



# Impact Report 2014/15

Children in school,  
ready to learn



School-Home Support

A young child with curly hair, wearing a pink floral patterned shirt, is sitting and reading a book. A parent's face is partially visible in the background, looking down at the child.

School-Home Support (SHS) is a charity working with children and families to maximise educational opportunities and improve their life chances. Partnering closely with schools and families, SHS looks beyond the classroom to understand and tackle the issues affecting children's learning. Since 1984 we have used early intervention to break intergenerational cycles of low aspirations, academic failure and worklessness, replacing them with children in school, ready to learn.

## Content

- 3.** Message from our Chair and Chief Executive
- 4.** Focusing on our impact
- 6.** Barriers to education
- 7.** Our impact in schools
- 8.** Working with business to inspire children and families
- 9.** Sakshi's Story
- 10.** Rafida's Story
- 12.** Impact of our training
- 13.** Ready for School
- 14.** Extending parental engagement to schools across the country
- 16.** Our work with 'Troubled Families'
- 17.** Anneasa's story
- 18.** Thank you

# Chair and Chief Executive Introduction

**There has been a lot of development at School-Home Support (SHS) over the last year. We have completed the implementation of our new case management and monitoring system, now in use by every SHS practitioner. We have continued to develop our internal communications and collaboration platform which is now live, and we have launched SHS Membership.**

This means that not only are our own practitioners better equipped to support the children and families we work with, we can now extend our expertise to provide professional support across the country to every school and community setting where there are people charged with supporting children to be in school, ready to learn.

The pace of change hasn't been without its challenges and we would like to take this opportunity to thank the terrific staff team at SHS; those that have been developing and commissioning the new services and those that have had the job of incorporating the new systems and tools into their already packed workload. We know it has been tough but we are absolutely sure that the results will prove extremely valuable in furthering the work we do with vulnerable children and families.

Recognising that access to children's centres is limited for many struggling families with pre-school aged children as local authorities are reducing services, we have designed and piloted "Ready for School". This is an early intervention service providing parents with the information and skills to be fully prepared for their children to start at school. Getting families into good habits of attendance and punctuality at the very beginning of their children's education reaps huge rewards throughout their time in school.

Schools are under increasing financial pressures, whilst at the same time being given

more responsibility to provide a wider range of support to children with increasingly complex needs. Housing, physical and mental health, domestic violence and poverty are just some of the issues our practitioners are working with families to overcome, often three, four or five of these concurrently.

SHS's Board of Trustees have welcomed the recent heightened focus and scrutiny on charities. We are proud of our transparent impact and financial reporting systems and, we have been continually improving our data collection so that we can measure in even more detail the impact we have on children and families. We continue to work closely with our generous funders to ensure that their money is used as effectively as possible and we welcome their support and challenge.

The level of detail we now record has highlighted the fact that many of our practitioners are working with extremely complex issues in families. We have therefore completely reviewed our safeguarding procedures to ensure that we are working closely with all agencies involved in a child's life.

With effective parental engagement, children achieve so much more at school. Our vision is that all schools will have the skills to provide effective support to children so that they can thrive and succeed in life and this report reflects the impact we have had achieving this vision.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Evans'.

Richard Evans, Chair of Trustees



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jan Tallis'.

Jan Tallis, Chief Executive

# Focusing on our impact

SHS has always had a strong focus on the impact we have on the children and families we work with. To make sure that we continue to provide the support children and families need to improve their life chances, we have been updating how we capture and monitor impact data and working with external experts to make sure that we are accurately measuring our impact.

We have been working with New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) for a number of years to look at the impact we have on the children, families and schools we work with. We jointly developed our Theory of Change, which outlines what we do, how we do it and the impact that it should have. This is summarised on the graphic opposite which identifies both the initial impact we have and the long term outcomes for the children and whole family.

To support our goal of delivering the best service to children and families, this year we introduced a new case management system. This has improved how we collect and store information about our work and made sure that we can measure the impact of our work. This gives us the opportunity to monitor cases a lot more closely and improve how we work with families by letting us analyse the interventions used and the outcomes they have had. The impact pages throughout this report highlight data obtained through our new system.

We also wanted to make sure that when people look at our impact, they can trust it. This year we have worked with Project Oracle, a children and youth evidence hub, funded by the Mayor of London, to validate our outcomes. We are delighted to have been awarded with their Level 2 Validation and are working with them and NPC to identify and carry out further research.



