



"The fact my child  
and I are in a safe  
non-judgemental space  
is really precious."



Ruby's  
Helping Special  
Families Shine



# Impact Report

2022-2023



## Celebrating the impact of Ruby's on families and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

**Ruby's support families of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).**

**We provide support at our centre and across Cheshire East, including SEND social sessions, sibling wellbeing sessions, access to counselling, and peer support groups for parents and carers.**

**We are a service-user driven charity, with all three of our management team having personal experience as carers of children with complex needs. We are there for our families should moments of crisis arise, and we have supported families through social isolation, mental wellbeing issues, financial difficulties, and relationship breakdowns.**

### A note from our Chair

During 2022-23 we were still feeling the impact of the pandemic. Last year we had to make some difficult decisions such as temporarily closing the café, but what we didn't expect was the overwhelming demand on our family support services. Temporarily closing the café allowed us to focus entirely on this support to families when they needed it the most.

Our staff have continued to adapt and respond to the challenges the pandemic brought. I want to thank them for their continued hard work and dedication. I would also like to thank the local community, organisations, funders and businesses for their continued support; their volunteer hours, donations and words of support have been appreciated beyond measure. Without such support we would not be able to support the children and families in the way that we do.

Andy Pear, Ruby's Chair



**SOCIAL VALUE AWARD**



### From our Founder

We never expected the pandemic to impact our lives in the way it has and for it still to be affecting our daily lives. In the previous year we adapted our working model, and this became our new normal for the team at Ruby's and for the families we support. The year has continued to present new challenges which the team has approached with professionalism and a strong team spirit. This has ensured that services to our children and families have continued with minimal disruption.

As in previous years I cannot write this statement without saying thank you to the children, young people, and families that we support at Ruby's. It isn't always easy, but we are always there for our families through the highs and lows. We are immensely proud and privileged to be part of their journey.

Alison Parr, Ruby's Founder

## In 2022-23 we are proud to have achieved an offer which includes:

### Sensory room

sessions and private hire

### Peer support

sessions including SEND parent carer lunch clubs and SEND family sessions

### Warm Place

support to those who needed a warm drink and place to go

### Soft play hire

for special schools

### Baby & You

sessions for new parents and babies at risk of social isolation

### Open soft play

sessions for all children, on a reduced timetable

# ★ Our impact in numbers

“Ruby’s has and will continue to be a huge lifeline for myself, my family & other families. Thank you for all you do”

## What we’ve done

**210**

new family support cases opened

**2,555**

contacts made - that’s 457 hours of family support

**275**

phone appointments made

**106**

referrals to Carefree parent carer overnight breaks

**164**

signposts to Cheshire East short breaks team

**33**

hours of outreach delivered

**162**

referrals for carers assessments

**27**

family support bus visits took place

**82**

SEND sessions including lunch club and weekend sessions

**163**

signposts to Cheshire & Warrington Carers Trust

## The impact we’ve made

**100%**

of parents felt listened to by Ruby’s staff

**66%**

of parents feel support from Ruby’s has prevented them seeking crisis support from their GP

**95%**

of people said Ruby’s support has improved their overall sense of wellbeing

**100%**

of parents would recommend Ruby’s support services to other parent carers

**93%**

feel better informed on how to be a parent carer

“I accessed the charity in September 2022 and since then I have had a meeting and a regular check-in with a lovely support coordinator. I have been on the Sensory Detectives course, attend monthly family socials and have been accepted for five sessions of counselling. Ruby’s support has been brilliant.”



# ★ An update from our SEND and Volunteer Family Support Services

## An overview of our SEND support for children and families in 2022-23

We understand that early help is important. We support children and their families in Cheshire East aged 0-18 years who have an emerging need or a diagnosis of any type of learning or physical disability.

We signpost, guide and introduce families to like-minded support networks and provide access to inclusive fun activities. We work with families to help them access support that has meaningful outcomes.

From March 2022 to February 2023 we continued with our adapted model of working in response to the pandemic and ran a varied timetable of sessions, activities and workshops.

### From March 2022 to February 2023 we ran:

- 35** after school sessions
- 12** weekend Short Break sessions
- 20** holiday Short Break sessions
- 10** monthly sibling sessions
- 103** Parent carer counselling sessions
- 17** Sensory Detectives sessions

"My volunteer is so lovely! Nothing is ever too much trouble, and she genuinely has our best interests at heart. I feel so comfortable letting her into our home despite however I am feeling - no judgement or anything."

Quote from family

## Celebrating 12 months of volunteers supporting local families.

In 2022-23, we delivered our volunteer-led family support service, funded by Cheshire East Council. This service is available for all families with children under 18, who are at risk of social isolation, poor mental health, or financial crisis.

We recruited

**26 volunteers**

who donated

**448 hours**

for

**114 parents**

and

**183 children**

"Everyone can make a difference - a smile, a kind word, an ear to listen, can all help to change a life."

