



## Sheffield Association for the Voluntary Teaching of English

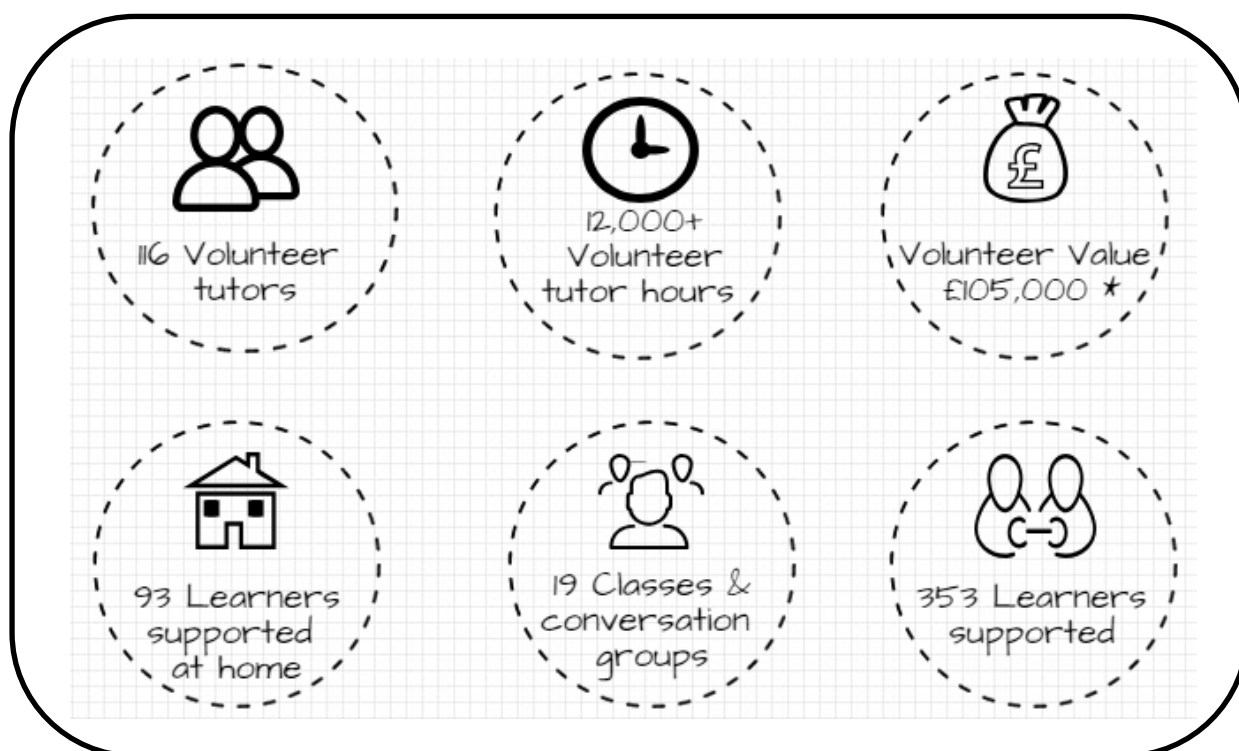
### Sheffield City Council, Core Service Grant Year 1 Impact Report 2017/18

This report summarises the impact of Sheffield Association for the Voluntary Teaching of English (SAVTE) services during 2017/18, year 1 of a 3 year Core Service Grant.

SAVTE provides a unique service to adult learners of English across Sheffield. Adults who would not otherwise have access to language development due to barriers such as health, disabilities or caring responsibilities are referred to SAVTE for individualised ESOL language support, enabling them to make progress and ultimately take steps towards integration into Sheffield community life and other services. The opportunities to learn English that SAVTE offer reach some of the most economically disadvantaged and isolated members of the Sheffield community.

SAVTE's provision meets a very diverse range of needs, many learners are new arrivals to the UK often with health barriers as a result of their previous experiences as victims of trafficking, torture or trauma as displaced people and the majority of our learners have very little or no prior English language skills – the combination of these complex needs are not currently provided for within mainstream ESOL language classes in Sheffield. SAVTE are therefore providing a unique and much-needed service, offering a range of learner-centred language teaching to meet these needs. The teaching we provide gives essential life language skills empowering individuals to engage with their lives in a more meaningful way including social integration, accessing services, participating in their children's education and moving on to further education or employment.

SAVTE's one-to-one tuition is provided by volunteers, selected, trained and supported by SAVTE to deliver this vital service. In addition, SAVTE volunteers also run conversation groups for English language learners in community locations and support learners in ESOL classes alongside qualified English teachers.



