

# THE RED HEN PROJECT

## Annual Report and Accounts

2015 - 2016



The Grove  
PRIMARY SCHOOL



# THE RED HEN PROJECT

# THE RED HEN PROJECT

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## Chair's report

We continue to work with five primary schools north of the River in Cambridge with two home-school workers supporting families in the most practical of ways and forming valuable relationships. We have received many supportive testimonials this year, and this one sums up the impact the project has in the community;

'Being so connected to local schools, the project has an intimate knowledge of the area giving access to families that might otherwise not make use of services. Furthermore, the work offered avoids the stigma often associated with statutory services.

By working at a local level and in family homes the project regularly raises the level of confidence and skills of parents enabling them to reclaim authority over their own lives. Many of these patients will have suffered trauma in their own childhoods.

The project's work is flexible and adapted to local needs generating levels of change that would be the envy of statutory services.'

**Vince Hesketh, Family Therapist at the Croft Children's Unit, Cambridge (NHS)**

The project was in the safe hands of an Executive Committee for much of the year, made up of the Head Teachers of the five schools. They oversaw the actual running of the project and fed back to Trustees at regular meetings. I am delighted to report that, with the employment of our very own Project Manager, we have been able to make this tier of management redundant and the Heads have taken up their positions as Trustees once more.

The project successfully moved into a new purpose built office at King's Hedges School, and, alongside this came a new 'branding' of the project and new logo to present a fresh face to the community.

Fundraising is of course a continuing challenge. National Lottery funding is in place until August 2017, and we do receive some regular and some surprise donation from the local community but are always open to new ideas and suggestions.

Offices, logos, management and meetings aside it is the Red Hen home-school workers who continue to deliver exceptional support to families in crisis. They manage large caseloads, difficult situations, huge demands on their time and they do it with patience, skill and empathy. Now with admin and management support from an efficient and innovative Manager I am sure the project is in very good shape to face the coming year.

I would like to extend my thanks to our staff, my fellow Trustees, new and old and all who support the project in any way.

Do keep in touch, follow us on social media and spread the word about this unique and special charity.

Lesley Ford

**Chair**

## Our vision, aims and what we do

### Our Vision

‘Our vision is to develop an outstanding, pioneering way of working with and supporting disadvantaged children and their families that bridges the school setting and the local community; a way of working which will be held up as excellent practice.’

### Our Aims

- Support and empower vulnerable families and children to build resilience and build relationships.
- Support the development of more positive relationships between schools and their communities.
- Develop interagency liaison, co-operation and collaboration.
- Support the development of positive parenting.
- Develop links with other voluntary bodies in the community to reduce isolation.
- Support the development of pro-active work at an early stage.

### In order to achieve these aims we will:

- Deliver our services in the hub of the community, and with the support of the community.
- Promote and raise awareness of the project.
- Raise funds from charitable and statutory sources.
- Co-operate and collaborate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities.
- Develop and exploit existing networks.
- Pay for and use the services of Home School Workers.

### Our values:

- We are committed to our local community.
- We believe in early intervention to prevent initial difficulties a child or a family may experience developing into significant problems
- We believe in the benefits of working with other agencies in a pro-active way
- We respect the families and children with whom we work and seek to empower them to resolve the difficulties they may be experiencing
- We are committed to continuous development
- We will maintain and respect the confidentiality of the families and children with whom we work

## Our work

Red Hen operates a family support home school liaison programme through the work of 2 full time project workers in the socially and economically disadvantaged areas of Arbury, Kings Hedges, Chesterton, and Orchard Park.

We work with children and families in five primary schools, Arbury, King's Hedges, The Grove, Shirley, and Orchard Park, concentrating on children who are displaying emotional and behavioural difficulties. When required, we also work with siblings of these children, even if they do not attend any of the five schools. We work within a multi-disciplinary framework and adopt a range of approaches as necessary. The objectives of the support include improved educational performance, attendance, reduce numbers of children displaying emotional and behavioural difficulties and increase empowerment and levels of participation of "difficult to engage" parents and families.

