

SOLIDARITY SPORTS



SUMMER REPORT 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4

SUMMER 2023 OVERVIEW

5

WEEK 1-3: HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL

6

WEEK 4: ALL SAINTS COLLEGE

7

WEEK 5: EXCURSIONS IN AND OUT OF LONDON

8

RESIDENTIAL TRIP: PGL OSMINGTON BAY

9

CASE STUDY

10

RESIDENTIAL TRIP: TURNVILLE

11

CASE STUDY

12

STATISTICS

13

FEEDBACK

14

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

Dear friends,

I am pleased to share our Summer 2023 Project Report with you. For five weeks, children across Kensington & Chelsea and Hammersmith & Fulham joined us daily for fun, stimulating, and healthy activities.

This year, our families experienced hardship like never before. During the winter months, we witnessed the detrimental effects of the rising cost of living. Many families were pushed deeper into a spiral of poverty, facing food insecurity and household debt. Parents were unable to purchase basic necessities, with some being forced to choose between heating their homes or having enough to eat.

Thanks to the ongoing support and kindness of our friends and partners, we delivered activities to 120 children. A key priority this summer was to introduce our children to new activities and opportunities with the aim of improving their mental and physical well-being.

We also took the step this summer to grow our corporate partnerships and now work with ten organisations. This allowed us to maintain our critical ratio of one adult for every two children and provide 1-1 support to our most vulnerable children throughout our project.

I am incredibly proud of what our team achieved this summer. And, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our friends and partners. Our work within the community would not be possible without your dedicated support. Your generosity helped create happy memories this summer!

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sean Mendez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Sean Mendez
Founder & CEO

SUMMER 2023 OVERVIEW

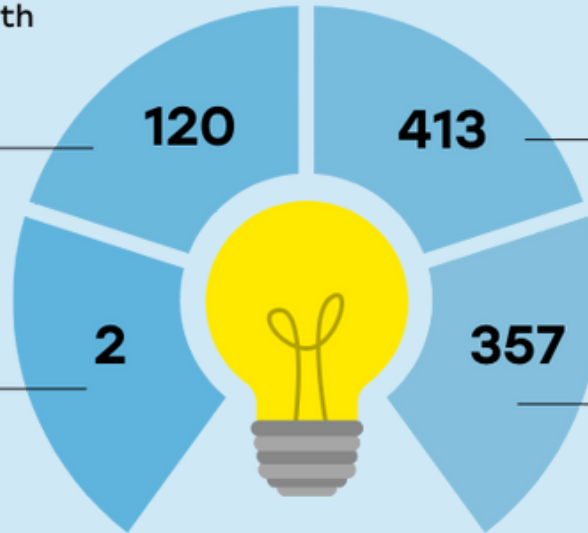


Children

- We supported 120 children across Kensington and Chelsea and Hammersmith and Fulham

Staff/Volunteers

- 21 staff members
- 35 active volunteers



Locations

- Holland Park School
- All Saints College

Corporate Volunteers

- 357 corporate volunteers from 10 organisations
- 420% increase in volunteer engagement from last year



WEEKS 1 - 3

HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL



For the second year in a row, our children benefitted from the incredible facilities available at Holland Park School. Over a period of 3 weeks, children participated in:

- Football
- Tennis
- Arts and crafts
- Smoothie making sessions

Along with delivering our much-loved activities this summer, our children were able to discover:

- Drama workshops with Tie Dye Drama
- Basketball with Basketball Knights London
- Photography workshops with Alison Jackson Photography

In response to overwhelmingly positive feedback, we have continued to deliver swimming sessions with the support of 5 swim coaches at Latymer Upper School every Friday.

"It was incredible to see how engaged the children were during basketball. Not a single child sat out during the session, and even those who are more reserved when it comes to taking part in physical activity got involved!"

- Idris, Staff Member.

"It was really cool to have a coach; she taught us a lot about Basketball. I learnt how to dribble better and shoot."

