



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 01/04/2023 Period start date to 31/03/2024 Period end date

Charity name: The Laughter Specialists Charitable Trust

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, hospices and to children with special needs in schools and other similar institutions.</p> <p>Outreach visits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- sick home bound children (would have been in hospital or hospice) and those rehabilitating and their families.- vulnerable children not receiving any other support during the pandemic <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 & 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</p>

		<p>therapeutic interactive teaching skills through play, laughter and fun, children with complex needs</p> <p>They visit Addenbrookes Hospital Cambridge, Broomfield Hospital Chelmsford, Colchester Hospital, Princess Alexandra Hospital Harlow – all visits have resumed.</p> <p>Special Schools include Columbus school & college Chelmsford Edith Borthwick School Essex, Marketfields School Colchester, Granta school Linton Cambs, Grove Cottage Nursery Bishops Stortford, Grove House School Brentwood, Harlow Fields school Harlow, Meldreth Manor School Herts</p> <p>Evidence for their work is needed: To ensure their work is needed and beneficial they seek and receive: 1) Ongoing feedback from relatives, staff and the children, through feedback forms, letters and consultation with Hospital staff. 2) General Research into Humour in hospital and connected topics carried out by journalists and researchers. 3) Gathering more feedback and impact measurement from our visits to Special Schools and listening to what the schools want from us</p> <p>We are widening our network, looking at new & 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>
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The Trustees have had regard to the guidance

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 2023 to March 31st 2024</p> <p>This year the income from corporate sponsorship, grants and donations has increased as more funding has been available after covid and our opportunity to deliver is back to pre covid</p> <p>Outreach visits to family's homes which we introduced during Covid times has been a great success and continued, with more and more families benefitting from the service.</p> <p>We visit the following schools:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Edith Borthwick School, Bocking, Essex. Once a week or fortnight during term time. 2) Grove Cottage (mencap), Bishops Stortford twice per month. 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 4) We visit Columbus School & College Chelmsford through general funding. We've built up a great rapport and understanding of the children's needs bringing them fun & laughter, helping them to interact with each other and express themselves. 5) Meldreth School The benefits of these visits have led to a reduction in stress and boredom for the children and their parents at these clinics. 6) Market Fields School Colchester Weekly or fortnightly visits during term time, through specific funding for that area

		<p>Training programmes:</p> <p>A new trainee LS began in mid 2023 and another in early 2024, both covering the Manchester area.</p> <p>A rigorous new theory training programme has been developed which will sit alongside a thorough practical training programme.</p> <p>The charity has successfully secured funds to move into the Manchester/Blackpool area and the North London region.</p> <p>Development of our service with older people with focus on dementia is also progressing, more funding is required to secure this service. 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	<p>There is an restricted funds balance of £17,330 and an unrestricted funds balance of £12,871 at the end of the financial year.</p> <p>We still had some training money left to continue our training programme. Overall successful funding was lower this year, there appears to be a lot more competition for grants and funds overall. We are looking at alternative ways to raise funds in this very competitive market.</p>
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</p>

		<p>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 reconsidered 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	
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 (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Trust Deed
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	Trust

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	Appointed by existing trustees
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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	Falcons Park Road Little Easton, Great Dunmow Essex CM6 2JH

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	Edward Rudd	Treasurer		
2	Clare Thompson			
3	Karen Sheairs	Acting Chair Jun20 -		
4	Madeleine Gardner	Finance officer		
5				

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

Director name		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	

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),

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

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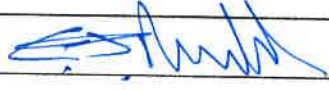
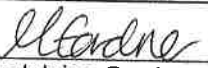
Other optional information

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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 17/01/2025



The Laughter Specialists

1132987

Receipts and payments accounts

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For the period
from

01-Apr-23

To

31-Mar-24

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					
Grants	978	33,919	-	34,894	39,002
Programme service fees	6,968	-	-	6,968	9,648
Donations	28,069	-	-	28,069	41,371
Fundraising events	-	-	-	-	-
Bank interest	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	36,009	33,919	-	69,928	89,919
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	36,009	33,919	-	69,928	89,919
A3 Payments					
Specialist performer fees	7,618	46,866	-	54,483	37,847
Fundraiser and administration fees	15,032	4,922	-	19,954	28,003
Management fees	2,264	6,968	-	9,210	6,410
Fundraising event costs	-	-	-	-	-
Other event costs	-	-	-	-	-
Costumes and props	87	1,354	-	1,441	1,565
Training	78	700	-	778	-
Insurance & licences	1,036	-	-	1,036	709
Accountancy costs	600	-	-	600	540
Advertising & marketing	-	-	-	-	148
IT costs	768	-	-	768	754
Travel, printing, meetings & sundries	1,762	2,991	-	4,743	1,784
Sub total	29,124	63,788	-	92,912	76,770
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Laptops	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	29,124	63,788	-	92,912	76,770
Net of receipts/(payments)	6,885	(29,869)	-	(22,984)	13,149
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	5,986	47,199	-	53,185	40,038
Cash funds this year end	12,871	17,330	-	30,201	53,185

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

		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank	12,871	17,330	-
	Cash in hand	-	-	-
	Total cash funds	12,871	17,330	-
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Grants receivable	-	7,660	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Laptops	Unrestricted	3,016	-
B5 Liabilities		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	Performer fees	Restricted	688	
	Fundraiser fees	Unrestricted	700	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		E. J. HODD	4/9/24	
		M. GARDNER	4/9/24	



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 2024** 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: **18/8/24**

Name: **N.S. Caton**

Relevant qualification **FCA, CTA**

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