

Skills for Work CASE STUDY

Sport and Recreation Intermediate One

Aberdeen College, Cults Academy and Aberdeen City Education Department were partners in this successful pilot.

Rationale

The college, which spent £3 million recently on new sports facilities at its Gordon Centre, has an established schools programme in place and wanted to extend it.

The school saw the course as a valuable addition to its curriculum and a way to give pupils access to new and different sporting facilities, specialist training and industry knowledge.



Partnership Arrangements

School staff, the college's Child Protection and Schools Liaison Co-ordinator plus sports staff from both the school and college met regularly.

With close links at strategic level existing among the partners, there was a formal memorandum of understanding that set out responsibilities of all three. The local authority, responsible for transportation of pupils, also supported the initiative through the establishment of an NQ Steering Group, of which the college is a member.

Delivery Approaches

The school, through the S2 Subject Choice process, undertook internal marketing and selection. Pupils and parents were provided with an information booklet outlining all the courses and parents learned more at an information evening.

Interested pupils were interviewed by their Guidance Teacher who discussed all their curricular and vocational options. Decisions as to suitability lay jointly with PE and Guidance Staff.

Induction was done by both partners, timetabling was mutually agreed to fit and care was taken with college staff selection so that there was continuity for the pupils.

The school was responsible for three of the Units: Personal Fitness, Assist with Activity Sessions and Dealing with Accidents and Emergencies and the college the remaining two: Skills for Employment and Dealing with Facilities and Equipment. In addition Skills for Employment was embedded by both school and college staff in all activities and Units delivered.

The Units have been delivered in a variety of settings in addition to the school and the college - in local sports centres such as The Robert Gordon University Sports Centre, David Lloyd Fitness Gym and the Aberdeen Beach Leisure Centre, which also offers a sports hall, leisure pool, fitness gym and ice rink.

Pupils' experiences included organising and planning P6 pupils' activity sessions.

They attended the Beach Leisure Centre once a week to gain experience of setting up and dismantling equipment in a working environment. They also learned how to follow work procedures and gained knowledge of the various jobs available within the sports industry.

Similarly, they worked with the National Pool Lifeguard Assessor - and at the ice rink, an ice steward outlined some of the accidents possible in and around an ice rink.

Employability Skills

Employability skills are embedded within the delivery of each of the Units. Both the school and the college emphasised punctuality as well as appropriate dress and organisational skills. Staff supported the importance of employability skills with role play and simulated situations carried out within the school before pupils were taken out into various facilities to learn through realistic experiences.

This included lifeguard training, working at a leisure centre reception desk, taking pool tests, being shown how a pool plant operates and undertaking the role of an ice steward at the ice rink.

Pupils were able to interact with customers, worked as a team and put into practice other skills, such as first aid and customer care.

Pupils were encouraged to design their own dress and behaviour codes and these were adopted throughout the course.

Pupils also kept their own training logs about what they had learned to help them understand more fully how the Skills for Employment Unit is embedded and not something separate.

Self-evaluation to identify their own strengths and weaknesses, using SFEU support materials, was followed up with discussions with their class teacher to discuss any positive or negative issues.

Initially, staff noted that pupils tended to be more negative about themselves and their own progress, compared with teaching observations. But pupils analysed their progress in a more realistic fashion later in the course.





Centre Evaluation

The partners report that there was a very positive response from the majority as pupils thrived on the challenges of dealing with members of the public and assisting in the coaching of younger pupils.

