

Nefe

Inspiration | Integrity

Gunning for glory: Nefe, our Edge Grove sporting legend, has signed a two year contract with Arsenal FC.

By Nefe's immensely proud English and Form Teacher, Miss Senior.



Six hours of gruelling training a week has paid off, and Nefe, at thirteen years of age, has signed on the dotted line with Arsenal FC.

'I am hugely grateful to my parents who made sacrifices to bring me to England for my football.'

After playing for Slough Town for a year, striker Nefe's prowess came to the attention of Chelsea FC; Nefe was instantly poached from the Sunday League, and he began training regularly with Chelsea on a probationary contract. A Blues fan, Nefe was honoured to spend four months with them as a left back. However, Nefe's raw talent, deft footwork and penchant for scoring beautiful goals à la his favourite player Thierry Henry meant that, when the myriad of other clubs vied to steal him, Nefe was able to be coolly judicious. When Arsenal approached, offering a trial contract with opportunities for striking, Nefe saw that the path to victory might just be red and white. Nefe was on trial at Arsenal for four months, playing 9 matches and scoring 10 goals, with

9 assists. On February 22nd 2023, Nefe was given the monumental news that he had passed his trial, and proudly donned his Gunners shirt as an official, signed member of Arsenal Academy.

Nefe is clearly hugely talented, but so are lots of the young people who are on a trial contract. Passing probation does not just

happen. In fact, it happens to less than 1% of players. Only 1% of young people on trial at Premier League clubs across the country will make it to the stage that Nefe has,

and sign a contract. Nefe is immensely talented and skilled, but it must be emphasised that he has undertaken this process with unwavering dedication, absolute determination, and pure hard work. It is highly laudable then too, that Nefe has retained such a strong grip on his School grades: his excellent work ethic and attitude to learning has remained just as resolutely positive.



'My dad says, "Talent is useless without the hard work."

When Nefe joined us from Nigeria in 2021, his name became very quickly synonymous with 'football' throughout the Edge Grove Pride, with many pupils wanting to hone their skills with him out on the frosty Astro. This article couldn't possibly mention both Nefe and the weather without fondly recalling the multitude of extra layers Nefe used to wear (approximately ten, wasn't it?) as he acclimated to the crisp air and wan English sun. In fact, the only time we at Edge Grove have ever heard our jovial Nefe respond in the negative about anything whatsoever, was during his first ever sight of snow. I asked "Isn't it magical, Nefe?" to which he crossly dissented, "No. No Miss. It is not. No." Fortunately, the snow melted, and Nefe has represented the Football First team with his peers throughout his two years at Edge Grove; they are a hugely successful, formidable side who have worked together seamlessly.

'I always whisper to myself: "I'll score, I'll score, I'll score." This brings out my confidence and makes me feel like I can do it.'

Even more commendable than having such talent and dedication, is the exceptional **kindness** and **humility** with which Nefe conducts himself both on and off the pitch. A friend to pupils of all ages, Nefe has a gentle, calm and kind demeanour for which he is valued by staff throughout the school. Ever fair and **respectful** to all, Nefe's **empathy** and sense of **unity** permeates the corridors and playgrounds. It is clear to all who have the pleasure of meeting Nefe that he is a stellar embodiment of the School's **Core Values** on which Year 8 have collaborated.

Nefe, your Pride is roaring behind you all the way to the Premier League and beyond, and we wish you every success. Your kindness, humility and grace will surely change the face of football as we know it.



Left: Nefe wears the same number as his favourite player, Arsenal's Invincible Thierry Henry.