The Red Hen approach is a family centred model. This model is a tried and tested approach in both Social Care and Health. Our approach has been informed by current research and philosophy on this topic. We aim to deliver frontline services that can help families, children and young people by focusing on their needs. This approach, and the use of the 'Early Help Assessment' (formerly 'Common Assessment Framework') can be used to give an effective early intervention program, which identifies additional needs across universal services.

We also adopt the principles of the Children and Families Act 2014 (formerly 'Every Child Matters'), as we feel that these themes are still more relevant than ever, and focus on positive outcomes.

- Stay safe
- Be healthy
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

Red Hen operated from an office base at King's Hedges Educational Federation, but works flexibly across all five schools, and the local Church Hall.

We work closely with all five schools and with our trustees, and meet regularly with key personnel to ensure consistency and to ensure that our objectives are being met.

We run parenting support coffee mornings at the Church Hall, and other groups and trips for families involved in the project.

## Red Hen staff annual report

Another busy year at The Project supporting children and families from Arbury, The Grove, King's Hedges, Orchard Park and The Shirley schools.

As well as doing tailored support for individual families and children we have offered the weekly coffee morning at The Church of the Good Shepherd, serving tea and coffee, bacon sandwiches, fruit, advice and much appreciated peer support for families. The group has gone from strength to strength with numbers sometimes in excess of 25 people attending including both mums and dads as well as preschool children, and extended family.

We hold link meetings in all 5 schools to update each other and to ensure children don't fall through the net. These meetings are attended by the project, school heads/deputy heads/ SENCo's and Blue Smile.

### Timeline;

**May 2015** – We appointed Liz Wright as Project Manager. One of Liz's first jobs was getting to grips with the requirements of the Big Lottery grants. Liz has also been putting together a strategic plan to develop and raise awareness of the project, which includes; staff training, banking & finance, developing social media, collaboration, and policy development and review.

**June 2015** - We ran a tombola stall at the Arbury Carnival and enjoyed meeting friends old and new, and raising awareness of the project in the local community.

**June 2015** – We attended stay and play sessions at our partner schools for new reception children in the summer term and met with some parents who had requested support with their children as well as children and families who had been identified by their preschool settings as in need of support once they transition into primary school.

**July 2015** – We said goodbye to Lisa Peat who had worked for the project for 3 years as admin assistant. We wished Lisa well in her new role with the Locality team.

**July/August 2015** - During the summer we ran 2 very well attended day trips to Wicksteed Park and BeWildwewood. We had some very good feedback from the families attending and for some it was their only outing of the holidays.

**September 2015** – We appointed our 2<sup>nd</sup> full time Home School Project Worker. Maria David is a trained social worker, and has been getting to know our families through her caseload. Maria has also been training to deliver the accredited parenting programme; 'Raising Children'.

**December 2015** - During the lead up to Christmas in December 2015, we were lucky enough to have both the Besom Project and the Locality team provide Christmas gifts and food to our most financially stretched families. All of these things help to make Christmas special even for those who have very little.

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**January 2016** – We attended the Arbury School annual trip to the pantomime and were able to spend some time with a couple of children on our caseload.

**January 2016** – We launched our new Red Hen logo, and re-designed our documents & forms to be more modern and to re-launch the project following the changes in staffing and location. Our referral form was realigned to the priorities of our Lottery funding, to make data collection easier and simpler.

**January 2016** - We ran an 8 week parenting course, 'raising children' in conjunction with a local training provider; 'Sharing Parenting'. Sharing Parenting are assisting us to train Maria to deliver the programme for Red Hen in the future.

**February 2016** - After 18 months of Arbury Primary School welcoming us to their school by providing our office base, we moved into the new office at King's Hedges Educational Federation in February 2016. The new office is attached to a community room, which the project has the use of to run drop in's, groups, workshops and courses.

**March 2016** – As we move towards our last year of funding from the Big Lottery, we are preparing to submit a new bid to the Lottery for a further 4 years. We are also investigating other funding opportunities to ensure The Red Hen Project is financially sustainable in the community.

We are looking forward to another year of challenges, forming new partnerships and collaborations and new people to meet and support and families to see move on hopefully with new skills and improved family lives for their time spent with us.

Liz Wright

Chris O'Reilly

Project Manager

Senior Home School Worker.

