

A FUNDING REPORT FOR: NED'S FUND

**Supporting two visits to Jamie's Farm Lewes from Uckfield College,
East Sussex**



“Jamie's Farm has allowed us to build relationships with the students outside of the classroom. With Covid, schools are very static, and students have to stay in the same place for long periods of time. Jamie's Farm has enabled us to come out of the environment, have conversations and experience positive things together.” **James, Raising Achievements Leader, Uckfield College**

“School life is quite stressful. On the farm it felt like having time out and a chance to try something new. I've seen a different side to myself. I am a real city girl, but it was fun to get stuck in. When I go back to school I want to take back this new personality; more confident and willing to try new things and not just shutting down because I'm nervous or worried what people think.” **Young person, Uckfield College**

Introduction

In 2020, Ned's Fund awarded a bursary to fund the school costs for two visits from Uckfield College to Jamie's Farm Lewes. Thanks to your support, we hosted 17 children and 4 support staff during two fantastic five-day visits in November 2020.

Our day-visit programme was launched in June 2020; an adaptation of our core residential model, with the same pupils returning each day for a week. The format has enabled us to continue to bring our immersive programme to children and young people during a time that Covid restrictions prohibited residential visits from mainstream schools. We have been able to fully utilise our outdoor spaces, working with children in Covid-safe environments surrounded by the tranquillity and adventure that the countryside offers. The success of the format has prompted us to retain such approaches when we are able to wholly return to residential, as of the 17th May 2021.

We hope this report provides an insight into the transformational changes that we have been able to achieve in many young people's lives during one of the most challenging and traumatic year for many. Our sincere thanks to the Fund for its partnership in making such change possible.

Day-Visit Programme: An Overview

During their time at the farm, the groups were involved with a range of jobs, including animal health checks, mucking-out and feeding all the animals (sheep, cattle, pigs, chickens, ducks, goats and horses). During the visit, each young person took part in our therapeutic horse work session with our Horse Specialist and horses Wall-e and Toffee. Other activities included log chopping, preparing logs to use for the bonfire at the end of the day where the group gathered to reflect on the day's achievements. The young people also took part in crafts and music, and a walk each day to explore the countryside. This provided the group with a chance to play games and have time to chat one-to-one with other pupils, their teachers or Jamie's Farm staff. All homecooked meals were enjoyed and shared together in our outdoor areas. Therapeutic group work and one-to-ones were weaved into the visit. Due to the impact of lockdown and the pandemic, we had a greater focus on therapeutic support. We also created team games such as Farm Olympics and Jamie's Treasure Hunt to help bring about some fun and togetherness which the young people had missed out on.



Bedding up and feeding the goats and kids on the morning farm rounds



Digging and preparing the new raised beds ready for planting

Who we supported:

Of the 17 children that attended across the two visits:

- 50% Male, 50% Female
- Worked with ages 12 to 15
- At least 12% had Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and 18% received Pupil Premium/Free School Meals

Each child that visits Jamie's Farm is referred for one or two principal reasons. Of those that visited:

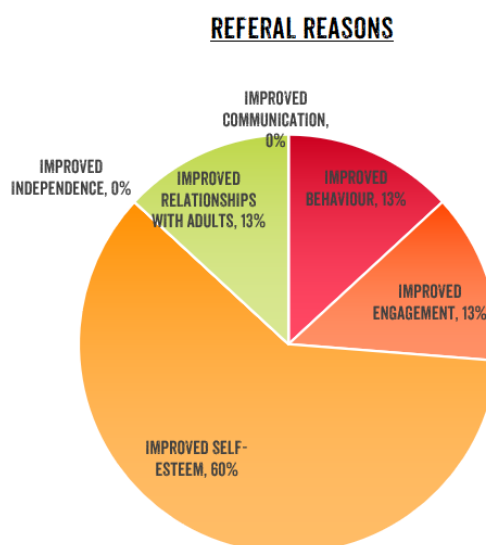
- 100% were at risk of exclusion
- 94% were not on track in their core subjects
- 20% had concerning attendance
- 27% displayed concerning or very poor behaviour in school
- 73% were persistently absent from lessons or disengaged with school
- 80% were identified by teachers as having consistently low self-esteem or lacked confidence

Impact Achieved:

The funding has enabled us to provide young people with a break from the challenges of everyday life and time in a nurturing, positive environment with support to help process the effects of the pandemic on their lives. The visits helped young people re-establish healthy routines and habits, such as time away from screens, and the opportunity to socialise with their peers and teachers in a safe outdoor environment, helping them to reconnect and establish new friendships. To be recognised by peers and adults as likeable and capable has especially important benefits after a long time away from the school environment.

