

Outlook Fund

Case Studies



Cambridgeshire
Community
Foundation

The summaries below are based on the reports that groups provide to CCF to explain the impact of the work funded by grants from the Outlook Fund.

Cottenham Primary School

Was awarded £2,500 to run an equine assisted learning programme which uses interaction with ponies to support the learning and development of 20 vulnerable children

All of the beneficiaries of the project have additional learning needs. Their time with the ponies enabled them to achieve success and have this recognised through mini-qualifications. For one non-verbal child on the autistic spectrum, it was with the horses that she spoke for the first time. She is noticeably animated in their company and is beginning to make eye contact with the Equine staff. All children have had the chance to practise and improve their fine motor skills, leading to greater confidence with their writing in class. Children are more settled on returning to their classrooms and enjoy being 'experts', sharing their knowledge with their classmates and teacher. The social and academic benefits to the children have been significant. Two of the older children asked if they could lead the ponies round to the playground to show them to their classmates. This was arranged and they spoke knowledgeably and confidently about their learning. As you can imagine, I have been inundated with requests from children wanting to 'work with the horses!'

Case Study:

K is a 9 year old boy with a range of complex emotional and behavioural difficulties. He demonstrates extremely challenging violent behaviour on a frequent basis and has to be taught away from his peers for their, and his own, safety. Even in a 1:1 situation with a trusted adult, K rocks constantly on his chair and is in a highly agitated state. His needs are being supported by a range of educational and health specialists. The EAL project enables K to experience some respite from his crippling anxiety. His behaviour changes completely when he is around the horses. He is gently, compassionate and relaxed. Sometimes, when he has been experiencing high levels of anxiety in the formal school setting, he would just want to sit quietly with Mary (his favourite pony) inside the horse box, gently stroking her mane and having some quiet time with her. Through the work that he has done with the EAL team, he has shown that he has excellent observation skills and has engaged in reading activities to develop his knowledge about areas of the natural world and animals that interest him. He has shown levels of engagement that have not been seen for a very long time in a formal educational setting. Whilst K still continues to require lots of specialist support to overcome his extreme social and emotional challenges, he has shown that in environments where he feels safe and secure he has the capacity to learn and receive some respite from the symptoms of his condition.

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Just Us

Was awarded £5,880 to hold the 2017 awards event for Looked after Children and care leavers. The event celebrates the young people's achievements over the last year and gives them the opportunity to nominate adults who they feel have made a difference in their lives.

This event builds the confidence of looked after young people whose self-esteem can be negatively affected by their early experiences. This can negatively impact their education achievements, attachments and ability to develop positive relationships. Being nominated for an award is seen as something to be celebrated, recognition of hard work and a show of pride. Each young person nominated received a £10 voucher and a certificate, and the night also included a steel band, a balloon model maker and refreshments.



The awards evening also supports positive working relationships with professionals and foster carers as young people have the opportunity to nominate them to acknowledge the support they give. In seeing this, other young people become aware that these adults can offer support and make valuable contributions to young people's lives.

With the increase in nominations each year, the size of the event has grown. This year, the venue was filled to capacity. Also this year the highest number of teachers were nominated by young people, many of whom attended the awards evening. The publicity following this event has been extremely positive and all the senior managers of the Local Authority attended the event and participated on stage with handing out certificates.

Case Study:

A 12 year old young person who was extremely shy and very hesitant and joining in anything and last year she came the awards for the very first time. From meeting her there we undertook a home visit with her and her foster carer to speak to her about joining a Just us group which from this she did and has started slowly to come out of her shell and is doing really well and made friends etc in the group.

We discussed with the young people about we wanted to come on stage and present and hand out certificates in the adult categories and with a bit of encouragement she stated she would with another young person with the group. Despite being a bit hesitant she did do this on the night and presenting the certificates. She came off stage really really pleased with herself and stated how much she enjoyed it and she would do again next year.



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The foster care commented to us how much she was smiling and beaming about this experience and how this was such a big thing for her to have the courage to do and a few months ago she would not of been confident to be able to even approach her with the suggestion.

Although it may seem such a small thing for this young person to come out on stage and hand out certificates in in actually fact was a huge accomplishment which the start of this was at the awards the year before. By being able to have the awards and this young person attending and seeing it and meeting us and seeing what we do, we were able to undertake a home visit. From this she attended group and from this the next awards she felt confident and comfortable to come up on stage.

The awards provides such a positive opportunity that several other opportunities grew from this for support with this young person and not only given her the opportunity to attend group, make positive peer group relationships and be able to join in other activities etc. It also supported her confidence in trying new things which is such a positive impact for her emotional development and independence skills. The hope is that this will continue to develop and that she will grow in confidence even further.