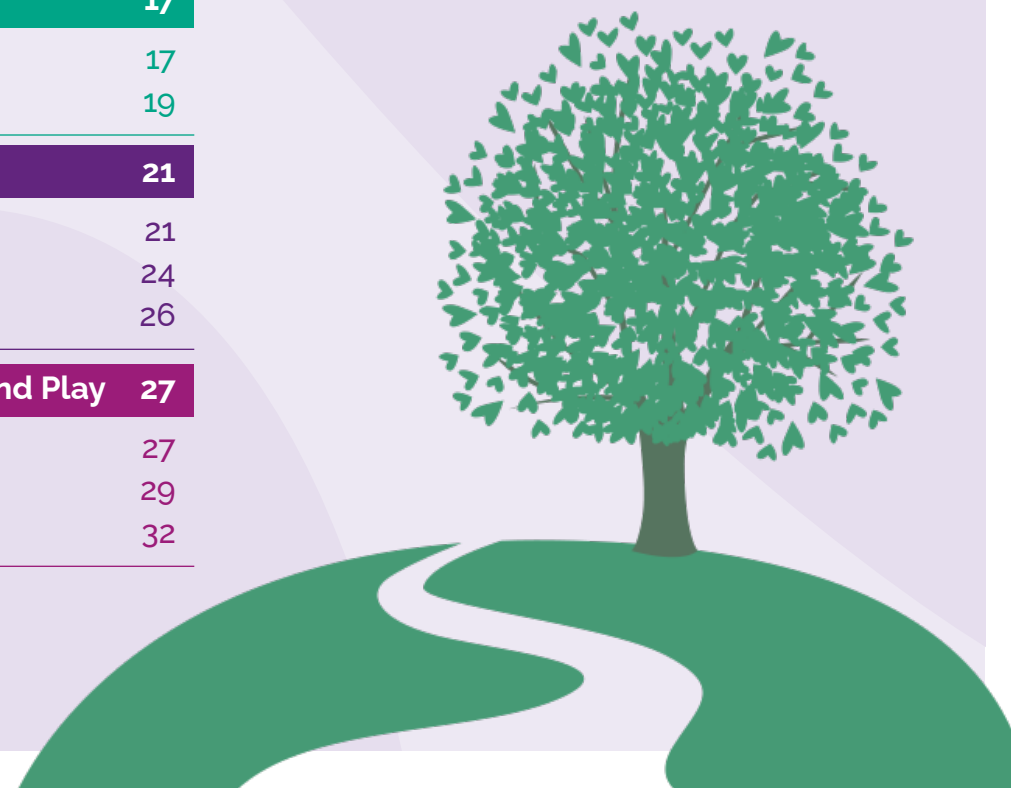




The Springfield Project Impact Report | 2022-23

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Introduction from the CEO



It is a real privilege to lead The Springfield Project, where staff and volunteers work hard every day to empower, enable and enrich our children and families and the wider community.

Our roots are in St Christopher's Church where activities for children and families have been running for 35 years. Our regular stay-and-play group, Seedlings, started back in 1988 and we have been growing and developing ever since. From that early 'seed', the scale of what we now achieve and the range of services detailed in this report is astonishing. I am very proud of the positive impact we have on so many lives in so many different ways. We are all about people, and our staff and volunteers are some of the best people I know! They live out the Springfield Project values every day, and this can be seen in so many ways throughout this report.

We were delighted that both of our nurseries received an Ofsted grading of Good in 2022 and that our children receive a creative, engaging and stimulating start to their education with additional support available to their

families through the Children's Centre and our wider support offer. As our community faces increasing challenges from the cost of living rise, we continue to focus on issues of poverty and disadvantage to support our community not just to survive, but to thrive. I am very grateful to all our partners who work with us to achieve common aims and with a spirit of friendship, hope, and optimism.

This year we took our work into Sparkhill Park and produced the Commonwealth Games live site festival, and we continue to engage creatively with children, young people, parents and partner organisations to drive our innovative 'Child Friendly Neighbourhood' strategy.

It is easy to feel downhearted when looking out at the challenges of our world, but looking at The Springfield Project's achievements fills me with hope.

Sarah Robbins, Chief Executive Officer

A word from our Chair



The Springfield Project has grown out of the local church's desire to make practical the love Jesus has for the world.

As trustees we have anchored this aim in these core values:

- Being welcoming and inclusive
- Listening
- Serving
- Being Professional
- Growing

As you read this report, I would ask that you notice how well the activities described are true to these values. If we are failing to live up to these values, I hope that you will tell us and in so doing you will help us to put this right. Alternatively, if, as I hope you will, you can see that the work of the

Springfield Project is effectively holding to these values, then I hope you will join me in being thankful for our strong foundations, and that you will also be encouraged by so much that we can celebrate and have real confidence in.

I certainly wish to thank all those who listen and serve, who are welcoming of ALL, who work with professionalism and bring about growth in so many people. It is good to see and celebrate love in action, shining out in a world that can seem broken and lacking in love.

Tim Boyes

Who We Are

The Springfield Project is a charity based in Sparkhill, Birmingham.

Born out of St Christopher's Church, we believe that every child, young person, parent and adult in our community has the right to reach their full potential in life. Unfortunately, deprivation, social inequality and a lack of local provision often create significant barriers to achieving that potential, and many families in Sparkhill face hardship and isolation.

That is why we run a programme of community activities which empower, enable and enrich the lives of hundreds of local children, young people and families. At our base in The Springfield Centre connected to

St Christopher's Church, and at our sites at Park Road and St Edmund's Church, we provide a range of educational, welfare, and recreation services for local children and families to combat poverty and help people to lead happy and healthy lives.

This is how we fulfil our mission to show God's love in our community.



