

## 'Best day ever' at Wirral Diamond Cricket Festival

**There was another bumper attendance at the Chance to Shine Diamond Cricket Festival, at Old Parkonians CC in Birkenhead.**

More than 150 children took part in the annual competition, with one inspired year four pupil describing the event as her "best day ever".

Cheshire's Wirral Development officers Chris Edwards and Gareth Moorhouse coordinated the fixtures, which saw 10 teams from eight schools play a total of 20 matches.



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, from Wallasey, brought an entire year group to the Festival in a bid to inspire as many children as possible to make a connection with the sport.

Martin McGovern, PE Coordinator for St Joseph's, described the event as "a fantastic day for all concerned" and praised the organisers for their continued support.

He said: "Through the Chance to Shine scheme, cricket has had a big impact on our school, where previously all the children talked about was football.

"After our coaching sessions with Chris, so many children were keen to take part in the competitions that I decided to be cheeky and asked if I could bring the whole year group!

"We hired a bus for the day and everyone had a fantastic time. We are already looking forward to our next opportunity to get involved in Diamond Cricket."

Martin's comments were echoed by Dianne Penn from St Peter's Heswall, another school which has benefitted from the inspirational coaching offer from Chance to Shine.

"We love the inclusive nature of the Diamond Cricket format and from speaking to our staff and pupils, it sounds as though everyone really enjoyed the experience.

"One little girl who had never played cricket before told our headteacher it was her best day ever. Many thanks once again to Cheshire Cricket for staging such a brilliant event."

The Wirral Borough Festival is one of seven Diamond Cricket competitions organised across the county, with children in school years three and four eligible to take part.

The focus is on maximising involvement and enjoyment for all concerned, with children then signposted to local cricket clubs to continue their playing journey.

Cheshire Cricket Board Participation Manager Gareth Moorhouse praised the pupils and staff for the spirit in which the matches were played, and thanked hosts Old Parkonians for their hospitality.

Gareth said: "With so many smiling faces and children new to the game, the Diamond Cricket Festival really is one of the highlights of the year on the Wirral.

"The format is easy to understand and all children are active, giving them the opportunity to enhance their skills and develop teamwork."

He added: "Through our partnership with Chance to Shine, we have been able to significantly expand our competition framework in recent years and it's fantastic to see so many children outdoors in the sunshine enjoying our great game."