



## **Believe to Achieve Annual Report 2012/13**

### **Introduction**

The charity has continued to develop rapidly in the last year due to the quality of work being delivered along with an increase in demand for services with the current economic and social downturn taking place. The work of Believe to Achieve has continued to develop at an amazing rate. The charity now delivers services in 42 primary schools across the Wolverhampton area offering a full range of activities, therapy, peer mentoring and support services to children and their families. The charity offers services to 16 schools in the traditional catchment areas of All Saints/Blakenhall and Whitmore Reans.

Over the last year an amazing figure of 57,967 children have accessed the activities offered by Believe to Achieve through lunchtime and afterschool programmes, plus school lesson based activity programmes. The activities offered during the school term -times plus on the holiday programmes include all sports, art, music, individual workshops ie/ magic, drama, streetdance along with fun and fitness programmes. The charity with the support of funding from Extended Schools has also operated family activity sessions at weekends to encourage quality family time along with facilitating opportunities for families to try out new fun experiences together. The counselling/therapy service has continued to grow with 93 individual children being referred to the service, engagement has also taken place with 36 children via behaviour/anger management group sessions which the project has offered to certain schools who have needed specialist intervention with some of their children. Art psychotherapy and dance movement sessions have also been popular both the aforementioned services have provided alternative ways to engage with children who have found it difficult to express their thoughts and feelings verbally. A total of 121 parents have attended Believe to Achieve parent nurturing programmes which have been co-delivered with one local childrens centres plus the local MAST area 3 team. The programmes were delivered for ten week blocks during the school terms.

Believe to Achieve has continued to successfully deliver the ASDAN accredited peer mentoring/support to programme with 227 key stage 2 children (8-11 years) in 19 primary schools having been trained the charity has worked in partnership with the Wolverhampton Peer Support Network to deliver the service. The project has also delivered a low key early intervention/prevention gangs workshop to 13 primary schools in Wolverhampton ten within the All Saints/Blakenhall catchment area. In total 679 children attended the workshops. The project has also provided 8 healthy living workshops to local schools along with four six weekly music sessions in three schools

looking at the theme of anti-bullying. The charity is currently working with around 432 children per week during school term-time across all its services.

The B2A has expanded into the local neighbouring borough of Dudley where services are currently offered to four schools. The growth in numbers can be explained by the development of school lunchtime provision providing services like streetdance, fun and fitness plus multi activities to support play and expression for children during the important break in the school day. A range of inhouse programmes have also been delivered to support children during the school day with a focus on attainment, attendance and behaviour. Believe to Achieve has developed its services in a very holistic way linking family life with performance at school. An increase has also occurred in children attending afterschool provision again due to the economic and social pressures effecting families more apparently in the last twelve months. Without question the services provided by the charity are needed more than ever in the current climate with family life becoming more difficult on a daily basis for the vast majority of the families that we work with. The impact upon the primary aged children can be wide ranging with parents often focussing the pressures they experience onto their offspring which along with poor parenting skills causes multiple complex problems within certain families.

### **Therapy Services**

Throughout the year project counselling/therapy sessions have been offered through a referral process to 22 primary schools in Wolverhampton. The local Multi Agency Support teams (MAST) and the local authority social care and early years teams have also been afforded the opportunity to make direct referrals to the service. A total of 93 individual children have been referred and received the counselling services in the last year. Once a referral is made Believe to Achieve staff undertake an initial assessment followed by a meeting with key professionals and in most cases the family to set goals/outcomes for the interventions. Individual targets are also set at a lower level for the children.

The charity reviews progress every six weeks (sessions usually weekly during term-time) with the average amount of time spent with children being ten weeks however 45% of children referred were seen for upto 20 sessions. Believe to Achieve staff also provide feedback to key professionals and attend Common Assessment Framework (CAF) meetings as a part of the support mechanism around the child/family. Reports are also produced to evidence progress and feed into professional interventions. The children also complete their own ongoing evaluations. Art psychotherapy (46 children), Dance Movement (89 children), play and drama therapy are some of the interventions utilised to provide an holistic service to the children in the last year.

The therapy service has grown in the last three years on a yearly basis with meetings held at the end of each year with headteachers and key professionals to review how the therapy has made a difference to the school life of the children referred plus how the service can be developed. In the last year the project has undertaken more behaviour/anger management work currently delivered to 36 children in seven schools who have identified a specific need for the service.

