



The Springfield Project
Impact Report
2024-25

Contents

1	Introduction From The CEO	3
2	A Word From Our Chair	4
3	Who We Are	5
4	Our Values	6
5	Overview of Our Services	7
6	Our Impact 2024-2025: Springfield Children's Centre	9
7	Our Impact 2024-2025: Our Nurseries	23
8	Our Impact 2024-2025: Community Services for Adults	28
9	Our Impact 2024-2025: Children, Young People and Play	31
10	Our Impact 2024-2025: Volunteering	41
11	Environment	45
12	Stakeholder Engagement	48
13	Our Supporters	50
14	How You Can Support Us	52



1 | Introduction From The CEO

I have now had the privilege of holding the post of CEO at The Springfield Project for 10 years. Every year things change, sometimes we stop doing certain activities and sometimes we start new ones. The income grows or reduces, the specific contracts may come and go. What never changes is the passion and commitment of our staff, volunteers and trustees to this wonderful, shared endeavour. An organisation with deep roots in the neighbourhood, the local community and in St Christopher's Church provides such rich, fertile ground for working with heart in the service of our community.

This report shows the depth and breadth of our work. It shows the wide ranging and profound impact of our work on the lives of children and adults in our community, through inclusive, accessible and nurturing community-based support. You can see this by how many of our participants go on to volunteer with us, and some also into paid roles with us. These are tough times for the

charitable sector. Available funding is reduced, the need for support is higher than ever and operating costs have risen significantly. I couldn't be more proud of our team and their ability to adapt and innovate in this climate. They do it from the heart, with love for this community and with the drive to make a difference. I look forward to continuing on this journey to co-create a thriving neighbourhood where everyone has the opportunity to live life in all its fullness.

Sarah Robbins



2 |

A Word From Our Chair

When the world feels as fragile and unsafe as it does right now, with far-off conflicts seeming close and hopes of peace repeatedly lost, it is wonderful to celebrate a grass-roots project that transcends community difference and provides life-changing support for families and children who most need it.

Visiting The Springfield Project it is hard not to be moved by the vibrancy of its wonderfully positive work with children at the very beginning of their lives. Alongside all that happens for expectant and new mums, and their children, the project is increasingly spreading its

reach across the school years. We are very excited by our growing work to make Sparkhill a child friendly neighbourhood - a place that listens to and amplifies the voices of young people to bring hope where we most need it!

This report carries the thanks of Trustees to all who work for Springfield and to those who make this work possible through practical and financial support.

Thank you!

Tim Boyes



3 |

Who We Are



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

Born out of St Christophers Church, we believe that every child, young person, parent, and adult in our community has the right to reach their full potential in life.

Deprivation, social inequality, and a lack of local provision often create a barrier to our community achieving that potential- and many families in Sparkhill face hardship and isolation.

That is why we run a programme of community-based activities which empower, enable, and enrich the lives

of hundreds of local children, young people, and families by removing the barriers to opportunity. At our base in the Springfield Centre connected to St Christophers Church, and at our Park Road site, we provide a range of services for local children and families to combat poverty and help people lead happy and healthy lives.

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

4 |

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

5 | Overview of Our Services

Springfield Children's Centre

Delivering Early Years Health and Wellbeing for children aged 0-5 years in Birmingham, Springfield Children's Centre is part of Birmingham Forward Steps (BFS), a pioneering Early Years Health and Wellbeing initiative for all children and their families living in Birmingham. 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. Our Children's Centre is now part of 'Birmingham Family Hubs' which increases the local offer to children aged 5-19 (25 with SEND).

Community Services - Adults

Our Community Services comprise of a range of free activities for adults living in our community, these include English Language Classes, a cooking group, and our flagship social group, Place of Welcome. All the services offered aim to improve mental health and wellbeing, by reducing loneliness and isolation amongst adults in the Sparkhill community.

Nurseries

Mini Springers Nursery and Park Road Nursery are OFSTED registered nurseries which offer sessional places for children in receipt of Early Educational Entitlement grants. This includes all 3- and 4-year-olds and eligible 2-year-olds. Both are inclusive nurseries and provide places for children with special educational needs. Most children are grant funded and receive 15 hours of free childcare per week. In the past year our nurseries have started to accept children for 30 hour places due to change in funding available for working parents.

Seedlings

Seedlings is a stay and play group for 0-4-year-olds and their parents/ carers which is run in partnership with St Christopher's Church. It's held 3 times a week (Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays) in St Christophers Church and is open to all. It is often the first point of contact we have with children and parents/ carers in the area, from where we can introduce them to our other services.

Child Friendly Neighbourhood (CFN)

Through our CFN initiatives we are working to make Sparkhill a great neighbourhood for children to grow up in. Our work aims to increase the range of activities available for children and young people, ensure that children and young people's voices are central to our work and to the development of the neighbourhood and to have a lasting impact on the physical environment of Sparkhill.

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 of the personal development opportunities our volunteers get through volunteering their time, with many going on to work and training.



6 |

Our Impact in 2024-25

Springfield Children's Centre



delivered by



From 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025, Springfield Children's Centre supported a total of **1,871 individuals**, comprising **748 adults** and **1,123 children**. Our Children's Centre provision is delivered in partnership with St Paul's Community Development Trust and the numbers below relate to the partnership and to the whole district of Hall Green.

Hall Green District received **492 referrals** for families and children in need of early intervention and family support from various agencies, including the Children's Trust, midwives, health visitors, schools and nurseries. All referrals are triaged, and **315 new cases** were assigned to Family Support Workers, who provided customised intervention and support packages to the families. Additionally, **702 parents** received support from family support staff during drop-in sessions for various needs.

Early Years Service

Our Children's Centre team continued to deliver high-quality Early Years services, supporting families across the Hall Green District through targeted programmes that play a vital role in supporting families during the early years of a child's life.

Our integrated services, experienced staff and targeted interventions allowed us to support parents to become more confident educators and ensure children are healthy and ready to learn.

Creche and Stay & Play Provision

We provide creche services to enable parents to attend courses with access to free on-site childcare. These sessions follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, creating safe and engaging environments with activities tailored to children's interest, needs and developmental stage, and progress tracked through regular attendance

In the last 12 months, **651 individuals** benefited from our Creche and Stay and Play sessions, enabling parents to engage in learning, support, and developmental activities.

We delivered three Stay and Play sessions every week during term time that focused on school readiness. These sessions included the Startwell programme, which encourages children to eat healthily and engage in more physical activity. We also offered sessions



specifically designed for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Health and wellbeing topics such as oral health, fussy eating, and home safety were integrated into these sessions. Additionally, we provided targeted support for identified families through tailored interventions.

During the school holidays, we organised Stay and Play sessions aimed at supporting families facing financial difficulties. In addition to providing a space for play, these sessions offered food parcels, budgeting workshops, and healthy eating advice. We also assisted families in accessing household grants to help them cope with the challenges of rising living costs.

"He is using more complete sentences, and I love watching him explore all the activities and play with other children. We both look forward to attending the sessions."

Parent, Stay and Play Session



"I found a huge improvement regarding my child's attention span. He is spending more time on one activity. I also found that his speech has improved, and he is now saying sentences. Since attending the Stay and Play sessions he has shown an improvement in his behaviour, he now listens and follows instructions better."

