

Charity Number 1136552

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## Montessori Education for Autism

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Report of the Trustees  
and  
Independently Examined Financial Statements  
for the year ended 31 December 2021



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## Montessori Education for Autism

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**Montessori Education for Autism**

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**Trustees of the Charity**

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Wendy Fidler	**	<i>Chair, Academic Director</i>
Roger Patenall	**	<i>Treasurer</i>
Shalini Modi	**	
Ashok Kumar		
Rachel Spooner		
David Stott		
Delphine Marcillaud		
Katalin Lovassy		

\*\* *Members of the Executive Committee*

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**Reference and administrative details of the charity**

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Charity Registered Number 1136552

Registered Office

Montessori House, 135 Westcombe Hill, Blackheath, London, SE3 7DP

Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd

Insurance Brokers

Northern Counties Insurance LLP

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**Montessori Education for Autism**


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**Statement of Financial Activities**

for the year ended 31 December 2021

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		<b>Restricted Funds 2021 £</b>	<b>Unrestricted Funds 2021 £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2021 £</b>	<i>Total funds 2020 £</i>
	Note				
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Voluntary income	1	5,985	68,399	74,384	80,077
Activities	2		31,096	31,096	35,748
Investment Income	3		4	4	22
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>		<u>5,985</u>	<u>99,499</u>	<u>105,484</u>	<u>115,847</u>
<b>Resources Expended</b>					
Charitable activities	4	5,985	94,439	100,424	103,960
Governance costs	5		500	500	400
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<u>5,985</u>	<u>94,939</u>	<u>100,924</u>	<u>104,360</u>
<b>Movement in total funds for the year</b>		0	4,580	4,580	
Total funds at 1 January 2021		0	30,132	30,132	
<b>Total funds at 31 December 2021</b>		<u>0</u>	<u>34,712</u>	<u>34,712</u>	

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**Montessori Education for Autism**

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**Balance Sheet**as at 31 December 2021

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		<b>2021</b>		<b>2020</b>	
	Note	£	£	£	£
<b>Current Assets</b>					
Petty Cash Floats		195		254	
Debtors	7	6,573		3,833	
Total at Bank		28,444		26,045	
		<u>35,212</u>		<u>30,132</u>	
<b>Creditors</b>					
Due within one year	8	500		-	
		<u>500</u>		<u>-</u>	
			34,712		30,132
		<u><b>34,712</b></u>		<u><b>30,132</b></u>	
<b>Charity Funds</b>					
Unrestricted Funds	9		34,712		21,582
Restricted Funds	9		-		8,550
			<u><b>34,712</b></u>		<u><b>30,132</b></u>

The notes and policies on pages 4 to 6 form part of these Financial Statements

The Financial Statements were approved by the Trustees on 8th January, 2022  
and signed on their behalf by:



Roger Patenall FCA

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**Montessori Education for Autism**

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**Notes to the Financial Statements**

for the year ended 31 December 2021

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	<b>Restricted Funds 2021 £</b>	<b>Unrestricted Funds 2021 £</b>	<b>Total Funds 2021 £</b>	<i>Total Funds 2020 £</i>
<b>1 Voluntary Income</b>				
Donations	5,985	51,667	57,652	65,232
Gift Aid		16,732	16,732	14,845
	<u>5,985</u>	<u>68,399</u>	<u>74,384</u>	<u>80,077</u>
<b>2 Income from Activities</b>				
Registrations	-	430	430	400
Donations to Nurture Groups	-	23,512	23,512	29,385
Donations for SEN & Waldon Training	-	6,360	6,360	5,730
MEfA Conferences & Events	-	-	-	-
Other fundraising	-	794	794	233
	<u>-</u>	<u>31,096</u>	<u>31,096</u>	<u>35,748</u>
<b>3 Investment Income</b>				
Bank Interest		4	4	22
<b>4 Expenditure on Charitable Activity</b>				
Summary by Fund Type:				
General Overheads		2,603	2,603	1,859
Administration costs		6,067	6,067	9,678
Nurture Groups		82,901	82,901	85,021
SEN & Waldon Training		9,178	9,178	7,802
MEfA Conferences & Events		155	155	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>100,904</u>	<u>100,904</u>	<u>104,360</u>
Summary by expenditure type:				
Overheads and Admin			8,670	11,537
Nurture Groups			82,901	85,021
SEN & Waldon Training			9,178	7,802
MEfA Conference & Events			155	-
			<u>100,904</u>	<u>104,360</u>

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**Montessori Education for Autism**

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**Notes to the Financial Statements, continued**

