

me2
Club



Impact Report 2022-2023

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Welcome!

We are really proud of the difference we have made at Me2 Club over this past year, and we wanted to share all the good things that we've been up to between April 2022 and March 2023 with you.

In this report, we will be demonstrating some of the amazing ways that Me2 Club has been able to make a difference to the lives of many children and families who accessed our Core Service supporting children at mainstream leisure activities. We are excited to introduce our new SEND Youth Forum and tell you about our development plans for our Youth Social Action and Teen groups. We also want to highlight the amazing volunteers at the heart of our service delivery, who make all this possible.

"The support Me2 Club provide is amazing. The volunteers have all been fantastic and are trained well. All the communication is excellent and Me2 Club are always thinking of ways to support and engage the children. I am grateful for the day we joined Me2 Club. It has been a great support for S both for her on going activity but also for other events such as Christmas parties etc. I would highly recommend Me2 Club to anyone with children who have special needs"

Me2 Club Parent

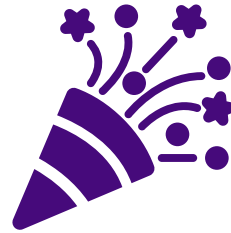


Our Year in Numbers



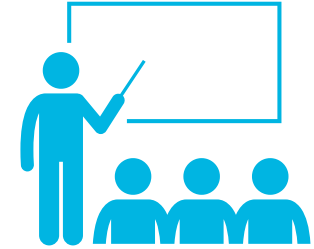
155

Children and Young People supported through all our services



40

Individual families attended our parties



61

Core Service Volunteers trained



3,989

Volunteering hours across our services



147

Volunteers supported this year across our services



2,633

Hours of respite for parents and families

What we do

Our mission

Our mission is to address the challenges of isolation and exclusion experienced by children and young people with additional needs and disabilities.

Our vision

To champion the right for inclusion for all children and young people with additional needs and disabilities across Berkshire, through our partnerships with families, volunteers, activity leaders and other voluntary and statutory sector organisations.



"She loves Me2 Club and so do I. It's made us both feel cared for and it was a very dark time before"
Me2 Club Parent



"Me2 Club have opened our eyes to a different world that isn't as lonely as it was"
Me2 Club Parent

What we offer

We support children and young people aged 5-19 years with additional needs and disabilities in the Wokingham and Reading Boroughs to take part in mainstream activities. We recruit and train volunteers to 'buddy' 1:1 with the children so they can join in and have fun. With our help children can access a wide range of activities including sports clubs, uniformed groups and drama classes, giving them a chance to build independence and vital life and social skills.

We run family events throughout the year, which are available to children and young people who are supported by Me2 Club.

We also run a SEND Youth Forum for young people aged between 8-25 years and their siblings every 6 weeks. We ran a pilot of our new Teen Group in October 2022 for our teenagers aged between 13-19 who will be planning social activities and fundraising to make these plans happen.

Who we help

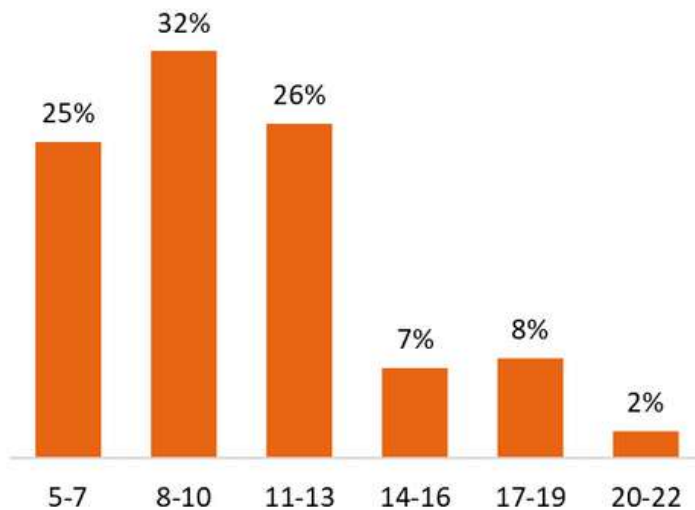
Our Core Service, Say YES Youth Forum and TeenW&Rd Club supported 155 children and young people over the past year. Some of the children and young people accessed more than one of these services with 126 being part of the core service, 28 accessing the Say YES Youth Forum and 14 attending our October TeenW&Rd Group.

We are proud to support children, families and volunteers from a wide variety of backgrounds. The majority of the children accessing our support were aged between 5-12 when mainstream activities are incredibly important for children to socialise and learn new skills. Most of our teenagers took part in our participation activities (see page 17).