Parent, Stay and Play Session





First Words Together

Four staff members were trained to deliver First Words Together, a programme designed to improve early communication, language and literacy, funded by the National Literacy Trust. We successfully supported **26 individuals** through the programme in the last 12 months. Each 5-week programme supports parents with weekly tips and guidance for language and literacy development, as well books and other resources to encourage reading at home.

Toddler Talk

Toddler Talk is an 8-week programme designed for children aged 18 months to 3 years who have speech delays or difficulties. The course aims to educate parents and caregivers on speech development while providing fun and practical activities to encourage and support language learning at home. This year, two additional staff members were trained to deliver the programme.

In the last 12 months, **256 individuals** have participated in the Toddler Talk programme. Children were assessed during the programme using the WellComm tool, and the outcomes included improvements in child confidence and communication skills.

Integrated Mandated Development Review Clinics

The clinics schedule appointments for developmental checks for children aged 2 to 2.5 years, focusing on physical, social, emotional, communication, and developmental aspects. During these visits, parents receive guidance and referrals to additional services that can support their child's developmental milestones and encourage healthier lifestyles. Over the past year, we have trained an additional two staff members to assist with these clinics, bringing our team to four members who conduct the assessments. As a result, we have achieved **86% of all 2-year-old checks**, exceeding our target of **67%**.

Rayan's Story


Name has been changed

During a 2-year-old development review it was identified that Rayan finds it difficult to communicate, can get distressed and overwhelmed and is a fussy eater and doesn't like to sit and eat.

The parents of Rayan were advised to bring Rayan to the Talking Together Stay and Play Sessions to help the parents form local friendships

and support Rayan to build confidence, independence and to work on communication skills. Since attending the sessions Rayan has become more confident and calmer, plays alongside other children as well as exploring activities independently. Rayan has started sitting with the other children during snack time and circle time and enjoys the nursery rhymes.

“Since attending the stay and play sessions, I have noticed an improvement in Rayan. He has started saying two words together such as “bye-bye”. He has also begun eating bread, which he wouldn't even try before.”



Parents/Carers of Rayan

Making it REAL

Four staff members were trained in the Making it REAL programme which is part of our Home Learning Environment (HLE) Strategy. This award-winning programme uses the Opportunities, Recognition, Interaction and Model (ORIM) method to equip practitioners and parents/carers to support children's literacy development at home. During the programme, parents/carers learn to support early reading and writing at home to build their confidence in engaging and supporting their child's learning. Programme participants are signposted to other programmes and services to continue their family's learning pathway.



Promoting Happier Parenting

Promoting Happier Parenting is a 5-week programme designed for parents and caregivers of children under the age of 5. The aim of the programme is to support the building of self-esteem, emotional resilience, and communication skills for parents/caregivers and their children. Additionally, it focuses on creating positive routines at home.

A total of **56 parents** completed the programme.

“As a Bangladeshi dad who also has a language barrier, the parenting programme was delivered to me in my mother tongue, and has helped me understand the importance of boundaries and routine and having implemented these at home with my daughter it has given us a happy home.”



Attendee of Promoting Happier Parenting Programmes

“I understand my children better and have created a stronger bond with them.”



Attendee of Promoting Happier Parenting Programmes

“We had a dad attend the programme who shared that the parenting style he grew up with in Bangladesh was very different to England. He shared that he was parented by his extended family and was unaware of the importance of routine and boundaries. He stated that by attending the programme and working closely with the child’s school he has changed the way he communicates with his children which has had a positive impact on this relationship with his children and wider family.”



Promoting Happier Parenting Staff

Ateefah's Story

Name has been changed

I was reluctant to attend the Promoting Happier Parenting programme, but I am so glad I did as the course has helped so much.

The course tutors were really engaging and supportive. During the course we talked about how to be more engaging with my daughters, something that was particularly challenging due to an unsettled

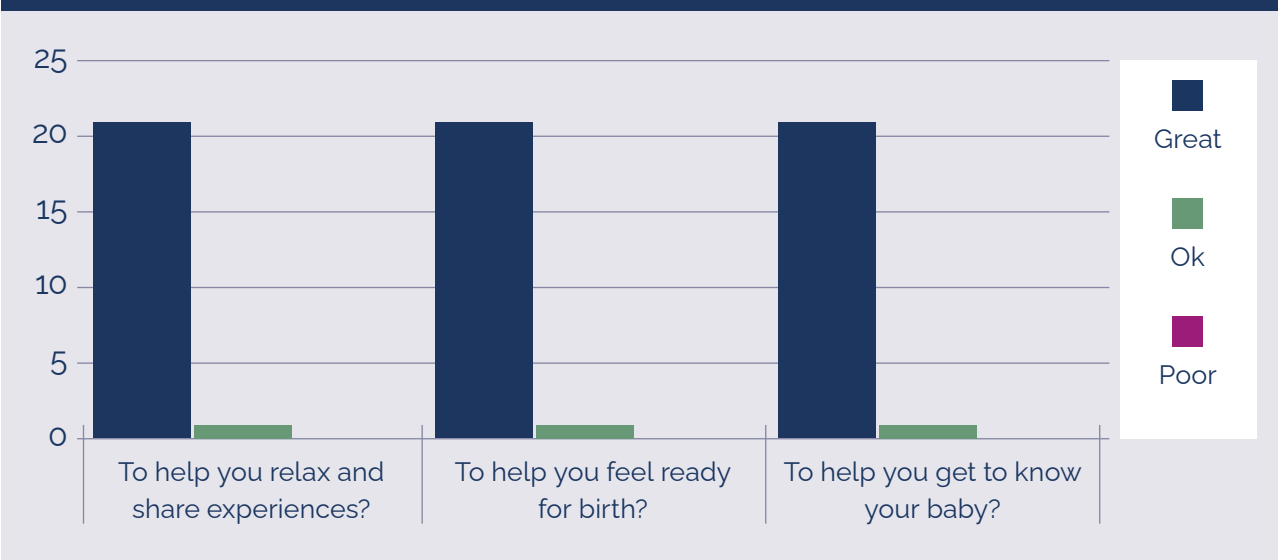
home life. I have reintroduced reward and toothbrushing charts for both my daughters. They were both excited to feel that we can achieve so much when we work together as a family team. I am also so much more aware of being more mindfully present with my daughters and can see the positive impact it has on them.

Solihull Approach Antenatal Sessions

The Solihull Approach Antenatal sessions are a 5-week programme for expectant parents to equip them with the knowledge and skills to prepare for birth, labour, caring for their baby safely and infant feeding choices.

The programme provides support to mothers facing breastfeeding challenges, resulting in a greater number of women successfully breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks and beyond. The goal is to help people feel confident enough to breastfeed on their own, which increases both the initiation and maintenance rates of breastfeeding beyond the initial weeks. To enhance participation and accessibility, the program is available both in-person and online.

Parents evaluation feedback for the Solihull Approach Antenatal Parenting Group



"I was bored and lonely at home, this group is building my self-esteem and confidence, and has given me good awareness of how to keep my baby safe, bathe them and sleep routines."

Antenatal session participant

"It's an amazing session for first time parents, very welcoming and informative, I felt like I could say or ask anything."

Antenatal session participant

43 women completed the programme:

Of the **11** fathers-to-be who attended the Solihull Approach antenatal sessions, **5** had English as a second language. By attending the programme, they were able to communicate confidently and take an active part in attending all midwife appointments.