# Our theory of change



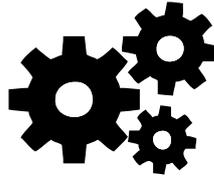
Work with children



Develop relationships and personal resources



Work with schools



Find practical solutions to education barriers



Work with parents



Promote engagement between school and parents



Improved attendance and participation at school



Improved parental engagement in learning



Improved character and resilience



## Accountability line



Improved well being for children from disadvantaged backgrounds



Improved attainment of children from disadvantaged backgrounds



Improved life chances for children from disadvantaged backgrounds

# 8 Barriers to a successful education



## 1 Getting to school

Many parents can't afford the cost of transport to get their children to school.



## 2 School uniforms

Families can't afford the cost of uniforms or don't have a washing machine to keep them clean.



## 3 Caring responsibilities

There are over **700,000** young carers across the UK, sometimes having to care for family members when they should be at school.



## 4 Poor housing

**1.6 million** children in Britain live in housing that is overcrowded, temporary, or dilapidated.



## 5 Bullying

**43%** of young people have been bullied.



## 6 Poor health

**Three** children in every classroom have a diagnosable mental health disorder.



## 7 Hunger

**3.5 million** children are growing up in poverty in the UK and don't always have food in the house.



## 8 Tired

Children in overcrowded houses who don't have a bed of their own don't get a good night's sleep to refresh for the next day.

## Our impact in schools

**90%**

of our schools rated good or outstanding by Ofsted

79% nationally

**71%**

persistent absentees improved attendance

number of children and family members worked with

**9038**

**1 in 10**

children and families worked with had complex needs (3 or more presenting issues)

**89%**

of pupils identified as having behavioural problems either maintained or improved their behaviour.

**91%**

of pupils identified as having problems either maintained or improved their engagement in learning.



"It was a fantastic experience, it's something I won't forget".

"Thank you so much this will benefit me so much in the future".



## Working with business to inspire children and their families

SHS works with our corporate partners to provide inspiring opportunities to some of the children we work with, giving them the chance to see the opportunities available to them through a good education.

Liberum Capital hosted groups of children and parents from Hungerford Primary School and Lister Community School to their offices in the City. This gave children the opportunity to gain insight into the workings of an investment bank and hear from staff about working in the sector.

One of the mothers who visited Liberum with her son said: "Although he is bright, I do worry about him as he isn't always as focused as he could be at school. It's really good to see him at the front of the group, asking lots of questions and seeing him excited by the experience of being here. It will help him focus on making sure he does well at school so he can get a good job."

Iqbal Wahhab, the founder of Roast in Borough Market kindly hosted a group of disadvantaged students from a local school who were interested in careers within hospitality and catering. The group got a behind the scenes tour of the restaurant and market and helped to prepare a fantastic breakfast. It was a brilliant experience for the students to gain a real insight into the restaurant world.



## Sakshi's Story

**Meet Kim:** Kim has worked for SHS for over four years in an infant school. The school goes up to Year 2, with three classes in each year and also a nursery with over 100 children attending.



**Meet the Magars:** A family of five, Sakshi and Varun live in London with their three children Raj (10), Nisha (7) and Lavanya (5). Varun is unable to work due to a disability and Sakshi provides full time care to him so is also unable to work. Varun's family live in India and Sakshi's parents live outside of London so there is little support available for the family.

**Sakshi:** I found out about Kim at the school, there was a poster up with her picture on. She was really good when I contacted her, she came out and visited me at home. I opened up about everything that was going. Varun had lost his Indian passport which had the stamp saying he had a right to remain here. Kim helped to sort it out, helping to fill in the forms and came with us to the Home Office to give us support.

**Sakshi:** We then applied for a British passport and got Varun British Citizenship. Kim came along to the ceremony which was great!

**Kim:** At one point they got burgled and all their beds got broken to pieces. I applied to the SHS Welfare Fund so that we could buy some new beds for the family. It had a big impact on the

children as they were struggling to sleep on blow up beds.

**Sakshi:** Our laptop was also broken and I was struggling with the insurance company, Kim spoke to them to sort things out which was a big help. She has also been really good with sorting out benefits, because at one point they were going to take Varun off DLA (Disability Living Allowance).

