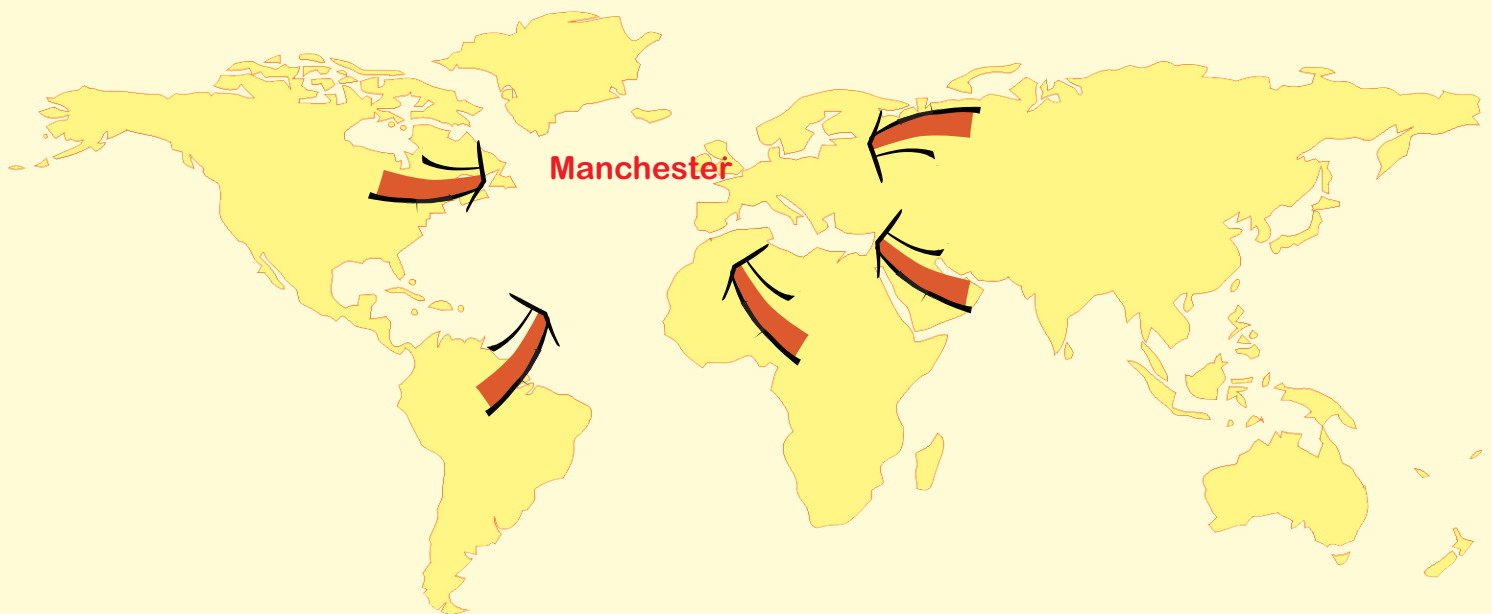


Routes Annual Report 2009/2010



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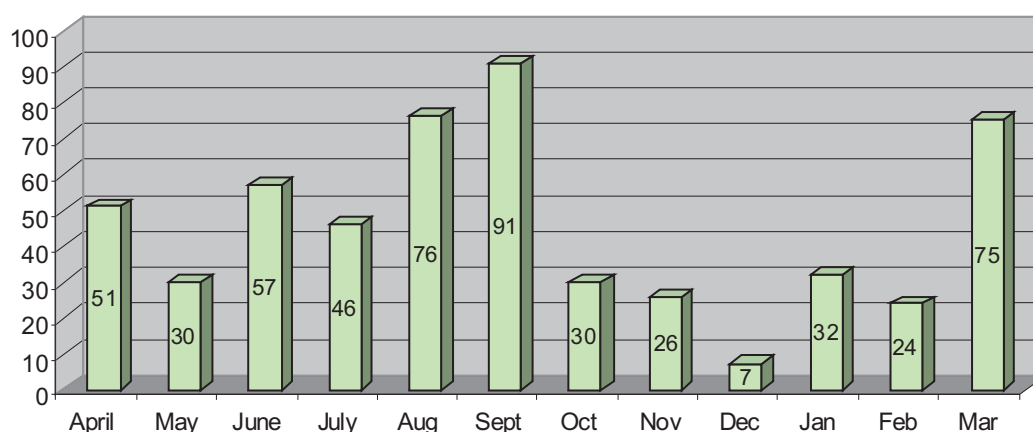
Over the past twelve months, our dedication to addressing the needs of newly arrived families has not wavered, despite the challenges that have been felt due to the unstable economic, political and social climate. Despite the socio-economic challenges, families from all over the world have continued to settle in Manchester and take the opportunity to experience what is on offer in our great city.

