

# Unlocking Potential

September 2021 – July 2022

UPUnlocking www.up.org.uk



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# Welcome from the Chair



Last year was a hugely successful and impactful one for the charity. As the pandemic ended, the demand for our services grew rapidly as many children and their families emerged with even greater vulnerabilities and challenges. Our services continued to adapt and develop to meet the evolving needs of our clients and pleasingly we increased our coverage meaningfully, reaching over 2,500 children.

This has taken a huge collective effort of the staff at Unlocking Potential, with the team always willing to go the extra mile to help ensure the children receive the help they need. I would like to thank each of them and all the numerous people who have supported us - both financially and with their time - over the past year.

We are optimistic that with more support, we can further improve our impact and reach in the coming years, always putting the interests of the children and their families at the heart of our work.



# Welcome from the Chief Executive



Dear Supporters, Partners and Friends,

I am delighted to present our second Impact Report, reflecting the tremendous strides we have made in the past year, to collectively double our support across London schools to address the vulnerabilities faced by children and their families to overcome a variety of social, emotional and mental health challenges.

At Unlocking Potential, we believe that every child, and indeed parent and carer, should be entitled to thrive and flourish, regardless of the adversities life presents. The unprecedented circumstances of last and past years have tested the resilience and mental health of many, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to providing support that is adaptable, responsive, and puts the power of relationships at the heart of the work. It is through connection, understanding and collaboration that lives are touched, and hope is replenished.

We continue with our tri-part approach, drawn from Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language Therapy and Child Therapies, that encompasses prevention, early intervention and ongoing tiered support, embarking on a journey with each child to navigate and communicate their emotions, learn their strengths, build their resilience and develop healthy strategies for life.

I am immensely proud of the work of the team this past year, which would not have been achieved without your unwavering support, so I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each one of you for your incredible generosity and commitment. Your time, expertise and financial contributions have enabled us to enhance existing programmes, expand into new schools, and extend our work with even more children.

However, even as we celebrate the journey we have been on, we are mindful of the work that lies ahead. The need to innovate, to broaden our impact, to reduce stigma around the challenges faced by families in these uncertain times and to ensure children's mental health and wellbeing is protected and prioritised remains high. Together, with the backing of partners, funders and friends we will continue to make a transformative difference in the lives of children and parents we have the privilege of working with.

With many appreciations to you all,

Cassie Oakeshott, CEO of Unlocking Potential



# **Our Mission**

Unlocking Potential's mission is to work collaboratively with communities to enable children and young people with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs to unlock their full potential.

We achieve our mission through our strategic goals.

## Strategic goals

We deliver high performing therapeutic programmes and education provision for children and young people with SEMH needs.

We work in collaboration with families, communities, and other partners to ensure that children and young people access the interventions they need in order to thrive.

We work in a trauma informed way that is child centric and attachment based, with a total commitment to excellent safeguarding practice.

We cultivate a workforce of knowledgeable and skilled staff who are passionate about supporting children and young people to make positive changes in their lives.

# **UP's Values**

#### Trust

We build trust by being honest, transparent, and accountable in the way we work with children and young people, staff, and partners and by providing services and programmes whose outcomes are measurable and evidenced based.

#### Empowering

We co-create opportunities for our children, young people, parents/carers, and staff to actively participate in decision-making that influences change. We promote the voices of children and young people in our organisation and the wider community.

### Impact

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We are committed to measuring our impact through a data driven method in order to develop our programmes and make a greater difference to the lives of children, young people, and their parents and carers.

#### Collaborative

Relationships are at the heart of our work. We prioritise communication and collaboration with partners, families, and communities, believing that by working together we create more effective and holistic outcomes for children and young people.

