

Spring Newsletter 2019

The Playhouse Foundation

Enabling Young Children in Hampshire with Autism to Achieve their Full Potential



Our Families



Meet Liam, our 10th beneficiary, in receipt of one of our programmes! Following a full staff training day in Andover and thanks to the collaboration of his preschool staff, Liam now has an ABA Programme integrated into his preschool sessions. Liam has a history of ritualistic behaviours, difficulties following instructions and very little speech. Fostering an approach which incorporates mutually agreed targets between preschool staff and Liam's ABA team is paramount to enabling a successful start. We look forward to updating you with how his programme is going in future newsletters!



Alex is having a fabulous time with his new tutor, Jess! Children with autism often find busy noisy environments upsetting and overwhelming. By having his tutor working one to one with him, Jess was able to structure up activities to motivate and guide Alex, prompting him with pointing when he wanted the tap turned on or a book from a high shelf.



Alex also has a history of mouthing inappropriate items, this is called Pica - the abnormal desire to eat something non-edible. Through targeting this condition as part of his ABA Programme, and with the collaboration from Alex's fabulous nursery staff, he is now beginning to avoid non-food items for food preferences. Alex's parents are, as you can imagine, thrilled with just how far Alex has come and so are we!



Since Selina's Programme began last October, she has made fantastic progress! She has built a wonderful relationship with all of her tutors and is always extremely happy when they arrive. She is engaging and responding well to her tutors and has already begun some targeted work, such as picture matching and copying the tutors doing actions with objects to help build her repertoire of play skills! Prior to her Programme starting, Selina would become extremely distressed if she could not communicate her needs. She is now beginning to use language to ask for things she wants and needs. This is a big step for Selina and her parents have reported a very noticeable, positive change in her behaviour and an increase in her day-to-day speech! Well done Selina!





Kuba is such a bright 4 year old! Thanks to **Tesco Bags of Help**, he is able to attend his local preschool with an ABA tutor for three afternoons each week. During this time, he has been able to gain several language and communication skills that will equip him ready for school in September.

Many children on the autism spectrum struggle with being able to give the right piece of information when asked to do so. With a question discrimination programme, he has now gained the skills to listen with greater accuracy. This is such a vital learning skill that will enable Kuba to advance onto higher language skills.



Through our collaborative work with preschool staff, our team have been able to target the areas Kuba is most in need of supporting and practise them in the home before generalising to the preschool environment. Kuba has recently impressed his team of tutors by being able to sit for a short circle time unaided. His tutor is always watching out for social opportunities in which he can interact positively with other children. Check out his high fives with another boy!

The Playhouse Foundation are proud to be co-funded by Hampshire and to be part of their Local Offer to parents. The aim of this approach is to offer consistency and continuity of support to all our families. You can click on the Hantsweb to view our details: fish.hants.gov.uk



Hampshire
County Council

Parent Support Role - helping the wider community

Did you know that we offer help and support to those who may not be eligible for one of our Programmes but still in need of signposting and respite? Such activities can include:

- an initial phone call to establish the needs of a child and identify an effective pathway of support
- sharing of contact details of suitable providers within the area and introductions made
- home visits to meet families face to face for more intimate care and support, dissemination of materials regarding how an ABA programme looks, meeting and assessing the child to decipher whether needs meet the provision of an ABA Programme
- assistance with providing a template of provision and costs for a programme
- assisting with the EHCP process - with how to start (for younger children) and how to review to incorporate and early intervention therapy for older children already at school
- connecting families to others in the area who have similar stories and who have embarked on ABA
- providing other useful information regarding websites, social media forums and charities who can aid support
- offer invitations to our regular training days where the family can acquire knowledge of how our programmes can shape and develop early communication skills and eradicate inappropriate behaviours
- liaison with preschools and primary schools to promote and provide further information on ABA strategies and systems to help individual children
- offer recommendations for legal aid in order to facilitate effective representation during the EHCP process

If you think you would be a good support volunteer for one of our advocacy families, then please contact us at playhousefoundation@icloud.com for more information.

New Trustee

In February, we hosted our Annual Trustee meeting and welcomed **Zaenia Rogers** to the board! A former accountant and VAT Consultant, Zaenia has been an avid supporter of the Foundation since its inception and we are thrilled to be able to utilise her.



Local Universities



This month, Founder, Vicky Stanley met up with **Gwen Gordon** and **Naomi Irving**, Volunteering Placement Coordinators for Southampton and Winchester respectively. The purpose of these meetings was to refine the student placement process and review future placements. At TPF, each student is supported on an individual basis. This is achieved by developing a bespoke programme of training, implementing safeguarding training, providing support by way of a named practitioner, implementing clinical supervision and providing feedback and monitoring to both the student and the university.