**Kim:** Sakshi struggles with using computers and all the forms for pretty much everything are now online so I work with Sakshi to complete the form. We have just completed the application forms for Raj's secondary school places.

**Sakshi:**  
I think the school would be lost without Kim. She's like an angel, I don't know what I'd do without her. I was really stressed before, on depression medication. I am much more relaxed now!



## Rafida's Story

**Meet Marilyn:** Marilyn has been a School-Home Support practitioner in a mixed comprehensive secondary school since December 2014. The school serves over 1,300 students that come from a diverse range of backgrounds.

**Meet the Maleks:** Rafida is a single mum to three boys; Maarif in Year 10, Affan in Year 7 and Lutfan in Year 6 at a separate primary school.

### Why did you need support?

**Rafida:** Maarif has Muscular Dystrophy and has to use a wheelchair to get around. On top of that he was fainting and vomiting as soon as he left home in the morning. It was having a deep impact on his attendance at school - it was just going down and down, to 40%. Marilyn came and did a home visit in January and saw Maarif's condition, he was totally unable, he had lost all sensation in his arms. He was just totally dependent on me. She explained to me about DLA (Disability Living Allowance). I had tried to claim it before but had been refused even though I had sent in the supporting medical letters from Great Ormond Street Hospital. They said I would have to appeal it, but I didn't do it.

**Rafida:** I was really struggling, pushing the wheelchair all the time meant my arms were in lots of pain. The stress of getting them to school, going back home doing housework and then coming back to school to pick them up. It was a tiring job, it was too much for me. My blood pressure was going up as well.

**Marilyn:** We completed the appeals form and then they rang me up to discuss how Maarif was coping at school - I just told them the truth. The journey into school for mum was horrendous, two buses, sometimes they would not be let on if there were prams. Obviously it was having a big impact on their ability to get into school. Maybe hearing from me made a bit of a difference.

**Marilyn:** In the meantime, I applied to the SHS Welfare Fund to pay for taxis for the boys. I think

having that really got the boys into the routine of coming into school, from that period on they have been coming to school. They needed that push and initial help to come into school.

**Rafida:** I was really lucky, we got a really quick response. When I got the news I was jumping up and down and came in the next morning and gave Marilyn a hug. From September we have had a taxi with wheelchair access coming to pick the boys up.

**Rafida:** I'm divorced now, but I was in a violent marriage. My husband would physically assault me and Maarif. It left emotional scars as well. It's taken a long time to move on from that. I try to think, what's in the past is in the past.

**Marilyn:** You could see the impact on Maarif as well. I think that was an issue in stopping him coming to school. He wanted to stay at home and protect his mum.

**Marilyn:** Maarif also has a brother, Affan, in year 7 and he was on my caseload. He also has Muscular Dystrophy, but he has better mobility and doesn't need a wheelchair. His attendance was also going down and was affected by Rafida's difficulty in getting Maarif to school. He was also getting bullied by some of the other boys in his year. I spoke to the Head of House and we looked into friendship circles and what it meant to be a good friend with some of the boys. I think because he is coming into school now, he is developing a really good network of friends.

By the end of the year, Maarif's attendance had gone up to 64% and it is almost 100% so far this year. In Maarif's end of Year 10 exams, he did really well.



### How have things changed for the family?

**Marilyn:** By the end of the year, Maarif's attendance had gone up to 64%, and it is almost 100% so far this year. In Maarif's end of Year 10 exams, he did really well. He got an A in his Religious Studies exam and in the rest of his subjects he got Cs. If he can do that with 64% attendance can you imagine what he'll do now we are getting his attendance up?

**Rafida:** He was checking over the summer holiday on the website to see what his results were - he really wanted to know. I said to him that I was so proud of him after all that he has gone through. If he keeps going, he is going to do so well.

**Marilyn:** Maarif has got to the point where he wants to come to school, he is happy here.

**Rafida:** I have been concentrating so much on my kids I haven't been able to think about myself. My aim now is to do a part time college course, do some volunteering and start taking some driving lessons. I'm going to go for it, do something for myself!

**Marilyn:** I can see the difference in Rafida, how much more relaxed, how much happier she is.

**Rafida:** I've never seen such a glow in Maarif's face as when school reopened in September. My children are coming to school on a regular basis, that's all I want, a good education for them so they don't have to go through what I went through.



