



1<sup>st</sup> February 2022

**RE: Facility Development at Bede Academy, Blyth, Northumberland**

To whom it may concern,

Northumberland Football Association are aware that Bede Academy, through the Emmanuel Schools Foundation, are applying for funding support from the Football Foundation to facilitate the delivery of a 4G pitch to replace the existing sand-based astro-turf pitch on the site. Part of the wider project plan also includes improvements to grass pitches and the potential of a club house/pavilion with toilets and changing to service community use.

Following meeting with the Emmanuel Schools Foundation Business Development Manager, who is leading the project proposal from the school's perspective, it is positive that they have considered multiple football and wider sporting outcomes for both the school's students and wider community. This includes a rugby club using the 4G pitch for midweek training, and links with Smile Through Sport supporting activity provision for people with disabilities. Blyth Rangers are the main partner football club for the project. They are an England Accredited Club and have 2 open-age male teams in addition to 13 youth teams. Blyth Town, who have 4 open-age teams and 26 youth teams have also been consulted and would use the site also. Blyth Town FC's own ambitions to gain funding for a 4G pitch is understood.

The school is also supportive of utilising the classroom and pitch provision to support Northumberland FA's Referee and Coach Development programmes. The Blyth Sunday League has also reported their main concern as the availability of pitches for open-age teams in their league. So, the wider development of the site with improved grass pitches and potential changing facilities would support alleviate this issue also.

Northumberland FA are supportive of this project being progressed and explored further. Northumberland FA will work with the Football Foundation to help facilitate strategic investment in footballing facilities in the area.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

David Jones  
Head of Participation  
Northumberland FA

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