

# ACTIVE SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER



March 2024



That's it - another term that has gone by in a flash, as we roll in to our 2024 Easter holidays! It has been a fast, furious and, as always, fun, couple of months! The Active Schools team has been non-stop from the word 'go' in January and is very much looking forward to a couple of weeks rest before we enter the final term of the year! As always, our newsletter will focus on the monthly SportScotland themes of the past three months; this time including: **Being Active**, **Try Something New** and **Women and Girls in Sport**. Read on to find out what has been keeping us so busy since the New Year!

## Being Active

### Competition Round Up

No fewer than 17 festivals and events have taken place this term, with over 2300 P5-7 pupils attending! After finishing 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> respectively at the Borders Sportshall Athletics Final, Priorsford and Kingsland Primary Schools progressed through to the East of Scotland Final at Meadowbank Sports Centre in February. The East Final brought together finalists from Edinburgh, West Lothian, Midlothian and the Borders, to compete over a series of indoor track and field events. Following a very exciting morning and fantastic team performances, Priorsford were crowned East of Scotland Champions for the second year in a row, with Kingsland finishing a fantastic fourth!



February saw the return of our Small Schools Basketball Competition, with 15 teams from across the Borders taking to the court. Teams played across three pools, with the pool winners going on to play a round robin final. Congratulations to our top three teams: Stow (1), Balmoral (2) and Yetholm (3). It was a fantastic day full of end-to-end play, amazing skills and a buzzing atmosphere!

February was a busy month, which also saw primary cross-country events taking place in four clusters. Rounding off our term two events were Area Basketball and Border Finals. The top team from each area competition made their way to Gala on 21 March to fight it out for the 2024 title. Knowepark, Broomlands, Eyemouth, Newtown, Drumlanrig, Newlands and Balmoral battled it out in a round robin competition. Our 2024 Champions are Drumlanrig!

### Borders College Partnership Working

Active Schools has been working in partnership with Borders College, providing placements for level seven and eight students. Ten level seven mountain bike students ran 8-week blocks of mountain biking skills sessions in three Tweeddale primary schools, which saw 66 P4-7 pupils attending. The bikers have enjoyed passing on their knowledge, with children picking up tips on cornering, wheel lifts, bunny hops and track stands! To round off the coaching block, the level eight students organised a biking festival for those who have been part of the programme. This brought pupils together for a fun afternoon of activity stations and mini races - it was fantastic to see everyone putting their newly learnt skills into practice!



Meanwhile, four level eight students delivered a 5-week after school golf club to primary five pupils at Melrose PS, as part of their Sports Development unit. Pupils had a fantastic time learning the basics of putting, chipping and striking and we hope the engaging and fun sessions have sparked an interest for pupils to want to continue their golfing journey at their local club. [#ActiveEveryDay](#)

## Try Something New

### Path to Paris

Path to Paris is a free programme created by Team GB and Paralympics GB for P1-7s and their families to celebrate the 2024 Paris Games. The challenge invites young people to get active together and log their physical activity online. It will then convert minutes to kilometres to help power their team bus to reach Paris in time for the Games! Active Schools believes this will be a fantastic resource to engage more young people in physical activity, create excitement for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and hopefully begin to build a lasting habit of physical activity. We're encouraging schools to sign up ready to get started on their journey as soon as they return from the Easter Holidays! Find out more [HERE](#).



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## Just Cycle Short Track Racing

Earlston Active Schools has been working alongside the Scottish Borders Cycle Speedway Development Group and Live Borders Sports Development Team to pilot a Short Track Bike Competition. Over this term and next, all P4-7 pupils in the eight cluster primary schools, will have the opportunity to take part in a 4-week short track racing block at school. Following the taster sessions, pupils will be invited to take part in the first ever inter-school competition in June, kindly sponsored by Just Cycle of Tweedbank. Keen pupils will also have the chance to join the Border Raiders coaching sessions and compete in the Scottish Speedway League and other cycle speedway competitions. Huge thank you to coach Trevor Bryant for the enormous amount of time and work he has put in to this project so far - the feedback has been brilliant!



## Primary Cross-Country Championships

February saw 260 P5-7 pupils from all 10 Berwickshire primary schools attend their Cross-Country Championships in Eyemouth. An overall school champion award was introduced this year, kindly sponsored by Jodie Martin HR Consultancy. This was awarded to the school with the fastest overall time from the fastest two boys and girls across all races. Congratulations to the first recipient of this award - Eyemouth PS! Meanwhile in Kelso, 145 pupils descended upon Floors Castle for the second annual P6/7 Kelso and Jedburgh Cross-Country Championships. Neither of these would be possible without the army of volunteers and local clubs - huge shoutout to everyone who helped these go ahead! #TrySomethingNew



## Women & Girls in Sport

### Primary Netball Participation Centres

After the success of last year, our Hawick and Galashiels Netball Participation Centres returned for a second year. The initiatives run in partnership with our Sports Development Team and act as a direct exit route from the extensive primary netball calendars in both clusters. The centres give youngsters the opportunity to keep on playing and enjoying the game, whilst honing their skills and developing new friendships.



