

PRESS RELEASE – 24th October, 2017



Children's lesson is just what the doctor ordered

Pupils from a South Tyneside school swapped their classroom for a hospital visit thanks to staff at South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust who are helping to educate local children about how to use NHS services wisely.

The youngsters from Keelman's Way School in Hebburn had a tour of the children's A&E department at South Tyneside District Hospital to see the work of the doctors and nurses. They were also given a demonstration of how plaster casts are made and how X-rays are taken.

Ali James, paediatric unit manager, explained: "We know that coming into hospital can be stressful for children and that the experience that a child has when accessing care can shape their views forever.

"By inviting pupils in from local schools it gives us the opportunity to educate them about the type of things which do need a trip to hospital and also what things they can do to look after themselves. By meeting our staff and seeing the sort of equipment we use, it's a way of reassuring them and reducing any anxiety they may

feel in the event of having to come into hospital. The children leave the department with a sticker and very happy faces and the schools tell us the visits are very educational and enjoyable."

Laura McGregor, assistant head of Keelman's Way School, said: "To be able to come in and experience hospital in a relaxed, fun way was very beneficial for our pupils and they thoroughly enjoyed the tour."

The majority of the attendances at South Tyneside children's A&E department are for minor injuries and illnesses, including coughs, colds, fever, rashes, infections, as well as fractures. For parents, who can often lack confidence in dealing with some of these common childhood illnesses, which often do not need a trip to hospital, there is now help at hand.

Parents and carers of children aged 0 to five years can find guidance at their fingertips to help them to look after their children's health and prevent unnecessary A&E attendances via a new free 'NHS Child Health' app.

The app gives easy-to-understand guidance on childhood illnesses and recognising when your child is unwell, and advice on when and where to seek further treatment. The app was created by healthcare professionals across the region as part of the North East Urgent and Emergency Care Network. It covers everything from oral health, upset tummies and diarrhoea, to advice on bumps and bruises. It can be downloaded from Google Play and the App Store by searching for NHS child health.

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Photo caption: Keelman's Way School pupils and South Tyneside District Hospital children's A&E staff