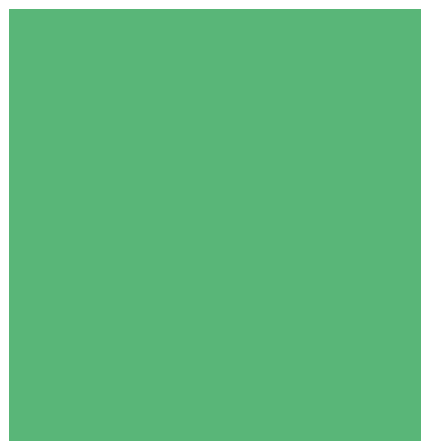
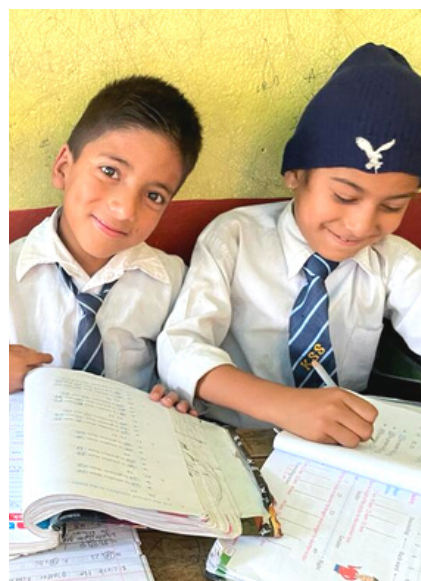


# Annual Report 2023

Education for all



**CHARITY NUMBER: 1103859**

[info@freedomtolearn.org.uk](mailto:info@freedomtolearn.org.uk)  
[www.freedomtolearn.org.uk](http://www.freedomtolearn.org.uk)

**Trustees:**

Mr. Jamie Creswell (Chair)  
Mr. Paul Kinnon (Treasurer)  
Mr. Adam Bentham

Scan to visit  
our website



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# Chair of Trustees' Statement

By Jamie Cresswell



I am delighted to introduce you to this year's annual report and to the excellent work that has been carried out this past year.

We are only able to carry out projects and continue to support our staff because of generous individual donations and the various funds we apply for. As everyone knows, money seems in short supply nowadays, and this is true for us also. We have been lucky enough to have received a substantial grant from the UBI and continue to receive support from the Erach and Roshin Sadri Foundation, as well as other anonymous trusts.

However, we do find ourselves in a similar situation to many small and medium size charities, where we are putting in a herculean effort to secure limited charitable funds.

We are doing everything we can in order to search for grants, funds and donations. With our new fundraiser, Aimee, working consistently for us this year, we are

increasingly hopeful that we can continue to implement our impactful work. And we have a few other ideas too...

We are looking at new funding ideas and discussing various possibilities to bring in funds within Nepal, as well as through grants.

At Christmas, as in past years, we will run several stalls at fairs and markets, selling handmade Nepalese items and informing more people about the work we do.

We are very proud of the daily work that happens in Nepal, and we desperately wish to continue and flourish. We have been building more friendships and contacts, and are considering deeply how we may evolve Freedom to Learn's work in the future. to ensure it continues having the best possible impact for the children and communities we support. And, we have some exciting news for both our boards in the UK and Nepal! Keep an eye on our website and socials for upcoming news...

In the meantime, please support us if you can, and come along to our Christmas events. We are very pleased and grateful for all the voluntary support we receive.

**With many thanks to all those who have given their time and support over the past few years, and to the wonderful staff, both in the UK and Nepal.**

# Programmes Director's Report

By Joey Owen



I always welcome the opportunity to reflect on another year of our important work. This report shows how we enabled the outcomes of last year to evolve into wider impact this year. Seeing for ourselves the benefits communities have experienced as a result of Freedom to Learn's projects has been a real boon to the team's confidence in what we do, why we do it, and how we go about it.

A great example of this is that our Nepal-based Project Manager, SK, has this year been elected the Secretary of the National Network of School Governance. Through this prestigious position, he has already received valued input for the up-and-coming National Education Act, currently going through parliament – the first for 52 years in Nepal!

