

Annual Report September 2021 – August 2022



PARENTING SPECIAL
CHILDREN



Message from PSC CEO Ruth Pearse



2022 was a very special year for PSC as we celebrated 15 years of supporting families of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The Countess of Wessex met staff, trustees and families at a special reception in Reading Town Hall as part of the celebration. It was a wonderful experience for everyone.

The demand on charities is difficult both locally and nationally, with less funding available and yet against this challenging backdrop the demand for our support continues to grow. As always we work very hard to raise funds through fundraising events, funding streams and commissioning which continues to be an important source of income.

Covid continues to have ongoing repercussions with families still very much adjusting to the impact of isolation, compounded with the cost of living crisis. This is illustrated in the growth of demand on our PSC helpline, a staggering 173% increase in the number of calls received compared to last year.

Message from PSC CEO Ruth Pearse cont...

As a charity we continue to develop and evolve our services, so we were delighted to be able to extend our geographic coverage with more families in need of our services to be able to access PSC online.

We have two new advisory boards, a BME advisory board and a young people's neurodiversity board as well as an existing advisory board of academics all of whom have lived experience. We very much value their input.

We would like to thank all of the partners that we work with in Berkshire and for the local and national funders who enable us to provide much needed support to families of children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Ruth Pearse, Founder & CEO



Introduction

Parenting Special Children (PSC) is a Berkshire based charity aiming to improve the wellbeing of children/young people with a range of special needs and disabilities, including those who have experienced early life trauma.

During the academic year

PSC supported 2489 families

We received 5022 referrals*
which is an average of 2 per family

* Calls, emails, workshops,
courses, 1-1 support

Our services include a mix of face to face and online:

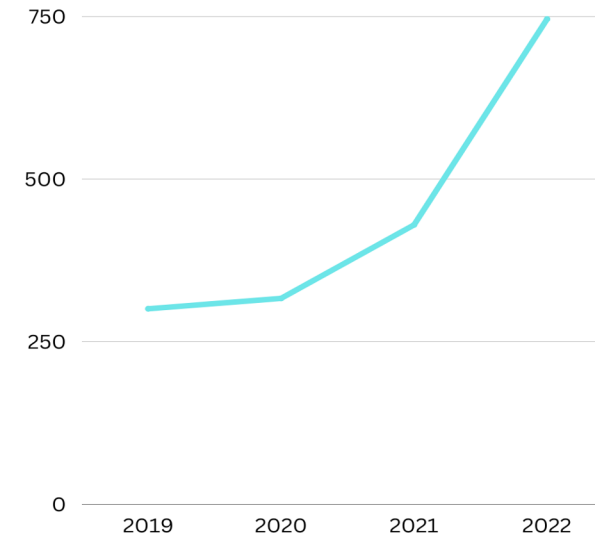
- Helpline, via phone, email and social media
- Specialist parenting workshops and courses
- Sleep workshops
- Community support groups
- Family Fun events
- Training for professionals.
- Monthly groups for young people
- Annual topic based conference with guest speakers
- Specialist workshops, courses and peer support for families of children who have experienced early life trauma.

PSC Specialist Helpline

- **746** Received calls compared to 430 last year an increase of **173%**
- **547** emails received
- **966** Parent/Carers supported
- **1952** referrals processed
- PLUS The average length of call = **56** minutes compared to 29 minutes in previous years



Dramatic increase in calls to Helpline



Community Support Groups

64 parents and children accessed
34 sessions

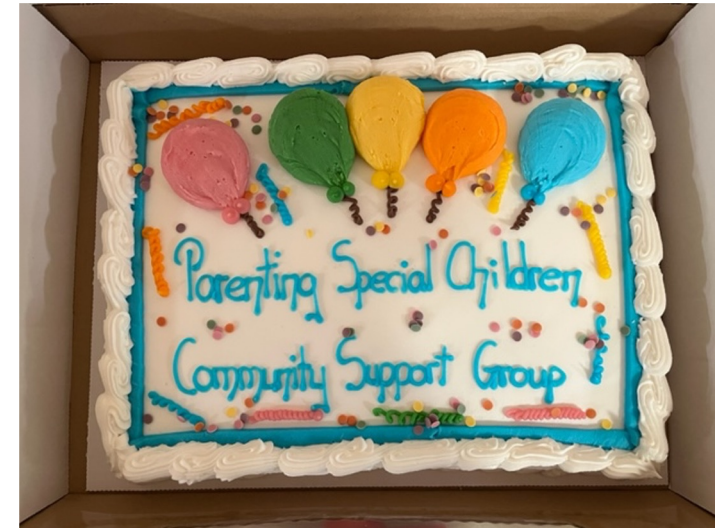
Total Attendance = **380**

Three geographical areas:

