Our Mission & Values

To end child bed poverty in England, giving children the opportunity to engage at school and a chance to break the cycle of poverty.

ASPIRATIONAL | COLLABORATIVE | OPEN | RESPECTFUL
Our story began when a schoolteacher discovered that a pupil’s struggle to engage at school was due to having no bed of their own to sleep in.

Five years on from being incorporated as a charity, having just surpassed delivering our 7500th bed and having been provided with an incredible regional and national TV and media platform, we are Zarach: the children’s bed charity, and we’re on a mission to end child bed poverty.

Our cause, and the increasing recognition of bed poverty, has captured people’s attention. People have found it unfathomable and unacceptable that, in one of the richest economies in the world, where there is a right to a good education, there are so many children who are missing out on the opportunity to engage at school and having a precious chance to break the future cycle of poverty due to a consistent lack of good sleep.
Areas We Support

- West Yorkshire
- Tees Valley
- Liverpool
- Stockport
- Stoke
- Romford
Child Bed Poverty

- What is bed poverty?
- How to spot signs of child bed poverty
- The impact of child bed poverty
What is Bed Poverty?

Barnardo's Report

- broken beds and damaged bedding: families who could not afford to replace or repair unsuitable beds or bedding, for example bedding that had gone mouldy
- sharing beds and rooms: a number of families in our research were sharing beds with their children as they could not afford separate bedding
- sleeping on the floor: many Barnardo’s practitioners mentioned working with parents or children sleeping on the floor
Signs of Bed Poverty

Child bed poverty in the classroom can manifest in various signs. Some common indicators include:

**Lack of energy and fatigue:** Children may show signs of tiredness and lack of energy during class.

**Poor concentration and focus:** caused by sleep deprivation, they may also have difficulty paying attention, retaining information, and participating actively in class activities.

**Frequent absenteeism or lateness:** Children may have irregular attendance or arrive late to school. This could be because they have trouble getting enough restful sleep at home, leading to difficulties waking up in the morning.

**Reduced academic performance:** it can significantly impact a child’s ability to learn and perform well academically. It may lead to lower test scores, decreased engagement in class, and slower progress compared to their peers.

**Emotional and behavioural issues:** the stress and discomfort caused by bed poverty can take a toll on a child’s emotional well-being. They may exhibit behavioural problems such as irritability, aggression, or withdrawal.

**Physical signs:** Children may come to school with physical signs of lack of sleep, such as dark circles under their eyes, drowsiness, or falling asleep during class.
The Impact of Child Bed Poverty

Child bed poverty can have significant and long-lasting impacts on children's physical health, emotional well-being, and educational outcomes. Some key impacts are:

1. **Physical Health**
2. **Emotional Well-being**
3. **Educational Outcomes**
4. **Social and Developmental Impact**

“A decent night’s sleep will help them to do better at school, allow them to react more quickly to situations, have a more developed memory, learn more effectively and solve problems, plus it will make them less susceptible to colds and other minor ailments, less irritable and better behaved!” — The Sleep Charity
A. The school have identified that the child /children are living with signs of bed poverty using the guide above
B. Relevant conversations with the family and agencies involved confirm this
C. The family is unable to provide furniture and beds due to the cost of living crisis and various factors. They either have a sudden change in circumstances eg: job loss, divorce, fleeing domestic violence or they are on low income / currently not in employment families.

The Zarach Family Engagement Team will also visit the family home to ensure we meet the specific requirements of the family - as we enter into the home we often see higher levels of deprivation than originally reported. We will always report back any findings to the school.
Next steps

If a teacher or member of staff sees the above signs or changes in behaviour and attendance they need to report it to the Pastoral Team in school or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

They can then contact referrals@zarach.org to see if we are registered in the area the school is situated. If so, we can send out the National Registration and Referral Form.
Registration and Referral Process
Registration Importance

To enable us to ensure we are covering all schools where there may be high levels of bed poverty we need to ensure that you start with the registration process to our charity to accept referrals. We can then closely monitor any schools that we need to target where they are unaware of our services.

During this process we also ask for your Head Teacher contact details and it is crucial that they sign off this element as overarching responsibility should a child protection concern arise. We ask for your school Ofsted Number so we can correlate this for data and also to see who has not registered prior to referring - please ensure this is correct.
Who Can Make Referrals

Having a school as the referrer can also help us secure future funding as they will be an integral part of completing our impact data demonstrating individualised progress over time since receiving our service.

Teachers and pastoral staff in schools are integral in identifying signs and symptoms of a child / children living in bed poverty. We have identified areas in which are the highest levels of deprivation in England and have a plan for slow integration into each area where the need is greatest. So we have a consistent Safeguarding link, we ask that schools are our only referrers as we enter into the most vulnerable family homes in England.