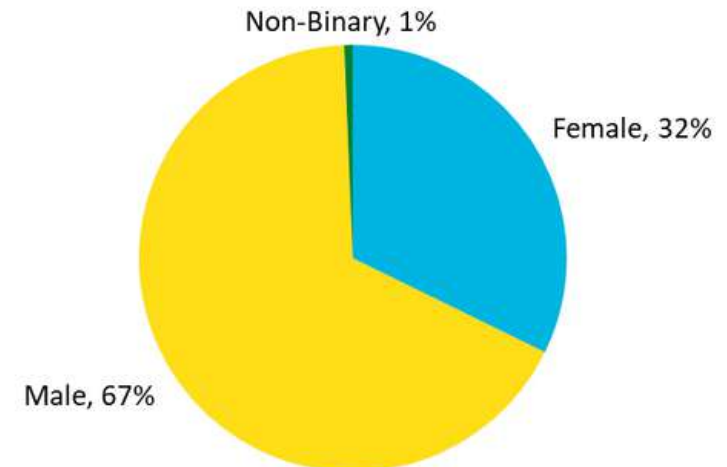


The majority of the children we support are male, but this year saw an increase of female children accessing our services compared to previous years. This contrasts our mainly female volunteer base but many of our boys enjoy having a girl to help them at their activities.

