



**Bromley
Brighter Beginnings**

Annual Report 2021 – 2022



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Our Mission

Bromley Brighter Beginnings envisions a world in which children are not disadvantaged by growing up in poverty, and where their parents and caregivers do not have to struggle to provide them with the most basic items.

Our mission is to relieve the pressure of poverty on families in a practical way by providing them with baby, child and household items. This support demonstrates that they are not alone in their difficulties and aims to foster long term social inclusion. Relieving stress, anxiety and depression in parents and caregivers has a positive impact on the early experiences of children, gives those children a better start in life and helps families recover more quickly from financial crisis.



Our Values



Community

We harness the power of the community to support its most vulnerable members.



Inclusivity

We aim to be thoughtful, inclusive and respectful of the diverse families we support.



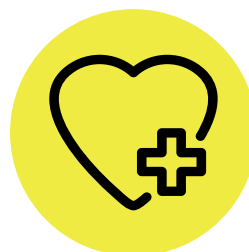
Dignity

We respect the families we support and aim to reduce the stigma associated with growing up in poverty.



Sustainability

We are mindful of the environment and committed to reducing waste as much as possible.



Well-being

We promote and are mindful of the physical and mental health of the families we support and everyone else in the BBB community.

Chair's Report

This year marks the tenth anniversary of Bromley Brighter Beginnings. The charity started back in 2012 as part of the National Childbirth Trust and grew organically by word of mouth, creating a network of referrers, supporters and volunteers.

It became clear very early on that we would be able to apply to a wider range of grant-making organisations, and meet the rising demand for our service, if we were an independent charity. Once we were independent, we had more success with obtaining funding, and by 2015 had reached the income threshold to be recognised as a registered charity by the Charity Commission.

Fast forward ten years to 2022 and we now have a team of **32 volunteers**, an extensive network of referrers and over **8500 supporters** in the local community. These numbers show just how far BBB has come and what a huge number of people have contributed towards getting the charity to where it is today. We are grateful to everyone who has been involved in supporting us on this amazing journey.

Over the last ten years we have benefited from some fantastic fundraising on behalf of BBB. We still don't have any regular funding - all our funding comes from one-off grants, donations from individuals or businesses, and sponsorship from events that our supporters carry out. Without this funding, BBB would simply not be able to offer the service it does, so we would like to thank all those who have contributed to date.

Key achievements over the last ten years:

- We have grown organically from a grassroots organisation into what is now a much bigger, well established and respected service. Professionals from all over the borough refer families to us. We would like to acknowledge these referrers who work tirelessly to support disadvantaged children and their families. We are glad to be able to support them in some way with the service that we are offering.
- The number of families we help grows year on year. In the first eight months that we were operating we completed just over **50 referrals**. This year we have completed **565 referrals**.

August 2022 was our busiest month yet where we reached **146 children** in the borough.

- Our **Bed for Every Child Project** has provided around **550 children** in the borough with a bed and we have set up a **Healthy Homes project**, which we run in conjunction with **Bromley Relief in Need**, to provide kitchen appliances for families who are unable to afford them.
- Our **Christmas Hampers** project has been running since 2016 - last year our hampers reached **535 children**.
- We were very pleased to get involved in the **End Child Food Poverty** campaign started by Marcus Rashford in 2020. We raised over **£15,000** in one weekend to provide local children in financial hardship with lunch during the school holidays.
- We now have a partnership with the **London Fire Brigade** which allows us to refer families for home fire safety visits and fire safety advice.
- We have been invited to speak with the media including BBC Radio London about the End Child Food Poverty campaign and recently Global Radio, talking about our Bed for Every Child campaign.

Our volunteers are key to the success of BBB, and the charity is solely run by them, with no paid staff. I would like to thank each and every volunteer, past and present, for your contribution towards making the charity what it is today.

Whatever the future holds for BBB, we will continue to do what we always do – support families living in poverty to the best of our ability by providing them with practical support to help them to look after their children.



Emma Martin - Chair

Referrals Report

This financial year (August 2021 – July 2022) we completed **565 referrals** which is a **30% increase** on last year.

These referrals have allowed us to reach **786 children**.

We have supported **23%** of the families referred to us multiple times throughout the year.

Our busiest areas in the borough where we have received the most referrals are **Anerley & Penge** with **144**, Bromley with **119** and **Orpington & Petts Wood** with **114**.

In previous years we've been a charity that mostly provided support with items for babies; however this year our top requested items were for clothes and toys, showing that referrals are now fulfilled for families with children of all ages.

One of the biggest increases in demand we have seen is for **School Uniform** where we received **125** referrals this year versus **71** last year. These **125 referrals** were for **283 children** who we equipped with correct, well-fitting school uniform and shoes, as well as the necessary equipment, to start or return to school.

We introduced a new initiative this year called the **Basics Bundle**. After lockdown we recognised that many of our families need a greater level of support than our normal offering. For families in extreme circumstances or with no recourse to public funds we offer a three-month supply of nappies, formula, and basic baby toiletries. We have supported **23 families** with a Basics Bundle this year.