To me, as Programmes Director, this is strong evidence demonstrating why Freedom to Learn's multi-faceted and creative approach has proven so effective. This is just one example of wide impact from a number of smaller and effective steps taken over time.

These were the steps towards greater influence in how schools are governed across Nepal:

- Using the data from the Act on Education theatre projects, (which work with everyone in a school community uncovering the barriers to quality education, and then problem solving, with the whole community) we were able to learn from a huge variety perspectives that good school governance was lacking in government schools.

Reported and discussed were incidents of insufficient safeguarding, irregular attendance records, low accountability for teachers, and ideas for improved budget allocation – all examples of where good governance could make a huge difference to improving access to and quality for education for all children.

- Using this data, our team were then able to design effective and relevant School Governor Training, using the learning to inform the content and design of the training.
- The results of the training were so successful, that the SMC Federation Nepal (the national governing board for all School Management policy) approached our project manager and proposed a partnership. This resulted in collaboration and resource sharing at district level, as well as supporting the 34 schools in our catchment municipality.
- And.... It also meant we now have a voice at national level once SK was voted in as National Secretary and became an active National Board member.

This demonstrates how we can take the understanding and consultation from children, parents, local governors and senior school leadership at ground level, all the way up to national level policy formation.

**I think that is amazing.** And it makes me very proud of the work we do. I'm especially proud of our committed and thorough Nepali staff team. At the heart of this are the "thriving hearts of each community" – our schools. Each school is full of children who have somewhere safe, fun and engaging to learn without prejudice, surrounded by teachers who have real belief in their capabilities. They are, after all, architects of the future of Nepal and Nepal's place in the world.

**I hope you enjoy seeing the other impacts our relatively small organisation has had on a big scale.**

# Nepal Programme Manager's Report

By S.K. Thapa

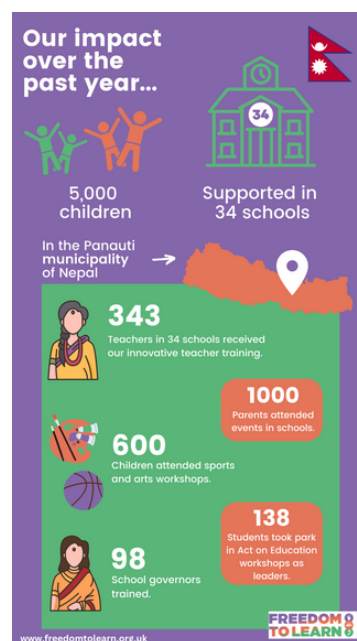


This year of work felt beautiful since there was no COVID pandemic in Nepal. All the schools were running smoothly without masks on children's faces or pandemic fear in their minds.

Some of the meaningful impact, I think, created in the schools for those young people due to our activities were:

- Resource provisions made children's access to education easier and made their learning fun.
- The Sister Schools and resulting global friendships between Kushadevi and Milford school children was key to exploring and learning about their intercultural experiences and understanding each other better, developing strong friendships from different corners of the world.
- One strong impact is our ability to network with institutions that have resources, knowledge and expertise in the education field. This year, our five year working partnership with Kathmandu University has opened a new door of opportunity for teachers and school leaders that ultimately will support school children, contributing to shaping their future with skills and knowledge in daily learning activities.

- School governance training has supported almost 100 school governors to guide and direct successfully better resources and staff mobilisation in schools.
- Coordination and working together with local government bodies has tied us with them as a key stakeholder in the education field.
- The initiation of the 'Reading Camp' this year, where high profile leaders in the district, as well as senior school leadership teams across the municipality, espoused the benefits of reading, and the enjoyment of reading their own favourite book. This was successful in attracting more people towards restarting their book reading habits, rather than engaging with electronic gadgets.



**In all these ways, our efforts in rural education are encouraging and trying best to reach more children and benefit them - to shape their futures in a better way - supporting them to be responsible future citizens of our global village.**

**Thank you.**





## Our Work – Outputs and Impact:

**With the clear aim of improving access to a high quality of education for all, we operate under four key thematic areas:**

### 1. ADVOCACY AND RESEARCH

Ensuring that everyone in the community has the opportunity to understand and therefore value the importance of a stable education in some of the poorest areas of the world.