Age

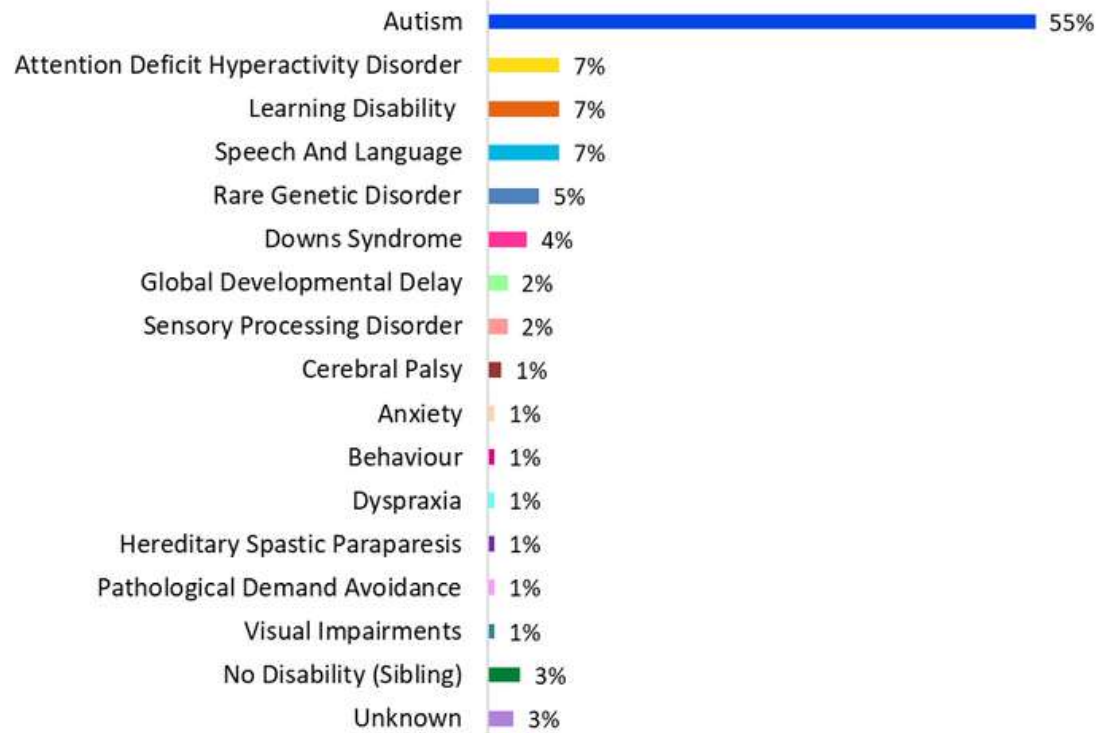


Gender



Who we help

Additional Needs & Disabilities



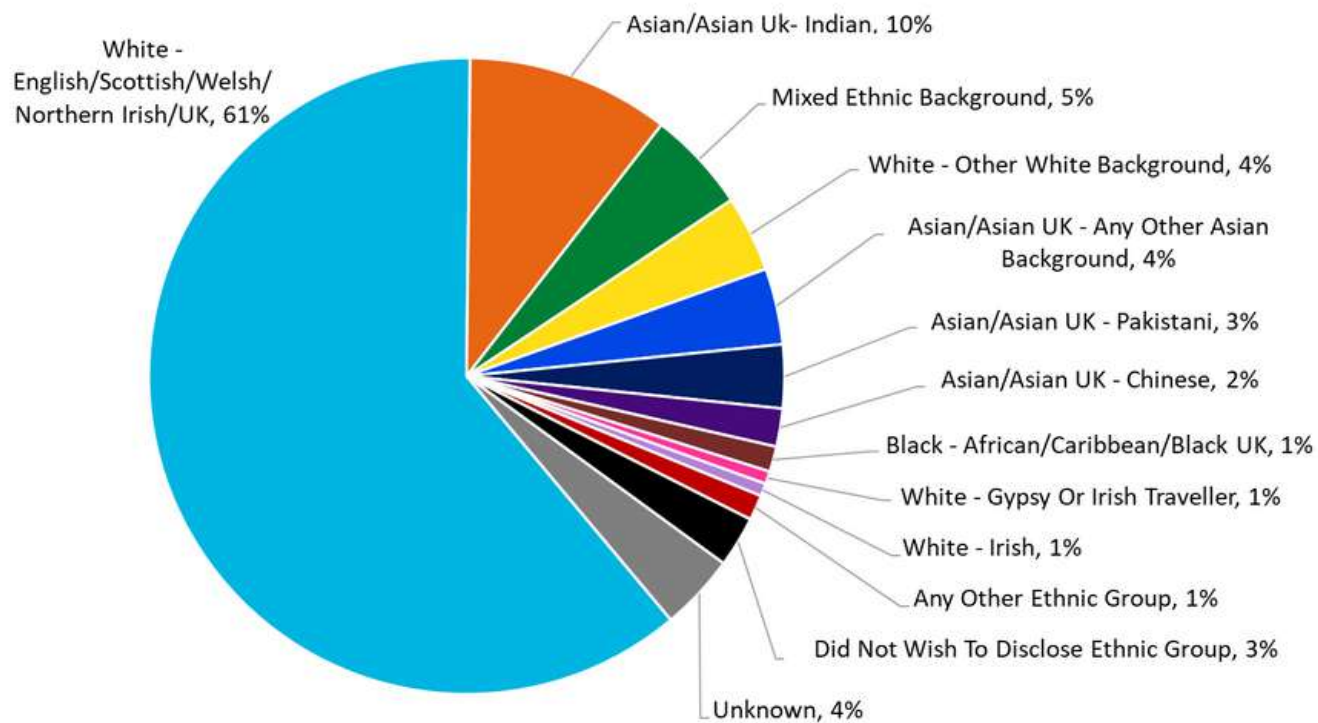
The majority of the children and young people we support across all of our services have Autism. The chart shows the children's main additional need but many of the children have multiple other needs in addition to the need shown here.

We do not require a diagnosis for our support as we know how difficult it can be to gain a diagnosis and we do not want this to be a barrier for children and young people to access our services.

Who we help

Ethnicities

This year we welcomed children and young people from a wide variety of backgrounds into all our services. The majority of these are from white backgrounds, which correlates with the local populations of Wokingham and Reading. We are pleased to have reached so many other communities and hope to expand our reach in under-represented communities in the coming financial year. The majority (78%) of children accessing our services live in Wokingham and 21% live in Reading*.

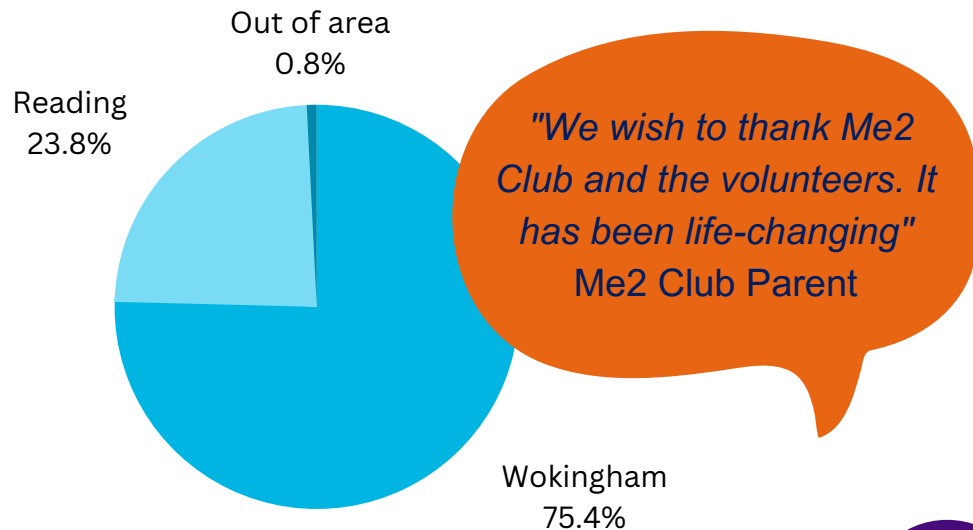


*the remaining 1% live outside of Reading & Wokingham)

Core Service Impact

The aim of the core service is to help the children access activities which they otherwise may be excluded from. We also hope to support the children to increase their confidence, independence and reduce their social isolation. The ultimate aim for some of the children accessing the service is to become independent enough to attend their activity without support from a volunteer. This year, 8 children started attending their activities independently.

