

THE PSHE PULSE

A GHLL BULLETIN



Gloucestershire
Healthy
Living and Learning

Issue: Dementia Spotlight Edition



Welcome to the GHLL Bulletin – Dementia Spotlight Edition

I am thrilled to introduce this special Bulletin which really demonstrates the amazing work happening in schools and our communities. I hope it also shows how easy it is to teach and learn about dementia from Key Stage 1 all the way through to Key Stage 4. By including this within PSHE (statutory guidance) and Personal Development we are supporting the next generation to understand the condition, become a Dementia Friend, break down stigma and take meaningful actions for people affected by dementia. It fits in so well with the Five Ways to Wellbeing and the Whole School Approach and can also be used as interventions towards your Healthy Schools/College Award as well as the Mental Health Champions.



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Welcome to the GHLL Bulletin - Dementia Spotlight Edition

Children and young people who have a relative with dementia may express their feelings and emotions in different ways and teaching staff may notice some changes in their behaviour. They may become quiet and withdrawn, act out of character or their schoolwork may be affected, as seeing changes in someone they love may be very unsettling.

If a parent/guardian of a pupil is a carer for someone with dementia, the child or young person may be worried about them, or it may be affecting family relationships.

There are lots of resources available including this short, animated film <https://youtu.be/IJdLf7gQWJs> which can be used as an introduction to initiate conversations and help children to talk about it. For younger children in Key stage 1 (5 to 8-year-olds) there are a number of illustrated books available that can be read to a class.

The work that Head Rebecca Scutt and her staff have been doing at Stow-on-the-Wold primary around dementia fully embraces the Whole School Approach and I hope you enjoy reading the article.

On another note, I am really pleased to announce that we will be running another competition next year for pupils who participate in the learning about dementia, and the winning design will be made into a coaster and shared across the county, as the winning badge design was two years ago...look out for details in the autumn term. Finally, if there are any schools who would like to link up with a local care home to participate in intergenerational activities with residents, do please get in touch with us at ghll@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Best wishes,
Fiona and the GHLL team



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A Spotlight on the Intergenerational Project at Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School

Over the last thirteen years, the Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning (GHLL) team of lead teachers has been keen to engage schools in **intergenerational work**. The initiative began back in 2012 when the Government of the day announced measures aimed at making the UK a world leader in dementia care and research, as part of the prime minister's 'National Dementia Challenge'.

“One of the greatest challenges of our time is what I’d call the quiet crisis, one that steals lives and tears at the hearts of families, but that relative to its impact is hardly acknowledged.”

The opportunities for social connection between generations have diminished over the last few decades around the world, as a result of changes in the way that we live and work. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated loneliness for many, with young and old being kept apart for safety reasons and for an extended period of time. Today, in this post-pandemic world, it has never been more important to establish strong intergenerational connections and provide opportunities for activities in which the young and old can participate, shoulder to shoulder.

“Magic can appear when you connect the different generations through an intergenerational project.”

Intergenerational Guide in Early Learning and Childcare, 2019



Typically, children and adults participating in intergenerational work describe feelings of enthusiasm, a sense of acceptance, become more motivated to take part and have a real willingness to continue to build on the friendships. Imagine what the effect would be if this were embedded in our everyday work, life and play...

The number of over 65-year-olds living in the Gloucestershire village of Stow-on-the-Wold is more than twice that of the national average. At the local primary school, the practice of regularly linking with the older generation in their local community, including those living with dementia, is very much embedded in their Whole School Approach. From Year 1 to Year 6, the children and staff have the opportunity to spend time with elderly people in their local community in a variety of ways; to have fun, learn, stay active, laugh, sing and, most importantly, connect.



Rebecca Scutt, headteacher at Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School, is passionate about the work she and her team facilitate with their local care homes, and how the project benefits the wellbeing of her pupils whilst also meeting many of the end of primary objectives of the Statutory Guidance for Relationships, Sex and Health Education, 2019. The work is a key part of the school's PSHE curriculum.



