

King Edward VI Aston (1)

School Story

Context of school

King Edward Aston is an MLB Hub site. This is our first year as a hub site and we have coordinated the MLB Staff training for local schools in Birmingham. We had 15 registered schools (13 attendees) for the course. Staff thoroughly enjoyed the training and were excited to return to their school to deliver the programme. The resources to support the programme were excellent, clear to follow and this has allowed schools to deliver the curriculum-based programme to pupils in their schools. As we are located in a high area of deprivation, it was really important that the skills / drills could be delivered in small spaces as many of our primary schools are not blessed with green outdoor facilities.

Motivation to be part of the MLB First Pitch programme?

We wanted to become a Hub site to give our young people in partner primary schools the chance to experience a different sport and for the chance to upskill teachers. As teachers had the chance to work with the resource cards, it gave them practical experience of delivering aspects of the resource pack, to fully understand how to use it. We also were really keen to run a festival to reward schools and pupils for the delivery in schools. 20 young leaders were trained from Aston Manor Academy to help support the delivery of the festival. Unfortunately, due to the timing of the festival, it could not be delivered. This is something we have rectified for the next academic year by placing it on our official calendar.

King Edward VI Aston (2)

School Story

Who have you involved? What have you delivered?

- 13 Schools attended the MLB First Pitch Training
- 20 young people attended the young deliverer training
- Curriculum baseball has been delivered in over half the schools who attended the training. The remaining schools have used baseball as a taster session or an after-school club option.

Have there been any challenges?

As a hub site, we would really struggle to deliver a festival without any kit. The kit bags provided to the schools were excellent, but as the hub site we did not receive any kit. We would really value some to support the festival planned for next year.

Have there been any successes? Have you seen the pupils develop through/following the programme?

The schools received the training really well and thought the training and resources were excellent. Just over half of the schools have delivered baseball either in their curriculum offer or as an after school club option.


What are your next steps and plans to continue? Have you connected with a community club?

We will be running a festival in June 2025 for local partner schools and we will be running leadership training for one secondary school to support our primary event. If more training is available to staff, we will run another training session.



Kings Langley Primary School

School Story

 Dacorum,
Northamptonshire

Context of your school

Kings Langley Primary is a two-form entry school with approximately 450 children (including nursery). We are based in Dacorum in Hertfordshire.

Motivation to be part of the MLB First Pitch Programme?

The Dacorum School Sport Network recommended it, so I took part in the training and was very inspired to incorporate it in the school. I ran an after-school Club along with another teacher for our Year 6's.

Who have you involved? What have you delivered?

We ran the club for Year 6's with the equipment and resource cards that were dropped off for us. From that I researched more and then attended the Dacorum School Sport Network Baseball Festival with the local baseball club (which we all thoroughly enjoyed)!

Have there been any successes? Have you seen the pupils develop through/following the programme?

Yes, we ended up winning the Dacorum Baseball Festival and we have definitely seen the pupils develop through the programme.

Have there been any challenges?

Yes, getting to grip with the rules and not mixing them up with Rounders!

What are your next steps and plans to continue? Have you connected with a community club?

I would quite like to get more children in different age groups involved next year - so that we can have more in-house baseball competition.



St Mary's Catholic Primary School (1)

School Story

 Chingford, London

Context of your school

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a one-form entry school serving the Chingford area on the Essex/East London border. We have around 200 pupils with diverse characteristics and only have a small playground and indoor hall as options for our spaces for PE.

Motivation to be part of the MLB First Pitch Programme?

It is a different sport which we haven't considered before; we were interested in offering an alternative striking and fielding sport to the regular rounders and cricket – we play cricket but not rounders due to lack of space. We were curious so joined the programme!

Who have you involved? What have you delivered?

We've initially used the programme as an intervention program to help children with social anxiety and SEN pupils with ADHD, AAD and low sporting self-esteem. We've used older children (year 5s) to help coach the younger pupils and create a sense of community amongst ourselves. The children have engaged in variations of baseball and the modified equipment is not only of great quality but vital for us to use in such small, confined spaces. No windows are broken, and nobody has been injured!

We took our whole year 5 class to the London Stadium to watch the Workout Day and we were blown away by the experience. We would love to come again!



St Mary's Catholic Primary School (2)

School Story

 Chingford, London

Have there been any challenges?

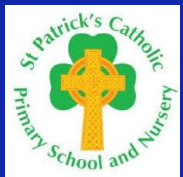
Young people aren't aware of baseball as a sport and don't have many opportunities to access baseball outside of school. As a school, it also competes with cricket and there is a cricket club across the road which makes cricket more accessible and visible. We also only have a small playground and not much outdoor space, so we have been playing baseball inside. It means the ball bounces off the wall, which adds an extra dimension to play!

