



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 01/04/2020 Period start date to 31/03/2021 Period end date

Charity name: The Laughter Specialists

Charity registration number: 1132987

## Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	<p>The objectives of the trust are:</p> <p>To relieve sickness, preserve and protect health by providing specially trained entertainers known as Laughter Specialists for sick children in hospitals, and those with special needs in schools, residential homes and similar institutions. Laughter Specialists also visit adults with special needs.</p> <p>To advance the education of the public in the benefits of laughter as an aid to good health.</p> <p>To achieve these objectives the trust provides specialist entertainers/performers to visit sick children and those with special needs bringing interactive play, laughter and fun.</p>
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	<p>Activities of Laughter Specialists for the public benefit:</p> <p>The Trust funds professional entertainers/performers to be Laughter Specialists who use their skills to bring fun and laughter to sick children in hospitals and to children with special needs in schools and other similar institutions.</p> <p>During the pandemic we have adapted our service to include the following:</p> <p><b>Outreach visits to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- sick home bound children (would have been in hospital or hospice) and those rehabilitating and their families.</li><li>- vulnerable children not receiving any other support during the pandemic</li></ul> <p><b>Production of themed short films</b> for distribution to schools, hospitals, children and families at home.</p>

		<p>The Laughter Specialists use magic, songs, music, puppets and improvisation bringing therapeutic interactive play, laughter and fun. Their aim is to improve the lives of the children in the hospitals &amp; parents, carers, and siblings. TLS are adapting their skills to connect and reach these families with mental wellness at the forefront of the service, and use their therapeutic interactive teaching skills through play, laughter and fun, children with complex needs</p> <p>They usually visit Addenbrookes Hospital Cambridge, Broomfield Hospital Chelmsford, Colchester Hospital, Princess Alexandra Hospital Harlow</p> <p><b>Special Schools include</b>  Columbus school &amp; college Chelmsford  Edith Borthwick School Essex, Granta school Linton Cambs, Grove Cottage Nursery Bishops Stortford, Grove House School Brentwood, Harlow Fields school Harlow, Meldreth Manor School Herts</p> <p>The TLS managed to still visit when possible and adapted their delivery to meet all Covid safety requirements, eg delivering in school gardens</p> <p>Evidence their work is needed:  To ensure their work is needed and beneficial they seek and receive:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ongoing feedback from relatives, staff and the children, through feedback forms, letters and consultation with Hospital staff. Especially over the last 4 years at Broomfield Hospital as regular visitors and other hospitals where we have made initial visits.</li> <li>2) General Research into Humour in hospital and connected topics carried out by journalists and researchers.</li> <li>3) Gathering more feedback and impact measurement from our visits to Special Schools and listening to what the schools want from us</li> </ol> <p>We are widening our network, looking at new &amp; better ways of marketing our services. We are always analysing our revenue streams and looking at developing our funding further for example through broader corporate support.</p> <p>We have developed stronger links with other organisations and value the establishments working with us who recognise the impact we are having.</p>
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Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	<b>The Trustees have had regard to the guidance</b>
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### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	One of the two founders Annie Aris who is Chief Operating Officer effectively administers the day to day running of the charity. The trustees and additional volunteers/supporters of the charity help with setting up, promoting and running events. The trustees are intrinsically involved in the financial aspects of the charity both day to day as well as strategically - through maintaining charity accounts and scrutiny.
Other		

## Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	<p>Activities and achievements of The Laughter Specialists Charitable Trust for the year April 1st 2020 to March 31st 2021 This year the income from corporate sponsorship, grants and donations has reduced due to the Covid Pandemic.</p> <p>The Laughter Specialists have had to significantly change the way they delivered their work due to the Covid Pandemic – as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1)The creation of funny informative and educational short films covering many diverse themes. These were then distributed to hospitals, schools, families at home etc</li> <li>2)Outreach visits to family's homes with delivery performed in a Covid safe way through glass doors and windows and in gardens where possible.</li> <li>3)Interactive Zoom sessions called Giggle Bursts for schools and individuals at home.</li> <li>4)Recorded Zoom sessions</li> <li>5)Visits resumed to some special schools when it was allowed with very strict Covid safety procedures.</li> </ol>

		<p>We visited where possible the following-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Edith Borthwick School, Bocking, Essex. Once a month during term time.</li> <li>2) Grove Cottage (mencap), Bishops Stortford.</li> <li>3) We visit Harlow Fields school Harlow every week through various sources of funding – this has been working extremely well, with our work being recognised for its additional educational benefits – this acts as a valuable model that can be rolled out to other Special schools</li> <li>4) We now visit Columbus School &amp; College Chelmsford through general funding. We've built up a great rapport and understanding of the children's needs bringing them fun &amp; laughter, helping them to interact with each other and express themselves.</li> <li>5) Meldreth School</li> </ol> <p>The benefits of these visits have led to a reduction in stress and boredom for the children and their parents at these clinics.</p> <p>The Laughter Specialists have been able to continue their visits working with children of mixed abilities.</p> <p>At both Columbus school &amp; College, The Laughter Specialists are working with children from the age of 5 -19 years with great success.</p> <p>Training programmes: Funding had been secured for developing trainee Laughter Specialists. A programme of training visits is continuing.</p> <p>Gathering and analysing the feedback for our visits to enable us to measure the impact more accurately of our work.</p>
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#### **Additional information (optional)**