100% of families would recommend Me2 club and many have important comments to make about the impact of the service on their child and their family.




100% of families would recommend Me2 Club



Our Core Service supports children with additional needs at activities around Wokingham and Reading. This service enables children to attend uniform groups, swimming lessons, drama classes, sports clubs and martial arts. Each child is matched with a carefully selected, trained volunteer who attend with them each week to provide the individual support each child needs.

This year we have supported 126 children and young people with 95 from Wokingham and 30 from Reading. After expanding our service to cover the entire Reading borough in 2019 we are building up our numbers in this area. This year we have taken 43 children off our waiting list with 28 of those coming from Reading and the remaining 16 from Wokingham.

Core Service Impact on Confidence

Through having a volunteer to support them our children can gain confidence in themselves and their abilities. This is reflected in the information we gained from their volunteers and their parents.

100% of parents and carers reported an increase in their child's confidence, and 68% of those rated their child's increase in confidence a 4 or 5 indicating a significant change.



100% of
Parents said
their child's
confidence
increased

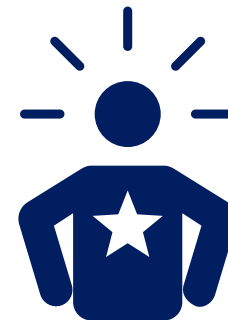
*"He has tried things
we would have dreamt
of him trying"*
Me2 Club Parent



"My son would not do any other club without support and his confidence has grown having great volunteers that have helped boost this"
Me2 Club Parent



The majority of volunteers (67%) reported an increase in their matched child's confidence, 20% of those rated their child's confidence stayed the same which is a positive outcome for many of the children, particularly those dealing with the ups and downs of life. The remaining 13% were unsure about how their matched child's confidence had changed, which may be due to them still getting to know their matched child. None of the volunteers in rated their child's confidence decreasing.



Core Service Impact on Independence

When parents and carers sign up for our service many of them are attending activities with their children as this is the only way many of them can take part. As a result of our support, we hope children increase their independence as they start to attend with their volunteer. Then over time many of them need less support from their volunteers as well. Parents tell us that this increase in independence can help the children go on to take part in additional clubs outside of their Me2 Club activity.

Most of our parent carers (93%) rated their child had increased in their independence with 61% rating a 4 or 5 out of 5 indicating a significant increase in independence.



"[Me2 Club] has allowed our son to start attending activities without one of us being there for him, an essential part of growing up"
Me2 Club



93% of parents said their child's independence increased

The majority (56%) of our volunteers reported an increase in their matched child's independence. Some of our children may not become more independent from their volunteer dependent on the child's needs, 37% of volunteers rated their child's independence stayed the same which is a positive outcome for many of the children. None of the volunteers rated their matched child's independence had decreased and 7% were unsure about how their matched child's independence had changed.

Core Service Impact on Social Isolation



Many children with additional needs and disabilities are socially isolated as it can be more difficult for them to join in leisure activities due to the barriers such as accessibility, understanding of additional needs and social difficulties.

Through the support of a volunteer, who becomes a trusted buddy, children attend their activities more regularly and connect with others. Some of our children attend specialist schools and if they do attend leisure activities it is with other children with additional needs. Our service enables them to make friends with a wider variety of children and experience activities they may otherwise be excluded from.

Almost all of our parents and carers (96%) said that their child increased in sociability and connectedness and 63% rated their child a 4 or 5 out of 5 indicating a significant increase in the child's sociability at the activity. This is an incredible increase for many of our children who may have been experiencing a high level of social isolation before starting with Me2 Club.

The majority (54%) of our volunteers reported an increase in their matched child's sociability with others in the group, 35% of those rated their child's sociability with others in the group stayed the same. None of the volunteers rated their matched child decreased in sociability and 7% were unsure about how their matched child's sociability with others in the group had changed.



"His relationship with his volunteer is amazing and the bond between them enables H to grow"
Me2 Club Parent



"Me2 Club has made my daughter feel like she is accepted and valued, and therefore she is more comfortable in relationships with other children"
Me2 Club Parent

Hear from our Children

We really wanted to hear what the children thought about the support they receive from Me2 Club. We asked children who had been matched with their volunteer for more than a term for their feedback about the charity and their volunteer and we were so pleased to hear such positive things from them.