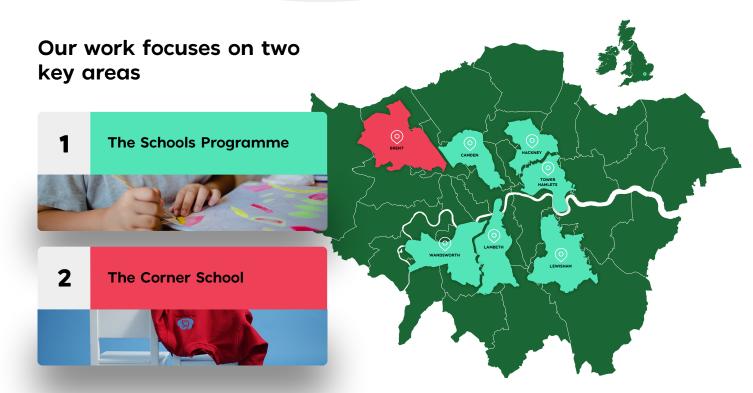
## Nurturing

We provide a nurturing approach based on safety and space for creativity, exploration, and growth. We support and care for our children, young people, and staff to realise their potential.

#### Safeguarding

Ensuring the appropriate safeguarding of the children and young people that we work with is a vital component of the work that we do. In the 21-22 school year 143 safeguarding concerns and 220 wellbeing concerns were identified. The top three reasons that safeguarding concerns were raised were physical abuse, mental health concerns of the child/young person or parental mental health concerns.





Last year we supported over **2,500 children** and their families across seven London boroughs (Brent, Camden, Hackney, Lambeth, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets and Wandsworth), moving into our first schools in Camden and Lambeth and into our first secondary school in Brent.





## **The Schools Programme**

The UP Schools Programme provides a high-quality mental health and wellbeing service to primary and secondary schools across London. Delivering a range of interventions designed to meet the needs of children across our partner schools including:

- 1:1 Child Psychotherapy
- Six Times Talk Time (6xTT) a brief solution focused intervention delivered 1:1 or in small groups focused on themes of self-esteem, social skills, emotional literacy, anger management and transition and change
- Wellbeing Groups designed to develop social skills, enhance self-esteem, and manage minor anxiety
- Transitional Groups through which UP Therapy Team Managers support year 6 children for their move to secondary school
- 'Speak UP', a drop-in service, where children can self-book an appointment to see a therapist to discuss their worries or concerns
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech & Language Therapy
- Check Ins (adhoc or regular) for emotional support
- Online Parent Group

Our services are integrated within the school pastoral and inclusion team, meeting previously unmet needs, and picking up on emerging issues often through informal engagement in the playground with children, teachers, and parents.

The inclusion of child therapists at pastoral meetings often adds a valuable perspective to the staff and administration about how best to support the child's academic progress and emotional wellbeing.

> During the 2021-2022 school year, we supported over 2,500 children in 17 primary schools and 1 secondary school across 7 London boroughs.

"When I'm not sure, I consult the (UP) Therapist, who is able to offer her skills and know-how, enabling us to see things from a different perspective."

School in Lambeth

#### Overview of Therapeutic Services

Children seen for 1:1 Therapy	255
1:1 Therapy sessions attended	4,319
Children seen for 6xTT	115
6xTT sessions attended	593
Children seen for OT	191
OT sessions attended	1 224
	1,334
Children seen for SALT	58
Children seen for SALT SALT sessions attended	
	58

7



### **Parent and Professionals Support**

We know that supporting parents and carers is key to providing effective support to children and young people, particularly if families originate from cultures where therapeutic support is not openly discussed or well-regarded, or where bridges need to be re-built to restore historic difficult relationships with professionals and families.

We recognise the value of positive relationships, and prioritise these at every stage of the work: when introducing our parents/carers to UP and our team members, when booking regular check-ins to hear how a child is progressing at home and school, when thinking with the parent/carer about how family life is supporting a child's development, and when responding to parents in crisis on the phone or at the school gate.

It can be hard for parents/carers to take the step to engage with external services, but the positive relationship they have with UP staff builds their confidence to accept help from social care, housing and adult mental health services.

Our support to parents is flexible and responsive, and we seek feedback to adapt to emerging needs to be as inclusive as possible. When we found that several parents in one of our Hackney schools were unable to access our online parent course due to logistical/technical barriers, our Therapy Team Manager provided a face-to-face parent drop-in service at the school.

Our offer to teaching staff is similarly adaptive; our therapists look for opportunities to support teachers with strategies to manage challenging behaviour in a trauma-informed way to build children's and staff wellbeing, and schools regularly compliment UP staff on their proactive and integrated approach, naming how seamlessly they form part of the pastoral team and school community. Parent Feedback: "It's so great to have a regular space to share with other parents, it helps me focus on how things are going."