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	
Other		

## Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	There is an Unrestricted funds balance of <b>£27,269</b> and a restricted funds balance of <b>£7,129</b> at the end of the financial year.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	<p>The trustees aim is to have funds in reserve to cover six months indirect fixed costs. These costs include administration fees, fundraising fees, insurance, office supplies, computer costs, accountancy costs etc</p> <p>Direct funds for our charitable activities (funding Laughter Specialist visits) are mostly restricted funds for projects and received in advance, though now some restricted funds are paid partially up front and then the remaining funds paid when the project is complete.</p> <p>At present the trustees don't consider it necessary to have a reserve fund to cover these costs as the number of visits and timing of the visits is very flexible, though this may be reconsiders if our funding becomes split between beginning and end of project.</p> <p>In terms of a reserve fund, it is more important in the trustees opinion to have a reserve fund to cover the other costs of running the charity without which we cannot support the Laughter Specialist visits.</p>
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	The trustees consider that the charity should have sufficient reserves in unrestricted funds to cover fundraising, admin and other fixed support costs of between £10,000 to £15,000 not exceeding £15,000.
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	

### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	
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Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	
Other		

## Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document ( <a href="#">trust deed</a> , <a href="#">royal charter</a> )	Para 1.25	<b>Trust Deed</b>
How is the charity constituted? (e.g <a href="#">unincorporated association</a> , <a href="#">CIO</a> )	Para 1.25	<b>Trust</b>
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	<b>Appointed by existing trustees</b>

### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	The Laughter Specialists Charitable Trust
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1132987
Charity's principal address	17 Crawley Hobbs Close Saffron Walden Essex CB11 4GD

### 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	George Howard	Chairman	April 2020 – June 2020	
2	Edward Rudd	Treasurer		
3	Clare Thompson			
4	Karen Sheairs	Acting Chair Jun20 -		
5	Madeleine Gardner	Finance officer		
6				
7				
8				
9				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

[illegible]

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

[illegible]

## Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

### Additional information (optional)

#### Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

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

Annie Aris (founder and Laughter Specialists acting as Chief Operational Officers),
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## Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

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## Other optional information



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## Declarations

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Ed Rudd	Madeleine Gardner
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Treasurer	Trustee
Date	17 / 1 / 22	



The Laughter Specialists 1132987

## Receipts and payments accounts

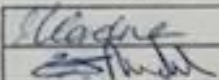

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For the period from 01-Apr-20 To 31-Mar-21

### 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 £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Grants	-	28,288	-	28,288	38,887
Programme service fees	5,545	-	-	5,545	8,315
Donations	29,307	-	-	29,307	23,313
Fundraising events	-	-	-	-	7,351
Bank interest	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>34,852</b>	<b>28,288</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>63,140</b>	<b>77,866</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>34,852</b>	<b>28,288</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>63,140</b>	<b>77,866</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Specialist performance fees	9,357	25,854	-	35,211	50,867
Fundraiser and administration fees	12,092	5,644	-	20,736	22,383
Fundraising event costs	-	-	-	-	634
Other event costs	379	472	-	851	-
Costumes and props	625	740	-	1,365	1,119
Insurance & licences	509	-	-	509	644
Accountancy costs	420	-	-	420	300
Rent	-	-	-	-	1,620
IT costs	1,499	-	-	1,499	575
Travel, printing, meetings & sundries	(1,014)	-	-	(1,014)	2,390
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>23,967</b>	<b>35,710</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>59,677</b>	<b>80,732</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	402	-	-	402	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>24,369</b>	<b>35,710</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>60,079</b>	<b>80,732</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>10,483</b>	<b>(7,422)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,061</b>	<b>(2,866)</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>(17)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>16,769</b>	<b>14,568</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>31,337</b>	<b>34,203</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>27,269</b>	<b>7,129</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>34,398</b>	<b>31,337</b>

## 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 £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Bank	27,269	7,129	-
	Cash in hand	-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	27,269	7,129	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments accounts)			
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	Grants receivable	-	2,500	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B4 Assets retained for the</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Laptops	Unrestricted	782	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	Business administration & support	Unrestricted	2,133	Apr-21
	Business administration & support	Restricted	984	Apr-21
	Specialist performer fees	Unrestricted	1,250	Apr-21
	Specialist performer fees	Restricted	1,868	Apr-21
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		M. GARDNER	4/11/21	
		E. RUSSO	7/11/21	



## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees of	The Laughter Specialists		
Accounts for the year to	31 March 2021	Charity no	1132987
Set out on pages			

#### 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 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 Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities 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: N.S. Caton Date: 26/12/2021

Name: N.S. Caton

Relevant qualification FCA, CTA

Address: Mill Scott Chartered Accountants  
Mill End, Mill Lane, Clavering  
Saffron Walden, CB11 4RP