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The children referred to in the Impact Report have all had their names changed to protect their identity.



Introduction from the Chief Executive

The long-term impact of COVID-19 and the cost of living crisis is disproportionately affecting those most vulnerable in society, and this includes the children and families we exist to support. The barriers to these children accessing their education are greater than ever and our effective and proven approach is never more needed, supporting families to recover from this situation stronger and more resilient.

By the end of the autumn term 2021 almost 1.7 million children regularly missed school¹ with over 1,000 schools having an entire class-worth of severely absent children, meaning those children are out of school more than they are in². Although these numbers were affected by the pandemic, almost 900,000 (or one in eight) children each year³ are missing too much school.

The growing complexity of our case work as detailed in this report illustrates the impact of those day to day struggles. Families who were dealing with one major issue are now dealing with many more when their children are referred to us. The number of times our practitioners 'interact' with families has doubled compared to last year, with concerns relating to work and money increasing by 82%.

As ever, we will continue to support children whose attendance takes longer to improve. Our support for these families whose children might be on the edge of the education system is crucial. For many, we are the positive constant in increasingly difficult lives and the progress they make.

Tackling poor attendance and engagement at school isn't a quick fix. To succeed, policy and practice must focus on the underlying causes of absence and ensure families have real and practical support when they need it. Failure to act could mean losing children from education for good.

We are proud that our second Government funded Community Practitioner Service, this time in Liverpool, has made a strong start. Based on our successful Blackpool Service, it delivered on average 9 more days of school per child in just two terms.

We are extremely grateful to our advocates, like the Centre for Social Justice who have helped us keep school attendance and family support high on the political agenda. By recommending our model and approach in three high profile policy reports⁴ and sharing our case studies, they have helped us take

our cause to the highest levels of Government and the media.

Our school engagement work is crucial to spreading and supporting best practice. Through School-Home Support membership, more schools have benefited from our experts in attendance, SEND, mental health and parental engagement. We now have 544 members.

With the generous support of all our partners, funders and advocates we finish the year proud of our impact and ready to deliver on our bold and ambitious 5 year strategy and vision: 'Every Child In School Every Day by 2050'. This impact report is testament to the tenacity and professionalism of our front line practitioners who work tirelessly with families to keep flourishing and safe. I hope it shows that when children and families are supported by someone they can trust, who has the time to understand what is going on at home, the impact on their education can be life-changing.



- 2 The Centre for Social Justice May 2022
- Department for Education Pupil absence in schools in England 2020/21
- https://www.centreforsocialiustice.org.uk/library/repairing-our-society https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/library/lost-but-not-forgotten https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/library/kids-cant-catch-up-if-they-dont-show-up



JAINE STANNARD Chief Executive School-Home Support

Our theory of change

Our theory of change is what guides our work with children, their families and their schools. It brings together the way we work, how we measure our impact, and the reasons why we do it all in the first place. This keeps us accountable to ourselves and our funders. as our theory of change is a proven model for successful intervention. If the work we are doing follows this model, we know we are working effectively.



Too many children are growing up with low aspirations and limited opportunities which hold them back. School-Home Support's model and approach make a huge difference to the town inclusion strategy in Blackpool. They are trusted by families who know they have their best interests at heart."