## What our service users say about us

In order to help us improve our service, we seek feedback from the children, parents and teachers, grading individual aspects, when we close individual cases. The responses have all been positive. We also ask for comments, a sample of those received are shown below:

### Children;

- Chris took me to the hospital and I went in the scanner - it was fun. We got Christmas presents and food.
- I remember to do charts and after school I tick them. I like to play football games with Chris.
- Chris is really nice and kind. I enjoyed playing games with her.
- Chris took me to the hospital and bought me chocolate for being brave. She helped Mummy and Daddy stop worrying, this made us happy.
- It was really good and I liked Chris very much - she helped me feel calmer. I wish Chris could still come round.
- I really liked Chris and she helped me.
- I liked making my charts
- Chris is nice, she listened, stopped me being so angry and helped me and Mummy to stop shouting. I'm so much happier now and so is Mum.
- Mum and Dad not fighting. Would like to go on the trips
- I enjoyed seeing and talking with Maria.
- Maria was very helpful because she's really nice and easy to talk to. She's helped me to make speaking to my Mum and mostly my Dad easier. Maria is the best listener I know, and has given me many suggestions to help with my problems.

## Parents;

- Maria has helped me greatly with our evening routines and with managing children's behaviour, listening to me and sleeping in their own beds. I feel more confident and use the 1,2,3 system which is really helping.
- 'M worked with the project addressing issues around behaviour, domestic violence, mental health issues and physical and emotional issues for her children. Red Hen supported them to get moved out of Cambridge to escape the DV. She rang us 18 months after her case closed let us know that they are all very settled, they now have a diagnosis for the eldest child, and she shared the decisions she was able to make regarding contact with Dad etc. She said that they are all the happiest they have been in a long time and she wanted to thank us for all the help we gave them as she still felt so much stronger and more able to make decisions and prioritize the needs of her children because of the help she had from Red Hen.'
- 'Z was supported by the project until December 2015. She rang us a few months later to thank us for all the support that she had, to tell us that her son is like a different person and they are doing really well. Following on from the work we did with her, she has now decided that she would like to do the same work as she felt it made such a huge difference to her and her family. We gave her some pointers and she is going to start looking for jobs.'
- Going above and beyond to get us places we wouldn't have been able to attend without. Going out of her way to help with food parcels and emotionally supporting us with no judgement.
- She helped so much just gave us a better understanding of how our son feels which helped us cope better and deal with his behaviour in a more effective way.
- I have learned a few good techniques to deal with my children's behaviour. I feel very well supported.
- Gave support & encouragement with applying rules & routine at home. Helped develop skills to cope with & manage stressful situations.
- To get out into the community and meet other people. Accessing foodbank, housing, DV services etc.
- Maria was helpful in liaising between myself and school inclusion mentor to make an easier relationship regarding my son's issues. She helped pave the way for a better relationship with the school support team.
- Maria has been an emotional support and a point of contact for me with regard to school activities, support groups. She has helped me in dealing with my autistic son at home through advice and visual charts as in school. Giving me support when I needed most.
- The family worker supported me to feel safe, more confident, improved relationship with my child and school.
- It used to feel hard to communicate with school, but Chris was brilliant and really helpful. She was the middle person between me and school, which helped to improve home-school relationships. Taught me different techniques to deal with my son's difficult behaviour.

## Schools;

- This was a challenging case for Maria - unfortunately E was in a difficult situation, too many things happening at home, very difficult for him to process. Maria worked hard, liaison with school was fantastic and she worked diligently trying out new strategies.
- F will be able to attend punctually and participate in after school activities which will hopefully lead to improved confidence and better relationships with peers. His behaviour at school improved and his emotional outbursts have been fewer since receiving this support.
- It was great to see I confidently perform in the end of year performance and to see how thrilled his Mum was. Information regarding I's difficulties have been passed on to secondary school.
- Much improved attitude to school work, particularly during boosters for SATS (after a rocky start) Behaviour is overall better in school but can slip when working with specific individuals.
- Parents very much appreciated the support and have said there is improved behaviour. Teacher and parents regularly talk about behaviour at school and this links to behaviour chart at home.
- R has made huge progress in relation to his emotions and behaviour during the time Chris has been supporting the family. Chris's input has been invaluable. R is still 'wobbly' with regard to his emotions and behaviour but school remains consistent and now home is a more consistent place, so his wobbles rarely escalate into anything more extreme now.
- A's behaviour has drastically improved, combined with moving classes in school. When meeting with Mum, she said A's behaviour at home has improved. A will apologise for any poor behaviour. He does always complete tasks in lessons and is keen to complete his work and is making good progress.
- Maria helped Mum introduce routines and boundaries at home with J. Maria persisted in breaking down the barriers Mum had initially put up and helping her to see what long term changes needed to occur for J to be successful at school and at home for her. Many of these routines are still in place and Mum's engagement with school is much more positive.

