

A different education, a different approach

Mr Kenny MacAskill MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice, joined over 130 pupils, staff and Life/Time organisations on Thursday 25th March to formally launch the Life/Time project.

Held at Gracemount High School on a rather misty day, the weather did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of the third year pupils who were involved in this one day programme,

designed to make them more aware about the causes and consequences of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Life/Time is managed and run Craig Mercer, Scottish Prison Service and has a wide range of partner organisations providing their time and expertise to run six workshops. Each workshop tackles a particular aspect of crime and the impact crime has on everyone involved from the individual committing the crime, their family and the victims. The third year pupils are 'prisoners' for the day and learn to appreciate what it might be like to spend some of their life in prison.

Craig says - "The day is about choices, about making good choices and about being aware of the consequences of bad choices," he says.

"A lot of young people live for the moment. This is about getting them to take a step back and think about where that moment might lead."



The Life/Time project has been running for two years and has completed 11 one day programmes across 10 schools – Gracemount High School is the first school to have run the programme twice.

The programme has received a lot of excellent feedback from the young people involved and their teachers and to recognise the work



Mr MacAskill meeting the Procurator Fiscal team

of all the organisations involved, a formal launch of the project was arranged to coincide with the day the programme was being delivered at Gracemount High School.

Pauline Walker, Head Teacher welcomed everyone to the school and thanked Craig and his colleagues for running the programme once more. Ms Walker hoped the pupils would take as much as possible from the programme to ensure she never got ‘the call’ to say one of her pupils had been in trouble or arrested.

Mr Nigel Ironside, Governor in Charge of His Majesty’s Prison Edinburgh, opened the event and thanked all of the organisations for their support of this project which the Scottish Prison Service is proud to deliver across schools in Lothian & Borders. Mr Ironside introduced Mr MacAskill who encouraged the young people to make sure they took every opportunity available to them to keep safe and avoid getting involved in crime.



Mr MacAskill speaking to the assembled pupils, organisers and guests

Life/Time continues to develop and some of the main additions to the programme are:

Prison issue teaching pack

A teaching pack funded by the Co-operative for the session on prison issues, delivered by prison officers. This pack was developed in partnership with the Community Education Trust Scotland (CETS).

Journey to Prison DVD

HMP Edinburgh worked in partnership with Carnegie College and Pilton Video to develop a DVD showing the viewer the journey from arrest, through court and onto prison.

Mobile prison cell

Also funded from CJA monies, HMP Edinburgh has constructed a replica prison cell 'on wheels'. This exhibition trailer was built within the prison's training centre with significant construction input from prisoners. The trailer is taken to schools on Life/Time days. By means of one side of the 'cell' opening up, pupils can see prisoners' living conditions 'in the flesh'.



A couple of 'prisoners' get special treatment from Prison Officer Mercer



Street scene

The Life/Time Project acquired a collapsible street scene for use on Project days as a back drop to an anti-social behaviour session delivered by the Police.

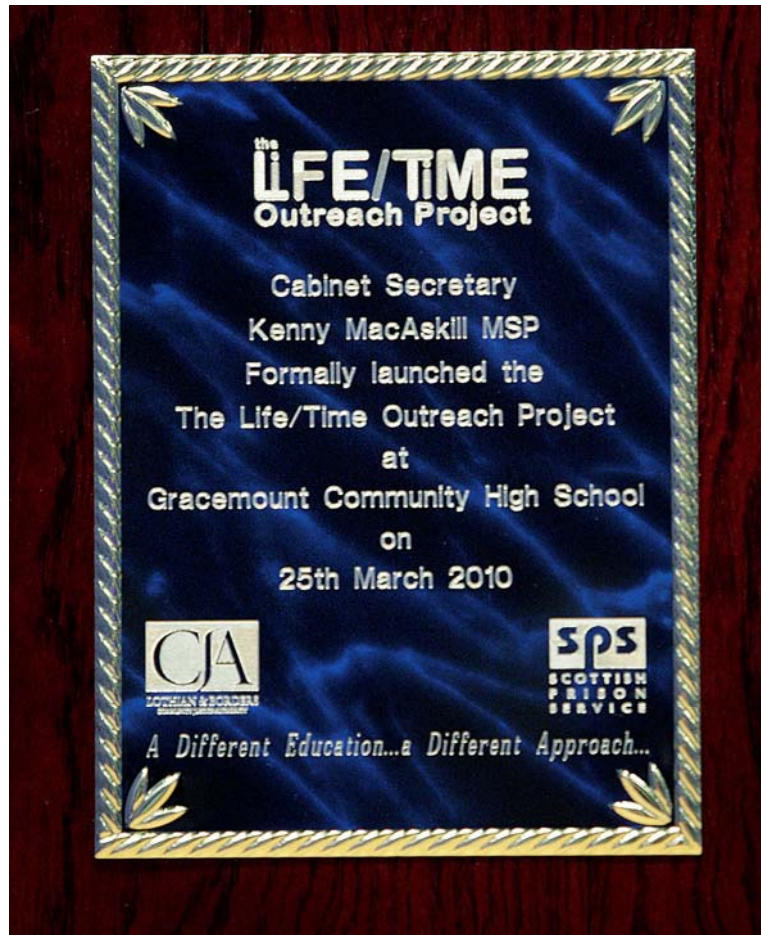
Technical equipment

A lap top and associated equipment allow the Life/Time Project to deliver its presentations to the highest professional standard.

So what can you expect from Life/Time in your school?

- the delivery of a new, exciting localised criminal justice awareness programme
- high numbers of pupils experiencing a positive message across Lothian and Borders
- excellent feedback from participants at all levels
- multi agency working towards a common goal
- a positive contribution towards the aims and objectives of Lothian & Borders CJA Area Plan
- a positive leadership role for the Scottish Prison Service, and HMP Edinburgh in particular, in the community





If you would like more information on Life/Time please contact

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