

Case Study

Newfield's Dragon's Den Event



After an extremely successful launch of the BiG Challenge at Newfield, Chris Jenkinson, Assistant Headteacher for Business and Enterprise, found himself with over 40 teams that were keen to take part.



Chris devised a fair way of selecting 10 strong teams whilst also driving entrepreneurship through the whole school.

Although this reflected the students' positive attitudes towards enterprise and entrepreneurship, Chris had concerns about the level of support he could provide to such large numbers. With the help of Newfield's Enterprise Champion, Pete Eason, Chris devised a fair way of selecting 10 strong teams whilst also driving entrepreneurship through the whole school.

All Key Stage three and four students were invited to participate in a Dragon's Den qualifying round which took place over two days. Newfield collaborated with the Entrepreneur Exchange, Sheaf Training, the Sheffield Steelers and Pete Eason to host a series of enterprising and entrepreneurial activities. Students worked collaboratively with each other and a range of entrepreneurs to develop problem solving, teamwork and presentation skills.

On day one, students were asked to complete a 'Steelers Challenge', an activity designed by Business & Education South Yorkshire. This involved a research task into the history and profile of the Sheffield Steelers ice hockey team. On completing the research, the students developed a good understanding of the club and were well prepared for the afternoon's activity: the 'Sheffield Steeler's Marketing Challenge'.



Students were invited to take part in the Sheffield Steelers Marketing Challenge which was judged by the club's general manager Mike O'Connor.

With the support of five visiting entrepreneurs and business people including Tim Lindley from The Advance Group and Mike O'Connor, The Sheffield Steelers General Manager, the students competed to solve a marketing problem: How can the Sheffield Steelers increase customers in the 14-19 age bracket? The students had to design a poster and present their ideas in a two minute pitch to a panel of judges.

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The judges took into consideration the students' understanding of their target market, the quality and appeal of their posters and the strength of their presentations. Fifteen teams were selected as the winners. These teams went through to the second round of the challenge, a Dragon's Den style presentation, which took place the following week.

This gave budding BiG Challenge teams a chance to propose their business idea to a panel of experts, including Pete Eason, Anwar Sullivan of AS Photography and Maria Clews, who is a Business Training specialist. From the 15 finalists, 10 teams were selected as Newfield's BiG Challenge entries. Chris comments,

"This event was a brilliant success and learners thrived within the competitive and exciting environment. With the school applying for Business and Enterprise as its specialism, we want all learners to develop their entrepreneurial capabilities, which will benefit them in the career paths that they take.

"Events like this are an excellent way to engage lots of students in an entrepreneurial and enterprising activity."

Chris continued to support the teams, running an after school club every Wednesday for them to work on their enterprise. At the end of the competition, all ten teams marked their completion of the BiG Challenge by submitting a business report. One team, MACE, went all the way and scooped an award for Best Written Report, becoming one of only 14 teams to be invited to the prestigious BiG Challenge Awards Ceremony. Chris comments,

"In the qualifying rounds, the 10 successful teams demonstrated a high level of skill, entrepreneurial potential, dedication and commitment. This continued throughout the whole competition and I was very proud to see them represent Newfield School in the BiG Challenge."

If you would like more information about organising a Dragons Den event at your school, please contact your Enterprise Champion.



All ten teams completed the BiG Challenge 2010 and MACE went all the way, winning Best Written Report.



Project Part-Financed
by the European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

