

Intergenerational Play



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**The Linking
Network**



BRADFORD 2025
UK City of Culture

The Linking Network - who are we?



Who am I?

Who are we?

Where do we live?

How can we all live well together?



Communities are our defence against hatred. Now, more than ever, we must invest in hope
[Katharine Viner](#)

The
Guardian**Opinions**



The Linking Network

26 Local Authority Areas

over **850** Classes

over **26,000** Children

Curriculum Impact on **200,000** Pupils

Pears
Foundation



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

THE
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Schools Linking Programme

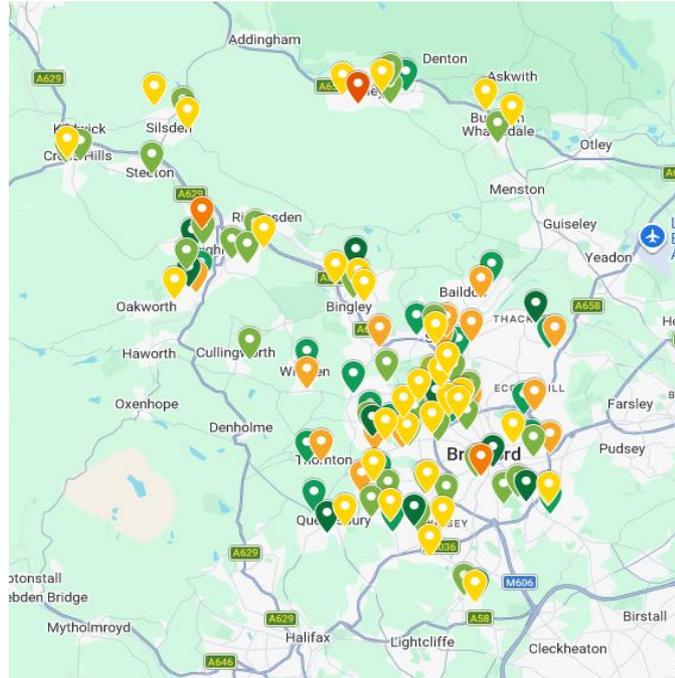




Intergenerational Linking

65 intergenerational links in Bradford

Nurseries, primary, secondary, sixth form, PRU



Care homes, independent living schemes, older people's groups

What is intergenerational practice?

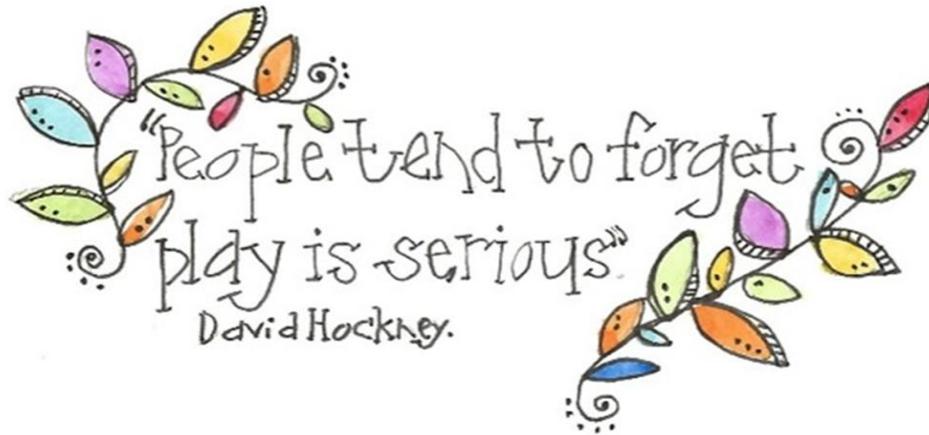


‘Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in **purposeful, mutually beneficial** activities which promote **greater understanding and respect between different generations** and contributes to **building more cohesive communities**. Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the younger and older generations have to offer each other and those around them.’

- Beth Johnson Foundation, 2009



The Intergenerational Play Project



What does 'play' mean to you?



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Mentimeter

What does 'play' mean to you?