### 2. QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Improving and sustaining a positive curriculum in schools and helping teachers feel equipped and confident to deliver impactful lessons.

### 3. ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Removing any barriers which might stop young people in rural Nepal from attending school every day.

### 4. GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY

We facilitate climate and environment education projects, school greening and global school partnerships.

**We are pleased to report that even with a tighter income and expenditure this year, we delivered some important project-work, producing hugely beneficial impact for children in the Panauti municipality, showing we can use our income efficiently.**

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## Pillar 1. Advocacy and Research: Act on Education

### Project:

Our Act on Education community engagement programme informs all the project-work we do. By facilitating a creative and constructive dialogue between multiple stakeholders - children, parents, teachers, senior school leadership, education officials, local MPs, local businesses – we gain understanding of exactly what the problems are, and then work together to devise workable, sustainable and community-led solutions. The project is creative - with applied drama, forum-theatre events, group meetings, research and outreach visits.

### Outputs:

This year we facilitated **four** Act on Education Projects with **138** children across **four** schools, and more than **23** powerful stakeholders took part, including education ministers, the Panauti Mayor, headteachers and local political leaders.

**Over 1,100 children were involved in the events, as well as more than 300 parents and just under 100 teaching staff.**





# Act on Education: Impact

We have seen that, as a result of being listened to, and problems being addressed, school attendance is increasing - this year on average by 23.2%. School facilities are improving with more resource provision and the level of positive engagement between the school and local community is further developed and sustained.

**The public Act on Education events resulted specifically in:**

## **Sanitation Concerns**

After these concerns were identified, the Local Development Committee released funds for a school cleaner, and accessed provision from a local WASH NGO. This resulted in better toilet facilities, and better school hygiene. Better toilets often mean girls are more likely to attend school and there is less spreading of viruses within the school community.

## **Domestic violence and alcohol misuse**

This was highlighted, and as a result has been addressed by our outreach workers and school support staff visiting homes and schools on an ongoing basis. One headteacher also provided funds to enable an awareness and an outreach project for families at risk.



## **A lack of appreciation and understanding from parents about the value of education**

This led to a formation of a larger Parent-Teacher Association, supporting parents to better understand the importance of education and develop more community ownership of the school. We saw higher and better quality engagement from parents in each school.

## **Potential sexual harassment and corporal punishment**

After learning about these issues from an Act of Education workshop, school management and teachers accessed and participated in training on safeguarding policy regulations and processes. This safeguarding training is continuing into late 2023.

## **Confidence, empowerment and equality**

Our evaluations this year demonstrate how this project also benefited participating students by improving their confidence and articulation skills, their critical thinking and leadership skills, and their engagement in the classrooms.

## Pillar 2. Quality of Education: Training Teachers

### Project:

Government teacher training has a maximum requirement of two months, and includes no practical experience or pedagogical reflection. Through no fault of their own, teachers are often poorly equipped and low-skilled. This has been consistently highlighted in our Act on Education events.

**So, our Teacher Training programme introduces teachers to creative learning techniques, practical pedagogy, the importance of children's mental health, and family support and communication.**



### Outputs:

We delivered training to **343** teachers across **34** schools in the Panauti region, in partnership with Kathmandu University. Training in each area was over four INSET days including class observation days before and after. The modules were:

- Classroom Management,
- Creative Learning Techniques,
- Stimulating Classroom Environments,
- Mental Health and Wellbeing,
- Child Safeguarding,
- Discrimination in the Classroom,
- Inter-Cultural Harmony,
- Community Outreach



# Teacher Training: Impact

Better teaching learning processes in the schools across the region! We have seen teachers working with more energy and, having learned new skills, they are actioning them, therefore facilitating more successful classrooms as a result. We see children enthusiastically taking part in creative learning practices, smiling and engaging in the work.

## Knowledge Sharing

Teachers are now sharing knowledge, resources and communicating better in staffrooms, as well as using apps like Messenger and WhatsApp to share ideas and planning - an added outcome which we see improving the region-wide school communities and networks.

## Confidence

Participating teachers reported increased confidence in their abilities and this led to more confidence and engagement in their students. Teachers are more confident in classroom management, delivering the curriculum in exciting and engaging ways.