\* Volunteer value calculated using 'Real Living wage' £8.75/hr

## SAVTE's impact is measured against three outcomes:

- 1 Individual learners improve their English language skills
- 2 Learners' improved English language skills have a positive impact on their lives.
- 3 Volunteers receive measurable benefit following involvement in the volunteer programme.

### 1 Individual learners improve their English language skills

The core of SAVTE's service is the provision of one-to-one tuition to individuals in their own home. This provision reaches learners who would not otherwise be able to gain language support to learn English. This unique provision of home tuition is the first step towards engagement with learning for a large number of learners, providing a lifeline to learners who are some of the most isolated and excluded people in Sheffield. The primary goal of our one-to-one tuition is for learners to make progress with their language skills, enabling them to take steps towards reducing their isolation through engagement in other activities and services locally, for example joining an English conversation group.



93 Learners supported  
at home



80% Learners are  
women

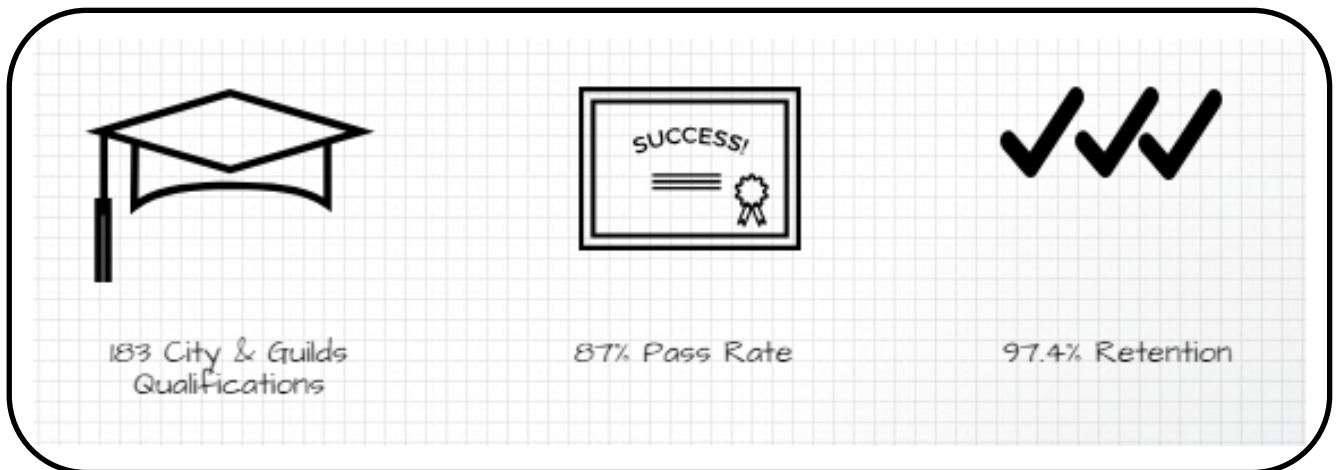


45% Learners describe  
themselves as disabled

The Sheffield City Council Core Grant is enabling us to develop new processes and tools for recording and measuring the progress our one-to-one learners make. We know anecdotally from our volunteers the difference the language support makes, with many of our learners progressing up a level in one skill (reading, writing, speaking or listening) during their placement. In addition to the development of a new database we are also working in partnership with The University of Sheffield to focus on our evaluation methods, to measure both the skills improvements made by our learners and the wider impact this has on their lives.

SAVTE also delivers formal ESOL classes as a sub-contractor of Sheffield City Council. These classes are located where the greatest needs can be met – often in the most disadvantaged areas. Supported by SAVTE volunteers our qualified English teachers support learners with the full range of ESOL skills up to Level 2 and City and Guilds ESOL examinations.

During the last academic year (16/17) we supported 386 learners enrolled in our classes to progress their English Language Skills.



***“Everybody needs to learn English, to take the chance even if it’s hard..... Sometimes I meet people who’ve been here for 25 years. Why haven’t they learnt English before? Maybe they don’t have a chance. Now I have the chance.”***

**Jameela**

Traumatic events due to the political situation in Ethiopia forced Jameela to leave her country in the most difficult of circumstances. Her time in the UK has also been extremely difficult and although now she is settled with her sons, as a single parent there are still challenges.

Jameela was referred to SAVTE in March 2016, as a single parent caring for her 2 children she was unable to access ESOL classes. In July 2016 she started one-to-one tuition with a SAVTE volunteer. After 6 months of ESOL support at home her youngest son started nursery and she was able to move onto a SAVTE Entry Level 2 class in Burngreave in January 2017.

