

Case study

Project: Ellen Tinkham School
Type: Disability Gymnastics sessions
at Exeter Gymnastics Club



Ellen Tinkham School is a Special Needs School based in Exeter, offering classes from Early Years to Further Education. Two of the school's teaching assistants, Susanna and Hannah, are also gymnastics coaches at Exeter Gymnastics Club, and they were able to build a link between the school and club to give disabled students the opportunity to try gymnastics. The school were able to arrange transport to the club's dedicated gymnastics facility, where the club's coaches now run sessions for 3 of the school's classes every week.

Two of the students who have been taking part in gymnastics at Exeter GC have answered some questions about their gymnastics sessions...

What do you do in your gymnastics sessions?

At the beginning of our lesson we do a warm up, based on a theme; at the moment our theme is Pirates! Next, we follow a circuit around the room using the apparatus. We get to climb ropes, walk along beams, do forward rolls on trampolines and roll over the bars.

After we have finished doing our circuits, we get to play in the sponge pit. It's really good fun! We get to swing off the ropes or go over the bars and fall or jump into the foam. Sometimes it's a bit tricky to get out of the sponge pit and it's quite funny!

At the end of our session it is 'Calm time'. We have to lie down and relax quietly listening to the waves music. Then we line up, get our shoes and go back to school for a drink.

What have you learnt?

We have learnt a lot of gymnastics skills, including forwards rolls, backwards rolls, cartwheels, headstands, and jumps (pike, straddle, tuck and star).

Our favourite things to do at Gymnastics are play in the sponge pit, climbing and circling over the bars and doing somersaults on the trampoline. We love the themed sessions, in particular we liked being Spiderman during the Superhero week!

What are you most proud of?

We are very proud every time we learn a new skill or do something for the first time. Five of our class entered Exeter Gymnastics Club's annual recreational competition, and won rosettes and medals! This was fantastic, and we are very proud of the Certificates and Awards we received.

What would you tell other people who might want to take part in gymnastics?

We really like going to Gymnastics, it has allowed us to learn a lot! Gymnastics makes us happy and healthy, although we are a bit tired afterwards! If other people are thinking about taking part in gymnastics, we would tell them it's fun and that they should give it a go... you never know what you might achieve!

Do you require support with disability gymnastics?

Contact us at: participation@british-gymnastics.org