

**Report of the Trustees and
Unaudited Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 December 2023
for
Stepping Stones of Chester**

Haines Watts
Military House
24 Castle Street
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 2DS

Stepping Stones of Chester

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Stepping Stones of Chester

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The objective of the charity is the provision of childcare.

Public benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aim and objectives, and in planning future activities.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial position

As at 31 December 2023 there was cash at bank and in hand of £35,750 (2022 - £48,502). During the year there was a net of income/(expenditure) of (£12,532) (2022: £19,369).

Principal funding sources

The principal source of funding is grants. During the year grants totalling £225,537 (2022 £152,622) were received.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The charity is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust and constitutes an unincorporated charity.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity number

1070081

Principal address

J H Godwin CP School
Melbourne Road
Blacon
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 5JG

Trustees

Mrs L S Jones
Ms E Roper
Ms L Evans
Ms H Edwards

Independent Examiner

Steven Mark Greensill FCA
Haines Watts
Military House
24 Castle Street
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 2DS

Stepping Stones of Chester
Report of the Trustees
for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

Approved by order of the board of trustees on and signed on its behalf by:

.....
Mrs L S Jones - Trustee

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
Stepping Stones of Chester**

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Stepping Stones of Chester

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Stepping Stones of Chester (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Steven Mark Greensill FCA

Haines Watts
Military House
24 Castle Street
Chester
Cheshire
CH1 2DS

Date:

Stepping Stones of Chester

Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

				31.12.23	31.12.22
	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Designated fund - Building rental £	Total funds £	Total funds £
INCOME FROM					
Grants		215,007	-	215,007	152,621
Other trading activities	2	17,289	-	17,289	58,059
Investment income	3	-	134	134	18
Total		<u>232,296</u>	<u>134</u>	<u>232,430</u>	<u>210,698</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Other trading activities	4	209,955	-	209,955	171,984
Support costs		<u>35,007</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>35,007</u>	<u>19,345</u>
Total		<u>244,962</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>244,962</u>	<u>191,329</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(12,666)	134	(12,532)	19,369
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>28,955</u>	<u>15,328</u>	<u>44,283</u>	<u>24,914</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>16,289</u></u>	<u><u>15,462</u></u>	<u><u>31,751</u></u>	<u><u>44,283</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Stepping Stones of Chester

Statement of Financial Position 31 December 2023

				31.12.23	31.12.22
	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Designated fund - Building rental £	Total funds £	Total funds £
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash at bank and in hand		20,288	15,462	35,750	48,502
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	8	(3,999)	-	(3,999)	(4,219)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>16,289</u>	<u>15,462</u>	<u>31,751</u>	<u>44,283</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		16,289	15,462	31,751	44,283
NET ASSETS		<u>16,289</u>	<u>15,462</u>	<u>31,751</u>	<u>44,283</u>
FUNDS	9				
Unrestricted funds				31,751	44,283
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>31,751</u>	<u>44,283</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on and were signed on its behalf by:

.....
L S Jones - Trustee

Stepping Stones of Chester

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the company, rounded to the nearest £1.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

2. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	31.12.23	31.12.22
	£	£
Fee income	16,263	57,386
Milk income	1,026	673
	<u>17,289</u>	<u>58,059</u>

Stepping Stones of Chester

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31.12.23	31.12.22
	£	£
Deposit account interest	134	18
	<u>134</u>	<u>18</u>

4. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

Investment management costs

	31.12.23	31.12.22
	£	£
Property repairs	2,147	2,600
	<u>2,147</u>	<u>2,600</u>

5. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 December 2023 nor for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 December 2023 nor for the year ended 31 December 2022.

6. STAFF COSTS

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31.12.23	31.12.22
	10	10
Support staff	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

7. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Designated fund - Building rental £	Total funds £
INCOME FROM			
Grants	152,621	-	152,621
Other trading activities	58,059	-	58,059
Investment income	-	18	18
Total	<u>210,680</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>210,698</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Other trading activities	171,984	-	171,984
Support costs	19,345	-	19,345
Total	<u>191,329</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>191,329</u>
NET INCOME	19,351	18	19,369

Stepping Stones of Chester

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

7. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - continued

	Unrestricted fund £	Designated fund - Building rental £	Total funds £
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	9,604	15,310	24,914
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>28,955</u>	<u>15,328</u>	<u>44,283</u>

8. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.12.23 £	31.12.22 £
Taxation and social security	2,499	1,624
Other creditors	1,500	2,595
	<u>3,999</u>	<u>4,219</u>

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.1.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.12.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	28,955	(12,666)	16,289
Designated fund - Building rental	15,328	134	15,462
	<u>44,283</u>	<u>(12,532)</u>	<u>31,751</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>44,283</u>	<u>(12,532)</u>	<u>31,751</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	232,296	(244,962)	(12,666)
Designated fund - Building rental	134	-	134
	<u>232,430</u>	<u>(244,962)</u>	<u>(12,532)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>232,430</u>	<u>(244,962)</u>	<u>(12,532)</u>

Stepping Stones of Chester

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.1.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.12.22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	9,604	19,351	28,955
Designated fund - Building rental	15,310	18	15,328
	<u>24,914</u>	<u>19,369</u>	<u>44,283</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>24,914</u>	<u>19,369</u>	<u>44,283</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	210,680	(191,329)	19,351
Designated fund - Building rental	18	-	18
	<u>210,698</u>	<u>(191,329)</u>	<u>19,369</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>210,698</u>	<u>(191,329)</u>	<u>19,369</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.1.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.12.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	9,604	6,685	16,289
Designated fund - Building rental	15,310	152	15,462
	<u>24,914</u>	<u>6,837</u>	<u>31,751</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>24,914</u>	<u>6,837</u>	<u>31,751</u>

Stepping Stones of Chester

**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
for the Year Ended 31 December 2023**

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	442,976	(436,291)	6,685
Designated fund - Building rental	152	-	152
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	443,128	(436,291)	6,837
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>443,128</u>	<u>(436,291)</u>	<u>6,837</u>

10. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 December 2023.