Have there been any successes? Have you seen the pupils develop through/following the programme?

The year 2 students get really excited when they see the baseball equipment. The Workout Day has been a big event to show the young people more about baseball; it was a really positive experience. They played baseball in the park prior to entering the stadium and we will be promoting the sport and the event in our sports newsletter once we are back in school.

What are your next steps and plans to continue? Have you connected with a community club?

Our next steps are to continue to work on the intervention programme but also to include the modified games into our PE sessions next summer.



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (1)

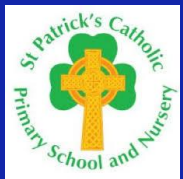
School Story

 Corby,
Northamptonshire

Context of your school

St Patrick's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is a voluntary aided Catholic school supported by the Diocese of Northampton. St Patrick's Primary is first and foremost a Catholic school with a distinct and strong ethos which disseminates from the Governing Body through all members of staff to the pupils. We at St. Patrick's will teach and uphold the values of wisdom, compassion, justice and integrity and this will be evident in relationships within the school, between the home and the school and between the school and the wider community. At present 69% of pupils are Catholic. Parents actively seek to send their pupils to the school and for the past 8 years we have been oversubscribed. We have a growing school population largely due to the regeneration and expansion of housing and business community within Corby and an increase in immigration and migration to the local area.

The school serves a diverse catchment area both culturally and economically. There is a mix of local authority and private housing with large pockets of deprivation in our area. Our Pupil Premium figure is at 11% (September 2023). The majority of pupils enter the school with attainment which is below national average in Maths and Literacy. We have identified Personal, Social and Emotional Development as being strong on entry due to the good start they have in our nursery. 5% of our pupils have been identified as having Special Educational Needs and are on our register, with 2% having an EHCP in place. Within the school 50% of the pupils have English as an Additional Language. Currently 53% of our pupils are from other ethnic origins; a figure which has been increasing more rapidly over the past three years. The percentage of pupils with EAL and from other cultural and ethnic groups is significantly above average when compared to national. However, the very large majority of these pupils achieve well and make good progress.



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (2)

School Story

 Corby,
Northamptonshire

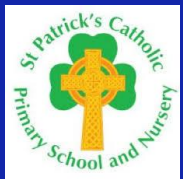
Motivation to be part of the MLB First Pitch Programme?

The initial draw was to provide our children with wider opportunities to engage in sports that they had not experienced before. Baseball was a sport that would draw on skills the children were already developing in the PE curriculum – striking and fielding skills – but would be new to them all. This would appeal to children who may not have taken part in after school clubs or engaged in additional sports before as all of the children were learning together. We were encouraged by the fact that we were being offered the training for free and the equipment to get us started. I decided that this would be a fantastic opportunity to bring a world known sport to our school with the chance to learn and provide this opportunity to the children in our school.

Who have you involved? What have you delivered?

My colleague and I delivered an assembly to Key Stage 2 children with information all about our after-school club. We provided a PowerPoint including what the club was about, who could attend, the equipment and expectations for their attendance.

We had 38 children from Year 3 to 6 attend the club. 26 boys and 12 girls. We completed all of the training, skills and games cards, including learning the baseball terminology which we found very interesting. The remaining 2 weeks have been having tournament games. Each child and adult had a baseball shirt printed with our school on the front, logo on the arm and their chosen name on the back. We attended the 'Work Out Day' London Series in London on Friday 7th June 2024 which the children absolutely loved! It was a great experience for them all as we arrived in our printed shirts and watched both teams on the field. It was a very memorable day to see the stadium converted into a baseball field and the children managed to get some balls and shirts signed. For many it was their first experience of a professional sporting event.



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (3)

School Story

 Corby,
Northamptonshire

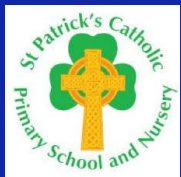
Who have you involved? What have you delivered? (continued)

We also attended the Baseball festival with Northamptonshire Sport at their Summer Games on Thursday 4th July 2024, the children moved around different stations in the morning and had 3 games in the afternoon. This gave them the opportunity to showcase the skills they had learned and enjoy the game.

Have there been any challenges?

The baseball after school club was extremely popular! We soon discovered that with 38 children we needed help, so another colleague joined us each week to support with the club. This allowed us to have one side of the field for games and the other side to continue with the card of the week. This enabled us to have smaller groups of children and for us to monitor and help where needed with implementing the correct posture, stance, follow through for each task.