## Training professionals to engage with parents

Impact learners have seen in their work:

**10%** increase in the number of children and families worked with

**14%** increase in the average attendance rate

**19%** improvement in behaviour

**82**

school practitioners trained in Level 3 Work with Parents

**50%**

of trainers interested in further CPD to improve the support they provide to children and families

**City & Guilds**  
Approved Centre

“

“I have been more confident with parents/ carers and developed communication and listening skills”

“I can approach parents more effectively”

“I’m more confident with dealing and solving situations with challenging parents”

“I am more outcome driven”

## Working with families to improve parenting skills

12 parents trained in Work with Parents Level 2

“I was able to put theory into practice and helped prepare me for what obstacles I might encounter”

“I have learned to communicate with parents on a professional level a lot better”

“I understand more about parents and children, I will use what I have learnt to help me and my own kids”

“I learned a lot of interesting information in the sessions”

# Ready for School

SHS intervenes as early as possible in children's lives, as we know that the earlier we provide support the easier it is to overcome issues and the better the outcomes for children and families.

This year we have developed and piloted Ready for School, a new programme designed to provide support to parents to make sure they are prepared for their child to start in primary school.

## Why did we develop the programme?

We knew from our wider work that many parents don't understand the education system and the importance of school for their children, particularly at a young age. Children in reception and year 1 have the highest rate of persistent absence in primary school and under half of children eligible for free school meals achieved a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Research from the Read on. Get On. coalition found that disadvantaged children lag 15 months behind their peers by the age of five, struggling to learn to read and stunting their progress at school and future life chances.

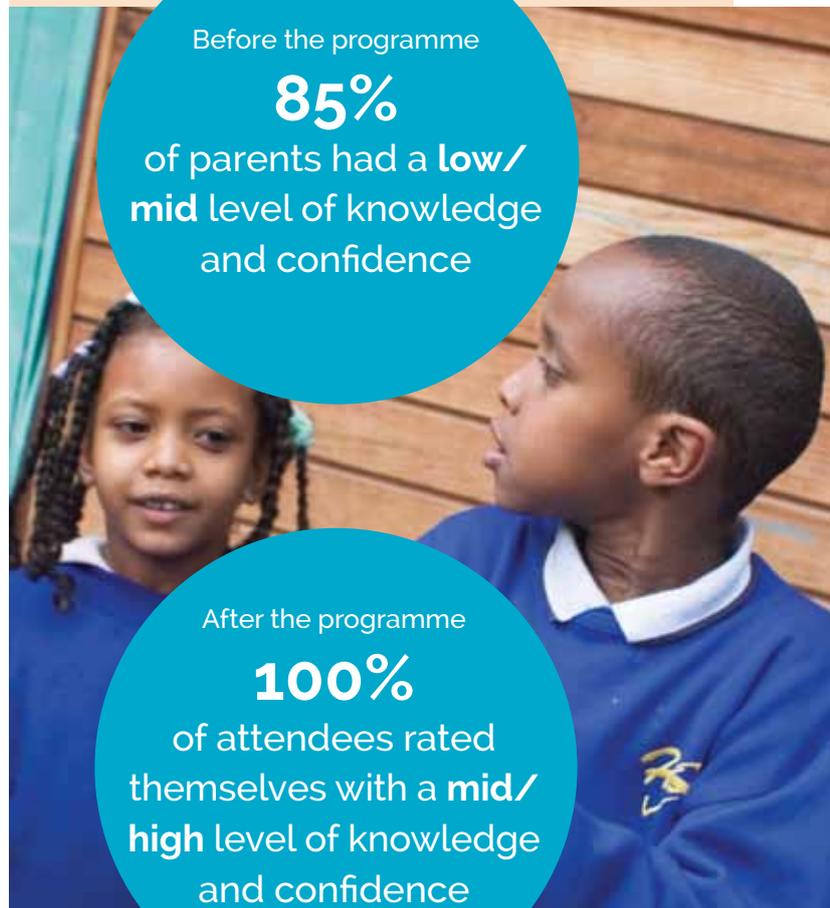
## How does the programme work?

The Ready for School programme is designed to empower parents to achieve a positive experience for them and their child during the transition from home to school.

Parents are equipped with up to date knowledge, tools and strategies to enable them to ensure that their child is 'ready for school'. They explore strategies and best practice models so that they are able to address concerns in a positive manner and equip themselves with the knowledge to work in partnership with the school effectively. The sessions include strategies to manage effective transitions and empower parents to support the emotional and social impact of school on their children.

