

Oasis Academy Isle Of Sheppey is an inclusive academy for children aged between 11 and 19 years, they are committed to delivering first-class education and playing an active role in the local community.

In April 2014 a group of students wanted to do some work with people who were living with dementia and a meeting was arranged between the school and Barton Court Nursing Home to discuss how they could work together. Many of their residents suffer from dementia so it seemed an ideal starting point for the school.



Tracey Schneider who is a Project Officer for Dementia Friendly Communities at Alzheimer's Society met some staff members of the school at a Dementia Friend Information Session, she and her team agreed to visit the Academy and deliver Dementia Friend Information Sessions to a group of students. This was completed and several other Information Sessions were set up with the school's sixth form students around the subject of dementia.

Prior to the summer holidays 2014 the students started to visit Barton Court on a Sunday and worked with the residents who had dementia. In September they were invited to a dementia conference in Dartford and they decided that they would speak on 'A Young Persons View of Dementia'. One of the students engaged in conversation with 30 adults on what the school wanted to achieve and from this meeting the Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey Dementia Café was born.

They came to the agreement that they wanted it to meet 6 times per year – be at school and offer the residents entertainment and tea. One of the students put together a bid that she sent to various people and organisations and as a result of this she received some funding to run the cafés. Around the same time the school had made contact with the NHS and they were asked to trial some materials for Key Stage 3 for around its work on dementia. This is still on-going within the school.

They hold one café every term and the first café brought in over 30 guests! February 2016 saw the turn of the school's anniversary – the school held a dementia tea party that was part of a day of celebrations. They had the Welsh Male Voice Choir and the Glee Club from school to entertain the guests. As usual the mayor came along and the local primary school attended.

The school aims to cover the whole of Swale in Kent. The main area they try to support is the Isle of Sheppey but the school also works with people in Sittingbourne and Faversham, and all areas in the Borough of Swale.





As part of the school's commitment to become a Dementia Friendly Academy they held a Christingle Service on Friday 12th December at 2pm. Reverend Tim and Father Frank from St Edward's Primary jointly ran the Service. Guests enjoyed afternoon tea and watched a nativity play performed by St Edwards Primary School.

The school have since developed fascinating links with Peking University Institute of Mental Health and have since had a visit from 12 delegates to see the work the school are doing around dementia. The students have won lots of

awards for their work but they did not start this work with awards in mind. To have the Chinese delegation visiting the school to see how they do things is surely an added endorsement for all the hard work done by everybody at the academy.

The Dementia Friendly awards event was held on the 24th October 2016. Oasis Academy have shown their ethos of engaging with the public, encouraging pupils as individuals and obtaining impressive academic results and even had Angela Rippon OBE attend the event as a guest speaker.

Students and staff at Oasis Academy Isle of Sheppey were delighted to welcome guests from Milton Court Sittingbourne, Barton Court, Blackburn Lodge, Age UK Sheppey, Churches Together, Amicus Horizon and Dementia Kent, KCC to their Dementia Café event on the West Campus in Sheerness during Dementia Awareness Week.

Visitors enjoyed a game of bingo, singing by St Edwards Primary and performances by the Year 10 GCSE Dance group. The newly elected Deputy Mayor, Cllr Colin Prescott, was first in the queue to enjoy a hand massage by the Health & Beauty students whose soothing and relaxing skills were highly sought after by guests. The delicious tea and cakes went down a treat and each group were presented with a cheerful springtime gift box to take home.



Community Coordinator, Paul Murray, said: "We always look forward to these afternoons; our students work hard planning and preparing the event each term and we are really proud of their commitment and enthusiasm in ensuring our visitors have an enjoyable time."