

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2022 – 23

Believe in a Better Tomorrow

August 2023

Herts Schools Outreach (UK)

20-22 Wenlock Road

London

N1 7GU

Charity Number: 1200464

Believe
IN A BETTER TOMORROW

CONTENTS

About Us	3
Introduction and Welcome	4
“WHY I BECAME A BEHAVIOUR CONSULTANT FOR HSO”	7
Our Vision, Mission and Values	9
Service Update	10
Meet the Team	11
Partnerships and our Funders	14
Thank you from the Trustees	15
Your Opportunity to join us	16

About HSO - Herts Schools Outreach

Promoting and enhancing positive change...

WHO ARE WE?

Herts Schools Outreach (HSO) is a mental health charity, based in Hertfordshire. HSO works with schools to support and empower all children and young people (CYP), across the UK, who are at risk of poor mental health to recognize early warning signs and prevent them from escalating into crises.

Thereby, enabling children and young people to 'believe in a better tomorrow'.

WHAT WE DO?

HSO partners with all kinds of children, young people (those with special educational needs, challenging behaviours, and/or young offenders) and their families employing early intervention techniques to address mental health-related concerns and equip CYP with the necessary tools for better mental health maintenance and resilience.

Working together with pupils and adults around them, we strive to create better outcomes for all.

Organisation and Management



Michaela Johnson
Founder and CEO



Lysa Hardy
Chairwoman, HSO



Beth Sandler
Operations Manager



Mike Segall
Vice Chair, HSO

HSO - Herts Schools Outreach

Believing in a Better Tomorrow...

If we can begin by saying welcome and to thank you for taking the time to read our Annual Report and in your wider engagement with our organisation and our people. This report contains the key reflections of both of us as Chair and CEO and our thoughts on the period ahead.

In setting out this report, it is worthwhile reminding ourselves that Herts Schools Outreach (HSO) has been providing vital services and support for over 4 years, initially starting as a CIC, and since converting to a CIO late 2022 covering Hertsmere, Dacorum, Watford, Three Rivers, Welwyn Hatfield and the city of St. Albans and offering Children and Young People Early Intervention support. This many years of service is something that we should all be tremendously proud of and is testament to the huge contributions of our staff and volunteers and the generosity and support of our funders. So, we begin with a huge thank you to all of those who helped us sustain and grow what we do.

In 2022-23, as we describe below, HSO has continued to surpass all expectations, with the team continuing to go above and beyond in supporting the users of our services, maintaining access and support at this time of huge uncertainty and disruption. An indication of the value and success of those efforts is shown in the table below:

Year	Total of Children and Young People supported (not including number of families)
2020	589 (up 184.5% from 2019)
2021	851 (up 44.4%)
2022	1272 (up 49.5%)
2023	2113 (up 66.1%)

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This is an increase of circa 66% over the last year, at a time when Children and Young People (CYP) have been facing the fall out of the recent global pandemic. Supporting CYP within their home and school environments have been pivotal in decreasing the amount of YP reaching crisis across Southwest Hertfordshire.

As mentioned, this increase in service need was heightened by the pandemic and the national response, with the severity and depth of its impact only becoming clearer as the pandemic unfolded.

Whilst society looks to move on from Covid-19 we can expect the negative impact on mental health to continue for some time. In addition, we will also see an adverse impact from the growing concerns over the cost-of-living pressures which we know can make mental health problems more severe and long-lasting.

We recognise that this sets out a challenging picture in terms of future demand. As an organisation we have responded to previous challenges positively and, whilst there is always more, we can do, our experience and strong track record demonstrated below means that we go forward confident that we will continue to support the mental health of our Children and Young People. There are also several other key developments which can help us build further and faster over the next period.

Firstly, over the last years we have seen increased funding for mental health to support core services and to make the transition to new ways of working. Whilst there are genuine concerns over the level of future funding that is required, we must strive to secure what has been made available and demonstrate our agility and innovation in improving access and ongoing support. The response to the increased demand and acuity referred to above is to do things differently and HSO can show, as it does below, how it can play a key part in this transformation.

Secondly, although there is greater awareness of mental health and the recognition that it is 'easier' to talk about mental health now than it was in the past, Early Intervention is a notion that we are working hard to be recognised. This is reflected in the number of organisations and schools that have approached us in the last year to work with them in supporting their staff and pupil wellbeing. We will continue to build on this, looking to extend our links into the workplace, to colleges, schools, and other organisations to ensure Children and Young people feel able to access support and advice when it is needed. We are speaking with MP's and other parliamentary members to establish this further and gain the recognition of government authorities to enable change.