Paul Maynard MP, Blackpool North



What we do







Work with children

Work with schools

Work with parents

How we do it



Promote engagement between school and parents



Find practical solutions to education barriers



Develop relationships and personal resources

Our outcomes



Improved attendance and participation at school



Improved parental engagement in learning



Improved character

Long term outcomes



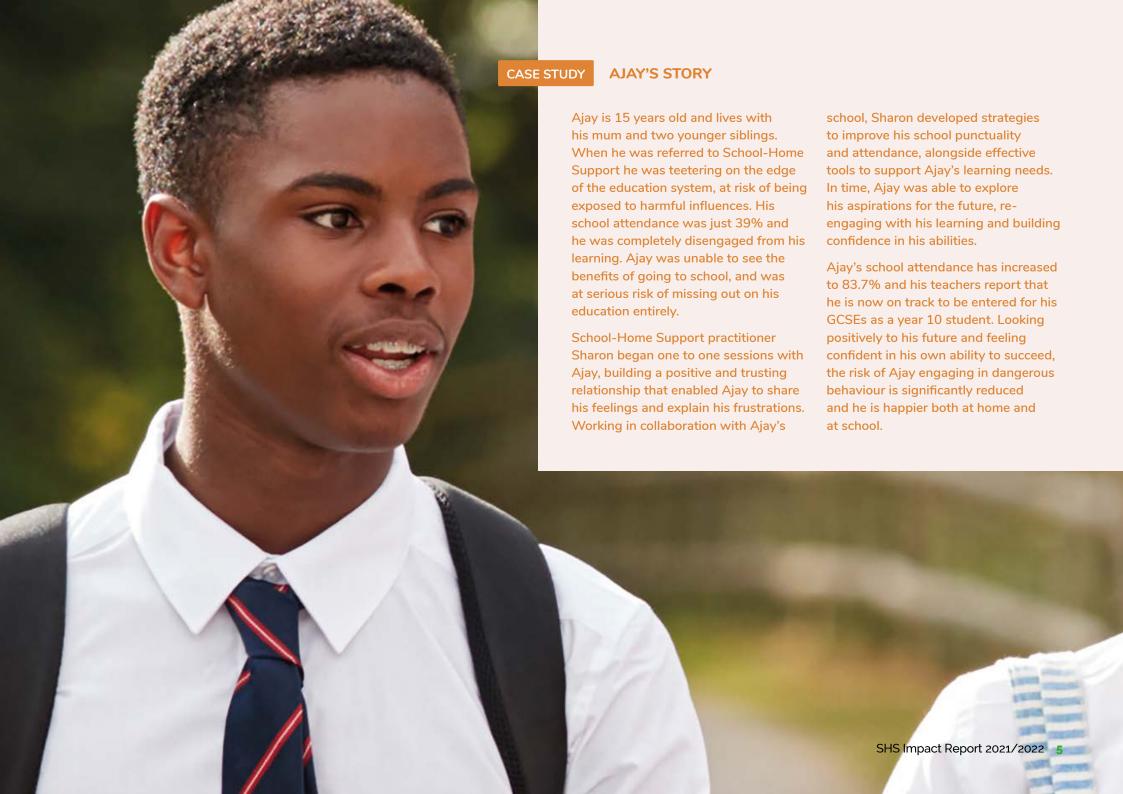
Improved wellbeing for children from disadvantaged backgrounds



Improved attainment of children from disadvantaged backgrounds



backgrounds



What we are seeing on the ground

Keeping children learning and safe

As families emerged from the pandemic and schools reopened, the problems once hidden by successive lockdowns came to the surface. Our practitioners have witnessed an increase in the severity of need across their caseload. Typically, practitioners support multiple complex home issues at one time, but this year demand

for support has been particularly intense. Our experienced practitioners know how easy it is for a family's challenging situation to become a serious safeguarding risk, and how important it is that someone is looking out for the children in these families. This year's figures show how vital whole-family support is to safeguarding children.

30%
increase in intensive case work

56%
increase in
interactions on
average per child

82%

increase in families presenting with money related problems compare to last year 67%

families dealing with at least two complex challenges at home

174%

increase in safeguarding alerts compared to pre COVID level



Our impact



63% of the children we supported improved their attendance. The average attendance increase over an average of 9 months was 7.8% which equates to an additional 15 days of school per year.



7 out of 10 of the persistently absence children we worked with improved their attendance by on average 16% which is an extra 32 days in school per child. Persistently absent children are those who are missing at least 10% of school which equates to nearly a month of school over the year.



We now have 544 members in total who access free information and support from our experts.



This year our wider family reach was 18,162, up from 13,078.



