



Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts 2024

Farriers Gate
Chatteris
Cambridgeshire
PE16 6QP



NATIONAL
LOTTERY
CHARITIES

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Registered Charity No. 1069714 | Ofsted Registration No. 221911



Trustees' Annual Report

for the period
from 01 February 2023 to 31 January 2024

REFERENCE & ADMINISTRATION DETAILS:

Charity Name	The Meadows Day Care Centre
Other Names	The Meadows Centre (Chatteris) - Old Name
Registered Charity No.	1069714
Charity's Principal Address	The Meadows Day Care Centre Farriers Gate Chatteris Cambridgeshire PE16 6QP.

Names of the Charity Trustees who have managed the Charity (1 Feb 2023 to 31 Jan 2024).

Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates Acted (if not for whole year)	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
John Smith	Chair		
Susan Kelly	Treasurer		
Yvonne Brown	Manager	From 09 Nov 2023	

Names of the Trustees for the charity.

Trustee Name	Dates Acted (if not for whole year)
Pauline Bell	To 12 Dec 2023
Samantha Mandley	To 12 Dec 2023

Names and Addresses of advisors:

Type of Advisor	Name	Address
Independent Examiner	Mark Saunders	7, Tribune Close, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire. PE16 6UY

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Type of Governing Document	Constitution adopted 26 Feb 1998, as amended 17 Apr 1998, as amended 17 Oct 2007, as amended 20 May 2014.
How the Charity is constituted	Association made-up from members and users of the Centre.
Trustee selection methods	Trustees are appointed/re-appointed annually at the AGM or by adoption to the Management Committee during the year.
Additional governance issues	<p>The Centre has several policies which act as governance and guidance to the trustees, staff and volunteers which include a Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.</p> <p>The Centre ensures that all staff and volunteers are deemed suitable through Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.</p> <p>It is a requirement of the Centre's Ofsted registration that all committee members are deemed suitable to form part of the 'registered person'* through their own checks and through Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.</p> <p><small>*The Childcare Act 2006 uses the concept of the registered person. 'Person' covers both individuals and organisations, such as companies, partnerships and committees who have overall responsibility for the provision of childcare.</small></p> <p>All trustees give their time voluntary and receive no remuneration or other benefits.</p>

OBJECTIVES & ACTIVITIES:

Summary of the objectives of the charity set out in its governing document.	<p>To educate and assist children and young persons living in or attending full time education within the town of Chatteris or the surrounding villages ("the locality") during their pre-school and out of school time so to develop their mental, physical, spiritual and social capacities that they may grow as individuals and members of society.</p> <p>To offer appropriate play, education and care facilities, extended hours groups ensuring that all inhabitants of the locality are offered the same opportunities whatever their gender, race, culture, religion, means or ability.</p> <p>To provide and assist in the provision of facilities for the recreation and leisure time occupation of inhabitants of the locality in the interests of social welfare and so that their conditions of life may be improved.</p>
Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects during the reporting period.	<p><u>Childcare:</u></p> <p>The focus of the Charity's main activities remained the provision of childcare for children and young people over the age of 2 years old within the local area through a nursery.</p>

Additional details of objectives and activities during the reporting period.

The Centre is required to follow the Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which specifies requirements for learning and development and safeguarding children promoting their welfare.

The Centre's childcare activities benefited those who attended the Centre by educating them, developing their social skills whilst; in the case for the nursery preparing them for full time education. The Centre believes in encouraging children's and young people's independence to foster their self-esteem.

The Centre welcomed children and young people from all backgrounds regardless of race and religion, gender, personal circumstances or educational needs.

The nursery also welcomed young people on work experience placements from local further education colleges who were studying towards a childcare qualification. As well as providing work experience placements for local school children.

Community Centre:

The Charity also made its facilities (building and equipment) available to the local area for parties, meetings, and other leisure and recreational activities.

The Centre is often used by families to hold children's parties, has seen the occasional organisation hold meetings/training sessions.

The Charity was thankful for the contribution made by volunteers from the parents of children who attended the Centre and others from the community. This volunteer help was greatly appreciated.

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCE:

Summary of the main achievements of the Charity during the year.

The challenges of Covid-19 had diminished and with HM Government having announced increased funding for Early Years, prospects for the Centre and its main activity looked good.

Childcare - Nursery:

The reporting period started with a healthy 53 children on roll and by the end of the Spring 2023 term this had fallen to 52 children. By the end of the summer 2023 term this had increased to 57 children with 28 of these children due to leave in July 2023 prior to starting their Primary education.