## Other professionals;

- ‘The Red Hen Project makes a link between school and family, particularly in attending EHCP meetings and supporting parents to voice their concerns and opinions alongside the input of lots of different professionals. They work collaboratively with parents, school and other agencies to facilitate good communication and support the best interest of children and families.’

**Anna Knowles, Speech and Language Therapist, Chesterton Medical Centre**

- ‘I have co-worked with Red Hen where we had a family with complex needs- Red Hen provided in school support to the middle child and both he and his mother reported back to me at the time that he had found the sessions really helpful. The mother could see where the sessions were having an impact in regards to some of the anxiety symptoms he was presenting with. We have also recently been in contact in regards to the parenting courses that both of our services will be running over the coming year- to ensure that we don’t duplicate but also so that we can both signpost families too each other’s where we might not be running a course at that particular time- I think this is helping in broadening the offer from both our services to families in the community, especially given the high level of need in this particular area.’

**Kathy Murphy, Senior Family Worker, Cambridgeshire County Council**

- ‘I believe the Red Hen works well to equip their staff with all the right skills to effectively support and provide positive outcomes for vulnerable parents with their parenting skills. They target and reach the hardest to reach families and provide a safe nurturing environment for families to grow.’

**Suzanne Pearson, Psychologist, Sharing Parenting**

- I worked closely with the project from 2015 with a family who had a history of mental health which impacted on the whole family. Red Hen were able to work alongside the family encouraging them to access support and provide a link with statutory services, they were key in linking with financial services and helping them at points where they had little money for basics. They helped them access the food bank and provided transport where the family could not get their children to hospital appointments and giving them confidence to do so. The family have always struggled with statutory services and the project has given them confidence to do this. When the family situation became dire Red Hen was able to work with health and education to make a referral to social care for neglect. The family were then more accepting of social care because they had more understanding of the system.’