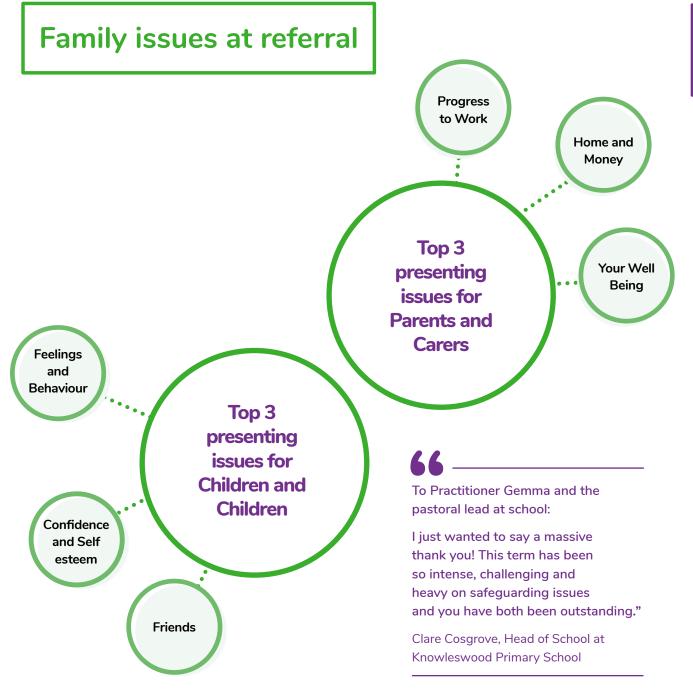
School Home Support has a laser focus on improving the lives of families in a practical way, its committed staff strengthening the links between home and school. Too many families who need this support aren't getting it. We need to act quickly, to prevent children being lost from education for good."

Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms MP for East Ham, Chair of the House of Commons Work and Pension Select Committee



A Community Practitioner Service has started to support schools and families in Liverpool.

families supported



You might see a few unfamiliar phrases over the next few pages. If you come across something you don't recognise, check the glossary below.

WORD/ PHRASE	DEFINITION	PUT SIMPLY
Intervention	A period of support via intensive casework, groupwork, and 'Early Response Support'.	Our day-to-day work with children/their families.
Interaction	The individual instances of contact during an 'intervention'.	Each conversation, meeting, and contact with an individual.
Wider reach	Family or household members benefiting from our 'intervention' with an individual.	How we help the people close to an individual.
Early Response Support	Individual support that isn't 'intensive', often involving signpost- ing, guidance, and de-escalation.	Helping children quickly by sharing resources and speaking one-on-one.
Persistent absence	An attendance rate under 90% – the threshold for severe impacts on attainment and other outcomes.	Missing more than 1 out of every 10 school days.
Safe- guarding	Protecting children from abuse and maltreatment; preventing harm to their health or development.	Keeping children safe.



Why we focus on school attendance

By the end of the autumn term 2021 almost 1.7 million children regularly missed school with over 1,000 schools having an entire class-worth of severely absent children.

Better school outcomes

As a charity we exist to close the gap between disadvantaged children and their better off peers. We work to improve their wellbeing, attainment and life chances by ensuring they are in school and ready to learn for as much time as possible. The evidence is clear: there is a strong link between good attendance at school and strong attainment outcomes

for children. In other words school is the best place for most children to learn, thrive and be safe.

Stronger safer communities where children can thrive

In addition to improving outcomes for children, addressing persistent absence through family support offers a chance to build stronger, safer communities, helping to prevent negative outcomes for children.

Understanding the value of intervention

Providing holistic family support to tackle absence isn't a cost, it is an investment. It costs School-Home Support approximately £1,000 to fund one tailored plan, per child per year. Compare £1,000 to the £1,965¹ annual cost per individual missing at least 5 weeks of school (those below the Persistent Absence threshold). One year's investment with School-Home Support would deliver a valuable injection of resources to provide best practice and work with schools to improve school attendance. At the same time, this investment achieves savings at both local and national level.



1 Government funded cost benefit analysis research for Greater Manchester Combined Authority http://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/research/research-cost-benefit-analysis/





JACOB'S STORY

Jacob is 12 years old and lives with his mum, his two older brothers and his younger sister. Originally from Czechoslovakia, his family have moved around a lot, and the recent move to the area was due to Jacob's mum experiencing physical abuse from his father. This was having a significant impact on Jacob's education, as he was at his fourth new school since 2019.

Jacob's family were living in extremely difficult and cramped conditions, with Jacob and his younger sister sleeping on two sofas pushed together in the living room. Their situation at home was putting great strain on the family's emotional and physical wellbeing.

Jacob was relied upon to support his mum with her physical and mental health needs, as well as translating for her. When he was able to get to school, he was emotionally and physically drained and struggled to engage in his lessons. School-Home Support practitioner Danielle worked closely with the family to tackle their

difficult living conditions, utilising our Welfare Fund to buy new foldaway beds to ensure the family all had their own bed to sleep in, and supported them with the process of applying for better housing.