- Reading
- Bracknell
- Slough



“The PSC groups have allowed me to access advice through experience on routes to approach for support etc. It also gives me a safe space to let off steam if struggling through forming a network of friends that understand each other”



1-1 Specialist Parenting Support

51 families received one to one specialist support – 4 to 8 sessions/family

84% said it helped them improve their well being

Well Being

88% said it had improved their confidence in their parenting

Confidence

92% of parents said their knowledge and understanding had improved as a result of working with a PSC Practitioner

Knowledge

Empowered

96% of parents said the practitioner was able to help them with the issues they were facing

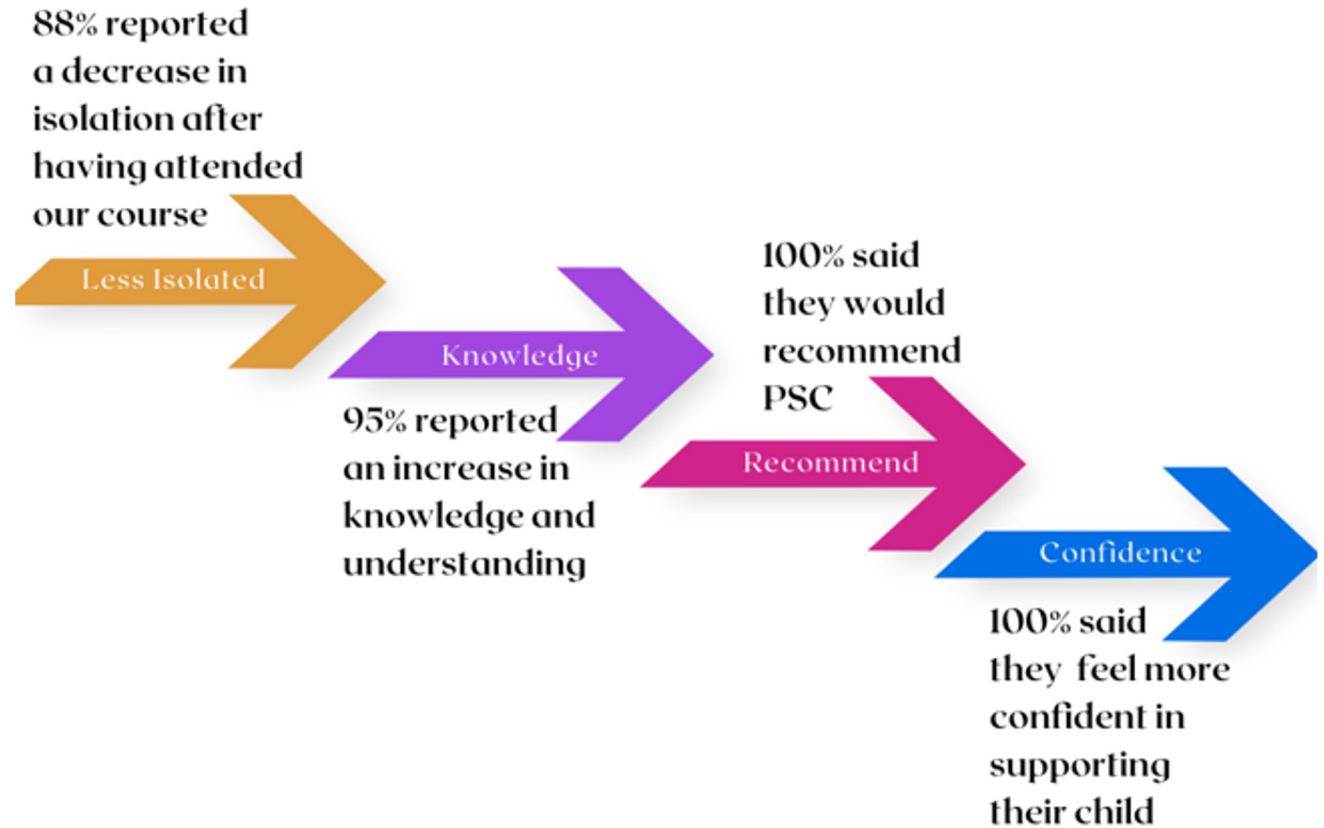
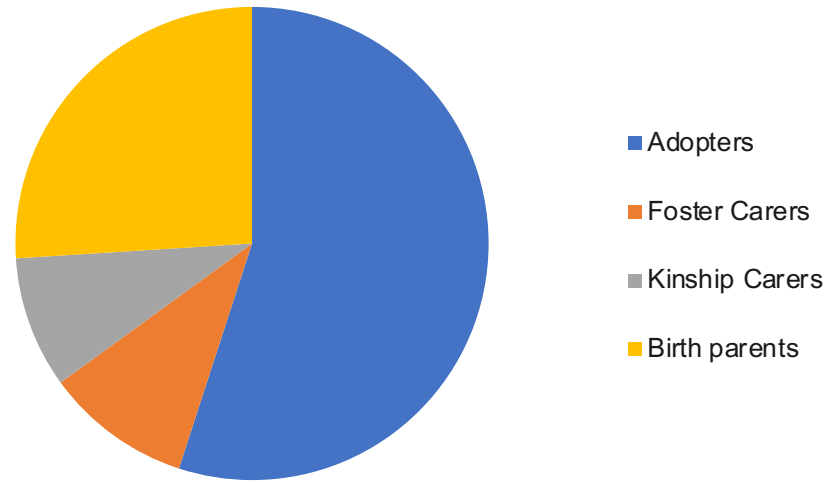
“The expertise of the practitioner was brilliant. Her knowledge & understanding of FASD was appreciated when presenting to my child's teachers; it gave me hope that they can help him moving forward.”

