

Woodmill High School shows its heart after raising money for a defibrillator

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WOODMILL High staff and pupils have been learning how to be lifesavers after raising cash to buy a vital piece of equipment.

A defibrillator has now been put in the school's reception area and the first training session on the important machine took place last week.

Biology teacher Laura Wilson was delighted to finally have the device, which can prove the difference between life and death for anyone who suffers a cardiac arrest.

"We had read somewhere that the majority of child deaths are underlying heart conditions so we decided we kind of needed one," she explained.

"A lot of the pupils felt quite passionate about getting it and we started the ball rolling to get one. We were working for two to three years to try and raise the money – they are about £1,000 so it was a lot of fundraising."

As well as organising cake sales in school, pupils wrote to local businesses asking for donations while Laura also took part in Dunfermline Round Table's Dragon's Den event, where they were delighted to secure £900.

"It is now in the reception area and will also be available for community use as we have lots going on after school," she said.

The importance of a defibrillator was highlighted through the Press' Take Heart campaign which called for kits to be available to the public around the clock.

As a result, three are now in operation in Dunfermline's city centre – in the Kingsgate Shopping Centre, The Guildhall and Linen Exchange and The City Hotel.

Someone who has had a cardiac arrest, when the heart unexpectedly stops beating, will be unconscious and will not be breathing properly.

Classed as clinically dead, without help the casualty generally has minutes to live.

A defibrillator delivers a shock to the casualty to try to restore a normal heart rhythm and bring them back from the dead. The easy-to-use devices will only deliver a shock if it detects a 'shockable' heart rhythm.

Sixteen members of staff at Woodmill High – along with several senior pupils – were given a training session on the defibrillator with more set to take place in the coming months.

"The pupils are quite keen to be trained on it," added Laura. "We want to roll it out to a lot of the younger people and Trevor, from Scottish Mines Rescue Training Centre, said he is happy to come back in and show them how it works."