Parent Meetings Attended	291
Parent Calls	315
Professionals Meetings	393
	A CONTRACTOR OF A CONTRACTOR

#### Who We Support

We deliver interventions to some of the most vulnerable young Londoners:

47%	received free school meals	
18%	were involved with social care	
40%	were involved in family trauma or serious safeguarding	concerns
Ethnicity	Ethnicity Key	Gender
	25% Black British/African/Caribbean 32% White 13% Mixed Background 17% Asian British/Asian 7% Other 6% Unknown Gender Key* 41% Female 58% Male	

1%

Unknown

\*Data obtained from School SIMS systems



## **Results from our interventions**

#### 1:1 Therapy

Counselling and Psychotherapy can benefit children in a variety of ways by providing time and space and a supportive relationship in which to explore aspects of their life that might be causing preoccupation or worry that impacts their day-to-day wellbeing and functioning. During weekly sessions in the designated UP therapy room, children are invited to engage in play, imagination and the use of creative media such as art, drawing, painting, puppetry, sand play and music; all of which are methods that assist the child in the exploration of their inner and outer worlds in relation to themselves self and others in order to facilitate psychological healing, growth and transformation.

## Children are referred for 1:1 therapy for multiple reasons:

Emotional regulation	21%
Family trauma	16%
Behaviour problems at school	10%
Self esteem & anxiety issues	9%
Struggling academically	7%



## Risk Levels for Children in 1:1 Therapy

**High risk:** Children on a CP or CIN plan, children with 3+ ACES, children with an EHCP, refugee and asylum seekers, children who have experienced sexual abuse, children who have experienced domestic abuse, looked after children, children who have been excluded from school.

**Medium risk:** Children identified as vulnerable by the school, children with a history of behaviour problems in school, children living in high levels of poverty, 2+ ACES, parents divorcing/separating.

**Low risk:** School identifies a need for short term support. Depending on the child, this could be due to a bereavement, additional needs around making and keeping friends, and/or struggling with emotional regulation in the classroom.

High Risk	78	32%
Medium Risk	114	46%
Low Risk	36	15%
Unknown	19	7%



## **Results from our interventions**

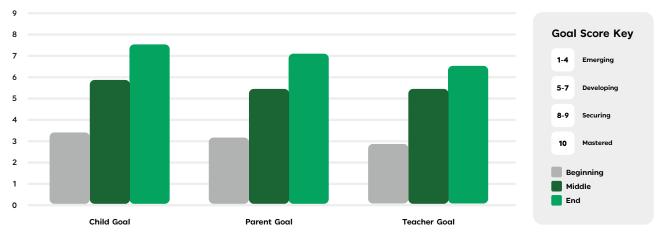
## 1:1 Therapy Goals

(This data is only collected for the 104 children that finished therapy during the 21/22 school year)

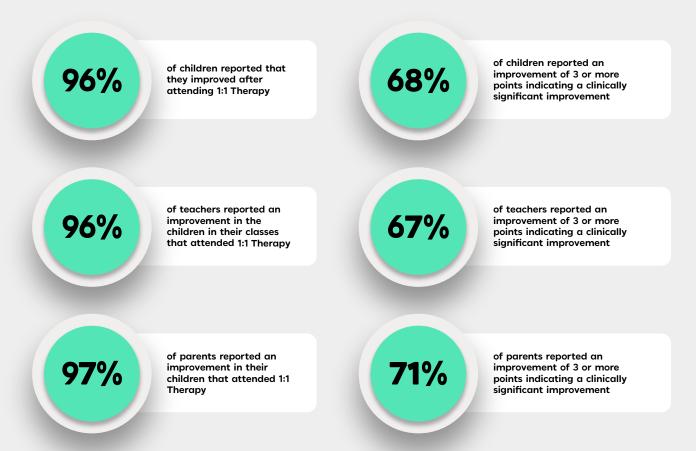
There is a 90% or higher attendance rate for therapy. Children enjoy the relational and creative element of 1:1 therapy and typically only miss appointments if they are absent from school.