Following eight weeks of training in Hawick and 10 in Gala, the season was brought to a close with a friendly between the two teams at the end of March. In Gala, youngsters were also lucky enough to be joined by Cerys Finn, current Scottish Thistles and Strathclyde Sirens GK/GD, at the final session of the year. Huge thank you to Cerys for this fantastic opportunity and to the amazing centre coaches Gwen (Selkirk HS), Stephanie (TD1 Youth Hub), Lisa (Hawick HS) and Ewan and Ravan (Live Borders apprentices), without whom, these opportunities simply couldn't have gone ahead.

### Secondary Netball League

The Borders Secondary Netball Leagues came to a close this term. Kicking off in September and running through until March, 32 games were played across the course of the season. Our first year back after the pandemic, we were delighted to have 18 teams from six secondary schools taking part across the S1, S2, S3 and Open age groups. Big shout out to all who made this possible, whether it was coaching, refereeing, scoring, transporting pupils or washing the bibs - the leagues couldn't have gone ahead without you! Well done to everyone who took part and congratulations to this year's league winners: Peebles (S1), Peebles (S2), Peebles (S3) and Berwickshire (Open).



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## *This Girl Can and Did!*

A 5-week girls' only P6-S6 golf initiative proved a success in Hawick this term. Run in partnership with Hawick Golf Club, with the aim of encouraging more young people to get more active, more often, six girls regularly attended the weekly sessions at Hawick High School. Led by club coaches Keith Morgan and Kenny Forsyth, they were delighted with the girls' efforts and commitment and hope they will now take advantage of the club's junior membership, junior coaching, and hopefully, future competitions too! #ActiveGirls



## Easter Added Extras!

### *Active Schools Team Development*

The Active Schools team continued their upskilling this term. First up was 'Introduction to Mentoring', a SportScotland-led course looking to support groups with recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers – we hope this will help grow and retain our phenomenal group of volunteers, who we simply couldn't function without! The team then updated their first aid qualifications, before completing a Basketball Scotland 'Tip Off' refereeing award, both of which will be invaluable for the growing Active Schools competition calendar. Lastly, building on our previous partnership with Borders Community Action (formerly Volunteer Centre Borders), the team are in the middle of becoming Saltire Award administrators, which will allow us to certificate our young people as part of all our secondary leadership programmes.



### *Careers & Volunteering*



It has been a term for career fairs! Coordinators in Kelso, Selkirk and Earlston all attended career fairs at their respective high schools and relished the opportunity to showcase what they do and how youngsters can get involved, both now and further down the line. Standing out on an application form or CV, is key in securing that place at university or that dream job - volunteering with Active Schools is a great way to show you are willing to go above and beyond and is an excellent vehicle to improving your interpersonal skills, confidence and knowledge. To find out more about getting involved and adding that little something extra to your CV, follow the link below and one of the team will be in touch to discuss further: <https://form.jotform.com/240873426427359>.

### *Easter Camps 2024*

We are excited to once again be offering our Easter Holiday Camps, which will take place across various venues in the Borders. Our fun-filled camps will be a great way to keep your children active and busy during the Easter Holidays. The camps will be taking place from 9am-1pm. To take advantage of one of our remaining spaces, click [HERE](#).



### *Triathlons*

Looking for the ultimate challenge in 2024?! Our Live Borders Triathlon Series kicks off in Galashiels on 13 & 14 April and will run throughout the Summer in Selkirk, Eyemouth, Kelso and Peebles. We have an event suitable for everyone, from complete beginners and juniors, to seasoned triathletes! For more info or to book a space: [bit.ly/LBtriathlon](http://bit.ly/LBtriathlon).

## Dates for the Diary:

Berwickshire Area Athletics: Wednesday 29 May

Jedburgh/Kelso Area Athletics: Tuesday 4 June

Eildon Mini Olympics: Friday 7 June

Hawick Inter-School Athletics: Thursday 13 June

## Hoppy Holidays!

As always, a huge shout out to everyone who has been part of the Active Schools programme this term! We've said it before and we'll say it again - we could not do it without you! Whatever you are up to this Easter, we hope you have a safe, fun and relaxing couple of weeks off. We look forward to returning, fully re-charged and ready to hit the final term of the year head on! Happy Easter!

