

## An example of a creating sporting excellence through school-club links

### Ernest Bevin College, Tooting, London

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Ernest Bevin College is a specialist college of sport, maths and computing based in Tooting, London

It is an 11-18 boys' college with a student population of over 1150 and a co-educational sixth form. It was awarded leading edge status in 2004 by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

#### Current facilities

In 2000 the college sold some land and used the proceeds to build new state-of-the-art sport facilities. These were built with both school and community use in mind.

- 25 metre Swimming Pool
- Two metre mat dojo
- Six court badminton sports hall
- Cricket nets
- Multi-use games area (split into 2\*2 tennis courts and 2x2 basketball courts)
- Fitness suite
- Refurbished existing gymnasium

The quality of the indoor facilities the college has been selected as a 2012 Olympic Training Venue. The college does not have its own playing fields and uses local authority facilities 10 minutes walk away.

#### Project background

Following the sale of the land and the building of new sports facilities the college reviewed its options for managing the new facilities and took the decision to run the facilities itself.

This decision was taken jointly by the Principal and the then Head of Sport because they wished to embed a culture of sporting excellence into the college through sustainable sports development.

They felt this culture could only be created through a robust club structure and not play and pay which a facility management company may have encouraged.

#### Sporting excellence

Success in building this new culture has required continuing support from senior school staff.

The continued involvement and support of the principal has also been critical in helping to develop successful sports programmes for the college.

These programmes have not only increased student participation in sport but achieved sporting excellence across indoor sports such as volleyball, table tennis and judo.

Specialised coaches support teachers both curriculum and post curriculum time. This has helped develop the students, and create new clubs and club pathways, providing development opportunities and talent pathways to those who excel.

The college is now in the top five state colleges in the country for table tennis, judo and volleyball and has a sustainable and thriving post curriculum club structure working alongside the college.

## Pupil development

As well as focusing on sporting excellence and increased participation, the college takes its academic and vocational responsibilities seriously.

The college has:

- A sport and leisure diploma
- GCSE and AS/2 PE
- BTEC courses at level 2 (sport) and 3 (sport studies)
- A leadership programme .

The college is also planning to be a hub for the [Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence \(AASE\)](#) run by Skills Active and linking closely with the national governing bodies of sport.

## Specialist coaches

The college has specialist coaches in table tennis, volleyball, judo and rugby union. They also run a football academy in partnership with Tooting and Mitcham Football Club.

These coaches work alongside the PE teachers during curriculum time providing expert support but also identifying potential talent.

They then go on to have 1:1 or 1:5 sessions with selected pupils developing and mentoring them.

A typical week for a specialist coach would be to attend eight curriculum lessons, and run two morning, two lunchtime and three after-college sessions for the students.

An important role is to develop and run after-college clubs as well as contribute to whole college improvement, working with target groups and mentoring pupils .

They also work with partner colleges, community groups and run holiday camps.

Joint-funding of specialist coaches has successfully built a solid club structure.

The table tennis, volleyball and judo coaches are funded through the Greenhouse charity (<http://greenhousecolleges.org/>).

Greenhouse uses sport and the performing arts to support children in deprived areas. Initially its focus was table tennis but as the charity has grown, so has its list of sports.

Although the college and the charity each have their own set of objectives, their aims complement each other and so the partnership works well.

## Club structure and outreach

Lots of thriving clubs means the facility is fully used most of the time.

There are six clubs in the sports hall and three each in the pool and dojo. These usage levels create consistent and regular income that is used to maintain the building and invest in clubs, coaches and volunteers.

These clubs are vital to creating opportunities for those with talent to develop.

The college has close links with;

- Malory Eagles Volleyball Club (National League club, men and women),
- Tooting and Mitcham Football Club,
- Leander Swimming Club,
- Harlequins Rugby Football Club.

It also has its own table tennis club which has 10 players ranked in the national top 100 in England.

The college's successful outreach programme links it to seven primary and three secondary schools in the borough. It also works with the College Sport Partnership programme, develop PE provision and regularly holds festivals for the students.

## Specialist sports

### Table tennis

Over 100 boys are registered in the programme with 25 regularly involved.

Table tennis was the college's first specialist sport. Mark Smith was appointed Head Coach in 2005 and was funded by Greenhouse TTK. Initially Mark worked alongside PE staff focusing on junior players.

After five years this work is proving to be extremely successful both in respect of the numbers playing table tennis and the increase in standards, with the U13s winning the national championships and an U16 being selected to represent England.

A community table tennis club, [Bevin Table Tennis Club](#), has grown out of the college club. It has five coaches and takes part in a number of adult and junior leagues.

On Wednesday night's club training fills the whole of the six court sports hall.

Many of the clubs' members, coaches and volunteers current and ex pupils.

### Volleyball

Over 200 boys are registered in the volleyball programme with 40 to 50 regularly involved.

Following the successful creation of a volleyball programme by John Lowney, a teacher at the college, Darius Setsoafia (who is an ex student) was appointed last year as a volleyball assistant coach.

He is jointly funded by England Volleyball Association and Greenhouse. The college now has four pupils playing for Malory volleyball clubs and has students in the England squad.

### Judo

Over 100 boys are registered in the judo programme with 22 regularly involved

To build on the school's longstanding judo tradition and encourage further interest, a

new double mat dojo was built at Ernest Bevin in 2007. Since then, both the college and the club, Ernest Bevin Phoenix Judo club have gone from strength to strength leading to the employment of Winston Gordon, an ex pupil and two time Olympian, as Head Coach through the Greenhouse programme.

The college has worked hard with the club to bring their programmes together and has been awarded the Clubmark Bronze award. The club has already achieved success representing and leading Wandsworth to the London Youth Games boys trophy.

### Rugby

Over 100 boys involved in the rugby programme. Because of the college's reputation for excellence, Harlequins RFU has developed an inner-city programme at the college.

Initially it was funded by Harlequins and the Rugby Football Union but last year the college became a partner with Harlequins. The coach works three days a week working alongside the PE teachers and identifying talented student players to be members of a year squad. Players are now being recruited into the Harlequins School of Rugby.

### Football

Fifty-four students are part of the football programme. The college has set up a football education programme in close partnership with Tooting and Mitcham Football club.

The academy players enroll as regular sixth formers studying a full range of courses as well as training for eight hours a week, playing fixtures on a Wednesday afternoon and are the reserve team for the Tooting and Mitcham senior side.

In its second year, the programme has already seen former students start university, represent the senior first team and one has joined a professional club. While the sixth form has benefited from the increase in academic achievement.

## Top Tips

- A successful project required sporting enthusiasm and a vision for the whole college
- Share ideas on structures with clubs and integrate them with the college and curriculum.
- Connect the college to local clubs so there is a seamless pathway from one to the other
- It takes time to develop and grow – there are no quick fixes.
- Use specialist coaches and focus on a few key sports – accept you can't excel at every sport
- From a PE teachers point of view curriculum and post curriculum (ie after-college clubs) teaching does not allow a teacher to specialise in one sport, there is too much pressure on current PE teachers to deliver their core work , especially the delivery of exam classes.
- Provide clear player pathways and targets for students that are agreed with the athlete and evidenced with a portfolio that holds match schedules, training times, event dates, discipline agreements, coaching and officiating awards.
- Use gifted and talented, junior athlete education programmes to benefit student athletes.
- Get parents/families involved or at least included in developing rounded students.

## Further information

For further information please contact Andy Garside – Director of Specialisms – [agarside@ernestbevin.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:agarside@ernestbevin.wandsworth.sch.uk)