

No puffing for these magic dragons who say no to cigs

Health: Football ace joins children to launch anti-smoking drive

BY JOSHUA KING

She has paraded her footballing skills all over the world and was the FA's inaugural Woman Player of the Year.

Yesterday, Mintlaw's Kim Little joined a group of north-east primary schoolchildren to launch an anti-smoking campaign.

The Scotland star, who grew up in the Buchan area before starring for Arsenal and Seattle Reign, visited pupils in Inverurie and Rosehearty to spearhead the NHS initiative.

The smoke-free awareness scheme is encouraging people to stop lighting up in homes and local authority grounds and raise awareness of the health risks of living in a smoky environment.

The two mascots for the project are dragons which have been named by a pupil from each town.

Kellands pupil James Beattie came up with the winning suggestion of Puffy for the red dragon while Kaelyn Simpson from Rosehearty School entered the name Bubbles for the blue dragon.

Ms Little, who has made more than 100 appearances for Scotland and recently rejoined Arsenal fol-

lowing a successful time in Seattle, met pupils to promote a healthy lifestyle.

The 26-year-old said: "I was brought up in a really healthy and active environment.

"Smoke-free homes are really important to provide a healthy lifestyle for children and give them the best opportunity possible."

She added that while second-hand smoke was damaging to everybody's health, children were hit the hardest.

After awarding Jamie and Kaelyn trophies, she added: "It is nice to raise awareness about this issue and come here to meet the pupils."

The Aberdeenshire dragons campaign was devised by NHS Grampian's anti-smoking team.

A spokeswoman for the health board said: "We're very encouraged that so many people, young and old, as well as professionals, want to raise awareness about the benefits of a smoke-free environment."

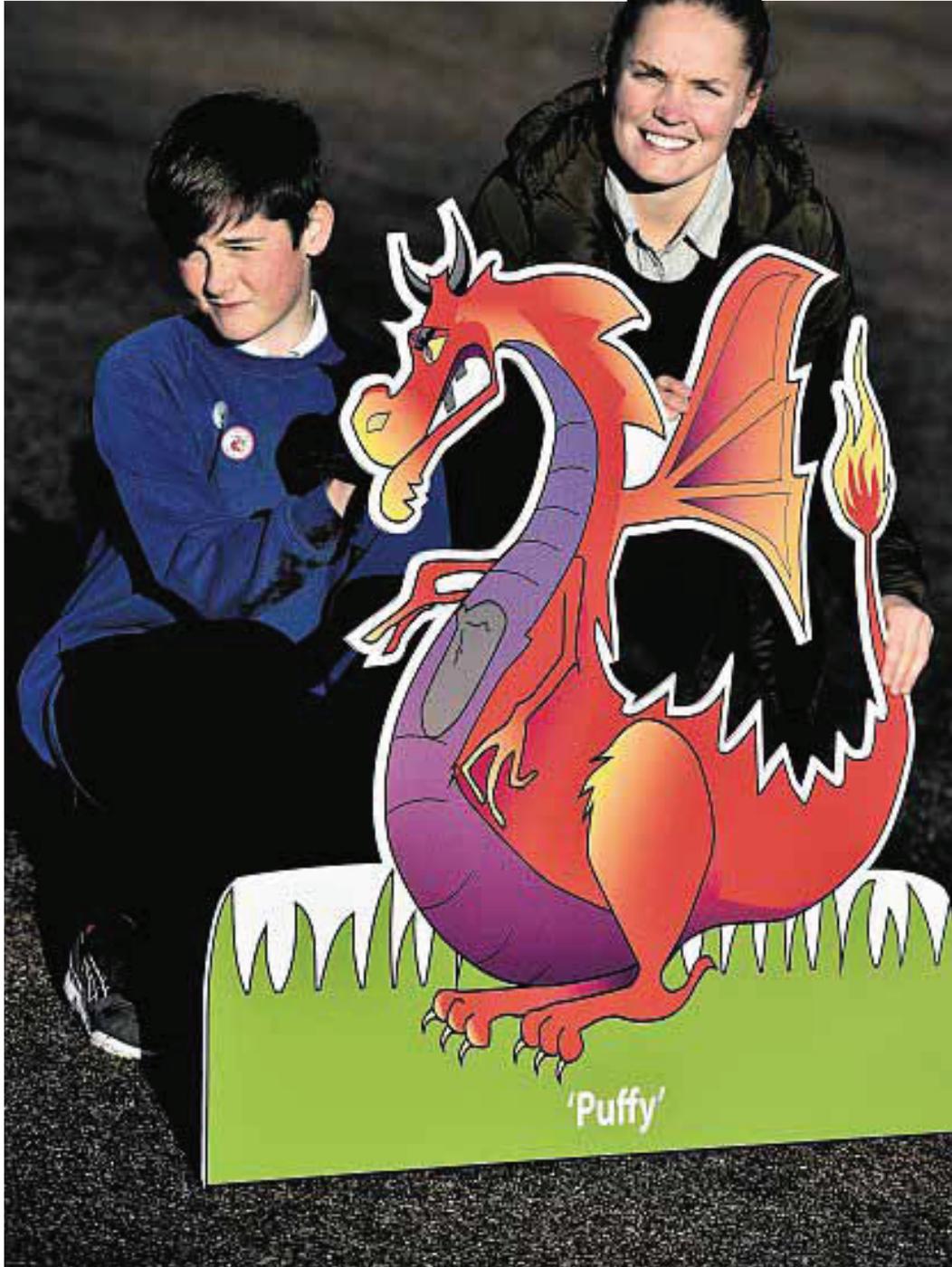
The NHS campaign team is following up yesterday's launch event with visits to Inverurie, Stonehaven, Huntly, Peterhead, Banchory, Fraserburgh and Banff between now and December 9.



Rosehearty pupil Kaelyn Simpson with Bubbles



... children to launch anti-smoking drive



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KICK IT: Kellands pupil James Beattie and Kim Little with Puffy, named by James. Photograph: Kami Thomson

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