



# Hearts for Homes

**This Christmas time, we'd like to help share some joy following what has been a very difficult year for many.**

**Inspired by Katrina Cole and the Year 1 children at Gee Cross Holy Trinity School who organised a special surprise for residents at their local care home, we're launching our #heartsforhomes campaign.**

**To take part:**

- 1. Read through the story written by Year 1 teacher Mrs Cole to find out more.**
- 2. Research where the care homes are in your local area and call or send an email to see if they'd like to receive some hearts from you!**
- 3. Use your template heart to write or draw a joyful message for a resident.**
- 4. Send or arrange a (socially distanced) delivery of the hearts.**
- 5. Share your photos, stories and hearts with us! Using the hashtag #heartsforhomes on Facebook and Twitter and emailing us [help@picture-news.co.uk](mailto:help@picture-news.co.uk).**

**The campaign will run between the 1st and 11th December**





## Hearts for Homes – Part 1

Following on from the news story with the big question 'Should visits to care home be allowed?' the Year 2 children at Gee Cross Holy Trinity were inspired to take action and reach out to their local community.

The 6 year olds were saddened to learn that the care home residents were not allowed to have visits from their loved ones. The images of the cuddle curtains and screens really touched the pupils and from this their compassion grew. They asked if we had care homes nearby and told their teacher, Mrs Cole, that they need to do something to make the old people happy again.

With the help from their class teacher, the class made contact with the manager of a local care home who informed the pupils that the residents had been very lonely and longed for visitors. The pupils knew what they had to do! They wanted to write letters and include something special for each resident.

Immediately, they started to write emotive letters to share their love and tell the residents that they were thinking of them. Some of the letters told them "I care about you and I am thinking about you at this sad time." The children copied their letters up on special paper and decorated each letter with pictures that would brighten their day. Then another suggestion came from a pupil. She asked "Can we send a pocket hug?" The class cheered to show that they all agreed.

The Year 2 pupils set to work decorating wooden hearts with special messages of hope with brightly coloured rainbows. They wrote "I am sending you a pocket hug to cheer you up." All the letters containing pocket hugs were put safely in decorated envelopes and placed in quarantine for 72 hours.



## Hearts for Homes – Part 2

After reading about the activities that residents take part in, from the Picture News Resource 2, the children felt that they wanted to make the residents happy with a game. With a little help, all of the letters were then parcelled up into a wonderful game of Pass the Parcel to bring more happiness to the elderly people.

One week later, and after a thorough risk assessment had been carried out, the Year 2 pupils walked to the local care home to take their parcel. The outcome was tremendous. Nobody had prepared themselves for just how emotional the visit was going to be...

Each of the residents came to the window in turn and waved to the children. The children called to each person using their name and smiled as they shouted "Hello!" They made hearts with their hands and held them out towards them. They were amazed to learn that Olga was 101 years old and waved like the Queen. The children rejoiced as one resident followed the children from window to window, just to get another glimpse of their smiling faces.

The school staff had tears streaming down their faces; tears of happiness at the difference that had been made by this visit. The manager, Sarah, repeated what the residents were saying at the window and this made the staff cry even more! Statements such as "This is the happiest I've been in weeks" and another lady cheered as we handed over the parcel.

The Year 2 children were totally inspired to visit again and started to plan a Christmas Carol Singing concert wearing fancy dress as soon as they returned to school! That evening, many parents contacted the Class Teacher via the home learning APP to say how the children had talked about the visit all night and had recounted their names. One parent wrote "Belle's been telling me their names since she came home, Norah, Dot, Florence, Gwen. Absolutely beautiful." Another parent wrote, "Amelie loved every minute, the excitement of meeting someone who was 101 just blew her away!" After the visit, the care home manager contacted school with great thanks, saying how, "they were all in bits and it made their day."

We have all learned something important from this community project, at a time of national crisis, there has never been a more important time to reach out and touch the lives of people that need our help.

**A huge thank you to Mrs Cole and the fabulous Year 1 children at Gee Cross Holy Trinity Primary School in Hyde for sharing their story!**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Hearts for Homes



**Write or draw a message in your heart for  
someone who is living in a care home.  
This could be a poem, words, or a picture to  
share joy over the festive period!**