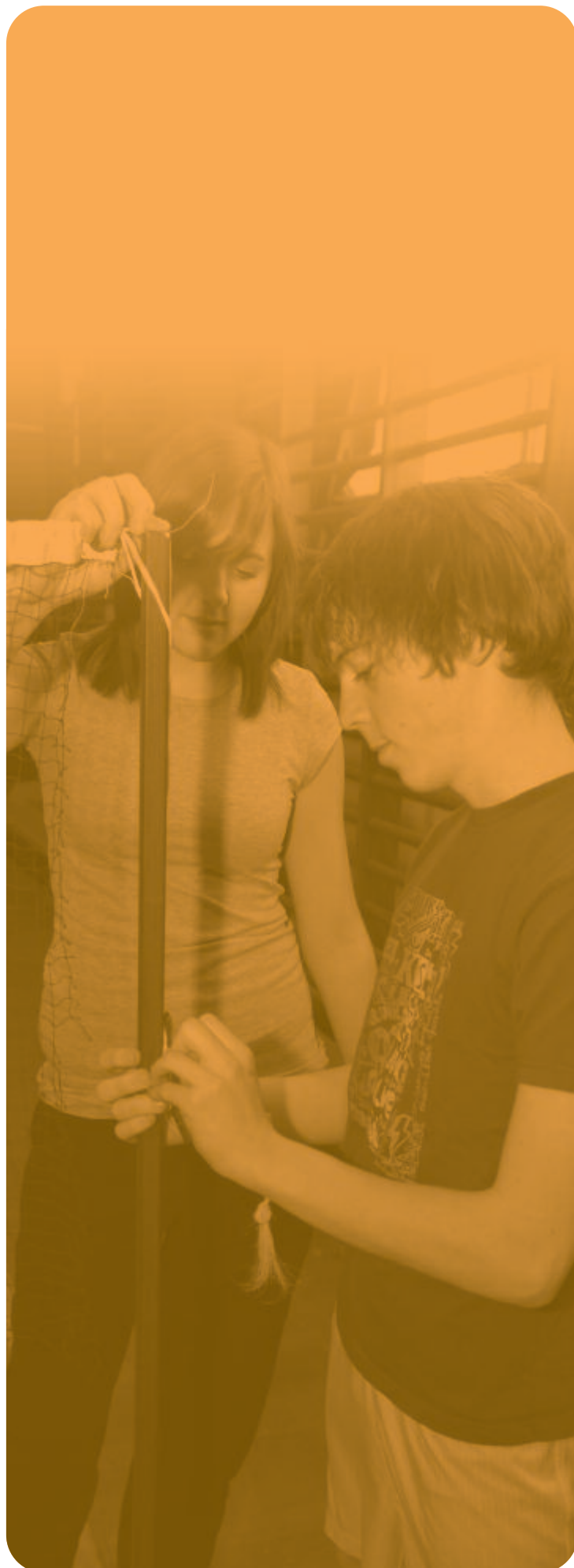
Pupils completed evaluation forms, identifying what they found most and least enjoyable and they were also asked to give ideas on how the Unit could be improved. This formed the basis for discussion to ensure that an enjoyable, beneficial and challenging course was provided.

Feedback from staff at the facilities has been very positive for both college staff and pupils. Because of their experience, pupils have been encouraged to apply for jobs within the centres on reaching the age of 16.

Pupils have been advised of the progression routes available at Aberdeen College, in the Sports Team and in other departments, if they want to further develop their skills and gain additional qualifications in appropriate courses.

“ I liked going to RGU and the primary school because it was something different, very interesting and quite fun ”

View from candidate, Michael Evans



Future Delivery Plans

The partners are hoping to offer the Intermediate 2 Sport and Recreation Course for further experiences of the industry. Opportunities are also being explored for pupils to gain their Community Sports Leader Award, which both the school and college can deliver.

School staff are keen to encourage pupils on the course to undertake their S4 work placement in the sports industry, as this will enable them to expand on their training log and identify additional skills learned.

Advice

Embedding the Skills for Employment Unit across all the Course's Units is strongly advised.

It is also important to encourage pupils to make decisions for themselves on dress and behaviour codes and tasks within the centres.

“This was an exciting and stimulating experience for the pupils with a clear insight into the Sports Industry and the many different occupations available to them. It also taught them skills that can be taken into any employment”

View from lecturer, Moyra Cowie