The top 7 things children enjoyed about their activity were:

- It's fun!
- I enjoy the activity
- My activity makes me happy
- I like seeing my volunteer
- I like seeing my friends
- I learn new things
- I like being active



95%

of children felt their
volunteer was good
at supporting them



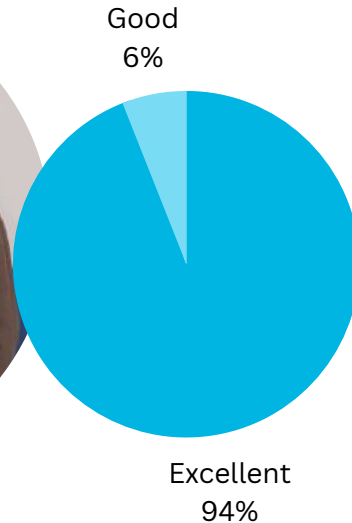
Children rated
Me2 Club
over 4 out of 5
stars



Children rated
their enjoyment of
their activity

4.5/5

Volunteer Experience



Our core service volunteers provided 2,531 hours of respite to our parents. This was over 60 hours of respite per week! This year we have worked with 139 volunteers who supported children at their weekly activities.

- 100% of exiting volunteers rated their experience as 'good or 'excellent'
- 100% of volunteers used their experience in applications for employment or study. We are so pleased volunteering with Me2 Club helped our volunteers progress in the career or education goals.
- Around 50% of our volunteers stay with us over a year and some of our volunteers have been with us much longer. our longest serving volunteer has been with us over 6 years!

"Being part of the Me2 Club was such an amazing experience that has helped me in ways I didn't even realise. It's also a real privilege to be a part of a young child's life in this way."
Me2 Club Volunteer

In total, we had 147 volunteers across our services including trustees, fundraising events, participation activities and our core service. This amounted to 3,989 volunteering hours in the last financial year.

Our volunteers support children at a wide variety of mainstream activities that would otherwise be inaccessible to the children.



"I've enjoyed every second and it has definitely made me more resilient, innovative and patient which will help my future in university and the workplace! It was a truly priceless experience"
Me2 Club Volunteer

Volunteer Induction Training



“Me2 Club Training has been inspiring. Hearing the ways in which I can help fills me with pride that I'm going to be doing something good.”
Me2 Club Volunteer

We trained 61 new volunteers this financial year over 4 training sessions in June, October, November, and February. We are always trying to improve our training to give our volunteers everything they need to feel confident in their roles. Our training programme covers additional needs, communication, understanding behaviour, safeguarding, manual handling, and their roles and responsibilities.

We are so proud that volunteers find our training so impactful:

- 95% of volunteers trained increased their knowledge of additional needs after attending Volunteer Induction Training increasing their ratings of their knowledge from 5/10 to 8.8/10.
- 81% felt more ready to be matched after completing training, improving their ratings of confidence in being matched from 6.2/10 to 8.6/10 after training
- 98% of volunteers rated their experience of training as 'Good', 'Very Good' or 'Excellent' with 90% rating it 'Very Good' or 'Excellent')

“I wanted to volunteer because helping children means paving a way for their future, which excites me and creates an opportunity for the child to develop and explore outside their own comfort zone regardless of their disabilities. Me2 Club is the best opportunity for me to pursue this passion.”
Me2 Club Volunteer



