Supplementary schools case studies
Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Overview

Supplementary schools provide part-time educational opportunities for children and young people, primarily from Black and minority ethnic communities. They generally offer mother-tongue language classes, faith and cultural studies, activities such as sport, music, dance and drama, and support with National Curriculum subjects. They are established and managed by community members, often on a voluntary basis, and operate from community centres, youth clubs, religious institutions and mainstream schools. Whilst many supplementary schools are small local groups run by parents, others are part of larger organisations that provide a range of services. There are an estimated 3,000–5,000 such schools in England.¹

The name ‘supplementary school’ was first used in the UK in the 1960s when they were set up in response to discrimination against African-Caribbean children in mainstream education. Since then, parents from other Black, minority ethnic and migrant communities have set up supplementary schools to enable their children to learn about their cultural heritage, history and language, encouraging them to develop a positive sense of identity and belonging, confidence and self-esteem. Many schools also provide additional tuition for children from migrant families to raise attainment levels in English, maths and science, and help parents to understand the UK education system.

Supplementary schools often provide a more informal setting and style of delivery in contrast to mainstream schools. Classes are usually smaller, providing opportunities for individual tuition and support, and staff and volunteers will have strong relationships with the wider family. For many children and young people, particularly those who are newly-arrived or not engaging positively with mainstream education, this can be a welcome alternative learning environment.

Funding for supplementary schools has generally been short-term and insecure and most survive on small grants and fees from parents. For a short period during the Labour Government of 1997-2010, several local authorities supported supplementary schools, largely through school improvement or ethnic minority achievement funds.

¹ They are also called ‘complementary schools’ and/or ‘Saturday schools’.
The level of support varied widely and was in the form of grants, free-of-charge use of mainstream schools, guidance and support from local authority officers, or a combination of these. However, since 2011, this support has been reduced significantly, and in many cases entirely withdrawn.

One of the main reasons for the success and survival of many supplementary schools is the drive, passion and commitment of their leaders, staff and volunteers. However, reliance on one or two key people can also make schools vulnerable when they leave or retire.

Another challenge for supplementary schools is to recruit high quality staff. While some schools are able to employ well-qualified teachers, many rely on teachers volunteering their time. Even if schools are able to pay staff, it can be difficult to find suitable people for such small, part-time and often insecure roles. Few supplementary schools have paid administrative staff. This lack of capacity also means that many supplementary schools do not monitor, evaluate or publicise the impact of their work on children and young people.

As a result, mainstream schools, local authorities and funders have not always recognised or valued the contribution that many good quality supplementary schools make to children’s education and wellbeing or the range of advice and support they provide to family members. In 2007, the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education (NRCSE) was set up to address some of these issues. It campaigns on behalf of supplementary schools in England and aims to raise their profile and improve standards of teaching, learning and management. It provides advice, resources and training for staff, and runs a widely recognised quality assurance scheme for supplementary education.
PHF’s involvement in supplementary education

PHF’s main aim is to help people overcome disadvantage and lack of opportunity, so that they can realise their potential and enjoy fulfilling and creative lives. The Foundation funded supplementary schools for 14 years through its Education and Learning Programme, contributing to improvements in the quality of their tuition and range of activities, as well as the development of partnerships with mainstream schools. PHF helped to establish the NRCSE, and along with the Department for Education and Skills, provided core funding over a number of years in order to ensure greater support for the sector.

Following a review of PHF’s Education and Learning Programme in 2011, and in response to the increasing pressure on supplementary schools, our trustees decided to undertake some additional work to strengthen the sustainability of our grantees and the wider sector, including:

• A large scale research study of the impact of supplementary schools on children’s attainment in mainstream education. See www.phf.org.uk

• Workshops to enable current supplementary school grantees to share good practice.

• Consultancy support for up to ten current and previous supplementary school grantees to strengthen their longer-term sustainability as organisations.

• This series of case studies of supplementary schools to show a range of relatively strong models for maintaining financial stability.
Case studies

Recent high profile cuts to public spending are set to continue, but even during this difficult time, many supplementary schools have developed creative strategies for sustaining their work. These seven case studies particularly aim to highlight their various approaches to fundraising and working in partnership. Although none of the organisations has found the perfect solution to financial sustainability, each case study features examples of excellent practice.