"I have come in order that you might have life, and have it to the full"

John 10:10



Our Values

We embrace our values and behaviours in our work, as well as in our professional relationships with colleagues, partners and those who use our services. We do this by always:



Being welcoming
and inclusive



Listening



Serving



Being
Professional



Growing



“They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

Jeremiah 17:8

Overview of Our Services

Springfield Children's Centre

Delivering Early Years Health and Wellbeing for children aged 0-5 in Birmingham, Springfield Children's Centre is part of Birmingham Forward Steps (BFS), a pioneering Early Years Health and Wellbeing initiative for all Birmingham children aged 0-5 and their families. It brings together health visiting and children's centre services, so that families can access the help they need from pregnancy until their child starts school.

Holiday Playschemes

We run regular holiday playschemes for children aged 5-11 from the local community of Sparkhill. We have two playscheme sites: one at St Christopher's Church and one at Park Road Nursery. The children benefit from a multitude of active and creative play, with access to our garden, forest school, and lots of time outdoors, as well as a healthy meal.

Community Services

Our Community Services comprise a range of free activities for adults living in our community which aim to improve mental health and wellbeing by reducing loneliness and isolation amongst adults in the Sparkhill community. These include English language classes, a cooking group, Springfield Food Pantry and our flagship social group, Place of Welcome.

Seedlings

Seedlings is a stay and play group aimed at 0-4 year-olds and their parents/ carers. It is held three times a week on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in St Christopher's Church and it is open to all. Seedlings is often the first point of contact we have with children and parents in the area, from where we can introduce them to our other services and help them to get ready for nursery and school.

Nurseries

Mini-Springers Nursery and Park Road Nursery are Ofsted registered nurseries which offer sessional places for children in receipt of the Early Educational Entitlement grants. This includes all three- and four-year-olds and eligible two-year-olds. Both are inclusive nurseries and provide places for children with special educational needs. The majority of children are grant funded and receive 15 hours in total each week.

Volunteering

We have a strong track record of working with volunteers at The Springfield Project. They bring enormous value to our team through their wealth of skills and talents, their energy and enthusiasm and the hard work they contribute by volunteering their time. We are proud to see the ways they gain and develop from their time volunteering for us, many going on into work or training.



Our Impact in 2022-23

1 | Springfield Children's Centre



Between 1 April 2022 and 31 March 2023 the total number of parents and children who were seen and benefited from Springfield Children's Centre was 2,253 (990 Adults and 1,263 Children).

The following data relates to the combined service provision of Springfield Children's Centre and St Paul's Children's Centre for the Hall Green district.

757 parents



received targeted and 1-to-1 breastfeeding support/advice and 246 parents were supported in breastfeeding lounges/groups, to support infants being breastfed at birth and sustain engagement at 6-8 weeks.

"This service has been life changing for me."



"I am now able to correctly latch my baby on for feeding. My baby is now calmer after I learnt how to wind her as she had terrible colic making feeding difficult. I am much more confident with feeding my baby and this has helped me to continue with breastfeeding, as I was very close to giving up."

224 pregnant women



attended and benefited from our antenatal group or received antenatal advice.

113 parents



attended our evidence-based parenting programme, Promoting Happier Parenting. The majority of the parents who attended the course stated that the programme gave them more confidence in their parenting.

153
parents



participated in Basic Skills courses or received Employment & Training support.

2,036
parents



were given emotional wellbeing support advice or attended the wellbeing group.

155
parents
and children



received oral health advice and training, and reported increased knowledge and understanding of oral hygiene.



90 parents



attended the domestic violence support programme, the Freedom Programme, and had a package of family support intervention put in place. Feedback has shown that women feel better about themselves after completing the programme.

The women who attended the Freedom Programme stated that they had increased self-esteem and self-confidence and were demonstrating resilience when experiencing difficulties. They reported experiencing lower levels of stress in their homes and their lives.

499 parents and children



attended and benefited from the HENRY Programme. This is a course of weaning, food and nutrition workshops aimed to promote a healthy lifestyle, providing advice and guidance on good nutrition and physical activity to improve the health and wellbeing of their families, and reduce obesity rates. 100% of parents that completed the questionnaires stated the programme had increased their confidence. Participants' comments emphasise how much they enjoyed the programme and how it supported them to make a wide range of positive changes to their families' lifestyle.

"Our household is a lot calmer and happier. My son is enjoying his mealtimes more and is trying different things. No force feeding. We are bonding more together."



"I have learnt no screen time when eating, praising children often, doing more as a family and healthy snacks for me and the kids."



210 parents and children



participated and benefited from home safety workshops and advice.

1,435 families



were contacted and encouraged to access Early Education Entitlement (EEE) for their two-year-olds. In 2022, 65% of the eligible families accessed EEE funding in the Hall Green District.

472 parents and children



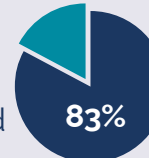
attended Language Through Play sessions and received support with their language development.

535 parents and children

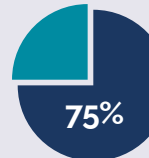


attended targeted stay-and-plays. Staff observations confirmed short term outcomes for children were met and the parents who were consulted reported the following:

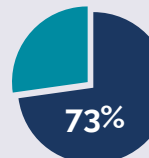
83% of parents said they had seen an improvement in their child's speaking and listening skills.



75% of parents said they had seen an improvement in their children's confidence in playing with other children and were more confident in their own abilities.



73% of parents reported they had seen an increase in their children's physical activity and abilities.



87% of children



successfully received their 2-2.5-year reviews after the implementation of integrated visits. This is well above the city-wide target of 67%.

Springfield Children's Centre received

681 referrals

for families and children requiring early intervention and family support from various agencies such as The Children's Trust, midwives, health visitors, schools and nurseries. Referrals were triaged, and in total **208 new cases** were allocated to Family Support Workers and offered a tailored package of intervention/support. **402 parents** were supported by family support staff at drop-ins.

CASE STUDY

Parenting Programme

*Names have been changed

Promoting Happier Parenting is a 5-week programme for parents and carers with children under 5. The sessions involve discussions, sharing of ideas and looking at strategies to promote positive behaviour. They support families in overcoming concerns, and addressing issues which impact on their parenting and/or the wellbeing of their children. The programme helps to build emotional resilience and raise self-esteem in parents/carers and their young children and to set clear boundaries and routines.