## What is the impact?

We piloted the programme over the summer term with parents from children's centres in two London boroughs.



Before the programme

**85%**  
of parents had a **low/**  
**mid** level of knowledge  
and confidence

After the programme

**100%**  
of attendees rated  
themselves with a **mid/**  
**high** level of knowledge  
and confidence

“

“I feel less worried about how my children will feel on the transition day onwards”

“More confidence in asking the right questions when required”

“I have more knowledge and info to be able to be confident in what I need them to do to support my child's learning and will be getting to know his teacher, SENCO, pastoral team and other staff”

# SHS Membership

**The vision of SHS is that every child receives the support they need to thrive and achieve. For this to be a reality, there needs to be staff in schools with the skills to provide effective support to them and their families, whether that is in the form of an SHS Practitioner, or their own staff.**

We know that local authorities and schools are under increasing financial pressure and not all schools will have the resource to fund a practitioner. All schools have pastoral responsibilities but their staff may not always get the support they need to deliver the most effective interventions.

This is why we have been developing SHS Membership, a new scheme to provide professional support to staff in schools across the country. We have developed an online learning platform which has been nominated for an award. The online learning centre provides members with training modules in a variety of topics including:

- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Child Protection
- Young People & Risky Behaviour
- Integrated Working
- Autism Awareness
- The Multi-Agency Approach (MAP) and Team Around the Child (TAC)

Schools have been given a lot more responsibility for providing wider support to children and families, with increasingly complex cases to deal with. As well as being highly trained it is important that staff receive appropriate support and guidance through supervision sessions. This is an area that Ofsted found was lacking in their inspections of Early Help in schools. All members receive supervision from SHS staff to ensure that they continue to provide the support children and families need.

We know that our own practitioners get a lot of help and support from each other and we want to bring this kind of peer support to staff across the country. This year we will be making use of technology to develop and launch an online forum for members to connect with each other and share ideas and best practice with each other.

We will be monitoring and evaluating the impact this has on our new members and the children and families they support across the country. We look forward to sharing how we have done and the learning we have had next year.

We would like to thank all our loyal supporters who have helped us throughout the conception and development of our new membership scheme. In particular, we would not have been able to reach this point without the very generous support of the following:



**The Esmee Fairbairn  
Foundation  
The Henry Smith Charity  
The Paul Hamlyn Foundation  
The Rayne Foundation**



**“My practitioner helped me from a dark place to a light place. Her strength and positivity made me feel stronger. She helped me to build my relationship with my Daughter; I was so lost before. She put herself out for me and I will be eternally grateful”**

