

Inspirational Stories – Gig Mill Swim School

Background

In 2010, a group from the pool committee at Gig Mill school in Dudley, West Midlands were trying for funding to get Gig Mill pool refurbished. At that time, the pool was only used one term out of the academic year, in the summer, as the building wasn't heated and needed updating to make it a more comfortable environment for swimmers and teachers. To enable this to happen, the building needed to be rebuilt.



Before



After

As a requirement of funding from Sport England and Ibstock Cory Environmental Trust, the refurbished pool had to service the community as well as being functional for the school. To help plan this, the pool committee asked Sharon Rollinson (Swim School Supervising Teacher) for her input and ideas on how the pool could be used to reach out to serve the community, as she has been working there for a number of years through the summer term providing lessons to pupils at the school.

Control

Before the refurbishment of the pool, it was only used to teach Gig Mill pupils. After initial thoughts of hiring the pool out for use by other clubs, the pool committee and Sharon decided it would be in the school and community's best interests for the school to create their own swimming school. This enabled them to have control over how the use of the pool would benefit all parties involved.

They were thinking of providing after school lessons, as the pool was designed as a learner pool and is 1.24m deep and 16m long. They have developed an agreement with the neighbouring pools in their area to enable their swimmers to achieve distance awards and perform National Teaching Plan skills in deep water. They liaised with the ASA to

assess their facilities and programme and once their plans were approved, they were then set to put them into action.



After-school classes

Their lessons started with after school classes, consisting of one adult and child class, one adult recreation session and after school classes, involving all stages of the National Teaching Plan. The quality of the classes has led to increased demand. Gig Mill Swim School now has a full schedule of four adult and child classes, which are all full, two aqua fit classes, two adult recreation classes, one adult beginner class, two Rookie Lifesaving sessions, all stages of the National Teaching Plan and specialised classes for autistic children. They provide swimming lessons to other schools in the Dudley Borough during the day and Gig Mill school pupils use it all year round, as part of their curriculum.

Big Splash Event

They have recently celebrated their first year running as Gig Mill Swim School through holding a Big Splash event. They had a pool party session where families were invited. The Home & School Association put on food and drinks after the 5 half hour sessions. They had current swimmers and prospective swimmers, parents, grandparents and siblings all attending with very positive feedback.



When the pool was in use during the summer term only, there were only two teachers employed. Initially the numbers of teachers were increased when the Swim School started and further to the success of Gig Mill Swim School and the demand of classes, the number of teachers has increased further.

They now employ 17 swimming teachers, some of which are ex-pupils of the school, showing that they can offer a pathway into employment from helper teachers to pool coordinators. Even with the increased number of teachers and pool time, they still have an extensive waiting list and find that the phone is always ringing.



Community award

Their success is through the continued support from the pool committee and the high level of teaching provided by their staff and Sharon is delighted that they have recently won the community club of the year in the Black Country Sport and Physical Activity awards and would like to thank everyone involved for their support.



Contact Details

If you would like to contact Gig Mill Swim School about their inspirational story then please contact them using the below contact details:

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