“I liked the home visits, advocacy and the experience in solving all the problems”

This report will summarise the work of the Routes Project over the last twelve months, highlighting the presenting needs of newly arrived families and how our work has helped to improve their wellbeing and strengthen the integration of children and their parents within our communities.

The extent of our work

From April 2009, we changed the remit of the Routes Project - supporting families with children aged 0-19 years to families with children aged 5-16 years. The change was necessary due to funding changes which led to a reduction in our staffing levels. Despite this, we have continued to receive a high number of referrals from a variety of sources.

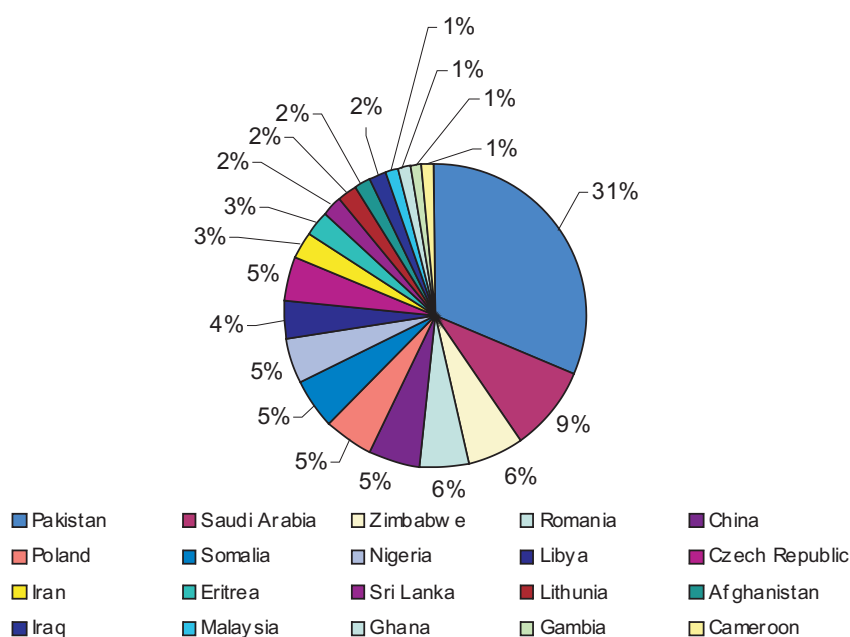


In total, 545 referrals were received, 4% of which were families previously supported by Routes and who required further support this year. We had anticipated that we would receive approximately 600 referrals in the year, and though the numbers were slightly smaller, the spread of international new arrivals is very wide, and the referrals are from a wide range of agencies.

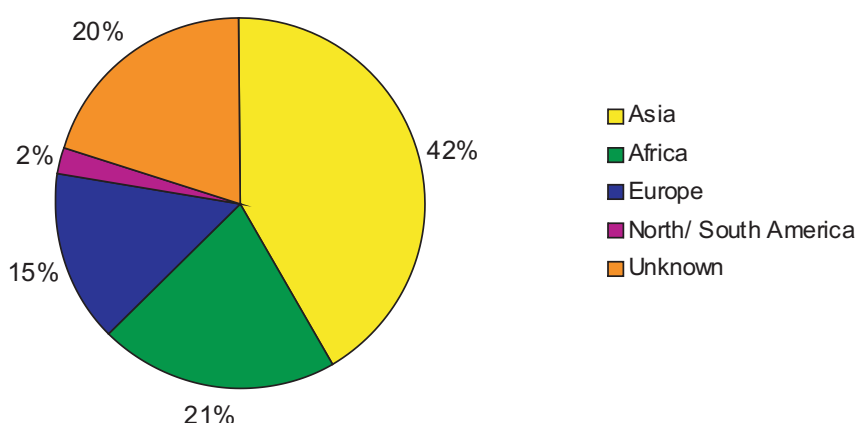
Who is arriving in Manchester?