Leah's Story*

I first felt very anxious and nervous going to the first session of Promoting Happier Parenting, but the first session and all the sessions after that were very relaxing. I was comfortable to share my thoughts, challenges that I face raising my 2-year-old toddler. I learnt a lot from the course and the other parents. I found it very helpful and notice a difference in myself and

my toddler by doing reward charts, for implementing brushing his teeth, drinking water and saying please and thank you. I was also able to go home and speak about it to my mother. My mother felt she also was learning and felt more confident supporting me with my son. It has helped me to become more positive in my parenting approach to when my child plays up.

CASE STUDY

Parenting Programme

*Names have been changed

Kajal's Story*

This course has been thoroughly enjoyable as well as having a positive impact in many ways. It helped me to improve my communication with my child. It helped me to improve my communication with my child. I can deal with tantrums in a more calm and relaxed manner. I am more aware of my child's feelings and emotions. It helped me to change my mindset in more difficult situations on how to respond in a positive way. It made me feel that it's not only my child with issues and that other children do similar things. It improved my self-esteem and made me feel a good mother. It was beneficial to meet other mums and hear and share experiences. I've



learned so much in a calm, positive non-judgmental environment. I was very dismissive or did not realise what effect my words and action would have on my child. Now I am much more aware, careful and have a better relationship. I see them as a little person and not just a child.

Saliha's Story*

This course has been a godsend. At a time as a new mum, we are dealing with drastic lifestyle changes, anxiety, even depression. This course was a ray of light and hope. Teaching how to manage and cope and get us feeling positive about parenting and ourselves and also to socialise and learn from other parents in the same situation as well. It has helped to break bad generalisation habits and helped to build a bright future for our children, to grow up to be healthier, more confident members of our society and homes. I am calmer than before, this has made my child calm and have less tantrums. I feel as though I listen to my child and understand my child a lot more, this has made our relationship stronger.

CASE STUDY

Women's Wellbeing Hub

*Names have been changed

This is a targeted mindful group to support women suffering from medium to high levels of stress, anxiety, depression, birth trauma and other traumas such as domestic abuse and Covid-19.

Divya's Story*

I was a first-time mum, 30 years old and I had a baby born prematurely with a diagnosis of PVL Cerebral Palsy. I was in a daze, feeling lost and apprehensive and still am. The diagnosis spectrum is vast and I don't know where my baby is on this spectrum. Before the birth of my baby I was in full time employment and had a busy social life, however I was looking forward to parenthood as daunting as it seemed. The early entrance of my baby's life was sudden and a worrying one due to the diagnosis. I was spending all my time at home with extended family. The whole experience was traumatic and difficult to deal with. My world seemed to suddenly become very small. I had

support from friends and family, I was not longing for my previous life but needed something more substantial than what I was currently experiencing.

As a first-time mum, living with a large extended family, it was important for me to have my own space and some time to myself to give some stability in my state of mind, and to have contact and share conversations and experiences with other new mums who understood me, as I had no contact with expectant mothers during my pregnancy due to Covid-19. My health visitor signposted me to Springfield Children's Centre, and I attended the Women's Wellbeing Hub in April 2022.

Continued >

CASE STUDY

Women's Wellbeing Hub

< From previous page

So many experiences under one roof, one programme which was free and on my doorstep. I felt part of the community with the group, I felt that I "truly belonged".

I learnt tools that I can use in my daily life, for life. It was something to look forward to. Stepping out of the house and walking to attend the session in itself supported my daughter's and my wellbeing.

My daughter reached a milestone being in crèche without mummy for the first time. It gave her the

opportunity to socialise with new adults and children. I also felt valued that a home visit was carried out to complete the session that I missed and also got follow-up calls on how I was doing. It made me feel that I was not just a number!

I am better equipped to deal with daily situations which arise and I use breathing techniques to manage my anxiety. My baby is interacting with other children the same age as herself, otherwise she was surrounded by family and adults all day.

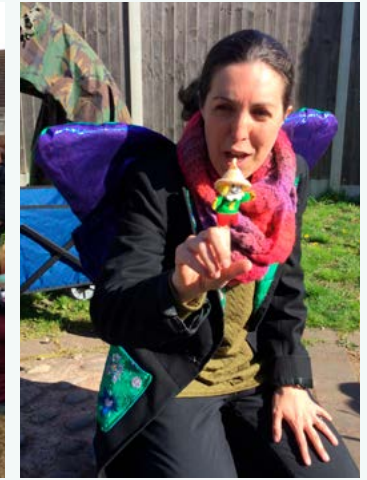
I have also learnt to make time to focus on myself, I use the energy to turn any situation into a positive one.



Our Impact in 2022-23

2 | Our Nurseries

2



Mini-Springers Nursery

This year, Mini-Springers Nursery has supported 93 children, 22 of which had additional needs. We provided inclusive care for children who have struggled to find settings and support elsewhere. Staff worked tirelessly to ensure all children made progress and met developmental milestones.

Two staff began Attention Birmingham Training which will help further support children with additional needs. They are both working extremely hard to gain their qualification and we can already

see an improvement in the targeted group of children they work with.

Due to the pandemic, a lot of our children are coming to us with delays in speech and language and social skills. During the year, staff adapted how they deliver the curriculum to provide activities that help these children flourish. We had story tellers who attend weekly to provide stories outside. The children enjoyed these experiences immensely and made some beautiful crafts to take home.

We took steps this year to become more eco-friendly and we began to take our parents in small groups for weekly walks in the local park. We took litter pickers with us and encouraged the children and their families to help look after our local area. Parents were thrilled with the experience and often stated that they did not know the park existed.



EID PARTY FEEDBACK FROM PARENTS AND CARERS

This year we held our first nursery Eid party. Staff, children, and parents enjoyed sharing their culture. Parents reported feeling a great sense of community as we shared food and conversation. Everyone enjoyed dressing up and children and staff felt represented.

“Amazing party. I have never seen my 3-year-old so excited. Had a blast.”

“We had fun at the party, it was well organised and executed. All thanks to the manager with the brightest smile and the efficient team members.”

