

# Call for first aid project to be rolled out in schools

**A Scottish Green MSP is calling for a pilot project teaching first aid to children in schools to be extended and made available permanently across the whole country.**

Health spokesperson Gillian Mackay said equipping pupils with life-saving skills at an early age is common sense and could avoid potential tragedy.

It follows the launch of a pilot project in 2021 and a campaign by St Andrew's First Aid who have been pushing Scotland to follow the lead of Scandinavian countries in rolling out the skills to even young pupils.

Ms Mackay said: "First Aid lessons are something that by the time we are adults many of us simply won't have done or will ever find the time to learn, despite the fact it could literally help to save someone's life.

"So it makes sense for us to look at ensuring they can be taught and embedded in young people at the earliest opportunity so they carry that knowledge and practical capability with them for the rest of their lives.

"Research shows bystander intervention in the event of a cardiac arrest went up from 20% to 70% in the first decade in Denmark for example, greatly improving the chances of survival. In Scotland around 50 people a day die from heart

attacks or related issues.

“Accidents too can happen anywhere at any time, up a mountain, on our roads, in our waters, in the workplace and even in our schools, so there is no downside to extending a common sense opt-in scheme like this.

“Funding will of course rightly be raised as a potential barrier, but the potential cost savings of early intervention are something that should be looked into as it seems odds on that the modest costs would be far outweighed by the eventual benefits.

“I have written to St Andrew’s First Aid and both the health and education ministers asking for their comments on the results of the pilot programme and how this could be progressed at pace to ensure we equip our children with skills for life.”

A petition calling for First Aid in schools was previously raised in parliament by the Chief Executive of St Andrew’s First Aid Stuart Callison.



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