

# inspire



Your supporter magazine

Autumn/Winter 2021

Foam and fun  
at our sensory  
'car wash'

## Inside

- Sam's inspirational story
- Incredible volunteers
- Enjoying our gardens



**The  
Children's Trust**  
For children with brain injury

# Welcome



Your kindness and generosity has helped our amazing team continue to deliver the specialist rehabilitation and education the children and young people need.

Your ongoing support will help us continue to push ahead with our ambition to support every child with brain injury and neurodisability, and help them live the best life possible.

We certainly have the dedication, expertise and enthusiasm amongst our colleagues to make this happen. It is wonderful that their commitment is recognised by others too, with our Director of Education Sam Newton recently winning a national award for her work.

People like you step up to support us in so many ways. Some of our fantastic volunteers are back helping in shops. And our grounds are in glorious bloom with the help of a very special gift – see more on page six.

Whatever support you can give and however you give it, we are always enormously grateful. I hope you enjoy reading about the work you're making possible.

**Amanda Boyd,**  
Senior Supporter Care Coordinator

**These times have been challenging for us all, but the summer has been kinder.**

Over the last 18 months, we've had to balance our commitment to helping children reach their full potential with their safety. And we're continually adapting and changing to uncertain times.

In recent months, we were able to welcome families and siblings back on-site, so you can imagine how thrilling that was for everyone. The warm weather has given us a window of opportunity to enjoy outdoor activities too, which the children have missed.

We don't know when this journey will end but we'd like to thank you for being here for us.

**On our front cover is 13-year-old Josiah enjoying our sensory sports day, read more on page 8.**

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# Our special school for special pupils

Our school is for children aged 2-19 with severe brain injury, whose needs are so complex that they require specialist support that could never be offered in mainstream school. What makes our school special is that children not only have teachers, but a multi-disciplinary team including doctors, nurses, therapists and support staff too.

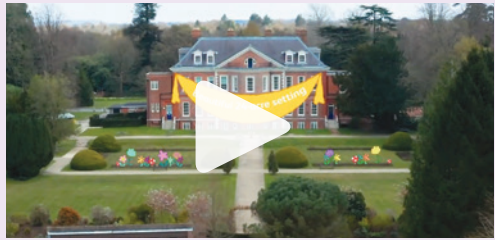
children to work on physical skills, recover from surgery and receive specialist respiratory or tracheostomy support in the water.

The school has been here for over 35 years and we have some very exciting plans for the site, which are currently at planning permission stage. We will share more news in future editions of *inspire*.



The Children's Trust School opened in 1985 and is co-located with our specialist rehabilitation centre.

## Step inside our school



Our talented team combine their expertise to support each child with their intellectual, physical, emotional and social development. We call this an integrated approach, and each child's school day is tailored to their needs.

**Scan to watch our video.** Meet the staff, children and families that make The Children's Trust School such a special place.



41 children attend the school and some pupils live on-site too. Our residential houses are next door and children have their own bedrooms, communal spaces and all the support they need on hand.

## Congratulations Sam

Our Director of Education Sam Newton has won a silver Pearson National Teaching Award for Excellence in Special Needs Education. It recognises her outstanding commitment to

Our school buildings have been adapted to the children's needs, for example with height adjustable and visually adaptable equipment. Our specialist curriculum has familiar lessons like history and art – and we have a nature trail and playground.



changing the lives of children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability.

Our integrated approach means that the school day looks a little different too, as rehabilitation is part of the timetable. For example, our aquatic therapy centre offers the opportunity for

The awards are described as the 'Oscars' of the teaching profession. And Sam was selected from thousands of nominations to win this prestigious award. We are lucky to have you Sam!

# Super Sam

Sam was 15 when a motor speedway racing accident left him with a serious brain injury. As part of his recovery, he spent three months with us having tailored, intensive rehabilitation. We're thrilled that Sam is on his bike again and won his first race back.



Sam Norris is a name people may recognise in the future. He has his sights set on getting to world-class level in speedway. It has been his passion since the age of five and he has many medals under his belt.

But it's also the sport that almost cost him his life. On June 16 2019, Sam – riding at the British Youth Championships in Glasgow – had a serious crash. He had severe head trauma and medics rushed him to the local intensive care unit. Sam was in a coma and put on life support.

Sam's parents Claire and Chris sat in shock at his bedside. Claire said: "Sam first opened his eyes three days after the crash but he couldn't focus or track anyone when they talked to him."