“It was certainly a surprise. The event was excellent, thoroughly enjoyed by parents and children. Thank you to Claire and all the staff for such a lovely party.”

“Thank you to everyone at Mini-Springers for organising this event for Eid. Me and my son enjoyed this very much! It was so nice to see everyone get together.”



Park Road Nursery

This year Park Road Nursery supported 73 children. 71 of these children have English as an additional language.

Park Road is an inclusive nursery where all children are welcome. This includes children with disabilities and those with special educational needs, who are well supported by fully trained and qualified staff.

Due to the pandemic, most of the two- and three-year-old children starting nursery this year came to us with skills and understanding below the standards expected for their age. This was very apparent with their speech and language development and their personal, social and emotional skills. These children were supported by a strong transition process. Children were identified, given named key workers, and their language was supported through the use of Makaton sign language, visual timetables and role modelling language skills. They also had daily access to activities and experiences to help them integrate fully with others.

We have an experienced Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO) who works directly with those children requiring further support with their educational needs, and we have seen these children make excellent progress during the year.

We made sure diverse and cultural activities were an embedded part of our children's learning to ensure everyone is valued and included.

Our nursery environment is reflective of children's home lives. Parents sent in materials and various cultural artefacts from their homes, which we displayed and implemented throughout the nursery. This helped contribute to the children's high levels of self-esteem as they enjoyed talking about their community, culture, and family, and felt celebrated and proud.

All parents received a questionnaire on the service they receive at Park Road. 100% of all parents were happy with the care at Park Road Nursery this year. Parents reported that they were



pleased with the progress their children make. They reported that their children's confidence had increased, they had learned lots of new words in English, and told how supportive and caring the manager and staff are. Parents also said their children had made good progress and felt they will be well prepared for their eventual move to school.



“The setting is like a fairy magical land”



“My child has grown in confidence since coming to Park Road”

“My child's language has developed so much since attending park Road”



We are very proud that Park Road Nursery achieved an Ofsted rating of “Good” in 2022, a testament to the hard work of the whole Park Road team.

Our Impact in 2022-23

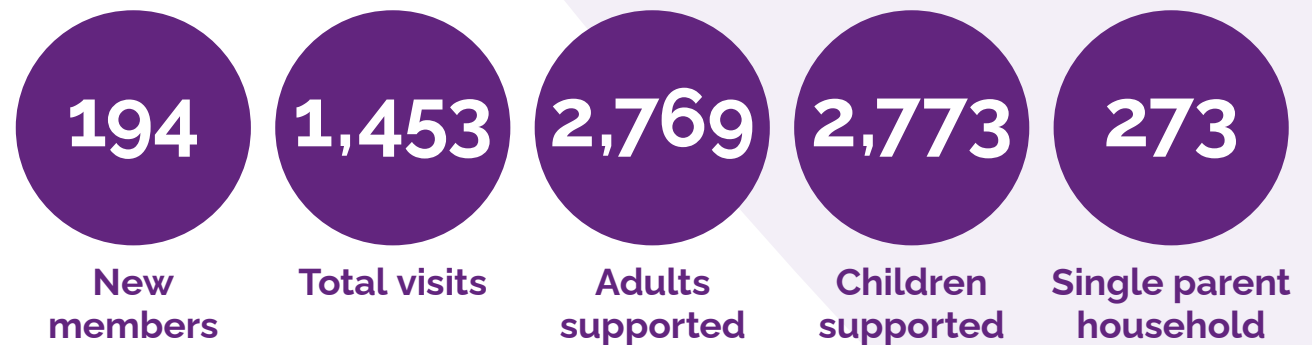
3 | Community Services

3

Springfield Food Pantry

The Springfield Food Pantry offers fresh and nutritious food for an affordable weekly membership fee, whilst making good use of quality food which would otherwise go to waste. The Food Pantry is community-led and open to anyone to join, not just those in crisis, offering choice and dignity during this time of rising food costs.

Key numbers for the year 2022-23:



At the beginning of this year, a new pantry co-ordinator was appointed, whose remit was to engage with the local community and increase membership to the pantry. As a result, Springfield Food Pantry saw a 90.6% increase in the number of visits, from 762 in 2021-22 to 1,453 in 2022-23. This increase was achieved largely by outreaching

and networking with local community establishments and residents and sharing information about the pantry. This was achieved through, leaflet drops to local residents, connecting with local schools, and displaying leaflets in local doctors' surgeries, the local library and pool centre.



This helped us increase awareness of the pantry and the model it is based on. As well as helping us to support many more people experiencing food poverty, it also attracted support from local organisations including Sewa Day West Midlands, Al Furqaan School and Hall Green Families.

In May 2022 we partnered with Hall Green Families who were able to offer an advice and signposting service on a

monthly basis in conjunction with the pantry which offered help and support with bills, benefit applications including the household support fund. Hall Green Families were able to support a total of 179 individuals and families from May 2022 to December 2022. We are grateful to Hall Green Families for this partnership.

As well as smaller funding pots we were able to secure a grant from Birmingham City Council Emergency Food Fund in January 2023 which supported the pantry with additional funding towards food and stock supplies for six months. This made a massively positive impact as it enabled us to not only increase our food supply and choices but also to make culturally appropriate provision for our pantry users. The fund will expire in June 2023.

Winter of 2022 saw a sharp increase in fuel prices which meant less money for low-income households to spend on basic essentials. Springfield Food Pantry registered as a Warm Welcome Space to

encourage non-pantry users to access the existing services and of course a warm space for those struggling to heat their homes. Hot drinks and biscuits were provided along with social activities in the form a knitting corner and jigsaw puzzles, as well as advice for those who needed it and the Pantry.

