

Record number of volunteers to take part in Education and Enterprise Week 2011 (4th October)

Over 170 volunteers from 17 top law firms and organisations across the city are giving their time to support and participate in this year's Leeds Legal Education and Enterprise Week.

The volunteers will be visiting 11 schools in underprivileged areas across Leeds, during 10th – 14th October, to talk to primary school pupils and provide first-hand accounts of working life as well as demonstrating how the skills taught at school can transfer into the workplace.

Leeds Legal Education and Enterprise Week is organised in conjunction with Leeds Ahead, which works with the public and private sectors to foster social and economic regeneration in the city. The aim of the week is to raise aspirations amongst the children and empower them to consider and develop their future career ambitions from an early age.

The children will take part in the 2011 theme 'World of Work Day' which will involve the volunteers highlighting the wide and varied roles that exist in a modern law firm, whilst explaining some of the basic principles of business and getting hands-on in developing skills.

To bring the business concepts to life the school will transform into the 'Great Big Chocolate Company' for the day and, in teams, the pupils will work at designing a new chocolate bar to sell to their chosen market. The children will design a poster advert and a storyboard for a TV advertisement and present their ideas to a judging panel made up of volunteers and school staff.

The day hopes to expand the students' understanding of the various industries and the roles out there in the world of work, in a fun and engaging way through interaction with positive working role models.

Rosemary Edwards, director of Leeds Legal and partner at Shulmans, said: "Education and Enterprise Week is now in its 5th year and it remains a great way for businesses to give back to the community.

"It is fantastic to be a part of a project which helps position young people strongly to be employable in the future and the support from the law firms has been phenomenal this year.

"Legal firms really add value because of the range of different jobs that exist within an organisation, from the office manager to finance and marketing; it's not just about lawyers. In this way, pupils learn about the widest possible choices of jobs and careers available."

Stephanie Burras, chief executive of Leeds Ahead, added: "Once again, we're delighted to be playing the pivotal role. With the continued support of key law firms in Leeds, we know we can drive up the aspirations and ambitions of young people. Leeds Legal Education and Enterprise Week is an ideal opportunity to encourage primary school pupils from some of the most deprived areas to aim high as they continue their education."

This year's participating law firms and organisations are: DWF, Pinsent Masons, Shulmans, Eversheds, DLA Piper, Clarions, Lupton Fawcett, Irwin Mitchell, Mills and Reeve, Addleshaw Goddard, Levi, Blacks, Heslop and Platt, Pace, Gordons, Stuarts and Leeds City Council.

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