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EDUCATION

First aid lessons to be rolled out nationally for primary pupils

By Sarah Ward

Primary schools across Scotland are being encouraged to teach first aid, with the roll-out of a national training scheme.

The Scottish Primary School First Aid Programme, launched by St Andrew's First Aid, provides free and easy online access for teachers to download and teach first aid in their class.

The initiative was proposed in 2018 after research showed that children as young as five were able to play a life-saving role.

A training programme for teachers was created to enable them to teach first aid to pupils from P1 to P7, with the objective of having young people across Scotland skilled and confident in first aid.

A pilot with Stirling Council was launched in 2021, which trained 56 teachers from 31 of the 40 primary schools in the region.

The charity is encouraging teachers to find out more and to register to receive access to its online learning platform and comprehensive suite of digital teaching resources.

Training days will be made available to support staff, helping them feel confident delivering the programme.

The training is designed to be short and age-appropriate, either

spread over seven core sessions or as a full four-hour course.

Schools will be able to apply for certificates for every pupil who has completed the course.

The charity is also set to launch Safe: St Andrew's Framework for Education ahead of the new academic session in August, with four banded levels, bronze, silver, gold and platinum.

Education Secretary Jenny Gilruth (*inset*), who visited the training centre in Glenrothes, Fife, last year, said: "Learning and teaching in school is about equipping young people with knowledge, understanding and skills to prepare them for life beyond school."

"No-one expects to have to deal with a medical emergency, but first aid skills can be crucial in supporting the response to one."

"This initiative from St Andrew's First Aid will help equip primary pupils with potentially life-saving skills, benefiting them and our wider society."

Jim Dorman, director of operations and community engagement at St Andrew's First Aid, said: "The launch of this initiative is the culmination of many years of research, engagement

and hard work, and we are thrilled to be in a position to finally make our ambition a reality."

"There is considerable evidence, including our own, which demonstrates that young children can play an active and valuable role in helping to save a life."

"This project is about giving teachers the confidence and resources to introduce first aid into their classrooms, helping to ensure children across Scotland gain the knowledge and skills they need to act in an emergency."

The courses will cover different topics depending on pupils' age, starting at "calling for help" and progressing through exploring a first aid kit, how to treat burns and cuts and even how to use a defibrillator.

