THE LINKING NETWORK

England & Wales · Charity number 1163901

Details

Other names	SCHOOLS LINKING
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2015-10-09
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

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Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE, FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, TO: 4.1. ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE, IN PARTICULAR BY: 4.1.1. PROMOTING SUPPORTING PARTICIPATION IN AND ENCOURAGING PROJECTS INVOLVING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS, ECONOMIC, ETHNIC AND CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS; 4.1.2. PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS AND TRAINERS THROUGH ACTION, RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS; 4.1.3. DEVELOPING RESOURCES FOR USE IN THE CLASSROOM OR OTHER SETTINGS EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS; 4.1.4. OFFERING GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL LEADERS AND GOVERNORS INSTRENGTHENING THE PROCESS OF EMBEDDING LINKING AND CITIZENSHIP WITHIN SCHOOLS. 4.2. ADVANCE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AND RELIGIOUS AND RACIAL HARMONY IN PARTICULAR BY: 4.2.1. ADVANCING EDUCATION AND RAISING AWARENESS IN EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AND RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS HARMONY;4.2.2. FOSTERING UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PEOPLE FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, IN PARTICULAR BY PROVIDING SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR SCHOOLS? PARTICIPATION IN PROJECTS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS WITH SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT POPULATIONS AND/OR TO WORK WITHIN THEIR OWN DIVERSE COMMUNITIES IN ORDER TO ENHANCE THE UNDERSTANDING OF IDENTITY, EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY; 4.2.3. CULTIVATING A SENTIMENT IN FAVOUR OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY, RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS HARMONY. 4.3. ADVANCE CITIZENSHIP IN CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

Activities: Education Consultancy and Training

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Education/training, Economic/community Development/employment, Human Rights/religious Or Racial Harmony/equality Or Diversity
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£823,196	£815,385	£1,123,978	9
2024-03-31	£541,456	£440,772	£1,116,167	9
2023-03-31	£492,003	£640,875	-	-
2022-03-31	£797,648	£543,919	£1,164,355	8
2021-03-31	£896,770	£657,693	£910,626	8

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Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Bishop Toby Howarth	Chair	2015-10-09
Alexandra Jane Enyori		2024-07-02
Alisha Batool		2024-10-21
Molly Beth Conrad		2025-07-07
Rev DENISE JUNE POOLE		2015-10-09
Yvette Thomas		2021-06-17
Zahra Niazi		2022-09-01

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THE LINKING NETWORK

England & Wales - Charity number 1163901

Accounts

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THE LINKING NETWORK

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Charity Registration No. 1163901

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THE LINKING NETWORK

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Bishop Toby Howarth	
	Rev Denise Poole	
	Yvette Thomas	
	Zahra Niazi	
	Alisha Batool	(Appointed 21 October 2024)
	Alexandra Enyori	(Appointed 2 July 2024)
	Molly Conrad	(Appointed 7 July 2025)
Charity number	1163901	
Principal address	Britannia House Hall Ings Bradford BD1 1HX	
Independent examiner	Alison Whalley FCA Azets Audit Services Ltd Carlton House Grammar School Street Bradford BD1 4NS	
Bankers	CCLA Investment Management 1 Angle Lane London EC4V 4ET Unity Trust Bank Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2HB	

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THE LINKING NETWORK

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THE LINKING NETWORK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's constitution as amended 19 February 2016, the Charities Act 2011 and “Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)” (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019)

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects are

To advance the education of children and young people, in particular by:

- promoting and supporting participation in projects involving children and young people from different social, religious, economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds;
- providing support for educators and trainers through action, research and professional development in conjunction with other institutions;
- developing resources for use in the classroom or other educational settings;
- offering guidance and support for school leaders and governors in strengthening the process of embedding linking and citizenship within schools.

To advance equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony in particular by:

- advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony;
- foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds, in particular by providing support and encouragement for schools' participation in projects with other schools with significantly different populations and/or to work within their own diverse communities in order to enhance the understanding of identity, equality and diversity;
- cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity, racial and religious harmony.

To advance citizenship in children, young people and communities.

The charity has made good progress towards achieving these objectives this year, as evidenced by the activities, outcomes and achievements listed below.

Public benefit statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities our trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission’s general guidance on public benefit.

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THE LINKING NETWORK

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Message from the Chair of Trustees

On behalf of The Linking Network Trustees, I want to express our deep appreciation to all the local facilitators, schools, and local organisations who have taken part in Schools Linking this year. We are especially grateful for your continued commitment in a time of increasing challenge and change.