- Girl age 9



WEEK 4

ALL SAINTS COLLEGE



This year, we had access to the whole of All Saints College. For five days, our children participated in a variety of activities, including:

- Switch Sports (a combination sport, a mix between football and netball)
- Gardening projects (children got to grow their own vegetables)
- group art projects
- Basketball with Basketball Knights London
- Photography workshops with Alison Jackson Photography

This summer, we were fortunate to have 357 Corporate volunteers join us. During our week at All Saints, every child benefitted from much-needed 1-1 adult attention.

For a third year running, we delivered nutritional education daily by having conversations about healthy eating with our children and by growing our own fruits and vegetables. At the end of the week, the children had their own tomato plants to take home.

"I thoroughly enjoyed my time [volunteering] and meeting all the children. It was humbling and emotional [to learn the children's backgrounds]. The kids were all so warm and loving."
- Carol, Corporate Volunteer.





WEEK 5

EXCITING EXCURSIONS IN AND OUT OF LONDON

We concluded our program with a bang! Our children had the opportunity to explore London and its surroundings, with four groups based in West London to ensure manageable numbers and help parents/carers save on transportation costs. From swimming at Fulham Pools to visiting Hobbledown Adventure Playground, Princess Diana's Playground, a boat trip to Greenwich Park, and even a day at the beach in South End on Sea, our children had a summer filled with thrilling activities.



100% of children participated in activities they typically would be socially excluded from.

51% of children voted our trip to Hobbledown Adventure as their favourite.

A total of 2,250 fresh hot/cold meals were prepared for our children.

"I was in Princess Diana's Playground today, and a group of your children and play leaders were seated next to me. I just wanted to share how wonderful I thought they were with the children. Personal, caring, enthusiastic and engaging. I work in the education sector, and it was such a wonderful example of child care at its best! The kids looked like they were having a wonderful time and were so receptive to the leaders."

- Email received from a member of the public, August 2023.

RESIDENTIAL TRIP: PGL OSMINGTON BAY

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This year, we took 30 children on our annual trip to PGL. After considering feedback from last year's excursion, we opted for a location change from the Isle of Wight to Osmington Bay. As a result, our children benefitted from more time on the beach and could try paddleboarding, a new activity for everyone.

For five days, our children were exposed to a world of adventure and were encouraged to step outside their comfort zone. From fencing, zip wire, and climbing, to beach walks, archery, and areoball, the children had an incredible time and broadened their horizons in the process.



Moments to remember:

- For all of our children, it was their first time visiting Weymouth
- Six children had never been/seen a beach before
- For one teen, it was their first time swimming in the sea
- All our children attempted at least one new activity

“At first, I felt a bit nervous and scared because it was my first time away from home, but I love it here. My favourite thing has been going to the beach. I've never seen the sea before; it's so beautiful. I didn't expect it to be so big.”

- Girl, aged 9



CASE STUDY 1

Isra*, aged 11, joined Solidarity Sports 4 years ago. At the start of the month, she was admitted to the hospital for emergency weight management due to weighing over 100kg and suffering from liver failure. Due to her weight, Isra lives a sedentary lifestyle and has lost all confidence and motivation to leave her house. Over the past few months, she has struggled at school, and her self-esteem has crumbled due to her peers' ongoing teasing and bullying. Over the years, we have built a strong, trustful relationship with Isra and her family and convinced her to join us on our recent 5-day adventure holiday to PGL, Osmington Bay, in Weymouth.

Her typical diet comprises of processed meals, fast food, sugary drinks and unhealthy snacks. With the support of a leading nutritionist, we put in place a meal plan for Isra during our week away. At PGL, she was placed on a strict, balanced, high-protein, healthy eating plan. For breakfast, she would have a bowl of porridge with cinnamon, banana and seeds. Lunch and dinner consisted of fresh vegetables and high-protein fish. Along with each meal, Isra would have a handful of berries and a selection of fruit as a snack throughout the day. She consumed no sugary drinks/teas and drank water consistently.

For five days, she participated in various physically stimulating activities, e.g. paddle boarding, zip wire and fencing, with the support and encouragement from caring adults. She benefitted from fresh air and coastal walks by the beach. She made more happy memories with her friends at Solidarity Sports. Throughout our trip, Isra received care, emotional support and guidance from 9 adults.

