

# ISA CASE STUDY:

## POWERING UP POTENTIAL

# DAIGON SUPPORTS ISA AS THEY HOLD THEIR FIRST NATIONAL ESPORTS COMPETITION

APRIL 2024



INDEPENDENT  
SCHOOLS  
ASSOCIATION

DAIGON

### Introduction:

The global phenomenon of esports, competitive video gaming, has witnessed explosive growth in recent years. Recognising this trend and the potential benefits for students, the Independent Schools Association (ISA) observed a growing number of its member schools embracing esports, either as an extracurricular activity or even integrating it into the curriculum. Seeing the value in this approach, ISA set out to create a national platform for esports competition.

### The Event:

Through collaboration with and amazing support from **DAIGON** and the generous hosting offer from DLD College in central London, ISA proudly launched its inaugural National Esports Competition. This ground-breaking event, held on Saturday, March 9th, 2024, aimed to provide a stage for both junior and senior school pupils to showcase their skills and experience the thrill of esports competition.

The centrepiece of the event was undoubtedly DLD's state-of-the-art esports suite. This offered an exciting atmosphere complete with top-tier gaming PCs, comfortable seating, and high-speed internet. Here, the most intense digital battles unfolded, with junior competitors locked in strategic concentration as they vied for victory.

However, the spirit of inclusivity extended beyond these high-tech walls. DLD had also set up an area to host the senior Rocket League competition and additional computers for competitors to practice on before competing. This thoughtful arrangement ensured that all pupils could participate, fostering a truly welcoming environment. Students from a wide range of backgrounds and technical capabilities were able to showcase their skills and experience the camaraderie of the event.

Fuelled by refreshments and buzzing with anticipation, competitors and their supporters weren't limited to the physical locations. A live stream broadcast the high-stakes action, allowing everyone to be part of the excitement. This digital window into the competition added another layer of energy, especially during the nail-biting finals. Cheers and groans from the virtual audience undoubtedly amplified the drama as teams battled for the championship titles.





## A Day of Dual Competitions:

The day unfolded as a doubleheader of competitive spirit, with both morning and afternoon sessions running separate Minecraft and Rocket League tournaments, crowning victors and runners-up in each age category. The morning session encompassed 4 junior teams vying for glory in Minecraft, while 3 senior teams battled it out in Rocket League. The afternoon session upped the ante with 5 junior teams competing on Minecraft and 4 senior teams, facing off in Rocket League. Each session commenced with a warm welcome from ISA and DLD College followed by a detailed introduction and explanation of the rules by DAIGON, ensuring everyone was on the same page.

Both junior competitions saw squads of young minds brimming with creativity clashing in the sprawling world of Minecraft. Their strategic prowess and resourcefulness were put to the test as they built, battled, and ultimately aimed to seize the flag of the opposition while protecting their own flag at their home base in this expansive sandbox environment.

The senior competitions shifted gears slightly for a high-energy showdown in the exhilarating world of Rocket League. This fast-paced, physics-based game demanded lightning-fast reflexes, seamless teamwork, and pinpoint control as teams piloted rocket-powered cars in an aerial soccer spectacle. Notably, the afternoon session also saw two intrepid year 6 squads enter the fray, showcasing the diverse range of participants and the growing popularity of esports across all age groups.

A huge thanks to the DAIGON team for ensuring all the competitions ran smoothly and on time.

## Benefits Observed:

### Increased Student Engagement:

The national esports competition ignited a surge in school spirit that transcended year groups. Pupils with SEND played alongside their peers on a level playing field as the games provided a uniquely inclusive environment. Their virtual nature removed physical barriers and encouraged secure social interaction even for those with social anxieties or difficulties. The central London location, with its state-of-the-art Esports suite, provided a vibrant and electrifying atmosphere that was a far cry from a traditional classroom. The live stream viewing added another layer of excitement, allowing students who weren't physically present to cheer on their classmates and share in the competitive spirit.

This event became more than just a competition; it was a unifying experience that brought students together. It provided a platform for those who might not excel in traditional sports to find a sense of belonging and an opportunity to shine. Whether they were cheering from the side lines or battling it out in the virtual arena, students felt a surge of camaraderie and school pride.



## Development of Valuable Skills:

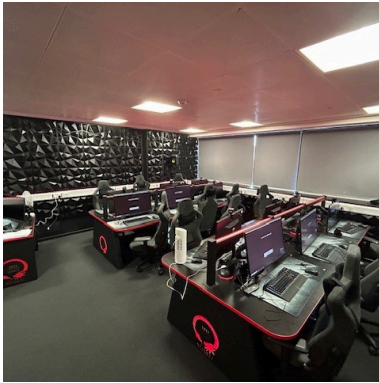
The esports competition wasn't just about winning; it was a valuable training ground for developing essential life skills. The pressure of competition honed students' critical thinking and strategic planning abilities as they devised winning game strategies. Communication and teamwork became paramount as they coordinated their actions within the game, learning to communicate effectively and synchronise their efforts towards a common goal.

For many students, the competition presented a new kind of challenge, pushing them outside their comfort zones. This alongside supportive adults that they knew, helped develop valuable resilience and emotional regulation strategies. Learning to manage their emotions under pressure and bounce back from setbacks are valuable skills that will benefit them not only in future esports competitions but also in academics and other aspects of life. In addition, for students with SEND, they were provided with a valuable platform in a national competition to showcase their talents, build confidence, and connect with others in a shared, accessible space.

## Fostering a Positive School Culture:

Beyond the thrill of competition, the esports competition provided a valuable platform for students from diverse backgrounds to connect and build friendships. The shared passion for gaming transcended social circles and year groups, fostering a sense of camaraderie, and belonging. Students who might not have normally interacted found common ground in the virtual world, forging new connections, and celebrating each other's victories. This inclusive environment nurtured a sense of community that extended beyond the competition itself.

The positive feedback from students and staff of the schools involved was a resounding testament to the success of the event. The excitement of representing their schools, the solidarity experienced amongst peers, and the thrill of competition all contributed to a fantastic day out for all involved.



## CONCLUSION:

The ISA National Esports Competition held in association with DAIGON proved to be a positive experience for all involved. It boosted student engagement, fostered valuable skill development, and promoted a positive atmosphere for competition. With this success behind us, ISA intends Esports to become a valuable addition to our annual competition calendar, supporting our schools to empower students to thrive in a digital age.

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