

# Food donation record is set by 'outstanding' student effort

By KEVIN SMITH  
kevin.smith@bognor.co.uk  
01243 828777

A MOUNTAIN of meals has been collected by school children in a record-breaking donation.

The 2,876.4kg of tinned and dry food provided a big boost for the town's foodbank. It was donated by 3,000 students around Bognor in an initiative led by The Regis School.

The incredible effort marked the 25th anniversary of the United Nations' convention on the rights of the child. It was also part of Free the Children's 'we scare hunger' campaign.

Free the Children education programme co-ordinator Joe McGinn said: "The Regis School is the best of the some 1,000 schools in the UK we deal with.

"I'm gobsmacked by what the school has done. It's absolutely outstanding. They collected 800kg of food last year on their own to create our record and they've beaten it again."

Last Thursday's event involved six other schools and a pre-school. The others were Felpham Community College, Bishop Tufnell, St Mary's, Edward Bryant, Southway, Bersted Green and Stepping Stones.

Tesco donated £100 worth of food and Co-operative Funeral Care made a donation as well.

The Regis School's rights respecting ambassadors



Rights respecting ambassadors at The Regis School with the donated food

the various schools to add to their own 1,800kg.

The food included breakfast cereals, tinned vegetables, steam puddings, meat pies and long-life fruit juice.

John Madell, Bognor Foodbank's director, watched as the donations were carried and wheeled into the

He said the Foodbank gave out some 200 parcels of food weighing 1.5 tons a month. A typical parcel fed a single person for three days. "The school has been magnificent," he said. "What pleases me most is it's all about getting the community involved.

"It's a great effort to have

30 per cent of everything we distribute goes to children."

He gave the example of a mother who walked with her three children five miles to and from school daily because she couldn't afford transport receiving food. Another woman who recently went to the Argyle Road food bank

Rights respecting ambassadors Alex Ralf and Ellie Canter, both 15, helped to organise the special day.

Alex said: "It really brings it home to us that people in this school can be affected by this. That's why people are bringing in five or six tins instead of just one."

realises how important this is. It's quite shocking people in this community need food. You don't think people lack the necessities that we have."

At Felpham Community College, students also raided their wardrobes and kitchen cupboards to help to celebrate the convention's silver anniversary.

They took part in a cross-school non-uniform day, which was also part of the event, as well as donating 1,500-plus items of food. A college spokeswoman said: "Article 24 of the convention highlights the simple fact that every child has the right to nutritious food.

"The event gave students time to reflect on the privileges many of us take for granted and raise awareness of the fact that not all children – globally, nationally and in our area – have access to the basic right of regular and nutritious meals."

Back at The Regis School, a long-lasting reminder of the event took shape in its atrium. All 1,400 students contributed towards a large silver artwork made from tin foil which stretched about 9m high to the third floor.

The hoop of joined hands linked with the Unicef logo. Each pupil also added a ribbon in their house colours with one of the charter's articles. Among those taking part was Callum Prior, 14.

He said: "Children around the world don't feel safe. Unicef helps to give them support they might not





Students from Felpham Community College with their donations for the foodbank



Joe McGinn, right, with The Regis School pupils and a donation from Stepping Stones



Students at The Regis School bring in donations of food



A 'food chain' of The Regis School students delivers the donations to the foodbank



Part of the artwork at The Regis School created to celebrate the UN convention's 25th anniversary



A group of Rights Respecting Ambassadors at The Regis School with some of the donated food