Manchester is continuing to welcome families from every corner of the world into its vibrant city and over the past twelve months, the Routes Project has worked with families from over 75 different countries. The top country of origin is Pakistan, which follows trends from previous years. This is then followed by Saudi Arabia, mainly consists of families whose parents are studying at the universities. We also have a relatively high number of individuals from Zimbabwe, Romania and China.

Top 20 Countries of Origin



Continental Spread



The Routes Project is skilled in breaking down any existing barriers when engaging with newly arrived families. Our multi-lingual team has in-depth experience of working with newly arrived families and understanding the issues that many families will be experiencing. Many of our staff have gone through similar experiences with their own families and this adds to an enhanced level of empathy, as well as the ability to provide practical support to families. Over the past twelve months, we have used a number of interpreters to help us fully engage with families where language barriers exist. Working with interpreters is a vital component of our service and we do not undervalue our dependence on those who have the ability to help us develop trusting relationships with those who cannot speak our language.

Referrers

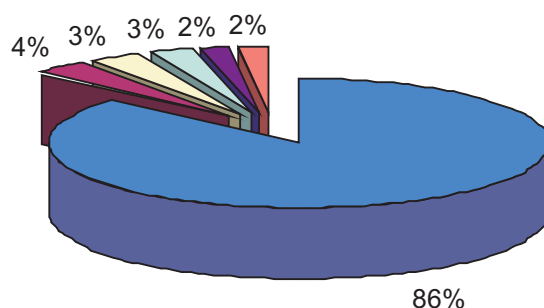
In 2009/2010, the Routes Project received referrals from over 20 different sources. As a service we are always looking at ways in which we can make our service more accessible, particularly for those who wish to self- refer. This year approximately 4% of referrals came from families who had identified for themselves that they could benefit from our support; whilst this figure is relatively low, it is 2% higher than last year.

Our strong links with Manchester City Council, most notably Manchester's Integrated Admissions Team and the International New Arrivals, Traveller and Supplementary Schools Team, has enabled us to reach new arrivals at the earliest occasion. Through past and present consultations with families, we know that applying for a school place is a top priority, and therefore through our established referral pathways with teams within Children's Services, we are able to reach families at the earliest opportunity, which prevents escalation up the Continuum of Need.

“Don't know what we would do without Routes”
- Manchester School Admissions

“I find the way in which the Routes Project works very effective. In my view the Routes Project are in a position to take a closer look at the families needs and will work effortlessly with other organizations to address family concerns”
- Parent Support Service