The context in which we work is constantly evolving. This year we've seen growing polarisation and division, both locally and globally. Communities across the country have experienced uncertainty, anxiety and tension. In this climate, the importance of fostering community cohesion and encouraging children and young people to build understanding of each other and connect meaningfully across difference is more vital than ever.

We know that schools are facing ongoing budget and capacity pressures in programmes. Yet, time and again, school leaders have chosen to prioritise Linking, recognising its long-term value for their pupils and communities. We are truly inspired by your commitment.

This year, we have placed greater emphasis on bringing the voices of pupils and other stakeholders to the heart of our programmes. This shift has brought a new richness and relevance to our work, deepening its impact and reach. We are also delighted to now be learning alongside colleagues in Wales and Northern Ireland—extending the spirit of linking across even more communities.

Our Intergenerational Linking programme has once again brought joy to all involved. We have been particularly thrilled to collaborate with Bradford 2025 City of Culture to introduce creative play in our links. Our heartfelt thanks go to the schools and care homes who have taken part with such care and enthusiasm, creating unforgettable shared memories across generations.

We are deeply grateful to all our partners for their ongoing engagement and support, and to our funders for their belief in and investment in our shared vision.
We look forward to continuing to grow and connect together in the year ahead.

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THE LINKING NETWORK

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Background to our work

'Helps to change your perspective about meeting new people - it's not that scary.'

Pupil in Bury

The Linking Network (TLN) inspires and equips schools to support children and young people to build meaningful connections across all forms of difference. We do this through two Linking programmes: **National Schools Linking** and **Intergenerational Linking in Bradford**. We believe in the capacity we all have to contribute towards a society where we can all live well together. Our work creates space for meaningful conversations using four key questions that foster curiosity, understanding and belonging:

Who Am I? Who are we? Where do we live? How do we all live well together?

There is strong evidence that meaningful contact between people from different social, ethnic, faith or geographical backgrounds can reduce prejudice, increase trust and understanding and lead to a greater sense of togetherness. Yet across the UK, many children and young people grow up in schools and communities where opportunities for sustained social mixing are limited. At the same time, discourse in the media and society can be confusing for young people. When our earliest perceptions of people who are different to us are negative then anxiety and fear shape our encounters later in life. On the other hand, if we have early experiences with new and different people that foster curiosity, encourage understanding and are joyful, we carry these experiences with us, shaping our life-long expectations of belonging - for ourselves and those around us.

This is at the heart of our work; creating more cohesive communities by giving children and young people opportunities to experience positive intergroup contact and gain confidence in meeting people who may be different from themselves. Our Linking programmes are led by teachers and enable children to develop skills of enquiry, critical thinking, reflection and communication. They provide opportunities to meet others across all forms of difference, gain confidence in contact, build empathy and trust and work together to contribute to the wider community - dispelling misperception and fear in the process. Our programmes are also about improving achievement across the curriculum and giving young people a voice and vital life-skills. Crucially they are enjoyable and create positive memories.

The disorder experienced by many communities in the UK over Summer 2024 coupled with widespread global conflict, was a powerful reminder of the continued need for work that strengthens social cohesion. Despite the challenging context and reducing public sector budgets, large numbers of schools chose to participate in Schools or Intergenerational Linking last year, creating opportunities for their pupils to meet others and to encounter difference in carefully planned and supported ways. Year after year, schools seek out these experiences for their children because they see the impact: greater confidence, empathy and understanding. Across the country, there has been extraordinary care and dedication from teachers, Headteachers, Local Authorities, community partners and civil society - all contributing to joyful opportunities for children and young people to meet with others who are in some way different from themselves. We would like to recognise the children and young people across all our partner schools who have taken part in Linking with such enthusiasm, curiosity and courage.

A summary of the activities and outcomes of each of our programmes during the year April 2024 - March 2025 are outlined below. We conclude the trustees' report by looking ahead to 2025-2026.