For children in 1:1 therapy, three goals are set at the start of the intervention: a goal with the child, with their teacher and with their parent/carer. It is always interesting to see if there are any themes or correlation between the three goals (e.g. if a child and parent or parent and teacher both want to see progress in the same area). We re-score the child's own-determined goal every six sessions, and re-score the teacher and parent goals once a term.

The chart below displays the average child, teacher and parent goal scores at the beginning and end of 1:1 therapy. Children usually attend therapy over the course of one school year, so the chart below shows goal scores for the Sept 2021 – July 2022 school year.



Child, parent, and teacher goals improved by an average of 3 points or more





## 6xTalkTime (6xTT)

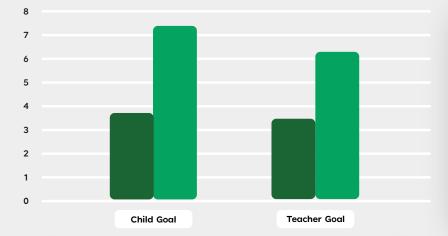
Six x Talk-Time is a set of 6 weekly 30-45 minute sessions offered to individuals or groups of children needing support in one of 5 areas: Self-Esteem, Social Skills, Emotional Literacy, Anger Management, Transition and Change (moving to a new school; moving home; divorce and separation; bereavement).

#### 6xTT (children are referred for multiple reasons):

Emotional Regulation	26%
Behaviour Problems at School	13%
Family Trauma	11%
Own mental health problems: self-esteem, anxiety etc	11%
Behaviour Problems at Home	8%

#### 6xTT Therapy Goals (83 children completed 6xTT last year)

For children in 6xTT, we set a goal with the child and their teacher at the beginning and end of the 6 sessions. The chart displays the average child and teacher goal scores at the beginning, middle and end of six times talk time. Children usually attend therapy over the course of one school year, so the chart below shows goal scores for the Sept 2021 – July 2022 school year.





of children reported that they improved after 6xTT

100%

70%

of children reported an improvement of 3 or more points indicating a clinically significant outcome of te

96%

46%

of teachers reported an improvement of 3 or more points indicating a clinically significant outcome

of teachers reported that their children

improved after attending 6xTT



## **Occupational Therapy**

Occupational therapy aims to give practical support to help increase independence and satisfaction in all aspects of a child's life. Its main focus is on enabling people to do the things they want or need to do in their daily lives ('their occupations'). In schools, the goal of OT is to improve students' performance of the tasks and activities that are important for successful school functioning. OTs work alongside the child and teachers to help make changes in the child, environment and task. OTs help children address a huge range of challenges that they may face in school and at home.

#### OT (children are referred for multiple reasons)



#### **Occupational Therapy Goals**

Occupational Therapists are responsive to the needs of the child so goals can be adjusted during the intervention to ensure that the 'occupations' the child and therapist are working on most closely reflect the areas of difficulty the child is experiencing.

In the 2021/22 school year each child received an average of 7 OT sessions per intervention.

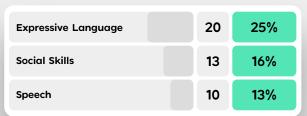




# Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)

SaLTs provide individual or group intervention and give advice or exercises at home in addition to having in-school sessions. At UP, in line with our SEMH focus, we work alongside the child to offer support in three key areas: emotional literacy, social communication and additional language needs.

#### SaLT (children are referred for multiple reasons)



#### SaLT Outcomes

95% of child speech

90%

of children met at least one of their speech & language goals

of goals were either fully or partially met



# **Positive Parenting Group**

#### The Programme

Following the successful introduction of the Positive Parenting Group to our partner schools we ran a further two groups this year.

The groups were co-facilitated by two members of the UP team, a child therapist trained in Parent Group Facilitation and able to hold in mind the needs of the child, and an adult therapist able to work with any strong feelings evoked in parents.

A total of 13 participants completed the full 10-week course. The first group (G3) ran from the beginning of November and the second group (G4) from the end of April.

G3 had 7 participants while G4 had 6 participants. Both groups contained a mixture of parents from seven schools in six different boroughs: Brent, Camden, Hackney, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets & Wandsworth.

