



Press Release

“Portadown Gets Active” A scheme to support local children and end holiday hunger a success

Children in Northern Ireland ran a summer scheme to support local children in Portadown. The programme was delivered in partnership with the community and voluntary sector, statutory agencies, local schools and local government with additional support from Craigavon based Almac Group.

The scheme Portadown Gets Active was aimed at tackling the problem of holiday hunger. This new and unique initiative was aimed at offering children a fun and active holiday programme, which not only provides a free nutritious breakfast and lunch but also gives children the opportunity to gain an OCN qualification in Healthy Living.

Pauline Leeson, Chief Executive of Children in Northern Ireland, said: “It is incredibly sad that in this day and age we still have families struggling to provide enough food for their children. Not only is food poverty detrimental to children’s health, it also has serious implications for their educational future. Which is why our project is so unique in its approach and why it has been a huge success by improving many outcomes for children.”

Some of the improved outcomes from this project include:

- Improved mental health and wellbeing for young people
- Improved nutrition during school holidays
- Improved educational achievement and no loss of educational memory
- Increased confidence and skills
- Reduced poor health through nutrition and exercise
- Improved employment prospects and progression (OCN qualification)
- Higher levels of social interaction and participation
- Increased confidence, health and wellbeing.

Speaking about the scheme, Kevin Reid, VP Corporate Marketing, Almac Group, stated *"Portadown Gets Active is a fantastic project which we were delighted to support. The kids who participated over the summer have developed a range of valuable skills and knowledge about nutrition, health and wellbeing whilst making friends and, most of all, having fun in the process. Congratulations to the team of volunteers who helped make the programme such a success."*

The Portadown Gets Active project will be running throughout the year during school holiday times summer, Halloween, Christmas and Easter.

The project in Portadown is a partnership between Oasis Youth Portadown, Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership, Pathways Activities and Presentation Primary School with additional support from the Public Health Agency, food supplier Brakes UK and the Almac Group.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

CiNI represents the interests of its 160-member organisations providing policy, information, training, and participation support services to members in their direct work with and for children and young people. CiNI membership also includes colleagues in the children's statutory sector recognising that the best outcomes for children and young people are increasingly achieved working in partnership with all those who are committed to improving the lives of children and young people in NI.

The Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) is a multi-agency partnership that includes the leadership of key statutory agencies and community and voluntary organisations that have a responsibility for improving the lives of children and young people in Northern Ireland. Chief Executives represent statutory agencies on the partnership and an open call ensured senior representation of organisations from the community sector and voluntary sector.

The Almac Group is an established contract development and manufacturing organisation that provides an extensive range of integrated services to the pharmaceutical and biotech sectors globally.

Pathways is the youth engagement delivery team for the Reserve Forces & Cadets Association for Northern Ireland. The team delivers across all communities throughout Northern Ireland, has been in existence for 2 years and has delivered 62,350 places, primarily to the primary and post primary education sectors as well as a variety of community groups.

Oasis is a local community group based in Portadown who work directly with over 700 children, young people and their families on a cross community basis, including a wide range of those from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Meals & More is a charitable programme run by Brakes UK, it works with suppliers and delivery partners to provide holiday clubs across the UK.

