

Annual Report 2024

Creating
brighter
futures.



CHARITY NUMBER: 1103859

info@freedomtolearn.org.uk
www.freedomtolearn.org.uk

Trustees:

Mr. Jamie Creswell (Chair)
Mrs. Dawn Tebbutt (Treasurer)
Mrs. Karuna Onta
Mr. Adam Bentham

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our website



CEO's Report

By Joey Owen



Despite significant challenges in the year June 23 to June 24 we saw good progress in our core project-work. Extending our work to the rural municipality of Bethanchok has been particularly exciting. Our research in 2022/23 highlighted the need for our initiatives in rural areas beyond the Panauti catchment. Outreach began in winter 2023, and an eight month Act on Education programme started in August 2024.

We were thrilled that our Nepal-based Project Manager, SK, was elected Secretary of the National Network of School Governance during this reporting period. This achievement underscores the importance and visibility of our work, demonstrating our impact on local and national education governance in Nepal.

Our partnership with School Management Committees across Nepal has therefore grown, leading to better policy management and leadership in many schools. This collaboration has improved governance, safeguarding, attendance, and community engagement.

Fundraising has become very challenging due to increased competition and the closure of one of our major funders. This has showed us the great need to diversify our funding streams. So, we've started a community engagement fundraising initiative, enjoying workshops in UK schools, market sales with beautiful handmade Nepali wares, and boosting our social media presence.

The growing social media engagement is becoming a valuable tool for outreach, awareness, and long-term fundraising. It helps us connect with a broader audience, sharing student success stories and cultural celebrations.

We hope to build a strong foundation for the sustainability of our work in Nepal. **To all our supporters, thank you for your generosity. Your support has been crucial, and we look forward to continuing our mission to ensure education for every child.**





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.

Pillar 1. Advocacy and Research:



Our Act on Education programme continued to be the cornerstone of our advocacy efforts, ensuring that community members have a voice in shaping local education policy.

This year, our outreach reached over 1,100 children, 300 parents, and 100 teaching staff across Panauti municipality, highlighting the importance of education and encouraging community ownership of school improvements.

School attendance increased by an impressive 2.4%, largely as a result of these initiatives.

Pillar 2. Quality of Education:

Teacher training continued in partnership with Kathmandu University, involving 343 teachers from 34 schools. The training focused on creative teaching techniques, mental health support, and classroom management.

Teachers reported greater confidence in their abilities, and classroom environments became more vibrant, with displays of student work contributing to a more engaging learning atmosphere.



Pillar 3. Access to Education:

Access to basic learning materials remains a critical part of our mission. This year, we provided school bags, stationery, and sports materials, benefitting over 500 children, which not only improved access to education but also increased students' sense of pride in their schools.

Six classrooms were painted and furnished to create comfortable reading corners and engaging spaces that encourage learning. Our volunteers, and a team of students, improved the grounds of Kushadevi School with a mural wall and playground made from recycled materials.



The work continued at local education level to ensure schools are outwardly inviting, including public events funded by the Ward Committees (similar to Parish Councils in the UK) increasing community engagement and parental interest, which in turn, despite facing political difficulties, has supported the attendance rates to rise by 2.4%.

Pillar 4. Global citizenship and Responsibility:

The Sister Schools project, which connects Kushadevi School in Nepal with Milford-on-Sea Primary in the UK, was a continued success. Students from both schools participated in cultural exchanges and learned about each other's languages, traditions, and daily lives. This project fostered mutual respect and understanding, demonstrating the importance of intercultural communication in today's world.

Lorna Walton, Assistant Headteacher at Milford, visited Kushadevi School for two weeks, and facilitated maths training to over 40 teachers, representing every school in the municipality. It was exciting for children in the UK to follow their teacher and has supported a healthy amount of fundraising for Kushadevi, which will be used to employ sports teachers in the school.

We have laid the foundations in six new schools in the New Forest, UK, all of which are participating in Sister Schools from September 2024 onwards.

It is exciting to confirm the growth of this project, creating value for schools not only in Nepal, but also here in the UK, as children learn to expand their understanding of what it is to be a global citizen.

Social Media and Community Engagement

This year, our social media platforms became a vital avenue for engaging our supporters and showcasing our work.

Our Facebook page grew by 38%, thanks to engaging posts that included project updates, student testimonials, and highlights from our Sister Schools live events. Videos of classroom activities and teacher training sessions were particularly popular, with thousands of views and numerous shares, expanding our reach beyond our usual networks.

