



## **Power of Parenting Annual Trustee Report**

**FY 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025**

FY 24/25 has been yet another busy and exciting year for Power of Parenting.

We have continued to work hard to promote the charity, utilising being last year's charity of choice by the Bracknell Town Mayor. We have increased our charitable activities by expanding to a third Borough and increasing our income with new grants and funding.

As of March 31, 2024, there were approximately 83,630 children looked after by local authorities in England, with foster care remaining the most common placement (67%), though numbers in kinship care (relatives/friends) are rising. Our support is offered to any foster child or care leaver, in one of the three the Boroughs, in which we work

Whilst continuing to work with Bracknell and Wokingham Boroughs, in December 2024 we spread our support to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. This doubled our support, in a geographically area, but also with the number of children / young adults which we can support. The last three months of the financial year saw an increased rise on support applications, this successful addition of support we hope will be a continued into 2025.

### **Under 16 Support**

On going from previous years, educational data from 2024 still shows an ever-growing gap between children looked after and not. CLA were half as likely to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and compared to the overall pupil population. These skills are essential and POP are supporting local Boroughs to provide extra tuition to close this gap. Maths and English are funded by POP and provided by Explore Learning amongst other companies. This not only allows the level of understanding to be increased but provides social skills and increased confidence. The attendance is high and we have wonderful, positive responses to this funding. 2024 saw a rise in applications for Maths and English support but also requests for more specific tuition to

support leading up to exams. We are seeing a gradual increase in non-tuition request of support, such as therapy. We believe this will increase further in the future., due to cuts in the social care sector, and the children not receiving the appropriate amount of support to assist with their trauma.

### **Further Educational Support**

From the Post 16 point, there is a vast gap with the needed support. Reasons such as funding such as pupil premium being cut, the stress from exams, intervention of support not given prior to age of 16, late SEN diagnosis and support, and the increasing mental health concerns and trauma.

Access to further education is much lower for young people who have been in care. 13% of pupils who were looked after entered higher education compared to 43% of all other pupils. POP is seeking to address this disparity with funding. The POP bursaries are offered, to help with travel, equipment, living costs and anything that might be required to support. £700 for each academic year of their course but can be more / less depending on circumstances. Children and young adults who are or have experienced social care, do not have the luxury of “bank of Mum and Dad”, so POP is striving to help bridge the gap. We offer financial and mentoring support, so the stress of further education becomes more manageable. 2024 saw a rise in requests for post 16 support, and we expect to see that rise continue into 2025.

### **Sporting and Life Skills**

POP continued to support and fund many sporting requests in 2024. From football and cricket equipment and subs, swimming lessons to horse riding lessons as a form of therapy. We saw an increase in older children requests this year, rather than previous years of under 10s. We also continued to support a The feedback we have had from this support, is that it is helping the children, integrate more easily in school and that their social skills are improving. Funding sporting activities does not only assist in confidence and social skills, but can provide a stable, regular activity for children who desperately need it. In the next year, POP is planning to help more within this area.

POP also offered support within a life skills area this year. To encourage independence, we provided transport funding towards school and college, bikes, and driving lessons. We also saw a huge increase for technology and equipment requests. Chromebooks were provided to enhance studies, and to assist those where English is not a first language. In January we received a request or a child who struggled to attend school. They had attended many schools in different area and was difficult for them to navigate the new journey. So, we agreed a term of funding for a taxi, so ensure that the child

could gain a good attendance. This became a positive outcome, as tis allowed the child to gain the confidence to go to a new school on their own, and that became a n independent bus and train journey.

### **Christmas Period**

POP delivered 21 hampers to vulnerable families in our local community in December 2024. We worked with three local schools, who identified families in crisis. The feedback has been amazing and so touching. This is where our volunteers shine, as a huge amount of work goes into this! POP can only achieve this by the generous donation from the Greenslade Foundation. Providing festive food, treats and gifts means that local families who need extra support at Christmas time receive it.



Pop also provided funds to Storyy Home Group, to provide Christmas gifts for the young adults. The young adults live in assisted group housing, being supported in their journey into independence. The festive funding POP provided allowed 14 to have gifts.

### **Significant donors / Grants and fundraising activities**

Fundraising was tough in 2024, but the friends of POP continued to support the charity, and we had another wonderful year. POP relies on funding to continue, and we continue to apply for funding and host events to increase the pot. 2024, POP received magnificent donations from Greenslade Foundation of £10,000, a £15,000 donation from Bracknell Forest Crematorium. This allowed POP to support a record high of applications from Bracknell, Wokingham and in last quart RBWM. We also had smaller donations, and fundraising events, which helped POP continue to grow and help.

## Annual Christmas Ball

The end of November saw the festive spirit arrive at POP, when we held our annual Christmas ball. This was a wonderful evening, to celebrate the foster carers of the local areas, and thank them for all their hard work and commitment. We also recognised the friends of pop for their support, as without the constant donations and volunteering, POP would not be able to continue. POP were able to share the vision for 2025, and where our funds are distributed. This was also a successful fundraising event, through a raffle, live and silent auction.



## Easthampstead Rotary donation – Bracknell Walk Together event



In May POP attended the annual Easthampstead Rotary event at South Hill Park. This is a wonderful event, as we not only raise money, but we had the opportunity to socialise with other local charities. This is a great social event, and POP is happy to continue with our involvement.



In summary FY 2024/2025 was a successful year for Power of Parenting. We onboarded a third Borough, RBWM, and supported more children and young adults than before. The support we have offered has been mostly focused on academic and financial support, as we have seen a growing demand. The financial bursaries for further education have been a big focus this year, which is positive, as shows more care leavers are carrying on their education. We will continue to raise awareness and funds to help bridge the gap which children in care face and strive to make "life as it should be".