

## City Bridge Trust – Monitoring Visit Report

<b>Organisation:</b> Welcare in Greenwich	<b>Grant ref:</b> 10014 (assessing officer John Merivale)	<b>Programme area:</b> 06. Positive Transitions to Independent Living\d) Disabled parents
<b>Amount, date and purpose of grant:</b> 09/09/2010: £90,000 over three years (£29,250; £30,000; £30,750) to expand the support group and employ a dedicated Family Support Worker for parents with learning difficulties.		
<b>Visiting Grants Officer:</b> Jemma Grieve Combes	<b>Date of meeting:</b> 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2012	
<b>Met with:</b> Sarah Clark and Nicola Holder		
<b>1. Introduction to the organisation:</b> Welcare in Greenwich works with parents with children under 12 years old to develop their confidence and skills to rebuild family life and give children a happier more confident childhood. It is a branch member of Welcare, a Christian charity which works with children and families in need, irrespective of faith or culture. Welcare in Greenwich are based within a large housing estate in Woolwich with over 400 dwellings and run a range of services including a support group for parents with learning disabilities; support group for parents; crèche; counselling; literacy classes and home support. In addition, their volunteer gardener has created a community garden outside their offices which is enjoyed by clients and other estate residents.		
<b>2. The project funded:</b> City Bridge Trust funding allowed Welcare in Greenwich to build on the success of their support group for parents with learning disabilities by employing a Family Support Worker who can additionally work with parents in their own homes. The project aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support 10-12 parents with learning disabilities at any one time to increase their parenting capacity and understanding of their children’s needs.</li> <li>• To support parents to use other services in the local community.</li> <li>• To improve parents confidence and self-esteem in their ability to care for their children.</li> <li>• To improve and increase school attendances.</li> </ul>		
<b>3. Work delivered to date:</b> The Family Support worker co-facilitates the Family Support Group for parents with learning difficulties. In year one 11 families attended and 10 are signed up for year two. The group runs for 30 weeks a year and explores issues such as the role of a parent, needs of a child and child development, dealing with challenging child behaviour, understanding social care services and value of play. <p>In year 1 the Family Support Worker also provided one-to-one emotional and practical support and advice for positive parenting to nine parents in their homes. The work has proved very intensive, allowing five to six parents to be supported at any one time. Typically the support worker will visit parents once a week to start with and will</p>		

reduce this to once a fortnight over time.

Parental empowerment and joined up working with other agencies is central to the work. Each parent that is referred to Welcare in Greenwich first attends an introductory visit with Welcare in Greenwich staff and their referrer to discuss their needs and the services they can access. It is then up to the parent whether they choose to access the services. Once a parent decides to take up one-to-one support or to attend the support group they agree a number of goals with the Family Support Worker which are regularly reviewed together. When a parent moves on, an exit meeting is held and they are invited back to events such as the annual garden party to help them maintain the social links they made at Welcare in Greenwich.

Payroll information has been checked, and the grant from the City Bridge Trust has been shown separately in the charity's latest accounts.

#### **4. Difference made:**

Welcare in Greenwich works with families which have a high level of need, and it takes time to make an impact. Nevertheless, their work has shown improved interaction between parents and their children, increased understanding of age-appropriate play, appropriate referral to other professionals and has helped families remain together. Clients are often socially isolated and do not have support networks in place: for example the Family Support Worker was the only person to visit one mother in hospital when she had her baby. Welcare in Greenwich provide a valuable role in developing peer networking and supporting parents to access mainstream services.

Home visits have proved vital in helping parents with a higher level of need or who would not be comfortable in a group setting. The insight into home and family life provides the Family Support Worker with a better knowledge of support needs even where the client has not identified these. It also helps parents who may have built up their skills in the support group but have not been able to apply them in their home.

Robust monitoring and evaluation processes are in place. A bespoke outcomes star approach is used with all clients. In response to need the Family Support Worker has also developed a set of pictures to help better communicate different elements of the outcomes star to parents with learning disabilities.

#### **5. Concluding comments:**

Welcare in Greenwich delivers tailored and intensive work to support clients with high level and multiple needs. They receive good feedback from both parents and referral agencies and aim to develop more local partnerships to increase the impact of their work in the future.

Most clients are referred to Welcare in Greenwich by social services and are already on child protection plans. Welcare feel that their work could have a greater impact if they were able to work with parents at an earlier stage and are working with schools and health visitors to try and get referrals before problems escalate.