- **15 parents** were informed about antenatal/postnatal services and breastfeeding support they can access before and after birth
- **10 parents** were informed of Healthy Start vitamins and how to access them
- **13 parents of toddlers** were given information about local Early Years services and EEE nursery entitlement
- **5 parents** were referred to other relevant services according to their needs
- **17 parents** were informed of the Baby Buddy app and other useful resources



"I feel more confident about the prospect of breastfeeding."

Antenatal session participant

"I have learned the process of breastfeeding; the sessions are very informative."

Antenatal session participant

Antenatal Case Study

Seema's Story Name has been changed

During my pregnancy I was offered support and access to the services at the antenatal programme at Springfield.

The programme really helped me with my mental health and wellbeing during my pregnancy by showing me techniques to manage the anxiety I had experienced in my pregnancy. The sessions really helped me to understand and prepare for labour, creating my birth plan and breastfeeding. I have made a lot of friends at the sessions which has empowered me and the other mums to support each other throughout the journey. As a young and first-time mum who suffered from a lot of anxiety and depression before and during pregnancy, I now feel more confident in myself. I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the staff of the Springfield Children's Centre for all the support they have provided.

Freedom Programme

The Freedom Programme is a 12-week initiative designed for women who have experienced or are currently facing domestic abuse. Its purpose is to enhance awareness and understanding of domestic abuse, identify unhealthy relationships, and recognise the impact of domestic abuse on children.

Over the past year, **71 women** have participated in the programme, with referrals coming from the police, social workers, family support workers, health professionals, and several self-referrals. The programme aims to boost the confidence of participants while helping them recognise signs of domestic abuse and take positive steps to leave abusive relationships.

Additionally, three more facilitators have been trained to deliver the programme, including sessions for women whose first language is not English.

In the last 12 months the programme has supported and facilitated:

- **12 referrals** to the National Centre for Domestic Violence for legal support
- Supported **18 women** with Clare's Law applications
- **8 women** have fled domestic abuse with their children
- **3 women** have joined the volunteer's programme
- **8 women** have accessed further training and employment
- **10 women** have been referred to the Promoting Happier Parenting programme
- **6 women** have been referred to the Harmony Women's Wellbeing programme
- **1 programme participant** has gone on to publish her own book as a domestic abuse survivor

"The Freedom Programme should be taught in universities, schools and colleges to educate young people on what domestic abuse is and what is a healthy and unhealthy relationship."

Freedom Programme participant



"The programme covers the Domestic Abuse legislation that you will need to move forward, the role of the police, housing, benefits and your own rights so that we don't need to feel trapped or alone in an abusive relationship."

Freedom Programme participant

"The programme has been invaluable helping myself and my children with food bank vouchers, hardship grants, advice and support and educating me on what a healthy and unhealthy relationship is."

Freedom Programme participant

Becky's Story

Name has been changed

About a year ago I was referred to the Freedom Programme by my family support worker. They advised me of the dates of the programme as well as the free creche available for my children and supported me to contact my employer so that I could request the time off work to attend.

In the first few classes I said very little, as I felt very nervous about talking about my experiences. In the third class I found it very emotional as it helped me to put into perspective the abuse I had been experiencing. The course facilitators were incredibly supportive, empathetic, and knowledgeable on the legislation

and support I could access. During the programme I was encouraged to attend the Promoting Happier Parenting programme and I received support with financial assistance through the household support fund. I was also able to get legal advice in applying for Claire's Law and a non-molestation order.

Before the programme I didn't fully understand what domestic abuse is and the impact it was having on my children. I have learned so much about myself and my relationships from the programme and it has improved my confidence and self-esteem. Knowledge is power and I know that I am not alone in this situation.

Family Hubs are a government initiative seeking to place coordinated support for children aged 0-19 (25 with SEND) in localities. In Birmingham the Family Hub programme has been linked to the Children's Centres and in April 2024 our Children's Centre became part of the Family Hub system. Our Children's Centre and Family Hub team act as a central point of access for children, young people and families, connecting them with support across a wide partnership of agencies. The Family Hub steering group coordinates activity and connectivity. There is now a wider range of agencies delivering activities from our sites, addressing the needs of children and families over 5.

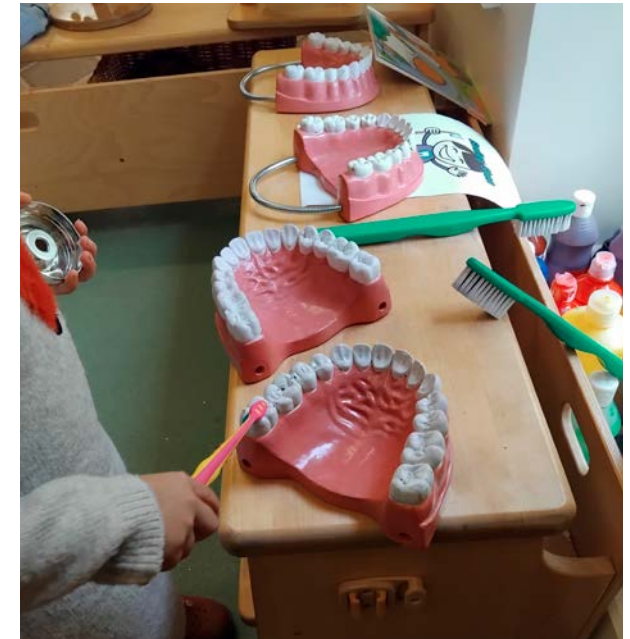


Family Hub

In April 2024, we Launched the Family Hub at St Pauls Trust and the Satellite at Springfield in May 2024.

The Family Hub and Best Start for Life Programme will help families in these areas by providing:

- in-person, virtual, and outreach services within the community. These hubs will provide various support



services for families with children from birth to age 19 or up to 25 for those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). Services include help for domestic abuse, SEND support, youth services, and housing advice.

- a local Parent and Carer Panel made up of families across the city. This panel will let families share their opinions on how to design and deliver Start for Life support.

To celebrate the launch, we held an open day for families with children aged 0-19 years. Over **1,100** people attended the event, enjoying different activities and accessing wellbeing and support services.

Our Children's Centre and Family Hub team have also supported the delivery of several projects including:

- **The Safe Sleep Scheme** which provides cots, beds and bedding for children aged 0-5 years olds. **Over 200 families** received items in our area.

"My baby can now sleep safely in a Moses basket."

Safe Sleep Scheme beneficiary



"I am in a lot of debt. A family support worker helped me get two cot beds for my children, this has helped me a lot and they now have a good bedtime routine."