At school, Danielle worked with school staff to allocate free breakfast club places for Jacob and his younger sister, meaning she was able to have a daily morning check-in with them both to monitor their attendance and wellbeing. She supported Jacob to join the school football team, which he greatly enjoyed and allowed him to find his place among his peers.

By tackling the family's housing issues, and supporting Jacob at school, his attendance, engagement and wellbeing started to improve. In just one month of support, Jacob's attendance increased from 69.1% to 74.5%. an extra two full days in school. Happier at school and at home, Jacob and his family are building resilience for the future.

Our impact and approach

RFFFRRAI due to low attendance record, teacher suggestion, self-referral by the families, etc. **NEEDS ASSESSED** when the pupil and/or family meets with **BUILD** practitioner, possibly **A BRIDGE** during a home visit between home and where the family school supporting children feels most and families to increas confortable their own resilience and independence so the School-Home Support impact we make is sustainable **PERSONALISED WORK IN PLAN CREATED PARTNERSHIP** in collaboration with with a range of family, SHS practitioners community services are trained to work within and agencies to ensure families get boundaries and

the specialist

support they need

The support provided by the SHS practitioner, to both the school and families has been invaluable. SHS has become an intrinsic part of the support which schools provide to families."

Paddy Gallagher, Deputy Vice Principal at One in A Million Free School



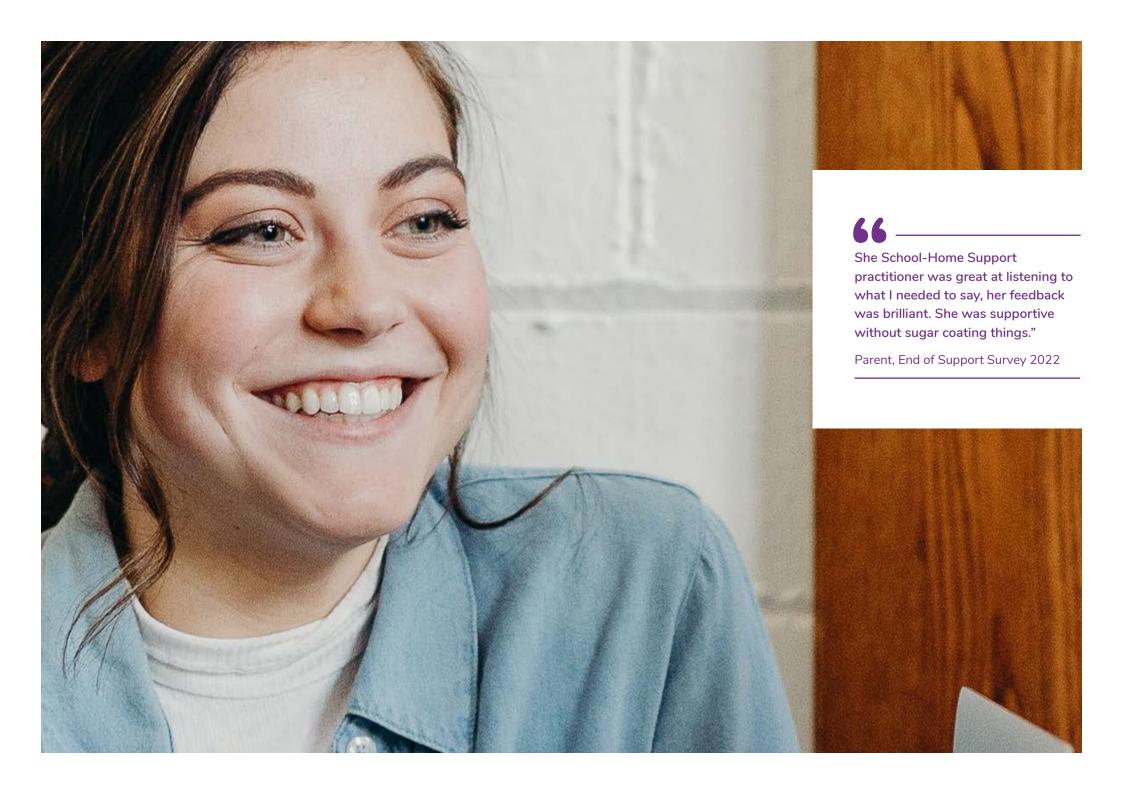
casework supervision

reinforce this

Claire is so funny, I love it when she comes into school for our time. She always makes you feel happy even when you're in a bad mood and always listens to you. You can talk to her even when you've done something wrong and she'll help you make it right again."