1. **National Schools Linking Programme**

'It's more than a Linking Project. You are inviting people into your life and just meeting new friends that you wouldn't have even known exist. We've so much in common, it's just really fun. I don't know why we didn't do it before.' Pupil Advisory Group Pupil

'I was nervous at first and then when I met everyone and then they were speaking to me I was like…getting happy.' (Year 5 pupil speaking about a Linking Visit)

'The experience has a huge beneficial impact on the students, who through Schools Linking learn the crucial values of respect and acceptance and the key life skills of communication and teamwork.' - Secondary Schools Linking teacher

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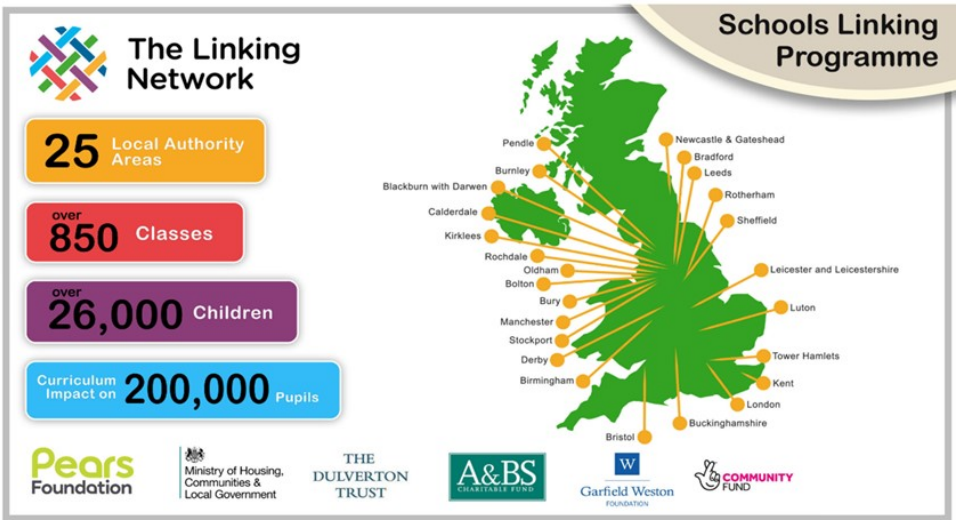
Schools Linking brings together two carefully matched classes from demographically different schools in a district, helping children and young people to connect with peers they might not otherwise meet in a structured and meaningful way over the course of a year. They explore identity, build relationships across lines of difference and this can strengthen communities. Rooted in the key conditions for positive contact in intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954), classes exchange work, meet online and then face-to-face in cultural or outdoor education venues and then visit one another's schools. In secondary schools there are shorter pathways with an emphasis on skills development, community building and allyship. Within Schools Linking, using our linking process to build connections between students at the same school, is of increasing interest, particularly in schools with diverse intakes.

Schools Linking includes carefully crafted activities that help pupils share their experiences with their families, strengthening connections between home and school and deepening the sense of shared understanding and belonging. The year includes high quality social action opportunities for pupils to work together to bring about positive change in their communities and work towards shared goals. In the Summer term, children and young people have the opportunity to celebrate their linking achievements on a national level by connecting online via our Schools Linking Celebration Week live sessions.

We support a network of local organisations to lead the delivery of Schools Linking in 25 local areas, rooted in their unique context - harnessing local knowledge, relationships and expertise. Four Schools Linking programmes are led by cultural organisations, six by local NGOs and 15 by colleagues within Local Authority's children's services (see table for a full list of our partner organisations). All 25 Local Areas deliver Primary Schools Linking, ten of our Local Areas also link in Secondary and seven link in Special Schools. Local Area Facilitators are locally employed, and their organisation receives a modest capacity grant from TLN to support the recruitment, matching, linking teacher training and support across the academic year to linking schools. In addition to the grant, the TLN core team provides regular support to the Local Area Facilitators by convening whole-network meetings and meeting each individual Local Area to plan the year ahead, reflect on progress, address challenges and make the most of local opportunities. This support has been especially important in the last year for organisations leading Schools Linking that have undergone significant change. Our support for the network is continuously informed by our direct delivery of Schools Linking in Bradford, where we are able to test new approaches.

Central to the success of Schools Linking is the commitment and tenacity of the hundreds of teachers who lead their classes through the programme together with the recognition and support of school leaders who value the importance of this work. TLN works with all kinds of schools - primary, secondary, special, mainstream, faith, independent schools and we aim for a long-term relationship between schools. Our central core team creates, tests and refines all of the classroom resources needed for teachers to be able to deliver Schools Linking as well as additional materials to explore themes of diversity, community, and equality across the whole school. Schools Linking teacher training sessions are held twice a year in all local areas and the core team co-deliver this with the majority of local partners.

