



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CHRISTMAS COMES EARLY FOR THREE CHARITIES IN THE NORTH EAST

Three charities in the North East received a surprise early Christmas present today (20 December) as they were presented with a combined donation of **£67,000** by Gateshead-based cheese manufacturer Primula.

St Bede's Hospice, South Street Community Primary School and Jack's Journey were all invited into Primula's Team Valley head office in Gateshead for what they thought was a pitch to colleagues to be in with a shot of securing funding.

Unbeknown to them, Primula employees had already voted for their winning charities and representatives were instead invited to the company's Christmas Briefing which celebrated the year's successes, where they were each presented with a cheque.

St Bede's Hospice was surprised with a cheque for £25,000. The ten-bedded unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital offers palliative care services across Gateshead in patients' homes, care homes, the QE acute setting and at St Bede's Unit, as well as offering clinical leadership and education to services providing palliative care. The money donated by Primula will go towards two important projects for the hospice – a brand-new therapy room and a redesign of the garden.

Gateshead school, South Street Community Primary School, was also surprised with a donation. The school, which is situated just 3 miles away from Primula's headquarters and factory, received £22,000 towards a full replacement of the play area. Children from the school were on hand to receive the donation after they'd delivered maximum Christmas spirit with a special carol performance for the Primula workforce.

Jack's Journey, which provides financial support to families following a diagnosis of childhood cancer and runs a holiday home in Cumbria for those families experiencing this difficult time, was the final recipient of a donation. £20,000 was presented to the charity to enable it to purchase a new caravan in the North East which would allow Jack's Journey to extend the number of families it supports.

Ross Whigham, head of communications at St Bede's Hospice, said: "On behalf of everyone at St Bede's Hospice, we'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone at Primula who nominated us for this very generous donation. The money means we can get started on two really important projects that will really make a difference to the patients here at St Bede's – a new therapy room and a brilliant new garden here in the ground of the Queen Elizabeth hospital."

Jennifer Clarke, teacher at South Street Community Primary School, commented: "The children and I have been absolutely blown away by Primula's generosity today. We didn't expect that at all. This is a fantastic early Christmas gift for our students – they're so excited to know that next year they'll be getting a fantastic new play area. It's really been the perfect surprise on what has been a brilliantly festive day. We'd like to thank everyone at Primula for inviting us along today and, of course, for nominating us to receive this donation."

Andrew Gibson, founder and chairman at Jack's Journey, added: "We are absolutely delighted to be one of Primula's chosen charities this year. We are very passionate about helping the children and families who need it at the most difficult time in their lives. No child or family should ever have to experience a childhood cancer diagnosis and we will do our utmost to support these families with the support of Primula. This donation will go towards purchasing a brand-new caravan in the North East which will allow us to massively improve the number of families we support."

Presenting the charities with cheques was Primula managing director Paul Lewney. Paul commented: "Being able to help local charities is what drives each and every one of us here at Primula and being able to deliver such a fantastic Christmas surprise to three incredibly worthy causes really makes all of the hard work throughout the year worth it.

"We collectively chose these three charities knowing what a difference it will make to lives across the North East and we hope that the donations will help them to continue delivering invaluable work into the future.

“Everyone at Primula counts down to the day when we surprise our chosen charities; it’s a really special day. This year, we’d like to thank the wonderfully talented children of South Street Community Primary School for making it even more festive and memorable.”

Primula is part of the Kavli Group, which is fully-owned by the charitable Kavli Trust, based in Norway. Each year all profits that aren’t reinvested into the business are donated to humanitarian, research and cultural charities and causes in the UK and around the world.

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For more information, please contact press@kavli.co.uk or call 0191 497 0145.

Notes to editors

About St Bede’s Hospice

St Bede’s Hospice is a ten-bedded unit with eight single en-suite rooms and one two-bed en-suite room. The unit is based at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Gateshead, near the Accident and Emergency department.

It offers specialist palliative care services throughout Gateshead in patients’ homes, care homes, the QE acute setting and the St Bede’s Unit. It also offers clinical leadership and education to services providing palliative care.

The team at St Bede’s Hospice is multidisciplinary, consisting of consultants in palliative medicine, experienced nurses specialising in palliative care, nurses skilled in inpatient palliative care, consultant clinical psychologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, chaplains and dietitians.

About South Street Community Primary School

South Street Community Primary School opened 25 years ago in 1994 on Cramer Street in Gateshead.

The school is attended by 288 children aged from 3 to 11 years old, with an even mix of boys and girls from the Gateshead area.

South Street Community Primary School aims to be an exciting, interesting and fun place for all to learn and succeed. It's an inclusive school with a caring, safe environment where all members are valued and encouraged. It has the highest expectations of all members of its community and is dedicated to maintaining and building on the highest possible standards.

About Jack's Journey

Jack's Journey is all about family. Jack's family supporting other families who have set off on a similar journey to theirs, down the road of childhood cancer.

In 2016, at just 17 months old, Jack was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia. This meant that Jack would require three years of chemotherapy in order to go on to live a happy and healthy childhood like all children deserve. As a Cumbrian family, the closest children's oncology ward was Newcastle's RVI Hospital, 95 miles away. In the first year after Jack's diagnosis, the family had to do a 190-mile round trip at least once a week but more often than not, 3 or 4 times a week. The financial pressure as a result was significant.

Following the financial strains Jack's parents faced, they decided to set up the charity Jack's Journey. Its main objective was to provide financial grants to those families struggling with transport to and from hospital, or to pay bills they were struggling to cover due to loss of income. The charity branched out to offer 'Jack's Packs'; a bag full of items that will benefit families in the first few days following a childhood cancer diagnosis, including a voucher for a local supermarket so parents don't have to worry about buying hospital food during their stay.

In 2018, Jack's Journey purchased a holiday home to allow families to enjoy a short time of respite in the Lake District. By providing this financial support and holiday accommodation, Jack's family hope to alleviate some of the stresses that a childhood cancer diagnosis brings.

About Primula

Primula is part of the Kavli Group and has been a leading family brand for more than 90 years. Most famous for its cheese tubes, Primula was first created in 1924 and is now the only spreadable cheese produced in the UK.

The squeezable cheese range consists of Original Cheese, Cheese 'n' Chives, Cheese 'n' Ham, Cheese 'n' Prawns, Cheese 'n' Salmon, Cheese 'n' Jalapeños, Cheese 'n' Paprika, Cheese 'n' Peri Peri, and Light Cheese. Primula also has a range of tubs and dips.

The Kavli Group is owned by the Kavli Trust, a charitable organisation based in Norway which supports humanitarian work, research and culture in the UK and around the world.

In the UK, the Kavli Group also owns St Helen's Farm, the UK's largest goats' milk producer, and Castle MacLellan, renowned for its high-quality range of pâtés.

About the Kavli Trust

The Kavli Trust was set up by the Kavli family in 1962 to carry forward the philanthropic work of its founders.

Headquartered in Norway, the Kavli Trust owns the Kavli Group, which provides the funds to donate to many worthwhile causes in the UK and worldwide. Part of the profits from the Kavli Group are reinvested in strengthening and developing the group's operations, while the remainder is donated to good causes in research, cultural and humanitarian work.

Kavli UK owns Primula Limited, famous for its squeezy cheese range; St Helen's Farm, the UK's largest goats' milk producer; and Castle MacLellan Foods Limited, renowned for its high-quality range of pâtés.