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		2021	2020		
		£	£		
5	<b>Employee</b>				
	In 2020 there was one employee (2019 - one) involved in the provision of charitable activity				
	There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.				
6	<b>Governance Costs</b>				
	Accountancy Costs	400	400		
	Meeting Expenses	-	-		
	Bank charges	-	-		
	Postage	-	-		
		<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>		
7	<b>Net Income</b>				
	This is stated after charging Accountancy Fees	400	400		
	During the year, no Trustee received any remuneration for acting as a Trustee (2019 - nil)				
	During the year, no Trustee received any benefits in kind (2019 - nil)				
	During the year, no Trustee received any reimbursement of expenses (2019 - nil)				
8	<b>Debtors</b>				
	Trade debtors, due within one year	2,750	2,750		
	Donation Pledged	-	-		
	Sundry Debtors	1,083	1,083		
9	<b>Creditors</b>				
	Expense accrued, due within one year		-		
##	<b>Statement of funds</b>	Brought Forward	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Carried Forward
		£	£	£	£
	Unrestricted funds	21,582			21,582
	Restricted funds	8,550			8,550
		<u>30,132</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>30,132</u>

**1. Basis of preparation of the Financial Statements**

The Financial Statements have been prepared using the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities. The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice - "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and with applicable accounting standards.

The books of account are kept on a Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with Charity Commission advice for a charity of this size. The Financial Statements have been prepared making adjustments to reflect timing differences between the receipt and payment of monies and the year in which the activity takes place.

Payments of deposits to landlords in respect of rent obligations have been carried forward as debtors.

**2. Fund Accounting**

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for specific purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with the specific restrictions imposed by donors and which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes.

**3. Incoming Resources**

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with accuracy.

Gifts in Kind donated to the charity are included at valuation (subject to de minimis) and recognised as income at the time of receipt.

No amounts are included in the Financial Statements for services donated by volunteers. Donated services or facilities are included in income (subject to de minimis) at a valuation which is an estimate of the financial cost borne by the donor where such cost is quantifiable and measureable.

Income Tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid is recognised at the time funds are received from HMRC.

**4 Resource expended**

All expenditure is accounted for at the time the funds are expended, except where detailed in note 1 above. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to one particular activity they have been allocated, so far as is practicable, on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

Governance costs are those incurred in connection with the administration of the charity and in compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements.



**Report of the Independent Examiner to the trustees of Montessori Education for Autism for the year ended 31 December 2021.**

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**Respective Responsibilities of the trustees and of the Examiner.**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- (1) examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- (2) follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Act), and
- (3) 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 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 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 Act and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act, have not been met, and furthermore, there are no matters to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Richard W Carey  
London.

26<sup>th</sup> March, 2022

## **Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 December 2021**

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The trustees present their Annual Report together with the Financial Statements of Montessori Education for Autism ('the charity' also 'MEfA') for the year ended 31 December 2021. The trustees confirm that the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the charity comply with current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities".

### **Covid 19**

In 2020 we broke with tradition by starting our Trustee Report with what we hoped would be a one-off review of the charity's response to the Covid 19 pandemic. Sadly, this subject remains the dominant factor that has affected all of our activities again in 2021, and already our return to school in January 2022 has been marked by Covid 19 related changes and complications.

In line with all educational establishments in England we remained closed during January and February 2021, and reopened in March. Due largely to the strict protocols that we had in place, and the unrelenting efforts of the staff to constantly clean and disinfect every item after every class, MEfA was then able to remain open throughout the remainder of 2021.

This availability was much appreciated by many families for whom MEfA is their weekly 'life-line'. However, from the point of view of the charity this came with a heavy financial cost. Numbers of families attending were varying from under one half of the normal enrolment to just under two thirds. However, the costs remain fixed for the most part regardless of numbers, and, once again, the HM government furlough scheme provided the difference between remaining solvent and having to close.

As in 2020, we were unable to hold any of our usual conferences and other events, again with a negative impact on our finances.

### **Structure, governance and management:**

#### a) Organisational structure and decision making:

##### Trustees

All trustees give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the charity in their role as Trustees.

The trustees consider that the Board of Trustees provides a wide spectrum of experience to MEfA. This experience covers autism, special needs education, the principles of learning devised by Dr Maria Montessori and others and also provides an insight into care and education in countries other than the United Kingdom.

#### b) Risk Management

The trustees are aware of their obligations and the need to provide a safe, healthy environment in which staff, volunteers, visitors and clients and their families can have confidence.

Policies are in place, and are reviewed on a regular basis, covering, inter alia, Protection of Children and Vulnerable People; Health and Safety, Use of Cameras and Mobile Recording Devices, Data Protection and Staff, Trustee and Visitor protocols, which include induction into the ethics, standards and procedures of MEfA.

