

Girls-Only Football

Engaging Teenage Girls

The Rio Ferdinand Foundation has partnered up with GreaterSport to inspire girls in Salford through the Sportivate Programme. We want to get more inactive young women back into sports!

The project began with a consultation with a group of year 10 girls from UTC Media City UK. Here, ideas of an all-girls football, dance or dodgeball project came to surface. Football at the school was very male dominated and there were few opportunities for female beginners wanting to try it out. We agreed we would create a safe and fun environment in which the girls could try something new. Football was their chosen sport so together we arranged eight training sessions at their school every week, with 30 minutes of healthy smoothie making and girl talk to follow!

Further to this RFF wanted to help the girls gain confidence and learn new skills so suggested working towards a Level 1 Sports Leaders Award. Through this accredited course the girls would learn how to assist in sports delivery for other inactive young people! The girls would then utilise their new skills and knowledge during a 4-week voluntary work placement with RFF coaching multi-sports in Salford!

The girls decided that they would become the RFF All Girls Football Club! Thanks to GreaterSport they designed and made their own team strip including the Manchester bee!

The training sessions then got underway! To coach the girls RFF called upon Jordan and Lauren, previous RFF participants who were now ready to make the step into the role of paid sessional staff members. You can read more about their stories here: <http://bit.ly/2Dw4LKc>.

The training sessions have been a great success! Watching the skills and confidence grow in both the players and coaches has been absolutely fantastic. The girls have really enjoyed the sessions, Poppy and Georgia told us they loved learning a lot of great skills and feel more motivated to keep playing sports. Before the programme the girls had never played football and rarely took part in PE sessions.

They are now all playing sports at least once a week and the weekly training sessions continue at UTC to keep the girls engaged and active.

In recent weeks the girls have begun to think about and practice leading their own sessions in preparation for the next stage of their project.

On 28th February 2018, the girls completed their Level 1 Sports Leaders qualification. Ellie who completed the qualification said *"[I've] learnt important life skills such as leadership, communication and teamwork! I'm really looking forward to coaching and gaining some work experience for my c.v"*.

RFF would like to thank GreaterSport, Lark Hill Primary School and UTC Media City for supporting us in creating this opportunity!

