

inspire

Your supporter magazine



Winter 2023

Living our best lives

Inside

- Sensory lounge opens
- Power of music
- New goal for Tye


The Children's Trust
For children with brain injury



High hopes for 2023

Putting together this edition made me realise just how much expertise we have to offer. Our team of health professionals provides a whole range of services to the children in rehabilitation at Tadworth and in our community services, and at The Children's Trust School.

inspire comes out twice a year and allows us to showcase some of our expertise in action. You will read about examples from music therapy to occupational therapy, and see the motivating and life-changing impact it has on children and young people. For instance, Tye came here for rehabilitation four years ago. He was so inspired

by our physiotherapists, he is now determined to become a therapist himself.

Everything we do is about helping children to participate in everyday life again after a life-changing brain injury. Our aim is to help them live the best life possible, and we can only do this with your support.

Looking after supporters is important to us too. We promise that our fundraising will be legal, open, honest and respectful. We manage your personal information following data protection and privacy legislation, regulations and guidance. We've updated our Privacy Policy, you can find it here: thechildrenstrust.org.uk/privacy-policy.

From the smiles of the children in our photo gallery, you can see that everything we do comes with fun and enjoyment 'built in'. Thank you so much for your continued support which means we can keep aiming high in 2023.

Best wishes,

Amanda Boyd,
Supporter Care Coordinator

Scan to donate



On our front cover is 11-year-old Indy who attends The Children's Trust School.

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thechildrenstrust.org.uk



Stay in touch, follow us on:

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TCT_1607 February 2023 Registered charity number 288018



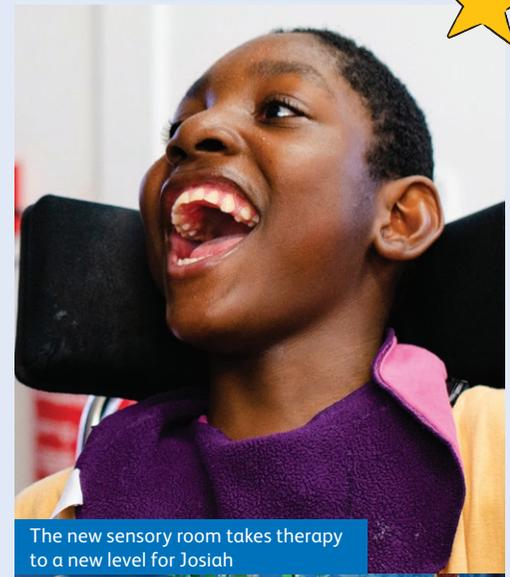
Children are enjoying a beautiful new multi-sensory room, thanks to the generous support of some amazing donors. Fun feature walls and blinds make children feel like they're underwater. Lights, sounds, tactile surfaces and scents stimulate the senses, and also offer a safe place to relax and enjoy a sense of calm.

Innovative therapy

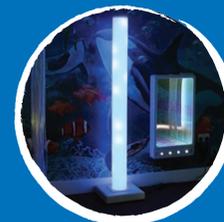
From their smiles, you can tell that children love this new space. Spending time here with our specialist therapists is a key part of their therapy too where they can work on visual, auditory and tactile processing, communication, fine and gross motor skills and access assistive technology, as well as having a safe space for play.

Enhancing experiences

Josiah was among children who recently took part in a Makaton workshop in the new sensory room. Makaton is a way of communicating using signs and symbols, and the facilities greatly enhanced the experience. Louise, Children's Support Assistant, said: "The new sensory room is a huge benefit to the children's needs and development."



The new sensory room takes therapy to a new level for Josiah



Two new sensory bubble tubes
Mesmerising movements and changes to soft colours are soothing to watch



3D light box
Creates an infinite illusion of LED lights encouraging visual stimulation



Trailing octopus lights
Cascading strands of light immerse users in a calm sensory experience

We rely on all of our generous supporters to make our work possible, thank you!

Independence for Indy

After a difficult start in life, Indy is now living and loving every day.



Indy has a strong relationship with our team.

When Indy was born she weighed less than a bag of sugar. She was put in an incubator and whisked away from her mum Sasha. When Sasha did see Indy she was amazed she was still alive. Sasha said: "Her forearm was the same circumference as one of my fingers. It was utterly devastating."