*Name changed for privacy.



*Photo not related to case study.

We are pleased to share that Isra lost an astonishing 7kg during our week at PGL.

In just five days, we witnessed a significant shift in her attitude and confidence. To have the greatest possible impact on Isra's life, our team has since shared the meal plan with her family, along with a plan to continue supporting her with a healthier lifestyle.

20% of our children suffer from obesity. We plan to continue delivering our nutritional education during every school holiday project to tackle this growing problem.

RESIDENTIAL TRIP: TURVILLE

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This year, we were invited by Turville School Trust to take 12 of our children on a 5-day all-expenses-paid residential trip to Turville, Buckinghamshire. This was our first summer project offering two residential trips, and we are pleased to share that it was a success! For most children, it was their first time leaving London and being away from home. Over the five days, our children partook in the following: horse riding, swimming in private residences, forest bathing, tennis/football matches, raft building and garden parties.



“I was scared of the horses before, but now I wish I could have my own.”

- Girl, age 7

“I am so sad that we have to leave, I won't get to see the stars in London”.

- Girl, age 8

“I don't want to go back home... can we stay two more days? I'm having the best time of my life.”

- Boy, age 8



Moments to remember:

- For all of our children, it was their first time horse riding
- 100% of children felt more confident and independent due to the residential
- 66% of children stated that the trip to Turville was the highlight of their summer

CASE STUDY 2

Abdullah*, age seven and Amina*, age six, were referred to Solidarity Sports 3 years ago due to ongoing domestic violence at home. They have two older brothers, who have been repeatedly aggressive and abusive towards the entire family. Due to his ongoing criminal activity, the eldest sibling has spent time in a Young Offenders Institute.

This summer, Abdullah and Amina attended our summer project, and staff immediately noticed that Abdullah was extremely protective over his younger sister and would often take on the role of his sister's carer despite being so young.

At the start of summer, both children would refuse to be separated, and Amina would go the whole day without speaking, often crying when she felt overwhelmed by the presence of adults and other children. Amina began to hit, pinch and punch adults when staff attempted to separate the children into their respective groups.

In order to build trust among the siblings, we began by giving both children person-centred 1-1 support.

By slowly building trust with both children, they became more comfortable spending time apart in different groups.

After a couple of weeks, we saw a shift in Abdullah's behaviour. He began to feel more at ease with the adults, forming friendships with the children in his group.

As Abdullah built trust with the adults in his group, he began to disclose to Solidarity Sports staff members the abuse he was facing at home. He told one staff member, "I don't want to go home; I want to die."



*Photo not related to case study.

