**Education**

It is now possible for schools within Dundee, Angus and Perth & Kinross to purchase Racquet Buddies for the early years using their allocated funding. In order to do so, please contact Hayley for more information using the contact link.

There is a standard programme ready to be delivered to children nursery age to P3 which is a 10 week block in which children and teachers will receive the following:

Teachers

* a fully comprehensive lesson pack with clear CfE outcomes highlighted, making it easy to identify the focus for the term
* evaluation for us to identify positive aspects of the course and also where developments needs are in order for us to improve our service

Children

* a learning record of their Racquet Buddies sessions, showing main learning intentions
* a simple evaluation for us to guage if the lessons have been pitched to the right level and to the professional standards we expect

In addition to all the benefits of the privately-run classes, children will also be educated in health and exercise and the benefits of this for life. The effects of exercise on our bodies is highlighted throughout and not only the physical elements, but also the positive impact it can have on our mental health which is so important for our young children today.

(PowerPoint Info)

**What is Racquet Buddies?**

Racquet Buddies is a programme which is designed to develop hand-eye coordination, gross motor skills, various movement patterns and basic racquet skills to early and first stage children, from nursery age to P3.

**How was Racquet Buddies created?**

Racquet Buddies was established in 2013 by Hayley Hogg, a fully qualified and practising primary teacher and former international badminton player, having also coached players to a junior international level.

Consideration was given to ‘A Curriculum for Excellence’ when designing the structure of the lessons, with all four capacities (successful learners, effective contributors, confident individuals and responsible citizens) taken into account.

**What are the learning intentions of Racquet Buddies?**

* Children will recognise and be able to practise the actions for the three main shots, namely overhead, forehand and backhand, through a variety of fun games and practices, and also through hitting balloons with their racquets.
* Children will work as part of a team to take part in group games and activities such as relay races.
* Children will take part in group discussions to talk about the effect that activities has on their bodies, and also to give suggestions on ways to improve their skills.
* Children will achieve success in practising and demonstrating their newly acquired skills.

**How can Racquet Buddies help children in the early years?**

**Physical development**

Children will gain an understanding of ways in which they move and manipulate their bodies in order to have the desired effect, ie in order for the balloon/ball/shuttle to go in a forward direction, the action with their arm/body must move this way.

Children will be able to carry out various movement patterns with their feet, gradually increasing in difficulty as they progress in a way that success will be celebrated before moving on. Examples of this include running, jumping, hopping, and performing various fast feet exercises.

Children will be exposed to a vast range of equipment to practise the skills being taught, causing them to consider the need to alter their action to achieve success, and put this into action.

**Social development**

Children will take part in discussions in group/class situations to talk about the effects of the games/practices and will offer ideas and suggestions to others in the class.

Children will work cooperatively with their peers to complete tasks and activities, offering encouragement to them to boost team spirit.

Children will interact with one another through a series of activities and games, demonstrating self-awareness within a group situation.

**How does Racquet Buddies reflect the experiences and outcomes highlighted within a Curriculum for Excellence?**

There are many ways in which the programme reflects the current curriculum in Scotland, with specific reference to the Health and Wellbeing experiences and outcomes. Both ‘Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing’ and ‘Physical education, physical activity and sport’ are the main areas which are covered.

In addition to this, there is also a clear link to the Es and Os in Literacy, specifically ‘Tools for Listening and Talking’.

**Mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing**

I value the opportunities I am given to make friends and be part of a group in a range of situations (HWB 0-14a)

I am developing my understanding of the human body and can use this knowledge to maintain and improve my wellbeing and health

(HWB 0-15a)

**Physical education, physical activity and sport**

I am aware of my own and others’ needs and feelings especially when taking turns and sharing resources. I recognise the need to follow rules (HWB 0-23a)

By exploring and observing movement, I can describe what I have learned about it (HWB 0-24a)

I am enjoying daily opportunities to participate in different kinds of play, both outdoors and indoors (HWB 0-25a)

I know that being active is a healthy way to be (HWB 0-27a)

I can describe how I feel after taking part in energetic activities and I am becoming aware of some of the changes that happen in my body (HWB 0-28a)

**Tools for Listening and Talking**

As I listen and talk in different situations, I am learning to take turns and am developing my awareness of when to talk and when to listen (LIT 0-02a)

I listen and watch for useful or interesting information and I use this to make choices or learn new things (LIT 0-04a)

As I listen and take part in conversations and discussions, I discover new words and phrases which I use to help me express my ideas, thoughts and feelings (LIT 0-10a)

**How does Racquet Buddies reflect the indicators of the GIRFEC model?**



**Confident Individuals**

Active – Having opportunities to take part in activities such as play, recreation and sport which contribute to healthy growth and development, both at home and in the community.