With this in mind we can only open up the referral process if you are part of a recognised local authority school where the Zarach service is established. Please keep an eye on our website for regular updates on hubs opening across England.
Children Not Enrolled in Education

As a charity we are not naive to the fact that the numbers of children of school age under this cohort are sadly increasing and not accessing their basic needs. This cohort includes:

1. Children who are within families that have fled from their country and new to England
2. Children who are new to the area have had to leave their previous area due to child protection concerns
3. Children who are currently missing education due to being taken off roll or home educated.

Due to our safeguarding policies we have the following advice where these families are concerned:

New to the country - the family will have support already and in temporary accommodation. The charity or local authority can apply for schools whilst in temporary accommodation and the majority of the time, this housing provides the children with a bed. Once they move to private or social accommodation, they should by this time have a school allocation and the school can apply on behalf of the family.

New to the area - the family will have an allocated social worker and it is the responsibility of the social worker to apply for a school allocation and once secured the school can apply to Zarach if the family are still living in bed poverty

Child not in education - the local authority should be aware of this and the Children Missing Education Team will have an allocated worker to access the correct form of education for this child or the Home Education Team. Once in school, the school can apply for the Zarach service if they are still living with signs of bed poverty. If the parent has opted for home education - we cannot provide a service for this cohort currently, however, we can signpost to other local charities / funding providers.
Unable to make contact with education provider

Please contact our referrals team at referrals@zarach.org where we will try and assist the process
Preparing the Family
Zarach Referral Process

1. Need for referral identified
2. Parent / carer show the process visual aid
3. Referral agreed and made
4. Which beds - single or bunk and the bundle
5. Within 24-48 hours a call from Zarach
6. Home visit & requirements identified
7. Old beds need removing prior to delivery
8. Bed delivery day
9. School informed of journey progress
Preparing The Family

An important part of the school role in this whole process is ensuring that families are aware of the service we provide and the process in which it is undertaken.

The Family Engagement Team that visits the family home have a breadth of skills when working with vulnerable adults and children. They are non-judgemental in their approach and are there to actively listen to the families and ensure a smooth and effective service. Coupled with this is we have a highly trained service delivery team that delivers the beds to the families.

To ensure we can reach the standards that are required, please can you ensure that the families are aware that we need to come to the family home in which the beds are intended to be delivered. During this visit we assess their needs in relation to bed and bedding requirements. We then organise a suitable time between 10am and 2pm for the beds to arrive on a set date. When accepting the beds we can only leave the beds with the named parent or carer and not the child (even if they are above 14 years of age).

For a successful delivery the family will need to get rid of the old beds prior to the visit and the logistics team will deliver the new beds to the room in which they are intended and check all instructions and parts are present.

After delivery around 3-4 weeks later the Family Engagement team will visit the families where they are not engaging in school or the support plan and see where we can help them re-engage back into education. We will always send you the Engagement Plan and keep you updated. The plan is always to have the responsibility with the school.
Correct Information

As a charity heavily reliant on the volunteer sector to deliver the most effective service to our families it really helps when the information we are provided with is accurate to avoid any delays in reducing the number of nights the child / children are without substantial sleeping arrangements.
Bed we Provide

- Bunk beds
- Single Beds
- Smaller Wooden beds for any additional family members that are 2-4 years old.

Once we have received your referral form we endeavour to review the form and contact the family within 24-48 hours unless it is received on a weekend or last thing on a Friday.

From there a decision will be made on whether we accept or decline the referral. For reasons of decline please refer to the element in the booklet listed “Reasons to Decline a Referral” If we do decide to decline, we will contact you via email. If accepted the process is on the next page.
Repeat Referral Reasons For Acceptance

Our system is able to notify us of repeat referrals for a family. We will accept repeat referrals if:

1. The family have encountered a house fire and the beds have been destroyed and therefore, the children are living in bed poverty again.
2. An additional child has moved into the family home due to custody reasons and they have no adequate bed.
3. The family have suddenly left the family home due to fleeing circumstances of a child protection nature and they could not bring their beds with them.
4. The private landlord would not allow the family to take the beds when the family moved house. **It is important to add here - we get a large number of referrals for families where the private landlord has not provided suitable beds when the house is a furnished let. Therefore the family requested a referral from us. The family will need to find a way to keep the landlord's bed stored safely and away from damp to avoid this happening.**
5. A sibling now requires a new bed as did not receive a referral previously due to age constraints or appropriate bed at that time.