Dillon – Student from a school in Blackpool

Our Practitioner Service approach has been recommended by the Centre for Social Justice as a solution to directly improving school attendance. Partnering with schools, local authorities, local agencies and families, our practitioners work with the whole-family to improve attendance, engagement and wellbeing. By addressing the root causes of school absence, our work provides sustained improvement to children and children, their families and schools.



Meet some of our amazing practitioners

We recruit from a wide range of professional backgrounds, and train our staff to provide a full range of services. Experts in family engagement, our practitioners aim to build a bridge between home and school. Using and sharing best practice, our techniques include initiating and developing positive relationships which allow for both challenge and support.



WHY I WORK AT SHS. For me it's all about creating independent pathways to success for Students and families. I love helping with barriers and watching them do the rest themselves.

PROUDEST MOMENT. This year it was probably exam results day when one of my Students got the grades he needed for his T level course at college.

WHAT SCHOOL SAID. Jeff's commitment to the Students and families at St Catherines is unwavering. Jeff works exceptionally well with Students, parents and staff often being that vital link.



WHY I WORK AT SHS. When I worked with a Local Authority, fining families rarely changed things for the better. Supporting families with attendance is rewarding and it works.

PROUDEST MOMENT. I have lots, but seeing families communicate with school without my help- that makes me really proud.

WHAT SCHOOL SAID. Our families appreciate being able to discuss the challenges they face. There's no doubt that they benefit from having Laurel, particularly as they navigate the cost of living crisis and after effects of the pandemic.



WHY I WORK AT SHS. Being a School-Home Support practitioner is an amazing job! Having a strong bridge between home and school for those children who need a little extra support, reassurance and understanding is so important to happy flourishing children.

PROUDEST MOMENT. Probably when I see the parents I support take their own first steps back to success – volunteering in the community, applying for jobs, researching college courses to get qualifications they may have missed. Because when a child has a parent with aspirations, they have the best role-model of all.

WHAT SCHOOL SAID. Our practitioner, Clancey, is a valuable member of our team, contributing in numerous areas of school life. She is there to go above and beyond for the children who need it most and has had a positive impact on both the attendance and wellbeing of some of our hardest-to-reach families.



Increasing our reach in target areas

We have scaled up and consolidated our work in London, Blackpool, Bradford, Greater Manchester, Eastbourne, Kent and Medway,

Liverpool and Sefton

Our new Community Practitioner Service, funded by the Department for Education (DfE) is making a difference to local families who need support so their children can access their education. Liverpool and Sefton have some of the highest levels of persistent school absence in the country, but with bespoke support for the whole-family to remove barriers to learning we are having a strong impact in a short space of time, increasing average

attendance per student by 9 days in two terms.

"We recently had a visit from DfE representatives and were able to tell them all about the project and how pleased we were with it thus far" Clare Graham, Deputy Headteacher, Northcote Primary School, Liverpool.

Bradford

Work on the Holme Wood estate since 2018 has deepened our knowledge and relationships with local partners. In 2021/22, we saw 36 (34%) Pupils move above the persistently absent threshold. This is a high number of children moving from persistently absent to regularly attending, a huge achievement for all concerned. We're hoping to expand our service in Bradford,

Blackpool

We are extremely proud of our work in Blackpool and the contribution we're making to the town wide inclusion strategy. Secretary of State for Education Nadhim Zahawi met Blackpool families and practitioners to learn more about our model and the impact it has on pupil attendance and family resilience. Our work in the town has received strong third party accolades including Paul Maynard MP and York Consulting LLP, one of the UK's leading socio-economic research and evaluation consultancies, who consider it replicable in other areas of England.



The team from SHS have been able to reach beyond the existing relationships we have with target families ... Being a separate entity to the school's staffing structure, has been a core element of this, with families more willing to be honest and open, trusting the SHS workers to then be advocates in navigating meetings and other situations"

Ruth Braithwaite, Headteacher at Bedford Primary School



Our team briefing Secretary of State for Education Nadhim Zahawi

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are central to our vision that 'every child has the support they need to thrive and achieve'. School-Home Support's commitment to creating a diverse workforce that is representative of the children, families and communities, isn't just a moral imperative, it's also an operational necessity.

