

News release

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Study Support Scheme Blows Full-Time Whistle on Junk Food

A Sunderland based study support programme will take a unique change in direction this term as it tackles the war on junk food.

Sunderland City Council's Playing for Success Team will work in partnership with the City's Food in Schools Team to help encourage more youngsters to think twice when it comes to their diet.



Alongside focusing on numeracy, literacy and ICT skills youngsters will also spend time looking at healthy snacks and how a poor diet can affect their health. The Food in Schools Team will spend sessions with both primary and secondary school children discussing healthy foods and playing educational food games.

There'll also be a practical element to the sessions that will cover food preparation, how to use kitchen utensils safely and appropriately as well as how to make healthy snacks suitable for a Premiership footballer.

Playing for Success is a national initiative and this shift in the programme's focus from only traditional key skills to incorporate healthy eating is unique to Sunderland, and follows the scheme's successful pilot over the school summer holidays.

Run by Sunderland City Council in association with the DCSF and Sunderland AFC Foundation, Playing for Success benefits over 330 youngsters aged between 10 and 14 every year. The 10 week study support programme, which is held at SAFC's Stadium of Light, aims to raise key skills by using the medium of sport as a motivational teaching platform.

Mrs Bell, Headteacher at Lambton Primary School, explained: "Playing for Success is an excellent way to help inspire young people by giving them the opportunity to learn in a unique environment at the Stadium of Light. They are really warming to how the Playing for Success Programme relates typical mathematical problems and literacy activities to football focused situations."

Councillor Pat Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services within Sunderland City Council, added: "This is wonderful news for Sunderland. Playing for Success is an innovative project and it's excellent that Sunderland is leading the way in expanding the programme to focus on other important life skills, including helping youngsters to understand the importance of healthier diets."

Schools involved with the new look Playing for Success initiative includes Lambton Primary School, Plains Farm Primary School, Thorney Close Primary School, Usworth Colliery Primary School, Farrington Community Sports College, Hylton Red House School, St Robert of Newminster RC School and Washington School.

Playing for Success centres are open out of school hours and mainly focus on young people who benefit from additional support to develop their English and mathematics skills. Since the launch of Sunderland's Playing for Success centre in September 1999 it has helped to provide over 2,100 youngsters with the extra study support that they need.