Referrers by Sector



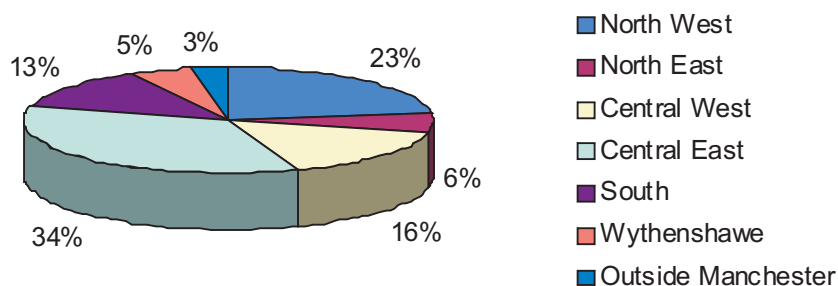
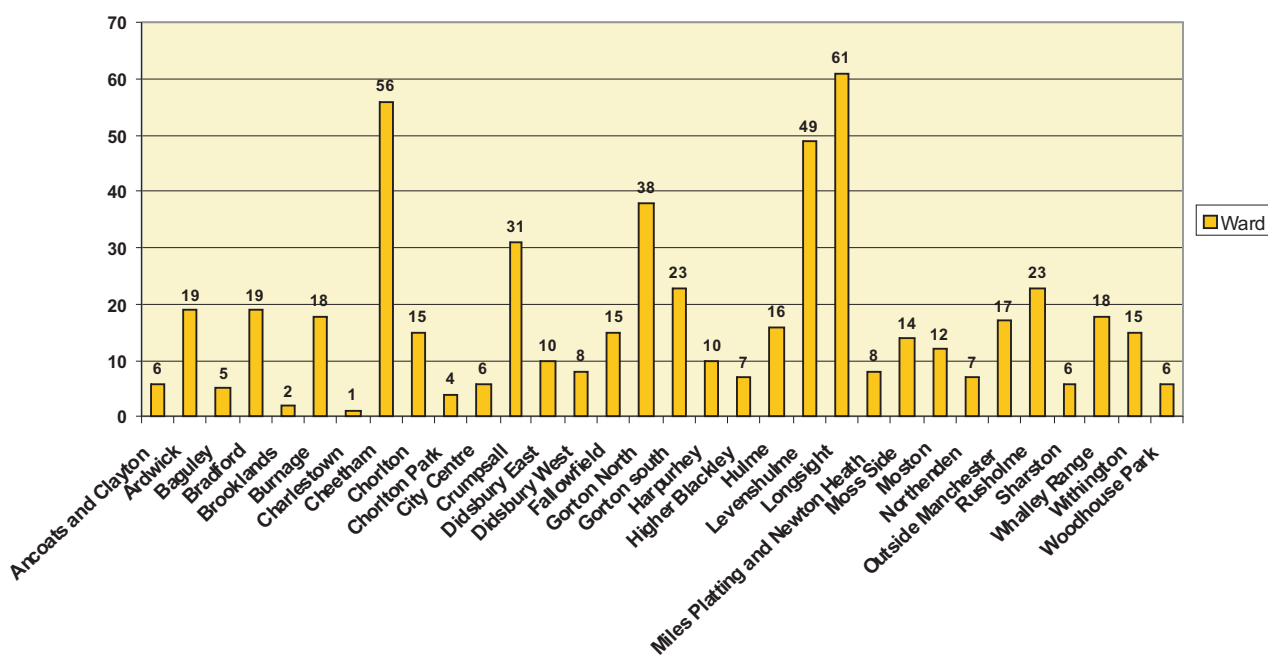
- Children Services (Admission Team, INA team, Social Services, Sure Start, Schools etc)
- Self
- Private sector (e.g. accomodation providers)
- NHS
- Voluntary Service
- Other (inc. Statutory Housing, Other Local Authorities)

Providing a city wide service

The Routes Project is a citywide programme that provides support to families in all districts of Manchester. The most popular areas for new arrivals to settle in tends to be Longsight , closely followed by Cheetham and Levenshulme. We find that many families migrate to areas of the city, where there are established pockets of communities representing the variety of nationalities entering the city.

International new arrivals settling in Manchester tend to be highly mobile and therefore re-encounter the same problems accessing services after changing districts. The Routes Project helps to narrow the gap between district-based services and highlights the need the necessity for a smooth transition for children and families from one district to the next. The Routes Project also regularly receives referrals from services or families outside of the City of Manchester. We are unable to work directly with these families; however, we always ensure that they are signposted or referred to other appropriate services.