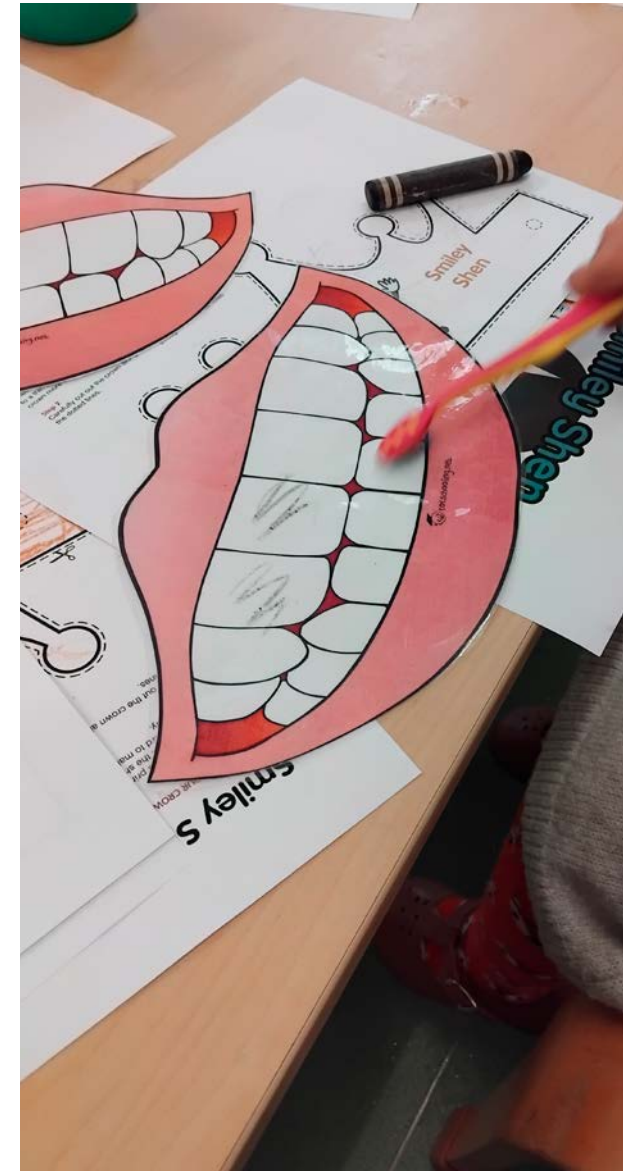
Safe Sleep Scheme beneficiary

"This money helped me pay for my gas and electricity bill, it kept my house warm for my children and I was able to buy food."

Household Fund beneficiary



- **The Slow Cooker Project** has provided **60 slow cookers** to families living in temporary accommodation and **10 slow cookers** to a Women's Refuge in the area. We ran two healthy eating workshops to show families how to use the slow cookers to prepare healthy and nutritious meals.
- **The Household Fund** has provided **177 households** to access £200 grants to support with bills and food. To date £35,400 has been awarded through the fund.
- The team partnered with Hall Green Families and BCT to host a Family Hub Parenting Event aimed at increasing engagement with our Family Hub Parenting Offer.





Family Voices

Family voices is a group that works to ensure that families and their needs are central to the service design and delivery of Family Hubs across Birmingham. This is achieved by enabling local parents and carers to engage with service provision leaders and commissioners to design and continuously improve the services provided.

In total, **33 parents** and carers attended the Family Voices sessions alongside various service professionals. During

these sessions, parents and carers shared their experiences.

Key feedback themes included:

- A need for language support from midwives for parents who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Suggestions for workshops and support groups for families with children aged 5 and older who have SEND
- A request for free or more affordable access to holiday play schemes and services, discounted for siblings

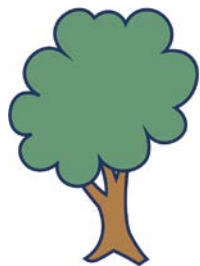
- A request for the establishment of a Dads' Group focused on mental well-being
- More focus on building support networks through services such as coffee mornings
- Trips in the holidays

As a result of the Family Hub programme we now host a number of partner agencies on our sites, providing families with access to a wider range of support. This includes: drug and alcohol support, smoking cessation, support for parents of teenagers.

7 |

Our Impact in 2024-25

Our Nurseries



Park Road Nursery

Park Road Nursery

This year the nursery provided high quality early years education for **71 children**, of whom all used English as their second language. We have expanded our offer to include 30 hour funded places for working families.

In the last 12 months we increased the number of places available for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) reflecting our strong

“So happy that the nursery now offers 30 hour funded places. I can now work knowing my child is well looked after.”

Parent of nursery attendee

“I have noticed my child has more confidence since starting nursery.”

Parent of nursery attendee



commitment to the belief that every child should be able to reach their full potential. We deeply value strong partnerships with our families and recognise the importance of working together to support each child's development.

Our Forest School continued to be central to our provision, offering children rich and meaningful outdoor learning experiences. Led by our dedicated Forest School Leader, these sessions provided opportunities for children to explore, connect with nature and immerse themselves in hands-on learning that nurtured curiosity and independence. Activities like den building, bug hunting and natural crafts were undertaken, which helped to build the children's self-esteem and promoted wellbeing. The sessions also supported the physical development of the children through climbing, balancing, and digging, which helped to build strength and promoted resilience, all in a natural setting.

*"I am delighted
with the progress
my child has made
since attending
Park Road."*



Parent of nursery attendee

Throughout the year we hosted a range of parent workshops on topics such as understanding the nursery curriculum, literacy, and safety. We also brought families together through events such as our annual sports day to strengthen and celebrate our nursery community. We are extremely proud of the community we created, and our annual survey to parents/carers showed that we continued to offer quality care, with **100% of respondents** saying their child was making good progress.



Arfiya's Story

Name has been changed

Arfiya was 2 when she moved with her mother to Sparkhill into accommodation for victims of domestic abuse. Arfiya has been on a child protection plan since she was 18 months old and until she moved had never attended a nursery. Both Arfiya and her mum have no understanding of English, and both speak Urdu.

Arfiya came to Park Road Nursery on the 2-year-old disadvantaged early education entitlement funding. She had significant speech and language delay and was very attached to her mum. She would become extremely distressed when her mum would leave her at nursery.

Arfiya was allocated a key worker who spoke Urdu. The keyworker tailored the settling in sessions to support Arfiya and her mum to ensure both felt comfortable with the process.

To support her language development all nursery staff used the visual timetable so Arfiya could see what was coming next in the nursery routine. Her keyworker communicated with her primarily in Urdu and would then repeat what had been said in English to support her in developing her language skills. Makaton was also used to develop communication skills, allowing Arfiya and nursery staff to communicate using visual cues.

Arfiya settled quickly into the nursery and her language skills have developed significantly. Now aged 4 years old she is ready to start school without any concerns of delayed language.

In addition, Arfiya's mum was signposted to English Classes at the Springfield Project, and support with benefit applications. Arfiya's mum has grown in confidence and can now speak some English, she has also made friends with some other nursery parents, and they go for play dates. They are no longer under the family support team and live independently in a flat of their own.



Mini-Springers Nursery

This year Mini-Springers Nursery provided high quality education for **93 children**, 28 of whom had emerging additional needs.

In the last 12 months we introduced a new curriculum that outlined what was provided at the nursery. This curriculum was shared with staff, parents, and visitors. It defined our practices and our commitment to providing all children with the best start in life. We also implemented room leaders, with three staff members promoted to this role.



We introduced several new programmes this year, including:

- The Early Talk Boost programme, which supported children with delayed language development
- The Brilliant Brushers programme, which encouraged 3-year-olds to brush their teeth daily at nursery
- The Bright Beginnings programme, which was designed to help children develop self-regulation and emotion management skills.



We welcomed many visitors to the nursery, including musicians from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Toni Tots drama, Animal Angie, and Bird Man Mike from Eco Birmingham. We also went on visits to Thinktank, the Birmingham Science Museum, and explored the local community, including shops, the post office and a launderette. This diverse range of visitors and experiences helped the children to develop their understanding of different cultures, provided them with interactive learning experiences, and developed a sense of local community.