# Troubled Families Impact

**73%** of young people reduced offending

**69%** of children are no longer persistently absent

**63%** of families reduced anti-social behaviour by  $\frac{3}{5}$  or more

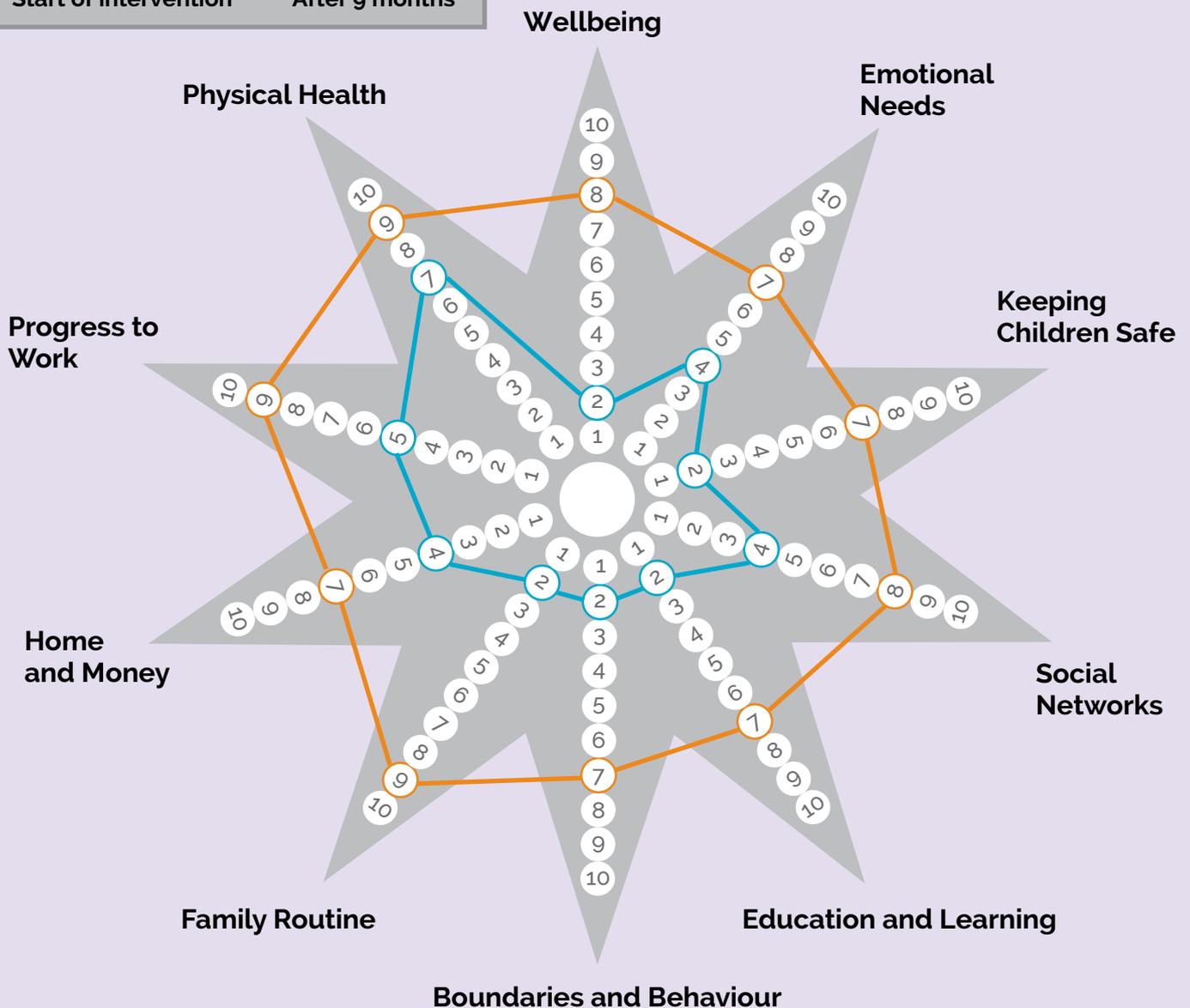
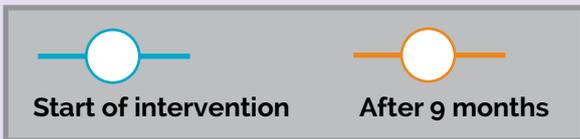
**79%** of parents progressed in their readiness for work

**83%** of children reduced the number of school exclusions

**65%** of parents moved into continuous employment

We introduced star diagrams in our work with families to measure the progress we make in a number of key issues. Practitioners and families sit together to discuss and jointly agree where they think they are on each issue. Families really value this

way of measuring impact as it gives them ownership of the work we are doing and they can see the progress they are making. The diagram below shows the average change for families after nine months of working with an SHS Practitioner.





## Anneasa's story

**Meet Katja:** Katja is a Troubled Families Practitioner and has worked for School-Home Support for two years.

**Meet the Molinas:** Anneasa is a single mum of two daughters, Marlia aged 9 and Ria, 3. The family lost the right to public funds when Anneasa and her second husband divorced and he moved out of the country.



**Anneasa:** I was living with my friend, who was helping me to look after my children. I worked nights and she worked during the day so we could share childcare between us. I finished work at 7am on the other side of London, so sometimes I would be late in dropping of Marlia to school. But then my friend died, so the council said I was going to be evicted so that they could give the flat to someone else. They said I had No Recourse to Public Funds, so they couldn't help me. I moved into a single room that was advertised, but I was only there for two weeks when they said I was going to be evicted.

**Katja:** The school had raised concerns as attendance was dropping and had reached 88%, so the case was referred to me as part of the Troubled Families service in May. I visited Anneasa in her single room and realised that she had no food or anyway of travelling. I applied to the SHS Welfare Fund to help buy some emergency food and get a travel card.

**Anneasa:** We had got lots of food in the house and one day when I came home from taking Marlia to school the locks had been changed and we had lost all of the food. I didn't know what to do.