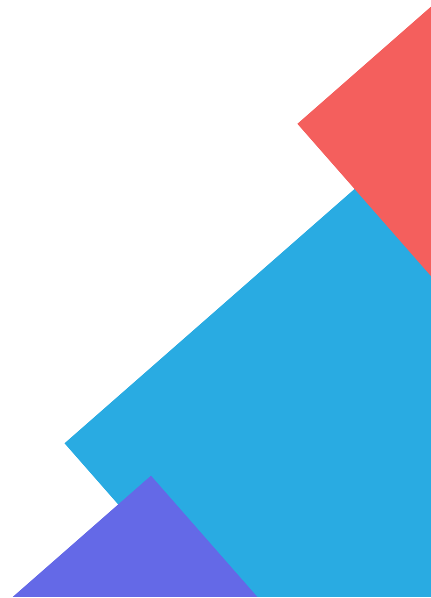
Believing in a Better Tomorrow...

We are also working hard to grow and extend our volunteer base and have several initiatives that will provide us with capacity, skills, and experience to supplement and enhance our direct workforce. We have created a new role of ambassadors and have recently made our first appointments. This role is for those who want to make a formal commitment to HSO by utilising their exceptional skills and experience but don't have the time to commit to being a trustee.

We are also working to create a specific volunteer team focussed on fundraising, supporting our fundraising strategy in the planning, and undertaking of our exciting program of events. Finally in terms of how we are building for the future we have; we are constantly evolving our strategic plan to meet the needs of our Children and Young People and we are now taking forward its implementation. There is more detail provided below on this, where you will see it is an ambitious plan which builds upon our successes and seeks to address current issues and the future needs. It fully recognises the challenges we will face and has a large focus on building our capacity and resilience to focus on the priorities identified of:

1. Supporting Children and Young People with their mental health management thus reducing waiting times and stresses upon other key services such as CAMHS
2. Using the voices of our Children and Young People to help shape our service.
3. Keeping the organisation safe - through the continuing investment in our people, our systems, and our ways of working
4. Growing our services - through increasing our capacity and resilience from income growth and partnership working

I hope the above gives a flavour of the last year, and we expand on this below. We are all very proud of what HSO has achieved and clear on the important role we will play in the future. There is much that it is changing but you will also see that our history, our achievements, our strong partnerships and our dedicated and inspirational staff and volunteers give us a legacy and a platform to continue to build and help deliver on the ambitions we have set together.



Why I became a Behaviour Consultant**Sonari Davies, HSD Behaviour Consultant**

I became a Behaviour Consultant to support and nurture vulnerable children and young people. From an early age, I recognised the absence of adequate resources to support young people experiencing traumatic and stressful social, emotional, and behavioural needs. Having seen first-hand the result the lack of resources and adequate care can have on young people, I believe early intervention can help promote the holistic development young people need to lead happy, healthy, and impactful lives.

Before you became a Behaviour Consultant, what were your views about Mental Health and the difficulties that Children and Young People face today?

Before I became a Behaviour Consultant, my views aligned with why I took on the role. Young people need a nurturing approach and adequate resources to support their social and emotional development.

Why did you choose HSD?

I chose HSD for a multitude of reasons. The role was hybrid and as I commute from London, this was essential. The company also promoted work/life balance and the culture and environment seemed positive and healthy. Lastly, the vision and ethics of the company matched that of my own.

What does an average day look like for you?

I wake up at 5am, get ready and leave my house for 6:45am. I take roughly 5 modes of transport to get to work. I usually aim to arrive at each school for 8:45am to allow me time to settle in. I start sessions at 9am until 3pm. Once the school day ends, I tend to catch-up with relevant members of staff and complete any data I can before I head home for the day. During each day, I meet with relevant staff and speak with adults involved with the students in receipt of support. I will then ensure that strategies and advice are tailored to the needs of the student and are accessible to the adults around them.

What knowledge or skills have you gained from this role?

The knowledge and skills I have gained from this role are an understanding of and working with wider services and how to manage challenging situations (self-harm, suicide prevention, low mood etc).

When do you use these skills?

These skills are regularly used throughout my role on a weekly basis.

Have your views changed about Mental Health within Children and Young People?

No, my views about Mental Health within Children and Young People has remained the same.

Working as a Behaviour Consultant has developed my view about mental health within children and young people as I have witnessed their issues and concerns first-hand.

Have your views changed about Mental Health within Children and Young People?

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Our Vision

"Our vision is for Children and Young People to Believe in a Better Tomorrow".

Our Mission

"Providing early intervention and support services in Hertfordshire to empower children and young people to take control of their mental health."

