



## Case Study 1:

# Achieving Essential Skills through the Power of Sport

Edinburgh College and Spartans Community Football Academy

## Achieving Essential Skills through the Power of Sport

Edinburgh College has teamed up with Spartans Community Football Academy to give students new skills and confidence through the power of sport. Using football as a learning tool, students on the Entry to Sport programme are building core and essential skills through the partnership with Spartans.

The Entry to Sport course uses a sport-themed, project-based learning approach to support young people who may find it hard to make the transition to adult life. It equips them with the personal, social, literacy, life and employability skills that will enable them to move on in their lives and progress to further studies or employment. The college and Spartans Community Football Academy are sharing their skills, knowledge and resources to provide the model and support students.



The Spartans link uses football as a method to help the students develop in these areas. The idea is that the sports and football theme, which includes practical activities, is a fresh way of gaining the skills and knowledge usually delivered in a traditional classroom setting.



Working with staff from the college and the Spartans Community Football Academy, the students undertake a series of football-related challenges, projects and activities, including football training sessions and other practical tasks. The learning and assessment plans match the regular core skills classes – in

communications, ICT and numeracy – but with content themed around sport and topical sporting events and news.

The first cohort of the course ended their time with a challenge match between the students' team – Edinburgh College Eagles – against Spartans Connections, Spartans' disability team. The students planned and organised the game themselves. The hard-fought match was won by Spartans Connections. The project fits the college's strategic aims of achieving a positive outcome for every student, and in shaping an innovative culture where creative solutions can thrive.

The programme was set up by lecturer David Hiddleston, who wanted to explore how to reach different groups of students, to make sure everyone had equal opportunity to succeed. He thought that students could benefit from the many

lessons they could learn from sport and that they could be delivered in a fun, accessible, challenging and rewarding way.

Spartans Community Football Academy has a strong presence in the local community so David thought they would be the ideal partners for the project, to use sport as an inspiring influence in the lives of young people. The club and its academy were delighted to come on board.

All the students showed significant progress in core skills and essential skills such as teamwork, timekeeping, employability skills and many more. The sports-themed activities also improved their literacy skills.



Garry Betts of Spartans Connections said: “The Entry to Sport project is a fantastic idea – we hope that it will continue each year and other projects can spring from it.

“It was a great learning experience for us as much as the college. Let’s hope that we can continue to grow together in the future.”

Entry to Sport student Finn Gray said: “One of the good things about the project with Spartans is that it makes studying more like real life. We covered working as a team, time management and making up training plans.”

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