The case studies represent different types of organisation, activities provided, and communities served. We hope that they provide practical and interesting learning for the supplementary education sector, mainstream schools, and organisations providing capacity building support for voluntary and community organisations.

The case studies presented here are summaries of longer, more detailed versions. If you are interested in reading more about any of these case studies, they are available on both the NRCSE and PHF websites www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk and www.phf.org.uk

Increasing income and reducing costs

Supplementary schools generate income from a number of different sources. Some apply for grants from local authorities, trusts and foundations, run fundraising events, or ask for donations for their work from individuals or businesses. This helps them to keep the cost of classes low. Many also charge for the service and the fee is usually determined by families’ ability to pay. At some schools parents pay just 50p for a session, while at others, they pay £500 per student per year. At Hua Hsia Chinese School, fees provide almost 95% of its total income.

Many involve volunteers in their work which helps to keep costs low. Shpresa Programme’s parent volunteers are trained to run its activities for children, STAR Communities First uses local university student volunteers, while both Bright Education Centre and Kerala Community Supplementary School (KCSS) involve older or previous students to support the delivery of classes for younger children. In each case, volunteering also offers significant benefits to the volunteers themselves, including teaching and youth work skills, confidence, administrative and other employability skills.
Those with strong links with local mainstream schools are often able to negotiate free (or low cost) use of their premises in return for supporting mainstream school teachers to better communicate with children and families from specific minority ethnic backgrounds, particularly those with few English language skills (Shpresa Programme and Afghan Association Paiwand).

Another case study shows how the consortium approach taken by The Westway Development Trust has enabled it to sustain its member supplementary schools by centralising administration, venue, and training costs. The Trust is now exploring how it might employ a full time member of staff to work across several of its schools.

**Partnerships**

All seven of these case studies provide examples of partnership working, and in each case, their ability to collaborate with other organisations is important for their sustainability. For example, many supplementary schools are working more closely with mainstream schools. It can be difficult to establish and maintain these relationships, but when they are successful, both supplementary and mainstream schools benefit from an exchange of valuable skills, resources and information. One of the main challenges is to set up an initial conversation with a mainstream school. Where a supplementary school is already working with a significant number of a local mainstream school’s students, this has been much easier. For example, Shpresa Programme encouraged parents to approach their children’s Head Teachers to promote the work of the supplementary school and arrange a meeting. This led to a pilot project based at the mainstream school, which allowed Shpresa to demonstrate the quality of its work and develop a long term partnership. They now work with several mainstream schools in various London boroughs.

Another strong model is a partnership between Afghan Association Paiwand’s three supplementary schools and 18 mainstream schools. This project was made possible through its close working relationship with Harrow and Barnet Councils’ Ethnic Minority Advisory Service (EMAS), which supported its development and links with mainstream schools. The EMAS also supported Paiwand to improve its monitoring of children’s progress, demonstrating the impact of its tuition on their attainment at mainstream school. Unfortunately, in most areas EMAS services have now either shrunk or disappeared as a result of cuts to funding and changes in education policies.
KCNS, Bright Education Centre and Hua Hsia Chinese School also work closely with mainstream schools, while Westway Development Trust and STAR Communities First represent more unusual types of partnership working. The supplementary schools involved with Westway Development Trust work in partnership with each other and with the Trust, which is a large social enterprise supporting the regeneration of its local community. A key supporter of this consortium model was the John Lyons Charity, an important local funder. STAR is an example of a supplementary school set up through a Welsh Government initiative (Communities First) which benefits significantly from its close relationship with Cardiff University.

By working in partnership, many of these case study supplementary schools have been able to share information and collect data from mainstream schools. Shpresa has commissioned an external evaluation and Hua Hsia uses a software package to monitor attainment in language learning. These methods for monitoring and evaluation provide good evidence of the impact of their tuition and other activities on children and young people’s progress and often help them to make a strong case to parents, funders, mainstream schools and local authorities.
Afghan Association Paiwand

About

Paiwand, meaning 'unity' in Dari, was founded in 2002 to support Afghan children to maintain their home language and cultural identity, to unite the Afghan refugee community and improve the quality of their lives in the UK.

