

PRESS RELEASE

Public Access Defibrillator at The Buckingham School

The Buckingham School extended a warm welcome to Chris Solomons (an emergency medical dispatcher and cardiac arrest survivor) and Clive Setter from HeartSafe/AED (provider of defibrillator cabinets to communities) to present the school with a life saving defibrillator. The defibrillator has been positioned outside the school's main reception for the community to treat sudden cardiac arrest.

Anyone who needs to access the defibrillator in an emergency calls 999 and the operator will give them a key code to open the box. The defibrillator can be used by anybody and gives the operator verbal instructions how to use it.

Miss Wells, Headteacher of The Buckingham School commented, "Having access to defibrillators in the community is vital and we feel honoured to be presented with this life saving piece of equipment. In return, we would like it to be used as a Community Public Access Defibrillator. Hopefully, we can help raise the awareness throughout Buckingham of the importance of knowing where Community Defibrillators are located and also the awareness for CPR training."

Background information

In December 2014, one of The Buckingham School students (Will Edgar-Gibson) collapsed in a PE lesson and quick thinking students Chris Collins and Matt Grenham helped save his life. Together with Assistant Headteacher, Mr Wardle, who was giving the lesson, provided CPR until the air ambulance arrived to provide further assistance. The boys and Mr Wardle have been honoured with a prestigious Award at the National Lifesaver Defibrillator Awards hosted by cardiac charity SADS UK and helped increase awareness for CPR training and access to defibrillators through national media coverage. This is where the introduction to Chris Solomons was made.

Chris Solomons (who works for Yorkshire Ambulance) was driving to work early one July 2010 morning and arrived at work feeling unwell. Chris' colleagues assessed him and it quickly became apparent he was suffering from a massive heart attack. Within minutes Chris had gone into cardiac arrest and his colleagues immediately began to battle to save his life – using CPR and a defibrillator. As it happens, a BBC camera crew were at Yorkshire Ambulance Air HQ that morning, filming the team as part of the Helicopter Heroes series. The BBC camera crew continued to keep the cameras rolling and captured this remarkable footage of the resuscitation attempt.

Since then, Chris Solomons has become a spokesperson for the issue of cardiac arrest and has attended many events talking about his experiences. Clive Setter from HeartSafe works closely with Chris Solomons, providing defibrillator cabinets (currently providing 700 cabinets to communities throughout the country). Clive also offers a Defibrillator locator website promoting the placement of Public Access Defibrillators.

Miss Wells, The Buckingham School Headteacher, together with Mr and Mrs Edgar-Gibson, their son Will, students Chris Collins and Matt Grenham (the boys who provided CPR), accepted the Defibrillator and cabinet, on the school's behalf.

Picture: from left to right – Mrs Edgar-Gibson, Mr Edgar-Gibson, Will Edgar-Gibson, Matt Grenham, Clive Setter (HeartSafe), Chris Collins, Angela Wells (Headteacher of The Buckingham School), and Chris Solomons (Saving Lives by CPR).