

Futsal - a new and exciting curriculum alternative



A new game to this country, yet played over the last 75 years in South America and the rest of the world, Futsal is the UEFA and FIFA recognised version of 5-a-side football. It essentially incorporates many characteristics of a game of football crossed with many basketball aspects, including the origin of some of the foul and rule interpretations as well as being very choreographic in its play.

The game is played indoors normally with goals more like handball than stereotyped wide and small goals used in this country, with a size 4 ball with lower bounce properties. This creates a game much more technically based than current versions and with boundaries to the pitch and a four-second rule on getting the ball back into play, this creates a faster, more dynamic version of the game with players having to rely on better ball mastery than the current version usually played.

Many countries have professional leagues, including Spain, Brazil and Italy, and players steeped in a tradition of playing the game through their school days. Often players like Ronaldo attribute their skills to having grown up playing this game. However, we are now at the stage in this country of starting to introduce this to secondary schools as an alternative element for curriculum PE.

How can this be built into existing development programmes?

Following consultation with the National Faculty group and various other pilots, it has been seen as a real option for curriculum delivery. It can aid young people's development of skill and technique and then provide a structured framework for them to apply this. It has very obvious benefits for health and fitness, as well as providing opportunities for young people to develop strategy implementation, teamwork and leadership skills.

With regards to current football development:

- taster sessions
- curriculum/OSH delivery
- inter-form matches/competitions
- inter-SSP matches/competitions
- district/county competitions.

There is a very obvious role this can play within the delivery of the School-Club Link framework and a variety of resources, equipment and bursaries can be obtained towards supporting its roll out. For example, Charter Standard Secondary Schools can receive free equipment and resources currently to help its development but for more information, please contact dermot.collins@TheFA.com, The FA's National Small-Sided Manager.