### **Peer Mentoring**

In total 227 children have been trained as peer supporters using the STEPPS programme which is ASDAN accredited which gives the children recognition for their achievement with a

certificate, special hat and a badge. In partnership with the Wolverhampton Peer Support Network, Believe to Achieve has organised two boroughwide events to celebrate peer mentoring in schools and to present awards to individual school pupils and to recognise an overall primary school peer supporter of the year for Wolverhampton. Development of the service is ongoing with promotional information being sent to all primary schools in Wolverhampton/Dudley.

### **Activities**

Sport particularly football, basketball, dodgeball, tennis and cricket proved most popular with fun and fitness games being designed for the children less inclined to take part in mainstream sports. Music and streetdance have grown more popular with certain schools as both lunchtime and afterschool sessions have developed. Believe to Achieve staff promote the service based on the feedback in assemblies and via leaflets targeting parents, carers and children. Four holiday programmes operated at different schools during the summer holiday with the programmes proving very popular and being delivered at a minimal cost to parents. Activities included local family trips plus seaside visits along with the more traditional music, dance art and sports based opportunities.

All activity programmes were evaluated via the parents and children with feedback often given to the schools involved in the programmes. Feedback from the evaluation forms both negative/positive is integrated into any future design of new holiday programmes. The activities have become more popular each year with school holiday provision being offered at each holiday period excluding the winter months. Average attendance at the holiday events was around 30-35 children per day. Over the year 12,420 children gained access to sporting opportunities. In the last year the demand for lunchtime interventions along with school curriculum based activities has grown, with schools utilising the project to enhance the attainment and increase pupil motivation to achieve at school by incorporating both fun and targeted activities. The lunchtime work has become a key part of the projects delivery direct to children with some of the feedback received from the schools suggesting the following benefits to the children, greater focus on schoolwork, improved peer relationships, development of confidence and personal motivation, reduction in play time incidents, development in motor skills, plus a greater control over emotions. In total 57,967 children have accessed activities in the last year. All schools are charged a small amount for Believe to Achieve services and this has afforded a longer term future for the project. All of our programmes are evaluated directly with the children, with the outcomes shared with the individual schools, MAST teams and other key voluntary sector partners.

### **Art Based Work**

Art based creative work commenced in May, 2012 due to difficulties in recruiting sessional staff with the appropriate skills. The service has become very popular with Believe to Achieve offering arts based sessions during its holiday programmes and to 12 schools weekly at lunchtimes with two afterschool sessions. Art based activity days have been very popular on the holiday programmes and in partnership with our schools we have undertaken sculpture work, an Olympic themed arts project

plus individual projects focussing on family life, healthy living and murals of the childrens local area/life.

Musical workshops have also been performed tackling issues like racism and bullying with the children using art and music performance to express their thoughts/feelings with performances in assemblies and at parents evenings within school. One of the main benefits afforded by this work has been the opportunity for parents and children to work alongside each other on collective group and individual projects. Throughout the above work consultation has taken place with parents and children along with the local schools to design appropriate programmes. Believe To Achieve has also engaged with three local childrens centres to deliver arts based activities. A total of 423 children took part in arts based activities on our holiday programmes and via access to our weekly school based sessions.

Art and music are important tools in engaging primary aged children to have fun, develop skills, gain confidence and to allow self expression. Believe to Achieve is looking at how we can develop more innovative approaches to increase self-esteem through music/art in the future without doubt utilising opportunities for families to work together is a key component affording individual and collective ways to express their feelings.

### **Parent Nurturing**

Believe to Achieve delivered four ten week family links parent nurturing programmes in one childrens centre attended by a total of 121 parents. The courses developed the theme of family cohesion, stress reduction and re-inforcement of basic consistent parenting skills. Five parents over the year moved onto the national more intense Triple P programme which was delivered by the local MAST teams. Parent questionnaires and course evaluation forms demonstrate that parents feel their self esteem has been raised and confidence levels have risen. The programme allows parents to be themselves focusing them on becoming better parents with tools provided to equip them to work more efficiently with their children praising good behaviour and being consistent in dealing with poor behaviour.