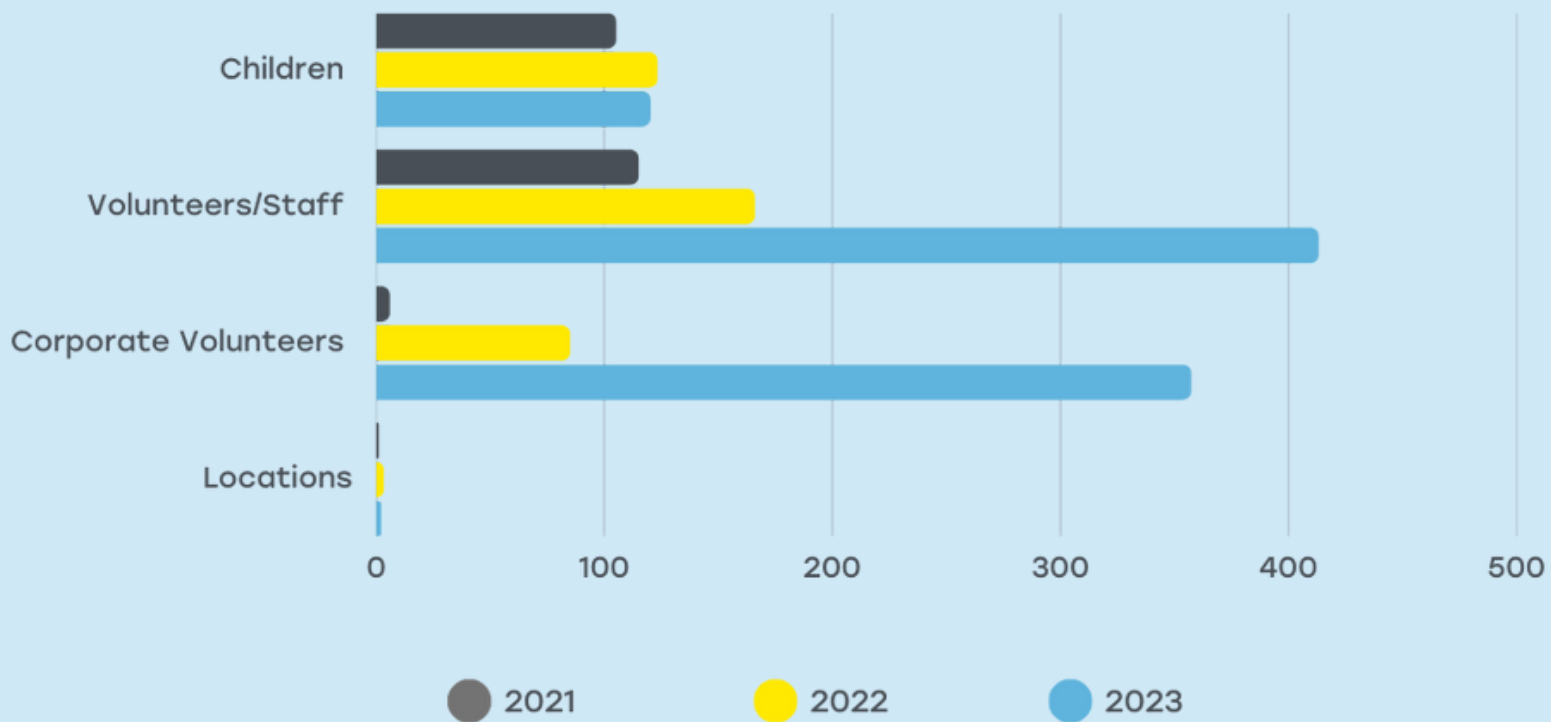
Our Safeguarding Lead contacted Social Services, who began investigating matters at home.

Over the summer, our team gave both children a high level of support to ensure they had a space where they could feel safe, form healthy relationships with adults and form friendships with other children their age, reducing their dependency on each other. We witnessed a huge shift in both sibling's behaviours and plan to continue our support over the upcoming months.

