

Case Study: Big Bocs Bwyd at St Margaret's Catholic Primary School, Aberdare

WHY?

At the heart of this initiative is a goal and a passion to create community. We want to combat social isolation, support mental health and wellbeing and help everyone within our community to make healthy lifestyle choices. We aim for no family to go hungry, no parent to be lonely and all families to have access to affordable healthy foods. We want to help our families to make friends and get involved

in community projects and we want to offer opportunities for education, volunteering and employment.

Our main aims are:

Mental health and wellbeing

Physical health and wellbeing

Personal and community aspirations

Sustainability

HOW?

We started by contacting our local Tesco who put us in contact with their Fareshare Go regional officer. We very quickly began accessing 'yellow sticker' food from Tesco every Sunday. We set up a volunteer rota to pick up the food and a system to initially deliver the food to families (during lockdown) and then allow families to choose food from an outdoor table set up at the end of the school day. We now have a weekly delivery from Fare share cymru and open the BBB weekly to families.

WHO?

A group of volunteers within the St Margaret's community have formed a committee with the Headteacher and run the project together. The initial set up was supported by the head teacher and staff of Cadaxton Primary School.

Parent and grandparent volunteers now meet the delivery each week, stock the shelves and fridges / freezers and supervise the opening of the Bocs to the community. The Head Teacher and school clerk manage the income and expenditure overseen by the volunteers.

Challenges and Barriers

Setting up the bank account and the charity has been a challenge but this is overcome with time and support from other BBB project schools

Getting the balance right between supporting the school families and the community who do not attend the school can also be tricky but this has been resolved over time through joint events and trying to form unity.



Benefits of our BBB!

- *Community cohesion*
- *Authentic projects for children and a desire to plant and grow foods for the Bocs*
- *Authentic responsibilities for children*
- *Getting to know more parents, family members and community members*
- *Seeing parents enjoy a social time whilst chatting in the queue*
- *More healthy foods going into the family homes as the cost of living rises.*

BBB Top Tips!

Consider having a limit on fridge items e.g only 4 fridge items per family to prevent one person taking all the 'good stuff'

Get parents on board asap through keeping them informed and inviting them to meetings and events linked to BBB

Ensure you have a committed team in place to take on various roles – there is a lot of behind the scenes work

Start slow!