“Whilst there are opportunities across the whole school for the children to be involved in activities with older members of our community, in Years 5 and 6 the pupils complete a focussed unit of work on Dementia Awareness and Understanding over several weeks as part of their PSHCE curriculum. They then become Dementia Friends, and all receive a badge. We visit the dementia cafe in Stow to work on projects and we visit the local care homes. Examples of activities the children do with the residents are reading poetry together; singing; looking at artefacts; playing cards; sharing afternoon tea and enjoying crafts. We also attend dementia awareness activities in the community, for example, this Saturday at Edwardstow Care Home there is a family animal petting session to raise awareness of dementia, which some of our children will attend.”

Rebecca Scutt, Headteacher at Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School



As well as visiting care homes where some of the residents are living with dementia, the pupils also enjoy opportunities to interact with residents of the retirement community of Beachwood Park. Here, there is a communal area where the residents gather for coffee, and in recent years they have organised art competitions for the children and heard poems with them, sung songs and completed gardening tasks together. The residents live independently and enjoy contact with younger children, sharing their life experiences and making connections which benefit the wellbeing of all involved. Last year, their ‘LOVE STOW’ competition made it to the local press!

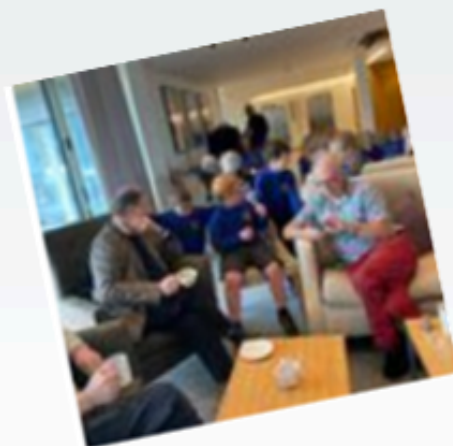


Pupils who entered the competition drew, painted and etched images of places they love including Ella's Toy Shop, Roly's Fudge Pantry, the Cotswold Sweet Company and the winning piece was a beautiful interpretation of The Sheep on Sheep Street by 8 year old Dolly Siddall. The creative pieces were then displayed at Brio Retirement Living's Beechwood Park development for locals, parents and residents to enjoy.

Elle Gower, Retirement Living Advisor at Beechwood Park, explained: "Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School has a wonderful relationship with both our staff and residents, and we were astounded by the beautiful pieces of art they produced – they really are a talented bunch of children!"

Our homeowners loved chatting to the winners about what inspired them to draw their interpretations of 'LOVE Stow', and a fabulous time was enjoyed by all."

Press release: 27th March 2024



Later in the year, the children and residents made the press again when twenty children from Stow Primary visited Beechwood Park to plant some sunflower seeds with the elderly residents...



Beechwood Park's General Manager, Matt Cotton, explained "We have forged a really strong relationship with Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School, and it was a joy to welcome so many children to the session. The potting took place at our weekly coffee morning and the children and residents enjoyed chatting, planting the seeds and having a lovely morning together!"

The children are now set with the task of nurturing the sunflower seeds and once they begin to grow, we'll hold a planting session where we will transfer them to the surrounds of the lawn outside Wintergreen Court here at Beechwood Park for everyone to enjoy. It's certainly put a spring in all our steps, after all, who doesn't love a happy, cheerful sunflower!"
The children also shared how potting the seeds made them feel with Callie Clark, 7, telling us, "I love nature"; both Parker Monar, 7, and Aisha Qureshi, 7, voiced how they 'love to see plants grow', whilst Evie Adams, 8, and Oscar Clifford, 7, were both keen to share that they 'love gardening at home'.

Rebecca Scutt, Headteacher at Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School, who was keen to support the multi-generational gathering, shared: "It's a joy to expand on our relationship with Beechwood Park – we've done lots of activities together and each time it strengthens the community spirit in Stow. The children had a wonderful time whilst also learning about the cycle of seed to plant – I don't think they realised how educational it was, they just had lots of fun which is what learning should be!"