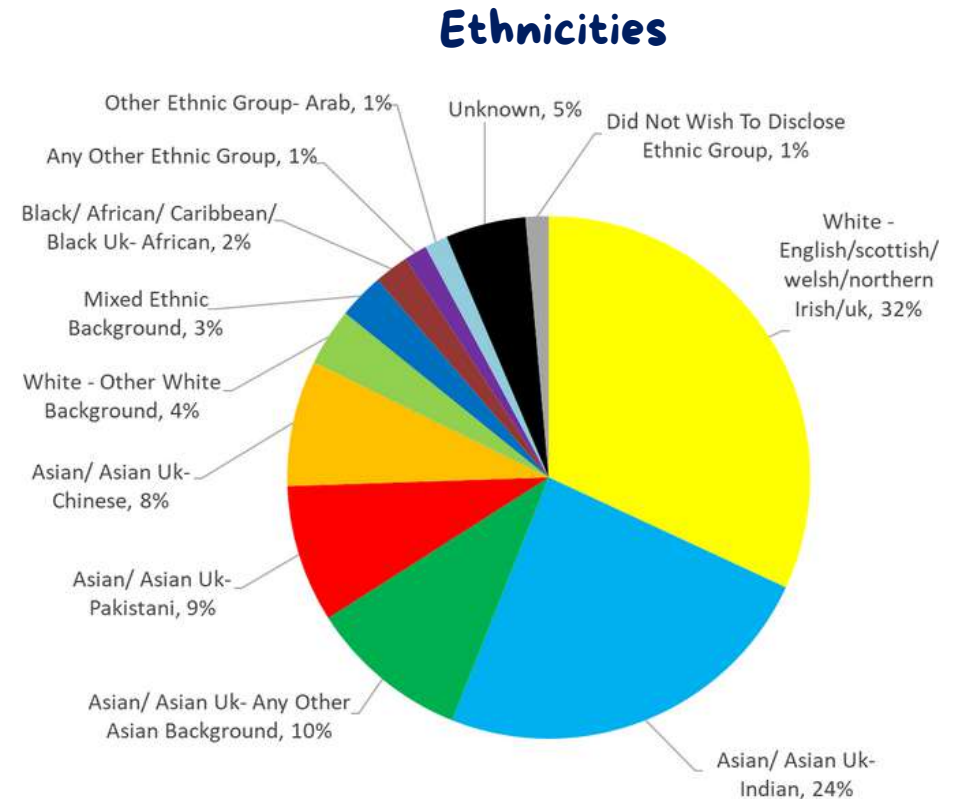
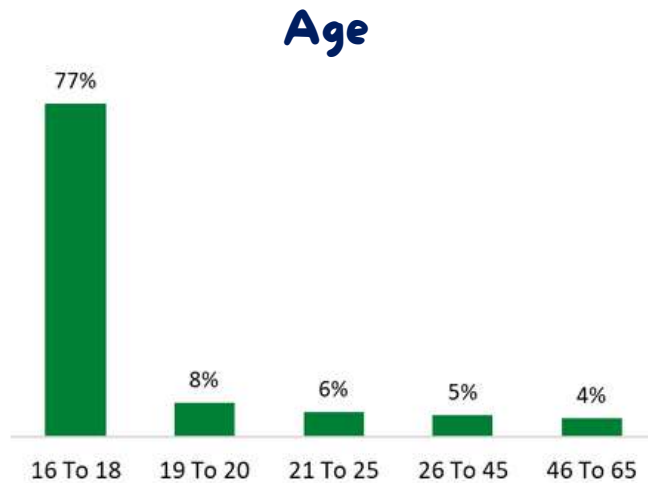
Our Volunteer Demographics



The majority of our volunteers (77%) are aged between 16-18, which is helpful for a lot of our children to have someone similar in age to help them take part. Our children have a range of needs and so having volunteers from a variety of demographics, experience levels and ages means we can find the best volunteer for each child's individual needs.

Most (80%) of our volunteers were female in all age categories but we are pleased to have 23 male volunteers aged between 16-18 who have made a big difference to our children who preferred to have boy volunteer help them at activities like swimming and sports clubs.

We recruit many of our volunteers through assembly talks given at local secondary schools and word of mouth. We are pleased that so many of our volunteers recommend volunteering with us to their friends and family.



Our 2022 Volunteer Awards



ELLIS



MIRANDA



AMY



DALIA



CHRIS, EMMA
& SOFIA

All our volunteers are amazing and make a huge difference to our children's lives through giving their time every week and fundraising efforts. This year, we gave out 4 Volunteer Awards to our volunteers who went above and beyond:

- Me2 Club Progress Award - Ellis
- Me2 Club Extra Mile Award - Miranda
- Me2 Club Young Fundraiser Award - Dalia
- Me2 Club Fundraiser Award - Chris, Emma and Sofia

In addition to these awards, this year we handed out a very special Volunteer Award in memory and recognition of Alexandra Briess, a volunteer who sadly passed away in May 2021. In honour of Alex's memory, Me2 Club and Alex's family developed this special volunteers award to remember her legacy and impact. Volunteers who are nominated for this award embody many of the qualities that made Alex so special.

The winner of this award in 2022 was Amy Long who demonstrated empathy, enthusiasm and worked very hard during her volunteering at swimming.

Meet Oliver and Channuka

Oliver started his Me2 Club journey in December 2018 when he came off our waiting list. He wanted to learn to swim and started progress towards his goals, supported by his matched volunteer. This continued until March 2020, when the UK went into its first lockdown.

Oliver didn't restart regular swimming lessons again until June 2021, which was challenging for him due to the difficulties he experienced during the disorientating period after lockdowns were lifted. He resumed stage 1 lessons, but it was almost like starting from the beginning again. Oliver had 2 volunteers between June 2021 and February 2023, who worked with him to increase his confidence and stay engaged during the lesson, but he remained in stage 1. During this time Oliver's twin brother, who had his own volunteer, had moved up to stage 3.