It provides a range of services, including advocacy to around 2,000 individuals per year, supporting them with welfare, housing, employment and immigration needs. It also delivers workshops in mental wellbeing, provides English classes for adults, supported accommodation for unaccompanied minors and young refugees, delivers holiday activities for children and has an established mentoring programme for vulnerable young Afghans.

Paiwand’s supplementary education programme operates in the London Boroughs of Harrow and Barnet. Three supplementary schools each take place at a mainstream primary or secondary school on Saturdays. In return for providing the venue and caretaking costs free of charge, these host schools refer up to 30 of their own students onto the programme. The majority of students are referred by other local primary schools or directly by parents – for a fee.

Classes include Dari and Pashto, the two official languages of Afghanistan, as well as Islamic studies, Maths, Science, Music and Drama, to over 500 children and young people aged 6–16 years. Approximately 40% of the students are Afghani; the rest are predominantly of Indian, African-Caribbean, Somali and Eastern European heritage.

Finance and Resources

The total cost to run the Supplementary Schools’ Programme is about £115,000 per year to support 500 students on a weekly basis. Just over 85% goes towards staffing costs and volunteer expenses. Staff include 24 sessional teachers and three Cluster Managers who ensure that referral, monitoring and curriculum information is shared with mainstream schools. Over half of this funding comes from a three year grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. Another £45,000 per year comes from sixteen partner primary schools and around £20,000 comes directly from the families of self-referred students.
Financial Year

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*Note: these figures are for the Supplementary Schools’ Programme only. 2012-2013 income and expenditure decreased due to a reduction in funding from Harrow Council.

Highlights and challenges

- Paiwand has strong partnerships with mainstream secondary and primary schools. 16 pay directly for the programme, referring pupils who are underachieving at school.

- Supplementary school teachers are matched with mainstream school teachers for mutual learning giving them access to the mainstream school’s programme of professional development training. In return, they support mainstream schools to liaise with families that they find difficult to engage and / or do not speak English.

- Host mainstream schools provide venues and caretaking services free of charge. This represents an in-kind benefit of £65,000 per year.

- Due to the strong links with mainstream schools, they are able to share data on students’ progress which enables Paiwand to evaluate and show the value of the programme.

- In order for the programme to become fully sustainable after grant funding ends, the participating mainstream schools will need to pay the full costs of the programme. Paiwand hopes that due to its positive impact, schools will want to ensure the programme continues.

See longer version on www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk
Bright Education Centre

About

Bright Education Centre (BEC) was founded in 2006 to support young people of Somali origin to develop their self-esteem and confidence, achieve and enjoy all aspects of school life and be empowered to achieve their aspirations.

Based in Lambeth, south London, its supplementary education programme takes place after school and at weekends. It supports over 300 young people, aged 5 to 19 years in Maths, English, Science, ICT and sport. BEC also provides a range of services for seven mainstream schools, including: translation support during parents’ evenings, cultural/enrichment activities and daytime classes in core curriculum subjects for a small group of 14–16 year olds who are at risk of exclusion from school. It has also set up a partnership with Lambeth College which provides free ESOL and ICT classes for parents running at the same time as their children attend supplementary education classes.

Twelve paid staff (including three qualified teachers and nine learning support and teaching assistants) plan and deliver most lessons. Twenty volunteers also support the programme, many of whom are former pupils who have gone to university. Up to 30 business professionals participate in an annual careers’ fair to which all students are invited.

Finance and resourcing

Bright Education Centre is incorporated as a company limited by guarantee, and has an annual income of approximately £55,000. Fees and donations from parents make up 18% of its total income; fees charged to mainstream schools for daytime education provision for young people at-risk of exclusion make up 16% of income, interpreting services (10%) and enrichment/cultural sessions (35%). It also receives small grants (17%).

BEC’s main expenditure is for staff (40% of total costs) and rent (30%). The costs of adult education courses are met by Lambeth College and the contribution of up to 20 volunteers helps to keep costs low.
Highlights and challenges

- BEC has strong partnerships with seven mainstream schools, in particular Lilian Baylis Technology College where it provides a number of services. Good quality monitoring and evaluation of student progress helps them to make a good case to schools.
- BEC has been effective at raising the profile of their work through contacts in the local community, local press, online marketing and referrals from mainstream schools.
- Its supplementary education programme has a strong and sustainable contribution by volunteers – as students get older and graduate, they often come back as volunteer tutors to help deliver the lessons.
- BEC provides services to whole families and, as a result, has strong relationships with them. This helps staff to consult families on changes to services and membership fees.
- A steep increase in rent has increased the cost of its services. BEC now has to focus on new ways to raise income including applying for more grants and organising events.