One of our standout social media campaigns featured the Reading Camp initiative, where posts showed local leaders and children discussing their favourite books. This campaign inspired more families to participate and demonstrated the positive impact of our programmes.

Financial Summary

Despite financial challenges in the small charity sector, we maximised the use of our resources to sustain our work in Nepal in the best way we could this year. Funding from Trusts and Foundations has been increasingly tough to access, and our success in that area of income has not been at the level we would have hoped for.

So, in response, we focused on raising funds through local markets, social media campaigns, and networking activities (such as the Sister Schools). This contributed significantly to our income, reflecting the success of our diversified fundraising strategy.

As a small charity we are still able to be efficient and flexible in our use of funds raised, making sure every pound raised creates value in Nepal.



FREEDOM TO LEARN

Income and Expenditure Account 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

Income			
Grants		£21,758.72	
Fundraising		£33,434.13	
Gifts in Kind		£4,552.00	*
Regular Donations		£3,012.00	
Bank Interest		£516.01	
		<u>£63,272.86</u>	
Less Expenditure			
Project Pillars:			
Improving Quality of Education	£11,244.72		
Advocacy and research	£6,532.31		
Access to education	£5,225.84		
Global Citizenship and Responsibility	£3,919.38		
Teacher and Programmes Training	£1,302.00		
Tuition	£648.00		
	<u>£28,872.25</u>		
Freedom to Learn Wages		£14,625.00	
Nepal Based Core Costs		£1,976.98	
Social Media Manager		£1,152.00	
Insurance and Professional Fees		£1,620.13	
Office Costs		£720.00	
New Website and Branding		£300.00	
Fundraising Expenses		£1,650.22	
Travel Expenses		£115.81	
Bank Charges		£204.13	
		<u>£51,236.52</u>	
Surplus / (deficit) of Income over Expenditure			<u><u>£12,036.34</u></u>

Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2024

Current Assets			
Business Money Manager Account	£33,753.73		
Community Account	£1,461.43		
Euro Account	£13,740.81	£48,955.97	
Current Liabilities			
Book-keeping costs		<u>£146.25</u>	
	£146.25		
Net Current Assets			<u><u>£48,809.72</u></u>
Financed by			
Accumulated Fund Brought Down on 1 July 2023			£36,773.38
Surplus / (deficit) of Expenditure over Income for the Year			£12,036.34
			<u><u>£48,809.72</u></u>

* Gifts in Kind broken down as follows:

Activities:

Social Media Manager			
Home Office Costs	£1,152.00	Monthly input	
Website	£720.00	Donated	
Xmas fair donation	£300.00	Ongoing website maintenance and support	
Nepal Based Tuition	£430.00	Xmas purchases donated by J Owen	
Volunteer Teaching Training	£648.00	12 Tutors in Nepal Working Weekly	
Programmes Trainer	£750.00	Kathmandu University Trainers x 3 Days	
	£552.00	Creative Environment and Act on Education Training and Drama and Sister School Workshops	
	<u><u>£4,552.00</u></u>		

Notes

Euro Account transactions converted to sterling at the UBI agreed reporting rate of 1 GBP = 1.15 EUR

Freedom to Learn Annual Reporting 2023/2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees

I report on the accounts of the charity, Freedom to Learn, for the year ended 30th June 2024, 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 Commissions. 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 Trustees 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 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 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 Mrs Zita Czifra-Haigh

Profession Local Business Owner - New Forest Carpet Clean

Address 70 Osbourne Road, New Milton, Hampshire, BH25 6AB

Date 20th October, 2024

Looking Forward

As we move into the next year, our focus will remain on educational projects both in Panauti and Bethanchok. We will launch our exciting environmental education project “Pedagogy of Empowerment, Hope and Action” (PEHA), which you can read about [here](#).

With expansion of our school partnerships in the UK, we will be supporting our global citizenship and responsibility work more widely, and increasing knowledge exchange and training in Nepal. We will grow local capacity through training and the exciting new income generating venture of a community café and education hub, right in the centre of Panauti old town.

We will also continue to leverage our social media channels to connect with new supporters and build awareness of our work.

We are deeply thankful for the ongoing support we receive from donors, volunteers and the community.

Your belief in our mission allows us to continue our work, making a positive difference in the lives of children in Nepal.