### **Objectives and Activities:**

#### a) Aims and Objectives

Our charity's objectives are as set out in The Objects clause of our constitution which was adopted on 28 February 2009. In summary, these are to benefit the public by advancing the education of children with autism (and conditions related to autism) through methods of learning and education developed by Dr Maria Montessori

A full report on our activities in 2020 and how we have strived to achieve these objectives appears at the section headed Achievements and Performance below and in our Covid 19 report above.

#### b) Public Benefit

This year, again, all of our activities have provided immediate and visible benefit to those with special needs (principally autism related), their families and their carers. MEfA aims to keep its objects under review and to continue directing its energies to those who may benefit from the expertise of its people.

### **Achievements and Performance:**

#### a) Activity Report

All our child and parent activities, and assessments, are held at Montessori House. These groups continue their evolution from an Early Intervention Class for very small children and their parents with a strong focus on developing children's social, sensory, communication, language and coordination skills. Our flagship project, the Montessori Moles after-school nurture group for children ages 4-11 years, often operating at capacity, helping children who are struggling to access their education at primary school because of difficulties associated with autism, such as sensory issues, social, communication and physical difficulties, anxiety, low self-esteem and poor self-regulation which often leads to behavioural problems.

We now have the following groups running each week during term time:

- Baby Montessori (children aged up to 12-15 months);
- Toddler Montessori (children aged from 15–36 months: 2 weekly groups);
- Montessori Inclusive School (children aged from 2-9 years: 3 weekly groups);
- Montessori Moles: After-School Nurture Group (aged 4-12 years: 1 weekly group);
- Forest School / Wellbeing Sessions (two weekly groups);
- After School Montessori Enrichment Group (aged 4-12 years: This group is temporarily suspended).

We are hugely indebted to the number of volunteers and interns who have supported our activities this year; we have a continuing stream of interest and enquiries about this aspect of our work. We are grateful also to the young people from overseas who have spent time with us in spite of the cumbersome procedure of obtaining the necessary visas.

By 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 we had completed 22 cohorts of the MEfA Montessori post-graduate SEN CPD Short Course: Part 1 - A Blueprint for Observation, and as a result we have trained teachers, psychologists, social workers, early years educators, parents, a choreographer, an environmental designer, and other masters-grade students so they can apply Montessori special education methodology and philosophy to their work, thus providing other avenues for reaching out to children and adults with autism. We are also justifiably proud of our increasing professional links with mainstream organisations.

In 2021 a reduced number of children registered to our various sessions at Montessori House which was to be expected, and it seems that there will be an ongoing requirement for social distancing in the coming months, which will again limit the numbers that register with us and thus enable us to meet the restrictions.

#### b) Financial matters

##### b.1) Funding

The total income of MEfA for 2021 was £105,484 (2020 - £115,847). Expenditure amounted to £100,904 (against £104,360 in 2020). General overheads in 2021 amounted to £2,103 (2020 - £1,859). The Trustees believe that this level of overhead is acceptable for a charity of this size and includes: Subscriptions made, Insurance, Fundraising, Bank and credit card charges and Professional Fees. The increase in 2021 includes a small increase in the fee of the Examining Accountant, the first such increase since 2012.

These financial results reflect the exceptionally challenging fundraising climate faced by MEfA in 2021, but also demonstrate the responsive manner in which the trustees have been able to match the expenditure to the income available.

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## Montessori Education for Autism

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The trustees attach great importance and commensurate effort into raising as much of our financial needs from the activities run on a regular basis, and thereby minimise our dependence upon grants from outside donors. This policy will continue during 2022 Nevertheless, MEfA is extremely grateful to the donors listed below, and acknowledges that such donations will continue to be a vital part of our funding programme.

### b.2) Donations

During 2021, grants, donations (including in kind) and funds were received from the following:

The Julia & Hans Rausing Charitable Trust (Special Covid Fund)  
The Kelly Family Charitable Trust (Special Covid Fund)  
The Stephen Taylor Foundation  
The Bimal Family  
Royal Borough of Greenwich (Neighbourhood Growth Fund)  
Greenwich GoodGym (who were unable to visit in 2021, but whose previous work continued to enhance the MEfA environment throughout 2021)  
The Page Family  
Design for Print

MEfA is grateful to all donors, including many whose time has been freely given but are not acknowledged above.

### b.3) Expenditure

As noted elsewhere, trustees are not reimbursed in respect of their activities as trustees and no expenses have been reimbursed to trustees during the year.

In accordance with Charity Commission guidelines the accounts have been kept using the receipts and payments method. In the Financial Statements, Deposit rents paid to agents of the landlord in respect of the properties at 135 and 135A Westcombe Hill are carried forward as prepayments. Payment of certain expenses (principally Insurance) for 2022 has been made in December 2021 and is carried forward as a prepayment.