"When volunteering with the families, you gain confidence, learn from them and they learn from you - it is a very rewarding role."

Quotes from volunteers



## ★ Ruby's specialist projects

Our specialist projects have been developed in response to the needs of our families. Through our family support work and open communication with our partner organisations, we can identify the current needs of the local SEND community, and react by providing the services they need, delivered in a way they can access and engage with.

### Showcasing sensory support sessions

We recognised the need for parents to gain early knowledge and understanding of the sensory differences their children were experiencing. We secured funding to deliver a sensory course for parents online and in person, as well as compiling a library of sensory items to loan to parents. We delivered the sensory support sessions, including our popular Sensory Detectives course, in partnership with The Wishing Well Project. The positive impact the sessions had on the families has enabled us to secure further funding, allowing us to sustain this vital family service.

**81%**

of participants felt better equipped to discuss their child's needs with professionals

**116**

people accessed the online course

**94%**

of participants said the sessions helped them support their child at home through sensory play

**33**

families accessed 1:1 sensory support, totalling 165 hours

**81%**

of participants felt confident to build their child's sensory profile following the course

## Our plans for the future

A review of all of our current services, and plan for the future by writing our 2023-26 strategic and fundraising plan – “we are excited for new sessions & fundraising events”

Reignite plans paused by the pandemic, to make the centre fully accessible by securing funding to install a lift, which will allow us to develop our respite offer to include overnight accommodation.

Establish the 16-25 volunteering project which will enable young people aged 16-25 with SEND to volunteer at Ruby's – “everybody has something to give and can make a difference”

All of our services and facilities have been developed after suggestions, feedback and consultations with our stakeholders. Developing our services for the future will not be possible without the support of our community now.

“This was a great course and opportunity to understand more about my daughter's sensory needs. I have come away with a new hope of helping my child a little more.”





## ★ A huge thank you to you all

Each year we work in partnership with several organisations to provide support services for our families. The trust our families have in us allows us to bridge the gap between our service and new organisations who they can benefit from engaging with.

**We would not  
have achieved  
the outcomes  
we have for  
our families  
without the  
support of  
our partners.**

**For providing external space  
for our sessions, thank you to:**

The Wishing Well Project  
Autism Inclusive  
The Cheshire and Warrington  
Carers Trust

**For holding their own sessions  
at Ruby's, thank you to:**

Cheshire East Council  
Cheshire and Warrington  
Carers Trust  
Space for Autism  
Our local schools  
Everybody Health and Leisure  
Cheshire East Autism Team



**Our work in the last year would not have  
been possible without the ongoing support  
of our donors, fundraisers, and sponsors.**

UKH Foundation  
Julia & Hans Rausing  
Broome Family Charity Trust  
DG Lowe  
Clifford Charity Trust  
Sweetpea Charity  
Lois Nicholas Charitable Trust  
Bosch Charity Forum  
My Babytime  
Little Toes Photography  
Alan Finneron  
Bird Bellows  
Richard Wharfe – Soul Night  
Fundraisers  
Macclesfield Beer Festival

Rick Phillips  
Family of John McDonald  
Jess Gough and Immy  
Chappell Centre  
Apples and Pears Day Nursery  
Family of Christine Jervis  
Natalie Taylor  
The Nanny Barn  
Congleton Rotary Club  
Cheshire East Chamber  
of Commerce  
Trinity Place  
St Mary's Church  
Nationwide Congleton Branch  
Sonny Gartside

## **For specific project funding, thank you to:**

**Sensory bus**  
David Solomons Charitable Trust  
**Siblings Project**  
Horizon Care, Duchy of Lancaster  
Benevolent Fund  
**Weekend SEND Family Groups**  
The David Family, David Souter  
**Crewe SEND Support**  
The Steve Morgan Foundation,  
Crewe Town Council  
**SEND Lunch Clubs**  
WO Street Charity  
**New boiler donation for  
our Centre**  
Worcester Bosch

**Volunteer Family Support  
Service and Short Breaks**  
Cheshire East Council  
**Sensory Detectives**  
Cheshire & Merseyside TCP  
**SEND family support and Baby & You**  
NHS Cheshire CCG  
**Early Bird NAS training**  
Charles Sharland Trust  
**Relax Kids**  
CRH  
**Sustainability project**  
The National Lottery  
**Counselling and SEND Family Support**  
The Social Enterprise Fund  
**Volunteer project**  
Sandbach Town Council  
**Community Hub and Wellbeing**  
Cheshire Community Foundation

If you feel inspired  
to support the  
work we do at  
Ruby's or you are  
a family who needs  
our support please  
get in touch –  
we want to hear  
from you.

"I finally feel like both my daughter  
and me as a parent are being heard  
and sense is being made."



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