

# Intergenerational Music Making

Wales

Intergenerational  
Music Making hub and  
training sessions

Reflection Report



[www.imm-music.com](http://www.imm-music.com)



INTERGENERATIONAL  
MUSIC MAKING  
Generations of Music

# About Us



Intergenerational Music Making is a not for profit Community Interest Company which aims to build bridges across generations, sectors and among professionals to create stronger, more cohesive communities.

Using the power of music we bring children, older people and communities together to create and connect. Through our projects, training and research we aim to encourage a sense of belonging and to provide spaces for voices to be heard and celebrated. Our work aids the improvement of mental and physical well-being and reduces feelings of loneliness and isolation.

## What We Do:



# Wales IMM Hub

During our Welsh IMM Hubs, we focussed on:



- Delivering and evaluating intergenerational music projects in Wales.
- Using IMM's music and movement and creative health as the driver for the sessions.
- Working in areas of Wales with deprivation and a shortfall of community services.
- Training and up-skilling staff members with the IMM Music and Movement training programme within care homes.
- Creating new, cohesive, meaningful and sustainable connections within communities which are re-building post pandemic.
- Promoting strong partnerships across sectors and communities.
- Giving the community a voice and empowering them to use music and movement as a tool within their setting.



# Project Overview



The IMM projects were delivered across locations in Wales, designed to support community connection, cohesion and encourage mental and physical well-being. Through the power of music and movement plus creative health we were able to celebrate voices, up-skill staff and bring people together from different backgrounds and generations to explore connections through music and movement, arts, dance, intergenerational connectivity.



## Music and Movement Day:

This day focused on empowering local children, residents, care staff, teachers and residents' family members to develop a deeper understanding of the place music and movement has for health and well-being. Through music, movement, games, training and connection we were able to lead the session which was an unique and organic experience for the group.

We were able to encompass the issues of loneliness, isolation, dementia, mental health and ageing to further support our understanding of key practices including; music therapy, community music and clinical support.

## Community Connection:

The day focused on the need for connection whilst providing opportunities for care staff to put their newly acquired IMM training skills into practice. The session concentrated on an intergenerational localised connection between a care home and a school. Through the power of music and movement we were able to provide an agency for feelings, thoughts, mental and physical well-being and the opportunity to build strong connections and mutual respect.

# Day One

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## What we accomplished day one: Community Involvement

The Grove Care Home - 17 Ynyscedwyn Road, Ystradgynlais, Swansea SA9 1BE & Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn Y Glowyr - SA9 2PT



### Morning Session

- We began the session with an Intergenerational Music Making training session for some of The Grove staff members.
- All participants had an interest and passion for music and the place it plays within health and well-being. This made for insightful and profound discussions.
- The training revealed that expertise in music therapy is not required to effectively understand and incorporate music, movement, and intergenerational practices into well-being programs.
- Collaboration developing practical ideas and the sharing of best practice and learning from one another.
- The space was friendly and safe where people felt relaxed and confident to explore and try out ideas.

# Day One

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## Reflections from IMM Facilitator

We assisted in setting up the day room, a spacious and well-lit area, ensuring all residents could participate with the children.

Name tags were provided to both the children and residents, facilitating quick and easy introductions.

The session commenced with a "hello" song, serving as an excellent ice breaker and alleviating any initial nerves.

Music-making activities were incorporated into the session, fostering mindfulness through music and establishing a strong connection between the participants.

Both children and residents took ownership of various activities, enhancing their confidence and self-esteem.

A highlight of the session was the inclusion of a Welsh song for an activity, providing a personalised touch to the experience.

We used the term "find a friend" to encourage children to pair up with a resident for activities, promoting familiarity and engagement.

Observations of comments, actions, and interactions throughout the session indicated that all participants benefited from the experience.

By integrating music and movement, we effectively promoted physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Several children expressed their reluctance for the session to end and their eagerness to return for future sessions with their "new friends."

The residents also commented on how much they enjoyed the children's presence during the session.

