

Bouncing Buddies – Bluebells Community Club)

Date: June 2026



Bouncing Buddies was a weekly, girls-only dance project delivered by Bluebells Community Club in East Salford. It provided a culturally appropriate, welcoming space for girls aged 6–16 to be active, build confidence, and strengthen social connections through music, movement, and friendship. Sessions took place once a week at a local venue that families knew and trusted, helping attendance feel straightforward and familiar. The project idea came from what local girls and families had said about what they felt were the barriers to being active.

The young people had limited access to mixed-gender gyms and other provision, and many teens described exercise as a ‘chore’ that was hard to prioritise alongside schoolwork and social time.

Local conversations and a YouthVoice survey highlighted strong demand for single-gender options and for activities that feel fun and social rather than pressured or performance-focused. Bouncing Buddies was designed to remove those barriers and make movement feel enjoyable and normal. Weekly dance sessions were delivered in three groups by trusted instructors from within the community, with a culturally appropriate approach to music and style.

Each session included warm-ups, fun ‘free-play’ dance, and learning set routines / choreography so girls could see progress over time. Refreshments helped create a relaxed, social atmosphere where participants felt comfortable and were keen to return.

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As the sessions got underway, existing participants encouraged friends to join, helping take-up grow in an organic and trusted way. The weekly attendance helped girls build routine and confidence with movement, and participants reported that they enjoyed the sessions and the friendly atmosphere. Word-of-mouth sign-ups suggested the activity felt appealing and accessible to girls who may have been less active otherwise. Some older teens also asked for evening sessions, which helped shape planning for future delivery.

Feedback from participants

“I used to think exercise was boring, but dancing here feels like hanging out with friends and having fun.”

“I like that it’s just girls because it makes me feel more comfortable and confident to join in.”

“My favourite part is learning dances together and then showing each other what we can do — everyone supports each other.”

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Project Developer, Bluebells Community Club:

One of the strongest elements of Bouncing Buddies was the welcoming, girls-only environment. Participants clearly valued having a safe and culturally appropriate space where they could be active without pressure or judgement.

The social aspect of the sessions was particularly successful, girls came not only to dance, but also to spend time with friends, relax, and feel part of a positive group.

Delivering sessions in a familiar local venue also worked well, as families already felt comfortable with the setting and attendance became part of a regular weekly routine.

Using trusted instructors from within the community helped participants feel understood and represented, which encouraged engagement and consistent attendance.

In future delivery, we would consider introducing occasional showcase events which could help celebrate progress and further build participants' confidence and social connections.

Following the funding period, we plan to continue exploring ways to sustain Bouncing Buddies through additional funding opportunities, community partnerships, and low-cost delivery options.

The strong attendance and positive feedback from participants and families demonstrated an ongoing demand for girls-only, socially focused physical activity within the area.

The project helped many girls build positive habits around movement and confidence, and it is hoped that participants will continue dancing and being more active outside of sessions, whether informally with friends, at school, or through future community activities.



Several girls also expressed interest in practising routines at home and attending more sessions if available.”