District working

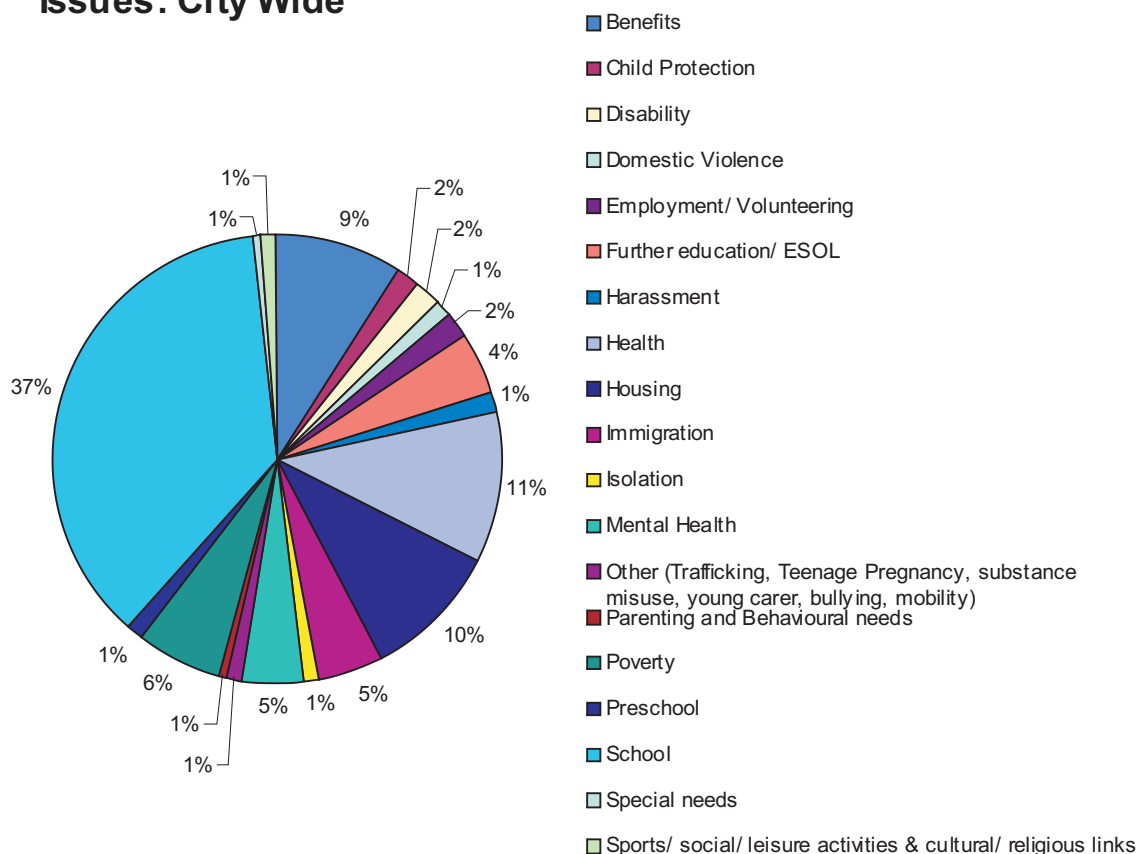


What are the issues?

Through measuring the issues that affect family life, we are able to determine if our service is still meeting the needs of the 'whole family'. Our intervention takes a holistic approach, in which we identify each issue that an individual or a family as a whole unit may be experiencing. If we are unable to deal with a specific issue, or we feel that the family may benefit from intervention from another service, we will signpost or refer on.

Consistent, with previous year's trends, access to school remains the top issue for our families, followed by health (11%), which includes access to health services as well as issues with health and well-being. Support with housing (10%) and benefits (9%) form a significant component of our outreach work. Approximately 6% of our families have been recorded to be living in poverty. However, this figure may be unrealistic and is most likely to be higher as we record 'poverty' when a family has no recourse to public funds or are experiencing financial instability due to the non-payment of benefits or NASS support.

Issues: City Wide



Through the analysis of the wide- ranging issues experienced by newly arrived families, we are able to inform commissioners of what the needs are at a grassroots level, enabling them to respond more quickly to the changing needs of the population.

Achieving our Outcomes

It is fair to say, that some outcomes are easier to achieve than others, and many can take a long period of time before a positive outcome is reached. For example, we support many families to register for social housing, however due to the limited availability of housing it is unlikely that families will be re-housed in the next 12 months. Other areas such as mental health can also be more difficult, as it more likely that a more integrated approach is needed, which draws in the expertise of mental health specialists. Our close working relationship with our sister project, Sahara, allows us to meet some of this need, as well as referring to other agencies such as Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture.

As indicated in the table below, we have achieved good outcomes for the majority of our families. Through our work, we have ensured that children are able to achieve the universal ambitions in accordance with the Every Child Matters Agenda: to be healthy, feel safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing.

	OUTCOME	PERCENTAGE OF OUTCOME MET	EXAMPLES OF METHODS USED TO MEET OUTCOMES	BUILDING ON OUR SUCCESS
OUTCOMES FOR FAMILIES	Outcome- Improved relationship/ attachments			
	Increased parental interest in child's behaviour	100% fully met	Completion of CAF's, Partnership working, referrals onto specialist services. Registration on courses such as Parenting classes.	Build on our commitment to Integrated Working.
	Improved parental management of child's behaviour	100% fully met		
	Improved recognition and praise	100% fully met		
	Outcome- Improved Functioning of family			
	Home conditions- better hygiene/ cleanliness	100% fully met	Worked with various agencies such as Private Sector Housing, Accommodation Providers, Shelter, Environmental Health, ASBAT, and Racist Incident Report Line. Ensured home conditions were of a good standard, without issues such as mould, poor plumbing, lose fixtures etc have an impact on the health and wellbeing of families	Closer partnership working with Housing Providers, advice agencies and enforcement.
	Home conditions- no hazards/ better home safety	100% fully met		
	Improved housing/ relocation/ reduced overcrowding	69% fully met 25% needs partly met (Routes supported families to apply for re-housing, however due to the limited availability of housing it is unlikely that families are going to be re-housed in the next 12 months	Worked with a range of organisations such as Refugee Action, Homeless Families, and Housing Providers.	Gathering case studies- analysing the rate of families being re-housed into more appropriate housing and measuring the impact on the wellbeing of families.