We have made some changes to our referral form to allow us to collect more information about our clients. This has allowed us to tailor our service to make sure we are providing support where it's really needed.

We are seeing referrals from many more types of professionals in recent months including BCWA refugees, social services, secondary and primary schools, health visitors, Citizens Advice, Bromley Children's Project, and many other organisations.

We anticipate that with the cost-of-living crisis affecting so many people, the number of families needing our help will only grow. August has already shown this with us supplying items to **146 children** in the month compared to **112** in August last year. It is our aim to continue to help as many families as possible through difficult times.



Treasurer's Report

During the 2021/2022 financial year, we continued to see high demand for the charity's services. Thanks to our kind donors and grant providers we were able to generate just enough to cover our expenses for the current year. Highlights are provided below for the 1 Aug 2021 to 31 Jul 2022 period with rounded figures (£k = '000).

Highlights:

Received total inflows of roughly **£133k** which was a mix of donations, grants and fundraising efforts

- **£45k** of the **£133k** was ring fenced for specific projects/ causes selected by the donors
- The remaining funds, **£88k** were general cause donations

Total outflows were **£125k**; the main drivers were:

- Bed For Every Child **£51k**
- School Uniforms **£31k**
- Christmas Hampers **£13k**
- Healthy Homes **£11k**
- Referrals **£7k**
- Food Poverty **£4k**
- Running Costs **£3k**

Net cash flow was positive with **£7k** retained

Ending cash balance was **£73k**

- Of which **£10k** is ring fenced
- Remaining unrestricted reserves balance is **£63k**



2021-22 Financials

Period	FY 21/22
Start Date	01-Aug-21
End Date	31-Jul-22

Incoming Funds	Sources	Outgoing Funds	Uses
Genera Use Donations		Charitable Expenses	
<u>Actively Sourced</u>		<u>By Cause</u>	
Direct to BBB	45,964	BFEC	-50,735
Just Giving/General	36,741	School Uniform Exp	-31,000
Grants/General	0	Hampers	-13,038
Benevity	3,028	Healthy Homes	-11,370
PayPal	555	Referrals	-6,890
Facebook	165	Crisis Support	-1,844
Monthly Scheduled	320	Food Poverty	-4,386
Sponsorship	0	Basics Bundle	-849
		Newborn Packs	-1,278
<u>Passively Sourced</u>		Book for every child	-63
Amazon	531	Other Misc	-700
Collection boxes	202	Covid 3 month Sup	0
		Enhanced support	0
Ring Fenced Donations by cause/source		Administrative Expenses	
BFEC/Just Giving	6,750	Running Costs	-3,240
BFEC/Various	22,200	Safeguarding	-161
Hampers/Just Giving	67	Team Development	-8
Hampers/Various	6,000	Advertising	0
Healthy Homes/Just Giving	474	AGM	0
Healthy Homes/Various	0		
Food Poverty/Just Giving	41		
School Uniform/Just Giving	1,325		
School Uniform/Various	7,014		
Newborn Hampers/Various	1,500		
Total Incoming	132,878	Total Outgoing	- 125,562
Net Cash Flows			
	7,316		

Cash Balance as of End Date		
Bank A/c	Equals A/c	Total
60,829.891	2,345.78	73,175.67

Ring Fenced Balance Tracker		
	01-Aug-21	31-Jul-22
	Beginning	Closing
BFEC	0	1,696
Hampers	4,694	0
Healthy Homes	15,887	5,104
Food Poverty	0	0
School Uniforms	0	1,997
Newborn Packs	0	823
Totals	20,581	9,621

Future Plans for BBB

Environmental Sustainability

It is becoming clear that we all need to take responsibility and action to prevent the escalation of the environmental crisis. Environmental sustainability is one of BBB's core values - reusing items rather than sending them off to landfill is part of where we came from. We are however aware that it is the families that we help who are going to be impacted by climate change first and they will be hit the hardest. Therefore, one of our key priorities over the coming months is to seek advice on how we can improve our carbon footprint as a charity and find out what we could do to help the families we support, with the climate crisis in mind.



Cost of Living Crisis

We have already seen a huge increase in the number of families being referred to us for help and unfortunately we are anticipating that that is only going to continue. Families who are already struggling are now under more pressure, and often anxious and fearful about what is going to happen in the autumn and over the coming winter. The crisis also threatens to engulf families who were previously 'just about managing'. We need to prepare as best we can for the increased demand for our service.

We are recruiting some additional trustees to help us to direct our overall strategy and financial responsibility with the above two key priorities in mind.

Words from families we have helped

Hi I have received Newborn pack today and it is So So Fabulous. Really, I dont have words to thank you....You guys has helped me Right in front of My Delivery Date and during these hard times when my husband has lost his job. Please say my thanks to all at BBB your help much appreciated. May God Bless you all

If it wasn't for you and your team I don't think I would of been able to carry on for much longer. Thank you again! Take care xx

Words can't explain how happy I am with the things. They are more than what I expected. Wow, thank you so much. I am truly grateful. Thank you very much. I woke up this morning with a very big smile.

