



# Royal Star & Garter

Care with courage

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **National Intergenerational Week: Heart-warming video as school pupil plays veteran's favourite song despite visiting restrictions**

This week marks the first National Intergenerational Week, running from 23 March to 29 March.

To celebrate the week, Royal Star & Garter, which provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia, had planned to hold a number of activities in its Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe. However, the Coronavirus outbreak has meant these plans have been paused.

But that did not stop one school pupil from bringing joy to residents in Surbiton. Jemima has been coming into the Home every Friday to play the piano for residents as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award. She also takes requests from residents, often learning the songs ahead of her next visit.



*Jemima and Bernard*

However, she has not been able to come into the Home following the charity's decision to limit visitors. Undeterred, Jemima decided to record a video of a resident's favourite song to put a smile on his face.

She played Ken Dodd's Happiness for RAF veteran Bernard, and sent the video to the Home's Activities Manager Raquel Pena Aristizabal. Raquel then captured the 91-year-old's delighted expression, as he thanked Jemima and sang along.

Raquel said: "It was a joy seeing the video, and Bernard's reaction was so moving. Our residents cherish their visits from the younger generation. Jemima plays so beautifully and you can see how much it means to her when she sees residents enjoying her music. Visits like these mean the world to our veterans, and we will be using technology to continue these interactions at this difficult time. My thanks go to Dawn, our Activities Coordinator, who has facilitated Jemima's visits."



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Royal Star & Garter welcomes children from as young as a few months up to secondary age to come into its Homes and meet residents.

St Matthew's CoE Primary School in Surbiton pay weekly visits to Royal Star & Garter. Key Stage 1 Leader Liz Lowe said: "The children have been fascinated to find out about the lives of some of the residents and have developed a lovely sense of what it means to belong to a wider part of the community. Some of the children discuss their visits to the Surbiton Home in great detail to their friends when they get back to class, with one little girl saying that it was her 'best day ever!'"



*Children from St Matthew's School visit the nearby Surbiton Home*



*Brian, an Army veteran in Solihull, with a child at Halloween 2019*

Toad Hall Nursery in Chessington were regularly visitors to the Surbiton Home in 2019. Nursery Manager Emma Ockenden said: "As a nursery we are looking after the younger generation and it's lovely to see how to look after the older generation. It's a really lovely experience for them."

Army veteran Alec agreed. The Surbiton resident looks forward to the visits of nursery children, saying: "They change your outlook on life. If you don't associate with them, you don't know what life is."

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**For further information please contact:**

Goolistan Cooper  
Communications Officer  
[goolistan.cooper@starandgarter.org](mailto:goolistan.cooper@starandgarter.org)  
0208 481 7669 / 07391 868796

Cally Madden  
Marketing & Communications Manager  
[cally.madden@starandgarter.org](mailto:cally.madden@starandgarter.org)  
020 8481 7692 / 07881 017299



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## About Royal Star & Garter

Our charity provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

**Twitter:** @starandgarter

**Facebook:** facebook.com/starandgarter

**Website:** [www.starandgarter.org](http://www.starandgarter.org)



Royal Star & Garter  
is a member of the  
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