**Nina Heaps, Health Visitor, NHS**

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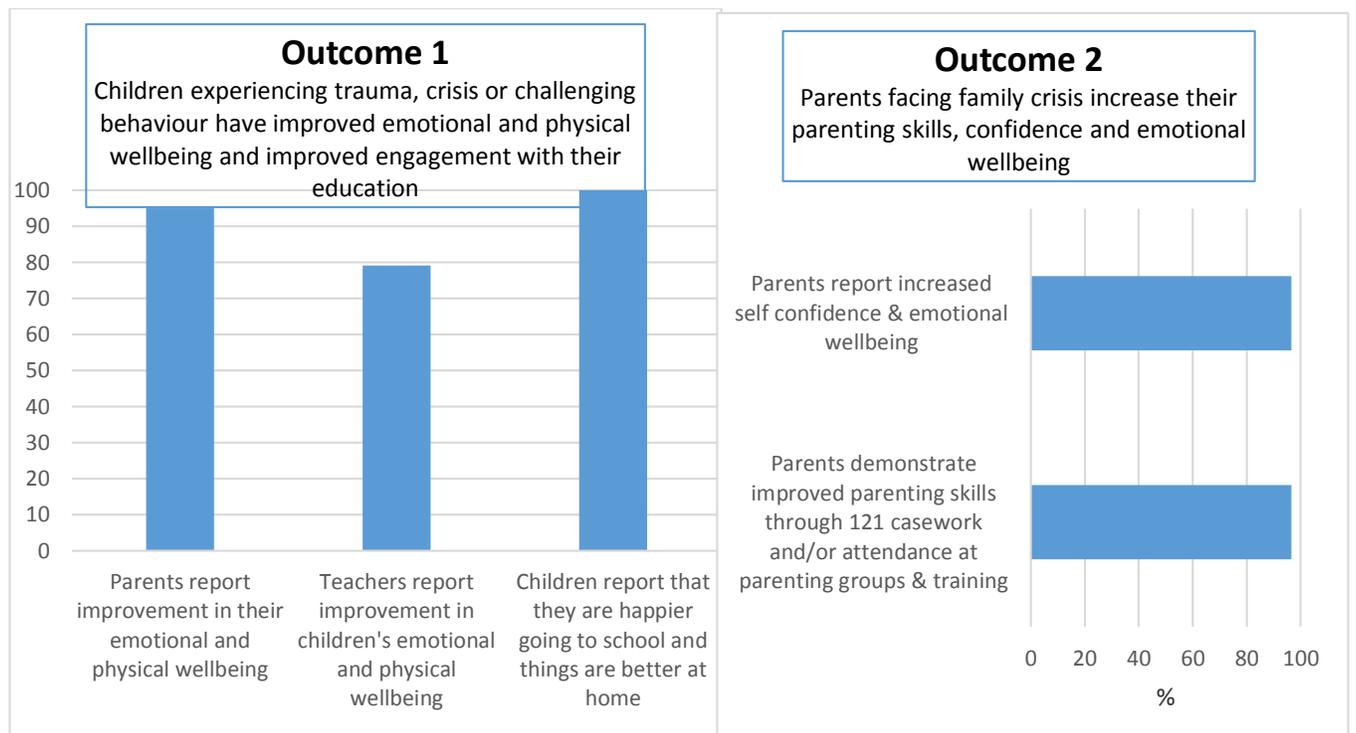
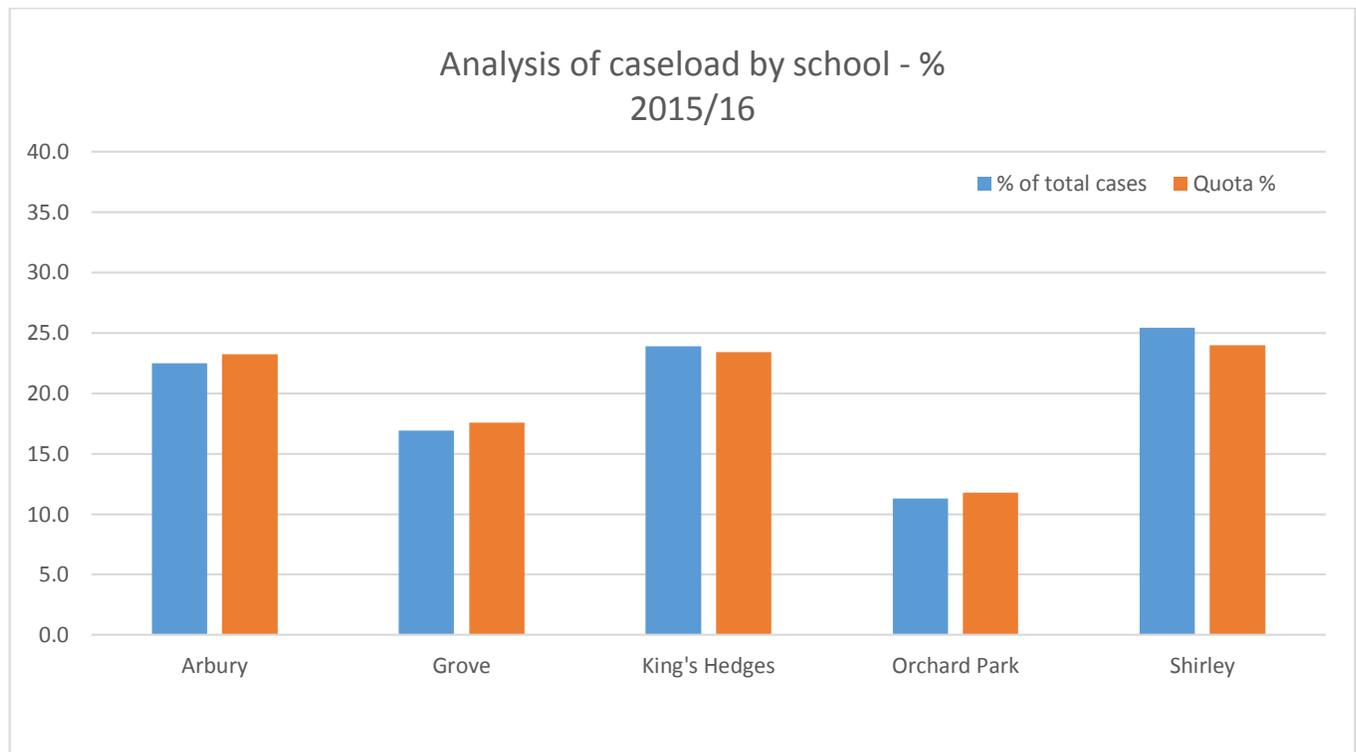
- Through our links with Red Hen, we too are able to gain the confidence of these families, who are among the most vulnerable in our community. It is this holistic approach which has been shown to get the best outcomes for families and Red Hen therefore make a real difference to parents' and children's daily lives and long term prospects.'