Our Values

- **Inspirational** – inspiring children and young people to achieve their potential.
- **Openness** – acting with integrity and transparency caring for staff, volunteers and the children and young people who use our services.
- **Altogether** – stronger in partnership
- **We Care** – listening and facilitating change.
- **Passion** – caring for the children and young people who use our services is at the heart of everything we do.

Our Services

This last year, as the previous year, has seen a continuous increase in Children and Young People reaching out for support and in addition we are being asked by schools to do more. This is exciting but also challenging especially for our management team which has not grown but has designed, developed, and mobilised several new programmes including: PHEONIX, LEGACY, HYGGE and SHIELD.

"HSD has been a real asset to the school this term and are very supportive. Our Behaviour Consultant is vigilant and will always come to speak to relevant staff if there is a concern or an issue with any of the students. They have fully integrated themselves with the school community and students ask after her each week ahead of sessions. She has built positive relationships with very challenging students and with her support, they have been able to reflect on and address consequences because of their behaviour choices. Our Behaviour Consultant and HSD have positively and significantly impacted all the students who receive support, and we are very lucky to have them in our school." **Primary School, Borehamwood**

"I wanted to reach out to thank you for the support you have provided my daughter. The support has really made a difference and has helped her to develop trust and build relationships. The support I have also received has been helpful and we are very grateful to HSD." Parent, Y9 pupil
"The communication from HSD in the lead to, during and after the support is fantastic, we are kept up to date on all of the support that has been delivered and the impact this has then made." **Assistant Head and Safeguarding Lead, Secondary School in Herts**

"The support my son and my family received from HSD was invaluable. The team worked with all other services involved and this meant that there was no overlapping or confusion with the support provided. My son's conduct improved; his wellbeing was positively impacted with him being encouraged to spend more time with us as a family to explore the ways he can begin to explore himself." **Parent, Y11 pupil, St Albans**

Service Update

HSO is a multi-award-winning service that has positively impacted over 2,000 children and young people in Hertfordshire since 2019. Winners of the Room for Young People Innovative Service Award (2020 and 2021) and the Chamber of Conscience Gold Award (2022). HSO was also a Finalist in the SME Business Awards for Service Excellence (2023).

Working across 16 education settings in Hertfordshire, we have developed strong and positive relationships with professionals across all services. Working closely with Lee Cliffe Big Local, we have been able to spearhead support for primary schools within their area delivering early intervention to those in need. We have built relationships within the wider communities for the schools we support and regularly liaise with additional services to provide a holistic approach for support and engagement. At HSO, we work to complement existing services to ensure that children and young people effectively supported and to further the reach; this has resulted in collaborations with Watford Community and Education Trust, Beyond, Hertfordshire Mind Network, Home Start and IFST Children's Services.

As from January 2023, HSO have;

- Attended Parliament and gained the support of MP's and Lords on our campaign, "Believe in a Better Tomorrow and Beyond" in partnership with the Charity, We are Beyond.
- Collaborated with His Majesties Lord Lieutenant Robert Voss with his new initiative, "Hertfordshire's Charity Hub" in partnership with Warner Brothers, Leavesden.
- Supported St. John's Ambulance Service on their new initiative for the First Responders Programme.
- Worked closely with the University of Hertfordshire and their Hertfordshire Cohort Programme, encouraging student participation providing us with insightful voices of Young People of which we have used to help shape our service.
- HSO were awarded as NatWest's UK's top 100 Social Enterprises and our CEO, Michaela Johnson was awarded as the UK's top 100 most influential women at NatWest's WISE100 awards 2023.
- Worked with His Majesties Lord Lieutenant Robert Voss, on the Kings Award, although we did not submit an application this year (2023) we are in a good place to submit next year (2024)



Meet Michaela Johnson – CEO and founder of HSO

Michaela is an award-winning CEO and is responsible for the overall development of the Charity. This includes operations, expansion, and strategic implementation, which has led to a significant number of vulnerable Children and Young People across Hertfordshire receiving support. HSO has set the standard for Charitable innovative thinking enabling those without access to key services a lifeline.

Michaela founded HSO in 2019, where she serves as CEO and has led the Charity through a period of global pandemics and economic unrest. Prior to HSO, Michaela served with Herts County Council and earlier in her life, experienced first-hand homelessness, and the detrimental effects of poor mental health.

“I love everything that we do within HSO. We provide crucial Early Intervention support to pupils across Hertfordshire from the ages of 5 – 19yrs. I am extremely fortunate to be at the helm of this fantastic Charity and look forward to seeing its expansion. I am also very fortunate to be leading our Charity with such a fantastic team – not only are they all incredibly skilled within their roles, but they also radiate a profound sense of empathy which brightens the lives of so many that we serve”

- Michaela, CEO and Founder.

