



St Michael's CE Junior School

# Working Towards Galleywood as a Dementia Friendly Community

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***VISION: 'To build citizens' and communities' understanding of dementia: reduce stigma and increase opportunities and capacity for people to support one other.'* (Southend, Essex and Thurrock Dementia Strategy 2017-2021)**

## **Background:**

At St Michael's CE Junior School, we seek to develop links across our local community in order that the children have an awareness of the resources, facilities and people on their doorstep. A huge part of our role as teachers and support staff in school is to equip children with essential social skills and the ability to communicate effectively with *all* those around them. Statistics tell us that many of our pupils will be affected by dementia in some way in their lifetime. In order to reduce any fear or stigma surrounding the condition, it is our belief that children need to be educated about it. In addition, we need to model in school what a fully inclusive community looks like.

In collaboration with the Essex Dementia Friendly Communities Coordinator and The Archie Project, we have taken positive strides towards Barnard Road and the surrounding Galleywood area becoming a Dementia Friendly Community\*, with St Michael's as the driver for this. Educating staff, parents and pupils in how to be dementia-friendly; taking steps to ensure that our learning environment is a safe and inviting place for those with dementia; inviting key stakeholders in the local community to

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replicate what we're doing in school and further developing links with outside agencies who support those with dementia and their carers are all key aims of the project.

\* A Dementia Friendly Community is a place where people living with dementia are understood, respected and supported; an environment where people living with dementia will be confident that they can contribute to community life.

## What have we already done?:

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Since September 2018, we have completed all elements of our initial action plan. The following steps towards Dementia Friendly Community status have been achieved:

- Dementia Friends sessions for all St Michael's Junior School staff.
- Dementia Friends sessions for most of St Michael's Junior School governors.
- Dementia Friends sessions run for St Michael's Junior School parents and the general public.
- Dementia Friends sessions for all St Michael's Junior School pupils – delivered in phase assemblies.
- The Archie Project is now well established and we're in our second year of this intergenerational project. Year 5 at St Michael's have been linked to Manor Lodge Care Home and we visit once a month to engage in a shared activity with the residents. Our most recent meet-up involved residents travelling to Galleywood Library for a shared reading session with the class. Pupils independently raised funds at Christmas to buy each resident a Christmas gift. Whilst away from school during the Covid-19 pandemic, the children have still regularly asked after the residents of Manor Lodge and children and parents independently organised the sending of Easter cards to them in the post.

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- St Michael's have been invited to the last two 'Singing for the Brain' concerts in Chelmsford Cathedral. At the Christmas event, pupils from our school spoke about their experience of the Archie Project and what they've learnt about dementia.
- Key stakeholder meeting was held at St Michael's Junior School to discuss next steps with representatives from the local community.

## Current actions for the community:

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### *St Michael's Junior School:*

Date	Action	Objective	Outcome
February 2020	To ensure that the school website informs users that we are a Dementia Friendly school and that we welcome family members with dementia and their carers to all of our school events.	To include details of how we welcome and can support those with dementia and their carers on our website.	Our inclusive school community will be extended; this may prevent relatives of our pupils from feeling isolated from important events in the school calendar.
As appropriate/relevant	To use appropriate signage at school events – productions/important assemblies.	To aid those with dementia in accessing all elements of the event and the facilities available.	
March 2020	To have a small display area in each classroom which explains	To have a visual reminder of the Dementia Friends session	Children will use the language associated with

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	what dementia is and how we can help people with it.	that all the children have experienced.	dementia in everyday conversation thus normalising it and removing fear/worry.
Academic Year 2019-20	Kirstie Orton to look into training as a 'Dementia Friends Champion'.	To share the knowledge that KO has gained through involvement with The Alzheimer's Society with others.	Greater societal awareness and education.

### *St Michael's Church:*

Date	Action	Objective	Outcome
TBC	To run Dementia Friends sessions for volunteers and parishioners at the church.	People associated with the church gain an insight into what dementia is and what it is like to live with it.	Attendees will turn their understanding into practical action in/out of church.
	To promote the work of and events organised by The Alzheimer's Society within the church.	To create an information hub within the church where leaflets/key information (like the Herbert Protocol) can be shared.	Greater awareness of support/help that is available.
	Parishioners of all ages to be invited to school events wherever appropriate/possible (for example, Remembrance Day assembly)	To increase the feeling of community and support for those living with dementia and their carers.	Less isolation for those living with dementia which will hopefully have a positive impact on mental health.

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	To promote inter-generational projects/links/events.	To develop relationships between different generations in the community.	Fear/stigma will be removed and all parties will feel better informed about the lives of those they have engaged with.
	To develop Dementia Friendly services in church.	To tailor services to ensure that those living with dementia can attend and feel safe.	Greater inclusion.
	To promote inclusion through home visits for those with dementia, if that is desired by those involved.	To reach out to those living with dementia in Galleywood who would prefer not to attend church services.	Greater inclusion and less isolation for those living with dementia which will hopefully have a positive impact on mental health.
	To ensure that the church displays dementia-friendly signage.	To tailor the physical environment to ensure that those living with dementia can attend and feel safe.	Increased safety for all. This will allow for greater independence and confidence.
	To aim to make weddings and funerals more accessible for those with dementia and their carers.	To tailor services to ensure that those living with dementia can attend and feel safe. In addition, carers feel supported and welcomed.	Greater inclusion for all.
	To consider elements of the physical environment to aid access for those with dementia and their carers.	Reserved spaces closer to the entrance could aid this. Opening both of the main doors would be beneficial too.	Those with dementia and their carers may feel more confident about attending church which will lead to a greater sense of inclusion and community.

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### **Galleywood Library:**

Date	Action	Objective	Outcome
Ongoing	To continue to be a haven for those living with dementia and their carers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To offer a range of clubs/drop ins accessible to all.</li><li>To offer timely assistance to those affected by dementia who are accessing the library.</li></ul>	Greater inclusion for all and a keen sense of community.
Ongoing	To promote intergenerational events/projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>To maintain link to St Michael's Junior School.</li><li>To consider events where young can engage with older generations in a safe place.</li></ul>	Greater inclusion for all and a keen sense of community. Increased footfall in the library too which can only be positive!

### **The Heritage Centre:**

Date	Action	Objective	Outcome
February 2020	KO to contact the Heritage Centre (Wendy Cummins) to discuss their involvement as a key stakeholder in Galleywood.	To involve all key stakeholders in Galleywood in providing dementia friendly spaces	The sense of community we're striving for in Galleywood is as far reaching as possible.

### **Galleywood Infant School:**

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Date	Action	Objective	Outcome
Academic year 2019-2020	To run Dementia Friends session/s for staff and governors at GIS.	To increase awareness and understanding of dementia and how to help those living with it.	Staff will be better placed to support family members of pupils. Key messages can be passed to pupils.

## Future Plans:

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- To establish Galleywood as a Dementia Friendly Community with St Michael's Junior School as the hub for this.
- To continue to develop the strong working relationship the school has with The Alzheimer's Society Chelmsford Dementia Action Alliance and with the local GP surgery.
- To promote the services of the Essex Community Dementia Support Service, local community groups and the Alzheimer's Society, referring and signposting people to these as appropriate.
- To continue to educate the younger generation on how best to understand and support those living with dementia.
- To identify and work with other Galleywood stakeholders e.g. the parish council and political leadership, retailers and health providers and dentists.
- To promote the St. Michael's School Dementia Friendly Communities initiative to schools, education providers and governing bodies.

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