After three weeks in a specialist unit, Indy was transferred to a hospital closer to home. But within 24 hours Indy got an infection and was diagnosed with a bowel disease that needed surgery. It went well, but just weeks later the family heard that Indy had sustained considerable brain trauma. "We were told that she had Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy and that it was likely to be of the most severe kind. I can honestly say I've never experienced pain like it," said Sasha.

Challenging times

After nearly six months in hospital Indy was able to go home. She couldn't sit up, walk or talk and it was then that reality hit. "I loved my little girl so much but caring for her 24/7 was life-changing. There wasn't a moment for us

as a family, and Indy's sister Domini took a back seat," said Sasha.

Like many parents caring for a profoundly disabled child, Sasha found it physically and emotionally exhausting. She told us: "I was on my knees. When we secured a place for Indy at The Children's Trust School, it was a huge relief but also bittersweet."

Indy has a residential placement, so she lives here in Chestnut House and attends our school. She now has around a dozen of our specialist staff supporting her 24/7. The team was specially trained to look after Indy's needs – and so Sasha knows Indy is in the best place, but says home felt so empty without her.

About Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy

It is a severe form of cerebral palsy that affects both arms and legs and often the torso and face. It can cause limbs to be weak, and can make movements fidgety, jerky or uncontrolled. Usually children require lifelong treatment and support.

Growing confidence

After three years at The Children's Trust, Indy is much more confident around people and is a big personality in Chestnut House. She likes waking everyone up each morning, loves going to school, using the hydrotherapy pool and enjoys music and yoga.

"Indy is now 11 and her personality has matured. We visit Indy every weekend and she had terrible separation anxiety at first, screaming for me even if I just turned my back," said Sasha, "but now she feels safe by herself."

Recently Indy proved just how independent she'd become by driving herself to school in her wheelchair. Our specialist therapy and equipment means that Indy operates her wheelchair using a head-switch. The path from Chestnut House to school is fairly long and windy, so it is a huge achievement. Indy was met by claps and cheers from her teachers and classmates.

Specialist care

It was so hard for Sasha to be separated from Indy at birth but now, although they don't live under the same roof, the whole family feels at home at The Children's Trust. "It is so reassuring to know that we have The Children's Trust family around us. It's changed our lives as well as Indy's," said Sasha. "We know that Indy is getting the very best care. She can do things we'd never have imagined – moving around by herself, swimming, learning in class – thanks to specialist care and the incredible team here," Sasha added.

Now our new Dojo app allows our team to share updates with parents like Sasha, so she's even closer to Indy. "My phone pings, and I can see photos of Indy's achievements in 'real time'. It's amazing!" said Sasha.

Our specialist says...

When Indy arrived at the school, she was a very anxious young lady. Due to her quite complex medical needs, Indy is reliant on adult support for a lot of her day. Encouraging Indy to have more independence has been something that is really important.



Molly is Indy's teacher.

Indy packs a lot into her day. She takes part in activities including Yoga, Music, Art and Drama. Her favourite activity is using her switch to power a number of toys, play music and drive her wheelchair. After school, she goes to lots of After School Clubs before getting ready for bed.

Indy has thrived being one of the 'older' learners in her class and thoroughly enjoys her role as everyone's 'big sister' – this shows in how mature, sensible and all round fantastic she is to have as a pupil.



From left to right: Sasha, Indy and Domini.

Thank you. With your support we can help children live the best life possible. And that's life-changing for everyone in their family too.

Working wonders



We marked Occupational Therapy Week in November by recognising the crucial role our specialist team of occupational therapists play in giving children greater independence in their lives.

People may associate occupational therapy with doing exercises after breaking a bone or recovering after an operation. Here at The Children's Trust, occupational therapy is about helping children to improve their ability to do everyday tasks, which may be difficult due to their brain injury or neurodisability.

Building skills

For example, a child may have difficulties with their morning routine, like dressing themselves. They may struggle with the 'sequencing' of a task – doing practical, everyday things in the right order.

We help a child to break down the process into detailed steps. We work with them on sensory skills needed to pick out clothes, and on the

movements and organisational skills to get the clothes in the right order. Members of our team use fun activities to improve a child's coordination and balance, which are also involved in getting dressed.

Using equipment

The team assesses what equipment could help a child's independence. This can include things like a wheelchair or alternative seating system, which we tailor to each child's individual needs. It's so rewarding to see a child confidently whizzing down the corridors in their new wheelchair!

New technology plays a big role too. Access methods include devices that can be used to operate electronic equipment like a computer.

For example, a sensor-controlled eye blink switch helps children to operate their computer with the blink of an eye.

