

Be the Best you can Be!

Eastwick Schools recently welcomed former BMX halfpipe World Champion, Mike Mullen for a day of inspirational talk and amazing tricks to launch the “Be the Best you can Be!” programme.

The “Be the Best you can Be!” is a nationally run and Olympic inspired educational programme, which enables children to discover and develop the unique potential within themselves and inspires them to pursue and fulfil their dreams. Professional athlete and guest speaker, Mike Mullen visited the school to introduce the programme and share the story of how he overcame setbacks and challenges to fulfil his dreams of becoming a BMX champion. In the following term the children will be working to discover and practice the skill they need to follow their own dreams, culminating with a celebration and recognition award.

Monday morning the Eastwick infant school hall was buzzing with excited children ready to welcome BMX titleholder Mike Mullen. The Friday before the teachers had been showing video clips of amazing tricks and stunts performed by Mike, and the children were very excited to meet him, hear him talk and hopefully see him perform in the playground.

Mike introduced himself, telling the children how he had grown up in a one-parent family and been quite a shy boy who, mainly because of his asthma, struggled with his confidence when doing sports at school. As an 11 year old he was introduced to BMX when watching a TV programme and became inspired and fascinated by the amazing tricks he saw. Mike described how he got a BMX bike and often he would fall and how he had to try again and again to get it right. He explained to the children how he overcame obstacles, such as his asthma or a broken bike, to learn to think forward and solve a problem rather than thinking about things being difficult or unfair. “Ask how instead of why” he said.

The children also had the opportunity to ask questions, and many children wanted to know what to do when you are scared or can't do something; Mike explained that he breaks things up into three steps and masters one thing at a time. He continued; “I still get scared or nervous, but I try to be a little better each day, to be my own best.”

Mike finished his talk by emphasizing the importance of role models who can inspire you to find and fulfil your dreams; when he first started he was inspired by the BMX riders he saw on TV and today it is especially Olympic and Paralympic athletes he finds inspirational. He believes all children have the potential of fulfilling their dream if they are inspired, passionate and hardworking.

All the children, from infants to juniors, enjoyed an engaging and entertaining talk, but no doubt the highlight of the day came at the end when Mike showed some amazing tricks and jumps in the playground. It was some very excited and highly motivated children who returned to the classrooms that Monday, and it will be fascinating to follow the children's progress this coming term as they continue with the “Be the Best you can Be!” programme at Eastwick Schools.

