

23rd March 2023

Dear Miranda,

I have pleasure in writing this report; detailing the outcomes for the beneficiaries of your generous grant.

- **Brief history of the charity**

Strength & Learning Through Horses have been delivering alternative education programmes and equine therapy services for over 12 years. We are recognised as the largest and most respected equine assisted therapy and education centre in the Greater London area and a centre of research excellence. We work with over 450 of London's most vulnerable and disadvantaged young people each year- many of these are school refusers, suffer mental health challenges and/or have learning disabilities.

- **Details of project supported by BHMT grant**

This funding has enabled two young people to join a Therapeutic Education Group that has been running weekly from the start of the year, for two hours a week. These sessions involve the young people partaking in an hour of horse care or horse training, followed by an hour of stable or yard management. Examples of the horse care activities include, but are not limited to: brushing, leading, exercising, helping horses overcome fears, field/stable management and feeding the horses. Whilst undertaking these activities, the students were also working on social and communication skills as well as numerous employability skills such as time management, decision making and leadership skills.

- **Areas of mental health addressed and profile of the recipients**

Both of these young people (aged 18 and 20) are autistic; they have extreme anxiety and really struggle with social skills and maintaining relationships. Decision making, teamwork tasks and communication with peers were almost impossible for them both. This is the only activity that one of these young people has been able to leave the house for in a long time. They both arrived with very low self-esteem, were very anxious around the horses and barely interacted with the staff members or each other.

- **Impact of the project**


This project has given both of these young men a positive activity to engage in on a weekly basis. They now arrive with smiles on their faces and greet us all politely; their confidence has improved considerably, and their communication skills and their teamwork skills are improving week by week. They have said that they are learning to understand both their and other people's feelings better. One of these students have managed to find themselves a job due to their new found confidence and they are slowly starting to develop a relationship with one another. They have both achieved 2 AQA Unit Award Certificates and are working towards several more.

- **Personal anonymised examples (if possible)**

One of the students does not leave the house at all, apart from to attend the group sessions with SLTH; he had no friends and no future aspirations. His birthday happened to fall on the day the session runs. When asked by a member of staff what his birthday plans are, he responded with 'Being here is my birthday'. This short and simple quote speaks volumes about the impact our programme is having on him.

I would like to thank you once again for your generous donation that has made such a huge difference to these young people's lives.

With warmest regards,



Laura Gill

Therapeutic Education Practitioner