They waited eagerly for the MRI scan result, but it revealed the nerve fibres in his brain were damaged. He was diagnosed with Diffuse Axonal Injury (DAI) – one of the most common types of brain injury, but one of the most severe. Claire said: "Sam's neurosurgeon warned us of the harsh reality of his severe brain injury, and that his recovery would be a long one."

Sam was flown to a hospital closer to home and, ten days after the accident, began to make progress, starting to move his left arm and hand then grabbing objects. Claire said: "I had been using sign language to communicate with Sam, and he told me that he wanted to get better and ride his motorbike again."

Claire started a Facebook page to keep everyone up to date about Sam's progress. In July 2019 she made a big announcement that got over 1,000 'likes': Sam had a place at The Children's Trust.



We are the UK's largest rehabilitation service for children with acquired brain injury. We're widely recognised as a leading centre of excellence. Our centre is one of the only places that can provide the most complex rehabilitation in the UK. Sam's parents knew that he'd get the best chance of making the best possible recovery with us.

When Sam arrived in August 2019, he could take some tentative steps but had weakness in his left arm. Our Occupational Therapist Mairi, Physiotherapist Jo, and Speech and Language Therapist Emma, talked to Sam about his goals, which included to walk and communicate, and then put a tailored plan in place.

Sam was eager to get back on his bike, but that was a huge step. So we broke it down into smaller more manageable ones. Mairi said: "Sam never imagined baking would help. But it calls for the coordination of both hands to hold a bowl, use a knife and stir. At the same you use cognitive skills and build strength too."

Rehabilitation is intensive, involves all kinds of therapies and is hard work. But by the end Sam



was walking confidently, talking and had regained strength in his left arm. He returned to school part-time, which after such a severe brain injury felt nothing short of a miracle to the family.

## Our specialist says...

### Mairi, one of our Specialist Occupational Therapists

Sam's focus was getting back to speedway, but of course there is no one therapy for that. We focused on the smaller steps that would help him build back his overall fitness and confidence – including work on the treadmill and bike, and retuning his fine motor skills, specifically his left hand.

One of Sam's biggest achievements was not physical, but involved planning and communication skills. He organised a staff versus children football event, which was great fun and a big success. It was a pleasure to work with Sam, and to see him realise his ultimate goal.



For Sam, the biggest moment came when he could get back on his bike. On 28 June this year, he won his first competitive race since his terrible crash. Sam said: "I hope it helps other people who have received an acquired brain injury, and gives them hope to achieve their end goal."

## About Diffuse Axonal Injury

This traumatic brain injury happens when the brain is 'shaken' inside the skull. The rapid movement tears the brain's long connecting nerve fibres called axons. They carry electrical impulses, which are the means of communication inside the brain and between the brain and the rest of the body. Many people with DAI remain in a coma, unable to regain consciousness, known as a vegetative state.

## A lasting legacy

During their lifetimes Sir Brian and Lady Janet Hill were committed to helping children with brain injury and neurodisability, and their families.



L-R: Caroline Hill, Alex, a former rehab patient, Lady Hill, William Hill, Elaine Paige OBE, and our CEO Dalton Leong.

We are saddened to hear of the recent passing of Lady Janet Hill, a committed advocate of our work and a frequent visitor to Tadworth. Our thoughts are with her children, William, Peter and Sarah, and their families at this sad time.

Lady Hill particularly enjoyed attending the annual Volunteers' Summer Garden Party where she would meet some of the children, families, volunteers and staff. Volunteering had been a passion of her late husband Sir Brian too, who gave his time freely in his roles as President (2009 to 2017) and former Chairman of The Children's Trust.

In 2018 the *Sir Brian Hill Volunteer Recognition Award* was established as a tribute to him. And it was Lady Hill who presented the inaugural award to Douglas Nurse from Banstead. Douglas – a volunteer of 19 years – generously maintained our beautiful grounds here at Tadworth.

Our grounds are where another legacy to Sir Brian lives on too. He was very fond of gardens and left a gift in his Will to help look after them. Our house and grounds are Grade II listed and this dedicated gift made it possible to restore our historic rose garden.

Everyone on-site is enjoying the garden and for families going through difficult times, it is a quiet and tranquil place to relax and reflect.

### Your support can live on too

With a gift in your Will, you can help our specialist work for children continue in the future. And our partnership with The National Free Wills Network can help you write or change a simple Will for free. To find out more call Charlotte Chaplin on 01737 365 000 (extension 8082) or email [cchaplin@thechildrenstrust.org.uk](mailto:cchaplin@thechildrenstrust.org.uk)

## Heart and soul

From working directly with the children to helping at fundraising events and with administration, our dedicated volunteers play an incredible role in supporting our specialist work for children and their families.

