

## **London Academy of Gymnastics and Dance (LAGAD) – Written evidence (NPS0009)**

Communication: At the moment SME's and smaller local sports clubs are often overlooked in preference of the larger players and registered charities and not for profits. Whilst we can often deliver as good as quality service and at times better; we tend not to get a look in as we are viewed as 'profitable' organisations; which unfortunately in community sport remains a dirty word.

As an SME that provides Gymnastics within schools, we have very strong links within our local populations. I feel it's a great shame that profitable SME's providing sports to the wider community are very much second class citizens when it comes to partnerships with NGB's and Councils. 'Not for profits' often take the bulk of the work and yet they are often run by individuals taking huge salaries or owned by private enterprises for profitable purposes. This definitely needs to be reviewed.

It would make a huge difference if local councils could build up a data base of registered and NGB linked organisations (profitable or not) and communicate regularly and effectively with all of them. There are many SME's that have a social conscience and offer both free and reduced cost access to those in need; in one such example we trained a gifted girl for 5 years (5 days per week) totally free of charge. She couldn't even afford the bus fair to the sports hall. She ended up representing Team GB Juniors. The only alternative for this often homeless girl was funding from GLL, but she didn't want to train with them. SME's should get a look in if their coaches can provide the right skills and training.

### Encouragement

Children can be encouraged to participate in sport by making it 'cool' and 'fun'. It is not difficult to use already established trends. Find out what the kids want and how they want to approach their classes. We go into schools and offer 'free' sessions. We make our classes positive and engaging. We offer a range of teaching approaches that cater to a wide range of participants. Competition against others, competition against self, range from easy to do to challenging skills. Often the attitude of parents has a significant affect, so we also work WITH the parents.

### Engaging Underrepresented Groups.

We are an SME working in particularly deprived parts of inner London (Tottenham, Islington, Enfield etc). We have a sizable percentage of attendees that are from ethnic minorities and less affluent backgrounds. We 'listen' to the needs of our participants and create our sessions based on our knowledge and their feedback. E.g. Teenage girls (of all backgrounds) like to choose their own music to exercise to and to have some say in the content of their sessions.

As with food and children's clothing, making sport for under 18s VAT exempt will really help to make classes more accessible for all. This could help to promote

participation in health-enhancing physical activity and keep obesity levels lower which could then save the NHS millions in the long run.

I believe that the 2015 sporting priorities remain important. I have no access to the data, so cannot comment on outcomes.

Data could be improved by collecting data from ALL providers. We are a profitable enterprise (or were before Covid hit), coaching over 3,000 children per week. We have no contact with authorities of any kind and limited links with our NGB, so our chance to have an input is limited.

Bias can be addressed with education. People in the sports sector tend to be physical and visual learners. Making films that sports sector personal can watch and empowering the education of participants to firmly and clearly stand up for a fairer society is essential within our entire society.

Safeguarding:

Look at fear. What do coaches 'not want to see'.

Continual obligatory CPD for elite coaches and external inspections – much like OFSTED inspections.

A national plan for sport and recreation is essential. It would enable us to benchmark goals, what our plans are and to check whether we are achieving those goals within the time frame set out. It would highlight positive results and areas of weakness that may still need to be addressed.

*12 January 2021*