## **Reflections on the sessions from IMM's team on The Grove**

- Not all activity coordinators had been exposed to activity training therefore not all had the ability or knowledge to use music within the care home setting
- Small communities were still recovering post pandemic and have had minimum exposure to intergenerational activities
- Residents commented that they had been feeling lonely in the care home and by using music intergenerationally we had begun to reconnect the community

# A's Story



A, a pupil of Ysgol Gymraeg Dyffryn Y Glowyr, took part in the session on the 16th of November at The Grove. A felt apprehensive, unsure and nervous when she arrived at the care home and had asked her teacher to take her back to school as she did not know what to expect from the session, and what to say to the residents. A bravely went ahead with the session and we observed her confidence, self-esteem and emotional well-being improve.

She involved herself in the activities and by the end of the session she had formed a special bond with Peggy, one of the residents. The team recorded this beautiful moment of Ava in conversation with her "new friend".

## "The people are very nice"

At the end of the session the team carried out an interview with A to hear her feedback on the session given her initial resistance. During the interview she was smiling and happy and said she had enjoyed herself.

A commented that her favourite part of the day was meeting and chatting to the residents and that she would love to return to The Grove care home.



# Betty's Story



Betty is a resident at the Grove care home and she is visited regularly by her daughter Diane but struggles with mobility and can sometimes feel down and lonely. She thoroughly enjoyed the session, she was smiling and interacting with the children. We observed Betty also joined in with the physical exercises as she happily sang along.

The session benefitted Betty emotionally, physically and clinically. In an interview with the team at the end of the session she commented that it was a brilliant day and she felt so happy. She was a little upset when the children left and shed a tear and the staff were on hand to offer support.

## "I was dancing away"





# Day Two

## Community Connection

Lakeside Care Home - 37 Wedal Rd, Cardiff CF14 3QX and  
St Joseph's RC Primary School - 204 North Rd Galbafa Cardiff CF14 3BL



## Morning Session

- We began with a Music and Movement, creative health training session for both activity co-coordinators at Lakeside Care Home.
- The room we used for training was also being used as a day room which meant we had residents coming in and out during the training which was rather disruptive.
- We completed the training and the feedback from staff members was very positive.

# Day Two

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## Afternoon Session - reflection notes from IMM facilitator

Upon the children's arrival, it was noted that the school had brought a class of 30 Year students.

To keep the children entertained, we engaged them in singing Christmas carols.

The children were highly energetic and excitable.

The session began with a "hello" song and a settling exercise.

All of the fifteen residents actively participated in the exercises and games, enjoying the music and interaction with the children.

The children were fully engaged and interacted well with the residents.

Both children and residents thoroughly enjoyed the bean bag passing game, which fostered a strong connection and interaction.

We utilised instruments such as tambourines to help express feelings through music.

The session concluded with a cool-down activity and a "goodbye" song.

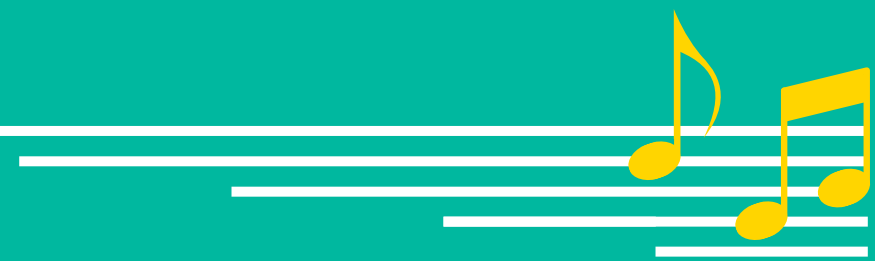
The team recorded some delightful moments on video.

Overall, the session was very successful, with positive feedback from children, residents, and staff, and everyone had an enjoyable time.

## What we learn't from the Lakeside care home

- With a young group of children i.e., year 3 pupils more support than just a teacher and teaching assistant was required to support the children.
- Providing the opportunity for music, movement, connection and engagement for the residents had a positive effect on all - seeing an improvement in their mental, physical and emotional well-being.
- Communities were suffering with a lack of intergenerational music projects.
- Some schools had a lack of exposure to musical activities and intergenerational connections.

# Ava's Story



Ava was a year 3 pupil who joined us from St Joseph's RC primary for the session. She was eager to take part in the session with the residents. Her mother accompanied the children as a chaperon to walk them to the care home. Her mother mentioned that Ava had never before been in a care home and did not have elderly relatives at home.