“The practitioner was amazing, she made me feel confident and have more self esteem again, something which I lacked.”

Trauma & Attachment Service: Parent/Carers

- Total number of parent/carers supported = **203** (counted once)
- 8 courses and 12 workshops
- 69% Berkshire and 31% non-Berkshire

"The course has helped me to understand and realize my children's and my own traumas."



Trauma & Attachment Service: Support Groups

Four Support Groups

37 monthly sessions

Total attendance: 193

- Post Separation group for mothers
- Dads and Male carers
- Adopters
- Kinship Carers

“It can be very lonely being an adoptive parent but there is no judgement in that group that you may get from parents at the 'school gate' - as they don't understand what it's like. Being amongst like-minded individuals, sharing experiences & knowledge & knowing you're not alone.”

“This is the only group that will allow me the freedom to speak openly and honestly about my current situation, safe in the knowledge of not being judged. The group offers support and ways to air your feelings. There is a lot of kindness and willingness to support one another.”

Trauma & Attachment Service: Professionals

Number of workshops/courses delivered = 20

Number of professionals trained = 191

- 95% said that they had gained new knowledge & understanding
- 96% said would recommend our training to others

"The training was excellent and definitely relevant to my role. It was inspiring and had a real impact on me."

"Great course. Insightful & encouraged in-depth reflection & skill building. Provided a lot of knowledge and resources which I will use effectively"

"Extremely informative training, should be in every school and health care setting."

Trauma & Attachment Service: Children & Young people

Let's Get Creative

18 Let's Get Creative/
Mindful Music sessions

Total Attendance = 99

'She has loved coming to a group that is all adopted children as she is very aware she is different to her school friends in this respect. We have also been so glad to have somewhere we don't need to explain her behaviours or worry. It has really blessed us!'

'The sessions are extremely valuable to my son. He always says how much he enjoys it. He finds school extremely difficult to participate in and so it is a relief to know he is accepted the way he is at Let's Get Creative.'