Understanding diversity of service users and staff

Delivering against our three-year strategy (2019-22) we continue to focus on understanding the diversity of our service users and staff through the development of robust data collection and analytics.

Our data shows that the proportion of improvement in attendance our service delivers reflects the ethnicity and gender breakdown of the children and young people we work with.

New equaity monitoring

The new Equality Monitoring Form is helping to steer our EDI recruitment strategy. In 2021/22 the ethnicity of our front line staff proportionally reflected the ethnic background of the children and children we support.

Translation

As part of our work to identify key barriers to engagement for our families with the generous help of our corporate partners, we've embarked on an ambitious translation programme. We now have key leaflets about our service available in 11 languages for families.

As part of our goal to foster a positive working environment that recognises and values differences, we have provided a multitude of EDI training opportunities in the last academic year with big plans for this year.

Diversifying our Board of trustees

The growing diversity of our board of trustees, has been helped by our investment in the Transform Programme which led to the recruitment of high quality trustees - a dedicated advocate for diversity and inclusion who is also an expert in conduct and ethics culture as well as our first ever young trustee. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at School-Home Support, we are committed to creating a diverse workforce that is representative of the communities we support, and an inclusive culture where all our staff and service users can thrive.



This is a great first step in diversifying our board of trustees, a commitment we have made to be more inclusive and representative of our service users and the communities we support. Having a Trustee with lived experience bring their insights and passion to change lives feeding into our board of trustees will add a new and extremely powerful perspective and voice."

Fred Sharrock, Chair of trustees

Improving the system for our children and families

Our impact continues to stretch beyond the classroom, with our advocacy work and insights from the front line reaching the highest levels of Government, national media and the third sector. We are speaking up for our children and families who need education policy and practice to work for them.

We continue to build a network of allies across both Government and Parliament and other thought leaders who are ready to advocate on behalf of our families.

- The Secretary of State for Education came to Blackpool to talk to our families and practitioners about family support for attendance.
- Number 10 Policy Unit invited us to brief them on the changes to underlying causes of absence.
- The DfE continues to fund us to work with families where need is greatest, most recently in Liverpool.
- The Government's School's Bill has attendance at its core with strong references to underlying causes and family support.
- We've contributed to policy reports by the Social Mobility Commission, Children's Alliance, the Centre for Social Justice, and took part in our first policy leaders podcast.

- Our footprint in Parliament is growing and Key Select Committees have shown interest in our work.
- We are regularly approached for input by high quality national media including the BBC and the Financial Times. Taking part in our first podcast for Centre for Social Justice we have a growing reputation for an organisation with a trusted, knowledgeable and authoritative voice on attendance and education inequalities.

