

Blades star Nick helps youngsters get the most out of this sporting life

# We're on the ball!



**BY SUZANNE McTAGGART**

PREMIERSHIP footballer Nick Montgomery made a special appearance at a four-day summer sports event for children in Rothwell.

The Sheffield United star helped more than 50 five to 11-year-olds take on nine different sports during the extravaganza at Rothwell St Mary's RC Primary School.

The children learnt skills in football, tag rugby, basketball, quick cricket, uni hoc, dance, athletics, netball and rounders during the event, organised by WR Active Learning.

## Activities

The company, run by sport and exercise graduate Will Ryder, works alongside several primary schools helping pupils take part in different physical activities.

He said: "The pupils have had the opportunity to take part in many different sports during the four days.

"Some might really not like football but but might really like basketball, so we're increasing overall participation rather than just targeting one sport, and both boys and girls are encouraged to take part. Our aim is to increase participation in sport among younger children through enjoyable activities and working on skills including balance and coordination."

In the past, Will has worked with Nick Montgomery and several Leeds Rhinos players, including Chris Feather and Gareth Ellis, to help



**WINNING TACTICS:** Sheffield United's Nick Montgomery meets children at St Mary's RC School, in Rothwell

inspire children to take part in different sporting activities.

As part of his sessions, Will also tries to tackle the growing problem of childhood obesity, by encouraging

kids to eat healthily and teaching them about the importance of diet.

He added: "One of our main concerns is the rising level of obesity in this country and the lack of physical

activity in primary schools.

"If we can make these sessions fun and enjoyable for the children, then they will carry on participating in years to come."

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– Will Ryder, boss of WR Active Learning