**Amanda Langford, Clinical Director, Blue Smile.**

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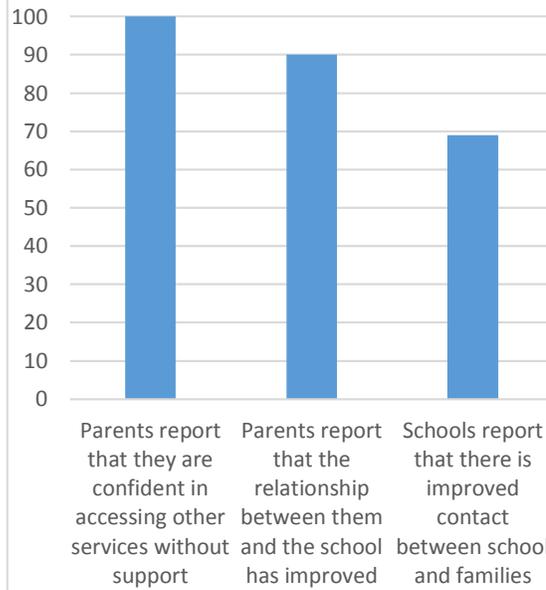
## Analysis of our work and outcomes

During 2015/16, we supported over 250 families in our communities, through individual support, support in school, coffee mornings, group outings, and parenting and other groups.



