

4. A Network of Opportunities

Somercotes Academy – member of the Tollbar Family of Academies and a mixed secondary school in North Somercotes, near Louth in Lincolnshire. It draws its pupils from largely deprived rural and coastal areas within a 20 mile radius, with many travelling by bus for over an hour each way to and from school. (East Midlands / SLIDACI: 5 / PLIDACI: 4)

What?

The Chief Medical Officer recommends that children should be active for at least 60 minutes a day across the week but currently 30.1% of children are classed as less active achieving less than 30 minutes a day, (HM Government, 2023). This is concerning with 23.4% of children moving into secondary school at obese and a further 14.3% are overweight, (Baker, 2023). Schools have a duty of care in supporting young people to achieve this goal. Therefore, co-curricular sport is a fantastic way to increase a young person's activity levels and contribute to the recommended daily total. A critical barrier for many schools is the uncertainty of where to start.

inspiring students to trial new sports and meet role models within community provision in the safe environment of their school. Whilst participating in co-curricular activities, students developed their physical literacy skills with a reward system in place to recognise skill-based achievements, sports man, and woman values in addition to a player of the match. By reframing competition in co-curricular activities, students' regular engagement and attendance has positively impacted their life skills and character.

So what?

Somercotes Academy are a great example of a school who have recognised this barrier and actively undertaken methods to reduce this problem through connecting with their School Games Organiser. A School Games Organiser is an individual invested in tackling inactive young people by connecting a network of organisations together to provide opportunities for young people to be active. Somercotes Academy and their local School Games Organiser facilitated a range of community provision through afterschool co-curricular activities to increase activity levels of students whilst bridging the gap to community provision. Local offerings of Louth Football and Grimoldby Cricket were among the opportunities offered for young people



Now what?

To replicate and learn from the success Somercotes Academy has had, secondary schools could consider:

1. Identifying the local [School Games Organiser](#) and collaborating with them to identify local community links to support the delivery of co-curricular activities within the school.
2. Invite 'in' the community so students have the safety of the school environment when trying new sport and meeting new people; before transitioning out into community settings.
3. Identifying a reward system for pupils to engage with, to support their life skill development.
4. Reframe what competitive school sport currently looks like; and work with students to create inspiring, accessible and meaningful opportunities to fulfil their potential.
5. Review the existing School Games formats found on [here](#) and test some new activity for new audiences.



Baker, C. (2023) 'Obesity Statistics'. [Accessed 10/08/23]

HM Government (2013) "School Sport and Activity Action Plan Update". [Accessed 28.07.23]

School Games (2023a) 'Taking Part'. [Accessed 16/08/23]