Parenting Workshops and Courses

35 Workshops accessed **578** attendees

List of topics included:

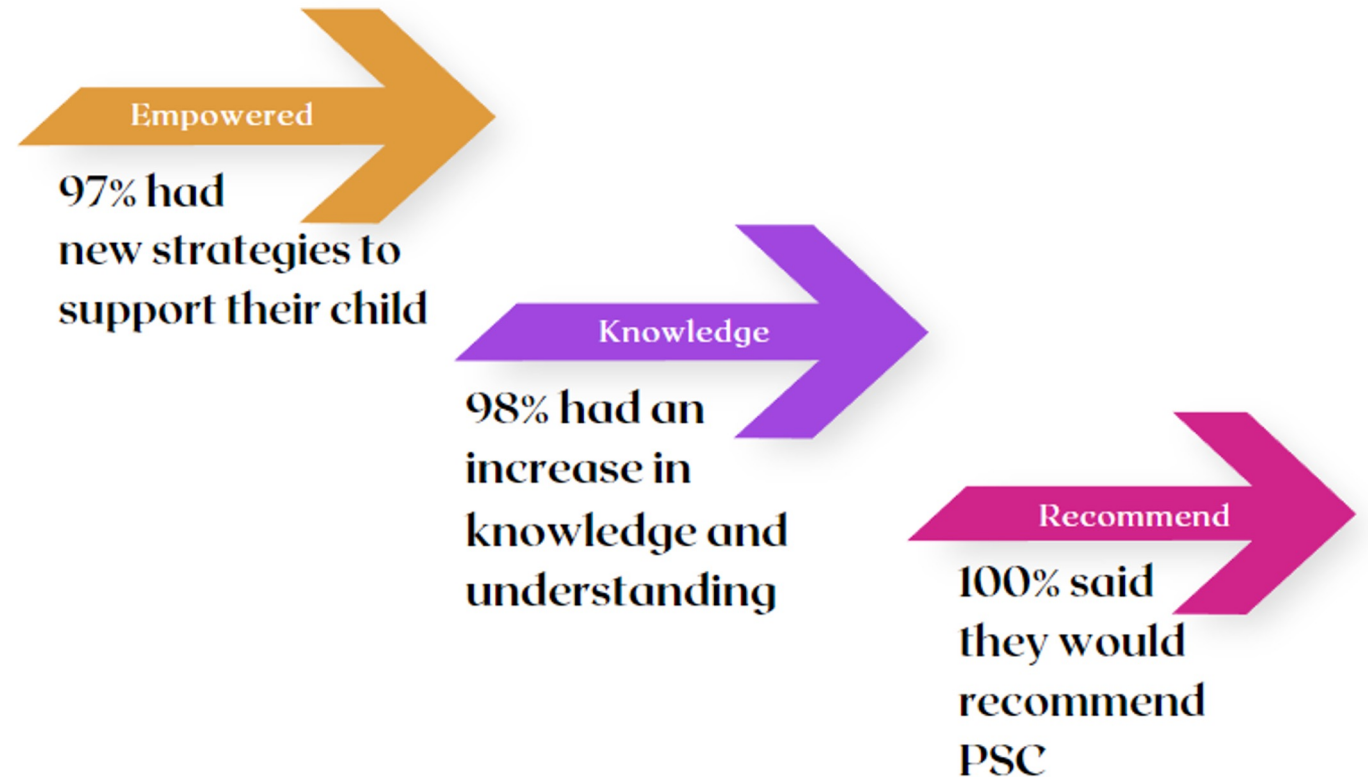
- ADHD and Medication
- Pre and Post ADHD
- Sensory Processing and Arfid
- Neurodiversity and Gender
- Managing Sexualised Behaviour
- Helping Neurodivergent CYP
- Transition to Adulthood

4 Courses accessed **32** attendees

List of topics included:

- Time out for special needs
- Time out for ADHD
- Who's in Charge (Child to Parent Violence)

Delivered for Hong Kong families in Cantonese (interpreter)
and a course delivered in Urdu