	Group 1	Group 2
Starters	8	7
Finishers	7	6
	•	

### **Our Participants**

Ethnicity

#### We consider children to be more vulnerable if they receive pupil premium, have a mental health diagnosis or an EHC Asian: Bangladeshi 15% plan, and/or are on a statutory service plan. 8% Any other Asian Background 31% Parents of children receiving Pupil Premium Any other Black Background 8% Parents of children on Statutory service plans 31% (child protection, child in need, special guardianship) **Black African** 8% 46% Parents of children with a SEMH diagnosis 38% White British 46% Parents of children with an EHCP White: Other European 23% **Risk Levels** High 31% 54% 15% Medium Low

**Risk Factors** 

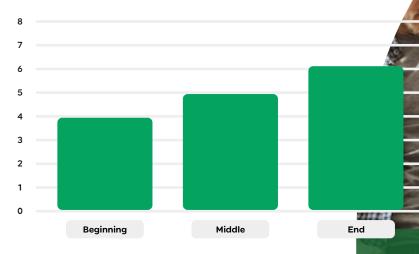


#### **Our Results**

To measure our impact, we used Goal Based Outcomes and the Parent Stress Scale.

#### **Goal Based Outcomes**

We have used GBO's with all our parent groups.



#### **The Parent Stress Scale**

The Parent Stress Scale (PSS) is a questionnaire that assess parent's feelings about their parenting role, exploring both positive aspects and negative aspects of parenthood. The PSS can be used to assess outcomes of interventions designed to support parenting efficacy of mothers, fathers and/or carers or children across a wide age range. Participants completed the PSS at the start and end of the course. Parental Stress scores range from 18 to 90, with lower scores indicating lower levels of parental stress.

The chart below shows the PSS score for each participant before and after the parent group. The average score across all participants fell by 3 points after the group. I couldn't sum it up in one sentence. The Parent / Carer Group has been profoundly helpful and the weekly check-in calls have been so supportive. Thank you so much!

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	PSS Score Before the Group	PSS Score After the Group
Α	62	51
В	43	43
с	50	49
D	54	47
E	59	65
F	63	59
Average	55	52



## **The Corner School**

The Corner School is a specialist Independent Primary School in Brent for children who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from mainstream education, as they face challenges due to their SEMH needs. We provide quality learning opportunities in a multi-disciplinary, nurturing, and therapeutic environment where children can grow and thrive. Our children develop a sense of safety and belonging, learning that they are valued members of the school community, even if there are still challenges or struggles to be worked through. By modelling appropriate language and behaviour, and by building significant relationships, we foster willingness, enjoyment and inspiration that leads to success. We aim to increase the children's self-esteem and resilience and improve their emotional regulation and support them to express empathy for themselves and others.

Our vision is to improve the life chances of all children at the Corner School by providing an appropriate and relevant education, improving their mental and physical health, and helping them build positive relationships with peers and adults so that they can contribute to their community and wider society.



Our school follows the national curriculum which is then tailored to suit the specific needs of our pupils through bespoke educational programmes and lesson plans. Our approach is both trauma informed and sensory-aware, to ensure we view a child's learning interests, their needs and their behaviour in the context of their wider family system and historic and emerging SEMH needs.

We limit our class sizes because we recognise that small class sizes and one-to-one work with teachers is crucial to the academic development of our children. We also offer exclusive one-to-one learning if a child struggles in the classroom with other children.

In addition to our academic work, our children access a tri-part therapeutic model of Occupational Therapy (OT), Speech & Language Therapy (SaLT) and Psychotherapy/Emotion Coaching. We support learning and academic progression by ensuring diagnosed or emerging SEMH needs are met through our team of therapists in the wider charity and a dedicated child psychotherapist who is on the school team.

## Ofsted

The Corner School's last Ofsted inspection was on 1 – 3 February 2022 when the school was rated good.

See the full report here:

www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/27/145849



"Leaders and staff want the best possible outcomes for • every pupil. They know how to help pupils build up their self-esteem and to experience success."