Just wanted to say a huge thank you and all and especially Nancy who delivered school items and vouchers for us today. We can't thank you enough. If we can help, in any way in the future to fundraise for this wonderful charity please ask as we would love to give back. Thank you

I want to say a very big thank you to you and your team at Bromley Brighter Beginnings! The kids are extremely happy and want to see the people being so kind to them! At Clarks, my daughter was so excited... she said to the lady assisting with fitting "this is our very first time in a posh shop, having our feet measured!" We are grateful! Thank you

I have been in tears after reading your message and only summoned up the courage to reply. You and BBB has given my children unending happiness, love, support and kindness.

I would like to say thank you very much for existing. You are special and you have brought back my smile and also my confidence. You are right it is not a shame to ask for help. I'm grateful that destiny put you in my life.

God bless you and your family have a wonderful evening dear

Words failed me last night, when I received the Christmas bag for the kids. I am beyond speechless. My kids are excited and your team has made my kids have presents for Christmas.

While I was wondering, what to say to them on Christmas day, your team made that a reality. Thank you! Thank you!

Hello, my son loves his new school bag and water bottle so much. He's so happy to have them and can't wait to start school. Looking forward to Monday morning. Thanks alot. My children and I appreciate your help. From mum

I have been to the school shop and got the uniform for the children. My family and I just wanted to thank you again. I am so grateful to brighter beginnings. Now I can relax knowing that the children have what they need, as my anxiety has been through the roof.

I feel really emotionally happy right now. I feel truly supported during this difficult time.

I'm very thankful for people like yourselves, thank you for existing. The little things in life mean the most.

Words from our referrers

I just wanted to drop you an email to pass on my sincere thanks for all of your efforts and support with the family I recently referred to Bromley Brighter Beginnings.

The family has recently suffered the loss of the father and this has had a huge impact both emotionally and financially on the family.

I cannot thank you enough for collecting all of the donations that you were able to for the children.

On Friday I delivered all of the donations to Mum, she was reduced to tears, I could see the sheer relief on her face.....

Mum has shared that her two boys birthdays are coming up and some of the toys, teddies and pencils she will wrap up for birthday presents, as she now has all of these clothes for the children she is able to use the money that she was trying to put aside to buy them clothes on [a little party for them]

Honestly I cannot thank you enough the difference you have made is immeasurable and it was evident that Mum was overwhelmed she just kept saying thank you so much over and over again.

I just wanted to email you to send you my personal thanks for both your own personal efforts and all the outstanding commitment that Bromley Brighter Beginnings shows to our most vulnerable families, with the support of your organisation we are able to provide some sense of relief and joy to them during moments of darkness.

Bromley Children Project - Hannah Hannen

I just want to express my gratitude for all the help you give, we would be lost without you all!!

I've just given a hamper to a single mum of 3 children and she is over the moon. I can't tell you how much this hamper was needed. I can't believe the quality of the toys and books in there, it's just wonderful, thank you

~ Health visitor

The family are so happy with the lovely bedding, which was delivered to them.

Once again I would like to say thank you, to you all for the hard work you do and for the smile you put onto families faces.

Tracy Reece - social worker

Thank you once again for helping another family in desperate need. I really do not know what we would do without you.

Bromley are so blessed to have such an organisation such as yours here doing what you do

Angie Springer

Thank you and your colleagues for the fabulous hampers. It is great to be in a position to support families across Bromley and we will ensure that the families receive these in time for the holiday season. We already know that they will make an enormous difference to the families that we are working with and truly 'brighten' their December during what can only be described as the most difficult and challenging circumstances in many many years.

~ Bromley Children Project

I cannot thank your service enough and can say that all of the parents I have referred have received support from your service and they have been most grateful for everything. The turn around from the point of referral to when support has been provided has also been very swift.

~ Bianca Hart, social worker

I just wanted to let you know that I have received several calls from my families reporting how much they appreciate the Christmas Hampers, the good quality of the hampers and how much the contents are going to help them and their children over the festive period.

My manager and I are very appreciative of all of the support and assistance provided by Bromley Brighter Beginnings to our families and wish to thank you directly.

Thank you very much.

Words from our supporters

Wow. Just wow.

Just when I think I have lost faith in humanity, you guys remind me that there are decent human beings out there, working hard for others.

BBB is an amazing charity because of the amazing people who make it that way. Well done to you all x

Words from our volunteers

I saw a referral today who is living in a sort of hostel with her teenage daughter. We got them duvets and linen recently. Today she told me that after I delivered them she had the first decent night's sleep since she had been there.

Angie



People are just amazing, not only was the Mum I dropped stuff off to just now beyond grateful - she was adamant that when she is back on her feet and life is back to normal she wants to "give back" (her words) with a coffee and cake morning to raise some money. Amazing.....well done Team BBB

Tracy

A massive thank you to everyone who has helped turn around every single bit of uniform and equipment, at very short notice, for the boy who is starting at [secondary school] on Wednesday. I delivered about 90% of it tonight and the mum broke down and sobbed in her hallway. I cannot imagine the amount of stress she has been under, knowing that she may not have been able to send her son to school. So thank you, thank you, thank you for relieving that stress.

Nancy