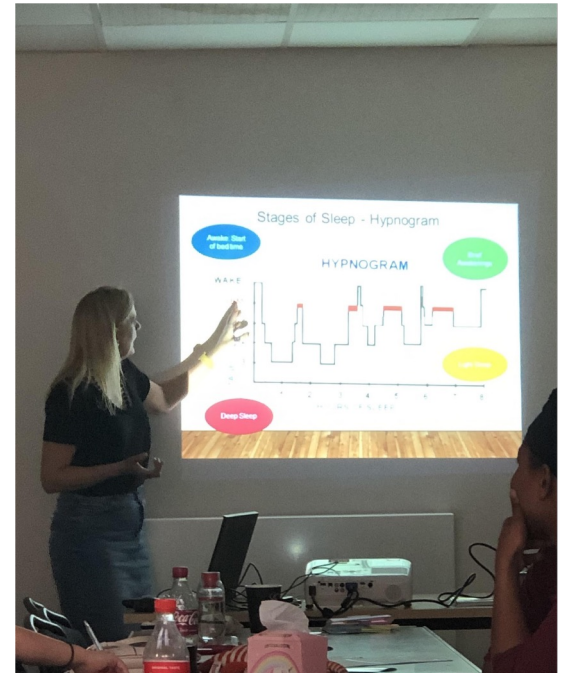


Sleep Courses, Workshops & Clinics

- **11** general sleep or sleep & anxiety workshops reaching **97** parent/carers
- **159** downloads of sleep on demand videos since launch in 2020
- **7** commissioned school workshops for over **200** for secondary aged students

“Really helpful, a good few things to implement for my son. Thank you.”

“Thank you very much, very informative session and lots of helpful information”



Neurodiversity Conference – 134 attendees



NEURODIVERSITY CONFERENCE

18 NOVEMBER

Topics:

- Introduction to Neurodiversity and Thriving.
- Interview with an autistic young author.
- Using creative methods with autistic/ADHD children and young people to share their insights and knowledge.
- Neurodiversity Updates from Berkshire Healthcare.
- Neurodiversity & Gender: good foundations for better understanding.
- Neurodiversity in Education.
- Neurodiversity and Ethnicity.
- Siblings: what does the research tell us about the experience of being a sibling of a neurodiverse child/young.



**Guest
Speakers**

**Venessa
Bobb**



**Colin
Foley**



**Ann
Memmott**



**Dr Ruth
Moyse**



**Dr Georgia
Pavlopoulou**



**Libby
Scott**



**Mairi
Evans**



Online

Neurodiverse Children and Young People Groups

“It’s a place where I can be myself, have fun, and hang out with people who get me.”

“I have my own tribe outside of school and it has improved my wellbeing”

The A Team – Awesome Autism & ADHD

8 sessions accessed by 45 girls

Social Interaction Course

6 sessions accessed by 40 young people

Auticulate

25 sessions accessed by 18 young people





Family Fun Events

A Royal Visit 15th Anniversary



← Tweet

 **The Royal Family** 
@RoyalFamily

Yesterday, The Countess of Wessex celebrated the 15th anniversary of Parenting Special Children, who support and bring together the parents and carers of children with special needs.

HRH heard about the charity's invaluable work - and was challenged to a game of Uno!



4:30 pm · 3 Mar 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

186 Retweets 14 Quote Tweets 2,278 Likes



Commissioning



LIMPSFIELD GRANGE SCHOOL
'together we make a difference'



PARENTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Funders, Supporters and Partnerships



Field | Seymour | Parkes



WELLINGTON COLLEGE



Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group



East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group

Behind the scenes – Admin

The Admin Team support the charity by maintaining:

IT/Cyber security, including associated staff training and NHS compliance; GDPR compliance; PSC database (CharityLog); PSC website; G Suite; Technical expertise and associated staff training/support; Data reporting; Event eligibility and security; PSC mailing list, and Client support.



- **6685** emails to admin mailbox
- **190** Events set up (across Eventbrite, Facebook, Website, CRM system Charity Log)
- **32** Mailshots including newsletters, and targeted mailshots
- **2500+** bookings/ cancellations (publicly available events)

Advisory Boards

PSC is **PASSIONATE** about inclusion, we want to reach all communities that may need us.

We do this by endeavouring to create spaces for each group to be seen, heard, and included so that everyone's needs are represented in a way that serves them best within PSC.

