



Somers Close, Stanmore, Winchester, SO22 4EJ
01962 840 022 | www.carrollcentre.org | c.y.c@btconnect.com

Working with children, young people and the local community
Registered charity No.1007973

In the heart of **Stanmore** since 1992, the Carroll Centre provides services for the community's children and their families, including **youth groups**, a popular **after-school club** and busy **nurseries** for 2-4 year-olds, all focused on the varying needs of the children.

Within its nurseries the Carroll Centre provides **free places for vulnerable two-year-olds**, enabling the deeply committed nursery staff to work intensively with toddlers from challenging backgrounds and with their parents and carers. Many of these children would otherwise be going to school at the age of four unable to communicate, sometimes not potty-trained or even able to be with other children.

The Centre also has a new **youth mentoring scheme**, providing one-to-one or group mentoring to struggling young people who are trying to cope with severe family and emotional issues. The scheme has been incredibly successful. It has been inundated with referrals from schools, parents and Winchester's youth mental health team, which is overwhelmed and facing cuts to its own services.

The Carroll Centre offers activities for the **whole community**, with clubs for the elderly, a parent and tots group, a new community shed, gardening projects, dance and drama activities and a children's library. Groups are set up to offer fun **ways of learning life skills** including healthy cooking, parenting skills, sexual health, and computing. The staff at the Carroll also supervise **volunteers** from the community, with the focus on helping them gain greater self-esteem and autonomy, and sometimes a path back into employment or training. It is largely for this work that the Hampshire Chronicle and the University of Winchester last year awarded the Carroll's head of centre, Jool Heller-Dixon, their prestigious **Community Star award**.

What really makes the Carroll so **special** – and why it is difficult to explain exactly what the Centre does – is that the staff are working constantly with **individual** children and families, where every problem is unique and the struggle to help find a solution always a new one. The area surrounding the Carroll Centre experiences considerable social and economic deprivation and the problems facing the families coming to the Centre for help are complex and often acute, requiring immediate help. The Carroll works closely with Social Services and the police and is often able to help in ways they can't. The Youth workers at the Centre are trusted by the local community. A child will often tell them about another child who is in trouble, allowing them to intervene before the situation escalates and the child's chances in life are spoiled. No two days are alike at the Centre; there are always family crises to be handled and problems of child safety and well-being to be tackled. But whatever the current situation, the staff at the Carroll are passionately committed to helping give every single child who needs their support the **best possible chance to thrive**.

The Carroll Centre is **funded** by grant applications; however, there are always five uses for every penny it receives and it relies on **donations** and legacies from the community. Thank you very much for attending this fund-raising bridge event today. It makes a real difference to the work of the Carroll. I hope you have a very enjoyable afternoon.

Rebecca Horsfall
on behalf of the board of trustees, The Carroll Centre