	Improved housing/ relocation/ reduced overcrowding	69% fully met 25% needs partly met (Routes supported families to apply for re-housing, however due to the limited availability of housing it is unlikely that families are going to be re-housed in the next 12 months	Worked with a range of organisations such as Refugee Action, Homeless Families, and Housing Providers.	Gathering case studies- analysing the rate of families being re-housed into more appropriate housing and measuring the impact on the wellbeing of families.
	Improved access to health services (GP, dentist, etc	100% fully met	Signposted and completed supported introductions to Gp's, Dentists and Opticians	Gathering case studies regarding access to health care, particularly around the provision of interpreters.
	Better access to benefits/ welfare	94% fully met 6% not met (a number of families left Manchester before all their issues could be resolved).	Worked in partnership with Benefit Agency, Manchester City Council Benefits Department, and Advice Agencies. Helped families apply for various forms of welfare support such as mainstream benefits, maternity grants, school uniform grants, charitable grants	In future, we would like to measure the total increase in income for our families and how this is linked to the reduction in poverty of children and families living in Manchester
	Outcome- Decreased family conflict			
	Reduced domestic violence or severe discord	66% fully met. 34% not met (a number of families left Manchester before issues could be resolved)	Worked in partnership with Women's Aid Unit, Homeless Families, Police, Children's Services, Solicitors, Housing	We will look at delivering awareness raising courses to newly arrived families around issues such as domestic violence and safeguarding
	Increased stability/ security			
	Outcome- Increased self- confidence/ self- esteem			
OUTCOMES FOR PARENTS	Increased Self- motivation/ self- worth- Independence	88% fully met 12% partly met (due to being placed on a waiting list for further education)	Signposted to the Roby's Women's Group, Drop-in's and Welcome Centres. Applied for Family Fund Charitable Loan for mother to learn to drive	
	Reduced depression/ anxiety/ other mental health issues	33% fully met 67% partly met	Supported to access practical support, which helps to increase mental health capacity and wellbeing. Referred to more specialist services such as the Sahara Project (BHA) and statutory Mental Health Teams	Work closely with the Sahara Project and other services to build capacity and fill gaps in Mental Health Provision
	Greater involvement in Volunteering	100% fully met	Supported individuals to access volunteering opportunities through signposting	Develop our own volunteer structure and increase our capacity to manage and support volunteers
	Take- up of new training and employment opportunities	80% fully met 20% partly met (due to being placed on waiting lists for courses such as ESOL)	Worked in partnership with Connexions, ESOL providers, Adult Education Centres. Signposted to provision such as Refugee Council's Teaching Programme	Gather case studies regarding gaps in provision and highlight issues at a strategic level, such as limited availability of ESOL provision for asylum seekers