I think the children enjoyed the club because everyone was starting on an even footing, nobody knew how to play already so everyone learned together. When the register was taken the children were divided into 4 different teams all mixed throughout the different age groups. They then chose a team name based on that week's cards and would stay in that team for the whole lesson.



St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (4)

School Story

Corby,
Northamptonshire

Have there been any successes? Have you seen the pupils develop through/following the programme?

The children have improved vastly from the first week we started, their technique and ability stood out when pitching, batting and catching. The children all attended regularly which was very positive - we had been concerned that once we attended London, we would have some children not attend but, in fact, it inspired them and increased their keenness. The older children would help the younger children in their team when playing the games. They all learned to communicate and teamwork skills were promoted by working together to get people struck out, which they enjoyed.

We were particularly pleased that the children who did not normally attend any clubs went on to thrive and looked like they thoroughly enjoyed it, which was wonderful to see.

What are your next steps and plans to continue? Have you connected with a community club?

We are planning to continue the club in September as the children moving up into Key Stage 2 are very excited to have the opportunity to join the club.

We had our local baseball club join us two weeks ago for a pitching session to show us some techniques to help the children as we discovered this was the area we wanted to improve on. They shared their post regarding this with us:

<https://www.northantsbaseball.co.uk/news/outreach-programme-2860664.html>. It was great to forge links with local teams and hope this can continue in the future too.



Trevithick School (1)

School Story

 Camborne, Cornwall

Context of your school

The school is in an area of social deprivation in Camborne, Cornwall. It is a two-form entry school with approximately 500 children (aged 2-11). We have high SEND needs (we have an Area Resource Base which supports pupils with more complex needs). We have high proportions of low-income families and pupil premium.

Motivation to be part of the MLB First Pitch Programme?

To offer something new to our children, to help encourage a different mix of children and to provide a variety to our school offer through developing our range of striking & fielding games. It was also a CPD opportunity for staff and free equipment to use with the children was a factor - those sorts of things are always well received.

Who have you involved? What have you delivered?

So far, we've delivered to KS2 children (aged 7-11), we've offered children after school club opportunities and linked the activities into our curriculum offer, alongside our other striking & fielding games (cricket/rounders).



Trevithick School (2)

School Story

 Camborne, Cornwall

Have there been any challenges?

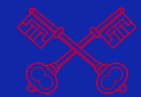
Children have enjoyed taking part and it has been well received but some of the plastic bats haven't held up well to consistent use. Other than that, we haven't encountered any barriers to participation. A lack of opportunities to compete and/or a link to a local club would be barriers to us progressing the sport locally.

Have there been any successes? Have you seen the pupils develop through/following the programme?

Seeing children enjoy the game, having fun whilst playing, particularly enjoying the batting. We've seen a development in critical thinking/game management with children starting to think about how they can get people out or ensure they don't run out their team mates etc.

What are your next steps and plans to continue? Have you connected with a community club?


We plan on increasing the use of MLB First Pitch within the curriculum, as well as continuing to use it within our after-school club provision. We also hope to be able to compete with our primary sports alliance. We haven't got a local club but will look into linking if one close starts.



RADLEY

Radley College – Hub School (1)

School Story

 Abingdon, Oxfordshire

Motivation to be part of the MLB First Pitch Programme?

Radley College already have a Partnerships Programme where they work with other schools, charities and community groups to enact positive change. The Partnerships Manager has previously been engaged with baseball and seen how inclusive a sport it can be, so saw this programme as an opportunity for a new sport to positively impact children from local areas of high deprivation. These connections were supported by Active Oxfordshire and began with relationship building between Radley College and the 5 targeted primary schools.

In 2 of the 5 targeted schools, PE was being provided by non-specialist subject teachers and Radley College saw the benefit of MLB First Pitch in providing structure to these staff to be able to plan for these lessons and in using Radley College's Young Sports Leaders to support with delivery to meet PE curriculum targets. The Young Sports Leaders were all Year 12 pupils from Radley College who had been trained internally over two years to deliver PE sessions in primary schools. Strong relationships were developed between the Young Sports Leaders and the primary school teachers from the first day of the MLB First Pitch training.

Who have you involved? What have you delivered?

A total of 16 Young Sports Leaders supported delivery of the programme in the 5 targeted primary schools. They each delivered a weekly MLB First Pitch session in the primary schools across a 6-week period. At the end of this period, Radley College hosted an MLB First Pitch Festival for all the targeted primary schools to attend, which was run by the Young Sports Leaders and primary school staff.

The festival was held at Oxford Academy (festival programme pictured right), as this site was in walking distance for all the primary schools and was the school that many of the young people at the primary schools will transition to in the future. Also in attendance at the festival was the captain of the Oxford Kings Baseball team and the president of the British Baseball Federation.

