

**Learning visit report**  
**Shepherds Bush Families Project & Children's Centre (SBFP&CC)12524**

<b>1.1 Date of visit:</b> 02/08/18	<b>1.2 Name of visiting Funding Manager:</b> Geraldine Page	<b>1.3 People met with:</b> TM
<b>1.4 Programme Area &amp; Outcomes:</b> Improving Londoners' Mental Health\More refugee and asylum seekers experiencing trauma, grief and loss accessing mental health services resulting in improved mental health Improving Londoners' Mental Health\More children and young people receiving specialist help, resulting in improved mental health		
<b>1.5 Purpose of the award:</b> £96,000 over three years (3 x £32,000) for the costs of delivering 720 hours of family counselling per year and related running expenses.		
<b>Grant start date: 01/04/2015</b>		<b>Grant end date: 01/04/2018</b>
<b>Project progress and difference made</b>		
<b>2.1 Project Outcome 1:</b> Local families experiencing hardships and mental health issues will have local access to support services. <b>Progress made:</b> Therapeutic social work and counselling have enabled more parents to access the intense emotional support needed to not only get through the day to day issues but also address the larger more complex issues that often prevent them moving on with their lives. SBFP&CC have seen an increase in self-referrals for the counselling, indicating more parents are realising that accessing this service will support their general wellbeing as well as their emotional health. 98% of parents feel it has been beneficial to them and their family.		
<b>2.2 Project Outcome 2:</b> Local families experiencing hardships will have access to essential cooking, washing, computer and play facilities. <b>Progress made:</b> Parents take the lead, on a rota basis, for buying and preparing a healthy meal for all parents and children attending. These sessions have allowed more families, specifically those with older children, to attend the centre, socialise and build relationships with others that have fostered mutual support mechanisms. 96% of families state the additional sessions have been a help for them and made dealing with their housing situation easier.		
<b>2.3 Project Outcome 3:</b> Timely intervention will prevent crises from escalating and will ensure that harm is minimised and pressure on statutory services is alleviated.		

**Progress made:**

The early intervention work and the holistic approach taken means families can often be signposted into in-house services which make life less stressful than if they had to visit different services.

**2.4 Project Outcome 4:**

Long term fostering relationships are built both with professionals and other service users through a co-production model.

**Progress made:**

SBFP&CC is well connected and respected in the area and works well with other agencies.

**2.5 Project Outcome 5:**

The local community will become better equipped to deal with day-to-day and longer-term challenges and will be better connected and more resilient as a result

**Progress made:**

Overall all the services provided by SBFP&CC go to meet this outcome. It is a valuable service meeting the needs of very hard to reach groups.

**Impact and learning: Funding Manager comments**

- 1. Impact:** SBFP&CC was set up in 1988 to meet the needs of large numbers of families enduring appalling living conditions after being placed in bed and breakfast hotels and other temporary accommodation. Systematic family therapy (SFT) has allowed SBFP&CC to offer more families intense support at an early stage and prevent the risk of further family breakdown. The SFT and counselling service have worked in tandem to support its most vulnerable parents and families.
- 2. Learning:** What has become more apparent over the last year is that more and more families are struggling to deal with the day to day stresses which are often increased by poor housing and changes to benefits systems.
- 3. Knowledge:** Rolling out of universal credit in the borough in late 2016 meant families suffered additional hardship and looked to SBFP&CC to get them through the minefield of claiming and the often-anxious waiting period before receiving the first payment. One of the main difficulties for families in private rented accommodation will always be the universal credit benefit cap, relating to the amount they can receive and the high costs of the private rented sector in London both for those working and those less able to work.