Due to our funding we cannot replace broken beds where they have had a Zarach bed previously from us - we receive a large number of requests due to the fact the child has a diagnosis and has jumped on the bed. Here we try to advise families to purchase a small indoor trampoline in the room for the sensory requirements.
Declined or On Hold Referrals

- Families have already sourced the beds somewhere else
- The families are not of school age between 4-18 and enrolled in a local authority school attached to a Zarach hub
- Incorrect information provided
- Have been referred previously and do not meet the criteria for a new referral (the criteria is mentioned under the Repeat Referrals Section)
- The family have not yet moved to their new accommodation and we need to see the accommodation where the beds will remain
- We have tried on 3 attempts to call and home visit the family but they have not responded or engaged
- The referral was for the adult and not the child - in this instance we will contact the referrer with alternative links to partnership local charities or grant providers.
Infestations

If the family has signs of infestation through bites or have mentioned they have a current infestation we cannot accept referral (due to reinfestation) until the house has been treated. If the house has been treated and their beds have been removed then we can accept the referral once the council or private Pest Control contact has given the all clear. This must be at least two treatments and we cannot deliver until 24 hours after the final treatment.
Keeping Data Safe

Zarach is committed to ensuring the security and protection of the personal information that we process in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Please see our privacy policy on our website for further information regarding the information we are collecting, how it is used and stored. We will only share information in this application with necessary parties to provide our services.

If you have any questions regarding data protection, please contact us on info@zarach.org.
Family Engagement Team
Needs Met

1. Enrolled in an educational establishment and are engaging in services
2. Already have social care involvement
3. We can offer to the referrer signposting for areas that have not been addressed but we have seen when entering into the home, we can signpost to a local partner or invitation to the Market Place - but we must inform the referrer of this so they can write it into their plan and offer grant solutions.

The Market Place will operate once a year in the given area and is used as a tool for families to gather information on local agencies and family support workers across the area to network.
Unmet Needs - Children enrolled in school, but not engaging

- **Environment** - Partnering with The Sleep Charity - to look at the Sleep Environment and guidance to families around the importance of sleep and the bedtime routine.

- **Education** - support in advocating for the family to re engage back into education / engage in the support plan. We can also help with school allocation forms and appeal process. Once re engaged - the support plan is passed to the school/s. Reading Egg and Mathletics - free Zarach School.

- **Emotional Wellbeing** - Regional Therapeutic support for the family where they have faced trauma and having an impact on their readiness to learn and family dynamics and links to the NSPCC

- **Economics** - Regional support and Fuel Bank Foundation- Financial help for benefit claimants, social tenants and low income earners to become better off, find work (or better work) and get online.
Safeguarding Procedures

We are extremely privileged at Zarach to work with the NSPCC around all our Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. This has included: training our logistics team on basic awareness, all of the Family Engagement Team have relevant Safeguarding training and are from a pastoral, social services, education or health and social care background with experience of working with vulnerable families.

We have embedded a buddy system for volunteers to attend the family home in pairs and have Designated Safeguarding Leaders to hand at all times. Should we see any cause of concern whilst in the family home, we will take appropriate action if immediate risk, but also inform the referrer and send a detailed report. We have all relevant procedures in place, safer recruitment policies and training, DBS checks and Managing Allegations procedures.

Communication channels

We aim to keep referrers and families up to date at various stages of the process. We will also send any individualised Family Engagement Plans to the school should the need arise. We will communicate with schools via email so they have it in writing for the support plan evidence and families we tend to call / confirm matters via work phones.
How Can You Help?

- Follow us on social media and share our stories
- Through collaboration we can work together to end child bed poverty in England
- Help with fundraising through schools and contact
- Volunteering opportunities within various areas of Zarach
- Completing exit surveys so we can demonstrate impact over time and therefore help with future funding and grant applications

Together we can #EndChildBedPoverty #EveryHeadABed
We want to hear about the impact that Zarach has on children, their families and your school.

Your feedback is so valuable to us. By submitting the follow-up surveys, sending your stories and joining our focus groups, you are helping to End Child Bed Poverty in the following ways:

- Every piece of information you provide is used to ensure we can continue to offer a fast and reliable service; meeting the needs of children in classrooms across the country.
- As a charity, we can use feedback when applying for funding, engaging with our supporters and promoting our service to more schools.
- With our robust GDPR, IT and Data Protection policies, you can be confident that any information you share with Zarach will be safe.
- Ongoing review and testing of all our systems and processes guarantees that we only ask questions that are absolutely necessary - no more and no less.
- We are proud of the positive feedback that we have received from schools, and we wish to continue making it as easy as possible for you to register and make referrals.

If you see room for improvement at any stage of the process, we gladly welcome all feedback. Please get in touch. Schools are our most crucial partners in this mission. We really couldn't do it without you.
Queries

referrals@zarach.org