Arfaana's Story

Name has been changed

Arfaana was 3 when she started at the nursery, having not attended a nursery or other childcare setting previously. When she started at the nursery, she was unable to communicate her needs to others, did not respond to her name and avoided making eye contact.

A special educational needs support plan was put in place to support Arfaana with her communication and relationship skills to allow her to join in with nursery routine activities and

to regulate her senses. Arfaana now comes running happily into nursery and is beginning to use single words to communicate, as well as using physical gestures to communicate a need.

The dad of Arfaana reported that he is extremely happy with the progress that Arfaana has made at nursery and the support they have received has been very good. He is happy that she can now communicate which has had a positive impact on her behaviour.

8 |

Our Impact in 2024-25

Community Services for Adults



Place of Welcome

Place of Welcome provides essential support and connection for the participants, many of whom experience poor health, live alone, are elderly or frail. It is run on an asset-based community model, led by volunteers who have been recruited from within the local community and overseen by a member of staff.

Participants and volunteers were directly involved in the delivery of the services - placing them at the heart of decision-making and shaping the service.

A hot meal was prepared and provided each week by the cooking group made up of volunteers and participants. The meal was then eaten together as a community, with participants socialising with other members or accessing additional support through our free drop-in sessions covering social care advice, legal advice and energy efficiency advice.

Place of Welcome was able to move back into our regular home at St Christopher's Church following the temporary relocation while building work was carried out. During the year, **247 people** attended Place of Welcome 988 times.

This year we launched a new partnership with Central England Law Centre providing free legal advice drop-in sessions at Place of Welcome. This helped **108 people** to improve their income through advice on welfare benefits, housing, and other legal issues. These sessions achieved a total annualised income of £156,489, an average of £1,449 per client.



Place of Welcome Case Study

Asmaa's Story

In her own words

I first came to The Springfield Project in 2022, accessing support from the midwife team, it helped me so much that I decided to volunteer my time.

I volunteer here at the Place of Welcome every week, registering the details of attendees and helping with the cooking. The group is really supportive and inclusive, and I have gained a lot of confidence from volunteering my time. I really love being part of the group.

English Classes

English classes at the Springfield Project were designed for complete beginners who were new to the UK and had little or no understanding of the English language, which impacted their transition into a new country and culture. The language barriers also affect their ability to understand and access community services available to them.

The programme was delivered through informal learning, designed to build attendees' confidence. The sessions were fun and creative, with participants role-playing scenarios from everyday situations, such as speaking to a doctor or their child's school.

The programme continued to focus on embedding health and wellbeing messages through the course content, with this year's focus on pre- and post-pregnancy. The classes included information on how to register for a GP, vaccinations for parents and children, mental health, and accessing emergency services.



In the last 12 months **135 people** participated in the classes and were signposted to other services and support such as healthy eating workshops, health checks and volunteering at the centre.



"If I had a baby now, I would eat a lot healthier and exercise more. I would also accept the screening tests that I didn't understand or want before."



English Class Participant

"English classes have boosted my confidence and I now try to be more active. I have also registered for cooking classes to build relationships in my community."

English Class Participant

9 |

Our Impact in 2024-25

Children, Young People and Play



Seedlings

Seedlings is a stay and play group for 0–4-year-olds and their parents/carers. It runs 3 times a week in term time and is staffed mainly from a team of dedicated volunteers. In the last 12 months **627 children** attended Seedlings with their parents/carers, with **277 new children** joining during the year. We saw an average of 24 attendees per session.

Seedlings provides a nurturing space for families to enjoy quality time together, the sessions followed a simple routine with play activities, book sharing, snack time, physical activity and singing. During the year, these activities were vital for a child's development and wellbeing, and the structured play provided at the sessions contributed to improvements in children's communication and language skills, social and emotional development, physical co-ordination, and motor skills.



“Seedlings has a brilliant structure and routine for children to follow. There is a good range of activities to help the children stay engaged and support their development.”

Parent of Seedlings participant





Seedlings is like an escape from the situation I was living in, it was a relief to just get out and to be with my son and play with him. It gave me a real boost in confidence coming here."



Parent of Seedlings participant

The Seedlings team worked collaboratively with families to ensure that they were heard and supported at the sessions, boosting family resilience. Families were also signposted to additional services to support their needs and development. When families regularly attended our group, they told us that it reduced their social isolation and improved their mental health and wellbeing.

Volunteers modelled and encouraged parents in facilitating play with their children, emphasising the importance of the parent's role in supporting children's learning through play. Many of the volunteers speak community languages, which enabled these messages to be relayed to parents in their home language.

Sparkhill - A Child Friendly Neighbourhood

Child Friendly Neighbourhood is an innovative programme seeking to improve the quality of childhood experience in Sparkhill. The distinct elements to the programmes, include:

- **Engagement** - A platform where young voices shape the future of Sparkhill as a child friendly neighbourhood and support project development
- **Enrichment** - Increase the range and number of out-of-school activities for children and young people
- **Environment** - Improve the physical environment of Sparkhill, and make it clean, safe, and green for the young people living in that community

In its third year, the Child Friendly Neighbourhood programme offered children and young people a broad range of experiences that were informed and designed by the young people themselves. Through the funding we have created a range of clubs, activities, events and playschemes.

“You are doing something special getting children back into parks and green spaces. The impact on their emotional and physical health is immense.”

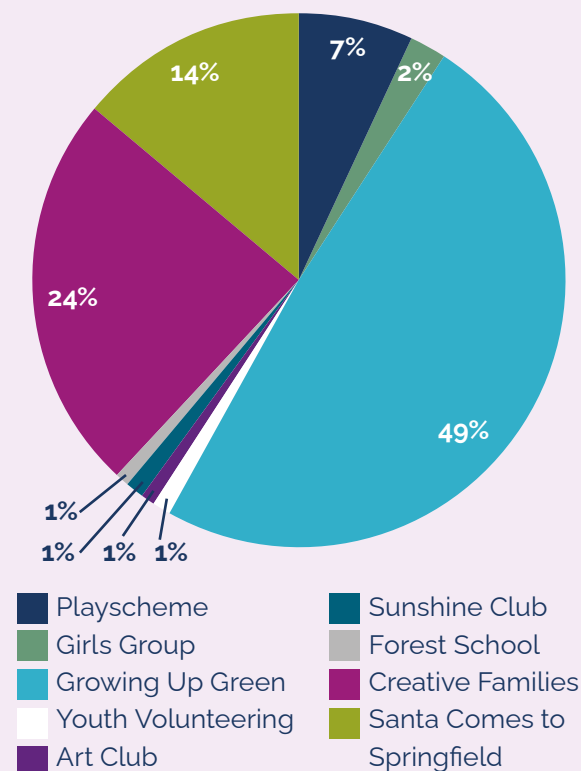


Conservation Partner

For children aged 5-11 year we ran the following during the year:

- After school clubs
- Holiday playschemes
- Forest School sessions
- Sunshine Club for children with special educational needs and disabilities which has been co developed with Sparkhill families
- Sparkhill - A Child's Eye View, a heritage project supported by local historians to provide the children with enriching experiences exploring the history and heritage of the local community.

