

Report and Accounts

School for Life – Romania

Charity Number: 1062953

31 August 2022

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Independent Examiner's Report to The Trustees of School for Life – Romania

I report on the accounts of the trust for the year ended 31 August 2022 which are set out on pages 3 and 4.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of accounts and you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 ('the Act') does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charities Commissioners under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act, and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Acthave not been met, or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Keith Lownsborough C.G.M.A., A.C.M.A.



1-6-2023

School for Life – Romania
Charity Number: 1062953

Income and Expenditure Account
For the year ended 31 August 2022

	<u>2022</u> £	<u>2021</u> £
Income		
Donations and sponsorships	37,092	18,762
Tax relief	2,521	2,398
Bank interest	0	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total income	39,613	21,162
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Expenditure		
Romanian expenditure:		
Salaries and taxes	23,807	22,605
Building and other	10,203	8,696
Bank charges and interest	271	214
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total expenditure	34,281	31,515
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Surplus/(Deficit) of income over expenditure	<u>5,332</u>	<u>(10,353)</u>

School for Life – Romania
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Balance Sheet
31 August 2022

	<u>2022</u> £	<u>2021</u> £
FIXED ASSETS		
School building	<u>95,256</u>	<u>83,236</u>
 CURRENT ASSETS		
English bank balances	15,938	10,115
Romanian bank balances	10,707	11,325
Cash in Transit		
Covenant/Gift Aid tax relief owed	<u>2,521</u>	<u>2398</u>
 CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>29,166</u>	<u>23,888</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>124,422</u>	<u>107,074</u>
 RESERVES		
Fund account		
Balance at 1 September 2021	39,679	50,032
Surplus/(deficit) of income over expenditure for year	<u>5,332</u>	<u>(10,353)</u>
Balance at 31 August 2022	45,011	39,679
 Building revaluation reserve	<u>79,411</u>	<u>67,391</u>
 TOTAL RESERVES	<u>124,422</u>	<u>107,070</u>

Report to the Charities Commission for the financial year 1/9/21 - 31/8/22

SCHOOL FOR LIFE ROMANIA Registered Charity number 1062953

Trustees: Ruth Brown, Dave Emptage, Katie Goodier, William Gould, Sylvia Gurr, Lizzy Hartley, Roger Mason

1) Brief summary of the purpose of the charity for the public benefit

School for Life Romania raises funds in the United Kingdom through monthly standing orders and fundraising events and sends funds directly to support our sister organisation in Siret, Romania "Scoala Pentru Viata" (SPV). There are no overheads or costs in the UK (apart from bank transfer charges), because the Trustees meet the costs of promotional material and regular trips to the project in Romania through their own personal funds. Trips are undertaken by Trustees usually at least once a year to the project in Romania, in order to offer support to Scoala Pentru Viata, and to gain first hand insight into the progress of the project. This informs our fundraising and promotional material in the UK. On some occasions, interested supporters of School for Life Romania from the UK accompany Trustees to the project in Siret to inform their own understanding of the challenges faced by the young people with disabilities in Romania. These trips also offer opportunities to forge links with local charities in Romania who are achieving similar purposes, in order to share information and provide Scoala Pentru Viata with more local sources of support.

The Director of Scoala Pentru Viata reports directly back to School for Life, informing of the educational direction of the project and of the allocation of funds. Scoala Pentru Viata employs Romanian special needs teachers, and a part time social worker. A salary is also provided to the administrator who oversees the upkeep of the buildings in Siret. Although Scoala Pentru Viata is responsible for the allocation of the budget, they are supported and guided by the School for Life Trustees. Scoala Pentru Viata deliver education and therapeutic support to young adults with disabilities who have grown up in an institution in the north of Romania.

There are two ways that this is achieved;

- a) Our supported housing project has enabled four young people from the institution to now live independently with outreach support in the community of Siret.
- b) Our community learning hub, situated in the heart of the community, provides an environment that can be accessed by young people with disabilities, where they receive educational and therapeutic support delivered by Romanian educators.

2) Update in respect of the main activities undertaken by the charity during the period of 1/9/21-31/8/22, with reference to the Charity Commissions Public Benefit Guidance

Project Areas:

Learning Community Hub

Located centrally in the town of Siret, the hub continued to be attended on a regular basis by 17 young people with disabilities living in both the institutions and in supported living within the community of Siret. Educational activities undertaken each weekday included

reading, writing, maths, arts and crafts, gross motor activities, through games and sport in the gymnasium and outside in the courtyard, self-care activities and gardening and developing independent living skills. In the warmer summer months the students enjoy walks in the local community to the parks, shops and market. Birthdays are celebrated with cake and juice, and pizza is enjoyed as a special treat when the students have worked particularly hard. The students have continued to benefit from the experience of a nurturing, safe, secure, relaxed and happy environment to learn and socialise in.