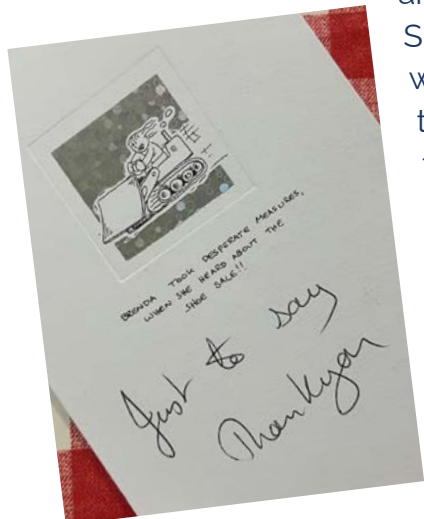
Thank you to Cadbury UK for their supply of hot chocolate for our Warm Welcome space at Springfield.



The Pantry has become much more than a place to shop for affordable groceries. Many of our users have stated that they enjoy coming to the pantry 'for a chat' and to 'see what we have in'. The volunteers at the pantry are genuine and sympathetic people who add immeasurable value to how the pantry is run and to the lives of the people that use it.

Unfortunately, with inflation still on the rise and the cost of living still in a crisis, the need for community food provision is showing no signs of abating. We

anticipate that the Springfield Project will continue to provide the service it offers for food provision as well taking a holistic approach to the needs of those that use it.



“The pantry is a great place. The staff are really welcoming which helps as I was a bit apprehensive at first, but they really did make me feel like they understood why I was there.”

“Thank you to all the pantry staff for helping us out with our parents who find themselves in a difficult situation. Keep up the good work” *Community Liaison Lead, Al Furqaan Primary School*

“I'd not been in a while as I'd found some temporary work as a security guard.

The Pantry called me to see if everything was ok as they knew my wife was unwell. Good people that give the rest of us hope.”



“The savings I make obviously means that I have more money available for other things like school essentials and the increasing bills. I come away with some really good food which gives us the chance to try new things without spending too much money or we would never otherwise get the chance to try.”

Place of Welcome

44 individuals came to Place of Welcome this year, with a total of 1,208 attendances, giving an average weekly attendance of 35 people.

The Place of Welcome is highly valued by all who attend. User evaluation this year showed that the majority of participants pointed to making “friends, not just acquaintances” as the main way they benefit from attending, friends who they value and enjoy meeting on a weekly basis. People reported that their mental health had improved as they felt they had a purpose and a role within the group. Many new members commented when they first arrived that the ambience is one of tranquility, and there is a sense of inclusivity in the group, with new members appreciating being approached and engaged in conversation when they first arrive.



A major success this year has been securing Health and Hygiene Certificates for four members of the Cooking Group which boosted the morale of all who took part. The Cooking Group meets each week to prepare a shared meal at Place of Welcome and to set up the drinks and snacks. More volunteers were willing to take on more complicated roles in the kitchen this year. The healthy cook-from-scratch approach resulted in a variety of dishes which were celebrated and enjoyed by all. Because all recipes were vegetarian, they were inclusive and accessible to the various dietary requirements within the group. The free meal and refreshments proved to be a very important aspect of our offer as food costs rose during the year, yet maintaining it as a creative and social feature of Place of Welcome has helped preserve the dignity of participants during difficult times.

The cost of living crisis has had a major impact on our community this year. In response, we were proud to register Place of Welcome as a Warm

Welcome space to provide a free, warm, welcoming and safe place for people to go this winter if they were struggling to heat their homes.

Each week at Place of Welcome, we have a representative from Narthex who can give money and benefits advice. It is open to all on a drop-in basis. This year saw on average 6 people visiting the Narthex outlet for advice each week. We observed that demand increased as the cost of living crisis began to be felt. We are grateful to our friends at Narthex for this ongoing partnership.

The social care resource also saw demand increase this year and the number of adult social care advisors was increased to four.

Towards the end of this year, we were pleased to launch training and employment support from Trident Reach at Place of Welcome on a drop-in basis. This is a new service helping attendees with their CVs and job application forms, and in many cases helping to demystify the job application process for those



who may never have worked before. We look forward to continuing this partnership with Trident Reach in the coming year.

English Classes

English classes at The Springfield Project are for complete beginners. The courses aim to support people who speak little or no English, through a programme of informal learning designed to build attendees' confidence in basic English. The sessions are fun and creative, with participants role-playing scenarios in everyday situations such as speaking to the doctor or their child's school.

109 people attended English classes at the Springfield Centre this year, including 45 people with children under 5 years old.

This year, we linked with Highfield Hall Community Centre in Hall Green, who obtained funding to cover the costs of



the trainer to use the Creative English method of learning. This is an innovative approach which includes puppets and games, making learning enjoyable and giving participants the confidence to have a go at new sounds and words in a safe and welcoming environment.

The impact is beyond improving language skills. Participants enjoyed learning and grew in confidence. Students reported being able to talk to their doctor, they learned how to check their blood pressure, and how to look after their health. Importantly, many talked of being able to go out on their own without feeling isolated and having the confidence to make plans for their future such as applying to be a volunteer or hoping to work for the NHS. Eight participants passed their living in the UK test during the year.

Most of all they have friends in the class and created their own WhatsApp group. Several students commented that the friendship group had helped them through difficult times.



“It has changed my life
I want to learn more to
make my future better”



“I feel like a new person. I used to feel
very sad and this has changed me and
made me happy and I look forward to
my future”

“I am more confident, I made friends
and learned many things”

“I improved my spoken English and
learned new words”

“I look forward to the class every week”

“I feel confident talking to teachers in
school “

“I practise talking to my children”

Our Impact in 2022-23

4 | Children, Young People and Play

4

Seedlings

Seedlings is a stay-and-play group for 0-4 year-olds and their parents/carers. It is held three times a week during term time.

Seedlings returned to pre-pandemic numbers over the year and became very popular again. An average of 24 children have attended each session with their parents or carers and we welcomed over 350 different children this year.

We received lots of referrals for priority cards from our Children's Centre family support team and health visitors. These cards enable families in the greatest need to attend more than one session per week.

We also worked with the Developing Local Provision project (part of Birmingham Early Years Network) to help support children with emerging additional needs or delayed development. This involved modelling strategies to parents, supporting transition into early years settings and liaising with and signposting

parents to other services that can support them. Research highlights the importance of early intervention for children with additional needs or delayed development so Seedlings is playing a significant part in improving outcomes for these children.

