

ADULTS AND HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL

27 SEPTEMBER 2018

THE 'MANY YEARS' INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECT

Report of the Director of People

Strategic Aim:	Health and Social care prevention, developing social awareness and stronger communities. The views and positive feedback of the individuals involved in the 'Many Years' project.	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr A Walters, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health	
Contact Officer(s):	Kelly McAleese, Principal Social Worker	01572 758167 kmcaleese@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	All	

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Panel:

1. Notes the implementation and impact of the 'Many Years Interaction Project'
2. Endorses the direction of travel for Adult Social Care

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report aims to provide an update on the impact of the 'Many Years' Intergenerational Project which was undertaken jointly by Adult Social Care and Early Years and ran between April and May 2018. The project brought adults living in residential care and children from a local nursery together for periods of structured activity with the objective of building positive relationships between the generations.

2 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 2.1 Intergenerational projects are intended to build relationships between individuals in different generations or age categories. They can have varying aims, but in general will have a focus on reducing social isolation and loneliness through structured interactions between old and young.
- 2.2 Rutland Adult Social Care has statutory duties within the Care Act 2014 to promote the wellbeing of adults and consider preventative approaches that could support the needs of the local community.

2.3 The initial planning for the ‘Many Years’ Project began in January 2018 and included representation from a variety of professionals within Adult and Children’s Social Care. It was agreed that the project would aim to promote meaningful relationships between old and young via co-ordinated activities.

3 ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Rutland Care Village and Scallywags Nursery were identified as suitable organisations for the project due to location and prior contact between them. The Manager of Rutland Care Village offered free use of the Brambles Community Centre which removed the need to consider transportation costs and Scallywags provided two members of staff to provide support for the children.

3.2 Four implementation groups were undertaken prior to the start of the project which established the aim, structure, timescale and target groups.

3.3 The aim of the project would be to support interaction between old and young with a view to promoting the creation of meaningful relationships. The group were clear that the primary ethos behind the project would need to be that it was a fun, relaxed, enjoyable experience for all who took part.

3.4 The structure of the sessions was to revolve around a core theme each week i.e. ‘Animals’ and would involve activities that promoted partnership between old and young, if possible working towards a shared goal. This included painting, group games and baking. Each session would have professional oversight of at least four members of the professions group to ensure there was leadership, that the schedule of the sessions was maintained and that there was a point of contact for the adults and children if required.

3.5 The timescale of the project was agreed as two sessions per week for two hours, over a period of six weeks. This was a manageable timescale for all professionals involved, supported the use of Brambles Community Centre and met with Scallywags schedule.

3.6 The identified target groups and inclusion criteria were agreed as follows;

- Adults residing at the Rutland Care Village
- Adults with the ability to consent to the project
- Children in the top set of Scallywags
- Parental consent to the project

3.7 Eight children and eight adults were identified to take part in the group. Initially it was agreed to have a set group of adults however over the course of the project, other adults who lived at the care home began to express an interest in the project and so it was agreed that we would take a more flexible approach to attendance. This allowed three other adults to attend. As attendance was not mandatory, numbers did fluctuate between six and ten adults at each session. This was due to either ill health or prior commitments.

3.8 The expenditure of the project was limited. Due to the dedication of the team and partnership between Adult Social Care, Early years, Scallywags and Rutland Care Village any materials required were provided. The use of Brambles Community

Centre was provided free of charge and the close location of the nursery to the care home meant that there were no transport costs. The primary pressure on the project was staff commitment and support from managers of each service to allow staff time away each Tuesday and Thursday, to attend the sessions.

- 3.9 The 'Many Years' project was successfully concluded with an end of project party to celebrate the relationships formed. Feedback was positive from all who took part in the project and would also support that there are adults and children who are still maintaining contact even after the end of the project.
- 3.10 The project had strong support from all who took part in it. All adults expressed that they found the project an enjoyable experience and that it gave them something to look forward to in the week. Equally all parents expressed that they felt the experience had been valuable for their child. The only negative experience expressed by the parents was that the project was time limited. The only negative expressed by the adults was that they found two sessions a week intense at times.
- 3.11 The feedback supported that adults had felt useful, they had grown in confidence in interacting with the children and that they had enjoyed meeting new people. It had given them a purpose as they felt they were contributing to helping the children learn about new things and talking to the children about their own experiences. Adding children into Rutland Care village created the sense of a 'community within a community' as although the project was based at Brambles, the children often visited the units to visit their new friends.
- 3.12 The feedback from parents supported that they had witnessed their child grow in confidence, become more familiar and open about disability, express real enthusiasm about the new friendships they had formed with not only the adults, but the professionals involved in the project as well. Witnessing interactions evidenced that the adults and children displayed empathy and kindness to each other throughout.
- 3.13 A reunion session was completed on the 7th of August 2018 and was attended by seven children and seven adults from the original group.

4 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The current model of the 'Many Years' project will continue with a lead from Occupational Therapy as this aligns with their continued drive towards exploring the concept of meaningful activity within the community.
- 4.2 The model would adapt to fit alternative care homes and nurseries. The inclusion criteria can be widened to include varying age groups and adults living with dementia. More robust risk assessment would be required with any changes made to the current model.
- 4.3 The EYCP offers another variation of the project which promotes continued intergenerational work.
- 4.4 Many of the outcomes of the project are not quantifiable. It was not expected that the project would be able to suggest a radical intervention to combat loneliness or social isolation as it is not a new concept. It was however a valuable experience that has identified areas in which Adult Social Care can learn from in order to challenge

and develop its practice;

- Cross generational interaction should continue to be strengthened and we should continue to challenge inherent bias that restricts people based on stages of aging and/or disability.
- Personalisation and strengths based practice will be tokenistic concepts if building relationships with people are not at the heart of what we do. Practitioners should be working in partnership with adults in order to build upon strengths but this should not be the primary focus.
- Understanding that people are unique individuals who benefit when time is taken to gain a deeper understanding of what motivates them.
- Current assessment tools, limit open conversations. Going in to something without expectations or answers to potential questions will create a different conversation.
- The spontaneity and chaotic nature of introducing children into a routine based setting created a positive imbalance in people's lives. This approach encourages instinctive, creative practice.
- It should be about the quality of our interactions not the quantity of them. People can have busy days but that does not mean that they will feel any less lonely. Building upon relationship based approaches support conversations that go beyond the superficial and work towards the root cause of an adults loneliness and/or isolation.
- Adult Social Care wants to ensure that people are supported to live and die well, as such what could have been a difficult conversation on topics such as death and dying were not a barrier for the project moving forwards.
- There is reward in taking a risk on something new; the more risk is embraced the less it will feel like a risk and will become incorporated into standard practice and values
- Society inherently normalises expectations around ageing; projects like the 'Many Years' challenges practitioners to look past this and learn from children that health, age and disability are not barriers or even considered when interacting with each other.

5 BACKGROUND PAPERS

5.1 There are no additional background papers to the report.

6 APPENDICES

6.1 There are no appendices.

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.