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## Grant report from Whirlow Hall Farm Trust

Dear Trustees,

Thank you once again for your generous donation of **£5,000** last year to Whirlow Hall Farm Trust. I would like to let you know how your grant has supported our work this year.

**Whirlow Hall Farm Trust** provides a range of educational and therapeutic programmes on our working farm with a focus on supporting children and young people who are struggling due to complex and debilitating disadvantages and acute trauma.

### The project you supported

Your funding has supported our education programmes, the focus of which is our alternative programmes known as “Whirlow LIFE” (Learning In a Farming Environment). These are split into two categories:

**Secondary Provision** (Ages 11 – 16) including delivering to all students from Becton School – Sheffield Children’s NHS Foundation Trust: a specialist facility for children who cannot attend mainstream school due to a variety of medical needs.

**Post 16 Provision** for young adults aged 16+ with Special Educational Needs (SEND)



Additionally, we offer day and residential visits for schools. The children take part in farm tours, curriculum-linked sessions, interactive storytelling, and seasonal farm jobs. These visits are designed to help children grow in confidence, gain independence and develop relationships with both peers and adults. For residential visits, often this is the first time a child has stayed away from home.

At the time of our application, we were still running our Primary programme for children aged 5-11 however, due to reduced demand, but increase in the needs of these children, the decision was made that Whirlow is no longer the most suitable place to be able to meet the needs of most of these children. We now have a partnership with Becton school which allows us to reach many more secondary age children.

### What we have done this year

#### Numbers of children and young people supported

	Secondary	Post-16	Becton School	Residential visits	Day visits
2021-22	27	25	78	768	0
Confirmed for 2022-23	20	28	110	740	370

Our priority is to reduce anxiety. We can then support the child/young person to re-engage with education.

We continue to see 85% show a reduction in anxieties within 12 weeks at Whirlow. For those who stay longer, this increases to 95% within six months.

Success looks different for each child or young person. This could be returning to their school and being more engaged, moving on to a new school, starting at a special school or gaining qualifications to move onto further education.

Last year, 86% progressed in a way that was suitable for them and their abilities.

**The following story is NOT for general the public. If it has been shared with you, please do not share elsewhere.**

16-year-old “D” is female but when she first came to Whirlow, aged 14, identified as male. He is now exploring and is not fixed on pronouns. He is classed as a young carer, looking after his mum who suffers from extremely poor mental health. His dad is a highly strung chef who struggles to hold a job down. Dad has also struggled with D identifying as male and as a result has no contact with him. D’s mum and dad are recently divorced. Despite mum’s diagnosis, she visits Greece several times every year leaving D in the care of his older brother and sister who he gets on well with.

D suffers from clinical depression and Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) and is medicated for both conditions but does not always take them. With low self-confidence and self-esteem, D has expressed feelings of being suicidal and regularly self-harms. This has led to support from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Ryegate, Sheffield’s NHS Child Development and Neurodisability Service. D is hearing impaired and needs to wear hearing aids in both ears but often finds an excuse not to wear them, despite the fact that he knows it significantly helps. D struggles with peer relationships and is much more comfortable with female adults.

It is unsurprising that D’s education has suffered. In Year 9 D was ‘at expectation’ in Maths and PE, “working towards” in English, science, and music and ‘below expectation’ in computing and history. The school referred D to Whirlow to improve confidence, resilience and independence and provide opportunities to develop positive relationships with others and embrace new skill sets to lead to a successful transition to Post 16. With Whirlow’s support, D has gone to college to study animal care and Whirlow staff keep in contact. He’s not finding it very easy, but we continue to give him encouragement to keep going.

Thank you once again from all at Whirlow Hall Farm Trust for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

*R. Gage*

**Ruth Gage**

Trusts and Grants Fundraiser

Whirlow Hall Farm Trust