

THREE former England cricketers combined with Chance to Shine coaches in Cheshire to deliver a “fantastic” coaching session that will be remembered for “years to come”.

Star-struck Wirral schoolchildren described their visit to picturesque Oxton Cricket Club as the “best day ever” after spending an hour in the company of Devon Malcolm, Alex Tudor and Simon Jones.

The pace bowling trio were in town to represent the PCA England Masters in a fixture against host club Oxton, and made time to deliver an action-packed coaching session to some local pupils before fulfilling their playing commitments.

Children from three schools involved in the Chance to Shine programme were invited to attend the event, which comprised a full day of activities led by Cheshire Cricket Board coaches and young leaders from the club.



Richard Hinds, PE coordinator at St Michael and All Angels Catholic Primary School, said: “The whole day exceeded my expectations.

“It was such a special day for all our children and every single child came into school on Monday morning saying that they had ‘the best day ever’.

“The event was made extra special by the attendance

of Alex Tudor, Devon Malcolm and Simon Jones. We cannot thank them enough for giving up their time to coach the children.

“The whole day was amazing. I only wish we could have taken more children.”

Richard’s comments were echoed by Matthew Naylor, PE lead at St Joseph’s RC Primary School, Birkenhead, who brought 12 pupils to the event.

Mathew said: “St. Joseph's children and staff enjoyed a marvellous day at Oxton Cricket Club for the PCA Masters event. The children loved playing and working with the legends and will remember the day for years to come. Thank you to all who were involved in organising and running this fabulous event.”

Cheshire Cricket Board Participation Manager Gareth Moorhouse led the morning activities, alongside volunteer coaches Callum Andrews and Jack Corran, who helped introduce the youngsters to the basics of striking, bowling and throwing.

The England legends then joined the session for an action-packed activity circuit, with Jones, Tudor and Malcolm demonstrating and feeding for some of the stations.

Before leaving, the players gave a short speech about the benefits of playing cricket, highlighting healthy living and making lifelong friends as two key aspects.

“Cricket as a sport has given so much to me, so it’s nice to be able to give something back,” said Tudor.



“It’s great to see so many smiling faces, and the boys and girls getting stuck into the activities.

He added: “Days like this are important because they highlight the role that local cricket clubs can play in helping to shape the lives of young people. We will certainly remember our visit to Oxtou Cricket Club.”

Following the speeches, the children had a short lunch break before spending the afternoon playing small-sided games, putting in practice some of the skills they had learned.

Before leaving, every child was presented with a medal by Chris Edwards, Cheshire’s Wirral-based Coaching Officer who also captains the England Learning Disability team.



Event coordinator Keith Andrews said he was “delighted” with the outcome of the day, and has pledged to organise more activities for local schoolchildren in future.

Keith said: “Last year we had the Lashings World X1 at the club and this time it was the turn of the PCA Masters. It was another brilliant day and the feedback from the staff and pupils has been excellent.

“Chance to Shine and Cheshire Cricket do a superb job to engage children in our sport, and here at Oxtou we wanted to give the pupils a day to remember, which it looks like we did.

“Whether they go on to become club members here, join a neighbouring club, or just continue to play cricket socially with family and friends, it’s nice to say we have played a small part in that journey.”

Keith added: “We hope to run more events like this in future so even more children can benefit”.

Letter written by Bradley, Luke and John, Year 4 pupils from St Michael’s and All Angels

On Friday, 12 children from Y4 went to cricket coaching at Oxton Cricket Club. Firstly we warmed up by playing lots of games, we then practiced batting, bowling and catching. We had a drinks break and then met three famous England Players called Simon, Devon and Alex. They helped us to become better players and had a picture with us. We also met Chris our cricket teacher who we love coming into school. In the afternoon we played pavilion cricket, diamond cricket and Lords Cricket. We were mixed up with other schools so we made lots of new friends. We all had lots of fun and even got a medal. It was the best day ever!