

Game of Our Own Girl's Football Programme

This week at Grace Academy Solihull we launched the *Game of Our Own* programme. This nationwide programme is supported by the F.A. with the vision of giving every girl equal access to football in schools by 2024.

Game of Our Own is designed to increase the number of girls participating and enjoying football related activities. It provides leadership development opportunities for girls to become 'Football Activators' – creating enjoyable opportunities for more girls in their school.

To help launch the programme some of our year 7 and 8 girls were lucky enough to have a visit from Aston Villa Ladies defender Natalie Haigh who delivered her own coaching session as well as supported them in delivering their own session. The afternoon then finished with a question and answer session.

All of the girls involved demonstrated an excellent attitude and leadership skills throughout the afternoon and made an extremely positive impression on Natalie who said;



"It was an honour to kick off the North Solihull Sport Girls' Football Roadshow with The FA's *Game of Our Own* Leaders at Grace Academy. The girls, currently studying in years 7 and 8, were given the opportunity to showcase and develop their problem-solving skills and coaching through adapting sessions for their peers. Utilising the S.T.E.P. principle, discussions centred around how the leaders might adapt their sessions to suit the ability of their players, whilst also incorporating elements of stretch and challenge, competition, inclusion, variation and most importantly, fun!

As well as demonstrating their fantastic leadership skills, the girls also impressed with their silky skills, great attitude towards learning, and energy levels, despite the heat. The pupils are a credit to their school, and I'm excited to follow their respective journeys into leadership roles in the future - from what I've seen today I know this group has the potential to inspire the next generation of female footballers!"

As a PE department we are excited to see this programme develop into the next academic year and for our Football Activators to drive girls football participation at Grace Academy Solihull even further. Keep up the great work girls!



Yr 7 & 8 girls respectively that were involved with the first *Game of our own* session with Natalie Haigh from the Aston Villa Ladies Team.