Context of your school

Radley College is located in Abingdon, Oxfordshire and is an independent boarding school for boys aged 13-18.





Have there been any challenges?

It's better for the young people to split into smaller groups; we found that 6-8 in a group with a Young Sports Leader each worked really well. However, for this, more equipment is needed. For example, with more batting tees more young people could practise batting at the same time. The environment in which the session is being delivered also has a big influence in terms of the amount and type of space available.

Without the Young Sports Leaders supporting the primary school teachers, it could be that teachers struggle to remember the training and be confident in what they are implementing – particularly for non-specialist PE teachers. The Young Sports Leaders have offered to create video resources to support teachers with this moving forwards to help with this.

Have there been any successes? Have you seen the pupils develop through/following the programme?

Primary school engagement was easier than expected – this was possibly because schools didn't need to buy anything themselves, the programme was simple to follow and deliver, as well as strong relationships having been developed between the schools across the past 2 years. The progress in the children taking part across the 6 weeks was also better than expected and the festival at the end of the 6 weeks was a good chance to see this. As it was a new sport to the young people, they all started from the same point, so no one was particularly disadvantaged. The festival was also a good focus for everyone involved; everyone came looking forward to it. The programme was also a good challenge for the Young Sports Leaders to use, adapt and apply their leadership skills to a new sport. The resource cards were also very clear and provided clear progression for the Young Sports Leaders and primary school teachers to deliver.

What are your next steps and plans to continue? Have you connected with a community club?

We plan to continue to work with the same five schools following the same format, ending with a festival at The Oxford Academy. In addition, we hope to engage with and support other secondary schools within our local region to act as hubs for local primary schools. We hope that similar training can be made available for these new hub schools, as well as our new Young Sports Leaders and new staff at the participating primary schools. We have also connected with Oxford Kings (the community club) and continue discussion with regards to their support in creating a sustainable junior playing pathway.



Claypool Primary

School Story

 Bolton, Greater Manchester

Context of your school

Claypool is a one form entry primary school with a SEND provision attached. It is recognised within the authority as being highly inclusive, and as a result has 19.1% of pupils with additional needs. The school ethos believes strongly in developing the whole child and PE, physical activity and sport are valued for the role they can play in this.

Motivation to be part of the MLB First Pitch Programme?

Having attended the training and received the equipment it appeared to be a new and exciting opportunity to try with smaller groups before potentially incorporating into curriculum PE.

Who have you involved? What have you delivered?

The programme has been delivered to 2 groups of children, 10 in Y3 and 12 in Y5 as part of an intervention programme with children who are either SEND or have low confidence and self-esteem. These are established groups where MLB First Pitch has been taught for an 8-week block, finishing with a festival with 4 other schools at the end. There are 9 girls and 13 boys in these groups.



Claypool Primary School Story

 Bolton, Greater
Manchester

Have there been any challenges?

It was very much learning with the children but that can add value to the experience. The equipment provided is a good starting point, but the tee broke very early on despite being used only for the purposes intended, 2 of the larger balls which we use with special needs pupils popped so it has been a bit disappointing that the durability has let us down. We look after equipment and only usually need to replace when things wear out.

Have there been any successes?

Have you seen the pupils develop through/following the programme? Enjoyment and engagement levels have been high meaning accelerated learning of the game, skills and tactics. Concentration has developed in children with additional needs who usually find it hard to focus for sustained periods. Children from Y5 and Y3 took part in a festival where other schools brought Y6 and staff from other schools, as well as an experienced baseball coach, commented on how skillful they were and how well they had been able to compete against older children.

What are your next steps and plans to continue?

Have you connected with a community club? The school will continue to deliver baseball in intervention groups and may extend into the PE curriculum and extra curricular club next year. The festival was attended by a coach from Manchester Baseball club who is going to support delivery and future festivals. We will definitely attend the festivals and events provided by the SSP next year, and look forward to the 'Salford World Series'.



Stories from Young People

I was looking forward to being involved in the programme because I could do something new. As part of the programme, I have learned how to throw the ball correctly, catch and bat. I know about the bases and the rules of the game.

Because of the programme I feel happy that I can now do more things than I could do at the start. In the future the things I've learned through this programme will help me to try and help my team out in a competition, play more sports and win something.

Young Person, aged 9

I was looking forward to being involved in the programme because I wanted to try a new sport. As part of the programme, I have done lots of games and teamwork. Because of the programme I feel happy, and I liked a new sport.

In the future, the things I've learned through this programme will help me to work in a team.

Young person, aged 8