"I just wanted to let you know that Oliver is now in Stage 3 swimming. He has absolutely smashed stage 2 and his confidence has absolutely soared. Channuka was completely the right fit for Oliver. Thank you so much for all you do you are fantastic, and I think thank you is not quite enough but thank you!"

Oliver's Mum, Amanda



In March 2023, Oliver was matched with Channuka who he got on well with from the very beginning. They decided that the goal was for Oliver to move up to stage 2 before December as Oliver only had two skills in stage 1 left to master. Channuka kept Oliver motivated to achieve his goal and helped him concentrate on the task. By the end of the first session Oliver had ticked off the things he needed to achieve to complete this stage and move up to stage 2!

Since their amazing first session, the pair have continued to build a really great relationship. Channuka is able to put clear boundaries in place for Oliver, which allows him to stay focused and encourages Oliver by giving him lots of praise. His support has really helped Oliver's confidence grow and Oliver has already started in stage 3!

Our SEND Youth Forum

in January 2022 Me2 Club ran the first SEND Youth Forum, Say YES for Wokingham. The forum gives young people a much needed voice in the development of local services. In the last year, the group have contributed to the national SEND review, a local review of health services, Wokingham's children's rights work and the new Keyworking Team. For example, the Keyworking Team have changed their information video in response to young people's feedback. Throughout the year, Me2 Club have attended meetings in Wokingham and across the West of Berkshire to share young people's views.



"He really enjoyed Say YES. He was fizzing with ideas afterwards!"
Me2 Club Parent

Our Youth Forum reached
30
young people this year



Say YES has now become well established, with good attendance by young people. Professionals now regularly ask to attend and seek young people's views. Me2 Club are pleased to see progress in the young people who have attended and are privileged to learn from their experiences. We have already arranged for young people to be involved in developing the Safety Valve SEND improvements in Wokingham and the local Autism Strategy refresh next year.

Youth Social Action

We were successful in obtaining a grant from BBC Children in Need to develop our youth social action, supporting young people to address the barriers they face in their lives and in their communities.

We involved 39 young people to help us develop the project. They want Me2 Club to enable them to make new friends, enjoy more fun activities & improve their self-confidence. They voted for a group that focusses on improving awareness of additional needs, open to Reading & Wokingham young people aged 8 to 25.

Our young people identified specific social actions that they would like to be involved in:

- Creating a video to raise awareness of SEND & how fidget aids can help.
- Taking part in events at Parallel Windsor in July.
- Ask local councillors to shadow a wheelchair user on buses and in local parks.



"It's clear you have some really great ideas to build upon and to deliver through the Youth Social Action funded project."

Pam Bacon, BBC Children in Need

Next Year

We will run a Teen Club starting in April 2023. By developing our work with young people, we are providing a responsive service that adapts to the changing needs of children as they grow older, as well as providing the support that our young people tell us they want!

Family events

Me2 Club hosted 3 family events for 40 families during 2022 that were accessible and inclusive to all and a place the whole family could have fun together. Me2 Club family events provide a 'safe haven' for children and their families to relax and socialise in an environment where their children are supported and understood.

We held our first family party after the COVID pandemic for Easter in April 2022 and had 11 families attend, which included more than 16 children and siblings. Everyone enjoyed a visit from the Easter bunny and Easter crafts. Thanks to our amazing 10 volunteers, supporters, and Trustees who made this event possible. On one of the hottest days of the year, 20 families attended our Summer party at Thames Valley Adventure Playground. This included 32 of our children and siblings who had an amazing time in the sun enjoying the playground. We had 6 Volunteers who helped out on the day, special thanks to our Pudsey Bear!

"What a very special event! I still haven't stopped talking about it. G amazed me with his brave attitude, his strength is far greater than I anticipated. We're very grateful."

Me2 Club Parent



We had 31 families attend our Christmas party, which was over 81 attendees! An amazing 52 children and siblings received gifts from Santa in his grotto and enjoyed a Makaton-signed entertainment from Jingle the Elf.

In addition to our family events, we enabled 14 families to access a special event where the children, siblings and parents got to ride in a variety of sports, rally and super cars. This event was organised by [Sporting Bears](#) and their drivers who donated their time and vehicles on the day.



Family events



"We love coming to the Me2 Club parties, it's great for my children to just be themselves and not have to pretend, it is a safe place with like-minded families who just get it."

