

Nicaragua Education Culture and Arts Trust

Trustees Annual Report

2024





Section A	Reference and Administration Details
Charity Name	Nicaragua Education Culture and Arts Trust
Other names for the charity	NECAT
Registered Charity Number	1114483
Charity's principal address	47 Boddington Rd. Wendover, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP22 6HY
Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity	Martin Charles Roger MaggieJo St. John Monika Christine Schiffer
Retiring trustees	No trustees retired during the year
Incoming trustees	None
Names and addresses of advisors	None

Section B	Structure, Governance and Management
Type of Governing Document	Trust Deed
How the Charity is constituted	Trust
Trustee selection methods	By invitation
Additional Governance issues	None

Section C	Objectives and Activities
Summary of the objects of the charity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The advancement of education through culture and the arts • The alleviation of poverty and hardship • The geographical focus for the work of the charity is the pacific coast of Nicaragua
Summary of the main activities in relation to these objects	<p>The charity operates in the city of León, Nicaragua where it supports the work of Hypatia, a local NGO with a focus on education. Hypatia has an education centre based in a deprived neighbourhood of the city where it runs a variety of education projects including after-school clubs, health education projects and teacher training. In addition the centre has a library that acts as a resource for the children who attend the centre. During the year children who enrolled at the centre benefitted from a 'merienda' a meal equivalent to a school meal. Since 2021 the teaching method has been the Montessori methodology where the structured approach to teaching has produced beneficial results for the children.</p>

Grantmaking policy

The work of the charity is dedicated to achieving its objectives through initiatives of its partner organisation, Hypatia. Projects are developed and implemented by Nicaraguan staff directly employed by Hypatia with support from local and international volunteers. A part time representative is employed in Nicaragua by the Trust who supervises the centre and employs the teachers, child psychologists or other contract staff as required.



1 Group Activity at the NECAT Centre, Leon, Nicaragua

Contribution by volunteers

In the UK all the work of the Trust is done on a voluntary basis. In Nicaragua local and international volunteers assist the project.

Section D

Achievements and Performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

During the year the charity focussed on supporting the operation of a Montessori class with funding support for the salaries of two of the teachers from a group based in Hamburg, Germany. The salaries are paid directly by that organisation (Nicaragua-Hamburg Verein) and NECAT is very grateful for their support.

Infrastructure:

Property: The charity does not own and/or lease land or property directly but has a beneficial interest in a freehold property in Leon, Nicaragua which is used in pursuance of its objectives. The building, which is situated in the Guadalupe district in the south of the city of Leon, benefits from having a large covered auditorium, side and rear offices, a kitchen and store rooms and gardens with covered areas where the children who attend the centre can play and learn in a secure environment.

Over the years improvements have been made to the interior and exterior decoration of

the building and to make the premises more secure. The centre is physically dividable using a foldable partition into two separate areas so that different activities can be carried out in the two areas simultaneously.

Children attending the centre had a wide range of resources available to them such as books from the library and specialised Montessori teaching materials.

Nutrition Project: In 2024 **Blackfriars Overseas Aid Trust (BOAT)** once again supported our programme of providing meals for the children who attended the centre with a donation of £4000. The objective of the project is to provide the children with a balanced and nutritious diet throughout their time attending the centre. Many of the children attending the pre-school come from poor families where regular meals are not always available. The food (which typically comprises tortillas, rice, beans, cereal and a drink) is prepared by the children's mothers on a rota and is distributed at a convenient time during the day. The variety of the meals is improved by supplying meat, fruit and vegetables from time to time.

Infrastructure Improvements – 'Rancho' Repairs: The centre has gardens where there is an enclosed and covered area (called 'rancho' in Spanish) where the children can participate in informal activities. During the month of June 2024 the thatched roof collapsed following a storm. An appeal was launched and together with available funds was replaced using zinc sheets. The original thatch lasted less than five years as that type of material deteriorates rapidly in a tropical climate whereas the zinc sheets should have a lifetime of at least 20 years. During the refurbishment it was discovered that some of the support pillars were affected by termites and these had to be replaced or reinforced using steel stanchions.



