

Mears Foundation grant kicks off inclusion through sport in Tonbridge

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A new grant aimed to improve community inclusion in sport has boosted opportunities for students with disabilities in Tonbridge.

Volunteers based at the Tonbridge branch of MPS Housing, part of Mears Group joined students from The Oaks Specialist College for a friendly kickabout at Tonbridge Football Club to celebrate a new grant by the Mears Foundation, the charitable arm of Mears Group.

The Foundation's Social Inclusion through Sport Grant aims to tackle social isolation through sport, supporting community-led clubs and groups nominated by Mears Group employees, and has provided sports equipment including football goals and indoor games for the college.

The Oaks Specialist College supports 18–25-year-olds with learning difficulties in Kent, East Sussex, and London Boroughs.

Operatives and office staff enjoyed a morning meeting the college's students, playing football, and sharing about the college's work over post-match refreshments.

Jonathan Tipler, Teacher/Tutor at Oaks Specialist College, said: "A massive thank you to the MPS Housing team for helping to organise the match and the very generous grant money. This has been put to amazing use for sports equipment, including football goals, exercise bikes and a badminton and tennis for learners across the whole college."

Heather Tyrer, General Manager, Mears Foundation said: "The Mears Foundation is committed to supporting people in local communities through grant-funded projects throughout the UK. The Social

Inclusion through Sport grant aims to provide grass root support to young people, getting them involved in community sports clubs. We were pleased to be able to support this new and invaluable connection in Tonbridge."

Jody Saich, Customer Success Manager, MPS Housing, added: "We are so grateful to the Mears Foundation for its support providing a grant which has allowed The Oaks Specialist College to purchase some much-needed equipment. The team thoroughly enjoyed the time spent with the students at Tonbridge FC as a joint celebration. There was a real focus on teamwork with plenty of laughter and an opportunity to take part in some healthy activity – just playing football."