See longer version on www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk
About

Hua Hsia Chinese School was founded in April 2011 by four mothers who decided to set up their own school, following the closure of the Mandarin language classes that their children were attending. They wanted to ensure that the children were able to continue learning the language and celebrating their cultural identity.

Hua Hsia is based in Barnet, north London, and also operates in Camden, Tower Hamlets and Islington. It provides Mandarin language classes and a range of cultural activities including dancing, cooking, origami, calligraphy, maths using abacus, and martial arts. The school also provides teacher training focusing on e-learning, and language classes for adults. Fourteen teachers deliver Chinese language classes and cultural activities in three primary schools, one secondary school and three libraries during the weekend and weekdays after school hours.

In total 250 children and young people aged from 6 months to 19 years of age participate in Hua Hsia’s classes. Many of the students (40%) have a Chinese heritage, but most do not and represent a diverse range of ethnic groups.

Finance and resources

Hua Hsia started off as a charity but changed its legal status to become a company limited by shares. It operates as a social enterprise and has an income of around £130,000.

Over 95% of Hua Hsia’s income comes directly from parents who generally pay £500 per year per student. As the School is based in a relatively affluent area of London, most parents can afford to pay. For the 30% of students who come from lower income families, Hua Hsia makes places available at a reduced cost. In some instances, parents of students have worked for the school, for example as a receptionist, with their hourly rate directly put towards the fees for the classes. Four mainstream schools each pay £3,000 for after-school classes delivered by Hua Hsia.

The school’s main expenditure is staffing (70%). The remainder goes on rent and insurance.
Highlights and challenges

- Interest in Hua Hsia School has increased rapidly following its feature on the BBC Documentary, *Meet Britain’s Chinese Tiger Mums* in January 2012.

- China’s position as one of the world’s economic leaders, makes it additionally attractive to learn the Mandarin language. This means Hua Hsia is in a strong position to earn an income from its classes, for both students with a Chinese heritage and those without.

- Hua Hsia is taking steps to ensure that leadership and strategic responsibility for the school is taken on by other staff as well as its current Director. She has driven the organisation’s growth, but is beginning to plan for her retirement.

- Hua Hsia uses a software package to monitor progress and attainment in language learning. This provides good evidence of results and helps with promoting their services.

- As it is a private limited company, Hua Hsia cannot apply to many grant funders which often only fund registered charities or community interest companies. In order to extend its services to benefit more disadvantaged students, it may need to change its legal structure.

*See longer version on* www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk
Kerala Community Supplementary School

About

Kerala Community Supplementary School (KCSS) was set up in Ipswich in May 2010, to provide out of school learning activities for children and young people aged 5 to 18. The supplementary education programme is based in St Albans Catholic High School and aims to develop children’s language skills in both English and their mother tongue, Malayalam (the most widely spoken language in the Indian state of Kerala).

45 children participate in language classes as well as dance, music, and karate classes, personal and leadership training, educational outings and holiday clubs.

Finance and resourcing

KCSS is a registered charity with an annual income of approximately £11,000. All families pay an initial membership fee of £10 which covers the language classes. Families pay an additional amount for other classes but the mainstream school also contributes to this cost. These fees contribute 10% of KCSS’s total income. In 2012-13, KCSS secured funding from BBC Children in Need (£3,200) and Young Suffolk Maths’ Challenge (£1,500). It also received £4,500 for winning The British Academy Schools Language Award.

Around 50% of all expenditure goes towards paying for specialist teachers of dance, music and karate. Outings and other activities for students made up just over 20% of expenditure, while venue costs were only 8%. As many of KCSS’s activities are run on a voluntary basis by parents and teenage children, this helps to keep the delivery costs low.
Highlights and challenges

- They established links with the mainstream school as it was linked to a church that the founding members (and their children) all attended.