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

		Period start date			Period end date		
From	Day 01	Month 01	Year 2023	To	Day 31	Month 12	Year 2023

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any)

Charity's principal address

Stepping Stones	
Melbourne Road	
Blacon Chester	
Postcode	CH1 5JG

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Linda Jones	Chair		
2	Laura Evans			
3	Emma Roper			
4	Heather Edwards			
5	Janette Trenholm			
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Pre School Alliance constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Trust
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Parents are invited to AGM, trustees are invited to stand and then appointed by election and check procedures.

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

Stepping Stones Pre school is registered with OFSTED reg No 305344 and is a member of the Pre School Learning Alliance.

Stepping Stones Pre school offers child care and education to the local community and has been operating for in excess of 30 years.

We are registered as Early Years Providers with OFSTED. Our average sessional number of children is approximately 60.

The pre school reviews all current policies and procedures on a regular basis. The review process is ongoing. The Pre school has a child protection policy in place which includes safer recruitment procedures and statutory requirements. Staff DBS checks are carried out in line with recommended guidance (every 3 years).

All committee members give there time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or benefits.

The Pre school is led by an enthusiastic, committed and dedicated team of qualified staff. The group is supported by a voluntary management committee made up by parents.

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

The Pre school receives support from Cheshire west and Chester Early Years team.

The Preschool has good relations with the onsite local primary school. The locality ensure good practice and the smooth transitions for children from the pre school environment in to full time education.

The Pre School aims to provide high quality, affordable and accessible child care to pre school children (aged 2 – statutory school age) in a safe

and supportive environment and to work in partnership with parents and all stake holders involved in the child care profession.

The Pre school is open Monday to Friday during term time, providing sessional day care in a caring and learning environment for children aged 2 to statutory school age.

Children are cared for and educated by highly qualified skilled staff who are dedicated and committed to the pre school.

The Pre School is active in encouraging parental involvement in the management of the Pre school and the development of their children, both within the setting and the home.

The Pre school offer support and advice on a range of issues regarding children's development and wellbeing.

We offer literacy open mornings to develop a love of literature also stay and play opportunities.

Parents meet regularly with their child's key person to discuss their progress and development. This practice benefits children and parents/carers alike by developing confidences and understanding of child development.

The setting welcomes all families regardless of background, ability, gender faith or ethnicity.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

The committee is run on a voluntary basis with all members willingly giving their time. Parents are able to join at any time.

Particular thanks to Janette Trenholm manager of the Pre School and the committee members for their time. Thanks are also given for the invaluable support and guidance that the setting receives from the Early Years Advisory Service.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

The preschool operates from 2 sites. A classroom in the main school building which is used as a preschool room with children aged 3-4 years and a modular build on the school grounds is used for children aged 2-3 years of age.

Numbers of children on roll have continued to increase throughout the year.

The staff have been committed to keeping up to date with mandatory training and framework updates. All staff have successfully completed safeguarding training, alongside several other online courses relevant to early years and the curriculum.

Throughout the year, our team has experienced several changes. Our two apprentices successfully achieved their Level 3 qualifications, but both have opted to pursue careers in different fields. In their place, we have welcomed a new apprentice, who is expected to complete her course and qualify as a Level 3 next year. Additionally, we have appointed a full-time Level 3 team member and two part-time inclusion workers to strengthen our staff.

We have continued to build our strong parent partnership by inviting families to watch our preschool nativity in December. We had play and stay opportunities in both 2-3 room and preschool room and we had many families turn up and spend time with their children exploring many different activities.

We collaborated once more with JH Godwin Primary School to host a literacy morning for our preschool parents, providing them with insights into what their children learn in preparation for joining reception.

In July, we organised our sports day, which saw a fantastic turnout from parents and families, contributing to a vibrant and joyful community event.

We have partnered with an Early Years Worker from Balcon Children's Centre to offer termly 'Ready Steady Read' sessions for our 2 to 3-year-old children. These engaging sessions invite parents and families to partake in storytelling and related activities. Furthermore, the Early Years Worker is available to provide additional support or advice to any parents who may require it.

Section E Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

Section F Other optional information

Section G Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Linda Jones	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	
Date	18.10.24	

Stepping Stones of Chester

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2023

	31.12.23 £	31.12.22 £
INCOME		
Grants		
Grants including NEG Funding	215,007	152,621
Other trading activities		
Fee income	16,263	57,386
Milk income	1,026	673
	<u>17,289</u>	<u>58,059</u>
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	134	18
Total incoming resources	<u>232,430</u>	<u>210,698</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Other trading activities		
Activities and materials	14,414	17,917
Wages	189,695	148,268
Consumables (food)	5,034	384
Milk cost	1,146	788
Courses/meetings	871	-
Insurance	829	1,357
Uniform	501	332
Premises expenses	5,696	338
Bank loan interest	151	-
	<u>218,337</u>	<u>169,384</u>
Investment management costs		
Property repairs	2,147	2,600
Support costs		
Finance		
Administration expenses	12,351	9,867
Consultants	1,400	-
Other expenses	10,727	9,478
	<u>24,478</u>	<u>19,345</u>
Total resources expended	<u>244,962</u>	<u>191,329</u>
Net (expenditure)/income	<u>(12,532)</u>	<u>19,369</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements