

DELIVERING THE YOUTH STRATEGY



Foundation

*Serving the community
through football*

FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



October 2019

FC 11/19/09

Success indicators used to assess performance are dictated by the key objectives and targets set out in the Irish Football Association Let Them Play youth football strategy which covers the charitable objectives of the foundation.

Target one – Participation and Football For All

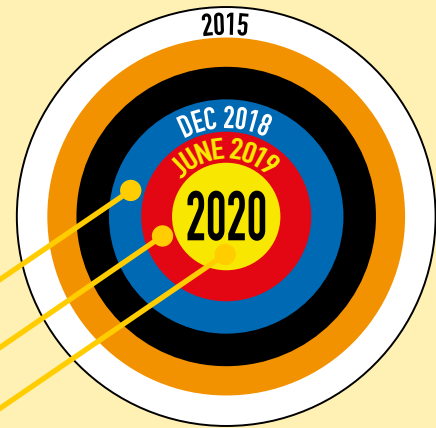
Increase youth football participation rates by 50% by 2020, from 50,000 in 2015 to 75,000 by 2020.

2015: **50,000** participants

December 2018: **72,000**

October 2019: **77,300**

2020 target: **75,000**



Target two – Schools and Colleges

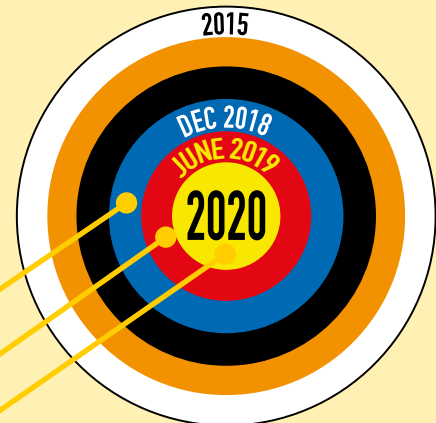
Revamp schools' and colleges' football by increasing the percentage of schools where football is played from 45% in 2015 to 90% by 2020 and increase the amount of young people playing in schools and colleges across Northern Ireland from 25,000 in 2015 to 40,000 by 2020.

2015: **25,000** young people playing in schools

December 2018: **29,230**

October 2019: **36,191**

2020 target: **40,000**



Target three – Club and Volunteer Development

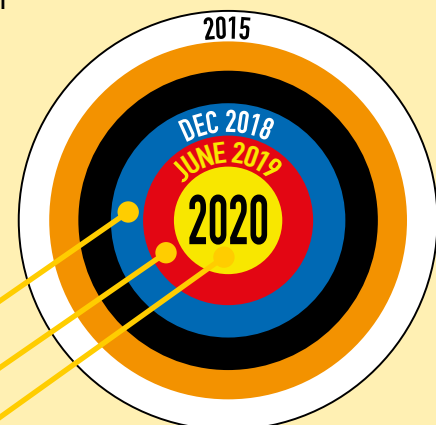
To embed a culture of club and volunteer development at grassroots level by 2020 that creates a fun, safe and inclusive environment throughout youth football. Supporting the development of youth football clubs that are run and managed by qualified, committed and Access NI authorised volunteers who encourage parents and young people to be attracted to and remain in the sport.

2015: **41** Accredited clubs / **50** volunteers

December 2018: **134 / 194**

October 2019: **141 / 270**

2020 target: **200 / 300**



Disability Football

Irish FA Foundation/USEL Disability League

The league started at Valley LC, Newtownabbey on 5 October with a record number 24 teams playing in four ability bands on eight pitches. This five-a-side league is for clubs catering for players with a learning and/or physical and/or sensory impairment. Over 160 players with a disability enjoying regular competitive football.

Northern Ireland Powerchair Football

It's been a busy period for powerchair football in Northern Ireland as clubs enjoy a new Northern Ireland Development League, participation in the Association of Irish Powerchair Football (AIPF) League, club training and Northern Ireland training. The development of club and player performance is going well.

Amputee Fun Day

Belfast Amputee Football Club hosted a fun day in partnership with Musgrave Park Hospital and the Irish FA Foundation on 22 September at Olympia LC. There was a good turnout with nine new amputees attending. Due to the ages of those attending a junior section of the club was formed.

Disability Spectator Forum

Forum member Jason Browning attended the second European Disability Access Officer (DAO) Network Group Meeting in Leipzig, Germany on 15 and 16 October. The DAO Network Group aims to educate and support national associations and clubs in providing a better service to their fans with a disability. Since the forum was set up in 2018 we have witnessed some great improvements at the stadium including the Quiet Room for those with ASD, the expansion of the Soccer Sight project, sign language for stadium announcements and the Mobility Buggy. Thomas Fulton has been a great help in this area.

Education and Employability

September will see the start of the third year of the Education and Employability programme. We are excited to bring the programme to new schools and colleges such as Ashfield Boys' High School and Belfast MET as we continue to develop partnerships with new and existing schools.

With Ashfield boys we will be delivering our education programme and teaching two modules on the Level three Sports BTEC. As this is a new and exciting addition to the programme we have been preparing and putting together resources to ensure that it is a success.



Futsal

Northern Ireland Futsal League

The Northern Ireland Futsal League sponsored by Cathedral Eye Clinic is in full swing after six rounds of matches. The league is thriving with investment from Cathedral Eye Clinic, as futsal continues to grow in popularity across Northern Ireland.



The league has already witnessed some upsets as current champions Sparta Belfast have suffered defeats to Omagh and World United, demonstrating the competitiveness in all matches. Belfast United and Omagh have set the early pace with five victories from six matches and sit in first and second place respectively. New club Rosario are also performing well and are currently undefeated, benefiting from a mixture of players that have previously played in the league and talented footballers that are experiencing the game for the first time.

The league boasts 186 registered players from 23 countries which range from Australia to Zimbabwe. Over 100 players are native to Northern Ireland but the league is proud to blend multi cultures and nationalities.

The league continues to be fast paced, energetic and end to end. Over 100 goals have already been recorded with Rosario player Jonathan Gowdy leading the way in the goal scorer chart with 12 goals from five games. A further six rounds will be played before the winter break as all clubs will compete to be top of the league at Christmas.

The female domestic league programme will commence in November with 24 clubs competing over three leagues. The final of these leagues will conclude in March as the Irish FA Foundation continues to expand its offering of futsal across Northern Ireland with the support of Cathedral Eye Clinic.

For more information about futsal and the league go to:

<https://www.irishfa.com/irish-fa-foundation/futsal/domestic-futsal-competitions>
#GameChanger #CathedralEye

Football and Social Responsibility

Stay Onside

It has been a busy month for the Stay Onside team, returning to Maghaberry for another six session programme. This included a tournament involving the PSNI, Probation, staff and prisoner teams with PBNI sneaking the victory in the final. Work continues in Maghaberry in November with separated prisoners and developing the 2020 syllabus in all three prisons.

Work also continues in the community. A community course is progressing in Ballymena and a PCSP funded course taking place at Inver Park in November in partnership with the PSNI and Larne FC. Work continues with other agencies including developing programmes with the Rio Ferdinand foundation and the Paramilitary Task Force.

Schools' Football

Schools' Football Conference

On Friday 20 September the Irish FA Foundation hosted its first ever Schools' Football Conference at the National Football Stadium at Windsor Park. Twenty-four post primary schools were represented and the Foundation hope to build on this number in the future.

The event provided an opportunity to outline the findings of the recent UEFA report on the social return on investment that football provides in Northern Ireland. Tim Crabbe from Substance was present to highlight the key findings of the report and make schools aware of how football was making a positive impact in this area.

Irish FA Foundation staff highlighted the depth of delivery that is offered to schools across Northern Ireland. Presentations were given on the School Quality Mark, Education and Employability Programme, the Ulster University degree programme and participation and on competition opportunities for males and females.

A school's perspective was provided by with Frankie Wilson, Head of Physical Education for Our Lady and St. Patricks College, Knock. Frankie spoke about how schools' football was positively impacting the male and female students both physically and academically. The conference was concluded by current Northern Ireland Under 19 international, Paddy Burns who was the former head boy of St Malachy's College, Belfast. Paddy delivered an inspirational speech on how football had assisted him academically, developed his social skills and created friendships for life.

Shared Future, Shared Goals Programme

The Irish FA Foundation are currently delivering a joint shared education initiative with the Ulster GAA which focuses on educating pupils about the importance of sustaining health, growth and wellbeing; building an awareness of the importance of a healthy diet and active lifestyle and exploring how to develop resilience and mental toughness through practical games and workshop delivery.



The main objectives of the programme are:

- To provide high quality learning and teaching – allowing each school to design the model for delivery
- To tackle childhood obesity through a mixture of practical and theoretical delivery
- To develop a strong understanding of cultural identity through the vehicle of sport
- To utilise sport and physical activity sessions to learn in other curricular areas such as Personal Understanding and Health and Mutual Understanding in the Local and Wider Community
- To engage with the local and wider community – signposting participants to further participation opportunities
- To provide additional quality assured support, information, advice and resources to help primary schools understand and promote children's mental health and wellbeing

The Irish FA Foundation and Ulster GAA are delivering this programme in partnership with the Education Authority across twelve regions in Northern Ireland. The programme is working with 24 schools and over 1,200 pupils between September and March.

Post Primary Schools Prepare for Futsal Finals

This month post primary schools from across Northern Ireland have been participating in futsal competitions organised by the Irish FA Foundation. Over 1,800 boys and girls participated in 12 regional competitions with the winners of each tournament advancing to the national finals hosted in the Antrim Forum on 20 and 21 November. The regional events provided schools with the knowledge of the laws of the game and benefits that futsal can have on their physical and mental wellbeing while also providing a competitive environment for school teams. Previous winners Boys Model showed their futsal class by winning the Year 9 Belfast heat again this year while last year's female winners St. Cecilia's also advanced to the finals.

Schools and Futsal Manager Jonathan Michael was very impressed by the progress of the schools competing. He said, "This is the fourth year we have organised post primary futsal competitions and it is clear to see the development of the game in the schools across the country. Over the four-year period there has been a 20% increase in the number of participants involved in post primary competitions which is testament to the hard work of the Irish FA Foundation staff in building a culture of futsal in Northern Ireland."

A list of schools that are competing in the National Futsal Finals can be seen below:

Boys' National Futsal Finals	Boys' National Futsal Finals	Girls' National Futsal Finals	Girls' National Futsal Finals
Thursday 21 November	Thursday 21 November	Wednesday 20 November	Wednesday 20 November
Year 8/9	Year 10/11	Year 8/9	Year 10/11
St Columb's (Derry)	St Columb's (Derry)	St Cecilia's College	St Cecilia's College
De La Salle College	Boys Model	Tandragee JHS	Lisnagarvey HS
Boys Model	St Joseph's (Belfast)	St Genevieve's	Mercy College
Bangor Academy	St Patrick's (Lisburn)	St Mary's College	Royal School Dungannon
Holy Cross, Strabane	Holy Cross, Strabane	Enniskillen Royal	Castlederg High School
Newry High School	Newry High School	Lurgan JHS	New-bridge Integrated
Parkhall College	Ballyclare Secondary	Abbey Community College	Ballyclare Secondary

School Quality Mark

Antrim Primary School and Newcastle Primary School are the latest school that has achieved the School Quality Mark accreditation. This makes 35 Primary school that has achieved the accreditation which focuses on schools putting structures in place to better schools football. There are also 12 primary and post primary schools currently in the process of achieving the accreditation with a total of 54 schools who have been presented the award from 2016.



St Columb's set Gold standard in Translink Cup

St Columb's college started this year's Translink Cup with home wins against Bangor Academy. The College defeated the Bangor at all three age groups with their impressive U17 team winning 4-0 at the Ryan McBride Arena. St Malachys made a similar winning start defeating Laurelhill at all three age groups while defending champions Our Lady and St Patricks, Knock were defeated at U13 and U15 level away to Ashfield boys but picked up a hard found 2-1 victory at U17 level.



The final game of the day seen Boys Model travel to Holy Cross College, Strabane. The home side took the advantage in the U13 game running out 3-1 winners, Boys Model levelled the games as a Jack Young goal was enough to win 1-0. In the final game of the day Holy Cross showed their class in a comfortable 4-1 win.

The teams will compete in the second round of fixtures on Wednesday 16 October with the tie of the round being St Columbs College v Ashfield Boys School. Holy Cross hope to keep up their winning start with home games v St Malachys College, Laurelhill Host Boys Model and holders Our Lady and St Patricks College, Knock take on Bangor Academy in the final game of the day.

The Translink Schools' Gold Cup involves the eight post-primary schools who have been awarded the Gold Schools Quality Mark accreditation by the Irish FA Foundation.

Northern Ireland U16 Schoolboys



Northern Ireland's U16 Schoolboys registered an impressive win against Poland U16s in the first of two challenge matches against the Poles this week. An own goal and a strike from debutant Jamie Donley were enough to secure a 2-1 victory at Portadown's Shamrock Park.

It was the first time a Northern Ireland team has won against Poland at U16 level since 2003 when two goals from Jonny Evans led to a 2-1 win. In the second game the U16 narrowly lost to Poland which was the first defeat for Gerard Lyttle's team this year.

The games against the Poles are the final warm-up matches ahead of this year's Victory Shield tournament, which is being staged at Colliers Park in Wrexham. Northern Ireland will face hosts Wales there on 28 October followed by games against Scotland on 30 October and Republic of Ireland on 1 November.

Safeguarding

In September we attended a week-long Social Responsibility compact course hosted by UEFA on behalf of the University of St Gallen.

The course introduced the concept of social responsibility in football focusing on a range of topics with Diversity & Inclusion, Compliance & Integrity, Sport & Climate Change. We were able to provide lots of examples of programmes and initiatives the Irish FA have introduced – Disability football, a wide range of educational workshops and environmentally friendly initiatives throughout the National Football Stadium. There was a very informative session with Dale Vince from Forrest Green Rovers FC on their efforts to be sustainable and environmentally friendly in everything they do at the football club. Participants were set several tasks throughout the week, one of which required us to attend the annual refugees football tournament organised by Geneva social services to assess the impact football has had on players lives.

In taking this forward we should consider how we formalise our work in this area by developing a long-term strategy combining the existing programmes from the Irish FA, Foundation and SDC. Producing an Annual Report outlining the range and benefits of the programmes we provide would be an excellent starting point for this project.



Parents in Sport Week



October saw the Irish FA Foundation support Parents in Sport Week. An annual campaign initiated by the NSPCC in 2016. The aim of Parents in Sport Week is to acknowledge positive parental involvement in sport and educate parents/guardians of the importance of their support and encouragement at any level of sport.

There were two objectives for this year's campaign – provide information and advice about how parents/guardians can be supportive on our sidelines and to educate parents/guardians on what they should consider when they consider joining one of our local clubs.

Flyers encouraging parents to find out about safeguarding measures clubs have in place along with information on they can behave in a positive manner on the sidelines. Flyers were given to young players at small sided games centres across Northern Ireland who then passed them to their parents before the match. Parents were then invited to have their photos taken along with the participating teams, coaches and other parents which were widely shared on social media.

We produced four different videos which were shared across the Irish FA social media platforms throughout the week. Marissa Callaghan and Andy Waterworth talking about their importance of the parental support they received and the impact this has had on their careers. A group of children participated in another video as well as Irish FA staff outlining the aims and objectives of Parents in Sport Week. These videos were viewed around 35,000 times on the Irish FA Facebook page and widely shared by clubs and parents and will be available on the safeguarding section of our website.

Grassroots and Youth Development

Irish Football Association awarded UEFA Grassroots Charter Gold Award

European football's governing body has presented the Irish FA with a gold award in its annual Grassroots Charter programme.

UEFA determines the status of each of its 55 member associations based on information collected through a wide-ranging survey.



Michael Boyd, the Irish FA's Director of Football Development, said: "This is a fantastic achievement for the Irish FA and a great reflection of our work at grassroots level across Northern Ireland promoting football for all and delivering the Let Them Play youth football strategy. It's a reflection of the progress we are making delivering and promoting the youth strategy, girls' football plan, disability plan and futsal plan with all our partners. Very few national associations receive gold status and we would like to dedicate this award to our partners and, most importantly, the clubs and volunteers who make it all happen."

The award means the Irish FA will receive funding to cover participation in youth, women's and futsal competitions and towards the implementation of the UEFA club licensing system as well as the application of various other UEFA coaching programmes.

The Irish FA's UEFA Participation Mentor Hannah Simpson explained: "The Irish FA has achieved UEFA gold standard because of its commitment to serving all the community through football and its commitment to football for all. Since the launch of its Let Them Play youth strategy in 2015 it has more than doubled youth participation levels. It also has innovative projects in place like Shooting Stars, which is transforming girls' participation, and the People and Clubs plan, which is based on meaningful research to support the grassroots game. I have been super impressed by the association's staff and their commitment to growing the game at all levels in a fun, safe and inclusive environment."

UEFA Grassroots Week

The Irish FA Foundation hosted a number of events from 23-29 September as part of UEFA Grassroots Week.

The week began with a visit to Fleming Fulton School to provide disability football coaching to pupils and finished with the launch of our new player development programme which aims to develop talented footballers aged seven and eight.

There were ten events in all including Fun Football Festivals, Shooting Stars for girls aged from four to eleven and schools' football competitions.



People & Clubs

On Monday 23 September the Irish FA Foundation launched their brand new programme for clubs and volunteers - People & Clubs.



The programme was created on the back of a large research process which included eight public consultations across the country, a large survey completed by nearly 800 people and meetings with nearly 40 other organisations ranging from universities, volunteer organisations, different sports, Sport NI and other football associations.



People & Clubs will produce a range of new courses, guidance notes, video guides and case studies on a range of topics identified from the research conducted. The programme will also include our new club accreditation which can be completed online and will also link in with Sport NI to ensure that clubs are able to access wider benefits once they achieve it.

Our approach is fundamentally based on making life easier for clubs and people. Where possible we will utilise technology, utilise the regional football community hubs, be club and people centered and accessible.



Halloween Football Camps

This year's Nutty Krust Halloween Football Camps are now under way. There are 32 two-day camps taking place across Northern Ireland from 28 October to 1 November.

The camp at Midgley Park beside the National Football Stadium began on Monday 28 October and attracted 114 participants, a new record for our Halloween Football Camps.

Ahead of the Game

Ahead of the Game workshops took place in September at the Fountain Centre in Bangor and in October at Abbey Villa FC. The workshops are part of our ongoing mental health awareness programme for football clubs and will continue to take place throughout the year.



McDonald's Fun Football

Fun Football festivals took place in Strabane, Portadown, Cookstown and Moneyreagh.