Seedlings follows a simple routine each session which models to parents the importance of child-led play, sharing books, eating a healthy snack, physical activity and singing together. These activities are essential for children's development and long-term wellbeing.

Seedlings runs thanks to a very committed team of volunteers. We have volunteers from a variety of backgrounds and experience who all work well together.

We are enormously grateful for the invaluable contribution of our volunteers, and we are proud that Seedlings also gives new volunteers the chance to gain experience and knowledge which can support them in finding employment in the future.

CASE STUDY

Seedlings

*Names have been changed

Aliyah* started coming to Seedlings with her mum in April 2022. They had recently moved to the area after a relationship breakdown. Aliyah's mum was very concerned about Aliyah's communication and language development, as she was not using many words. She also had a lot of meltdowns that mum was finding hard to cope with. The family were given a Priority Card for Seedlings which enabled them to attend 2 sessions each week. During the Seedlings sessions, we modelled strategies with Aliyah and gave her mum some advice on developing Aliyah's communication skills. We also liaised with Aliyah's health visitor and referred Aliyah to the Children's Centre so that she could attend Language Through Play groups with her mum.

We supported Aliyah's transition into nursery by helping her mum to find a local setting and to complete transition documents. Aliyah quickly settled into nursery and is making good progress.

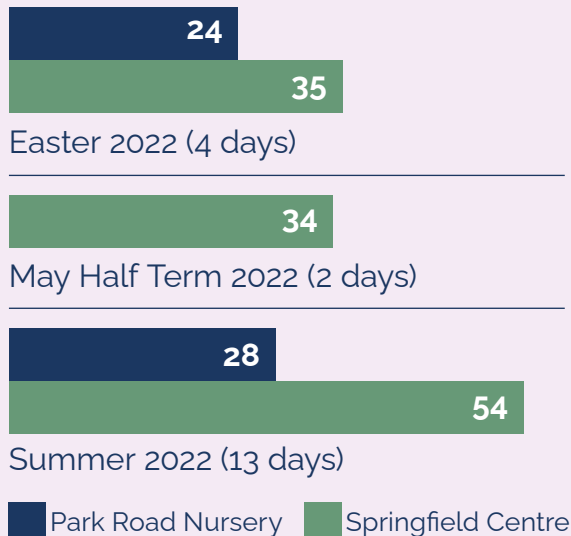
Parent quote "I was very worried about Aliyah. Thank you for all your help!"



Holiday Playschemes

The Holiday Playschemes at The Springfield Centre and Park Road Nursery provide rich play experiences for local children aged 5-11 as well as a nutritious meal during school holidays. This year we ran holiday playschemes three times: at Easter (four days), May half-term (two days – Springfield Centre only) and the summer holidays (13 days). A total of 175 children attended

Playscheme - individual attendance



playschemes, 57 of whom had never attended the playscheme before.

The playschemes provide children in the Sparkhill area with a multitude of opportunities they may not have had before. This year the playschemes offered opportunities to play outside with a variety of forms of play, from archery to outdoors art, and a special trip all the way to Weston-Super-Mare. The children also took trips to the local park, played in the garden, visited farms and our own Forest School site. Our playschemes provided opportunities for risky play that children in urban settings don't always have access to for a variety of reasons. As all of the children that attend the playscheme are either on Pupil Premium funding or identified as vulnerable, having these opportunities for play is that much more meaningful.

In August, to round off the playscheme, a trip to Weston Super-Mare was organised for 75 children and their grown-ups. We provided two free coaches, packed lunches and some beach toys.

SOME QUOTES FROM PLAYSCHHEME ATTENDEES

“Can I volunteer here when I get too old? I like coming and helping you.”



“I like going here because it's fun.”

“I learned to never give up and to always be honest.”

“I liked archery when we got the bow and arrow, it's so fun to pull it and make a shot.”

“I like it here because I was with my friends!”

“I played archery and made points and it was too much fun!”

FROM PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN PLAYScheme

“I just wanted to say that what you guys are doing is wonderful and they're going to have these memories forever. I remember when I used to go to playschemes when I was little and it was nothing compared to what you guys do. They have so much fun while they're here so don't get discouraged just keep up the good work.”



“Oh she loves you guys all and wants to come every day!”

“Thank you so much for what you're giving to the community. These kids really need it.”

“Thank you for doing this, the kids really need it and it does help, otherwise they'd just be sitting at home.”

“We appreciate all you do for us for all the joy the centre gives both the children and adults through its many activities and of course the warmth and welcoming atmosphere. Thanks.”



CASE STUDY

Holiday Playscheme

*Names have been changed

Malik* has cognition difficulties and takes time to process things, making it difficult for him to keep up with others and/or vocalize what he wants. However, he was excited to be back at the Easter playscheme. He told a group of boys that he wanted to play cricket and while they didn't immediately join in, Malik played with a staff member and his excitement got the attention of the boys who eventually joined. He was thrilled! He really came out of his shell when playing and shouted cricket phrases, "good job!" and had general banter with the boys. When his mum dropped him off the second day of Easter playscheme, he immediately joined in activities, whereas prior to this he had stayed close to her and was hesitant to leave her side. In the Summer playscheme, he jumped right in, and his comfort was evident. We were able to bring in an archery coach and Malik really thrived in these sessions. His confidence has really increased and he speaks much more now, even cracking jokes with us.

Leaving Sparkhill is challenging for the family as mum has limited English and a speech impediment, and also cannot afford a daily bus pass for them both. Dad had told us that he worries about Malik getting the social interaction he needs and so is very relieved and happy that Malik can go somewhere so close to home and also get a variety of enrichment.



Photography Club

This year also saw a new after-school photography club for 11-year-olds. Over the six-week period, 12 children explored Sparkhill and took photos, giving us an insight into how they see Sparkhill, and the things they value. The sessions culminated into an exhibition where the children, their parents and other members of the community got to see the children's work displayed. 20 people attended the exhibition.

100% of the children who gave feedback said they learned something new and enjoyed the club.

