

Healthy Places, Healthy Children

Pupils at St Paul's Primary School in west Belfast have used their voice to improve their local neighbourhood following an initiative from Belfast Healthy Cities, the World Health Organization body in Northern Ireland.

Belfast Healthy Cities engaged with local school pupils across Belfast and outlined their priorities in a 'Child Friendly Places Action Plan' which was presented to policy makers in Belfast City Hall in June. Belfast Healthy Cities also led the development of a new teaching resource, a key action in the action plan, which was piloted in the last academic year by St Paul's and 10 other schools in Belfast. Schools participating in the pilot developed child friendly proposals for their local area.

St Paul's pupils identified a need for additional litter bins in their neighbourhood. This need was communicated by Belfast Healthy Cities and as a result Belfast City Council has now installed 2 new litter bins in the area. This is a direct result of the work and the request of the school pupils.

Laura McDonald from Belfast Healthy Cities said,

"The outcome of the project shows that local children have a lot to contribute in improving their environments and we are pleased to have been able to make the link between the school and Belfast City Council".

Mr Colhoun teacher from St Paul's welcomed the installation of the new bins.

"We encourage our pupils to be aware of and take interest in their local areas. We have had a very positive response from Belfast City Council. The positive aspect of this project is that children see a change and feel heard.'

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