

School brings CNY cheer to residents



GOOD NEIGHBOURS: Northbrooks Secondary School staff and students gave needy residents in Yishun goodie bags for Chinese New Year.

TNP PICTURE: KUA CHEE SIONG

Northbrooks Secondary School staff give out goodie bags of food

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WITH Chinese New Year (CNY) comes the exchanging of hongbao, oranges, bak kwa and pineapple tarts.

But not all families have the means to fully participate in such an occasion.

So the staff of Northbrooks Secondary School in Yishun decided to reach out to the school's neighbours.

They gave goodie bags filled with biscuits, noodles, canned food and oranges to some of the people living in the one- and two-room HDB flats near the school, helping more than 300 households.

For Northbrooks student Amirul, 12, it was his first taste of charity work.

"It's the first time I've done something like this," said Amirul, who helped his teachers give out the bags.

"Some (residents), you could tell, were really poor. It made me want to cry."

He said he was "really happy" to help out with the school's CNY Outreach Programme, which involved 97 of the school's staff. The goodie bags were given out over two days in the past two weeks to those living around Yishun Avenue 11.

The aim of the programme is to "reach out to residents in the neighbourhood to bring new year cheer to them", said the principal, Mrs Janet Oh.

The school had asked a staff member, Madam Kurjuran Nair Madavy, who is also the treasurer of the Women's Executive Council (WEC), if her organisation and the Residents' Committee (RC) of zone 10 would be interested in collaborating to help the residents.

Ms Lachimi Suppiah, 64, whose daughter-in-law is Chinese, was pleasantly surprised by the gifts.

She said: "I was so happy and surprised that they gave me (the goodie bag)... I'm going to keep it for when my grandchildren come."

Madam Chun Leen, 77, who lives with her son, said she doesn't see people often because she stays at home alone all day while her son is at work.

She added: "It's good that they are doing this. The necessities inside, like rice and oil, will come in useful."

The school hopes to do it again next year.

— Additional reporting by Foo Jie Ying