She is full of enthusiasm: *“My class is great. Zeinab (her teacher) explained everything bit by bit – carefully. It’s a nice group and I’m learning and understanding. Tomorrow I’m doing Entry 2 Speaking and Listening Exam. I’m also doing Reading later. Writing is still hard for me, writing and sometimes understanding. Next year I would like to do Entry 3, but I need to finish Entry 2 writing.”*

Jameela had to use interpreters at the hospital with her first baby, but now she can do without. *"Sometimes doctors are very fast when they speak but now I am ok."*

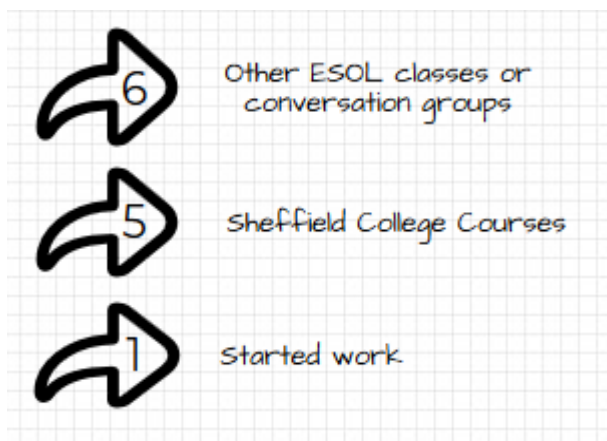
Learning English has also enabled her to help her two children and she is able to communicate with teachers and school staff. *"When I ask the teachers something at school, they understand. My son knows everything! I ask him spellings! He is happy and his school is very good. He is doing well."*

It's impossible not to admire Jameela's positive attitude and cheerful nature. She puts this down to being able to live in the moment. *'I live now! I'm happy now.'*

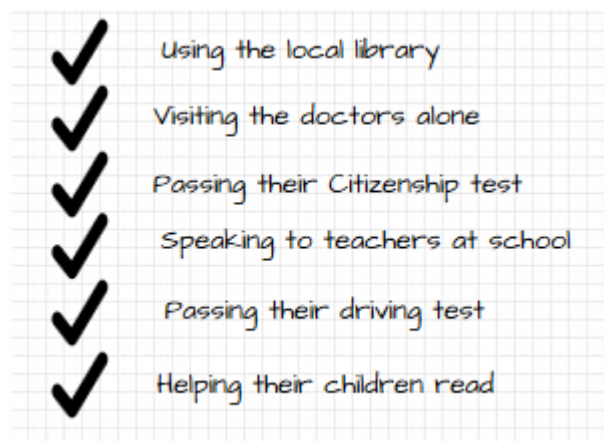
## 2 Learners' improved English language skills have a positive impact on their lives.

One-to-one home tuition is vital for developing learners' language skills, confidence and self-esteem and in creating opportunities to progress to other forms of learning. Recent research by the Learning and Work Institute on the impact of community-based ESOL provision in Manchester<sup>1</sup> found a significant impact on the levels of social integration of learners, including evidence of more social bonds being formed, improved confidence in engaging with health professionals and a significant increase in the level of trust in their local community. Our own experience of evaluating the impact of SAVTE's services matches these findings.

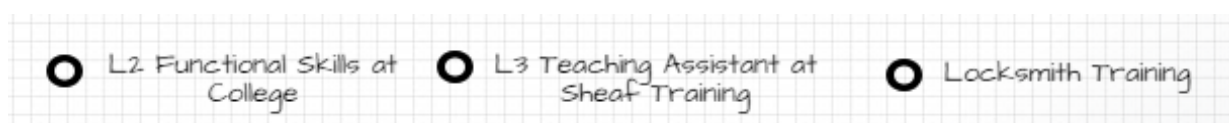
Learners completing the one-to-one tuition this year have progressed on to:



Other achievements one-to-one learners tell us about are:



50% of learners who completed their Level 2 ESOL qualification this year have now started further training and education including:





***‘I am very grateful to my volunteer teacher who was very good and helped me a lot.’***

**Meseret**

*“When I first came to England I was very lonely and sad. I worried all the time. I couldn’t look at people. I couldn’t say anything. My volunteer teacher was really kind. She helped me feel relaxed.”*

Meseret came to England three years ago. Originally from Eritrea she had lived for some years in a refugee camp with her parents who died there. She consequently had no schooling in her own language and can’t read or write in Amharic. She had three months ESOL teaching in a class when she first arrived but when she had her son she could no longer attend classes and became very isolated and depressed.