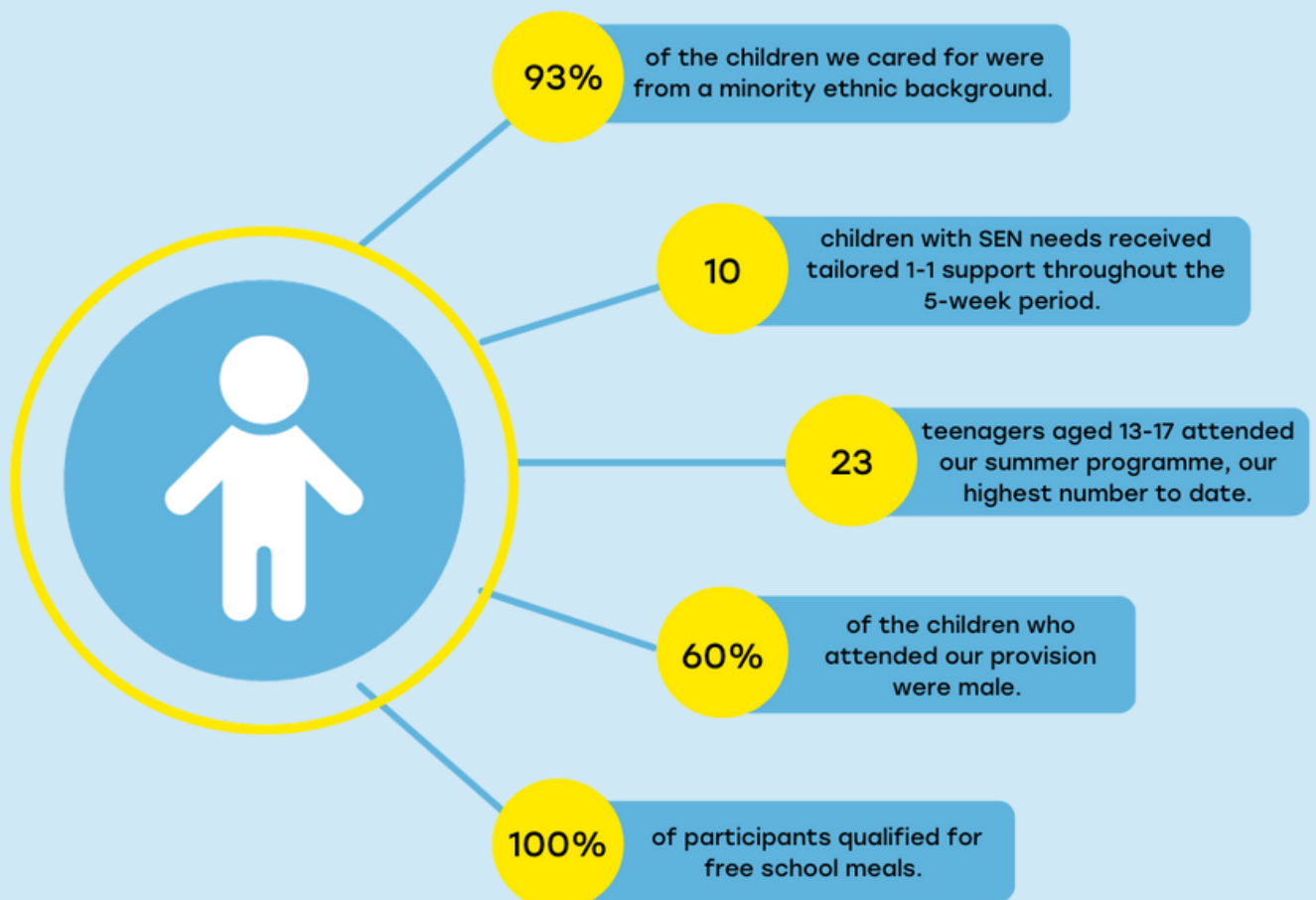
*Name changed for privacy.

SUMMER ATTENDANCE

The chart below compares data from our last 3 Summer Holiday projects.



This year, we piloted volunteering opportunities with various organisations across London, thus providing us with a surplus of adult support. Going forward, we plan to maintain these partnerships but limit the number of volunteering opportunities per project.



FEEDBACK



WHAT OUR VOLUNTEERS THOUGHT

"I grew up in the care system. I grew up with one parent. I was bad in school and had behaviour problems, so for me, volunteering is everything. It means a lot to be able to give kids the guidance and support they need to grow and deal with obstacles! It's almost like going back in time and watching myself grow up. I love to help in any way I can!"

- Volunteer.

"Volunteering for Solidarity Sports is a privilege. Being a part of a child's happiness in their developing stages is rewarding enough, but to be able to have fun at the same time is fantastic. It's never a boring day at SS and most times, I feel like I'm benefitting more than the kids."

- Volunteer.

WHAT OUR CHILDREN THOUGHT

100% of children felt safe during our summer project, with 80% stating the volunteers to be the reason why.

65% of our children voted swimming as their favourite activity for a second year in a row.

Our summer holiday project received an average rating of 9.4* out of 10*.

WHAT OUR PARENTS THOUGHT

"Thank you so much for all the support, patience, love and kindness you give to our family. I especially wanted to say a big Thank you to the team for all the amazing activities this summer. My children had the best summer."

- Parent.



A SPECIAL THANK YOU

A huge thank you to the following organisations, who, without their generosity, we would not have been able to deliver another incredible 5-week summer project.



The Calleva Foundation

Turville School Trust

**The London
Community
Foundation**

SOLIDARITY SPORTS



THANK YOU

Your support allowed us to transform children's lives this summer and give each of them what they deserve: happiness.

solidaritiesports.org

[@solidaritiesports](https://www.instagram.com/solidaritiesports)



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