The Autumn 2023 term started with 28 returning children and 7 new starters. At the end of this term, numbers had steadily increased to 42 children.

The reporting period ended in January 2024 with 50 children on roll.

It must be noted that in the post-covid era there seems to have been a shift in how parents approach the registration, and subsequent attendance, of their children at the nursery. Prior to covid, the nursery would see a very healthy waiting list with children due to start at the nursery at the beginning of each academic term. It can be seen now that parents are relying less on placing their child on a waiting list, and instead leaving it later to register their child with the nursery. It has become common for parents to request registration forms during the summer shutdown looking for their child to start at the beginning of the Autumn term. Some parents are leaving registration and a planned start date to after the child becomes eligible for funded hours and we are seeing an increased number of mid-term starters.

Staff:

The Charity continued to ensure that all staff were fully trained to the statutory levels required. As noted last year, in the post-covid era many of the courses are online rather than face-to face. Whilst some staff members would rather attend face-to-face courses, those held online do benefit the staff and Centre; staff do not have to travel to attend a course, often complete the course within the Centre building using the Centre equipment and can be available to work soon after finishing the course.

There was one addition to staff during the reporting period with that staff member initially being required for SEN 1 to 1 cover and lunchtime assistance.

Overall, the Centre does find it difficult to hire and retain good quality qualified individuals. Unfortunately, this is not something which just affects the Centre, it is an industry-wide problem.

Ofsted:

With the last two days of the Autumn term upon the nursery, giving the nursery the customary one afternoon notice, Ofsted announced they would like to visit and carry-out an inspection on 13th December 2023.

The Ofsted inspector duly visited and carried-out her thorough inspection of the nursery activities, procedures and governance. The inspectors visit culminated by joining parents to watch the children perform their Christmas performance which gave her time to engage with parents as part of the inspection process.

The outcome of the inspection was that the nursery was to retain a 'Good' rating. Thanks from the Trustees must go to the Manager and her staff for the excellent job in ensuring the Centre runs a good quality nursery providing good quality childcare for parents.

FINANCIAL REVIEW:

Brief statement of the Charity's policy on reserves.

The Centre holds a balance at Bank in two accounts - one current account and one deposit account.

In addition a balance is held in a PayPal account and on occasion a balance may temporarily be held in Stripe or Square. Stripe and Square being card processing companies who hold card payments for a few days prior to the monies being transferred to our bank account.

The reserves held in the current account are used for day-to-day running of the Centre whilst the reserves held in the deposit account are held for the following:

- To meet any unforeseen expenditure that may occur, for example repairs and renewals to the premises.
- To meet any redundancy costs should The Centre cease to operate. It is advised to hold approximately three months payroll costs in reserves for this purpose. Should the situation arise, the cost to the centre at the end of the

reporting period would have been in the region of £29,000

Note - Restricted Reserves:



Heating replacement reserves:

The small balance remains in this reserve and will be used if and when necessary.



Early Years Improvement Fund Opportunity Area Reserves:

As reported in the 2021 reporting period, the Centre took part in a successful Early Years Improvement Fund Opportunity Area bid.

Due to the Covid-19 shutdowns, etc. there continues to be no movement in this project

These funds are restricted for the use of the OA project only and whilst they are held in the Centre's bank accounts, they are held in reserve on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. Net reserves for the project as at 31 January 2024 remained at £5528.56. Cambridgeshire County Council have not informed the Centre what they wish to do with this money.



Ready to Learn Programme Funding:

The Centre has continued to take part in an additional Opportunity Area bid for funds under the Ready to Learn Programme.

These funds are restricted for the use of this project only, the Centre is, however, free to decide the direction of the project and what expenditure items can be paid for from the reserves providing it benefits the children's learning. During the year the spending on this project was £2083.45 and as at 31st January 2024 the net reserve stood at £2,461.41.

Details of any funds materially in deficit.

The Centre has seen a deficit from its activities this last financial year, however the expenditure items include two extra-ordinary one-off large items of expenditure and have been listed separately on the Statement of Financial Activities for the year. These are:



Window and Door Replacement £16,934.00.



Children's Toilet Refurbishment £,5535.94.

Further financial review details.

Although the Statement of Financial Activities for the year shows a deficit of £16,258.86 for the year, as mentioned above, excluding the large one-off items of replacing the windows and refurbishing the children's toilet, the centre would have seen at a surplus of £6,211.08 for the year.

