



Chance to shine
EDUCATING THROUGH CRICKET

Ashes hero agrees to Step up to the Crease for schools' cricket charity

As the English cricket season gets underway, The Cricket Foundation charity behind national schools' cricket initiative, *Chance to shine*, announced today (Thursday 8 April) that England and Lancashire all-rounder Andrew Flintoff has agreed to be the face of their campaign.

The Times, The Sun, Sky Sports and talkSPORT have also all agreed to back the campaign as official media partners in 2010.

Chance to shine is the single biggest school sport development initiative ever undertaken in Britain. Launched in May 2005, it aims to bring the educational benefits of cricket to two million children in a third of state schools by 2015.

To mark the fifth anniversary of *Chance to shine*, the charity is launching a public appeal – "Step up to the Crease!" – next month to raise funds from the cricket-loving public.

Wasim Khan, Chief Executive, The Cricket Foundation said: "Andrew Flintoff really embodies our campaign and its aim to educate and inspire young people through cricket. To have the backing of such major players in sporting media is also fantastic for the charity."

Flintoff, who became a household name after his heroics on the field in both the 2005 and 2009 Ashes series, now fronts the charity's promotional film. He said: "*Chance to shine* is so important. It's going to give two million children a chance to play cricket and I want every kid to have that opportunity to play the game that I love."

Head of News, The Sun, Chris Pharo added: "The Sun is proud to have been invited to become a media partner for *Chance to shine*. It is a fantastic campaign that is bringing our national summer sport to thousands of children up and down the country who might otherwise never get a chance to enjoy it.

“In these modern times where computer games have overtaken good old fashioned sport and exercise *Chance to shine* is encouraging young people to enjoy a great sport outside in the fresh air and sunshine.”

Chief Cricket Correspondent for The Times and Sky Sports commentator Michael Atherton said: “I’ve followed *Chance to shine*’s progress since it launched five years ago and it’s heartening to see so many youngsters enjoying competitive cricket in their schools and local clubs. *Chance to shine* will not only help to revive cricket in the country’s state schools, but will also help to sustain it.”

President of *Chance to shine* and Governor of the Bank of England, Mervyn King, was instrumental in launching the campaign in 2005 when fewer than 10% of state schools provided competitive cricket programmes.

Since then, *Chance to shine* has reached around 800,000 boys and girls and now works through 400 cricket clubs, involving 4,000 state primary and secondary schools throughout the country.

The charity’s fundraising target is £25million by 2015 and the Government, through Sport England, has pledged to match the private figure.

The campaign is fully backed by all the main cricketing bodies including the England & Wales Cricket Board, Marylebone Cricket Club, Professional Cricketers’ Association and The Lord’s Taverners.

For more details on *Chance to shine* visit chancetoshine.org

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Notes to editor

- A range of generic images are available to download free-of-charge from our online *Chance to shine* Flickr gallery. Please contact us for further details.