

Fire Service Youth Engagement Service at St Kentigerns Academy



A Scottish Fire and Rescue Service youth engagement programme ran at Bathgate fire station last week in conjunction with St Kentigerns Academy in Blackburn, West Lothian.

Local Area Liaison Officer Stuart Watson explains: “Working with young people means that the fire service can raise awareness and challenge attitudes to fire safety and other forms of anti-social behaviour.

“The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Youth engagement project engages with young people aged between 12-17 in order to work towards reducing hoax calls and secondary fires and to increase awareness of local community safety issues.

“We encourage positive social behaviour by using a combination of intensive group work and fire service activities with a view to raising self-esteem, confidence, personal motivation and increase problem solving skills

“The programme allows participants to experience basic fire service tasks such as team building, first aid, hose running and ladder climbing to develop physical stamina.

“All activities incorporate a fire safety message and endorse a strong group work component.”

Councillor John McGinty said: ““It was terrific to be able to join with the young people, their families and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service staff for the final day presentation of the Cool down crew programme. I was really impressed by the skills and team work shown by the young firefighters and took

time to congratulate them on their achievements. It was also great to see so many family and friends turn out to support the young people, and I know how proud they were of their youngsters.

West Lothian Council is grateful to the Scottish Fire and Rescue service, and all our local firefighters, for all they do to keep our communities safe day in and day out. Cool down crew is an outstanding example of the additional work that the service delivers for our communities and their work with our young people is particularly appreciated by the Council. I hope that this is something that we can continue to develop and deliver in the future."

On the final day of the programme, the young people displayed a practical presentation to demonstrate the skills they have learned. This was an opportunity to invite friends, family and teaching staff from St Kentigerns along to the fire station to share in their success.

They were presented with certificates by Councillor John McGinty to recognise their achievements.

The names of the pupils that took part are:

Dominic Dalton

Declan Girdwood

Declan McGarry

Ben Foster

Adele McConnell

Sarah Berry