This period has seen a large increase in the funding received from the County Council for 2-year-old provision and a moderate rise in the funding available for the 3 / 4-year-old provision. These increases follow the announcements from the government to increase general Early Years funding and a wish to expand the funding availability for 2-year-olds from April 2024 and again from September 2025.

The continued rise in NLW/NMW has once again pushed wage costs up and these costs remain the biggest expense to the Centre. Without the staff, the Centre could not run a nursery, so staff always have, and always will, remain the vital cog in the machine.

The Centre has finally seen the costs of energy increase following the large increases seen across the energy market in prior years following the start of the Ukraine conflict. Although the Centre had initially been shielded from these costs due to the inclusion in large buying group contracts, as these contracts have come to an end prices have increased.

The Centre has continued to be subject to the higher-than-normal inflationary pressures as seen by the wider economy, as such we have had to look carefully at any increases in fees. Whilst income from funding streams has increased, the Centre must not be seen to use this to subsidise non-funded childcare. At the time for a review the decision was made to raise private fees by a modest amount.

Income received by the Charity and its activities have allowed the Centre to provide affordable childcare for children and young people from the local area, from any background whilst being able to accommodate every need of that child or young person.

The Centre is also able to offer out its facilities to the local community for recreational leisure activities at an affordable rental.

OTHER INFORMATION:

Centre Building:

The Centre building, opened in September 1998 for the purpose of providing childcare and a community centre, is held in Permanent Endowment by the Charity with all initial construction costs being 100% funded by Community Fund Lottery grant. All balances relating to the Centres fixed assets (Centre Building) are restricted funds which the Charity is not able to release.

The land which the building is sited is owned by The Diamond Learning Partnership Trust; transferred from Cambridgeshire County Council ownership with Glebelands Primary School on 1st February 2017; and is leased to the Charity on a 'long lease' at peppercorn rent.

DECLARATION:

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Smith', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Full Name John Richard Smith

Position Chairman

Date 6 November 2024

THE MEADOWS DAYCARE CENTRE

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 JANUARY 2024

THE MEADOWS DAYCARE CENTRE

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THE MEADOWS DAYCARE CENTRE

Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account) For The Year Ended 31 January 2024

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Incoming Resources					
Local Authority Grants	137,758.73			137,758.73	120,448.49
Fees Received	17,514.45			17,514.45	29,634.34
Grant - RTLP (Fenland & East Cambs OA)	0.00			0.00	0.00
Other Income	695.28			695.28	404.02
Interest received	965.05			965.05	101.55
Total Incoming Resources	156,933.51	0.00	0.00	156,933.51	150,588.40
Resources Expended					
Costs of Activities for Charitable Objectives					
Salaries, N.I and Pension Contributions	121,291.14			121,291.14	120,339.63
Staff Training	619.00			619.00	824.90
Repair & Maintenance	2,844.52			2,844.52	5,697.34
Window & Door Replacement	16,934.00			16,934.00	0.00
Children's Toilet Refurbishment	5,535.94			5,535.94	0.00
Cleaning & Skip Hire	3,021.72			3,021.72	3,208.74
Equipment/Activities	5,778.04	2,083.45		7,861.49	10,282.42
Refreshments/Snacks	2,070.27			2,070.27	1,669.15
Other Consumables	1,755.06			1,755.06	1,700.40
Depreciation - Building	0.00		4,767.00	4,767.00	4,767.00
Sub - Total	159,849.69	2,083.45	4,767.00	166,700.14	148,489.58
Management & Administration					
Audit	175.00			175.00	175.00
NNDR	675.84			675.84	1,152.00
Water Rates	870.83			870.83	746.28
Energy Costs	6,034.09			6,034.09	3,000.25
Telephone	508.63			508.63	407.68
Insurance	2,067.34			2,067.34	2,038.17
Subscriptions	1,631.66			1,631.66	1,506.02
Stationery, Printing & Postage	1,379.29			1,379.29	1,376.95
Sub - Total	13,342.68	0.00	0.00	13,342.68	10,402.35
Total Resources Expended	173,192.37	2,083.45	4,767.00	180,042.82	158,891.93
Net Incoming / (Outgoing) Resources	(16,258.86)	(2,083.45)	(4,767.00)	(23,109.31)	(8,303.53)
Transfer to Restricted Funds	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Net Movement in Funds	(16,258.86)	(2,083.45)	(4,767.00)	(23,109.31)	(8,303.53)
Total Funds brought forward 1 February 2023	110,390.73	10,693.42	171,592.00	292,676.15	300,979.68
Total Funds carried forward 31 January 2024	94,131.87	8,609.97	166,825.00	269,566.84	292,676.15