In 2017 a SAVTE volunteer started to support Meseret with one-to-one tuition at home, she quickly made progress and gained the confidence to apply for a place at Sheffield College. She successfully secured a place at College which includes childcare for her baby son. She now attends two days a week and has just passed her Entry Level 2 exams in Reading and Writing.

*“This year I started going to college two days a week. I really like college and I have made a friend there. I am a different person today. I think I understand life in England now and I am very hopeful about the future. When my son has gone to nursery I want to train as a nurse so I can help people.”*

### **3 Volunteers receive measurable benefit following involvement in the volunteer programme.**

SAVTE attracts, selects and trains volunteers to teach ESOL in a one-to-one placement or a conversation group. Volunteers complete the 8 week SAVTE Training Programme before they are placed into a group setting or start to teach one-to-one with a learner.



53 newly trained volunteers



82% reported increased confidence to teach after SAVTE training



88% reported increase in 3 or more skills after SAVTE training inc:  
planning lessons  
teaching reading and writing  
teaching grammar



64% volunteer for more than 6 months



Volunteers on our course tell us that as a result of the training sessions they.....

*“feel more confident about teaching a learner I also feel more equipped for the stages of planning a lesson “*

*“learnt a lot more about what are the different minorities living in the city and the struggles they face with all the cuts to the services. I also learned more about the English Language and culture during the evenings with other volunteers.”*

*“learned a lot about one to one teaching and feel more confident with visiting the learner’s house and teaching them based on their individual needs.”*

SAVTE trainees enjoyed.....

*“Meeting people from many different backgrounds who I wouldn’t normally encounter”*

*“The mini-teach.....an excellent way to develop skills and put into practice”*

*“Being encouraged to learn about communities in Sheffield.... made me open my eyes to the individuals we will be working with.”*

*“.. a great experience - quite intense but both pleasant and incentivizing and I feel raring to go”*



***“I’m a British person now. I love my independent life”***

**Andlib**

Andlib came to England in 2008 from Pakistan where she was a teacher. In 2009 she attended SAVTE classes and passed Entry Level 3 and then Level 1 ESOL. It was when she accompanied her husband to support him at a SAVTE class at Firth Park Library that she got interested in volunteering.

Andlib completed the SAVTE Volunteer Training Programme in February 2017 and in addition to supporting learners in the SAVTE class, she went on to teach an individual learner one-to-one for 6 months, successfully supporting her learner to progress onto a SAVTE ESOL class. Andlib continues to volunteer at the ESOL class.

*“I love helping in the class because I can help other people, like me.”*

*“The course really helped to develop my confidence and I applied to start a teaching assistant training course which began this September. Eventually I would like to train to be a teacher. The SAVTE course, SAVTE’s ESOL classes, watching Martina (the tutor) teach, has all helped me so much in my learning.”*

*‘In the beginning I felt like I was deaf. When I went to the doctor I always took my husband with me. I’m a very sociable person and always wanted to make friends with everyone. I wanted to talk to English people and now I can understand them. Even with the Sheffield accent! I want to help others to do the same. I want to go on to study more and more. I love my days and all that I do.’*

## **SAVTE’s Future**

SAVTE has many years of experience of developing services to respond to the needs of ESOL learners in Sheffield. In addition, SAVTE produces a city-wide directory of ESOL services and working in partnership with other ESOL providers, signposts and refers learners on to the most appropriate provision for them. SAVTE has recently achieved Matrix Quality Standard recognition for this work.

The Sheffield City Council Core Service Grant is enabling us to expand these services, tailoring our provision to meet the new and developing areas of need. We are committed to providing ESOL learning opportunities for those hardest to reach or facing barriers such as lack of childcare provision to enable their inclusion and long term integration. The recent “Integrated Communities Strategy” green paper from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government<sup>2</sup> has highlighted the important role that opportunities for English language development play in enabling individuals to thrive in strong local communities. SAVTE’s 2017 Matrix Quality Standard report described SAVTE’s work as “innovative, probably unique, and provides excellent alternatives for clients to engage and progress.....the overall model is especially effective in engaging hard to reach individuals, and in breaking through cultural barriers to learning.”

Integral to achieving this is SAVTE’s partnership role with other ESOL providers city-wide and input to the development of an ESOL strategy and coordinated services for Sheffield’s ESOL learners.

### References:

1. “Measuring the impact of Community Based English Language Provision – Findings from a Randomised Controlled trial”, March 2018.  
National Learning and Work Institute, on behalf of Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
2. “Integrated Communities Strategy Green paper”, March 2018.  
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.