"I enjoyed the photography and learned how to do editing and make good pictures. And the way our teacher Mr Keith was a fun teacher and he showed us all how to do it the easy way."



"I enjoyed having fun teachers and spending time with my friends and meeting new people."



Our Impact in 2022-23

5 | Special Events

5

In May, The Springfield Project was delighted to welcome B'Opera back for another performance of "Hello Bird, Hello Fish", their baby opera that was made for and by the families of The Springfield Centre. This was a very special event that was ticketed and only open to families of the Project. 89 people attended.

To celebrate the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee** in June 2022, the Springfield Project held a one-day garden party with live music, games, crafts and our very own Great Springfield Bakeoff. There were 261 attendances over the 3-hour event.

2022 was a special year for Birmingham as the Commonwealth Games was hosted in our city, along with the Birmingham 2022 Festival, celebrating the diverse culture and history of the city. The B2022 Neighbourhood Festivals brought the Games to our doorstep on 30 and 31 July, showing the Games on large screens accompanied by activations, set up in 6 sites across the

city. Sparkhill Park had the privilege of being chosen as one of these sites. The Children & Young People Development Worker produced the festival after taking part in a 9-month training offered by emPOWER. The 2-day event had over 1,000 attendances, 17 artists and groups performing and have-a-go activations.

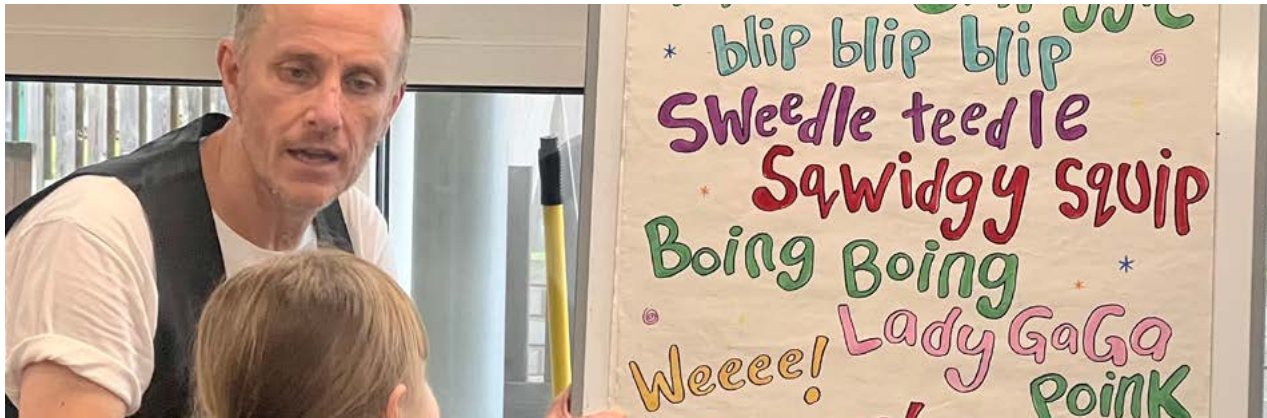


The **Creative Families Festival 2022** took place over two days during October half-term and saw 338 people attending. The project brought the people of Sparkhill together to explore their creativity, participate in high quality artistic experiences both familiar and new, and enjoy a social activity in their local neighbourhood. Many families in Sparkhill do not have disposable income to spend on arts or leisure activities, nor a cultural history of accessing arts events.

Our theme for this year's festival was 'the world of words'. We explored the magic of words through music, dance, visual arts, stories and poetry.

Thank you to our team of amazing artists who came to perform and to share their skills to inspire our children and families. What a joy!





QUOTES FROM CREATIVE FAMILIES FESTIVAL ATTENDEES

"I had a wonderful time with all the staff, children and parents. It was such a fantastic atmosphere, and the events came to a close with an amazing finale."

"The letter necklaces were a hit, it was like bees to a honey pot. There were so many people there and just super focused. And it was mums teaching their children and adults just making and doing. It was brilliant."

"Toni was so engaging and it was mindful. She got everyone to be in the present and not thinking of anything else. Toni and Chris kind of triggered children's imagination and kept them engaged and

entertained and made them laugh. Children were captured with what was going on in front of them. I never came across anybody who's managed to keep me so focused on what they're doing and actually got me to engage with them so that I was just thinking of them. I was focused and on edge thinking what exciting thing is going to come next? It was really lovely. For mental health I felt they were amazing. They managed to get people to forget their problems. Jobe also got people thinking of nothing else. It was all so positive."



Santa Comes to Springfield was a lovely event that saw arts, crafts and fayre games along with a very special visit from Santa! Santa was able to give Christmas presents to over 80 children. He even played some holiday music with the band. 170 parents and children joined in the festivities.



Our Impact in 2022-23

6 | Sounds of Play: Phase 2

6

Through our role in Birmingham Forward Steps, The Springfield Project has been leading the Birmingham Early Years Music Consortium, which brings together partners from across the Early Years sector with professional music organisations.

Following the success of Phase 1 of our Early Years Music Workforce Development Programme, 'Sounds of Play', in 2022 we were thrilled to be awarded a further three years' of funding from Youth Music for Phase 2.

Phase 2 of Sounds of Play aims to develop a sustainable network of Early Years music practice between Early Years services and music organisations to support children's musical entitlement across Birmingham. Through this we hope to:

- Develop Early Years music-making in settings across all 10 Birmingham districts.
- Increase co-designed approaches to family music-making in settings across all 10 Birmingham districts.

- Further develop the consortium partners' understanding of music-making opportunities offered by consortium partners across the city.

In 2023 we will appoint five Early Years Music Champions to lead across 10 districts, and we will recruit musicians to complete artist residencies in each of the 10 districts.