THE MEADOWS DAYCARE CENTRE

Balance Sheet as at 31 January 2024

	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
Fixed Assets				
Tangible Assets Centre Building		166,825.00		171,592.00
Current Assets				
Cash at Bank	103,441.18		119,948.21	
Cash in Hand	174.45		251.60	
Debtors & Prepayments	1,265.35		1,745.01	
	<u>104,880.98</u>		<u>121,944.82</u>	
Current Liabilities				
Creditors : amounts due within one year	<u>2,139.14</u>		<u>860.67</u>	
Net Current Assets		102,741.84		121,084.15
Net Assets		<u>269,566.84</u>		<u>292,676.15</u>
Funds				
Unrestricted Fund				
General Fund - Undesignated		94,131.87		110,390.73
Restricted Funds				
Replacement Funds (Heating)	620.00		620.00	
RTLTP (Fen & E Camb OA)	2,461.41		4,544.86	
Opportunity Area EYIF (Cambs CC)	<u>5,528.56</u>	8,609.97	<u>5,528.56</u>	10,693.42
Capital Fund				
Building Fund - Endowment		166,825.00		171,592.00
Total Funds		<u>269,566.84</u>		<u>292,676.15</u>

Notes to the Accounts for the year to 31 January 2024

General

Depreciation

Centre Building 60 Years - Straight Line basis

2. Fixed Assets

The above values relate to the centre building only. The land these are sited on is owned by Cambridgeshire County Council and is leased to the Charity on a 'long lease' at peppercorn rent.

3. Unrestricted Funds

4. Restricted Funds

- (i) The Heating Replacement Fund (£5,000) was established in 2015 to set aside funds for the future replacement of these items. In 2019/20 £4,380 was utilised and transferred back to the Income & Expenditure Account, leaving a balance of £620 on this fund at 31 January 2020. There have been no further transactions since, leaving an unchanged balance of £620 on this fund at 31 January 2024.
- (ii) In 2019/20, £6,594 of ring-fenced funds were received from Cambridgeshire County Council following a successful 'Opportunity Area Early Years Improvement Fund' bid. Of this, £465.44 was spent during the year, leaving a balance of £6,128.56 on this fund at 31 January 2020. There were no further transactions during 2020/21. During 2021/22, £600.00 was spent leaving a balance of £5,528.56 on this fund at 31 January 2022. There have been no further transactions since, leaving an unchanged balance on this fund at 31 January 2024.
- (iii) In 2021/22, £10,164.44 of ring-fenced funds were received from Cambridgeshire County Council for the Ready To Learn Programme (RTLPL). Of this, £238.80 was spent during 2021/22, £5,380.78 during 2022/23 and a further £2,083.45 during 2023/24, leaving a balance of £2,461.41 on this fund at 31 January 2024.

5. Permanent Endowment Funds

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6. Movement in Funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL £
Balance at 1 February 2023	110,390.73	10,693.42	171,592.00	292,676.15
Incoming Resources	156,933.51	0.00	0.00	156,933.51
Outgoing Resources	(173,192.37)	(2,083.45)	(4,767.00)	(180,042.82)
Balance at 31 January 2024	<u>94,131.87</u>	<u>8,609.97</u>	<u>166,825.00</u>	<u>269,566.84</u>

7. Net Assets by Funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Endowment Funds £	TOTAL £
Fixed Assets	0.00	0.00	166,825.00	166,825.00
Current Assets	96,271.01	8,609.97	0.00	104,880.98
Current Liabilities	2,139.14	0.00	0.00	2,139.14
	<u>94,131.87</u>	<u>8,609.97</u>	<u>166,825.00</u>	<u>269,566.84</u>

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Meadows Daycare Centre

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31 January 2024, which are set out on pages 1 to 4.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to :

- * examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- * to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act; and
- * to state 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 Commission. 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 any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

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 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- * to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act;

have 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.

Signed : 

Name : Mark Saunders B.Sc (Hons)

Address : 7 Tribune Close
Chatteris
Cambs
PE16 6UY

Date : 3 November 2024