"The children are very keen to take good care of the potted seeds, and we can't wait to see the first shoots pop through. They're very much looking forward to being able to plant the sunflowers at Beechwood Park and I'm sure they'll be an element of healthy competition in who can grow the tallest!"

Press release: 24th April 2024



Twice a month, the Baptist Church in Stow runs a community café offering friendship, support, advice and activities for anyone living with, or caring for someone with, dementia. The children at Stow Primary School have been involved with these sessions, and I spoke to Joy who runs the sessions who told me about the benefits of the intergenerational experiences that she has been involved in.

“It is wonderful to see the way people living with memory loss light up when they interact with children; children come with no judgement and take people at face value, as they don’t see the diagnosis. Our motto is ‘Head, Hand, Heart’. Both a person with a dementia diagnosis and their carer can often feel socially isolated; this work really supports these people to feel happier and more fulfilled, as well as bringing so many advantages for the children taking part.”

Joy Dimond, Dementia Café Volunteer and School Governor

Whilst exploring the intergenerational work which has been taking place in Stow-on-the-Wold, I also had the opportunity to find out about engagement with another local care home.

“I, and our General Manager Matthew Peach, are extremely grateful to Mrs Scutt and her team for their continued support in the intergenerational work we've been doing at Edwardstow Court.



We've been lucky to have a well-established link and regular visits for over five years. In this time the young people of Stow Primary School have attended our Woodland Walk Grand Opening, and also a Beach Themed Day with seashells, a sandpit, a seaside singalong and even a visit from our local Ice cream van. They also often visit and just spend time engaging in activities, games and conversation.

The benefit to our residents and the young people is obvious in the joy shown on all of their faces. Residents really look forward to their visits and we regularly reflect on their previous visits when we're looking through our scrapbooks and memory boxes.”

Gemma Joynes, Care Leader at Edwardstow Court





Recently, I was privileged enough to visit Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School, where I had the opportunity to talk to staff and children about the intergenerational work they are involved in. The children were incredibly animated as they spoke about their experiences.

We went and performed our Christmas songs in the care home. The residents I spoke to said they really enjoyed the afternoon, and lots of them joined in the songs when we were singing. Some were clapping along to the music.

Molly, Yr6

My favourite visit was when we went in and spent the whole afternoon playing games together. We played Giant Connect 4 – it was so much fun!

Grace Yr2

Sometimes we take pictures in with us to talk about, or actual things. When we had a bucket and spade, the lady told me about the seaside. Once, we took magic painting books in with us and showed them how to make colour on the pictures.

Olivia, Yr2

We painted poppies when we went in one day and talked about why poppies are important to us. I think sometimes the people really want some company because they always love talking to us.

Evie, Yr2





*If you would like the pupils at your school to benefit from this project, please get in touch with the GHLL team and we will assist you to find a local care home for you to connect with. If you are not familiar with our primary lesson plans on Understanding and Awareness of Dementia, then you can find them [here](#). If you don't have the capacity to connect with a care home currently, the learning around dementia is still invaluable as a stand-alone unit, as the three lessons are designed as a 'pick-up-and-go' resource – and **teachers do not need to have any prior knowledge of Dementia to deliver them**. The activities have been linked to the Statutory RSHE Guidance to enable PSHE leads to map it easily into their school's PSHE curriculum. If you would like any support with this, or have any questions, please contact your GHLL Lead Teacher, or nicky.witcomb@gloucestershire.gov.uk*

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Rebecca Scutt, headteacher at Stow-on-the-Wold Primary School, and all her pupils, staff and families for sharing their experiences with us.

Thanks also go to Stow Baptist Church, Edwardstow Care Home and Beechwood Park Retirement Community, for sharing their experiences with us.

We look forward to hearing about your intergenerational experiences in the future

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Contact Details

We would love to hear from you...
Contact us by:



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