



Extended Services in and around schools

Inter-generational work in Bracknell Forest

Over the past 18 months a number of very successful senior citizens lunch clubs have been set up at primary schools in Bracknell Forest where elderly people from the local community are invited to join pupils for lunch.

At Sandy Lane Primary School approximately 18 elderly people attend the lunch every Wednesday and pupils from year 6 act as helpers, taking orders and generally supporting the older guests. This extended service activity is simple to set up, easy to organise and mutually supportive in benefits.

Other developments have taken place at the school since the lunch club started; a knitting club has been established with one of the elderly lunch guests as a volunteer helper and a ten week ICT course has been run for the elderly guests in the school's ICT suite. This has proved so successful that another is planned for next term.

In addition, from time to time the local Police Community Support Officer and the local Health Visitor for senior citizens visit for lunch and eat with the children and the guests.



Feedback from elderly people that attend the lunch clubs has been very positive and include comments such as:

'I have recently moved to the area so this is a good way of getting to meet people in the community' and 'I wouldn't have a roast dinner if I had to cook it myself'

Pupils at The Pines Primary School and residents from Hanover Gardens (sheltered accommodation providing independent dwellings for older people) worked together on a visual arts project, exploring issues around an intergenerational theme.

The idea for the project came from the Birch Hill and Hanworth Neighbourhood Forum, when residents from Hanover Gardens stated that they wanted to build better relationships with young people living in the area.

Community Development Officer and the Area Co-ordinator Extended Services at Bracknell Forest Council, worked with residents and the school to develop the project. A professional artist was employed to run a number of after school sessions and the residents and children worked together to produce a collage which explores the differences and similarities between lives of young people over 50 years ago compared with those of today.

Both the school and Hanover Gardens regard this project as the start of an on-going relationship. The older residents are involved in a variety of lunchtime and after school activities, including sewing and local history clubs and attend events at the school, such as plays and concerts. There is also a successful senior citizens lunch club at the Pines which takes place every Wednesday at 12.30pm during term time.



Further intergenerational work is currently being planned with schools in Bracknell Forest including an innovative music based project called 'Age to Age in stories and songs'. This is a project where reminiscences gathered from older people are worked into the form of songs by year 5 & 6 school pupils, and then sung to the people whose stories inspired them.

For further information:

Contact:

Graham Symonds

Extended Services Co-ordinator

01344 354067

graham.symonds@bracknell-forest.gov.uk