

COFIE COMES HOME – FROM MOORLAND TO MANCHESTER UNITED AND BACK AGAIN.



In 2020 Moorland School is pleased to welcome John Cofie back to the School in a Coaching Role. John will be joining Head of Football Development, Charlie Jackson in a role which extends the Schools knowledge and experience within the football world.

Having a career spanning various international clubs, John's relationship with Moorland School begins first at the age of 10 when he attended as a student. *Cofie enjoyed school life and met the head of football development for Moorland, Charlie Jackson. He was a "really important" coach and a mentor for Cofie, working to polish the technical side of his game to complement the physical attributes and poacher's intelligence he already possessed.*

From here John went on to break a world record at the age of 14, becoming the youngest player to be transferred for more than £1 million. Now 27 and starting his new career as a coach, John brings a wealth of knowledge to his role; telling a story of trials and tribulations he personally experienced whilst attempting to carve a successful football career. Using his personal story will be invaluable in instilling a sense of self-worth and understanding in his future students at Moorland School. A task which John can't wait to get started saying *"Hopefully, my story can touch people and help. There are lots of mistakes I have made that I can help others avoid."*

Cofie believes his best period of development came when playing for United Under-18s coach Paul McGuinness with sessions always ball related whilst simultaneously designed to build fitness. Manchester United Reserve team manager



Warren Joyce was also “really good at what he did” and, when he was part of the under-23s set-up, Cofie had the chance to work with United’s now first-team manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, who passed on his knowledge of finishing and positioning.

The striker loved his six years at Manchester United. However, injuries hindered Cofie’s progress at important stages of his time there. It was a huge blow. As a second-year scholar, Cofie felt there may have been a chance he could break into the first-team picture. It was the same season close friends Pogba and Morrison got their opportunities to be involved in and around the squad.²

Flash forward to 2013 and John was unfortunately being told he was being released from Manchester United. This hit John very hard, from here on out John really struggled to comfortably settle anywhere and acknowledges that he made some transfer decisions he has come to consider mistakes but blames no one else for his decisions. John had seen the darker side of the personal and mental struggle that could be a part of the modern game, reflecting on his career, he acknowledges that he played his best football when he was happy, and an often overlooked consideration would have in his mind, meant that his career might have had a different trajectory. Had he stayed at Burnley; he would have been happier.

The mentoring role he is now undertaking at Moorland, will not only allow him to help educate young footballers in the early stages of his career, but will also allow him to reunite with his old coach and mentor, Charlie Jackson.

Charlie had the following to say about the acquisition of John at Moorland Football Academy, ‘John Cofie was one of the most naturally technical and athletically gifted players that I have ever worked with. Watching John grow is a truly inspirational and he will undoubtedly make an outstanding contribution to the Moorland Football Programme.’

Charlie Jackson is a current Manchester City Development Coach. Charlie has previously worked at Manchester United and Blackburn Rovers FC. Charlie has worked with some of the finest young footballers during his 25 years in coaching. Jackson has forged a fine reputation in coaching circles, due to his record of getting young players signed to Category 1 Academies. A number of these have gone on to sign professionally for clubs such as Manchester United, Blackburn Rovers, Preston North End, Liverpool, Everton, Burton Albion, Villarreal in La Liga, along with Real Salt Lake and New England Revolution in the MLS.

Our aim has always been to embed the correct techniques right from the outset, encouraging young footballers to play and develop naturally. We believe football should be fun and putting these two colleagues and friends together in an educational environment is something that Moorland School believes can only lead to more rounded & successful football graduates. Those aspiring to become professional footballers, can also take advantage of our contacts at the highest level meaning we offer genuine through-routes and pathways for those exceptionally talented players.

Moorland School provides a unique education option for potential future football talent including pathways to professional CAT 1 level Academies. With on-site boarding Moorland provides a safe haven for students from all over the globe, as well as a high level of academic education for all students. Adding John as part of this on-going journey only strengthens the offering from Moorland Football Academy, whilst allowing John to refocus his efforts and write a new chapter in his story.

1,2 Source: <https://theathletic.co.uk/1941673/2020/07/24/john-cofie-manchester-united-burnley-1-million-14/>

FOR MORE INFORMATION & IMAGES

Please contact enquiries@moorlandschool.co.uk or call +44 (0) 1200 423833 and ask for the Media Team.

Moorland School, Ribblesdale Avenue, Clitheroe, Lancs BB7 2JA
enquiries@moorlandschool.co.uk | +44 (0) 1200 423833 | www.moorlandschool.co.uk
Member of Independent Schools Association | Registered in England No. 674037
Headteacher: Mr J Harrison B.A (Hons) P.G.C.E

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