

Each issue we want to give one of our pupils the opportunity to speak about something that is important to them.

This issue we talked to **Louca Cooke**, 15, from St. Bede Catholic School and Byron Sixth Form, Peterlee.

He is part of the Elite Football Academy programme in school in partnership with Fast Feet Football Academy.



What year are you in and what are you currently studying? I'm in Year 10 at St. Bede's Catholic School and Byron Sixth Form in Peterlee studying English language and literature, maths, triple science, geography, engineering and BTEC sport.

Why did you decide to join the Elite Football Academy programme? I have always loved football. I have played since I was four or five and play in centre midfield position. I'm a Hartlepool United fan and love watching them play too.

How does the programme combine your academic studies and your football coaching? The football sessions are only before and after school, so you don't miss any lessons. I have two early mornings from 7.30am and two after school from 3.15pm-5pm. I don't mind the early mornings as I'm used to getting up early and it wakes me up more, gets me active and I feel better in lessons.

What have you enjoyed most about the experience so far? I enjoy the games and going out of school with the lads. It is nice and active, and I really enjoy the training. I've known the group for the past couple of years and the coaches are great.

How does having the opportunity to include football in your school curriculum benefit you? It makes me want to come into school on the days you feel ill; it gives you another reason to come into school. I'm a very loud, active person so playing football and having extra coaching is great.

Would you recommend the programme to other students? Definitely. As long as you love playing football, you will love it.

What are your aspirations for the future? I am looking into going to America to do a football scholarship programme after college. My Dad's friend did it and put the idea in my head, so I started looking into it.



We currently have football academies for both girls and boys at St. Bede and Byron Catholic Sixth Form, Peterlee and St. Joseph's Catholic Academy, Hebburn.

Our Football Academies are run in partnership with Fast Feet Football Academy. Their experienced coaches use a holistic approach to enhance technical skills and tactical understanding, to give each player the best possible chance of fulfilling their potential.

Find out more: www.fastfeetfa.com