**Katja:** It turned out the room was being illegally sub-letted by a tenant and the landlord didn't know that Anneasa and her daughters were living there. Social services didn't want to take responsibility for the family as they had no recourse to funds. Anneasa has a right to remain until summer 2016.

**Anneasa:** I had to go to the police station and sleep there. Katja was trying to help me a lot, was ringing me and trying to sort things out.

**Katja:** We had lots of discussions with social services and trying to get them to agree to find housing for the family. As the family were destitute they agreed to help and did find some emergency housing for them. I had not dealt with a case like this before, so I had to learn a lot about the legal side of things and what services were available. We went to Praxis, another charity who provide support to migrants and refugees in London. They agreed to take the case on and found a pro bono solicitor to help.

**Anneasa:** I couldn't work anymore because I didn't have any childcare support, so I didn't have any money to buy food or pay for buses to drop Marlia at school or attend meetings with Praxis. Katja helped me out, she got money from SHS [Welfare Fund] to pay for food and they share the cost of buses with the school.

**Katja:** We are currently applying to the Home Office for the family to have the right to remain in the country. We are also applying to get Marlia a passport as her father was British, which will help with the right to remain. We are waiting for the decisions to come through so that we know what the next steps are.

**Anneasa:** We are getting Marlia into school, her attendance is up to 96% and she has just started in Year 6, which she is really enjoying.

**Marlia:** Thank you Katja for helping us find a place to rest our head. If it wasn't for you then we will have been living on the street with no food to eat and no clothes to wear and nowhere to live. Thank you and God bless you!

# Thank you

Thousands of disadvantaged children and families depend on SHS. Every single day. We simply cannot reach them without generous support from charitable trusts, companies and private individuals. We would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every person, company and charitable trust that has supported SHS over 2014-15. None of the impact you have read about in this report would be possible without your support.

## Unrestricted income

Unrestricted income is essential for any organisation to efficiently manage resources and to grow and SHS is no different. Unrestricted income enables us to; pay rent on our premises, provide a function to manage our finances and ensure staff are paid, invest in our fundraising so that we can continue reaching children and families that need our support, and much more.

“Investment in core functions is essential for any organisation to be resilient, responsive and to grow. Our grant to School-Home Support is unrestricted so that they can continue to provide the best possible interventions to help children learn and thrive.”

Kari Holtung, Pears Foundation



We are grateful to the Pears Foundation and others for providing essential core support over the last year, including those below and other generous benefactors:

- 29 May 1961 Charitable Trust
- BlackRock
- Cinven
- David and Claudia Harding
- Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- The Haberdashers' Company
- The Henry Smith Charity
- Rayne Foundation
- Sobell Foundation

## Services

Much of our frontline service activity directly working with children, families and schools is enabled through generous funder support. This allows thousands more children and families to benefit from SHS's expertise than would otherwise be possible. Services funded by supporters over the last year included SHS practitioners working in individual schools and Troubled Families practitioners working across schools to target support at families with multiple and complex needs.



SHS Membership has been developed over 2014-15, as you will have read, providing an additional opportunity for funders to enable children, families and schools to benefit from SHS's expertise.

We are grateful to the Nomura Charitable Trust and others for supporting SHS including those below and other generous benefactors:

- Breadsticks Foundation
- ExPat Foundation
- Liberum Foundation
- Man Group plc Charitable Trust
- Nomura Charitable Trust
- Paul Hamlyn Foundation
- Richard Reeve's Foundation
- Walcot Foundation

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“School-Home Support is unique in its approach to engaging both hard to reach children and parents, and identifying innovative ways to engage with corporate supporters.”

Naomi Matthams, Head of Community Affairs, Nomura

## Welfare Fund

The SHS Welfare Fund is vital. Many families we come into contact with are struggling for everyday items such as school uniforms, a bed for their child to sleep in or even emergency food. The Welfare Fund can provide a vital life-line that begins to break down the barriers to learning.

With many thanks to all those supporting the SHS Welfare Fund, including those below and other generous benefactors:

The Drapers' Company  
The Goldsmiths' Company

For more information on any of our services, or to discuss how you can support us in reaching more children and families please contact us on **0845 337 0850** or email **enquiries@shs.org.uk**.

\*All case studies have been anonymised and the photo's used throughout the document have come from the SHS image library and do not represent the case studies or quotes used.

### **School-Home Support**

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