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## NEWS RELEASE

# Schools singing for healthy hearts

We are all aware of the increase of childhood obesity; statistics show that over 15% of children in the UK are overweight or obese. Evidence has shown that children who are overweight tend to grow up into adults who are overweight. They therefore have a higher risk of developing serious health problems in later life, including heart attack and stroke, type 2 diabetes, bowel cancer, and high blood pressure.

The pressure is on for schools to help pass on positive 'healthy heart' messages to pupils. National charity Heart Research UK can help, by providing free resources and outsource trained speakers to talk to children about keeping their hearts healthy.

Teachers and parents can order a free 'Sing for your heart' fundraising pack! **Sing for Your Heart** is an annual fundraising event during the week of **8-15 December**, when schools, groups of colleagues, friends and family get together and raise money by organising a singing related occasion.

Many UK schools chose to get involved as they can tie the fundraiser in with Health Education or Music lessons. Schools around the UK have organised carol singing or school concerts to raise money for Heart Research UK and teach the healthy heart message.

Last year Newton Primary School from Dunblane in Scotland helped to raise over £1,000 for Heart Research UK by organising different activities including a sponsored sing-song, which raised over £750 alone. The school chose Heart Research UK, as they had recently learned about heart health in their health education lessons (part of their curriculum). The National Director of Heart Research UK visited the School in person to accept a cheque and give a healthy heart talk.

PIONEERS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HEART DISEASE

Registered Charity Number 1044821. Registered office: Suite 12D, Joseph's Well, Leeds LS3 1AB.  
Company limited by guarantee No. 3026813 registered in England



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**Miss Sharon Denovan, principal teacher at Newton Primary commented:** "All of the children thoroughly enjoyed each of the fundraising events and joining in the nationwide 'Sing for Your Heart' event. We are extremely grateful that the charity Director took time out of her busy schedule to come and meet the children and give them a talk about heart health and activity sheets. It was a great way to reward the children for all of the hard work they put in."

**Heart Research UK's National Director, Barbara Harpham commented;** Many schools already hold seasonal shows and concerts in the run up to Christmas. Sing for your heart is a great way for children to understand heart health and fundraising, for an important cause, especially relevant during the festive season of goodwill. I'm sure that our volunteer speakers in your area would be pleased to book talks for year 5 classes.

**If you would like to know more about Sing for Your Heart and how your class can get involved, call Heart Research UK on 0113 234 7474 or email [info@heartresearch.org.uk](mailto:info@heartresearch.org.uk) to get your Sing For Your Heart information pack.**

If you would like to request and organise a FREE healthy heart talk for your year five group, please call Denise Armstrong on 0113 297 6206 or email [lifestyle@heartresearch.org.uk](mailto:lifestyle@heartresearch.org.uk).

-Ends-

For further information please contact Hayley Downey at Heart Research UK on 0113 297 6205 or email [pr@heartresearch.org.uk](mailto:pr@heartresearch.org.uk)

#### **Additional notes to editor**

#### **Heart Research UK**

Heart Research UK is a visionary charity founded in 1967 by Mr Watson, a working heart surgeon, who realised that patients were dying unnecessarily because of the lack of research in heart disease, especially surgical techniques. Having funded six of the first eight UK heart transplants the charity leads the way funding ground breaking, medical research projects into the prevention, treatment and

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cure of heart disease. There is a strong emphasis on supporting clinical and surgical projects and young researchers on their first steps into research. The Charity currently funds over £1.8m of research projects at 40 hospitals and universities across the UK. In addition over £100,000 has been awarded to community-based lifestyle projects that aim to prevent or reduce the risks of heart disease.

Exercise is no longer a regular part of everyone's day – some children never walk or cycle to school, or play any kind of sport. And it is not unusual for children to spend hours in front of a television or computer. The National Diet and Nutrition Survey (2000) found that 40-69% of children over the age of six spend less than the recommended minimum of one hour a day doing moderate intensity physical activity.

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