2 Refurbishment following the 'Ranch' roof collapse



3 Refurbishment in progress using zinc sheeting



Section E Reserves Policy	Financial Review It is the policy of NECAT to only hold the minimum amount of reserves commensurate with meeting our in-country project and staffing commitments.
Exchange Rates	Due to its focus on Nicaragua the bulk of the charity's financial expenditure is handled in US\$. Receipts and payments originating in US\$ have been translated into pounds sterling at the average exchange rate prevailing during the year, with outstanding funds at 31st December 2024 being translated at the year-end exchange rate.
Financial Commitments	NECAT is committed to paying the salary of its representative in Nicaragua. Other staff are employed on an annual contract. At the time that the charity acquired its centre an informal loan of \$15,000 (£11,500) was agreed with a supporter. The loan was discharged in full in 2022.
Principal sources of Funding	The principal sources of funding for NECAT are grant funding from charitable trusts, churches and donations from individual supporters.
How expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity	<p>a. The advancement of education through culture and the arts: By supporting a local NGO (Hypatia) in operating an education centre for pre-school children in a deprived neighbourhood we presented children with educational opportunities which would have otherwise been unobtainable. The children participated in many artistic and cultural activities which promoted their education. The use of Montessori teaching methodology provided a structured learning experience for the children which has been particularly appreciated by the participating families.</p> <p>b. The alleviation of poverty and hardship: By concentrating our support on underprivileged sectors of society and in areas of the city where family incomes are very limited we were able to alleviate poverty in those communities.</p> <p>c. The charity will operate in the Pacific Coast region of Nicaragua: All of our support went to the city of León and its suburbs, situated on the Pacific Coast of Nicaragua.</p>
Investment policies	There are no investments other than funds held in the UK and Nicaraguan current accounts awaiting use on relevant projects.

Section F	<p>Other Information</p> <p>In order to conform to Nicaraguan regulations for the establishment of independent NGO's NECAT, with support from the German organisation Nicaragua Verein Hamburg, applied for registration in Nicaragua for a new legal entity. The application has been made using the name 'Hypatia' and has been approved by the Nicaraguan authorities. Now fully established this entity operates independently under the control of a local board of trustees.</p> <p>The full process is lengthy and requires the organisation to obtain a registration number (called RUC or 'Registrado Unico Contribuyente') as well as an NGO registration number. As of June 2021 the organisation is registered in Nicaragua as Asociación Hypatia, RUC J0810000407811 and Charity registration number 6941.</p> <p>Annual accounts for Hypatia are submitted to the Ministry of Governance (MINGOB), Managua and continued operation of the organisation is dependent upon their approval.</p>
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Section G

Declaration

See below

Declaration:
The trustees hereby declare that they have approved the trustees’ annual report for 2024.

Signed on behalf of the charity’s trustees by:

Signatures:

<i>Signature, first trustee</i>	<i>Signature, second trustee</i>

Full names:

<i>Printed name, first trustee</i>	<i>Printed name, second trustee</i>

Date:

<i>Date of signing</i>	<i>Date of signing</i>

Position/Role (e.g. Secretary, chair etc.)

Trustee	Trustee
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Charity Name Nicaragua Education Culture and Arts Trust		No (if any) 1114483	CC16a
Receipts and payments accounts			
For the period from	Period start date 01/01/2024	To Period end date 31/12/2024	

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
UK Donations	22,655			22,655	16,818
UK Bank Interest	-	-		-	4
UK Grants	-	4,000		4,000	4,000
UK Gift Aid (allocated to unrestricted funds)	2,272	-		2,272	2,053
Nicaragua Bank Interest	14	-		14	9
Nicaragua Donations	227			227	1,952
Sub total	25,168	4,000		29,168	24,836
A2 Asset and investment sales, etc.					-
Total receipts	25,168	4,000		29,168	24,836
A3 Payments					
UK Expenses/Affiliations	50	-		50	-
UK Bank Charges/Intermediary fees	432	77		509	97
Nicaragua Admin/Office/Security	3,417	-		3,417	3,952
Nicaragua Monitoring costs	8,350	-		8,350	8,161
Nicaragua Bank Charges	256	-		256	166
Nicaragua Direct Project expenditure	9,948	2,003		11,951	9,481
Exchange rate Movements	853	152		1,005	1,072
		-		-	
Sub total	23,306	2,232		25,538	22,929
A4 Asset and investment purchases, etc.					-
Total payments	23,306	2,232		25,538	22,929
Net of receipts/(payments)	1,862	1,768		3,630	1,907
A5 Transfers between funds			-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	2,353	1,104	-	3,457	1,550
Cash funds this year end	4,215	2,872	-	7,087	3,457

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	UK	2,642	-	-
	Nicaragua	1,573	2,872	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	4,215	2,872	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Property in Leon, Nicaragua	Unrestricted	USD65,000	-
	The Charity does not own and/or lease land or property directly but has a beneficial interest in a freehold property in Leon, Nicaragua which is used in pursuance of its objectives.		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name

Nicaragua Culture, Education & Arts Trust ("NECAT")

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1114483

Set out on pages

1 & 2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

**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 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent
examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 the 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 material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed:

Date:

13/1/26

Name:

R J Marshall

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

Address:

45 Walton Road, Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 7SR

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