Expenditure has been tightly controlled during 2021. The one major item purchased was a 12ft by 6ft quality greenhouse constructed in wood and toughened glass, which is already transforming the range of activities within the Forest School. This project was funded for the most part by The Greenwich Neighbourhood Growth Fund, with the balance, being the earthwork and concrete base, funded by a private donation.



### **Investment Review**

MEfA funds not immediately required are held on a bank deposit account. In this time of continuing negligible investment returns, the trustees consider that any extra returns that may be earned by seeking other uses for funds are outweighed by the inherent risks in taking such action.

### **Plans for the future and Appreciation**

At the time of preparation of this report, the outlook for 2022 remains very unclear, in spite of the success of the Covid vaccines programme. Our Forest School continues to be developed with an eye to the longer term future. Elsewhere our plans are all focussed on ensuring the more immediate future of the charity.

The gratitude of our MEfA families that we are still there to offer them support has been gratifying. We are confident that, whatever challenges are encountered, we will continue to offer as full a range as possible of activities through 2022. MEfA, in turn, could not operate without the continuing efforts of our staff, volunteers, donors and families for which we place on record our heartfelt thanks.

This report was approved by the Trustees on XXXX XXXXXXXX 2022 and signed on their behalf by:



Wendy Fidler

Testimonials - 2020

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The MEfA session texts and great articles gave me all the ideas and guidance on how to start my research and I will keep these treasures in a very precious place on my shelf and forever in my heart.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the MEfA course, which helped me not only gain more knowledge on different special educational needs, but also gave me great confidence to talk about it to parents, as well as share my knowledge with my colleagues.

*A Cohort 20 student*

Dear Wendy,

Thank you very much for the programme (*for M, during Lockdown*). It is fantastic, we are implementing it well.

. . . .

Thank you very much for all your help, support and reassurance, having you in our lives is a great privilege!

*M's Mum (June 2020)*

Dear Wendy,

I just wanted to send you, Rathi and the rest of your team a huge thank you for your support and tutelage since September. We really appreciate the time you have spent planning the session and personalising the activities for R. I think this has made an enormous difference and helped F to make some progress this term.

Thank you also for making J (*sibling*) so welcome.

Moreover, even in these uncertain waters, MEfA has always remained a steady and constant vessel. Your commitment and bravery is incredibly admirable and we have been very grateful for this.

*L - a Mum (December 2020)*

"I have such fond memories of your Montessori preschool at Mycenae House. I remember you introduced me to the concept of children working hard through observation, that they are constantly learning even when they don't appear to be actively engaged."

*The Mum of a former toddler pupil reaching his 11th birthday.*

I discovered Montessori's Method, fell in love with it and qualified as a Montessori teacher. After that I did a post grad diploma with Montessori Education for Autism. What I learnt gave me the confidence to dismantle the various methods, choose what I needed, and re-build them into my own version. . . ( Thank you Wendy Fidler)

*Chi Boakye (SEN Training, Cohort 4)*

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## Montessori Education for Autism

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### Testimonials - 2021

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I Am currently pursuing my diploma course in SLD from India and just cannot forget the journey I had in MEFA. Thank you for the immense knowledge that you shared. As I'm doing my project I just can't stop thinking about my time in your school. Thank you so much

*Sapna U. (SEN graduate)*

Dear Wendy,

Thank you very much for the programme *(for M, during Lockdown)*. It is fantastic, we are implementing it well.

. . . .

Thank you very much for all your help, support and reassurance, having you in our lives is a great privilege!

*M's Mum (June 2020)*

Dear Wendy,

I just wanted to send you, Rathi and the rest of your team a huge thank you for your support and tutelage since September. We really appreciate the time you have spent planning the session and personalising the activities for R. I think this has made an enormous difference and helped R to make some progress this term.

Thank you also for making J *(sibling)* so welcome.

Moreover, even in these uncertain waters, MEFA has always remained a steady and constant vessel. Your commitment and bravery is incredibly admirable and we have been very grateful for this.

*L - a Mum (December 2020)*

"I have such fond memories of your Montessori preschool at Mycenae House. I remember you introduced me to the concept of children working hard through observation, that they are constantly learning even when they don't appear to be actively engaged."

*The Mum of a former toddler pupil reaching his 11th birthday.*

I discovered Montessori's Method, fell in love with it and qualified as a Montessori teacher. After that I did a post grad diploma with Montessori Education for Autism. What I learnt gave me the confidence to dismantle the various methods, choose what I needed, and re-build them into my own version. . . ( Thank you Wendy Fidler)

*Chi Boakye (SEN Training, Cohort 4)*