Engagement



“Thank you for having this club for us, there is nothing out there for our children. Before they used to be some groups to go to, but they were all cut. We are grateful to be able to come to these as a family.”



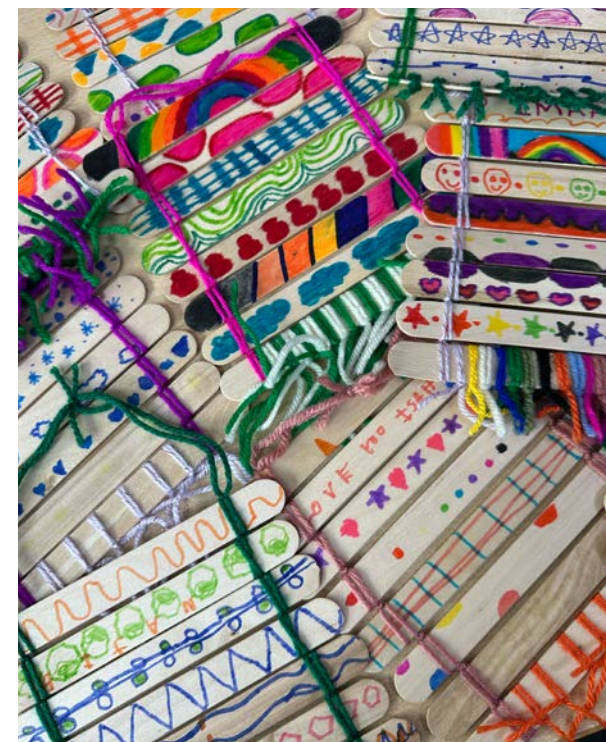
Sunshine Club Parent



For young people aged 11-18 we ran the following during the year:

- Youth advisory board to inform our work with this age group
- Girls' Group providing a safe space where girls aged 11-16 can meet new friends and have fun
- Youth Volunteering

The Youth Volunteering project is supported by a grant from the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, Simon Foster, through his My Community Fund initiative to help local groups prevent and reduce crime in their local community.



“What CFN is doing is important. You are working together with other partners in the community to provide what’s missing for children and that’s special.”



Steering Group Member

In addition to our regular groups, a number of community events were run which supported our CFN aims and provided rich opportunities for play:

Community Activities Hosted in Year 2	Attendance figures (children & adults)
Blossom Project trip to Ikon Gallery (part of playscheme)	24
Growing Up Green Festival	600+
Tree planting with Friends of Sparkhill Park	24
Allotment, Forest School days	15
Summer Garden party with St Christopher's Church	326
Creative Families Festival	291
Santa Comes to Springfield	170
Family Health event with Sparkbrook Children's Zone	100+



Child Friendly Neighbourhood Case Study

Anika's Story

My child is non-mobile and non-verbal and attends a special school in the city. Outside of school we feel isolated and other playschemes are not set up to support the needs of my child.

We were invited to attend the Sunshine Group. My child was able to engage with the sensory play and be amongst the other children having fun. I was able to connect with the other parents in the group and we shared our experiences of parenting a child with additional needs as well as self-care tips and information about other groups and resources.

I am so thankful for this group; it gets me and my child out of the house and connecting with other local families.

Name has been changed

Butterflies

Butterflies is a Stay and Play group for children with additional needs. Sessions are kept intentionally small in order to support the children and give them an inclusive and high-quality educational play experience that can be adapted to the needs of the individual child.

In the last 12 months we have supported **32 children**, with an individual play plan developed for each child that included targets or next steps that the parents could work towards with their child. The feedback from parents was very positive, with **90%** of parents saying their child has made progress at the sessions and a **100%** of parents feeling the space is safe and supported their child's learning and development.

"This is a lovely calm setting and ideal for children with sensory issues. My child has benefitted from coming here."

Parent of Butterflies participant



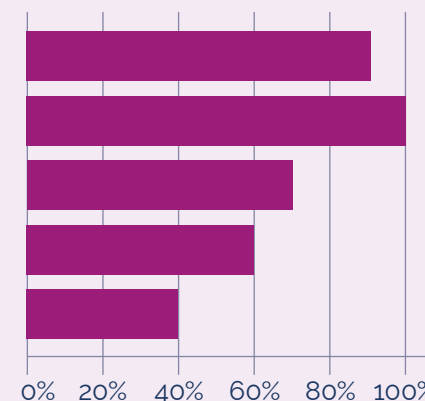
"I really appreciated the personalised targets that were given to us. My and husband and I are trying to work towards them with my child. It was very simple but effective and manageable, allowing us to focus on smaller areas to help him without feeling overwhelmed."



Parent of Butterflies participant

What has been helpful at Butterflies?

- Supporting my child to make progress
- Having a safe place for my child to play and learn
- Getting advice and referrals
- Talking with parents
- Supporting my child's transition into nursery



Aminah's Story

Name has been changed

Aminah was aged 2 when she started attending Butterflies, she was not speaking and showed little awareness of others. She showed delayed play skills and initially did not engage with any activities without a high level of support.

After some observations a play plan was developed with some targets including supporting Aminah to focus on a range of joint attention activities, to take turns with her mum/another familiar adult during activities. Staff at Butterflies worked with her parents to show them the activities in the play plan so that they can support

Aminah to work towards the targets. The Butterflies team also liaised with the health visiting team to ensure the appropriate referrals were in place for Aminah to support her development.

Aminah has progressed well in all the targets set. She is engaging more and more with a range of activities and shows attention to adults who use joint attention strategies with her. The early intervention of the Butterflies group will support Aminah to progress well in the long term. Her parents are extremely positive about the progress she has made in the group.

Playscheme

The holiday playscheme at the Springfield Centre and Park Road Nursery site offer quality play experiences for local children aged 5-11 years along with nutritious meals during the school holidays.

Over the last 12 months playschemes have taken place during the Christmas, easter and summer holidays with 170 children attending.

The children attending had the opportunity to participate in activities designed to spark creativity and imagination, supporting the development of problem-solving skills and their confidence in communicating their emotions. The children were given

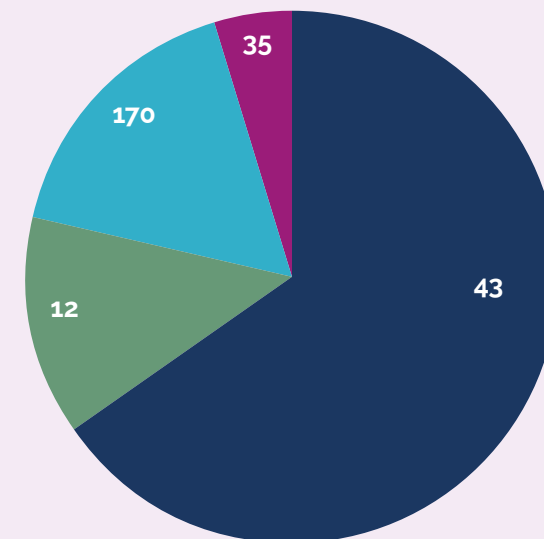
"I like it when I get to play outside in the garden with my friends because I don't have a proper garden at home."
Playscheme attendee



lots of opportunity to experience outside play, encouraging them to connect with nature, engage in physical activity and reducing stress and anxiety.

