

Children's nursery helps people living with dementia



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As part of Dementia Action Week this week, a leading West Midlands care and support provider is shining a light on some of the work it does to help people living with the disease.

One method Accord Housing Association is actively using is intergenerational care, where children work with people living with dementia to help improve the way they engage and interact.

In November 2018 Pathways 4 Life – part of Accord – started working with Little Rascal's Day nursery in Aldridge to introduce the pen-pals to its Dementia Cafés in Walsall.

Since the children started being involved there have been a number of benefits to the people attending the cafés. Garry Parker, aged 73 has dementia and attends the cafés with his wife Janine, who says she has seen many benefits since intergenerational care was introduced, and even says the cafés have helped and supported her.

She said: "Since the pen-pals have been introduced I have seen a huge difference in him, as he enjoys writing to them and reading their letters.

"The café has huge benefits for Garry but also for me, as Garry is not very sociable now so it gives me the chance to speak to people who understand what dementia is, and the people who run the café are just brilliant."

Janine Hayes, Accord's Dementia Café Co-ordinator is a great advocate for intergenerational projects like these.

She said: "By using this method of intergenerational care we really are developing the way we provide care to our customers. Since the children have been involved in the Dementia Cafés you can see a huge change in the person they are interacting with.

âOur cafÃ© users really look forward to hearing from their pen pals, and seeing the children when they visit as it helps to bring out their inner child.

âEven though more research is still being carried out to gather evidence about why intergenerational work is so effective we can definitely see the benefits it brings our customers.â

Intergenerational care is also used to help older people who may be lonely, and there has been an increase across the UK with the amount of care homes that now work with their local schools and nurseries.â

Accord delivers dementia care in a range of services including residential care. Intergenerational care is also being used effectively in these settings to support people with dementia.

Dementia Action Week runs until Sunday (May 26), for more information visit: <https://bit.ly/2IqIraN> or for more information on Accordâs Dementia Cafes visit <https://bit.ly/2qYUjrW>