***The training was fun, colourful, useful - and we made good friends to share our work with and exchange ideas. I am doing new things in the classroom all the time now.***

*Sachita, Teacher*



## Brighter classrooms

Teacher training has had a huge impact on young people and teachers, school environments have improved in each of the schools, with work being displayed, and more colourful and enticing classroom layouts.

## Long-term change

Each teacher will teach around 145 students regularly throughout the school year, and a further 150 in cover and curriculum enrichment classes. Just under 5000 children are supported to participate in a higher quality education. Training teachers creates significant and long-term change.

## Pillar 2. Quality of Education

### School Management Committee (SMC) and Good Governance Training

#### Project:

As part of our holistic approach to improving standards of education in schools, we deliver training to members of school management committees. This training covers policy, procedure and good governance.

#### Outputs:

After last year's training, and subsequent connection with the SMC National Federation, we delivered training in Panauti, covering all **34** schools with **106** governors. Training covered: responsible planning and management, leadership skills, staff support and motivation, child protection, safeguarding, resource management, finance and budgeting.

#### Impact:

School governor, Rayan, told us he had never been confident in his role until the training. He hadn't understood what leadership meant, or his part in how to make sure the students were safe, the teachers were happy, and the school community was thriving.

*I came from the training days, and went straight to the headteacher with about 20 questions! Since then we have made policies, have regular parent teacher meetings, have offered free school lunches for children who are struggling and we have painted the infant classrooms - so many things! I often talk with the School Management Committee to get advice. I feel I can do this work now. Thank you so much.*

*Rayan, School governor*



#### Community Management

A Community School Management Committee Federation has been formulated in Panauti Municipality after this training, and the SMC National Network is now regularly working in the municipality to strengthen the school governance in every school. These are both a direct impact of our work.

Our Project Manager was also invited to put himself forward for the position of Secretary on the Board of the National Network of School Management Committees. His campaign was successful and he won the nationwide vote. He is now working hard to drive improvements for many more children than he could in his position in the localised municipality.

## Pillar 3. Access to Education: Resource Provision

### Project:

We continued this year to provide provision to our students and for the learning community as a whole.



### Outputs:

**Six** Classrooms were painted and decorated with educational displays and learning and play resources. This included furniture and colourful and comfortable reading corners.

This year we have provided **250** school bags, art materials for **nine** classes, library books, stationery and sports materials.

The School Management Committee Office in Kushadevi was also provided with furniture and stationery, giving the governors a space to work in.



***“I love having a school bag,  
I wear it proudly as part of  
my school, when I walk  
through the village.”***

Pujana, student

### Impact:

Not only are school bags an essential resource to support learning, but they help improve access. Lovely presentation events, attended by families, contributed to the impression that government schools can be enticing places to go. The visuals of school bags and colourful educational materials inside further encourage children to be part of the school community.

Sports materials also contribute to this comprehension of schools as thriving hearts of a community. PE activities now take place every week - increasing health, well-being, teamwork, communication skills, and dexterity.

As a result of improving the governors office, Kushadevi is the only SMC in the municipality to hold regular meetings. This shows leadership and provides a model to other SMCs.



## Pillar 3. Access to Education: Education Policy and Consultation

### Project:

As reported last year, we researched, developed and published a comprehensive “State of Education in Panauti” report.

### Outputs:

Published reports have been distributed across every educational establishment in Panauti. The Education Office Senior Leadership meetings have been actively using it on a monthly basis. Our Nepali Project Manager has taken the information and used it to ensure well informed school management and School Governance training.



### Impact:

The impact is demonstrated over a wide reach. Over this year the research report has been in continuous use. It has been used to inform in the headteachers exchange meetings we facilitate, comparing schools academic and physical infrastructures and informing future development into the next academic year, which began in April 2023.