Ofsted report February 2022



#### **Academic Progress**

Children at the Corner School are assessed against National Curriculum levels. Children are also set bespoke academic goals which reflect where they are against the national curriculum. We then embed these targets into classroom learning and therapists, teachers, and other staff members work collaboratively to help children reach their goals. We encourage children to become independent learners who take ownership of their goals, instilling a love of learning and a desire to become their best selves. All individual goals are shared with the parents and carers to support progress at school and at home.

Our team is utterly committed to transforming life chances of children, ensuring that they have opportunities to thrive. Our dedicated team of teachers, teaching assistants and therapists work together to support each child to develop as individuals in their own unique way. We offer a safe and nurturing environment and the stability needed to gain an emotional balance and to develop their self-esteem and resilience.

We are committed to delivering inspirational teaching that develops confidence in learning and encourages our children to take ownership of their learning and be proud of their achievements. We use an imaginative and innovative curriculum to bring out the best in our children. "Pupils enjoy learning the broad range of subjects on offer. Through a highly personalised approach, leaders and staff make sure that pupils learn well and apply their knowledge effectively."

Ofsted report February 2022



#### **Reading & Writing**

We use Read Write Inc. Phonics a literacy programme, validated by the Department for Education, designed to teach children to read and write with ease and fluency. Read Write Inc. is used in more than a quarter of UK primary schools and was designed to ensure progress for every child. It has proven success in all types of schools, including those with high numbers of children with SEND and those in the least privileged areas. Read Write Inc. Phonics is split into different literacy groups represented by a group. There are 9 groups each having at least 10 books.

Once children complete Read Write Inc. Phonics they move to Fresh Start, which is split into five groups with a total of 33 modules.

Once children complete Fresh Start they move on to accessing further reading that is more appropriate for their age.



#### **Progress in Reading**

Children were assessed for reading at four points in the year.

of the children made positive progress in reading 90%

of the children made more than 5 levels of progress in reading

**50%** 

100%

of the children completed Read Write Inc. Phonics and were working on Fresh Start

# 10%

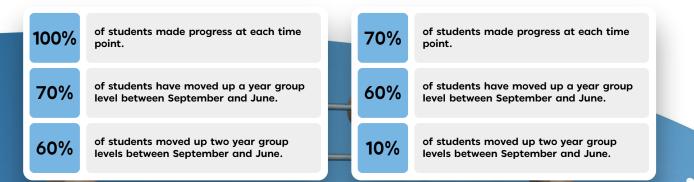
of the children engaged in further reading having completed Read Write Inc Phonics and Fresh Start

## **Progress in Writing**

Children were assessed for writing at four points in the year.

## **Progress in Mathematics**

Children were assessed for mathematics at four points in the year.





#### Therapeutic Support at the Corner School

The chart below shows the number of therapeutic interventions that took place at the Corner School in the year.

	Number of children attended	Number of sessions attended
1:1 Therapy	12	130
Therapeutic Check-Ins	11	40
OT / SaLT	11	96



that adults will support them and deal with any problems that arise."

> Ofsted report February 2022

### 1:1 Therapy

The Corner School psychotherapist offers three different kinds of support to all pupils in the school:

1:1 Therapy - one to one sessions up to 50 minutes in length

**Check-Ins** - time limited therapeutic check ins (10 to 30 minutes)

**Body based regulation support** - in class or around school as and when needed

"Staff and therapists help pupils to become more self-aware of their feelings and emotions." Ofsted report February 2022



## **Occupational Therapy**

Occupational therapy (OT) at the Corner School supports children to regulate their emotions and sensory system so that they can engage in lessons and develop their foundational skills. OT is embedded in the school curriculum through child-centered teaching activities and meaningful enrichment activities.

Each child in the Corner School receives a yearly holistic occupational therapy assessment which combines class observations, discussions with staff, and one-to-one work with the child. An intervention plan is created based on the holistic assessment which may consist of one-to-one sessions outside of the classroom, integrated activities with teachers, or occupational therapy based group work with other students.



This school year we supported six families with parent coaching and counselling.



# Parent & family support at The Corner School

Each family at The Corner School is offered parenting support and counselling. Whether it's an individual parent or both parents together, an UP Therapist will agree with them the type of support they wish to access. Parenting support and counselling can take place in person or online.

#### **Parent Facilitation**

UP provide a parenting coach to work closely with parents around specific parenting hurdles, such as self-regulation, communication between parents and child and boundary setting in the family home.