- Nine older students support six adult volunteers with running the sessions, which helps to keep the staffing costs low. They also develop important communication and leadership skills by doing this.

- A learning ‘passport’, which is highly valued by the mainstream school, is used to motivate the students. It records progress, introduces the idea of qualifications to children and rewards the number of learning hours undertaken.

- KCSS has strong relationships with the local Council and other organisations, including the local Rotary Club, who helped them raise over £2,500.

- They have had success in securing grant funding.

- As older student volunteers leave school and go onto university, they will not be able to continue to help running the sessions. This might force KCSS to hire staff which would increase the cost of the programme.

See longer version on www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk
Shpresa Programme

About

Shpresa, meaning ‘hope’ in Albanian, was established in 2002 to advance the lives of Albanians in the UK and support them to take full and active roles in their communities.

Based in Newham, East London, it provides a range of services including a women’s health and wellbeing project, a volunteering project, advice and advocacy and campaigns to raise awareness and address issues of importance to the community. For example, they are currently campaigning for the development of a GCSE qualification in the Albanian language.

Its supplementary schools’ programme benefits around 450 children and young people each year, aged 6 to 14, and operates from premises in mainstream schools in eight London boroughs. The school focuses on personal development and maintaining Albanian cultural heritage through language classes, dancing, drama, sports, mentoring and leadership activities. Some of its schools also provide tuition in maths, English and science.

Through its volunteering project, Shpresa has trained and supported 20 women each year to become qualified teaching assistants or childcare workers. Many of these women go on to volunteer for the supplementary schools’ programme.

Finance and resourcing

Running costs for its supplementary schools are relatively low – around £45,000 per year. This is because they are able to negotiate free or low-cost premises from mainstream schools and use up to 60 trained volunteers and parents to support the activities. The majority of expenditure (85%) is on staff to manage the programme and 1–3 sessional teachers.

Income is mainly from trusts and foundations (60%) including BBC Children in Need, Help a Capital Child and John Lyon’s Charity. They also get a significant amount from local councils (35%) for work in two boroughs. Families pay an annual membership fee to Shpresa of £30.
Highlights and challenges

- Shpresa has built relationships with mainstream schools by enabling parents to approach headteachers in their children’s schools. Shpresa negotiates a trial period of six weeks’ and uses the evaluation of this work to help secure an ongoing contract.

- Partnerships are mutually beneficial – Shpresa provides interpreting at parents’ evenings in return for free or low-cost premises and caretaker services.

- Shpresa strengthens its relationships with partner mainstream schools by supporting its trained and qualified volunteers to take up placements as teaching assistants in these mainstream schools – some even go on to secure paid employment.

- Shpresa is now very experienced at applying for grant funding; this enables them to reduce costs for families.

- With funding from Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Shpresa is training and supporting groups from other communities to set up and run their own supplementary schools.

- Due to reductions in mainstream school budgets, it is becoming more difficult for Shpresa to negotiate free premises for their supplementary school classes.

See longer version on www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk
About

The Communities First programme is an initiative funded by the Welsh Government since 2001 to reduce poverty in areas of high deprivation. STAR Communities First covers the Splott, Tremorfa, Adamsdown and Roath areas in Cardiff and has been managed by Cardiff Community Housing Association (CCHA) since 2012. It provides a number of services for local residents including training, education and employment support.

In response to a request from local parents, STAR set up a homework club in 2009, run in partnership with the University of Cardiff. Based in Adamsdown, the club now supports around 70 children and young people per week from a range of different ethnic backgrounds, aged 6–18 years. Classes focus on reading and English for younger children and science and maths for the older group. Approximately twelve community volunteers support eight students from Cardiff University to deliver these sessions. By taking part in the programme, university students gain valuable skills and leadership experience. The programme also involves visits to the university to raise young people’s aspirations, and trips during school holidays to provide enjoyable additional learning opportunities as well as increasing confidence and motivation.

Finance and resourcing

Communities First in Adamsdown operates on a budget of around £80,000. Due to the commitment of the university and community volunteers and free premises from Communities First, the homework club is run on minimal finances. Staffing costs account for just 15% of all expenditure. Materials costs are also low (15%). This is mainly because mainstream schools involved in the partnership have provided resources such as lesson plans and stationery. The main costs are trips for the children and young people (60%) and refreshments during sessions (10%).
Financial Year

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* Note: these figures are for the Supplementary Schools’ Programme only. In 2011-2012, CCHA contributed additional funds from another budget that was underspent.