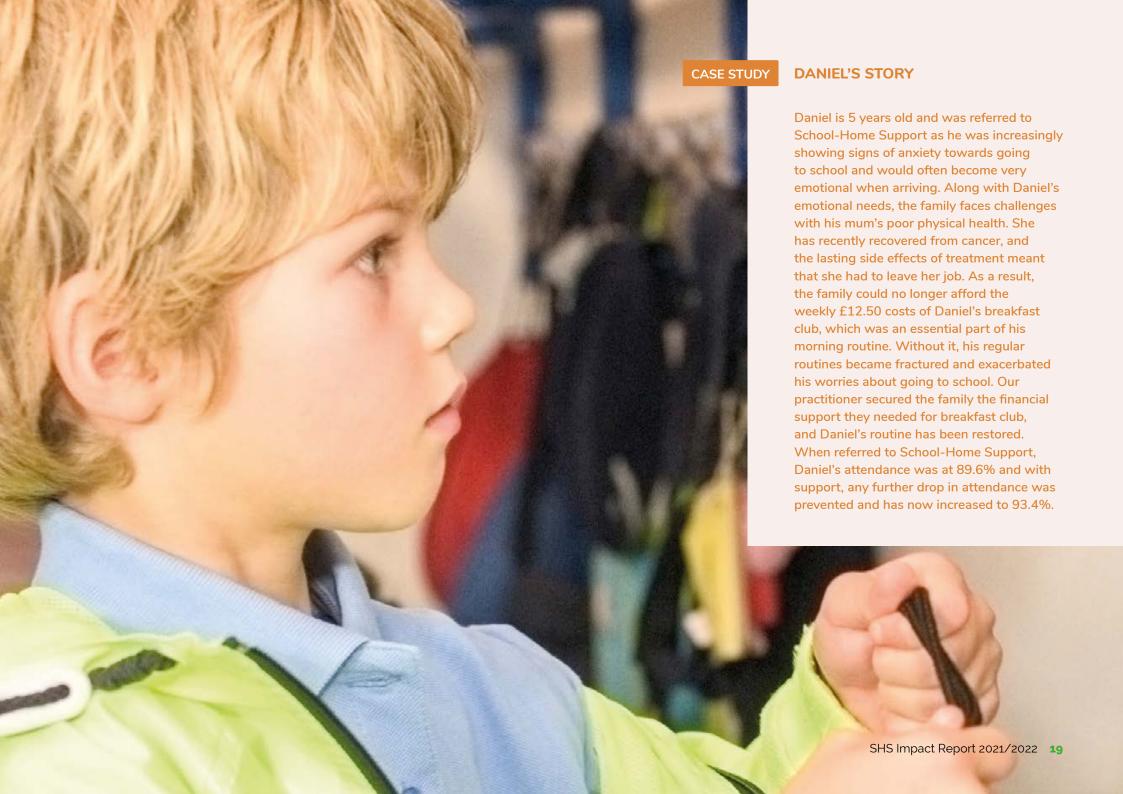




A busy year speaking to decision makers is reflected in growing interest in our model and approach. In its Education White Paper, the Government acknowledges two critical things: the importance of families in closing the disadvantage gap and that poor attendance is often driven by problems at home.

Best Year Yet for sharing our stories

Getting our families' stories into the media and key reports is critical to fundraising and influencing. We surpassed our target by 50%.



Our plan for 2022/23

Reach more children and families

We will continue to work in our established target geographical areas of Blackpool, Bradford, Liverpool, London and Manchester. We are committed to these areas and are successful in the schools where our practitioners operate. We aim to embed our work in the new area of Liverpool and will scope a further area to deliver services in 2023–24. We will also seek opportunities via statutory sources to increase our delivery.

Support more schools to address persistent absence

We will research new ways to deliver our services. A new Schools Bill is working its way through Parliament which will create national school attendance standards. How schools approach these standards is crucial to the long-term success of the Government initiatives and to relationships with hard to reach families. We know our whole-family support model works so we will therefore consult with key stakeholders this year to allow us to identify strategies to embed best practice nationally.

Influence policy and practice

We will launch our first national campaign in 2022–23. Support Before Court will promote whole-family support before sanctioning parents/carers for non-attendance. We support the Government's drive on improving attendance in schools but without sufficient resources and funding, schools could be forced into reaching for more punitive measures that affect their relationships with families, resulting in fines and court visits that ultimately affect a child's ability to access their education.







Every child, in school, every day by 2050

The need for our service continues to increase year on year. Fundamental shifts in the education and social care landscape driven by the Schools Bill, the SEND green paper and children's social care are responding to gaps in support services which have been growing for too long. We must be ambitious and bold if we are to widen our reach and impact. We have therefore undertaken consultation with key stakeholders to help develop a new 5 year strategy that will have at its heart the vision that Every child is in school, every day, by 2050.



Our strategic aims



Children and families have access to the support they need for children to be in school, ready to learn.



Schools are confident and effective in addressing persistent absence through access to best practice information and support.



Education policy and systems support and enable all children to be in schools.



Thanks to our supporters

The A D Charitable Trust

Allen & Overy

BBC Radio 4 Appeal narrated beautifully by our Patron Lady Sophie Windsor.

The Bloomfield Trust

BlackRock

Brabners Foundation

Breadsticks Foundation

Bruno Schroder Trust

CIBC

City Bridge Trust

Clifford Chance

The Colyer-Fergusson Charitable

Trust

The Crispin Davis Family Trust

Discover Financial Services

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

I &Q Foundation

The Liz & Terry Bramall Foundation

London Stock Exchange Group

Loomis Sayles Investments Ltd

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The Big Give

The Childhood Trust