The playscheme also offered opportunities for the children to explore the history of the neighbourhood, attend trips to museums and art galleries and try out new activities such as kick boxing and canoeing.

Playscheme in numbers



- Number of children attended
- Number of children with SEND
- Number of children from 0-10% SOA*
- Number of families referred/signposted to other services

*Super Output Areas - children from the top 10% most deprived areas



Darsha's Story

Name has been changed

After attending the playscheme at the Springfield Centre, Darsha's parent requested for her daughter to attend an additional playscheme.

The parent shared that her child has a diagnosed disability and struggles to be at home over the school holidays and finds it difficult to engage

in activities that she is unfamiliar with. The parent commented on the positive impact attending the playscheme had on her child's behaviour. Darsha was allocated a space at the additional play scheme and a referral was made to Early Help for additional family support.

Sparkhill - A Child's Eye View

Building on the success of the Child Friendly Neighbourhood programme, our Heritage project, Sparkhill - A Child's Eye View, connects children with the history of their neighbourhood through a child friendly lens. This is done by exploring the local area's green spaces, shopping areas, and cultural and religious spaces with local historians who explain the history of the area.

The children visited the Birmingham Museum Collections Centre to connect the objects of the past on display to

the heritage of their neighbourhood. By providing the children with rich experiences and an understanding of the local heritage we are equipping them with the skills to imagine a future for their neighbourhood. Supported by creative practitioners, the children created an artistic response to their learning that will be showcased at the Festival of Sparkhill which we will be running in 2025.

In the last 12 months **36 children** participated in the historic community walk-throughs, **28 children** participated in the visit to Birmingham Museum

& Art Gallery, and **48 children** have participated in artistic activities.

Sparkhill - A Child's Eye View is made possible with The National Lottery Heritage Fund. Thanks to National Lottery players, we have been able to launch this year-long programme of community heritage activities. We are looking forward to continuing the programme into the year ahead, culminating in a heritage focused Festival of Sparkhill in 2025, celebrating the many experiences of childhood in Sparkhill through history!



10 |

Our Impact in 2024-25

Volunteering

During the year, volunteers brought enormous value to our work at The Springfield Project, through their broad range of skills, their energy and enthusiasm, and the hard work they contributed by generously giving their time.

We were proud to see the ways they gained and developed through their volunteering, with many going on to seek employment and training opportunities.

“Sohana is an amazing volunteer who has been remarkable in the last couple of years, offering a lot to Seedlings. Her background in education has helped a lot, and since being here her confidence has grown.”



Name has been changed



“Mumtaz has been volunteering here for a long time. She is hardworking, honest, and reliable, she has excellent communication and customer service skills. I am really impressed with her capability in creating a professional and welcoming environment for families.”

Name has been changed



In the last 12 months:

75

volunteers supported The Springfield Project

40

new volunteers received induction training

19

volunteers found employment

7

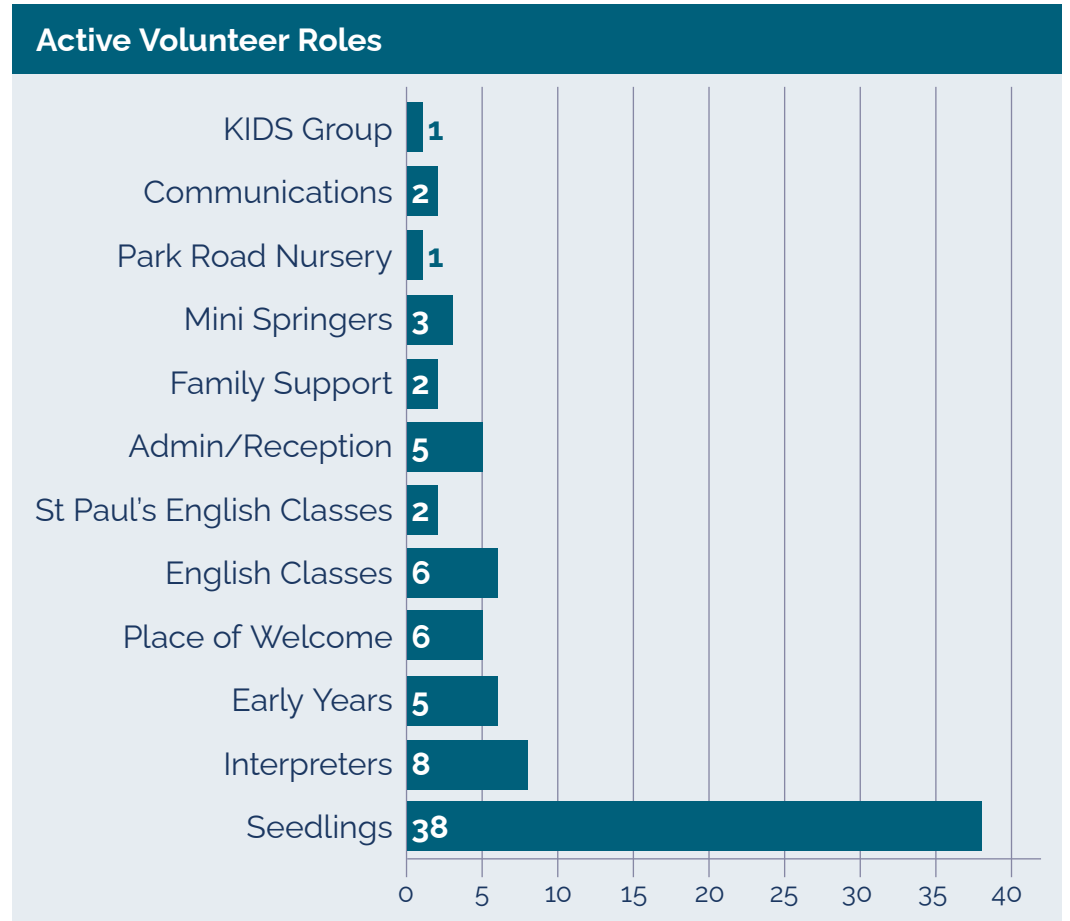
volunteers started training courses

Characteristic	Number	%
Female volunteers	74	99%
Jobseekers (minimum figures)	29	39%
Resident in Hall Green District	55	73%
Springfield Ward	40	53%
Parents of children under 5 in Hall Green	13	17%
Parents of children under 5	17	23%
Previous service users	30	40%
Residing in the top 10% most deprived areas	16	21%
St Christopher's Church members	8	11%

This year, our volunteers clocked up **2,318 hours** - the equivalent of 64 working weeks and a value of **£27,843** - representing an extraordinary gift of time, care and support that directly enriched the lives of local families.



*Value calculated assuming a 36.5-hour week and using the Real Living Wage of £12.60 per hour.



Abida's Story

In her own words

Abida moved to the UK 16 years ago. Health issues and a significant career gap left her feeling disconnected from the workforce. Abida lacked confidence and felt she would never work again.

Abida was encouraged to volunteer at The Springfield project, and after completing relevant training, Abida began volunteering her time to support the delivery of the English classes. The experience boosted her confidence and reminded her of what she was capable of.

After her success as a volunteer Abida was offered a paid position as an English teacher, she was mentored

by other staff members and is thriving in her new role. She now teaches English for Infant and Women's health and motivates others in her class to volunteer at the centre, creating a cycle of empowerment and support.