Parents are upskilled to understand how their child might be feeling and how that can effect the dynamics of the family. Some of the tools provided help parents to instill family rules with rewards and penalties along with looking at certain behaviour which maybe attention seeking and teaching parents basic problem solving skills. Feedback from parents suggests that after attending the course they feel more confident and no longer see their childrens behaviour as a problem, it is often the parents rather than the children who have effected change.

All the of referrals come direct from schools, childrens centres, MAST teams, social care and occasionally via court orders.

### **Gangs/e-Safety/Healthy Living Workshops**

The charity has also delivered a low key early intervention/prevention gangs workshop to 13 primary schools in Wolverhampton ten within the All Saints/Blakenhall catchment area. In total 679 children attended the workshops. The focus of the workshops offered an in-depth insight into issues around staying safe, avoidance of bullying and transition into senior school. The project has also offered 8 healthy living workshops to local schools along with four six weekly music sessions in three schools looking at the theme of anti-bullying.

### **Weekend Family Work (Fun4Families)**

Every piece of work is evaluated in some areas of the work like therapy/counselling movement/progression can take time, equally parenting programmes are often the first step on a long road for some of the parents we work with. Sometimes parents have to attend parenting programmes twice to begin to feel the full benefit this can be a 20 week commitment. In 7 schools our lunchtime interventions have shown a drop from 11/12 playground incidents per day down to 1%. 52% of children attending afterschool clubs have told us that they feel more confident in themselves as a result of learning/developing new skills. The charity also meets a lot of soft targets for example 23% of parents became more involved with their school evidenced by them attending parent evenings, going on leisure trips with their children organised by Believe to Achieve and attending weekend joint family fun activity sessions.

. Below is an example of a Fun4Families programme that the project organised:-

### **Woodfield Infants School Weekend Family Engagement Project**

Partners

.Woodfield Infant School

.Star Childrens Centre

. Believe To Achieve

.LNP Neighbourhood Wardens

### **Background**

The project ran for eleven Saturday mornings (10am-12 noon) delivered via a multi-agency approach to an average of 15 parents plus siblings per session. A range of cooking, family safety, multi-activities, street dance along with arts and crafts were offered over the sessions. Utilising school staff, Childrens Centre staff and Believe To Achieve sessional staff. The aim of the sessions was to

engage with hard to reach parents affording them the opportunity to have fun and quality family time together. The activities were funded by some residual Extended Schools finance underspend.

The overall theme was built around keeping safe and secure with sessions around road safety and safety in the home being intertwined across the programme.

### **Venue**

The Community facility at Woodfield Infant school was viewed by service users and delivery partners as being an ideal facility combining both outdoor and indoor options for the delivery of activities.

### **Survey**

14 parents were surveyed about how they found the project and how we could improve the delivery of the activities on the trip to Barmouth.

The responses were as follows:-

1. What aspects of the programme did you enjoy the most and why did you attend?

Reasons given

Activities for the whole family

Able to bring both my children

Got my child used to coming onto the school site ahead of him joining the school

Different range of activities

Good provision for the boys in particular

Quality time together local to home

Activities were free

Friendly staff who encouraged us to attend weekly

2. Would you continue to attend programmes from September if they were run weekly/monthly/please specify?

Would definitely attend monthly

Weekly is okay but not in the winter months

Only if activities remained free

Providing the venue remained the same

Possibly if the timing changed to 9-30-11-30

3. What additional activities do you feel could be provided?

More to do for the under-5's

Some toys for the little one's, otherwise more of the same

Learning activities for the family

More walks or outings to places of local interest

Arts/crafts

Theme based activities around friendship/families/bullying

More music and dance

More fun/fitness sessions

4. What would you change about the programme ?

Later timing 11-1

Move to Sundays when families have more time

More to do for the younger ones

Greater integration of fathers

9-11 timing so we can get back for lunch

Walks

Exercise based activities for the family to enjoy

More cultural cooking

Simple games the whole family can play

Barmouth Trip

Following on from the weekend programme 77 children and parents attended the Barmouth trip on Monday 23.7.12. Everyone enjoyed the day on one of the few real sunny days of the summer.

## **Evaluation**

The programme was very successful the parents/children who attended definitely had positive/fun experiences. The main aim of attracting hard to reach families was not achieved, however the families were targeted prior to the sessions commencing and the school may have its own views on why some of the targeted parents did not come along.