Carrying our practical jobs with tangible outcomes helped the young people achieve a sense of success and rebuild their confidence. Group challenges/creative tasks allowed them to play - key in helping young people prepare to learn again, especially at such a crucial time in their secondary school education. Young people face a long road of recovery ahead, but by working in partnership with Uckfield College, we aim for the benefits seen at the farm to continue in the classroom.

"The students were picked by the team to see if they could get the most benefit from more self-confidence and self-esteem to take back to school with them and help them through to the end of the year. To have the time to really talk to them about their concerns and worries, how we can support them, and to see them building friendships, and achieve things they really thought they couldn't do, has been incredible. Facilities like Jamie's Farm are few and far between; we could do with ten times as many. The ability to bring students here who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity too, to see something different and believe in themselves, is massive." **Senior Pastoral Leader, Uckfield College**



Outcomes



Anecdotal feedback after the visits plus our reporting six weeks after has shown significant improvements in young people's behaviour, engagement, self-esteem and mental wellbeing (please note, we have not yet collected six-month data). The change in young people's outlook and confidence saw the greatest upturn. With 'improved self-esteem' being the main referral reason, the end of week survey reported that of all young people 57% had improved wellbeing and of those referred to improve their self-esteem, 100% were reported to have improved.

"N was reticent about attending the farm, he has extremely low self-esteem and considered himself to have no friends in school. He said he is a 'loner'. Since coming to the farm N has really opened up and has tried all the activities, even when he was completely unsure of himself. It is wonderful to see him interacting with the group and hearing how much the week at the farm has inspired him. I really believe that N will come away from the farm a much stronger person and with much more self-belief." **Senior Pastoral Leader**

"We focused on students that have a negative experience at school and have very low self-esteem. This trip has allowed students to gain confidence, come out of their shell and taste success. It was very enjoyable watching a student grow in just five days." **Raising Standard Leader**

"One of our young people suffers intense anxiety by just being in school and struggles to get through the front door and doesn't make it to lessons. At Jamie's Farm they engaged in every activity, volunteered to try things first and came to everything with a positive attitude." **Pastoral Leader**

"For me this week has been a lot more physical, you talk a lot more, you do a lot more, you feel more useful than I usually do. I liked talking to everyone and getting to know them better, that's been the best thing. I will keep up the confidence I have now and keep trying to make people feel comfortable so that I feel comfortable around them as well." **Young person**

Visiting staff

Our end-of-visit survey conducted by the visiting staff highlighted the value of the experience on their own practice and the young people:

- 100% of staff thought it was particularly positive for their students to attend Jamie's Farm after a period of lockdown
- 100% strongly agreed that the day visit programme was of benefit to their pupils

"There have been several times when I have seen ways of working with the students that encourage them to praise one another and this is something that I will endeavour to work into my school practice." **Senior Pastoral Leader**

"Having a check in with students to know how they are at the beginning of something and then how they feel at the end is a great review tactic for them and us." **Pastoral Leader**



Looking Ahead

With residential resuming from 17th May, we are delighted to see our summer calendar booking up with visits across our farms. The day-visit format has seen fantastic results across our farms and we have consequently worked with more local schools and organisations than ever, developing new partnerships with local groups that will last long beyond the pandemic.

2020 was an incredibly challenging year, however thanks to the support of several long-standing trusts, we secured emergency funding and have ended the financial year within our reserves policy and financially stable. We are hugely thankful to Ned's Fund for supporting the visits they have to date. We have several schools local to our Lewes Farm that are very keen to attend, but currently are seeking funding to support their visit costs. We would be happy to put you in touch with them if appropriate. On behalf of us all at Jamie's Farm, thank you for your partnership.

Jamie's Farm is a registered charity, number 1129544