The Ukranian War and the Refugee Crisis

The town of Siret from which Scoala Pentru Viata operates, is 2 km from the Ukranian border, and a major route from the Ukraine into Romania and beyond. In February 22 and over the next three months Ukranian refugees were travelling through Siret in their hundreds and Scoala Pentru Viata opened the doors of the gymnasium to accommodate some of the refugees (700 in total over the period), providing them with a bed and food for the night, and travel support and advice. The school building over the following three months was adapted into a temporary refugee centre and the learning hub activities were temporarily suspended in order to support the refugees.

Independent Living

Ongoing enquiries continue to be made into the setting up of comprehensive trust funds to ensure the future financial stability and security of the three ladies living in SPV's supported accommodation. The fourth lady continues to live happily and independently with her partner and child in the Siret community. The ladies continue to thrive in their environment, providing support to the teaching staff with the school activities and successfully carrying out cleaning jobs within the community. They have been very active in supporting the refugee crisis, helping with the practical tasks required.

Buildings

The SPV team have continued to work hard to maintain the good standard of the buildings in the learning hub and independent living space. The buildings have been thoroughly cleaned. Fire equipment has been inspected. Adaptations and repairs have been made to the central heating and the water systems. The toilets and showers in the learning hub have been fixed and broken items replaced. The outside yard and access points have been tidied and cleared. The garden continues to be well maintained and used to grow flowers and vegetables.

Staffing

Overview:

Director, Elena Harasemiuc (Doina)

Admin / estates: Radu Harasemiuc

SPV Educators – Loredana and Laura Hritcu

Social Worker – Raluca Fercalo

A social worker continues to be employed by SPV for two hours a week, and works alongside the SPV team providing a link between the SPV Foundation, Social Services, and the Hospital services (which are under the control of the Ministry of Health).

Administration

The SPV foundation has continued to collaborate with the Neuropsychiatric hospitals in Siret, and has worked closely with the Major and the Town Hall in co-ordinating support for the Ukranian refugees.

Data protection - The charity continues to abide by the GDPR Data Protection Policy.

Public Benefit

The learning hub provides teaching sessions in the heart of the community to students every morning from 9am - 12 noon. The students are divided into two classes depending on level of ability and their needs. The students live in either the community in group homes, or in one of the neuropsychiatric hospitals, and are not able to access employment due to their levels of learning and physical disability. The young people benefit greatly from this opportunity to interact with one another in a happy and relaxed learning environment, with opportunities to learn safely both indoors and outdoors. They are provided with opportunities to learn new skills as well as consolidate existing skills, and to build on their social and emotional well-being and development.

Opportunities for trustees to visit the project in Siret have resumed after the pandemic restrictions, and the trustees have kept in regular contact with the director of SPV, who has provided administrative reports and updates. Trustee meetings and the AGM have continued to be conducted via zoom with the advantage that the director from SPV has been able to attend some of those meetings too which has been beneficial for the sharing of information and progress. The team in SPV have reported that progress and positive interactions and learning experiences continue to be made.

The Trustees of School for Life Romania are aware of and have taken into account the Charity Commission's Public Benefit Guidance and have had regard to this in order to guide and support the ongoing work of the charity operating in Siret, Northern Romania.

Future of the project

As has been previously informed, the impact of Brexit, and the Corona virus pandemic shadowed future financial forecasts for the charity. Realistic in our understanding that the sponsorship base is unlikely to grow and as the project costs continue to increase, it is our intention to work with the SPV staff to ensure that over the next three years our expenses do not increase and that we secure a future for the young ladies in the SPV accommodation. We are approaching our final year of winding down the education project and then a further 2 years to ensure a secure future for the young ladies living in the SPV accommodation. Research and consultations are ongoing into how this will be achieved. The intention is for the School project to be concluded by September 2023 and ladies' accommodation to be secured by summer 2025.

3) Finances

Financial Year 1/9/21-31/8/22 total income = £39,613

Standing orders, donations, fundraising = £37,092

Gift Aid rebate = £2,521

Fundraising

There have Sponsored Walks in the north and the south of England to raise funds for the Ukranian Appeal that Scoala Pentru Viata was supporting in Siret, in addition to the sale of Christmas Cards. Mitra Sessions has continued to raise money through her online Reiki. Jon le Fevre and Andover Primary School have been active in raising awareness of the charity and have sent out drawings and songs to the Learning Community Hub in Siret.

4) Reserves Policy

The charity does not have a reserves policy. Due to the small turnover, it is unable to keep a large sum in reserve. However, we do keep a sum of around £1000 in a separate account to cover any unexpected costs that may arise. This sum is always included in the Annual Accounts under Current Assets.

5) Serious incidents

The Charity had no serious incidents or other matters that trustees should have reported to the Commission.