



All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration

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Notes from Visit to Apples and Honey Nightingale – 28/09/2018

Present (APPG members)

- APPG Chair – Chuka Umunna MP

Present (others)

- Two members of staff from the Chair's office
- Two members of staff from The Challenge (the Secretariat)
- Judith Ish-Horowicz, Principal, Apples and Honey Nightingale
- Andrew Leigh, Director of Operations, Nightingale Hammerson (the charity that runs Nightingale House care home)
- Jeremy Kelly, Director of Fundraising and Communications, Nightingale Hammerson
- Nursery children from Apples and Honey Nightingale nursery, and elderly residents from Nightingale House care home

Background to visit

As part of the APPG's inquiry into intergenerational connection, launched in December 2017, we are undertaking a series of site visits to learn more about the promotion of intergenerational connection in different regions.

The APPG organised this visit because Apples and Honey Nightingale is the first intergenerational nursery in the UK, having opened within the grounds of Nightingale House care home in September 2017. Regular, meaningful activities are offered between the nursery children and elderly care home residents, and the centre therefore provides an invaluable case study to inform the APPG's interim report into intergenerational connection, due to be published in January 2019.

Key learning points from the visit

- Apples and Honey Nightingale nursery, run as a social enterprise, opened within the grounds of Nightingale House care home in September 2017 – becoming the first intergenerational nursery based at a care home in the UK. Alongside roughly 200 residents in the care home, there are now around 50 nursery children. 40% of residents are funded through local authority places, and 60% are private residents.
- The nursery offers meaningful intergenerational activities on a daily basis, including a baby and toddler group, art and music, and religious ceremonies and celebrations, such as the

Shabbat and Sukkot events that we observed and participated in during our visit. Though a Jewish faith-based early year's setting, Apples and Honey Nightingale is equally welcoming of children of all faiths and non-faiths to participate in these intergenerational activities.

- Alongside the delivery of intergenerational activities, Apples and Honey Nightingale has also established itself as a thought leader on this topic, producing a detailed [report](#) on its intergenerational work up to January 2018, and hosting an intergenerational conference in February 2018, at which 15 practitioners and academics presented, and over 100 people took part.
- The intergenerational activities put on at the nursery crucially involve equal status interactions – they are not based around either younger or older people being dominant in the relationship, or one generation doing things *to* the other generation. Young and old join together on equal terms to enjoy shared activities and interests.
- One of the main benefits that the young children enjoy from intergenerational interactions are enhanced communication skills relative to their peers who have enjoyed fewer interactions with adults. In addition, the young children at the nursery show an increased appreciation for delayed gratification as a result of their intergenerational relationships.
- Though the current intergenerational interactions at Apples and Honey Nightingale involve mainly the oldest and the youngest, the combined nursery and care home is keen to broaden its scope and become a hub for all age groups in the local community. Judith spoke about how the centre intends to invite the family members of both residents and children to events going forward as a step towards this.
- In establishing itself as a local hub for social connection, the nursery's members of staff recognise that social integration cuts across a range of different social groupings, and should foster stronger bonds not only between people of different ages, but also ethnic background, religion and class.
- To ensure that people from a diversity of religious and non-religious backgrounds are attracted to Apples and Honey Nightingale, and not only those of the Jewish faith, the nursery has built a network with different kinds of schools throughout the local area. The nursery and care home's staff are also from a diverse range of backgrounds and hold a range of religious and non-religious beliefs. So, though it has a Jewish ethos underpinning its activities, Apples and Honey Nightingale aims to make its environment comfortable and welcoming for people of all backgrounds.
- During the discussion, Chuka spoke about the benefit that intergenerational initiatives, and social integration more widely, has for tackling misunderstanding and hate throughout society. If strong relationships and high levels of trust have been established throughout all areas of society between people of different age, ethnic background and class, then there is not the platform from which to sow the seeds of hate.
- A challenge for Apples and Honey Nightingale in continuing and enhancing its work to foster intergenerational connection is funding. The provision of effective intergenerational

activities in a combined nursery and care home setting is intertwined with social care funding, an issue which has still to be solved by government. And with social integration including the fostering of stronger connections between people of different class, it is important that enough local authority funding is in place so that people are not restricted by private finances when it comes to participation in activities such as those provided by Apples and Honey Nightingale.

Next steps

- Together with the invaluable insights gained from visits to Manchester (21.06.18), south London (20.07.18) and the West Midlands (06.09.18), the evidence and observations gathered from this visit will help inform the interim and final reports of the inquiry – due to be launched in early 2019 and summer 2019 respectively.
- The APPG is planning further community visits to learn about intergenerational connection over the coming months, in addition to parliamentary meetings to hear evidence from experts on this topic, to inform its forthcoming reports. Future parliamentary meetings will follow that which took place on Monday, 15th October in Committee Room 8 of the House of Commons, focused on 'International and regional perspectives on intergenerational connection'.