# Local primary school make a difference for the sick children's trust

**Friday 28 July, 2017**

Schoolchildren at a Leeds primary school have pulled together to raise £1,470.89 for The Sick Children's Trust as part of the nationwide Make a Difference Challenge set by the Go-Givers organisation.

Year Four pupils from Austhorpe Primary School began their fundraising mission for The Sick Children's Trust in January and through a range of events, the class has gone on to raise an amazing £1,470.89. As part of the Make a Difference Challenge, the schoolchildren were asked to pick a cause that they felt passionately about and they chose The Sick Children's Trust – a charity that supports families with seriously ill children in hospital with free 'Home from Home' accommodation.

The Sick Children's Trust runs ten free 'Homes from Home' across the country, one of which supports families with seriously ill children at Leeds Children's Hospital, called Eckersley House. After the schoolchildren contacted Eckersley House Manager, Jane McHale, she made a visit to the class to explain who the charity helps. **Year Four Teacher Helen Haigh says:**

"The children were extremely moved by what Jane had to say and all the wonderful work the charity does in keeping families together while a child is seriously ill in hospital. They had already researched some other possible charities as part of their homework, but after Jane's visit they were adamant they wanted to focus solely on fundraising for The Sick Children's Trust. It was the winning cause."

Over the last six months, the Year Four class have organised lots of fundraising activities including a school raffle, 'name the bear' and 'guess how many sweets are in the jar' competitions, as well as selling charity wristbands and merchandise. Every child in the school was also given a collection box to take home to see who could raise the most money. The parents of Austhorpe children have been so supportive. **Helen continues:**

"We sent a link to the charities website and suggested parents watch the video so that they knew who we were trying to help. The video on the website made parents think –"that could have been our family" – as a result, everyone rallied behind the cause, helping out with the raffles and competitions, and donating generously."

As part of the Make a Difference Challenge, the children strived to raise awareness for The Sick Children's Trust and at a presentation afternoon held at Leeds City Museum in June, schools participating in the Make a Difference Challenge from across the city gathered to speak about their chosen cause. Austhorpe Primary School children showed the same video from the website which features a family who the charity had supported at its 'Homes from Home'. **Helen said:**

"When we showed the video, I don't think there was a dry eye in the room. I think the work of The Sick Children's Trust really struck a chord with everyone at the presentation."

The Sick Children's Trust's Eckersley House has 22 family bedrooms, eight bathrooms and three fully equipped kitchens, as well as a private flat available for families to stay with their child while they recover from a liver transplant. **Eckersley House Manager Jane McHale, says:**

"We would like to thank Austhorpe Primary School for their incredible fundraising efforts over the past six months. The children have worked extremely hard and should be so proud of all that they've achieved, it really is inspirational.

"The Sick Children's Trust supports around 4,000 families each year and although our 'Homes from Home' are free of charge for families, it costs the charity £30 to support a family for one night. We rely entirely on voluntary donations and contributions, and so the children really have made a difference."

For further information about The Sick Children's Trust, please visit http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/

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