

ELLON NETWORK ACTIVE SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

Issue 1

Introduction

January 2007

Welcome

Welcome to the first 'Active Schools' Newsletter for the Ellon Primary School Network. The aim of this newsletter is to raise awareness of Active Schools and to highlight some of the good practice that is currently taking place within the 11 primary schools - Arnage, Ardallie, Auchterellon, Balmedie, Ellon Primary, Foveran, Hatton (Cruden), Meiklemill, Newburgh Mathers, Slains and Tippetty.

My name is Gary MacBeath and I am the Active Schools Coordinator for the Ellon Network. I am based at Ellon Academy (postal address Ellon Academy, Schoolhill Road, Ellon, AB41 9AX) and can be contacted on 01358 727956 or 07823536237. Email: gary.macbeath@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

Background

Active Schools is a Scottish Executive programme aimed at tackling the declining levels of physical activity among many children. The fundamental aim of Active Schools is to offer children the motivation and sustainable opportunities to adopt active healthy lifestyles now and into adulthood. These opportunities are available before, during and after school, as well as in the wider community.

Since taking up post in August I have been busy auditing the schools and I would like to thank all the schools, their staff and the parents who took time to complete the audit forms that were sent round.

How Can You Help??

Most lunchtime and after schools clubs already in existence throughout the network are run by staff and parent volunteers in their spare time. These volunteers are always looking for help and support in some way. Sometimes it can be as simple as taking a register or setting up equipment.

If you are interested in helping with an activity or would like any information on the training opportunities advertised within the newsletter, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me.

Why Physical Activity?

"The links between health and levels of activity are clear: become more active and you and your family reduce your risk of health problems, small and large" (healthyliving)

An active life:

- Improves mental health
- Improves sleep
- Helps maintain a healthy weight
- Improves cardiovascular fitness – and that means lungs, heart and the circulation of the blood
- Reduces stress
- Increases social opportunities - you meet more people and develop friends.
- Reduces the risk of diabetes
- Helps prevent the bone disease osteoporosis

How Much Physical Activity Is Needed?

- Children should aim to accumulate (build up) **at least 1 hour** of moderate level physical activity per day.
- Adults should aim to accumulate (build up) **at least 30 minutes** of moderate level physical activity per day

Recent figures show that at 11 years only 55.5% of boys and 41% of girls achieve this!!

The information above has been taken from the national Healthy Living Website. This website contains lots of healthy living tips and information for families. The website address is www.healthyliving.gov.uk and is well worth a look.





Food Standards Project

Primary 3 and 4 children from **Balmedie** and **Newburgh Mathers** have taken part in a football project in conjunction with Aberdeen Football Club and the Food Standards Agency.

The project comprised a six-week training course designed to raise awareness of the benefits of being fit, healthy eating and food hygiene to school children. Aberdeen Football Club provided six half-day football sessions as well as asking the pupils questions pertinent to their classroom workbooks, to test their knowledge of the material taught during the previous week.

All pupils who successfully completed the course received a certificate along with some goodies including a kit bag and lunchbox. This is an excellent example of how football can be used to deliver important messages to children.



Ellon Football Project

Auchterellon, Ellon Primary and **Meiklemill Primary 7s** have just begun another exciting football project. Aberdeen Football Club coaches will deliver 20 weeks of football coaching during school time. The Scottish Football Association and partners McDonalds have produced logbook which the pupils themselves have the responsibility of completing. The logbook is packed full of facts on diet, exercise and football skills.

A boys and girls soccer seven team will then be made up from each school and evening games will take place at Gordon Park one night per week, starting mid April. **I am looking for volunteers to help with the teams – can you help?** You do not have to be football minded to help – just be prepared to lend a hand! If you are interested in helping with this project, please feel free to contact me at any time for further details.

