

PingPong4U

PingPong4U are a community organisation based in Leeds, dedicated to providing varied and inclusive activities that everyone can access. Coming from a professional table tennis family, founder Peter is passionate about his work and focuses his knowledge and enthusiasm not only on coaching, but also adapting the sport and devising new ways to improve the lives of less fortunate people in the community. APPA (Adapted Ping Pong Activities) are now very popular and a proven tool for engaging anyone with little equipment.

PingPong4U accessed StreetGames Satellite Club funding in September 2019, in a bid to engage an inactive group of students with learning disabilities, at the Beeston Campus of Leeds City College. By the end of the year, the sessions had engaged 157 individuals and generated over 1400 attendances. The sessions guided the students through a journey of learning basic table tennis techniques and undertaking individual skill drills. Bespoke games consisting of throwing and hitting balls into adapted targets within the sports hall were really effective in laying the foundations of table tennis techniques. With varied disabilities in the room, individual communication was key and vital in engaging the whole group.

When coronavirus halted their face to face delivery, PingPong4U applied for grants to purchase table tennis equipment to give out to the Satellite Club participants, along with other individuals from lower socio-economic groups throughout lockdown. With the aid of StreetGames, they secured £10,000 from Sport England and a further £10,000 from Leeds Community Foundation to help bolster their delivery. Peter said: *'Thanks so much for your help, so many people will have some active fun now. Simon - I can't thank you enough. I can't tell you how much this means to us...'*

Nearly 300 equipment packs were purchased and distributed with the £10k Sport England funding, which were well received and have allowed participants have continue to play within their own home. Despite the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic, PingPong4U encouraged regular activity further by uploading videos made by top England internationals and coaches each week, for people to try out and improve their skills. All this supported their own sessions, which were adapted to run virtually and their transition to online delivery has been met with praise from parents of the young people.

'XXX absolutely loves the sessions. Let me say thank you for all your efforts in teaching tennis skills to XXX and his class, it's so delightful to watch. I sat in a little bit of the lesson - it was so inspirational and you spoke with such passion it gave me goose bumps. Keep the good work up!'

'Just wanted to let you know how much XXX enjoyed doing the Ping Pong sessions. They have been an important part of his lockdown timetable and something he has looked forward to. It was such an extra special session Pete arranged for Olympian Jack Spivey to join in. Please pass on our thanks to him and we hope XXX will get the chance to meet up with him again once college restarts.'

Peter says *'The students have come on remarkably during the project and this has been visible for all to see. The young people have now created a sporting habit which they are sustaining via their 'at home' table tennis kits delivered by Ping Pong 4u. Kate Roberts (StreetGames Doorstep Sport Advisor) was the main contact and provided great support throughout the project. StreetGames 50% funded the at home table tennis packs which have been exceptionally well received across Leeds and Bradford to bring table tennis to a wider audience.'*

If you would like to hear more about the great work PingPong4U are doing, find them here:

Website: www.pingpong4u.co.uk
Facebook: Ping Pong 4 U
YouTube Channel: Ping Pong 4U
Twitter: @PINGPONGFORU

