

This evidence relates entirely to fourth line of enquiry: What measures should be taken to ensure a sustained legacy in school sports following 2012?

Summary

Sporting Nation is a web-based tool which helps grassroots sports players in schools and the community manage, and keep a record of, their active lives. It allows users to:

- build a permanent record of their sporting stats, achievements, and personal fitness data
- manage all team and individual sports in one place; school, university and community
- plan and manage ladders, leagues and individual fixtures
- manage player, official and volunteer availability
- share sporting highlights with family and friends
- keep track of their network of sporting connections; team-mates, opponents and coaches
- In schools, it connects with school databases and virtual learning environments, and helps PE teachers assess pupils by building a picture of entire active lives, not just what they see in class
- A wealth of participation data is collected across every type of sport and activity, and every pupil

SportingNation.com is a framework which makes it easier to organise and record sport that stays with users after they leave school. This framework, together with a permanent record of their involvement and sporting connections, make it more likely players will remain engaged in active lives after they leave school.

Overview

Where Facebook helps organise and keep a permanent record of social connections and events, and LinkedIn does the same for one's professional life, Sporting Nation is a similar concept but for grassroots sports. It is not always easy to organise sporting activity, and very few statistics are recorded for grassroots sport – you can't pick a team, organise a ladder or keep statistics on existing social networks. Furthermore, whilst one would not always want to add team-mates, coaches and opponents on Facebook, maintaining this network is desirable for continued sports participation.

Sporting Nation solves these problems. It is a platform on which team and individual sports are organised, availability and scheduling is managed, and statistics are recorded. Over time, a user builds a permanent record of their sporting life, and the network of people involved. Importantly, it brings together in one place sporting involvement from school and the community.

Schools First

Whilst Sporting Nation is designed for all people who lead active lives, our strategy has been to start by focusing on schools. The PE module is used by 100% of the student population in a school, not just the 'sporty' kids, exposing all students to the framework, and sporting opportunities. It builds an electronic portfolio of evidence showing progress and achievement. By building up a picture of a user's sporting involvement, statistics and sporting network whilst they are at school, these users are likely to be 'sticky'. We have been working with seven schools to help build the software, and have over 50 schools who have requested access ahead of our full schools launch next academic year.

Pilot Groups

Having started development in November 2011, several thousand pilot users from the following schools have guided our development since Sep 2012:

High Arcal School, Dudley

Becket Keys School, Brentwood

Ravenswood School, Bromley

St. Gregory's Catholic School, Tunbridge Wells

Christ's Hospital School, Horsham

Haverstock Comprehensive, Camden

Borden Grammar (Sports College), Sittingbourne

Proposal

For every child, starting in primary school, to build a permanent lifelong record of their sporting involvement, whether playing, coaching, volunteering, or keeping fit, and of all their sporting connections. This allows continuity between primary and secondary schools, as well as between school and community sport. It stays with the individual after school, helping promote a lifelong habit of sport. It is cheap to provide, and provides a wealth of data on activity and participation as a by-product.