

Inspiring Dementia Action in Bristol Schools - September 2026



We hope that you all had a restful and enjoyable Summer break and are now embracing the new school year. Terms 5 and 6 were again very busy, leading to 2025-2026 having the highest levels of engagement since our work in schools began in 2017 – 8000+ pupil interactions within 25 schools. This consisted of a variety of bespoke projects as well as our core offer, including design projects in Primary and Secondary schools and a session based on person-centred care in a Post-16 setting. We are delighted to share that we were Highly Commended in the inter-generational category at the UK National Dementia awards last term. This is such an accolade and would not be possible without your engagement and support. Our sincere thanks to you all. Now is a great time to make a booking for this academic year whilst availability remains good.

Please contact sally.townsend@alzheimers.org.uk.

School Engagement

More than 5000 pupils and staff in Primary, Secondary and Post-16 settings engaged during Terms 5 and 6.

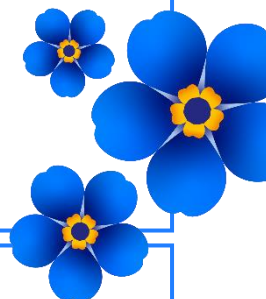
Thank you to the following:

Ashton Gate Primary School
Collegiate School
Henleaze Infant School
Henleaze Junior School
Ilminster E-Act Academy
Oasis Brislington Academy
Redland Green School
Redland Green Post –16
Redmaids High School
Shirehampton Primary School
Stoke Bishop Primary School
Waycroft Academy
Whitehall Primary School
Westbury-on-Trym Academy



School spotlight

It was a pleasure to work with Redland Green Post-16 Year 12 Health and Social Care students last term. Building upon an assembly and a Dementia Friends session, students joined in a session based around person-centred care, where a Dementia Navigator from Bristol Dementia Wellbeing Service spoke about the completion of wellbeing plans - a document created upon someone's diagnosis to ensure that their needs are met. This was an amazing opportunity as students are beginning to consider their career options. Students then met and shared conversations with someone living with dementia and a family member, applying their knowledge of the condition. Opportunities in the local area that could support the visitors' lives were considered and joint goals were written to support the person's wellbeing. Feedback from everyone involved was outstanding and we look forward to building upon it further next year.



Did you know?

Many experts believe that around 40% of dementia cases may be linked to risk factors that can be influenced throughout life, showing that healthy choices at every age really matter. Most people think of dementia as something that affects older adults, but research shows that taking care of our health from a young age can help keep our brains healthy throughout life. While there is no guaranteed way to prevent dementia, healthy habits developed during childhood and adolescence can make a positive difference. We are therefore including brain health messages as part of our offer.

What can children and young adults do to help reduce their risk of developing dementia?

Keep active Regular physical activity helps keep the heart, body and brain healthy. Walking, cycling, swimming, dancing, team sports and active play all count.

Eat well A balanced diet with plenty of fruit, vegetables, wholegrains, beans, nuts and seeds provides important nutrients for growing brains.

Keep learning Challenging the brain through reading, puzzles, music, creative activities, learning new skills and trying new hobbies helps keep minds active and engaged.

Stay connected Spending time with friends, family and the wider community supports wellbeing and helps develop important thinking and communication skills.

Get enough sleep Good quality sleep helps the brain rest, learn and recharge. Developing healthy sleep habits is important at every age.

Protect your hearing and head Looking after your hearing and wearing appropriate safety equipment, such as cycle helmets, can help protect your brain.

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Young Carers: supporting family members

Children and young people living with, or near, a parent, grandparent or other family member affected by dementia may be young carers and may need additional understanding and support from school.

A young carer is a child or young person under 18 who regularly helps care for a family member affected by disability, long-term illness, mental health difficulties, substance misuse, or conditions such as dementia. Their caring responsibilities may include practical tasks like shopping, cooking, cleaning, helping with personal care, looking after siblings, or providing emotional support. While many young carers show remarkable resilience and responsibility, caring can have a significant impact on their wellbeing, education and childhood experiences. Research shows that young carers are more likely to experience stress, worry, loneliness, bullying, and poorer educational outcomes. Their physical health can also be affected through lack of sleep, heavy responsibilities and reduced opportunities for self-care. Young carers often do not recognise themselves as carers and may be reluctant to seek help because they worry about what might happen if they speak to professionals. As a result, they can easily remain hidden. Signs that a pupil may be a young carer include frequent lateness or absence, difficulties concentrating in class, anxiety, withdrawal, challenging behaviour, limited aspirations, or reluctance to talk about home life. Schools play a vital role in identifying and supporting young carers. Simply recognising their role, listening to their experiences, and asking "How are you?" can make a significant difference. Early identification and access to specialist support can help young carers maintain their wellbeing, education and social opportunities.

The charity 'Carers Support' provides a dedicated Young Carers service across Bristol, offering assessments, one-to-one support, activities, and opportunities for young carers to connect with others facing similar situations.

Find out more at: carersbsg.org.uk/young-carers

Walk together for a dementia-friendly future

By supporting Alzheimer's Society fundraising activities, school communities can help make a real difference to people living with dementia whilst providing valuable learning opportunities for pupils. Fundraising offers many benefits for pupils - it helps develop important life skills such as teamwork, communication, organisation and leadership, while building confidence and strengthening community connections. It can also enhance CVs, personal statements and future job or further education applications.

One great way to get involved is through Alzheimer's Society Memory Walk, a sponsored event that brings communities together to raise vital funds for dementia support and research. Every step taken helps ensure that no one has to face dementia alone. Schools can take part in Memory Walk as a team, encourage families to join a local event, or organise their own sponsored walk. Every pound raised helps Alzheimer's Society provide practical and emotional support for people affected by dementia, fund research into better treatments, and campaign for positive change.



Bristol Memory Walk is due to take place on Saturday 3rd October 2026. Spaces remain for both participating and volunteering. Click [here](#) for further information. Having walked and volunteered at these events, they come highly recommended!

Dates



September - World Alzheimer's month
13th September - National dementia carers day
21st September - World Alzheimer's day
10th October - World mental health day
November - National caregivers' month
13th November - National kindness day

It will take a Society to beat dementia



Please contact sally.townsend@alzheimers.org.uk
for further information about our free offer to Bristol schools.