

Tower Hamlets school children benefit from financial literacy programme funded by Sodexo Stop Hunger

3 years ago



The Switch charity received a £10,000 grant from the [Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation](#) in April to provide financial literacy education to vulnerable children aged 9-10 years from Manorfield Primary School in Tower Hamlets, London.

The Switch has been providing educational experiences to raise aspirations and boost the career chances of young people for more than 30 years. As part of its Beyond Food Aid agenda*, the project was selected to receive the grant by the Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation trustees as the charity's work helps build financial literacy and confidence from an early age, key skills which will give young people skills to mitigate food insecurity.

The grant enabled The Switch to deliver a Business, Enterprise, Employability (BEE) programme in collaboration with the school and 24 volunteers from Sodexo. The online and face-to-face 90-minute sessions supported by Sodexo's volunteers included topics such as making money choices, sustainability, advertising and branding.

To celebrate the end of the seven-week programme, 90 children from the school visited Sodexo's London head office for the final session and were treated to lunch. The children presented their very own business ideas which included tote bags, birthday cards, frames and mugs which had all been hand decorated and sold at school.

The Switch was nominated by Sharon O'Brien – Head of Tax and a Sodexo Stop Hunger Charity Champion,

she said: "It has been a fantastic programme to be part of and to see the impact it has had on the students was amazing. The understanding, maturity and ambition from students of such a young age was a pleasure to see."

All of the teachers involved in the project said they felt that by participating the children had increased their understanding of different jobs and the world of work. 94% of the students said they understand more about money and 90% of them said they would recommend programme to a friend.

A Manorfield Primary School teacher commented: "It is a great opportunity for pupils to learn about financial literacy. It is learning that keeps pupils engaged, motivated and making links to the world outside classroom settings."

Sodexo Stop Hunger has donated grants to a number of beneficiaries since April this year. Others include:

- A Lust for Life in Ireland, a mental health charity, received a €30,000 grant for its nationwide schools programme. Within Ireland there is high incidence of individuals suffering from poor mental health which is one of many root causes of falling out of paid employment and into food insecurity.
- The Black Heart Foundation, which aims to remove barriers to educational access, learning, aspiration and achievement for underprivileged children. £10,000 will support one young woman to go to university with a Sodexo Stop Hunger scholarship.
- SSAFA a long-standing beneficiary of funding from the Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation received £50,000 which supports SSAFA's homelessness fund and enables the rapid delivery of financial assistance to support with food costs to those most in need from the Armed Forces community.
- CoFarm, the first community farm created with and for the local community in Cambridge with the majority of the food grown donated to local food hubs. £105,000 three year funding will enable CoFarm to expand and replicate its model outside of Cambridge.
- Enactus UK, a youth action and social enterprise charity building a national network of socially minded entrepreneurs. Sodexo has worked with Enactus since early 2019 supporting the charity's incubator project to help develop the most innovative solutions to tackle food insecurity and women empowerment issues faced in the UK. Enactus is benefitting from a three year grant of £75,000.
- Chapter One, a national charity helping vulnerable children to read to the expected standard thanks to their online tutoring programme. Since the beginning of its partnership, 45 children have been matched with 45 Sodexo volunteers through the Sodexo Stop Hunger volunteering programme.
- Edinburgh Food Social, a social enterprise aiming at improving life chances of people facing the challenges of poverty by providing access, education and skills to young people and communities in Edinburgh about food. £10,000 will support the charity with their community meals project.

Gareth John, European Director of Sodexo Legal Affairs and Chair of the Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation said: "The work of charities such as The Switch is so important. Their programmes are aimed at helping break the cycle of young people falling into food insecurity through building financial literacy and confidence from an early age. Manorfield Primary School is situated in the London area of Tower Hamlets, which sees double the UK average rate of children eligible for free school meals and extremely high rates of child poverty.

"Supporting projects like this are key to delivering Stop Hunger's mission which is not limited to a food

related project or a day at a food bank. Projects supported include those that are aimed at helping to prevent individuals needing to rely on emergency food packages and addressing the root causes of food insecurity, like mentoring, job-skills, cookery classes, skills-based volunteering and much more.”

Sodexo is the founding partner of the [Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation](#). In the UK & Ireland, the Foundation (a UK registered charity) works with national and local charity partners to donate time, skills and money to tackle food insecurity and its root causes and help empower women – who represent the biggest opportunity in eliminating hunger.

Stop Hunger is an employee-led Sodexo initiative active in over 40 countries around the world. Thanks to the financial support of Sodexo, 100% of the donations made to Stop Hunger go directly to financing activities and sustainable solutions for disadvantaged communities to exit food insecurity.

[Stop Hunger's mission](#), including fundraising and volunteering efforts, form part of Sodexo's Social Impact strategy, its ethical manifesto for leading the way to improve quality of life for society and our planet. The Foundation's work contributes to Sodexo's global corporate responsibility commitment, Better Tomorrow 2025 which aligns to the Sustainable Development Goals designed by the UN to make the world a fairer and more equal place.