



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Sarah Hickerton

Ref: West Mercia IJW22

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Telephone: 01905 825108

FORMER ADDICT GOES BACK TO SCHOOL

On Thursday 23rd October students at King Charles School are being given a unique opportunity to get 'another' chance to meet with a former drug addict who has transformed his crime-ridden life and now advises government. Mark Johnson, an ex pupil from the School who abused drugs and alcohol from childhood is now a 'converted' character. Mark has written a book 'Wasted' about his former life, which the students are now reading and he has offered to return to the school and meet with more of the students to give a talk on the consequences of crime. Further activities that day will involve sessions with the Fire Service, Prison service, Police, Turning Point, Youth Offending and Probation.

The day will be supported with a number of other Criminal Justice Agencies and Partner Organisations whom will be taking sessions with the students to educate them on the Criminal Justice System, the causes of anti-social behaviour and avoid getting involved in crime. This will be an awareness day for the students, and an opportunity for them to speak first hand with someone who has had experience within the system.

The fire service will be speaking to the students about road safety and the consequences of arson. The Prison Service will be sending along a Prison Officer who will give the students the opportunity to experience for themselves what life might be like in prison, trying on prison clothes, and seeing real life pictures of a prison cell. Probation will be an playing an interactive programme offering the students the opportunity to 'Judge for themselves' and dish out sentences providing them with the chance to see for themselves real life consequences of crime they will then be able to see the decision of the Judge and, after that, fast forward to the future to see how things turned out for the offender on completion of their sentence. The stories are based on real life cases.

Thursday 23rd October is all about making the students aware of the consequences of crime, and making them aware of potential risks and preventing them from getting involved in the Criminal Justice System. The last visit on the 20th October was such as success Mark was keen to revisit the school and talk with more of the students. Mark said 'At school, children aren't prepared mentally or emotionally for the world outside. I really want to support this event for Inside Justice week, and want to be part of educating children on the fundamental aspects of law and the way it works. This isn't part of their curriculum so I will do whatever I can to help make it, as I believe it should be developed into mainstream education.'

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Notes to editors:

1. Inside Justice Week runs across England and Wales from 18-25 October. For more information about the campaign, please visit <http://insidejustice.cjsonline.gov.uk/>

The event at King Charles School –

Guest Speaker Mark Johnson will be visiting King Charles 1 School, Hillgrove House, Comberton Road, Kidderminster DY10 1XA, Press are invited along for interviews and photos with Mark Johnson, and to talk with the Criminal Justice Agencies and other Organisations and the students at 12.00 – 1.20pm.

Please sign in at reception on arrival and you will be collected.

2. For all the events taking place this year during Inside Justice Week (18-25th October) in West Mercia please visit <http://lcjb.cjsonline.gov.uk/WestMercia/home.html>:
3. The winners of the Justice Awards will be announced on 21 October. For more information, please visit www.cjsonline.gov.uk/justiceawards
4. West Mercia Criminal Justice Board is responsible for the running of the Criminal Justice System in West Mercia. For further information please visit: sarah.hickerton@cps.gsi.gov.uk

For further information please contact:

E Sarah.hickerton@cps.gsi.gov.uk

T 01905 825108 M 07826 510248