**Effective Contributors**

Included – Having help to overcome social, educational, physical and economic inequalities and being accepted as part of the community in which they live and learn.

**Responsible Citizens**

Healthy - Having the highest attainable standards og physical and mental health, access to suitable healthcare, and support in learning to make healthy and safe choices.

**Successful Learners**

Achieving - Being supported and guided in their learning and in the development of their skills, confidence and self-esteem at home, at school and in the community.

**Underpinning Theory**

There are 2 main theorists who have inspired the structure of the programme:

* Jerome Bruner
* Len Vygotsky

Jerome Bruner

**Spiral Curriculum** – this is the belief that children can tackle challenging topics in age-appropriate ways. These topics can be revisited and expanded upon year after year.

**Application to Racquet Buddies** – throughout their development, children are challenged to use more difficult hitting objects (balloon → shuttlecock/tennis ball), to include more technique to their hitting (eg hit overhead → stand side on → step through → add movement)

**Building on Previous Knowledge/Experience** – learning is an active process in which learners construct new ideas or concepts based upon their current/past knowledge

**Application to Racquet Buddies** – in relation to learning a particular shot, eg forehand, children progress to using hard/soft forehands and also when it is appropriate to play that certain shot (ie when the balloon comes down on the side the racquet is being held)

Len Vygotsky & Jerome Bruner

**The Importance of adults** – both men believed that adults should play an active role in assisting the child’s learning

**Application to Racquet Buddies** – teachers/coaches are vital in providing as much interaction as possible throughout each session, giving the children most opportunity to develop their skills (maintaining the highest possible ratio of adults:children possible)

**Why now for Racquet Buddies?**

* Due to the extraction of PE specialists within primary schools, there is a distinct lack of expertise available to children and an increase in pressure on teachers to provide an enriched programme of the expressive arts to their pupils. Racquet Buddies can help both staff and pupils.
* Within early years, childhood obesity is a huge problem with NHS Scotland reporting that nearly a quarter (22.9%) of primary one pupils are at risk of being overweight or obese. Racquet Buddies can provide a structured time for further physical activity, and something which would also be new for many of the pupils.

**Reviews from parents who are also teachers**

* My 3 year old absolutely loves the class and looks forward to it every week. As a primary school teacher myself, I recognise the incredible job Hayley does. The children are fully engaged, the skill set is accurately pitched and the interaction and discussion elements are well balanced and judged. I fully recommend Racquet Buddies to any parent with a young child. Excellent class! (D. Bluman)
* Racquet Buddies is a fantastic class, keeping children active and engaged while developing motor skills and coordination. Children are able to achieve success at their own level of development and are encouraged to challenge themselves to continue to improve their skills. Highly recommended! (F. Main)
* My daughter has attended Racquet Buddies since she was 2 years old. Mya is now 4 and in her 2 years, her motor skills have improved rapidly and vastly. I believe Hayley is covering a high amount of the Curriculum for Excellence benchmarks giving the children attending a fantastic grounding in PE. Hayley is providing experiences for children to develop in and out of school, making all the children in her class feeling valued and safe. The sessions are fun, full of variety and engaging for the children which is why Mya will continue to attend in the future. (A. Ward)
* Racquet Buddies is a fantastic class that encourages children to build a positive connection with sport and exercise from a young age. Hayley is a brilliant coach who encourages each child to achieve their potential in a fun and caring way. During this class my son had lots of opportunities to develop his coordination, listening, motor and social skills. I would definitely recommend Racquet Buddies as a way to encourage young children to develop a positive association with the importance of being fit and active from an early age. (E. Dailly)
* Racquet Buddies provides fun and engaging activities to promote coordination, cooperation, racquet skills and listening skills. The activities suit all ages and stages using a variety of resources. Would highly recommend these classes. (L. Cook)
* Great fun, highly engaging and pitched at exactly the right level for my 3 year old. Great concept, encouraging atmosphere and Hayley is a natural. Highly recommend. (S. McMaster)
* Hayley knows each and every child and develops their skills accordingly. Some of the benefits are improved hand-eye coordination, special awareness, listening skills and team building. Racquet Buddies is a fun and exciting programme for boys and girls. I love the way children can earn rewards and achievements are celebrated. (F. Lynch)