

StreetGames & England Netball



HAT-TRICK
love sport for change



INTRODUCTION

StreetGames and England Netball have been working in partnership to 'test' an informal netball offer in community settings.

The pilot is taking place in three different locations in the North East, North West and Midlands with one Locally Trusted Organisation (LTO) in each region, from the StreetGames network.

In each of the pilot areas, England Netball has provided a regional coach to plan and deliver three weeks of activities and provide equipment for use in the sessions, including: netballs, bibs and pop-up wall sticker nets.

The community offer aims to engage 'non-traditional' participants using informal formats, including: 4 v 4 and NetFit and has been specifically designed for sessions which take place in small community spaces.

NORTH EAST PILOT: HAT-TRICK

The North East pilot took place in Newcastle upon Tyne, in partnership with Hat-Trick in November 2022.

The activities, were delivered by Gemma White, the North East Netball Development Community Coach and took place at Moorside Primary School on Monday evenings between 5-6pm.

The participants, included circa 10 young females (aged 11-14 years) together with some of their mums and one younger sibling (aged 8), who were all part of an existing 'closed' Arabic group that had been taking part in a bi-weekly doorstep sport sessions delivered by Hat-Trick since March 2022.

To help prepare for the session, Gemma visited the group in advance to meet the attendees, find out what they were used to doing, what they enjoyed and what they'd like to do as well as see the space available and what adaptations would be needed.

Gemma then designed and delivered three weeks of activities which included some fun warm-up activities, informal games using a different netball themed focus each week that included: passing in week one, shooting in week two and defending in week three.

Gemma adapted the activities and games to 'fit' the smaller space and equipment available – for example using a basketball post and a target on the wall to score a goal.

WHAT WORKED WELL

The mums and daughters shared how much they had really enjoyed the opportunity to take part together – in both the fun games and the opportunity to play competitively against each other, something which they hadn't done previously – as illustrated by some of the feedback gathered at the final session:

*"I like the start....
the fun warm-ups"*

[I like] "the bit where we take part with our children – really fun to do it...it was really competitive and fun" [I also enjoyed] .."the warm ups at the start.....the fun games and enjoyed the games suggested by the kids"

"I like ball sports"

Annemarie Roberts, Community Sports Coach at Hat-Trick shared that the group had been excited about having an England Netball Coach leading the sessions and enjoyed her 'fun and interactive' style. This had included asking the younger participant (Fatima) to help her out with the equipment and to help lead the warm up. She also asked a couple of the girls who didn't initially want to join in to be in charge of music, which they did – leading to them later to join in the sessions and in the final week asking some of the boys to join in too as the hall space had been double booked.

The participants also shared how much they'd enjoyed the music:

"it gives you motivation"

"The kids really like the music – they started to dance".

"Yes, I like the music – in a good, really fun way"

Gemma's expertise and experience of delivering other similar community pilots proved really valuable, in terms of having a 'feel for how much netball specific activity will work' and by taking the time to visit the group in advance it had helped her to chat with the participants and see the space so she knew what adaptations would be needed. This also included not being too 'strict' on the rules at the sessions to allow the games to flow – by looking to mainly focusing on one key rule each week, which seemed to work well – with participants sharing:

"Yes fine – I knew the rules from school"

"Kind of learnt as you go...haven't done this since high school but the trainer explained it to us"

"Yes – I play at school"

LEARNING / IMPROVEMENTS

The participants and staff at Hat-Trick didn't have any specific suggestions re improvements or changes – sharing how much they'd enjoyed the sessions and a desire to play netball again within their regular sessions. Their only other feedback related more to the group itself, in terms of it sometimes taking time to 'prepare' and the 'chatty' nature of the group.

As mentioned above, the addition of music within the sessions proved popular and whilst this pilot didn't include other 'wrap-around' elements, such as food or group trips, it may be worth exploring in some of the other pilots. Group trips to spectate at live matches have proved popular in other sports specific interventions. None of the participants attending this group had seen elite netball before - although Gemma was mindful of not wanting to 'turn people off' if too much traditional netball was incorporated into the sessions too early.

Moving forwards, Gemma will be linking again with Hat-Trick to deliver activities to a school based group in the area in the New Year, whilst Annemarie shared that they would be able to incorporate some of Gemma's activities into their own sessions using their own Activator skills and equipment provided by England Netball.