



**CLEVELAND**  
SCHOOL SPORT PARTNERSHIP

# CASE STUDY 1 2021-22

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## LEADERSHIP

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# Background

Cleveland Leadership Academy was established in September 2021 for all Sports Leaders to be a member of throughout the year. Previously the Leadership Academy was a stand-alone event that was organised by the Cleveland SGO and Partnership Manager and included the five secondary schools [Laurence Jackson, Nunthorpe, Bydales, Freebrough and Huntcliff]. This year all Sports Leaders have volunteered under the 'Leadership Academy' umbrella.

The logo is representative of young people leading a group of children and is based on the Partnership logo, and was designed and endorsed by the first group of leaders to be trained this year at Laurence Jackson School.

The Leadership Academy displays their own pop-up and banner at events showing the Youth Sport Trust leadership pathway from Learning & Exploring, through to Driving Change.

With five secondary schools and more than 100 events, ranging from festivals to development days to competitions, there are many opportunities for Sports Leaders. The SGO and SSP shares those opportunities among the schools, trying to keep opportunities as local as possible.

Another change this year has been the focus on Events and Leadership, creating a stronger and better trained workforce. The focus has been to prepare Leaders for specific roles, by visiting some schools during PE lessons, and other schools as an extra curricular offer and keeping the training going throughout the year.

This case study focuses on one student, 'M', who has attended the extra curricular Leadership Academy at Laurence Jackson School. Her identity has been removed at her request and her image is not used throughout this document.



# M's JOURNEY

M is a Year 9 student at Laurence Jackson School. She has a specific learning difficulty, Dyslexia, and she struggles with writing, spelling and reading. M experiences high levels of anxiety and struggles to attend school. This is M's journey through the Leadership Academy this year.

M came to the first Leadership Academy training session in September 2021. At that session, 22 volunteer students from years 7, 8 and 9 attended the hour long extra-curricular session. The session was designed to be an ice-breaker, and team-building activity and introduce the participants to what leadership is.

At the end of the session, M came up to me and stated that she did not think that leadership was for her. She said that she thought she would be playing sport, not organising and officiating sports and activity. I asked her to give it another go and convinced her to attend the following week.



M turned up the following week, where the session looked at developing students' planning and organisation. I partnered M up with some of the younger leaders and asked her to help them. At the end of the session I asked M how she found the session and she said she had enjoyed it and would come back the following week. M came back the following week, and for the next three weekly sessions. A pattern was forming. M was attending school more - but her attendance was still hit-and-miss - apart from the noticeable fact that in any week, she always attended on a Thursday, - Leadership Academy day.

Throughout the year, as leadership opportunities at festivals and competitions increased, so did M's attendance. It was also clear to see M's confidence grow. She involved herself in all aspects of leadership, from organising teams, to scoring, to chaperoning. Whatever was asked of her, she was willing to try and have a go.



# Archery

Having seen how M was attending school on the days that there were events, I spoke to her Learning Support Assistant to explore further opportunities to encourage M into school on days that there was no events. Mrs Shaw was keen with the idea and M was monitored more closely.

In December one of the training sessions involved taking part in an indoor archery session as a reward. We have two sets in school which are mostly used for activity to engage non-sporty children. M was at the session and said that she had taken part in archery at her Y6 residential and she had really enjoyed it. I decided to change the session from a 'have a go' session to a 'how to run' session, just in case any of the leaders would include archery in future activity.

The next day, M came to the office and asked if she could use the archery set during lunch time to practise. I asked her if she remembered how to set it up and be safe, then allowed her to do so. M not only enjoyed the session, but by the end she had recruited more children (Years 7 & 8) from the 'Jackson Club' which was taking place in the squash court next to where M was practising archery. Jackson Club is a break and lunch time club where vulnerable students have a safe place to go.



We didn't see M for a couple of weeks, and her attendance wasn't good. I spoke to Mrs Shaw, and we suggested to M that she could run archery sessions for Year 7 & 8 when she was in school. M's attendance improved slightly, so now she was attending school to lead at events, and attending to run lunchtime archery sessions.



M's sporadic attendance continued into the spring term, and it was seen by school that it was a positive move to allow M to attend events as a leader, and to run archery sessions, as it did improve M's attendance. However, my thoughts were that M could not just pick and choose the good days to attend school, particularly because she often only attended school at the time of an event. If an event started at 1pm, M would come in to school at 12:30pm. This was also timetabled in by her LSA.

I spoke to Mrs Shaw and asked if we could explore the possibility of extending M's attendance by using Leadership as a reward for attending school. Mrs Shaw spoke to M and her Mum, and it was agreed that M could only participate in off-site leadership opportunities if she increased her hours and attended more lessons. Also, M could only run a lunchtime archery session if she attended lessons for the whole day. M agreed to these changes.

# The Road Ahead

M continues to attend more lessons, is still volunteering at events as a member of the Leadership Academy, and runs lunchtime archery sessions once a week for Year 7 and 8 students in the Jackson Club.

M is not yet attending school full time, but there is a significant improvement.

I recently interviewed M and she gave me an insight into her motivation to attend school more regularly.

She said that she has always enjoyed playing sport, but struggles to fit in with sports teams in school.

When she attended the first Leadership Academy session at the start of the year, she thought it would be playing more sport, but found after a couple of sessions that she really enjoyed the leadership aspect of the academy, which is something she had never thought about before. M had 'stumbled' across leadership.

She was honest in her answers and when I asked why she attended school more now, she said that it was because of the leadership opportunities. I asked her how her lessons were and she said that she is now enjoying most of them.

We will continue to give M leadership opportunities, and our hope is that she will continue to improve her attendance. Next year she starts GCSE's, and KS4 students are not invited to attend the Leadership Academy. Hopefully the Senior Leadership Team at Laurence Jackson School will see the benefits the Academy brings to children, and an exception can be made. I will ensure the archery sets are made available for M at lunch times, should she choose to continue with her sessions for the Year 7 and 8 students who attend Jackson Club. I hope she does.