The Chief of the District Coordination Committee of Kavrepalanchok has publicly praised the book on a number of occasions, and used the research to acquire knowledge of the schools of Panauti Municipality. He then used it creatively as school contact database, and has been communicating with schools personally as a result. He then went on to organise a large scale event in Dhulikhel, the district headquarters, inviting two students and a teacher representative from all the schools in Kavre. This is to form constructive dialogue and ensure that children and teachers voices are heard in the up-and-coming Education Act. This is to happen in August 2023 so outside of the jurisdiction of this report. It will be a huge event and is an enormously beneficial direct impact of our research and lobbying leading to what will surely be a more relevant policy for those most closely involved. It also has demonstrated clearly the ability for expanding out to district and central level network and gives us confidence in our ability to facilitate a quality contribution for a fairer more effective education system in the future.

## Pillar 4. Global citizenship and Responsibility: Sister Schools

### Project:

This is a project where Milford-on-Sea Primary School in the UK partners with Kushadevi School in Nepal. They join together in global friendships, celebrating each other's cultures and language. They work together on school projects and meet every few weeks on a live video call.

### Outputs:

**Three** classes and activities in each school leading towards **four** live links. A total of **327** children in Milford-on-Sea Primary School and **72** in Kushadevi School participated in topics including 'influential women in our society', 'cultural and religious festivals' and 'daily life'.

### Impact:

Children in both schools demonstrated an understanding about the value of intercultural communication.

*I found it so interesting to hear about how we have some things in common, and some that are different. It got me thinking about all different countries, and what we are all like in different schools everywhere!*

*Year 4 student, Milford on Sea*



### Global friendships

Students in both schools increased their articulation skills and confidence speaking to camera. They learned about religion, culture, language, and technology. It strengthened the human relations from different part of the world and encouraged them work together, support and care for each other.

*I have much happiness to get this opportunity making new friends at Milford and seeing and talking with them.*

*Radha Jaisawal, a grade 9 student from Kushadevi School*

## Income and Expenditure Account 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023

### Income

Grants	£28,000.00
Fundraising	£5,542.55
Gifts in Kind	£8,718.00 *
Regular Donations	£1,502.00
Bank Interest	£114.19

**£43,876.74**

### Less Expenditure

Structured Across the Four Freedom to Learn Project Pillars:

1) Advocacy and Research	£7,697.39
2) Improving Quality of Education	£10,263.18
3) Access to Education	£6,414.49
4) Global Citizenship and Responsibility	£1,282.90

**£25,657.96**

Freedom to Learn Wages	£7,400.00
Nepal Based Core Staff Costs	£2,340.45
New Website and Branding	£1,714.26
Social Media Manager	£1,560.00
Office Costs	£520.00
Insurance and Professional Fees	£433.53
Bank Charges	£319.08
Travel Expenses	£256.13
Fundraising Expenses	£246.05

**£40,447.46**

**Surplus of Income over Expenditure**

**£3,429.28**

## Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2023

### Current Assets

Business Money Manager Account	£33,500.21
Community Account	£2,665.80
Euro Account	£607.37
	<b>£36,773.38</b>

### Current Liabilities

**£0.00**

Net Current Assets

£36,773.38

**£36,773.38**

### Financed by

Accumulated Fund Brought Down on 1 July 2022	£33,344.09
Surplus of Expenditure over Income for the Year	£3,429.28

**£36,773.37**



## Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees

Once again this year I have the pleasure of reporting on the accounts of the charity, Freedom to Learn, for the year ended 30th June 2023, as set out in this report.

### Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and Examiner

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year (under Section 43 (2) of the Charities Act 1993) and that instead an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under Section 43 (3) (a) of the 1993 Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under Section 43 (7) (b) of the 1993 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 Freedom to Learn and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes a consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the board Trustees and Financial Officer concerning any 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 my examination this year, in August 2023, no matter has come to my attention:

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the following requirements have not been met:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 41 of the 1993 Act;
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act.

or;

2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to reach a proper understanding of the accounts.

Signature ..... 

Name ..... Zita Czifra-haigh

Profession ..... Company Director

Address ..... 70 Osborne Road, New Milton, BH25 6AB

.....