We count ourselves fortunate to have over 1,000 volunteers. They come from all walks of life, sharing a desire to make a special contribution in their own way. And we just couldn't do our work without them.

Over the last year, while some volunteers have been able to continue by helping remotely, the majority haven't due to COVID-19 restrictions. We know that everyone is keen and committed and so we took the opportunity in National Volunteers Week – in the first week of July – to say a big thank you.

One of the highlights of the week was a tour around our 17 shops to catch up with our retail volunteers who are back in force. They felt delighted to be serving customers and sorting stock, catching up with regulars and feeling part of the local community again – raising much-needed funds in the process!



do. I couldn't want for a better team, we all look after each other."

### Jan, volunteer at our Maidstone shop for four years

"One of my favourite things about volunteering is teaching other volunteers and supporting them in knowing what to



### Mike, volunteer driver for six years

"I drive the young people we support and their families to locations like hospital appointments and

outings. Volunteering is very rewarding. My favourite parts are the discharges and home visits which are really nice."



### Jayne, volunteer with our People Team for two years

"I wanted to do something that would really utilise my skills and support the wider aims of the charity.

My absolute favourite thing about volunteering at The Children's Trust is the interaction with the team I work with."

Read more about Jan, Mike and Jayne and their experiences during the pandemic. [thechildrenstrust.org.uk/stories-from-volunteers](https://thechildrenstrust.org.uk/stories-from-volunteers)

Maybe you'd like to consider volunteering too? Find out more [thechildrenstrust.org.uk/support-our-work/volunteering](https://thechildrenstrust.org.uk/support-our-work/volunteering)

### Come on in

Our 17 charity shops are open. Drop off unwanted items, pick up some bargains and find hidden treasures too – our Sevenoaks shop recently sold a pair of silver sugar tongs worth an amazing £180!

## Everyone's a winner!



Josiah enjoying the foam and bubbles at our sensory 'car wash'.



Young people from our school and residential houses took part in a sensory experience, the first on-site event in over a year.

This exciting sports day saw the children enjoy sensory and physical activities. Each one was designed to encourage playfulness and stimulate at least one of the five senses; sight, sound, scent, taste and touch.

As well as being great fun, these activities can encourage development of motor skills and coordination. Sharon Tuppeny, Head of Therapy for Rehabilitation, said: "Sensory environments help children and young people with complex needs and multiple disabilities to engage with their senses and interact with the world around them."



Olive enjoys the herb garden

The mud pie station proved most popular. Children loved mixing, stirring and moulding earth and water to make some 'delicious' pies. Olive liked the herb kitchen, full of the scent of mint, rosemary, coriander and lemon. Ryan enjoyed 'fishing' in the water zone, and Adam joined in playing messy football, boccia blast and tennis.

All the children received a medal and certificate at the end of the day to celebrate their participation.



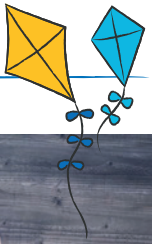
Ryan fishes in the water zone

This special event was hosted by Parallel, who deliver inclusive events for people of all abilities. Also on-site were inclusive sports expert Mark Bullock and the team from Panathlon, who provide sport competitions for young people with disabilities.

### More fun – for more children!

Our camps and clubs reopened this summer. Children up to the age of 18 with brain injury or neurodisability can come and stay, and make the most of our wonderful facilities while being looked after by our caring team. It's lots of fun for them, and a much needed rest time for their families – especially after this last year.

## Our promise to you



Your support makes what we do to help children and young people with brain injury possible. Every donation matters, so we appreciate every gift no matter how large or small.

We promise that our fundraising will be legal, open, honest and respectful. As part of this commitment, we take great care with your personal information following data protection and privacy legislation, regulations and guidance. This is explained in our privacy policy, which you can read at [thechildrenstrust.org.uk/privacy-policy](https://thechildrenstrust.org.uk/privacy-policy)

If you need to update your details or would like to change the way in which we contact you, please speak to Amanda or Sue in our Supporter Care team.



01737 364 349



[supportercare@thechildrenstrust.org.uk](mailto:supportercare@thechildrenstrust.org.uk)



Supporter Care, The Children's Trust,  
Tadworth Court, Tadworth,  
Surrey, KT20 5RU



### What a gift... £171,578 boost!

One of our biggest donations in 2020-2021 came collectively from all the people who signed up for Gift Aid. And so we'd like to say a huge thank you.

If you are a UK taxpayer we can claim 25p from HMRC for every £1 you give to us. It may not sound a lot but all these 25p gifts quickly build up – from money donated, sponsorship paid and even from goods given to our charity shops.

### Sign up to Gift Aid today

This extra money goes such a long way to support our specialist work for children with brain injury. So please sign up to Gift Aid at [thechildrenstrust.org.uk/support-our-work/fundraising/gift-aid](https://thechildrenstrust.org.uk/support-our-work/fundraising/gift-aid) Already give by Gift Aid? Please let us know of any changes in your situation or home address.

*giftaid it*

## What you've been up to...

There's no stopping our amazing supporters especially now that summer is here. And all your fundraising efforts make our work with the children possible. Thank you!

### Sweet deal

Since it began in 1991, National Doughnut Week has raised £1 million for many charities.



Dunn's Bakery started selling doughnuts for The Children's Trust 15 years ago. Now hundreds of other independent bakers and cafés join in too, raising £460,000 for The Children's Trust so far.



Indy and other children got involved, decorating (and of course eating) their own doughnuts.

### Tee-rrific fundraisers

Members of St George's Hill Golf Club and their guests raised a huge £74,000 on Saturday 3rd July at their Captains Charity Day. Players enjoyed a great round of golf, a wonderful lunch and a live auction to finish off the day.

Both the men's and ladies' captains have chosen us for their charity for 2021, so their amazing fundraising efforts will continue.

### Top of the class



Activities help Charlie and Lucy learn about brain injury.

Schoolchildren do so much to raise funds for us. So we set up a virtual School Recognition Day, to show them just how much their support means.

Six schools attended via video screening. During the session, we involved children in three activities: follow the instructions, animal bingo and taskmaster. Each activity gave them an understanding of how children with brain injury communicate and interpret things differently.

The children loved the activities particularly taskmaster. They had to find objects around the classroom and make our butterfly logo.

At the end, we held a virtual awards ceremony to present each school with thank you certificates, for their amazing fundraising efforts to help other children.

*"The children really enjoyed the session, it was pacy, interactive and just the right amount of information on a difficult topic for them to understand."* Teacher.

## What's coming up?



As lockdown lifts we have more in-person events. And you can still get involved virtually too. We appreciate everything you do to raise much-needed funds.

### Tadworth to Tokyo – 23 July-5 September



Our mascot called Tadworth is undertaking an incredible 25,000-mile virtual journey from our specialist centre in Surrey to Tokyo to

celebrate the Olympics. Take part in your own sponsored challenge and contribute to Tadworth's miles.

### Run Reigate – Sunday 19 September

We are excited to announce the return of this memorable experience with a half marathon, 10k race, 5k race and kid's race in Reigate Priory Park. Got a place? Contact us to join our Squad.



Run Reigate.

### The Virtual Virgin Money London Marathon – Sunday 3 October 2021

Take part in the world's greatest marathon on a course of your choice during a 24-hour period. Guarantee your spot on your virtual start line by joining our Squad and running for The Children's Trust.



The Virtual Virgin Money London Marathon.

### Christmas Concert – Tuesday 14 December

Join us at Holy Trinity Church, Guildford along with a host of celebrities. Enjoy amazing performances and much-loved carols. All guests receive a full colour souvenir programme.



### Step Forward – March 2022

At the time of writing, we're planning an in-person event! Join us for a physical walk starting and finishing at our national rehabilitation centre in Tadworth, Surrey. Choose from a distance of 10 or 5 miles - families, friends, children and dogs are all welcome!

More information on all our events and how you can get involved can be found here: [www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/events](http://www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/events)

# Christmas has come early

## New Christmas cards

Our brand new range of 16 delightful festive cards have arrived and are on sale now.



Christmas is always such a busy time, so this is a great opportunity to sort your cards out early. And because all the proceeds go towards our specialist work for children with brain injury, they get to benefit sooner too.



We've handpicked our range of cards so that there's something for everyone. From cute animals to Christmas scenes, snowy landscapes to traditional trees... whatever you choose will help the children.



### Ways to order



Call 01372 389 943

Lines open Monday to Friday  
9am – 5pm



[shop.thechildrenstrust.org.uk](http://shop.thechildrenstrust.org.uk)



Please note that the last day for ordering cards is 9 December 2021 to ensure pre-Christmas delivery.

  
**The Children's Trust**  
For children with brain injury