

ATTENDANCE INITIATIVES NEWSLETTER

Black and White through and through!

The Education Welfare Service continues to welcome and value the support of Newcastle United Football Club. Tickets are donated for every home match and many of these tickets have been presented to pupils in school assemblies. Lynn Archer from Junior Magpies and Gillian Sanders from Education Welfare visited a number of schools across the 2005—2006 season and presented goody bags to children in exciting Q & A sessions along with match tickets to the lucky winners. For the third consecutive year Junior Magpies supported a short term attendance challenge giving hundreds of pupils from across the city a fun filled afternoon in the Family Lounge at St James' Park on Saturday 12 November.

In February 2006 Titus Bramble and Jean-Alain Boumsong launched an attendance poster campaign developed by the Education Welfare Service in partnership with Newcastle United along with Catherine Fitt, Executive Director of Children's Services at Newcastle City Council. Children from the six schools in the New Deal for Communities area (Hawthorn, Moorside, Our Lady & St Anne's RC, St Michael's RC, St Paul's CofE and Westgate Hill primaries) were on hand to help.

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Newcastle EWS is very grateful for the support offered by Newcastle United Football Club in the drive to promote school attendance. With the help of the business community we are helping our children and young people to establish a pattern of regular attendance and punctuality which will stay with them throughout their school career and into the world of employment.

Outstanding attendance



The annual event which celebrated 100% attendance for 3 or more consecutive years to July 2005 was held in the Bamburgh Suite at St James' Park on 16 March 2006 from 6pm—8pm. Over 70 pupils attended with family and friends. Many of the Education Welfare Service business partners also came along to the event and enjoyed a superb celebration of outstanding school attendance hosted by Kenny D and Marky Mark from Metro Radio. Players from Newcastle United Football Academy joined in the fun quizzes and we were delighted to welcome the Lord Mayor, Councillor David Slesenger and Lady Mayoress, Councillor Jackie Slesenger along with Councillor Nick Cott, Executive Member for Children and Young People and Mike McLeod, 1984 Olympic 10,000m Silver Medallist in Los Angeles.

Every pupil attending received a fantastic goody bag, filled with items generously donated by our sponsors. Prizes galore, including Newcastle United and Newcastle Falcons match tickets and Eldon Square gift vouchers were up for grabs. Newcastle United were the major sponsors for the event. The EWS is grateful to all partners who helped make this into a successful celebration.

CONGRATULATIONS GO TO ALL PUPILS WITH THIS FANTASTIC ACHIEVEMENT!



The young people achieving 7+ consecutive years of 100% attendance pictured in the tunnel at St James' Park—well done!



Newcastle United Football Academy players joining in a fun sports quiz with youngsters achieving 100% attendance

“Show Racism the Red Card”

Newcastle pupils with excellent attendance records have been rewarded with two exciting outings through locally based charity Show Racism the Red Card. On Wednesday 15 February students from Benfield School and Kenton Technology College enjoyed a trip to Newcastle Falcons Rugby ground at Kingston Park for the Falcons poster campaign launch. The students watched part of Show Racism's recently launched DVD, listened to a rap group and joined in a Q&A session with three Falcons players. After light refreshments the students enjoyed a tour of the ground and each went back to school with a goody bag.

On Tuesday 2 May children from 8 primary schools and one secondary had an exciting afternoon at the Civic Centre in the company of Kieron Dyer and Shola Ameobi. The event was held as the prize giving ceremony for the charity's anti-racist competition for schools and winners came from as far afield as Middlesbrough and Oldham. Also present was Charlie Hardwick who plays Val Lambert in Emmerdale. The children from Benton Park, Hilton, Kenton Bar, Montagu, St John's, St Joseph's RC, West Denton and Westerhope primaries and Walker Technology College were able to have autographs signed and thoroughly enjoyed the visit.

Congratulations are due to Ged Grebby and the team at Show Racism the Red Card for their outstanding work.

Drumming up excellent attendance

Pupils at six Newcastle primary schools were set an attendance challenge over a four-week period beginning in January 2006. The schools involved were Byker, Christ Church C of E, St Lawrence's RC, Hawthorn, St Michael's RC and St Paul's C of E primary schools. The challenge was for each Key Stage 2 class (children aged 7 — 11) to work as a team to improve their attendance and give the winning class the opportunity to take part in two drumming workshops with Worldbeaters Music as part of a project developed with Newcastle City Council Arts Development Team.

Margaret Kerridge, Headteacher at St Michael's RC Primary School, in Elswick, Newcastle, said: "This challenge really motivated children, particularly those who sometimes have difficulty with their attendance. We gave them the running totals for each class every week in assembly and the leading class changed a few times so it was really exciting for them. As a result of this scheme all of the children were really keen to make sure they didn't miss school".

The workshops were thoroughly enjoyed by all participants. Parents also had the chance to get involved by being invited to join in part of the second drumming workshop and watching the children perform.



Eagles take flight

For many years Newcastle Eagles Basketball Team has been a major supporter of the Education Welfare Service in their work to improve school attendance. Thousands of pupils have been given the opportunity to see Newcastle Eagles in action in what has been their most successful season to date. On Sunday 30 April 2006 the Eagles were crowned play off champions and made a clean sweep of all four domestic cup competitions for the season 2005 — 2006. We offer our heartiest congratulations.

Tickets are awarded across the age range as part of attendance challenges in schools and also on an individual basis to children who have made significant improvements in their attendance. Each autumn term a celebration is held to acknowledge the children achieving 100% attendance for the previous academic year and Newcastle Eagles are proud to be the major sponsors for this event which attracts a significant crowd numbering thousands.

The event for the academic year 2004 — 2005 was held on Saturday 1st October 2005 and families enjoyed a basketball game at the Metro Radio Arena with attractions in the foyer before the game and some fantastic prizes provided by our very generous business partners. Andrew Withers and Jonathan Parker from Heaton Manor School acted as young reporters on behalf of the Evening Chronicle and are pictured, below left, interviewing the Eagles player Andrew Bridge. Also pictured is the cheering crowd when more points were added to the Eagles scorecard. The Eagles scraped a win against Guildford Heat by 89 — 88 as an anxious crowd looked on!



The Education Welfare Service works in partnership with many organisations, businesses and agencies to raise awareness of the importance of regular attendance. We celebrate and reward both excellent and improved attendance and punctuality. The Service supports families who are experiencing difficulties.

We are all aware that regular school attendance is vital if children are to realise their full potential. It enables them to recognise and develop the skills required to seek and secure employment, as well as leading to higher aspirations and increased levels of attainment.

We invite and welcome support from the business community in our drive to improve attendance in Newcastle schools and ultimately improve the life chances for young people in the city.

Other recent support to promote attendance includes:

- Debenhams at the Metrocentre hosting class visits
- Robson Brown and The Children's Foundation supporting visits for Grange First School and St Anthony's CofE Primary School to the Centre for Life in January 2006. Children enjoyed a fantastic time during what was described as a 'perfect school visit' by one teacher
- Eldon Square Shopping and Nexus sponsoring attendance certificates

Celebrating in style!



Guests and families having fun at the St James' Park celebration on 16 March 2006



Pictured with the 4 year 100% achievers are Lynne Iveson, Asda Metrocentre, Councillor Nick Cott, Mike McLeod and Janice Hittle, Asda Gosforth

For further information about the projects/initiatives featured in this newsletter or to offer support please contact:

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