Sounds of Play Partners

- Birmingham Forward Steps
- Birmingham Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Barnardo's
- Spurgeons
- St Pauls Community Development Trust
- The Springfield Project
- Birmingham City Council EY, Childcare and Children's Centre Services
- Services for Education (S4E)
- Birmingham Nursery Schools Teaching School Association
- City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra
- MAC Makes Music
- B'Opera
- Birmingham Contemporary Music Group
- Birmingham Conservatoire
- Welsh National Opera

**YOUTH
MUSIC**



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

Our Impact in 2022-23

7 | Volunteering

7

Volunteers bring enormous value to our work at The Springfield Project through their wealth of skills and talents, their energy and enthusiasm and the hard work they contribute by volunteering their time. We are proud to see the ways they gain and develop from their time volunteering for us, many going on into work or training. This year:



This year volunteers contributed **3,736 hours** of their time to delivering services on behalf of The Springfield Project to the community of Sparkhill, worth **£40,724.***

*This is based on the Real Living Wage for 2022 of £10.90 per hour.

Feedback from volunteers



“The staff were very welcoming, especially when working with Nazmin at reception. Every staff member I met was very accommodating and welcoming.”



“Thank you for the lovely, professional and helpful staff at Springfield Project”



“I really enjoyed working with Rosalyn. She made me feel very welcome. She was a great mentor to me.”



“I want to thank Hasmita for being so supportive and helping me grow and develop into an excellent volunteer. I gained so many new skills and learned so many new things. Being in the company for such a great time I leave with a heavy heart. However, I hope I can give back to the community in the future as I really enjoyed my time volunteering. It’s such a rewarding project and one I highly recommend.”



“Volunteering helped me to get a job and get a lot of experience for how to work with children”



“I gained knowledge and developed skills”

Our Impact in 2022-23

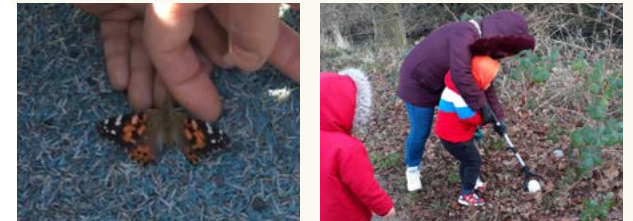
8 | Environment

8

The Springfield Project has had an environmental policy for a few years. This year we stepped it up and elected a Green Champion.

Here are some of the changes we introduced during the year:

- Stopped using disposable cups, plates and cutlery ✓
- Reduced the things that we laminate ✓
- Printing double-sided as default ✓
- Switching to hand dryers in the toilets ✓
- Introduced new labelled recycling bins and posters ✓
- Catering with vegetarian food for events ✓
- Introduced nature walks with parents and children ✓
- Encouraging outdoor play ✓
- Planning a Forest School ✓



The nurseries are leading the way. Mini-Springers Nursery and Park Road Nursery both have compost bins and are growing vegetables. Park Road Nursery collects and re-uses items such as corks for open-ended play. They use natural resources from the park like twigs for play. Mini-Springers Nursery have watched the development of caterpillars into butterflies and are glitter-free.

Acknowledgements

We would like to say a big thankyou to all our funders, donors, friends, volunteers and supporters who have given so much to our community this year. Thanks to your generosity we have been able to keep providing vital support in Sparkhill throughout the year, helping us have a positive impact on the lives of people in Sparkhill, and reflecting our mission to show God's love in the community.

- Birmingham City Council
Commonwealth Games Celebrating
Communities Fund, c/o Neighbourhood
Development & Support Unit
- Birmingham City Council Emergency
Food Fund
- Birmingham City Council Warm
Welcome Grant
- Bring it on Brum - Holiday Activity Fund
- The Eveson Trust
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Knowle Parish Church
- Reaching Communities (NLCF)
- Sewa Day West Midlands
- Souter Charitable Trust
- Swanshurst School
- Tesco Community Grants
- The Roger & Douglas Turner
Charitable Trust
- William A Cadbury Charitable Trust
- Yardley Great Trust
- Youth Music – Catalyser

William A Cadbury
Charitable Trust

TESCO
Community Grants



W
Garfield Weston
FOUNDATION

YOUTH
MUSIC



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

The
EVESON
Trust



Support Us

If this report has inspired you there are several ways you can support The Springfield Project and the vital work we do. We always welcome people who want to get involved as volunteers, donors and supporters. You will be helping to make a difference for hundreds of local families each year and truly showing God's love in our community.

Make a donation

You can donate online and help us to support those who need us most. A one-off donation of any size will be greatly appreciated. If you can afford it, a regular gift will help give long-term security to our organisation, which in turn will protect our ability to continue to support our Sparkhill community. Your generosity will make a big difference.

Visit www.springfieldproject.org.uk/support-us/make-a-donation



Volunteer

Our volunteers make a difference in their community and help us to increase the services the Springfield Project can offer to children and families. We want to offer volunteers opportunities that are stimulating, relevant and rewarding and of mutual benefit to the Springfield Project.

Anyone can apply to become a volunteer. We embrace inclusivity and diversity and value the skills, enthusiasm and commitment brought by staff and volunteers of different faiths and none.

Visit www.springfieldproject.org.uk/support-us/volunteer to find out how you can get involved.





Can your business or community group help raise funds on our behalf?

Contact us on **0121 777 2722** or **info@springfieldproject.org.uk** if you would like to discuss how your organisation can support The Springfield Project.



Join us on social media

Find, follow and share what we do on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. Be the first to hear about upcoming events, news and opportunities, and help spread the word about what we do.



www.facebook.com/SpringfieldProjectBirmingham



www.linkedin.com/company/the-springfield-project



Park Road Nursery on Instagram:
[instagram.com/_little.thinkers_](https://www.instagram.com/_little.thinkers_)



Pray for us

We would be grateful if you could include The Springfield Project in your prayers.

If you would like to find out more about the work of St Christopher's Church, visit: **stchristopherspringfield.org.uk**

The Springfield Project

Springfield Road, Moseley, Birmingham, B13 9NY

Tel: 0121 777 2722

info@springfieldproject.org.uk

www.springfieldproject.org.uk

Park Road Nursery

57 Park Rd, Birmingham, B11 4HB

Tel: 0121 759 0090

Fax: 0121 325 5358

Registered charity no. 1134977

Company Registration no. 06582318