There are all kinds of devices for all kinds of needs. Our team helps children use a variety of head, hand and eye-operated switches, so they can participate in whole class activities.

Working as a team

Our occupational therapists work closely with our wider specialist team – including physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, music therapists – to make sure therapies work together, to help children meet their personal rehabilitation goals.

Being independent

Occupational therapy is about giving children greater independence in their lives and feel part of the world around them. What we do in our lives defines who we are and that is important to children's health and their wellbeing too.

You can see why, to Mandie, Tina, Ella and the other members of our occupational therapy team, it's much more than a job, and they are working wonders for the children.

What's the best thing about occupational therapy?

"Working directly with young people and enabling them to access activities they enjoy. You feel like you have made a difference."

**Mandie Geddes,
Specialist
Occupational Therapist.**



"Being able to make a small difference in the world, whether that's helping someone to understand something better or finding a solution that would improve their quality of life."

**Tina Chen, Highly
Specialist Occupational Therapist.**



Our team helps Finn, Frankie and Guy build skills to increase their independence throughout their day, including leisure activities as shown here.

Putting you in the picture

Festive fun and special days



The Body Shop supported our Winter illuminations.



Colourful umbrellas painted by the children.



School fundraisers take part in our Elf Run.



Annabelle enjoys Christmas activities.



Olivia performs in our Christmas play.



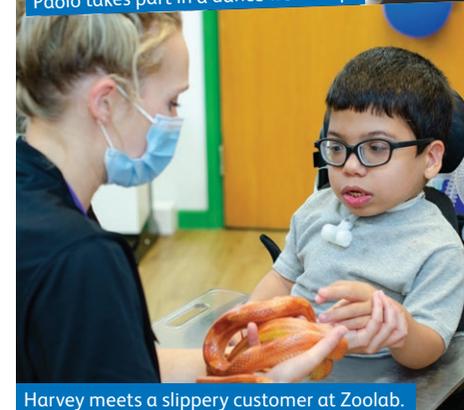
Matthew dresses up for Christmas fun.



Paolo takes part in a dance workshop.



Kenny enjoys an African drumming session.



Harvey meets a slippery customer at Zoolab.



Finley dresses up as a firefighter.



Nathanael builds a bear.



Frankie meets Supergirl at Comicon.

Power of music

Music inspires children to move, communicate and progress faster, so they can approach their lives with hope and much-needed confidence after severe brain injury.

When you listen to music, does it bring back memories of a certain time or place? Music activates areas in the brain associated with memory, speech, movement, attention, and those involved in processing emotions.

It's why music therapy isn't simply 'nice to have' at The Children's Trust, our specialist music therapists help children regain lost skills, develop resilience and adjust to dramatic changes they have experienced following a brain injury.

Power to speak again – Haydn's story

When Haydn was fifteen, he was knocked off his bike and his head took the full impact. In the critical care unit, Haydn's parents were told that if he did wake up, he would need round-the-clock care. But after twelve days in a coma,

Haydn slowly started to improve. Two months later Haydn moved to The Children's Trust.

When we met Haydn, he couldn't speak or have a conversation but he could sing. After a severe brain injury, many children can sing before they can speak. It's because of the way that music and language are processed in the brain. Music acts like a turbo booster for learning and rehabilitation.

Music has always been a big part of Haydn's life and we thought he'd be motivated by Melodic Intonation Therapy. This focuses on areas in the brain that are used in singing, to support learning and recall. We would sing a phrase that Haydn wanted to learn, and Haydn would sing it back. Phrases such as 'Can I have a drink please?'

Haydn's mum Amanda said: "It may seem little to some but it's huge for me and whilst he still has a fair way to go, I really believe his speech wouldn't be where it is today without music therapy."

Haydn came on in leaps and bounds and at his going-home ceremony he played the Nirvana track 'Come as you are' on the drums. He now plays at public events too.

Power to move

Just as a drumbeat can encourage people to walk in step and time, we can use the rhythm of music to help children to walk again, improving endurance and the strength and quality of the

Did you know?

Music therapists are accomplished musicians with a degree in music before they go on to train as music therapists.

movement. This is possible because the musical rhythms affect connections between brain cells and strengthen brain pathways so that skills can be learnt.

Our music therapists work with other specialists in our multidisciplinary teams too. For example, music therapy can work hand in hand with physiotherapy. Practising coordination and movement by playing the drums can be much more exciting and motivating than standalone physical exercises.

