

Olympic boxer is pupils' inspiration

STUDENTS from a school in Blackheath were put through their paces by an Olympic boxer as part of an initiative to get more youngsters into sport.

Hannah Beharry, a member of Great Britain's women's boxing team, visited St Matthew Academy in St Joseph's Vale, on November 18.

The team will take part in next summer's Olympic Games in London.

Hannah, 25, will fight in the 48kg category.

She spoke to the students about how, aged 17, she found herself in a downward spiral, with no education and unsure of her future.

But a community project based in Haringey, North London, helped her to turn her life around and build an impressive sporting resumé. Now she is a member of the highly respected Haringey Police Community Amateur Boxing Club, and has won gold medals in the Swedish Box Cup, Haringey Box Cup, Golden Girl Box Cup and a bronze medal in the European Union Championships.

Hannah McKee, head of PE at the school, said: "Our students really enjoyed meeting a real-life Olympic athlete. Hannah Beharry knows what it is like to work hard to achieve her dreams,



PACKING A PUNCH: Boxer Hannah Beharry, centre, with students from St Matthew Academy

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and was able to show our students just what they can achieve - and how to do it." Student Victoria Maquieira, 14, said: "It was really fun,

and different. "And hearing from Hannah made me more determined to work hard to achieve my own success."