Creative space, engagement, enjoyment

Prank with friends as long you not hurting their feeling

Anything which isn't classed as work

Everything! Life-changing, Foundation for connection.

Having fun however you feel on the day

Being silly together

Sharing cheeky stories

swimming and lounging in the water



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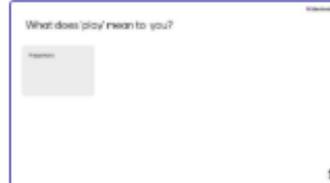
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Intergenerational Play in a nutshell



Share stories of play
across generations

Build strong
relationships across
generations

Enhance a sense of
social responsibility
in younger people
through empathy and
respect

Improve wellbeing
and reduce social
isolation among older
people

Working in
partnership with 20
schools & care homes
& 10 creative
practitioners

Ages 3-11, 307 learners,
270 older people



Intergenerational Play in a nutshell



Recruitment and training of creative practitioners

Matching and planning meetings - 20 schools & care homes

Creative practitioner delivers a session for older people and children separately in their settings

Intergenerational sessions: 3 sessions with children and older people together led by the creative practitioners

Final session: celebration



What Play Looked Like & the Benefits

Imaginative



Multisensory



Music & Singing

Storytelling

Arts & Crafts



Imagination & Confidence

“If his dad could have seen him dancing, he’d be so proud” - **Class teacher, Peel Park**

“I felt really nervous my first time there because I didn’t know anyone but now I like it because I know lots of people at the care home” - **Pupil, Baildon CE Primary**

“The first week, the children were anxious and nervous ... They’ve gained so much confidence from this project.” - **Teaching Assistant, Dixons Allerton**

Connection & Wellbeing



Identity & Curiosity



"I've learnt all about going to a mosque from my partner and that is something I've always wondered about" - **Peaselands resident**

"I'm enjoying seeing everybody taking part. I'm learning about other people's dances, culture and myovement. I'm enjoying every minute of it." - **Hallcroft resident**



All Generations - Building Community



“My daughter has talked about her new friends here and told me I had to come today to meet them.” -
Parent, Dixons Allerton





Community & Belonging



How it Worked - principles that guide the work



Well planned

Equity

Meaningful
interaction



Well-planned

Locality

Communication

Preparation

Overcoming challenges

So, intergenerational means bringing together different generations



We are going to link together with older people.

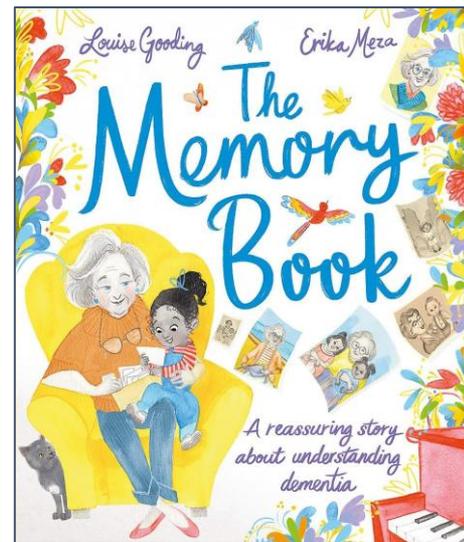
Care is about looking after something or someone and providing what they need.



A home is where we live, where we feel safe and secure and happy.



 The Linking Network



Equity



Our Goal: Making Bradford an intergenerational district



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People

'You see their faces light up' - The legacy of Bradford 2025 intergenerational project sees friendships between schoolchildren and older people

An intergenerational project that ran as part of Bradford 2025 is leaving a legacy, with friendships formed between schoolchildren and older people. Laura Reid reports.

Friendships formed in intergenerational project in Bradford

Telegraph & Argus

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How young and old people in Bradford can meet together

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Intergenerational Play

This year-long play project for Bradford 2025 linked 4 - 11 year olds with care home residents, building new connections through playful experiences. We caught up with some of the people involved.

Published: December 11, 2025

The Bradford 2025 Intergenerational Play project paired 20 primary schools with 20 nearby care homes to build new

Chance to discuss

What are your experiences of creating meaningful interactions between generations?



Are there questions about our work you'd like to ask?