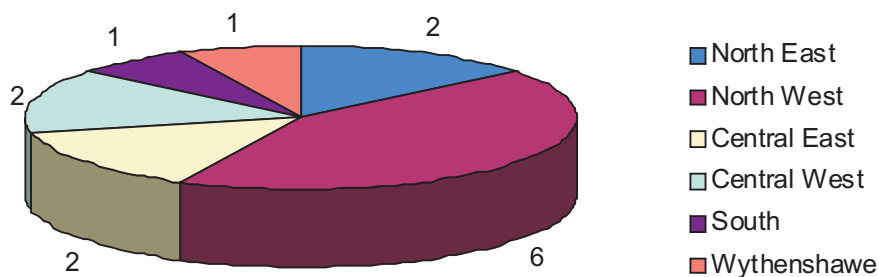
OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN	Outcome - Reduced Social Isolation			
	More active involvement with local community	66% fully met. 34% partly met (some families not willing to engage with activities or provision in their local community at this stage)	Signposted to community groups, BHA Service User Party built up connections between newly arrived families and other families in the area. Helped to facilitate research with Manchester City Council- looking at the needs of asylum seekers and refugees and their experience of accessing services when their immigration status changes- we supported our service users in helping to influence decision-making and improving best practice	Develop community volunteer programme whereby settled families help to orientate and provide friendly support to newly arrived families.
	Outcome 6- More involved with children's learning			
	More involvement with Children's learning	Supported families to engage with the education system and participate in choice-enabling activities.	Supported families in making and attending school appeals, giving information regarding schools in Manchester, attending admission meetings with children.	Monitor more effectively- number of appeals, applications made etc.
	Outcome - Increased personal resilience			
	Reduced depression/ anxiety/ other mental health issues	100% fully met	Completion of CAF's, Partnership working- referred to specialist services such as Emotional Trauma Support Team (MCC).	Work more closely with services providing support to children and young people.
	Increased access to/ use of recreational provision	100% fully met	Referred and signposted to various organisations such as Sure Start, Children's Information Service, Library services, Dance, Music, Sports activities	Look at developing sports activities for children and young people
	Outcome- Improved relationship with school			
	Improved attendance/ reduced lateness	100% fully met	Supported to access entitlements such School bus passes, Walking Bus, School Uniform Grants	
	School place(s) allocated	92% fully met 8% not met (dispersed from Manchester)	Supported hundreds of families in accessing appropriate educational provision for their children- support with making applications, appeals etc. 6% of children/ young people with identified needs were referred to services such as Connexions and the INA/ Traveller Team for further support	Continue to source funding specifically around access to educational provision to ensure needs are met quickly

Common Assessment Framework

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is an assessment and planning framework, which aims to help the early identification of children and young people's additional needs and promote co-ordinated service provision to meet them.

The Routes Project has been very involved in the implementation and delivery of the Common Assessment Framework, both within our own agency and throughout our wider network, most notably within the voluntary sector.

In total, 14 CAF's have been completed, which is 81% less than what we had anticipated. However, the total number of CAF's completed by Routes is high in comparison to the number of CAF's being completed by other agencies; including those within the voluntary sector, (approximately 61% of CAF's completed by the Voluntary Sector were done so by the Routes Project).



CAF Activity 2009/ 2010

Whilst our CAF numbers are relatively low, we are confident that the quality of our CAF work is high. In partnership with the CAF team, we were able to Quality Assure our work and measure the positive outcomes being met. We are confident that when a CAF has been undertaken for a child with additional needs, it has made a positive difference to the wellbeing of the child and wider family network.

Over the past year, the Routes Project has employed a strong presence within the now disbanded CAF steering Group for Central East, and was strategically involved in defining the implementation of CAF across the district. Since the implementation of the CAF within Manchester, the views of the Routes Project have been sought by various agencies and we have been in a good position to support other professionals who have undertaken the CAF process. Due to our expertise with CAF, we have also been encouraged to voice the views of the Voluntary Sector, in regards to CAF and we have been actively involved in the establishment of a CAF Intervention Toolkit for the benefit of the wider Voluntary and Community Sector.

Informing and Influencing Practice

The Routes Project plays a pivotal role within the voluntary sector, particularly when highlighting the needs of children and families. As a representative on the Child and Family Support Forum and the District Partnership Panel for North West Manchester, we are in a position to gather information on both an operational and strategic level and we try to disseminate this information to our partners across the voluntary and community sector.

Reporting on the needs of newly arrived children with Special Educational Needs

In partnership with Manchester Alliance for Community Care (MACC), a position paper was written to highlight the needs of children in Manchester experiencing great difficulty and/or delays in obtaining adequate SEN provision, with a particular focus on the process of obtaining appropriate provision.

Some of the issues we highlighted included:

For child and family:

- Children Missing Education - children without school places for a long time with significant impact on child and family.
- Mainstream schools not offering a place to child with known SEN, and refusing child without giving information about where families can get advice.
- Family afraid to declare SEN needs to school for fear of not being offered a place. Children are going through SEN process once mainstream place is secured.
- Family lack understanding of process and do not know what questions to ask.
- SEN process very slow
- Poor communication with family.
- Lack of interim arrangements for children

For professionals:

- Confusion about CAF roles
- Confusion about roles within LEA especially who takes lead responsibility
- Voluntary sector unable to make referrals to Educational Psychology
- Poor communication between departments, schools, organisations.

