

## Sport Unlimited Case Study

### Introduction:

The Revolution Skate Park in Broadstairs offers a variety of activities such as in-line skating, climbing and skateboarding (the basis of this project). The Skate Park has had a high demand for its sessions but recently, thanks to Sport Unlimited, experienced an increased waiting list of 40 children wanting to take part in the skateboarding project. Children from year 3-8 were given the opportunity to attend an 8 week course with sessions running for 2 hours. This would have cost participants £79, however the funding provided meant that 13 young people from Thanet could take part free of charge. Thanet is in the top 65 most deprived districts and as a result cost is often a barrier to young people's participation.



This project was created and delivered by a partnership in Thanet which consisted of:

- Thanet's Sports Development Officer (SDO)
- Revolution Skate Park
- Thanet School Sport Partnership (SSP)



Each of these groups played key roles in:

- Targeting the children for the project
- Advertising
- Ensuring the project ran smoothly.

This partnership was key to the success of this project as together they were able to identify the need for a non traditional sport to be available to the young people in Thanet. It was important to find a unique sport that was appealing to the 'semi sporty' young people and they were keen to be introduced to the impressive facilities Revolution Skate Park has to offer.

### The Project:

The Skate Park did not want to single this one group out. To ensure they didn't feel out of place the young people undertook some preliminary testing for the instructors to identify the children's abilities. Following this they were integrated within the existing groups. This enabled the stronger children to progress faster and the less able to experience the attention they needed. Gabriel, 9 years old, 'couldn't stand' the first lesson but with the instructors patience and help he managed to continue the course and now thoroughly enjoys the sessions, attempting new moves every week, although not without a little hesitance first!

On observing a session it was easy to see that the young instructors helped to create a fun and relaxed atmosphere which took away any risk of intimidating new comers. One mother said 'it's nice for the boys to have positive role models'. With a good ratio of instructors to participants children were constantly active. The sessions took the form of:

- Beginning with a fun game of 'dodgeball' during which young people unknowingly start to pick up tricks
- Floor work or ramps depending on which level they are at

- Finish with 'free skate' which sees some young people pushing themselves on the more challenging ramps and others returning to their favourite part of the Skate Park.

#### **Attendance:**

Overall 13 young people participated with an 11:2 ratio of boys to girls. The majority of the young people were classed as 'semi-sporty' with only 3 out the 13 currently only participating in one hour.

The project saw a very good retention rate with only 2 participants not attending 60% of the sessions. Out of the other participants only one other session was missed which is a very positive sign. Furthermore the two girls involved in the project were both retained. This has shown Revolution Skate Park that the sport also interests girls and to accommodate those less confident they will now be implementing girls only sessions.

#### **Future development and sustainability:**

As with any activities that have been provided for free, there is sometimes the worry that participants will lose interest as they will suddenly have to begin paying for an activity which was previously free for them. Fortunately, this doesn't seem to be an issue with this Sport Unlimited group. Revolution stated that there has been a lot of interest in booking on upcoming courses along with some of the children already paying for extra sessions along with attending the free skating. Trinity aged 10, *'loves it, and will be coming with my older brother after these sessions, we have already agreed!'*

Martyn Cassell, Thanet's SDO commented on the project, 'Thanet is very lucky to have such a fantastic facility and I am always happy to work with the team at Revolution to make sure local young people and those from further afield can make use of it.' Revolution has said that following the success of this project they will also look into the Open Pot Funding the Sport Leisure and Olympics Service offers through Sport Unlimited.