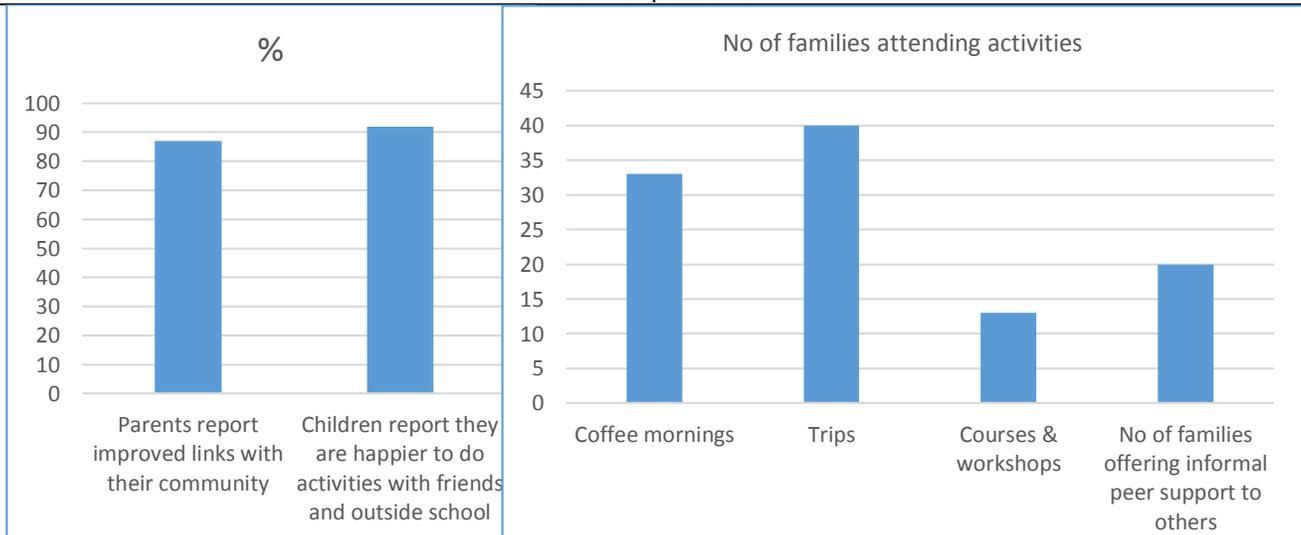
## Outcome 3

Schools and other agencies are better coordinated to meet local needs so that families feel isolated and frustrated with their interactions with



## Outcome 4

Families have improved links with others in their communities and are better able to support others with similar problems



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## Looking forward.....

During 2016/17, we are making some changes to the project, these include;

- A consultancy review to; identify key strengths, streamline processes and develop & build the project to exceed outcomes and expectations, in preparation for a 2<sup>nd</sup> bid to the Big Lottery fund as our funding runs out during the financial year 2016/17.
- Establishing our new office in King's Hedges Educational Federation, ensuring that our families know where to find us, and making use of the attached community room to run courses, groups, and workshops.
- Training our staff to run and deliver parenting courses across our five schools, one per term.
- Developing links and collaborations with other services and groups in the community with common aims, to ensure a joined up approach to community development.

We will continue to carry out the much needed work in the community that we have been doing, including;

- Working with families in their own homes
- Working with children in school
- Working with and in partnership with our five schools, and other agencies.
- Running coffee mornings at the Church of the Good Shepherd each week.
- Our annual summer outings.
- Other support groups, e.g. cooking and other groups

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## Treasurer's report

We started the financial year 2015/2016 with a carry forward of £72,444. For the financial year 2015/2016 we set a deficit budget of £35,278, with the previous year's carry forward we ended the year with credit balance of £37,166.

The charity continues to be funded by the Big Lottery. For 2015/2016 we received £53,155 this is to part fund salary costs for the home school workers and general running costs.

During the year we received further income of £21,437.

We would like to thank the following for their donations and grants:-

Big Lottery Fund  
Cambridge United Charities  
Hobson and Crane  
The Church of the Good Shepherd  
Masonic Charitable Trust  
Mr GJ McPherson  
Cambridge Students RAG appeal  
The Haymakers pub, Chesterton  
King's Hedges Labour Party  
Barnabas Oley Trust  
Stapleford Church  
All those using easy fundraising.

We would like to thank those that attended the Arbury carnival, this raised £176.

Also we would like to thank the following primary schools for their donations:-

Arbury School  
Kings Hedges Educations Federation,  
The Grove,  
The Shirley  
Orchard Park

Accounts for the Financial Year ended 31 March 2016 are available for inspection.

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## Thank you for your donations

We would like to thank the following for their donations and grants:-

Big Lottery Fund  
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Hobson & Crane  
The Church of the Good Shepherd  
Masonic Charitable Trust  
Mr GJ McPherson  
Cambridge Students RAG appeal  
The Haymakers pub, Chesterton  
King's Hedges Labour Party  
Barnabas Oley Trust  
Stapleford Church

All those using easy fundraising.

Arbury Primary School  
Kings Hedges Educations Federation,  
The Grove Primary School  
Shirley Community Nursery and Primary School  
Orchard Park Primary School

## Red Hen Trustees April 2015 – March 2016

### Chairperson

Lesley Ford (co-opted)

### Vice Chairperson

Rev David Maher (co-opted)

### Secretary

Jo Angel (Ex-Officio)

### Treasurer

Tracey Miller (co-opted)

Karen Martin (ex-officio)

Angela Leach (ex-officio)

Ben Tull (ex-officio)

Stacey Harper (ex-officio)

Paul Connelly (co-opted)

Helen Geall (co-opted)

Christine Cowling-Jones (co-opted)

Linda Morris (co-opted)

Kevin Price (co-opted)

### Project Manager

Liz Wright

### Home School Project Workers

Christine O'Reilly

Maria David

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