#### **Parent Counselling**

One to one counselling for parents provides a space and opportunity for parents to be able to explore or express feelings or experiences, past or present in a confidential setting.

**Total sessions offered** 





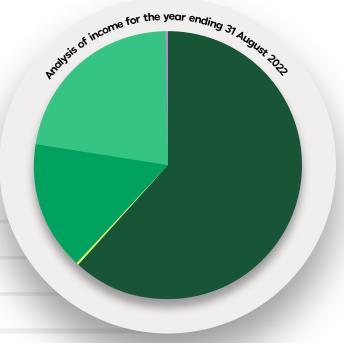
# **Income & Expenditure**

#### **Our Income**

Thanks to your generosity and support we raised £2.5m to enable us to carry out our vital work with children and young people with social, emotional, and mental health needs to improve their mental health and unlock their full potential.

We received support from philanthropists, trust and foundations, corporates, and individuals. We are particularly pleased to receive multi-year funding which helps us to plan and develop our work. We also receive funding from schools, universities, local authorities, and government.

Voluntary £1,532,894
Local Authorities £554,400
Schools & Universities £385,163
Government £3,000
Investments £1,241



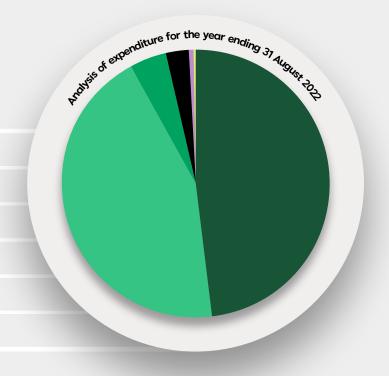
Total £2,476,698

#### **Our Expenditure**

We have tight controls over our expenditure and most of the money we receive goes directly into our programmes that help children and young people. The majority of our cost is for salaries and employment costs. Our team are largely made up of highly qualified therapists and educational professionals.

Schools Programme £1,203,313
The Corner School £1,092,251
Young People's Programme £111,734
Fundraising £65,090
Homework Club £11,749
Community Outreach £2,207

Total £2,486,344



A full breakdown of our income and expenditure is available in our Annual Report & Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2022.



## **Funders**

A huge thank you to the following organisations and individuals who, among other generous benefactors, have given us much needed funding and support during the year:

#### With special thanks to:

- 🕤 Aksia LLC
- 🔂 Alan Howard
- 😧 Alex and William de Winton Trust
- 🔂 The Aura Trust
- 😧 Brian and Clare Linden
- 😪 Charles Hayward Foundation
- 🔂 The Childhood Trust
- 😪 The Davis Foundation
- 🔂 Henry Oldfield Trust
- 😪 Glenbevan Trust
- 😒 Lansdowne Partners
- 🔂 The Peltz Trust
- 🔂 Mr Natsis
- 😧 Roden Family
- 😪 Troy Asset Management

- 숨 The Drapers Charitable Trust
- 😭 The 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
- 🗙 Vintner's Company
- The Gerald and Gail Ronson Family Foundation
- The Heathside Charitable Trust
- 😧 LentaSpace
- 🖈 The Regatta Foundation

#### Trustees

We have an experienced and extremely dedicated board of Trustees who generously volunteer their time and expertise. The Charity would like to warmly thank the Trustees for their tremendous support that they have provided during the year.

	Stuart Roden (Chair)	•
	Brian Linden (Vice – Chair)	
	William de Winton (Treasurer)	
	Thomas Bible	Alt.
	Tatiana Amory	
	Chiku Bernardi (resigned 25 January 2022)	
	Emily Meeyoung Sun (resigned 10 May 2023)	
	Derek Nasseri (Clinical Trustee)	
•	Jonathan Clark (Safeguarding Lead)	
	Carrie Herbert (appointed 7 December 2021, Chair of the Corner School Education Committee)	all little





#### Unlocking Potential

## Get in Touch

info@up.org.uk

Canopi, 7-14 Great Dover Street, London SE1 4YR t: 020 3405 7860

Registered Charity Number: 1163932

## **UPUnlocking** www.up.org.uk