Meet Beth Sandler – Operations Manager for HSO

Working as the Deputy to the CEO and Founder of HSO, Beth is responsible for the development and running of the service. Beth joined HSO in 2020 and supported the service through the global pandemic and has worked towards a significant number of Children and Young People across Hertfordshire receiving person-centred support.

Prior to joining HSO, Beth worked in a Hertfordshire Primary School for 14 years covering the classroom, inclusion, and pastoral environments where she worked as Assistant SENCo and Joint Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead for 5 years.



HSO Behaviour Consultants - January 2023

We continue to rely on the very active involvement of our Board of Trustees and develop how they support our management team. During the last year we have developed a very active sub-committee structure which involves Trustees working directly with our staff on key projects. We have also introduced the role of ambassador to provide us with expertise and specialist skills from volunteers who do not want to commit to a Trustee role but wish to support our work on key projects.

Everyone has their personal stories and challenges, our Trustees have never wavered in their support, making themselves available to give advice and practical support.

Fundraising is important to us as it provides us with vital means to run our service. We look to provide Children and Young People with consistency in all our support in addition to running services from our Charity Hub means that we are very concerned by the additional costs we now face at a time when we want to provide more access and comfort. We will be looking to grow our fundraising work through a dedicated team of volunteers so that we can help support the impact of the cost-of-living crisis that is now upon us.



Finance, Partnerships and our Funders

Thanks to the continuing generosity of our funders and the work of our own staff and volunteers we have seen an increase in funding this year and have reported a small surplus that can help support our future work. Clearly, the financial position for all third sector organisations remains uncertain but our financial position this year will enable us to make some small investments to support future potential projects.

Thank you to:

Clarion Futures
LeeCliffe Big Local
Hertfordshire Community Foundation
Tesco Community Grants
CoOp Community Grants
Watford Mayor's Small Grants Fund
Harlow Healthcare Trust
Simon Gibson Charitable Trust
Watford and Three Rivers Trust
Communities 1st
Chamber of Conscience
Tesco
ARISE Hatfield

Our Gratitude

HSO would like to thank so many for their support with contracts, grants, and funding during the year and to all the people who raised funds for us.

We have received donations from:

Nigel Bell, Leader of Herts County Labour Group Councillor
Aga Dychton, Deputy Mayor of Watford
Public Donation from Fundraisers

As ever, the Trustees wish to express their appreciation for the commitment and enthusiasm of all the staff and volunteers who give their time to the charity, and without whom HSO would be unable to achieve its objectives.

The following is one of several comments from a trustee on a service visit.

“As a trustee of HSO, my role means that I do not always see the direct impact of the work of HSO’s staff. However, during the summer, I was able to visit one of HSO’s Legacy Camps held in Watford. Legacy is HSO’s resilience and self-esteem programme funding through Hertfordshire County Council’s HAPpy scheme designed for children who are in school years Reception to Year 11 and are in receipt of benefits related free school meals.

During the sessions I attended, I saw how the HSO team worked with the children and young people attending the camps, helping them take part in a wide range of activities, providing support and encouragement throughout the day. It was clear how effective the staff were at encouraging the children and young people, supporting them to overcome challenges they faced and providing them with strategies to tackle them.

As a trustee, I would like to express my thanks to Michaela and the rest of the HSO staff for their work over the last year in supporting 2,113 children as well as their wider families. I would also like to thank the volunteers, funders and supporters of HSO who have also contributed to this remarkable achievement and would encourage anyone who would like to support HSO to believe in a better tomorrow to get in contact with the team. “



Alex Murray, Trustee of HSO.

Report of the Trustees (continued) For the year ended 31 August 2023 Herts Schools Outreach (UK)

- Supporting Children and Young People with their mental health management thus reducing waiting times and stresses upon other key services such as CAMHS
- Using the voices of our Children and Young People to help shape our service.
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Reserves Policy

Herts School Outreach (UK) aims to create a sustainable reserves policy that covers a school term should the charity be unable to continue to trade so as not to disrupt the support being given. Being a young charity funding has been difficult to obtain to support the build-up of reserves. The trustees are looking at all revenue streams to enable this to be obtained. Once established the policy will be reviewed.

Risk management

The trustees have a duty to identify and review risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error.

On Behalf of the Board:



Chair

Date: 2nd October 2023

Your Opportunity to join us

We do hope that you are inspired by all the great work that HSO has continued to achieve. If you believe in what we do and would be prepared to help us further then we have a number of opportunities for you to consider both within our volunteer roles, that are focussed on either general fundraising and third sector experience to one of our sub committees.

Please do contact us at admin@homesschoolsoutreach.org.uk to explore any of the above.



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