The position paper recommended for further efforts to be made in strengthening partnership working between all sectors, including the voluntary sector. We emphasized the need for communication, clarity of roles and ease of referrals to be at the centre of working in partnership.

The Position Paper was forwarded to the Head of Education Services but no response was ever received. The Routes Project is continuing to monitor the process of obtaining appropriate SEN provision and will continue to highlight and recommend areas of improvement.

Building the capacity of others

The Routes Project have delivered several training sessions to providers across the city which have proved instrumental in raising the awareness of the needs of newly arrived families and also ways in which to effectively engage with 'hard to reach' communities. By delivering training to organisations such as Sure Start and Home Start, we have been successful in establishing integrated working practices, which promote partnership working, sharing of expertise and achieving positive outcomes for children and families.

Trip to Romania

In 2009, The Routes Project were successful in obtaining funding through Government Office Northwest to work with Eastern European Migrants with a specific remit of Roma. This is a new area of work for Routes and as such, we wanted to learn as much as we could about Roma culture and the context in which many of Manchester's Roma have come from in Romania. A multi-agency trip to Romania saw us engage with a number of organisations and individuals who are currently working with the Roma community in various capacities, such as those working on a political/ strategic level and those working at a Grassroots level.

One of the primary aims of the trip was to learn from our counterparts, including those working within the voluntary and statutory sectors and share methods of best practice. We observed cutting-edge programmes designed to engage with parents who had been ostracized from education throughout childhood, but who were now being encouraged to learn within the classroom setting alongside their children- this programme was particularly key to the under 5's.

We also wanted to highlight the good work that is implemented in Manchester by organisations like the Routes Project and the great strides we have taken in promoting inclusion and ensuring that positive outcomes for a historically disenfranchised group are achieved. We hope to continue building on our success as well as continuing an integrated working approach in Manchester and also further afield in Romania.

Christmas Appeal - Presents

In December 2009, the Routes Project held a special appeal for presents to be donated to the children and families who we support. We received an exciting array of gifts ranging from cuddly toys to selection boxes. Approximately twenty-five families were given gifts, regardless of if they were celebrating Christmas. Some children were so excited that they did not wait until Christmas Day to open them up!

Listening to the voices of children

In March 2010, the Routes Project conducted a workshop with a small group of newly arrived children. The workshop took place in half-term, in partnership with a teaching assistant from the International New Arrivals Team. The workshop included children taking part in art activities, which facilitated discussion around their first impressions of Manchester, and their worries and concerns as a newly arrived child. The children reflected on newly established friendships and also the friendships that had been lost when moving to the UK. The children who participated in the activities discussed how they were enjoying school, particularly as it was the first time that they had ever received formal education. The group spoke about their ambitions for the future and their commitment to their education.

Concluding Remarks

The Routes Project is optimistic that 2010/2011 will bring new opportunities and endeavours. The winter months of 2010 will be a telling time for Routes, when we should be clearer on what the scope of our service will be after April 2011, and if our project will be funded again. Our position in delivering a high quality service to newly arrived individuals and families in Manchester is strong; however, we face uncertainty regarding reviews and potential cuts in funding.

“Support worker was very friendly and understanding. All concerns were dealt with”

Our ethos of 'the cup being not just half full, but overflowing' will guide us through the uncertainty and will hopefully bring the stability and security that we need in order to continue to delivering a much needed service to newly arrived families in Manchester.

Thanks and acknowledgements

We are grateful to the following organizations and individuals who have supported the Routes Project in many different ways over the last year:

Alianta Civica a Romilor din Romania (ACRR)
Cheetham Hill Advice Centre
Citizens Advice Bureau
Government Office North West
Happy Homes
Interpreters from across the community
Joint Health Commissioning Unit
MACC
Manchester City Council:
International New Arrivals, Traveller and Supplementary Schools Team
Manchester School Admissions
Manchester Community Outreach & Advice Partnership (MCOAP)
Manchester Regeneration Teams
MARIM
Manchester Parent Partnership Service
MAST
Common Assessment Framework Implementation Team
Manchester Metropolitan University
MRSN
The Mayor of Tanderai
Outreach School Health Advisors (NHS)
Ovidiu Rom
Sarah Forster
Stockport College
Sure Start
The Roby
The University of Manchester



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