

29 June 2012

### **Photography available**

### **High school students break the mould in teaching about debt**

While MPs and financial institutions are debating the best way to teach young people how to manage their money, pupils at Southlands High School in Chorley, supported by the charity Debt Advice Foundation, are blazing the trail. They are rolling out their unique money management lessons, in which 14-year-olds teach younger pupils about budgets, savings and how to avoid unmanageable debt, using books and presentations they have developed themselves.

The project began when Debt Advice Foundation, a national debt advice charity based in Darwen, Lancs, approached Southlands High School to discuss ways of supporting financial education in schools. Two students had the idea of writing the first Money Diaries, comparing the fortunes of two families with different approaches to money. The project has now developed into compelling money management lessons, taught to nine-year-olds by secondary school pupils.

And now the project is being rolled out to other secondaries as part of My Money Week, run and resourced by the Personal Finance Education Group (pfeg), the UK's leading finance education charity

Two teams of Yr9 and Yr10 students from Southlands High School have been demonstrating to other secondary schools how they run their lessons, so that the programme can start to roll out in other parts of the country.

So far the programme has been rolled out to Yr 10 students from Royal Wootton Bassett Academy in Wiltshire, the David Young Community Academy in Leeds and Carr Hill High School in Kirkham, Lancs.

These schools are now planning to use the training, lesson plans and Money Diaries to develop lessons for younger pupils in their own schools and then for their local primaries.

Deputy headteacher of Southlands High School, Brian Souter, said: "It was quite a challenge to work out how best to train other students, because of course they had never seen the lessons themselves.

"I was really pleased at how well they took to the idea, and how our young people coped with what must have been quite a nerve-wracking experience of presenting something really quite complex to other students of their own age.

"Every time we have given the lessons to primary pupils, I am amazed at how engaged they are, and how much they enjoy being taught by our students. I really do believe we have hit on something that is not only unique, but which is solid enough to roll out from school to school, teaching hugely important life skills as it goes."

Dennis Benson, chairman of Debt Advice Foundation, added: "At the outset, we never imagined for a moment the enthusiasm and originality with which Southlands has taken up this project. I've been consistently impressed, and am absolutely convinced that this is one of the strongest ways of helping young people realise what an important part money management should play in all their lives."

- Ends -

**Further information:**

Press office: 0800 779 7136

Out of hours: 07889 736044

Email: [pressoffice@debtadvicefoundation.org](mailto:pressoffice@debtadvicefoundation.org)

## Editors Notes

### About Debt Advice Foundation

Debt Advice Foundation's telephone helpline service is available six days a week on **0800 043 40 50**; lines are open from 8am-8pm Mon-Fri and 9am – 5pm on Saturdays.  
[www.debtadvicefoundation.org](http://www.debtadvicefoundation.org)

Debt Advice Foundation is a registered charity, with the following objectives:

- Provide free, impartial and appropriate advice to people with unaffordable debt.
- Help people with debt problems to gain free access to solutions that will help them.
- Promote the education of young people in money management so as to reduce the likelihood they will mis-use debt later in their lives.
- Undertake or fund research to understand why problem debt happens and its effect on individuals, families and the wider UK economy.
- To use this evidence to become a force for beneficial change within the credit and debt solutions industry and to work with government to bring about legislative change to benefit UK consumers.

The charity is a member of AdviceUK, the UK's largest support network for free, independent advice centres and all of the charity's advisors are associate members of the Institute of Money Advisers, a charitable body that aims to promote free money advice and develop professional standards. It is also a registered supporter of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Financial Education for Young People and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Debt and Personal Finance.

### About pfeg

- pfeg (Personal Finance Education Group) is the UK's leading finance education charity.
- pfeg is the leading independent charity providing free support, resources and expert consultancy to help schools plan and teach financial capability. Its mission is to ensure that all young people leaving school are equipped with the confidence, skills and knowledge they need in financial matters to take part fully in society.
- pfeg works with teachers, government, consumer bodies and financial industry representatives to assist schools in delivering personal finance education to the highest possible standards – making sure that children and young people are able to understand money and make informed choices which will guarantee them security and economic well-being in the long-term.
- pfeg was named Educational Charity of the Year at the Charity Awards in June 2010.
- For more information please visit [www.pfeg.org](http://www.pfeg.org) or contact Kat Hodgkinson [kat.hodgkinson@pfeg.org](mailto:kat.hodgkinson@pfeg.org)
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### About My Money Week 2012

- My Money Week takes place in schools throughout England from.
- My Money Week is a financial education programme developed and executed by pfeg (Personal Finance Education Group). My Money Week is the highest profile, and most recognised personal finance education initiative in England. This is the 4th Annual My Money Week.
- As a result of extensive research among young people, parents and teachers, the programme acknowledges the pressures already upon schools and teachers and will deliver resources to provide confidence and support in integrating personal finance in their curriculum. Its fundamental aim is to improve financial capability for young people in primary and secondary schools.