Abida's return to work has been a source of pride for her children who admire her determination. Her career shift has set a powerful example for her family, showing them that personal and professional growth are always possible.

Abida's journey from volunteer to English teacher at Springfields Children's Centre highlights the power of support, personal growth, and community.

“Volunteering was an amazing experience that made me feel great and excited about what I could do.”



“My children are thrilled that I am working again and often tell me how proud they are of me for returning to work after such a long break.”

Abida

11 |

Our Impact in 2024-25

Environment

Our core mission is to support every child, young person, parent, and adult in our community to reach their full potential, but we recognise that environmental sustainability is a crucial part of building healthy and resilient communities.

Across our operations and programmes, we have taken steps to manage and reduce our environmental impact, reusing craft materials and packaging to providing children with the opportunity to connect with nature through our outdoor play and Forest School provision. In the last 12 months we have:

- Launched the Building Greener Communities Project with ecoBirmingham ✓
- Held the Growing up Green festival which was attended by 600 adults and children ✓
- Children at our nurseries enjoyed a seed bombing session planting bee friendly plant ✓
- Hosted Bird Man Mike who taught the children bird call recognition ✓



Building Greener Communities

Launched this year, the Building Greener Communities (BGC) project is a 3-year initiative led by ecoBirmingham and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

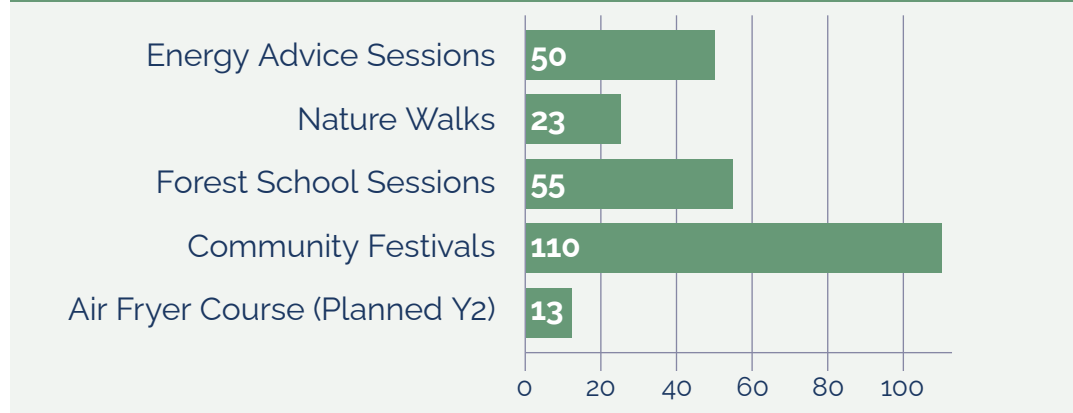
It will support The Springfield Project to embed sustainability across our projects and services.

In the last 12 months we engaged **355 people** through **28 community events** including:

- Drop-in energy advice sessions at Place of Welcome which provided advice and support to **50 people**
- Local nature walks with **23 participants**
- **13 Forest School Sessions** engaging **55 residents**
- Environment-focused activities at **3 community festivals**, reaching **110 people**



Resident Engagement at The Springfield Project (Sparkhill) - year 1





Other key achievements included:

- The development and delivery of a bespoke air fryer cooking course for project users as a more energy efficient way of cooking
- Completion of energy audits and sustainability action plans for all sites
- Carbon literacy training to key staff

The Springfield Project's participation in the Building Greener Communities project has helped us in our commitment to manage and reduce our environmental impact across all our services and programmes.

We are very proud of the steps we are taking to eliminate waste, eliminate single use plastics on our sites, become more energy efficient and increase our environmental sustainability.

12 |

Our Impact in 2024-25

Stakeholder Engagement

This year we resumed our Service User Survey. In total we had **258 responses** to the survey, with over **80% of respondents** rating the service we provide **5 out of 5**.

The survey results highlighted key themes such as community, positivity, child development and an increased confidence in adults.

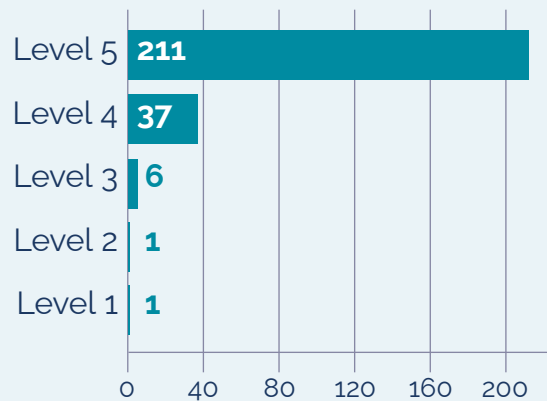
- **95.7% of respondents** agreed/strongly agreed that adults and children of all ages and backgrounds are welcomed at The Springfield Project
- **95.3% of respondents** agreed/strongly agreed that The Springfield Project helps to bring local people of different backgrounds together
- **90.6% respondents** agreed/strongly agreed that coming to The Springfield Project has helped their family a lot

“Springfield Project helped me when I was going through a tough time having a toddler – they have been very supportive.”



Springfield Project Parent

Please rate your overall experience with us (1 star is low, 5 stars is high)



4.78

Average Rating



“Keep it going for support with children that have additional needs. It makes such a difference; families can feel helpless without something like this.”

Springfield Project Parent



“Springfield helped me in a way that I feel more confident and comfortable while communicating with people. I’ve built good connections here.”

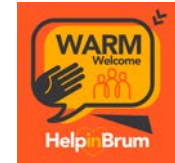
“Thank you for working so hard and supporting the Sparkhill Community.”

13 | Our Supporters

We would like to say a big thank you 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 to the Sparkhill community 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.

- Art Works Hall Green
- Baron Davenport's Charity
- Baynel
- Birmingham City Council Household Support Fund, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions
- Birmingham City Council Warm Welcome Grant
- Bring it on Brum Holiday Activity Fund, funded by the Department for Education
- Central England Law Centre
- EcoBirmingham
- The Eveson Trust
- Faith Action
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Knowle Parish Church
- MADL - Making A Difference Locally
- Mitel
- The National Lottery Community Fund - Reaching Communities
- The National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Parakeet
- West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner - My Community Fund
- The Springfield Project is enormously grateful to Mitel and Baynel for generously donating time and expertise to support the production of this Impact Report.

Our Supporters



14 |

How You Can 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.

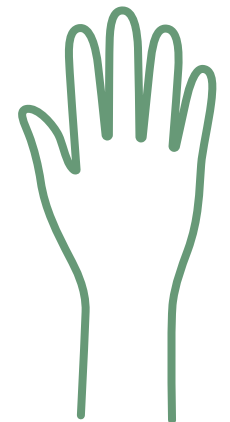
Visit www.springfieldproject.org.uk/support-us/make-a-donation



Volunteer

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.

f facebook.com/
SpringfieldProjectBirmingham

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

 instagram.com/
the_springfield_project/



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**



Leave a gift in your Will

Find out more about remembering our charity in your Will on our website. Visit **springfieldproject.org.uk/support-us/leave-a-gift-in-your-will**



The Springfield Project

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57 Park Rd, Birmingham, B11 4HB

Tel: 0121 759 0090

Registered charity no. 1134977

Company Registration no. 06582318

