with Live Borders Disability Development Officer Greig Shortreed. This gave them a great insight in to being able to adapt activities so they are inclusive for all. We look forward to seeing the group utilise these new skills in the upcoming months of their coaching journeys. Leaders were also put through a First Aid Certificate with First Aid Borders Ltd.



October also saw the return of Inclusive Sportshall Athletics events in Berwickshire and Peebles. Led by Greig Shortreed and Borders College students, pupils were able to try their hand at multiple activities including javelin, ball toss, long jump and obstacle courses.

Earlston High School staff and senior pupils enjoyed a twilight upskilling in the Paralympic sport of Boccia in November. Big thanks to Greig again for delivering such a fun and engaging course. Staff are already enjoying including these new ideas and games in to the curriculum!



It has been a busy term in Kelso too. An adapted P6/7 hockey festival allowed Ednam's wheelchair user to join in the fun! With their own 'winger zone', they had space and time to control the ball, dribble and pass back into play without being tackled. A lunchtime seated volleyball club back at school has also allowed them to regularly participate with six other class mates. Kelso High School Young Ambassadors have also continued their Support for Learning lunchtime archery and boccia club.



Over 90 S1-3 pupils from Earlston, Kelso, Jedburgh and Peebles High Schools were lucky enough this term to take part in an SBC Secondary School Bike Event at Glentress, organised by Caroline Wallace, Inspire Teacher for the UCI World Cycling Championships. The project, which aimed to target pupils who had not experienced Glentress forest bike trails before, gave pupils a full day's coaching, with fully qualified outdoor education cycling leaders, on the new master plan trails at the UCI World Championship venue. It is hoped this taster session will encourage pupils to participate in biking more regularly! **#SportForAll**

November: Celebrating Sport

In November, Live Borders celebrated their annual ClubSport Awards. These inspiring evenings recognise the sporting talent across the district. It is always great for Active Schools to see current and former pupils achieve in their sporting careers and coaching journeys and this year was no different. Congratulations to everyone who was nominated and to all those that took home silverware.



ClubSport Roxburgh saw last year's YCP and current S6 pupil Callum Pollhammer, win Young Coach of the Year. Callum's tireless enthusiasm to help drive sport in Kelso has seen him go above and beyond to help get Kelso youngsters more active, more often.

At the ClubSport Berwickshire Awards, Sarah Turnbull and Maddie Rosher, both from Berwickshire High School, celebrated becoming Young Coach of the Year and Junior Sports Personality of the Year respectively.

Meanwhile, Ross Ferrando, S5 pupil at Earlston High School, came away with the Rowan Boland Disability Award at the Ettrick and Lauderdale Awards, which was thoroughly deserved following a year of hard work and badminton success. **#LetsCelebrateSport**

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December: A Year in Sport

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.

Festival & Event Round Up

No fewer than 24 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 1536 pupils from across the Borders participating. Next up came netball. Border Small Schools once again proved hugely popular, with 14 teams stepping on to court. It was a great day in the office for Denholm and Morebattle who came first and second respectively. Then



came Area Netball competitions, followed by the Border Final. A total of 456 area competitors were soon narrowed down to 70 finalists. This time it was West Linton who came away with the 2023 title, after some extremely close results! RSCD Ceilidhs in Galashiels and Hawick, also saw no fewer than 400 pupils take to the floor this term.



Primary Leadership Update

In October, we reported that over 200 P6/7 pupils across the region had been going through leadership training with their Active Schools Coordinators. We thought it would be good to update on the new opportunities these leaders have been providing in their schools since then! In Selkirk, Knowepark P7s have been running extra-curricular lunchtime sessions for P1s, while the school's Junior Active Schools team has also had a successful term delivering multi-sport clubs to P2-4 pupils.

Across in Kelso, Broomland's P7s spent eight weeks working towards their Primary Sports Leader Award, followed by their assessment week, where they delivered sessions to the P1s. The school is delighted to have 31 pupils now ready to lead lunchtime activities for their younger pupils after the Christmas holidays.



In the Earlston cluster, Melrose P7s ran lunchtime games, which saw 106 P3-5 pupils attend since September. It has also been great to see leadership programmes being a success in the small schools, with Westruther and Channelkirk P7 leaders both providing opportunities for the whole school at break and lunchtimes.

Upskilling

It has been a great term for upskilling both our Active Schools Team and our army of coaches and volunteers. November saw the team go through the Primary Tennis Teacher Training Course, with the intention of supporting schools through similar training and getting tennis more established in our schools. Seventeen PE teachers, school staff, volunteers and senior pupils also completed their Basketball Skills Coach Award in November, giving candidates ideas on how to develop physical movement skills, technical skills and build basic tactical understanding in U10-U14s. Netball Scotland delivered a Netball Leaders coaching course and On Your Whistle umpiring course in December for 18 volunteers and senior pupils, which will help support our ongoing extra-curricular netball programmes. **#SportReflections2023**

Catch You Later!

It has been short and sweet, but the time came for us to wave cheerio to Niamh, our maternity cover in Eyemouth. She now takes up a Football Development Officer post at the Hibernian Community Foundation. Before leaving, Niamh said: *"I have absolutely loved my time at Live Borders. I have loved working with the school staff, parents and senior pupils to make opportunities happen for our young people. Working with the kids has been second to none - I've never not left with a smile on my face. A massive thank you to everyone who has been a part of my Eyemouth journey"*. We wish Niamh all the best in her new role and look forward to welcoming Kendal back in to post in early January!

Dates for the Diary:

Border Sportshall Final: Thursday 8 February
Small Schools Basketball: Thursday 22 February
Border Schools Cross-Country: Thursday 14 March
Border Primary Basketball Final: Thursday 21 March

Ho! Ho! Ho!

Well, we have made it to Christmas! What a term! From the word go, the team hasn't stopped! We have been flat out working with our schools and communities, delivering a full programme of activities and events, upskilling staff and volunteers and celebrating many successes - we couldn't have fitted any more in if we'd tried! We are now very much looking forward to our winter break, to get re-charged and ready to take on 2024! Here's wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