Although Ava had little exposure or experience in a care home or with the elderly during the session the team noticed how naturally she was interacting with the residents making bonds with them and was very happy to take part.

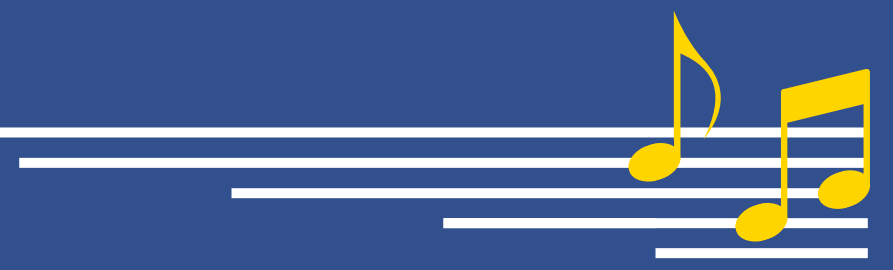
The team conducted an interview with Ava and she said that she loved the session and spending time with the residents and would really like to come back.

I think this experience proved to be not only educational but helped her to build empathy & work towards a more cohesive community by integrating an intergenerational and musical aspect into her life.



# Impact

## Moving Forward



The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on Welsh care homes, leading to the loss of a significant number of residents and an increased sense of isolation. Sadie, the Activity Coordinator at The Grove care home, expressed that she had not received adequate training, particularly in music therapy, which could have enhanced her ability to support residents during this challenging time.

In response, IMM initiated and facilitated projects in Wales aimed at addressing these issues. Comprehensive training was provided to the staff at both The Grove and Lakeside care homes, equipping them with the necessary skills to incorporate intergenerational music and movement into their activities. This training included practical sessions and theoretical knowledge, ensuring staff were well-prepared to lead these initiatives.

To ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the projects, IMM continued to offer support even after the formal completion of the training sessions. This support was crucial in maintaining the momentum and ensuring that the legacy of intergenerational music-making would remain alive within these two communities.

IMM's approach is based on the belief that with proper training, activity coordinators in each care setting can independently facilitate intergenerational Music and Movement sessions. These sessions aim to foster a sense of connection and engagement between residents and younger participants. Prior to the implementation of these projects, both care homes experienced feelings of isolation and a lack of connection among their residents.

The sessions have since demonstrated significant physical, mental, and emotional benefits for the participants. Residents have shown improvements in mood, increased physical activity, and enhanced social interactions. The children involved have also benefited, gaining a sense of empathy and understanding towards the elderly.

The impact of these sessions has been substantial in reconnecting communities post-pandemic. They have helped to bridge the gap between generations, creating more cohesive and supportive intergenerational relationships. By sowing the seeds of musical connection, IMM has contributed to the development of a more inclusive and engaged community environment.

In conclusion, the projects facilitated by IMM in The Grove and Lakeside care homes have successfully addressed the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through targeted training and ongoing support, staff have been empowered to lead intergenerational music and movement sessions that significantly benefit both residents and children. This initiative highlights the importance of intergenerational engagement and the positive impact it can have on community well-being.



**2**

Welsh Locations



**60**

Children  
Participated



**42**

Residents  
Participated



**20**

Staff Members were  
trained



**100%**

Felt Happier  
After The Session



**100%**

Would Like  
More Sessions

IMM will be on hand to support all parties with future meet ups and has signposted all participants to our online digital Together with Music programme. All facilitators have the Move & Groove manuals and training presentations to refresh and keep them updated with how to plan future sessions.

### Conclusion

The intergenerational Music and Movement, Creative Health sessions facilitated by IMM in Wales have been a resounding success. These initiatives have significantly benefited both residents and children, fostering stronger intergenerational connections and enhancing overall well-being. The comprehensive training provided to the staff at The Grove and Lakeside care homes was highly effective, equipping them with the skills needed to independently lead these sessions.

Given the positive outcomes and substantial impact observed, we are committed to developing and expanding this work. Our goal is to extend the reach of these beneficial programs to more care homes and communities across Wales, ensuring that the advantages of intergenerational music-making and movement can be experienced by a larger population. The success of the training and the sessions underscores the importance of continuing and broadening these initiatives to create more cohesive and supportive intergenerational relationships.