The weather was very unseasonal on certain weekends and this could have been a factor, along with the choice of day with some parents having other work or leisure commitments on Saturday mornings (several parents came along post 11am due to their children having other commitments).

A stronger focus from the partners on targeting families may bring better uptake in the future. The project has always worked in partnership with schools holding regular meetings with headteachers and developing bespoke programmes after a thorough consultation with parents.

## **Conclusion**

The charity has definitely brought major changes to the lives of the children and families we have worked with particularly in the therapy work undertaken. Believe to Achieve is often the first organisation to begin working with a particular child on issues around emotional/physical abuse or working with a family where domestic violence might be an issue. We find the child can often be partly restored very quickly whereby the adults in the family can take much longer. The therapy service is totally confidential and this enables those experiencing emotional conflict to talk through issues with someone who is trained to listen and who has no other role in their life.

The therapy we provide is a positive process that encourages clarification of thoughts and feelings. We have been very successful in alleviating personal distress and suffering, fostering a sense of self that is meaningful and enhancing the quality of the child's domestic and school relationships. Some of the issues we have successfully turned around include anger, disruptive behaviour, loss and bereavement, bullying, abuse, neglect, depression, low self-esteem, witnessing domestic violence and breakdown of school/family relationships. We offer an holistic approach to our work and we undertake work with particular children and their families across two or three of our services. The schools certainly see value in our work with improved behaviour, attendance, attainment and better relationships developed in school.

Parents also benefit from our family work often due to them beginning to understand basic parenting skills and gaining a better perspective of how their child might be feeling. We also encourage parents to give their children some quality time on a more regular basis. Through our Peer Mentoring work we attempt to train children to be more understanding, thoughtful and ultimately more responsible citizens. We view mentoring work as a lifelong experience that can be transferred into secondary school, college and work life. The training in primary age children is key as it sets them up for the future. Prevention and early intervention are important components in dealing with issues/concerns. Statutory bodies and other voluntary organisations work with us to provide a team



around certain children and their families which provides them with a greater level of intensive support when it is needed.

The charity has learnt a great deal in the last year as we have moved with the ever changing times and needs of our client base. The most important lesson the project has learnt is flexibility. Through detailed evaluations, and direct discussions with teaching staff/families we have adapted services like our therapy and activity work to integrate them and streamline the services to take a more holistic approach to our work. By listening to our client base we have adapted delivery times, venues and how we deliver certain services to gain maximum benefit. We have a great belief in delivering services out in the community, where children and families feel more comfortable. Sometimes school settings have not been appropriate so we have utilised other venues like childrens centres and community venues. We have adapted some of our activity programmes to support children with additional needs and tried to use a wide range of therapy services to engage children who have difficulty in self expression.

We have also learnt that some of our clients will take a great amount of time before significant change can be measured properly. Confidence is a key factor when working with children and families with low self-esteem it is often a case of taking small steps. Poor parenting skills is and remains a major issue that needs to be addressed the loss in the sense of community can leave many parents and children feeling isolated and vulnerable, through the charities work we have attempted to bring families closer together and emphasise the important role primary schools have to play in the early development of children. Poor life experiences at an early age can set a trend for future life. By working in the schools we have tried to raise their profile in the eyes of the community emphasising that they are a place of fun and personal development as well as learning.

**Nick Pratt**

**Project Manager**

**February, 2014**

**B2A Trustee Board Members**

**Lisa Webb co-Chair/Founder**

**Jon Crockett co-Chair**

**Matthew West Treasurer**

**James-Pearson-Jenkins**

**Robert Marris**

**Virginia Denner**

**Timothy Swallow**

**Michelle Lane**

**Ann Gough**

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**Wendy Lewis**

**Administrator**

**Sessional Staff**

**Therapists**

**Debbie Agnew, Jessica Spittle, Elizabeth Marron, Carol Featherstone, Danielle Humphries**

**Activities/Peer Mentoring**

**Chris Rabone, Sam Rock, Grant Joshua, Iain Gillett, George Clayton, Luke Bowdler, Kelvyn Brookes, Natasha Clarke, Lucille Orantino, Faye Adams, Christie Robbins, Nyli Lewis, Bradley Lawley, Simon Ram.**

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