We believe passionately in these partnerships working and are dedicated to providing time to ensure that the model we provide for students is structured and supportive with collaboration between TPF and the University.

Impact Project

Over the last couple of months, we have established a working party which aims, over time to demonstrate the impact of our work through various channels.

Eleanor Greene, (Charity Finance specialist) has created an initial TPF report reviewing the cost and savings impacts of ABA through EHCP in schools. In her conclusion, Eleanor writes 'If the Local Authority takes a joined-up-thinking approach, it can be seen that supporting The Playhouse Foundation in funding ABA eligible pupils to be supported in mainstream schools is, in fact a net saving to the public purse even before health, social care and other departments are taken into account. There is also the intangible (and almost impossible to quantify) benefit to teachers and other pupils in the schools of the CPD aspects of ABA. Staff retention and overall results can be improved by properly supporting autistic children on the roll. ABA and The Playhouse Foundation facilitate this'.

Support & Training to Staff & Parents

The team had a fabulous day in February when our Playhouse Consultants were invited to present a whole staff training day at the launch of our newest beneficiary's Programme! The morning consisted of underpinning the principles of ABA and in the afternoon, our team of experienced tutors, together with the Consultant, identified a programme of individualised targets to best support the needs of the child.



Events

London Marathon - Virgin Money



Our awesome Trustee **Kathryn Griffith** is now in full-swing of a robust training schedule as part of her preparation for the London Marathon where she will run to raise funds for the Foundation. Her son, Felix was diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at age 2 when it became apparent that his struggles to develop language were about more than a simple speech delay.

Kathryn explains the reasoning which led her to sign up for the London Marathon. "We were lucky to be able to push to an early diagnosis with Felix but then realised that this left us in something of a black hole as far as support and services were concerned. At a time of real struggle and upset, we discovered by good fortune an early intervention programme, Applied Behavioural Analysis.

From a point of despair, when we wondered how on earth we could possibly help Felix. We now find ourselves with a confident, contented, entertaining, loving and engaging child who is exceeding all expectations and finding a real place in the world. It is difficult to really describe and evaluate this journey fully in a few short paragraphs, but we began this process with various services telling us we should be prepared to accept Felix's "disabilities," accept that he would "never access the mainstream," acknowledge that his relationships would not be like those of typically-developing children and so on. That is not the Felix we see today - the Felix who goes to his local school, has best friends (and enemies!), talks non-stop about Minecraft (we could maybe have done without that on reflection...), who has taken up golf, can ride a bike, climb a tree, has an ambition to be a pig farmer (yes really) and flew through his SATs last year without a backward glance."

Please help us to raise more funds!

Staff Developments, Growth & Increased Expenditure

Our network of consultants and tutors has grown considerably to meet the needs of our 10 families and as such, TPF needs to rely on funding from multiple sources to finance the growth of additional costs.

We rely on the generosity of Individuals, local community groups and businesses, grant making organisations and local authorities to continue supporting children and families.

Since our last newsletter, we have received further funding from **St James' Place Foundation, The Big Give** and the **Winchester Roundtable**. A huge thank you to these magnificent organisations who are literally transforming the lives of the young children whom we support!



Thanks to **The Hampshire Flower Studio** situated in Festival Place, Basingstoke for helping to raise funds for supporting young children with autism. This was a free workshop for children over the age of 7 and all money raised came directly to The Playhouse! If you feel that your business or organisation could help to raise funds for our Foundation, then please contact us at playhousefoundation@icloud.com with your ideas!

How can you help?

Coffee Mornings / Local Fundraising - perhaps bag packing like these two?! Please get in touch with any ideas you may have.

We need your support to continue changing lives.

Could you help spread the word about The Playhouse Foundation? Do you know to people who might support us? Would you support or fundraise for us?

Do talk to us if you have a contact or can fundraise for us. There are various ways in which you can help us to achieve this:



Virgin Money

The Playhouse Foundation is registered with Virgin Money for all events and fundraising opportunities.

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charity-web/charity/finalCharityHomepage.action?charityId=1014574>

Give as you Live & Easy Fundraising

The Playhouse Foundation is registered with both Give as you Live and Easy Fundraising. Both of these websites are fantastic easy ways to give to a charity when you shop!



Give as you Live®



Register with either of these sites and install the reminder on your computer. <https://www.giveasyoulive.com>
<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk>

As always, we are incredibly grateful for your donations and together, will enable young children with autism to achieve their full potential!

Thank you!

Vicky Stanley
Founder & CEO