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After-School Activities

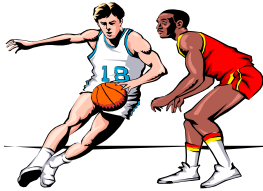
January 2007



Sporty Spanish

Kids at Foveran Primary are going to be taking a foreign approach to their activity sessions. Parent volunteer, Katie Flaherty, is going to run an after-school Sporty Spanish class at Foveran Hall. The kids will incorporate Spanish phrases into their activities such as greetings, numbers and colours.

Basketball



Basketball Development Coordinator, Grant Wilson, will be delivering taster sessions to schools in February, to advertise evening basketball sessions starting at Ellon Academy (Old Building). For further information regarding this project, please contact the Active Schools Coordinator.

Hip Hop Dance

Active Schools is not just about traditional sports. It also aims to introduce different forms of physical activity into a child's life.



A good example of this is dance. Kids at Tipperty Primary have begun a Hip-Hop Dance after-school class, which has been led by Ellon Academy Senior pupil, Georgie Hay. The kids have been working on a routine, which they will demonstrate in the future to parents. It is hoped that this is an activity that can be replicated across the network of schools.

Netball

Active Schools, in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council Netball Development, is continuing to support Netball programmes aimed at increasing participation levels in boys and girls aged between 9-12 years old. The Netball Participation Centre in Ellon is held on Tuesdays, 4.30pm – 6pm, at Ellon Academy. For further details please contact Netball Development Officer Jill Yule on 01467 628124 or myself.



The Meadows Sports Centre
Meadows Way
Ellon, Aberdeenshire, AB41 9QJ
Tel: 01358 725162

The Meadows Sports Centre have recently set up a new after school multi sport class providing children the opportunity to take part in a variety of sports. Meadows staff are currently delivering taster sessions to schools in the Ellon Network to provide a taste of the activities on offer.

The Meadows also offer a range of activities for children and adults. Why not take your child to an activity and use the other facilities on offer for yourself! For further details, contact the Meadows staff direct.

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Forthcoming Activities/Community Information

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Athletics & Rugby

Active Schools is working closely with both Ellon Athletics Club and Ellon Rugby Club. Both clubs are looking to increase the opportunities for kids to take part in physical activity. It is hoped that in the coming months both clubs are going to expand their outreach work by running sessions at various schools.

Both clubs are based at the Meadows and if you require further information on the clubs, or the projects themselves, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me.

Easter Swimming Project



Active Schools will be running a swimming project during the Easter holidays. More than fifty P6 and P7 children have been identified throughout the Ellon Network as non and weak swimmers. These children will be offered free-swimming lessons at Ellon Swimming Pool, taking part in fun games and water confidence activities.

Skipping

A total of over twenty teachers and parent volunteers attended a skipping workshop in October. Many of the schools within the network will also be practising their skills throughout the day, culminating in demonstrations to parents during the school health week.

The ultimate aim of this project is to establish regular lunchtime/ after-school skipping sessions and I am currently assisting the volunteers in starting up after schools skipping clubs in a number of schools across the network. If you are interested in getting involved in this project, or in future training workshops, please get in contact with me.

Hockey

P4-7 pupils at **Slains, Ardallie, Tipperty** and **Arnage** are going to take part in a Hockey project over the coming months. Hockey Development Officer Kevin McNab will deliver a 5-week block of coaching, culminating in a weekend festival at Ellon Hockey Club. Coaching sessions will then continue on a regular basis through the club's junior section, based at the Meadows.

This project has gained support from Aberdeenshire Sports Council. Their aim is to encourage, develop and promote all sports and further information on the council can be found on www.aberdeenshire-sports-council.org.uk

themiddletontrust

The Trust was set up in 1990 to promote the activity and performance of sporting talent in young persons under 18 years, who are resident in Ellon and District, and who would be unable to develop their talent fully without such assistance. To date some £15000 has been disbursed to young sportsmen and women.

The trust run an annual 10k Road Race for Adults and a 3k Fun Run for kids in September. To support this and other cross country events in Aberdeenshire, Active Schools are looking to set up after school-cross country sessions for kids to practise their running skills. We need volunteers to come forward for this project and if you are interested, please feel free to contact me at any time.