

# Christina Fortey

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What a year it has been!

Gloucester Primary Schools Football Association (GPSFA) selected our son for their B Squad and we have had the pleasure of supporting a team of hardworking coaches, a wonderful bunch of lads and some pretty lovely parents.



As a prolific rugby supporter, it was a tad odd supporting the round shape ball and trying to learn the offside rule! From week one we found this football set up to be organised, professionally run and pretty awe-inspiring! So much goes on behind the scenes by a group of volunteers – some of who have stayed loyal to GPSFA since they had the experience of being apart of it with their own children.

The level of commitment shown by all those involved is commendable, they give up their own time to teach, coach and nourish the bodies and minds of a group of Year 6 lads.

The football is only one part of this special year, the children selected understand from the start that a level of commitment, respect and loyalty is required to ensure that everyone gets the best from the opportunity they have been given.

A defining moment as a parent was to see a group of boys turned out in GPFSA Jumper, Tie, shirt and trousers. They wore it with pride as a symbol of being part of this team and parents looked on with pride knowing that this was pretty different to anything else a 10/11 year would have experienced up until now. As they donned the canary yellow kit, it was emotional to see our son lead his team out on their home soil, who knew yellow could look so good!?

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Initially the prospect of spending yet another morning on the side of the pitch with several younger siblings in toe was not something I was looking forward to, however it has been an absolute pleasure supporting a team on every wet Saturday morning ...apart from one which was sunny, with the help of a bit of bribery from the tuck shop for the young Fortey's.

Somehow what was been observed on and off the pitch made it very hard to miss, whatever the great British weather threw at us. I'm not naive enough to think that football teams everywhere are as inspirational as this, but it has changed my opinion drastically. The standard of football played has been brilliant and the chances these boys have had to – especially going on tour has been mind-blowing. The parents have had a pretty good time following them to support too!

Thank you to all the wonderful people we have had the privilege of meeting along the way and thank you for not assuming the rugby playing lad couldn't play football. Here's to having the can-do attitude and the luck that was with our son the day he was picked. You have not seen the last of us! We will always hold GPSFA in the highest regard and support where we can.

Thank you all.