Date ..... 10th August 2023

## Expenditure Notes:

'In Kind' income is as follows:

- Social Media Manager: £1,560.00 Weekly Input
- Programmes Trainer: £1260.00 Creative Environment/AoE/Workshops
- Nepal Based Tuition: £1778.00 12 Tutors in Nepal
- Volunteer Teacher Trainer: £2,700.00 Kathmandu University Trainers.
- Website: £900.00 Half Price Website (charity price)
- Home Office Costs: £520 Estimated utility and connection costs

## International Transfers:

Funds are advanced in lump sums to Freedom to Learn's implementing partners in Nepal for community projects. Expenditure in Nepal is fully audited annually by the national regulating body the Social Welfare Council Nepal and also verified annually by Freedom to Learn visiting trustees or senior staff.

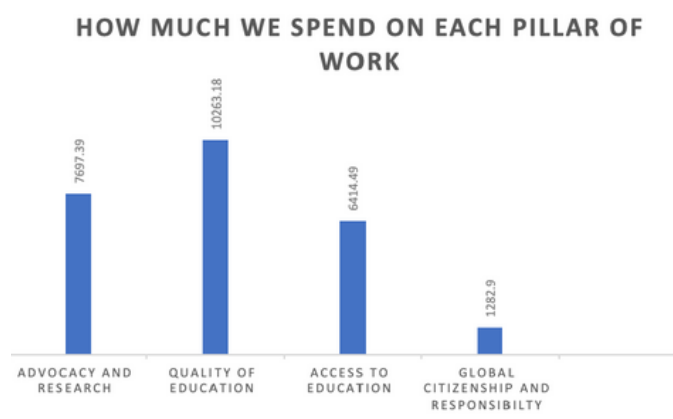
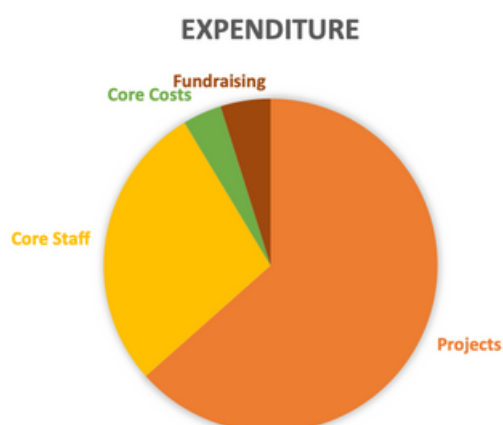
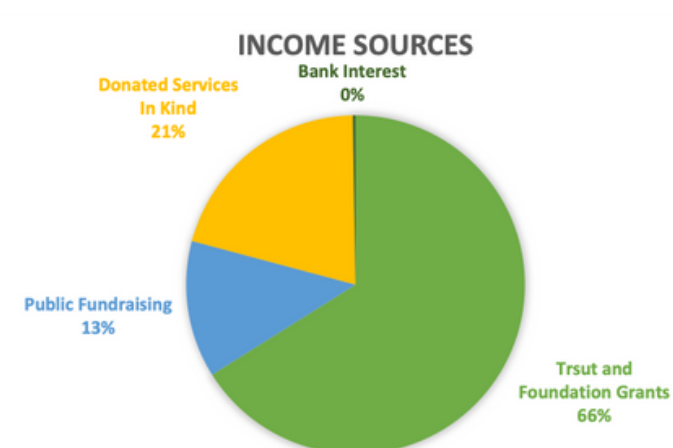
Currently our Euro Account transactions are converted to sterling in our bookkeeping at our European funders agreed reporting rate of 1 GBP = 1.15 EUR.

All of our NPR transactions from Sterling or Euros are conducted by Equals Money international transfers service, (Company Number: 06268340) whose safeguarding is managed by Citibank.

Annual accounts are prepared on the cash basis. As such, 2022-2023 accounts reflect ongoing spend on a three year from Unioniste Buddihiste Italiana (UBI) 'Improving Quality of Education' project. but the corresponding grant income was received in prior years with the balance of approximately £14,000 payable Autumn 2023 which will therefore be reported in 2023-2024 accounts. In summary the funding specifically from UBI equals as follows:

	Income:	Expenditure:
2020-2021	£40,436.86	£15,727.80
2021-2022	£79,552.37	£107,725.41
2022-2023	£0.00	£10,532.61
	£119,989.23	£133,985.82

**Balance of Funding due from UBI Autumn 2023: £13,996.59**



**View our reserves policy [here](#) or scan to view:**