As well as working towards their individual goals, children can make music together, fostering a sense of teamwork, achievement and belonging. When incorporated into rehabilitation and education, music therapy can be a game changer.



"It is truly inspiring to see how the children we support respond to music therapy. It brings vitality to the exercises and interventions that change lives."
Dr Jonathan Pool, Music Therapist.

Watch Haydn's inspirational story scan the QR code



Six ways music therapy strikes a chord

- 1 Increases independence** – using assistive technology to play musical instruments
- 2 Develops social skills** – using 'call and response' to imitate two-way conversation
- 3 Encourages movement** – improving finger control by plucking guitar strings
- 4 Improves communication** – humming, making sounds and singing
- 5 Promotes memory recall** – playing familiar songs and learning lyrics
- 6 Reduces anxiety** – using songs that explain medical procedures

New goal for Tye



Tye's dream was to become a footballer but then life took an unexpected turn. Now Tye has a new ambition.

In July 2018, 11-year-old Tye's day was like any other but then he woke up in the night with a terrible headache and started being sick. He began to have seizures and was rushed into hospital.

A scan revealed Tye had a severe bleed on his brain and he went into emergency surgery. "There were no warning signs and I wasn't ready to hear that my son was going to die," said Tye's mum Amy. "I've never been so scared."

After two nerve-wracking months in hospital, Tye was on the mend. It was a huge relief when Amy was told she could take Tye home. A week later, Tye came to The Children's Trust for specialist rehabilitation to help him become more independent.

Tye had been extremely independent before his illness but when we met him, he couldn't stand without help and relied on his wheelchair. He also struggled to remember what had happened and where he was. Throughout the day, we had to prompt him about upcoming therapy sessions and the names of our team members.

Specialist rehabilitation

It didn't take long for Tye to build a bond with our team. Physiotherapist Rachel, pictured here with Tye, said: "A huge motivator for Tye was his desire to return to playing football. Over the first three months, Tye worked with me twice a day to improve his balance and walking."

Tye said: "Whenever I was on the treadmill with Rachel, she was always pushing me forward which was nice. She was always there cheering me on and that's when I really felt like I was walking on my own again."

Tye progressed very quickly. He benefited from the wide range of therapy our team provides, including hydrotherapy, horse riding, gym-based sessions and walking with music therapy. "Every day we were doing something different to achieve my goals and that helped make it fun," said Tye.

Amy recalls how Tye and the other children would play games together. She said: "It gave parents a little bit of breathing space. I didn't have to worry, there was a shared experience, a shared understanding with everyone."

Scan to watch a video of Tye's story



Kicking helped Tye to focus and also stretch stiff muscles.



Using a scooter helped Tye balance and build his confidence.

"I was excited to go home," explained Tye, "but I knew I would miss The Children's Trust. I still struggle a bit with my memory, so I've continued using my notebook to write things down throughout the day. That's something I started doing at The Children's Trust."



Tye enjoyed the sessions and progressed quickly.

New ambition

Tye recently came back and visited us with his mum. "I wanted to see how everyone was getting on and if there was anything I could do to help," said Tye.

He is now in Year 10 and is working towards his GCSEs, with the ambition to be a Physiotherapist. So Tye took part in some of the therapy sessions while he was

here. Physiotherapist Rachel said: "It was lovely to have Tye join in the sessions and I felt the young people responded really well to him. He is a physio in the making because he was so supportive, motivating and incredibly helpful."

"All the therapists at The Children's Trust are just amazing, and they inspired me to want to be like them," said Tye. We know how hard Tye worked and saw how determined he was during his rehabilitation. It's a sign that he can go all the way. Good luck Tye!

Planning for the future



Leaving a gift in your Will for our work can give more children and young people like Tye a brighter future, by helping us develop our services over the longer term.

We know Wills are personal. Family and friends must always come first. But they are also a chance to remember causes you care about. Any amount you may be able to leave us would be a very special legacy for someone like Tye.

For a limited time, you can now have a Will written or updated for FREE, with our Free Will offer*.



For more information scan this code or visit: thechildrenstrust.org.uk/something-special

*As The Children's Trust is covering the cost, the number of free Wills is limited and subject to availability.

What you've been up to...



The life-changing work of The Children's Trust is possible thanks to all the incredible people who fundraise for us. Thank you for everything you do.

Inspirational Charlie raises £4,000

Charlie Fogarty visited to mark 10 years since his rehabilitation and presented us with £4,000!



Charlie was 15 when he sustained a severe brain injury after being knocked

down by a car. Doctors thought it unlikely he would ever walk or talk again. But with our specialist support and Charlie's determination, he was back playing football for the West Midlands Centre of Excellence team within five months.

Now Charlie is Player Manager for the open-age Disability Team at Solihull Moors Football Club. He was named in the Queen's New Year's Honours List 2017/18. His MBE was awarded for his services to young people in Solihull.

Charlie delivers speeches to individuals from all walks of life. A big part of his story is his rehabilitation at The Children's Trust and we're proud to be part of it. We want to thank Charlie for raising £4,000 for us in his commemorative fundraising drive.

Charlie recently won the Stephen McAleese Award for Inspiration 2022 for his work in the field of Acquired Brain Injury. Congratulations Charlie!

Just the business

As part of our long-running partnership, Irwin Mitchell Solicitors continue to sponsor our annual

National Paediatric Brain Injury Conference. It allows us to share our expertise and is seen as a must-attend event for healthcare and associated professionals working in this field. We truly appreciate this commitment.

Teams from Irwin Mitchell Solicitors also competed to create the best window displays at our Redhill and Reigate shops. Team Reigate got top marks for their 'incredibly creative window'. Team Redhill helped rack up higher sales on the day. Everyone's a winner.

Big thanks go to Toyota for their continuing support which has helped fund our robotics programme and transport. Their team also helped with our gardens, planting over 400 plants around Tadworth Court.

A team from Barclays also took part in a garden challenge and volunteered at our Winter Illuminations. We're so grateful.

Snow much fun

Thank you to schools who took part in our Elf Runs:

- Homefield Prep School • Mickfield School
- St Christopher's School and Nursery
- Albourne C.E School • Salfords Primary School
- Danes Hill School • Royal Alexandra and Albert School • Josh Evans Soccer School.

By putting on hats and running the distance of your choice you went a long way to help the children we support! Taking part in fundraising is great fun too... look out for more school fundraising activities this year.



What's coming up?

We have lots of dates for your diary and would love to see you at our events over the coming months. There are so many ways to join in and have fun at the same time.

Firewalk

2 March 2023

Take on the ultimate flaming fundraiser challenge and face the heat by walking on hot coals to support The Children's Trust.

thechildrenstrust.org.uk/firewalk

Surrey Hills Hike

12 March 2023

Come along on a picturesque hike through this area of outstanding beauty. The hike starts and finishes at our rehabilitation centre in Tadworth. Our new '1K Your Way!' route is fully accessible for buggies and wheelchairs.

thechildrenstrust.org.uk/surreyhillshike



Surrey Hills Hike.

Skydive

Date: Whenever you're ready!

Jump into 2023 by taking part in our skydive! You can take the plunge from 10,000 feet anytime this year at Headcorn Skydive Centre.

thechildrenstrust.org.uk/events/skydive-us

London Landmarks Half Marathon

2 April 2023

From cultural landmarks and heritage to the city's quirky and hidden secrets, join us and get to explore the capital on a route like no other.

thechildrenstrust.org.uk/landmarks

London Marathon

23 April 2023

Are you lucky enough to have a place? We'd

love you to join our friendly team on the start line of this iconic race.

Email sports@thechildrenstrust.org.uk

Golf days

Two prestigious venues are offering outstanding rounds for players.

Wildernesse Golf Club Sevenoaks

25 May 2023

thechildrenstrust.org.uk/springgolfdays

Hankley Common Golf Club

6 Sept 2023 thechildrenstrust.org.uk/annualgolfdays

Shop sustainably

Spotted in our charity shop... Laura Hamilton, TV presenter and property expert! Laura said: "Buying from sustainable small businesses or pre-loved from charity retailers like The Children's Trust shops is something we can all do. It's all about trying to ensure the best future possible

for our children (and looking fab while doing it!)"

Thank you for supporting us Laura. thechildrenstrust.org.uk/shops



Laura Hamilton shops with us.

For more information about how to get involved visit thechildrenstrust.org.uk/events



Surrey Hills Hike

Sponsored Walk 12 March 2023

5-mile, 10-mile and
a new accessible route



To support
children with
brain injury

Limited places, sign up now!

Lace up your walking shoes and join us for a family-friendly hike through a section of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Beauty! Scan the code or visit the address below to sign up.
thechildrenstrust.org.uk/surreyhillshike



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The Children's Trust
For children with brain injury