Me2 Club Parent



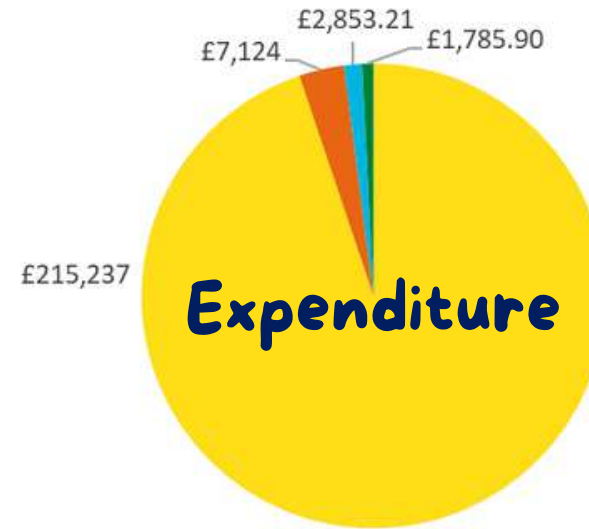
Our Income & Expenditure

We are very grateful for the new and continued support from many Trusts and Foundations, organisations and individuals. This support is essential in allowing us to continue our work, developing, growing and most importantly enabling children and young people with additional needs to take part.

The charts below illustrates how funds were raised during 2022-23 and our charitable expenditure. Unfortunately, we experienced an income gap following a challenging year of fundraising. We will be focusing on identifying new funding opportunities and diversifying our income streams in the year ahead to minimise future deficits.



Grants & Trusts	£136,820.53
Community Donations	£8,669.81
Corporate Funding	£5,994.38
Fundraising Events	£3,733.03
Town and Parish Councils	£3,725.00
Individual Donations	£2,024.93
Total	£160,967.68*



Service Provision	£215,237.00
Fundraising	£7,124.00
Families and children	£2,853.21
Volunteers	£1,785.90
Total	£227,000.11*

*These figures have yet to be confirmed by year end accounts.



How you can help

In 2023/2024, Me2 Club needs to raise over £270,000. We will do this by vigorously fundraising to ensure we can continue to support children and young people with additional needs and disabilities in our community.

We are asking for regular donors to set up a monthly gift via Just Giving for any amount you can afford. If you'd like to find out more about regular giving, please contact [Jo Ramsay](#).



Regular giving can be any amount, below are examples of giving amounts and what they could mean to Me2 Club families:



- Giving £5 a month for a year could help pay towards volunteer recruitment. We are constantly seeking new volunteers to be specialist trained and matched with a child on our waiting list to attend mainstream weekly activities.
- Giving £10 a month for a year could help pay for the whole family to attend one of the 3 Me2 Clubs annual parties. Me2 Club every year host an Easter, Summer and Christmas Party that is accessible and inclusive to all and a place the whole family can have fun together.
- Giving £20 a month for a year could help pay towards our specialist volunteer training and on-going support for 1 volunteer.

Companies looking to make a regular donation can make a huge difference

- Giving £100 a month for year could help pay for a Childs initial assessment, essential matching and termly support visits from our AVCs.



If you're interested in making regular donations to Me2 Club, it takes just a couple of minutes to do via [Just Giving](#) simply select the monthly donation button and choose the amount you'd like to give.

JustGiving™

Fundraising events



In September, Hennerton held a Charity Golf Day for us



In October, we held our Annual Me2 Club Quiz



Syngenta ran a sponsored 24-hour football match



KPMG helped us run a bake sale at their Summer Party



Time to Sing Choir raised money for us through their performances



In June, we attended Woodley Carnival



In September, we ran our Annual Summer Raffle



Ritchie ran the Virtual London Marathon for us



Thank you to all our supporters



Thank you to all our supporters;
local community groups, local businesses, schools, town councils,
Rotaries, Lions clubs & individuals who supported us in 2022/2023.

Our Trustees & Staff Team

This year Me2 Club welcomed our new CEO, Chin Davies and Senior Fundraising and Development Co-ordinator, Jo Ramsay to the passionate and committed team.

Staff:

- Chin Davies - Chief Executive Officer
- Jess Haycock - Senior Activities & Volunteers Coordinator
- Jo Ramsay - Senior Fundraising and Development Co-ordinator
- Ramona Bridgman - Participation Coordinator
- Vicky Fisher, Nikki Fisher & Louise Butler - Activities & Volunteers Coordinators
- Sabrina Marsh - Core Service Support Officer



Trustees:

- Sonia Aulak - Chair of Trustees
- Simon Crawford - Treasurer
- Kate Sims - Secretary
- Sue Woodcock & Giles Cross

We would like to say a massive thank you to our amazing Board of Trustees; for freely giving their valuable time and expertise to make sure Me2 Club continues to make a difference to the lives of children and families.

In August 2022, we said farewell to Lucy Morris, who served as a Trustee for Me2 Club for 3 years and led the Board of Trustees as the charity's Chair. Lucy originally joined the Board as a Parent Carer Trustee, having had experience of her child being supported by one of our volunteers. Lucy had a career with the Charities Commission, which helped shape Me2 Club's approach to safe and effective governance arrangements.



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