PSC Advisory Boards:

- Neurodiversity
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)
- Neurodiverse children and young people

Parenting Special Children Financial Results : FY18 – FY22



Parenting Special Children - Financial Results - FY18 - FY22					
	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Income	194,366	264,983	328,760	247,015	294,113
<i>Covid funding</i>			98,708		
<i>Non-Covid income</i>			230,052		
<i>Income growth %</i>	22%	36%	24%	-25%	19%
Expenditure	179,006	216,885	263,652	277,930	277,453
Net surplus/deficit	15,360	48,098	65,108	(30,915)	16,660
<i>Surplus/deficit %</i>	7.9%	18.2%	19.8%	-12.5%	5.7%
Reserves	47,679	95,777	160,885	129,970	146,630
<i>Reserves as a % of income</i>	25%	36%	49%	53%	50%

Source: Charity Accounts FY18-FY21 and management accounts to 30 November 2022

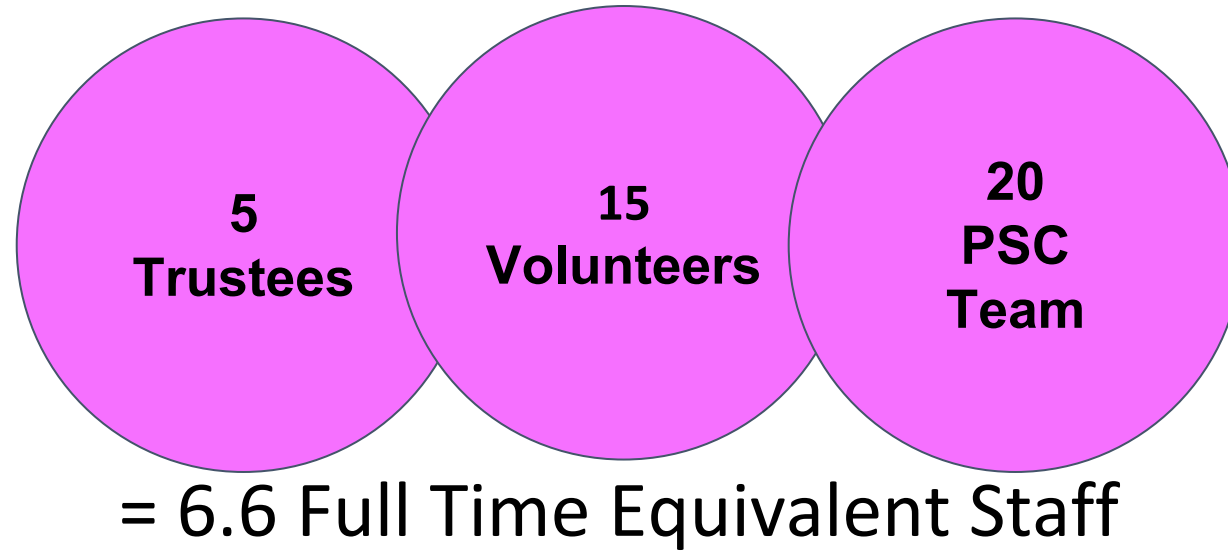
Looking Ahead 2023

Our main focus is to keep engaging with our families, listening to their immediate needs, and continuing to respond efficiently and quickly to their needs in an ever-changing world.

- Impact of Covid
- Cost of living crisis
- Sustainability
- Funding to meet the increased needs of our existing and new families
- Grow income from commissioning
- Continuation and expansion of services

“The additional support with the practitioner on a one-to-one basis broadened my knowledge and allowed me as a parent to feel more confident in helping the children in aspects of life including education. Thank you for helping us parents when we have nowhere to turn for advice help and guidance on complex children”

Finally...a special thanks to all of our amazing, team, volunteers & trustees



'I was keen to become a Trustee at PSC because, as a service user, I could see what a profound difference the charity makes. The advice , training and services that PSC provides significantly improves lives for both parents and children. In some cases, it's not an overstatement to say PSC may have saved lives.'

I wanted to do what I can to support the great work the charity does. As I have a governance focused role in financial services, I thought I could put some of that experience to use as a Trustee. Working as a Trustee has been fascinating and humbling in equal measure. It's a real privilege to work alongside such a diligent and driven team.'