Highlights and challenges

- Cardiff University’s Widening Access Team initially approached STAR because it was interested in encouraging more young people from BME communities to apply for Higher Education. It has since realised that university students are gaining valuable skills and experience through volunteering, which is now the main reason it supports the programme.

- Due to the success of the Homework Club, Cardiff University and STAR are working together to set up similar projects in other areas, and the University plans to contribute towards the salary of a Coordinator to manage this increased educational provision.

- Local parents are involved in running the programme on a voluntary basis, which helps them to develop their own skills and improve their employability.

- There is a strong focus on evaluating children and young people’s progress, in partnership with local mainstream schools. In fact, the project has proved so beneficial that there is now a waiting list of children keen to attend.

- STAR Communities First played a significant role in the setting up and ensuring the success of the Homework Club. STAR was able to link local people to Cardiff University and reassure them that the supplementary school would be run professionally. It can be difficult for individual supplementary schools to approach universities, but they are often keen to work with local BME communities and to provide development opportunities for their students.

See longer version on www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk
Westway Development Trust

About

Westway Development Trust is a social enterprise formed in 1971 to manage and regenerate 23 acres of derelict land created by the building of a motorway flyover into London city centre. Today it continues to work with the public, business and voluntary sectors, to improve the social and economic wellbeing of communities in North Kensington, West London.

The Trust leads a consortium of 21 supplementary schools working across the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. They deliver a range of after-school and Saturday classes for over one thousand 5–19 year olds, providing support for the core curriculum, home language teaching, sports and leisure. The schools are typically run by parents on a voluntary basis. Sessions take place at local mainstream schools, community centres or at the resource centre managed by the Trust.

The Trust has secured funding for the consortium and takes responsibility for quality assurance, monitoring, reporting to funders, organising partnership meetings and running a training programme for supplementary schools focussing on governance, sustainability and maintaining the high quality of their work. It also provides premises for some schools and a range of shared resources.

Finances and resourcing

Westway Development Trust is a company limited by guarantee and registered charity with an annual turnover of over £6 million and assets estimated at over £20 million.

The Trust receives £25,000 from John Lyon’s Charity, to support 14 of the consortium’s 21 supplementary schools. A further £95,000 has been secured for 4 years from the local authority, £20,000 of which goes towards the running costs of the resource centre. A further £10,000 funds a part-time administrator. The remaining £65,000 goes directly to the supplementary schools and is distributed based on a calculation of the cost of delivering one hour’s tuition for each child. The Trust also subsidises some costs (e.g. management of its supplementary education work) from business and other income.
Highlights and challenges

- This consortium approach enables smaller supplementary schools to benefit from the expertise, resources and reputation of the Westway Development Trust. It enables them to access funding that they would have difficulty securing independently. The Trust’s staff take responsibility for monitoring and evaluation and writing reports to funders.

- The Trust make large purchases of stationery and other resources for all the schools to share, which reduces costs for everyone.

- The Trust provides references and support for supplementary schools when they are writing their own funding applications.

- As many supplementary schools find it difficult to recruit high quality teachers for only a few hours a week, the Trust is considering employing a full time teacher and volunteer coordinator to be shared by several of the consortium’s schools.

- Consortium supplementary schools cannot apply directly to the consortium’s main funders (e.g. the Council) which makes it difficult to expand their own school’s provision.

See longer version on www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk
Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Paul Hamlyn (1926-2001) was an entrepreneurial publisher and philanthropist, committed to offering new opportunities and experiences for less fortunate members of society. During his lifetime, and because of his experiences, he had a particular interest in social justice, challenging prejudice and opening up the arts and education to everyone, but particularly to young people.

In 1987 he established the Paul Hamlyn Foundation for general charitable purposes. Since then, we have continuously supported charitable activities that have enabled individuals, particularly children and young people, to experience a better quality of life.

The mission of the Foundation is to help people overcome disadvantage and lack of opportunity, so that they can realise their potential and enjoy fulfilling and creative lives.

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