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Key achievements 2024-2025

26,000 children and young people took part in Schools Linking. Our network of local facilitators delivering Schools Linking in 25 Local Authority Areas continues to be collaborative, mutually supportive and determined to provide the very best opportunities for children to feel connected with their peers and within their wider communities. They are all delivering a local Schools Linking Programme with energy, vision and creativity - collectively reaching **26,000 children, 850 classes** in over **500 schools** across England.
Schools Linking Celebration Week took place in June 2024, enabling pupils and their teachers to feel part of a national movement of schools connecting. Over 3,500 primary school pupils joined a live online Linking session and many local celebrations took place reaching into communities.

Reaching high proportions of schools in areas of deprivation.
Our records show that over a fifth (22%) of our linking schools are in the
lowest decile for IMD (Indices of multiple deprivation), whilst over half of our linking
schools (55%) are in the four lowest indices of multiple deprivation. The remainder of our schools are across all the higher six indices showing that we are bringing children from different localities together. 86% of Linking Schools were in Urban Areas with 14% in Rural Areas.

Increase in social confidence in pupils who are usually withdrawn in class. This impact has been independently commented on by headteachers and teachers from across our network. These quotes below are just examples: *'I am seeing three children who we are really concerned about their social interaction in school flourishing socially today*.' Primary Headteacher *'Children who find making friends challenging have made new friends... it was incredible to see.*' Primary teacher. We have been discussing with researchers how we can further understand this important effect.

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Innovation in Secondary Schools Linking - Across the network, local areas delivered a range of exciting approaches in secondary schools. This included linking young carers, student leaders, new arrivals, students with English as an additional language or students focusing on specific subjects such as Religious Education, Art and Maths. The Linking students had the opportunity to lead a range of activities, including engaging in meaningful dialogue with the wider community, facilitating an assembly for their entire year group, or connecting with elected members of their Council.

Enhancing Links with neutral venue visits to local cultural experiences. In 13 of the Local Areas neutral venue visits took place which created a wonderful space for the first meetings of the two classes, strengthening the connection between the children and opening up the local cultural life available to both schools. For many children involved in Schools Linking, the visit can be the first time they have been in a theatre, museum or art gallery. Venues hosting link days included M6 Theatre in Rochdale, Stockwood Gallery in Luton, Oldham Gallery, the Laing Gallery in Newcastle.

Developing local Pupil Advisory Groups to ensure children and young people's perspectives and experiences shape the future of Schools Linking. At the heart of our programme, children have a chance to talk about their identity and their voice is valued and listened to throughout the Link. This year, we have trialled new approaches to involve pupils in shaping the Schools Linking programme and sharing their voice across their local areas. Pupil Advisory Groups have been established in six of our Local Areas bringing insight and energy. Changes are already being made to the programme as a direct result of pupil feedback. For example, pupils told us they enjoyed online video call sessions and felt it helped them connect as part of their Linking Journey so more are being designed and planned for next year.

Establishing Stakeholder Advisory Groups that can support the Schools Linking Programme in their local areas. We have established two pilot Stakeholder Advisory Groups in Calderdale and Leicester in order to help programmes build local roots and connections. As a direct result of the new group in Calderdale, cultural funding was identified to enable pairs of classes to take part in neutral venue Links in a local museum, local transport was sourced for Link Visits and a celebration in the Town Hall was arranged. Likewise, in Leicester gathering stakeholders raised awareness, offered local insight to the facilitator about potential partnerships and enabled Leicester Schools Linking to raise funds through a crowdfunding campaign.

Building agency through social action. Across the network linking schools undertook social action as part of their Linking Programme. In addition, our Primary Schools Linking programme in Bradford partnered with Child Friendly Bradford to enhance children's experience of social action, building appreciation of their shared values, sense of agency and voice. Classes received a book full of ideas to inspire their planning, took part in a live lesson with an inspirational author, and were given a small amount of funding to put towards their chosen social action projects. Pupils took action in a variety of creative ways, from seed planting, to promoting safe parking, to spreading happiness within their schools and communities.

Schools Linking embedded in a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). We are working closely with a Bradford Multi Academy Trust to explore delivering Schools Linking across the whole Trust. All 22 classes from Years 3, 4 and 5 of their Primary schools are taking part in Linking, with plans for all Year 6 classes across the MAT to join in 2025–2026. A refreshed curriculum is being written for each year group, ensuring the programme develops progressively as pupils move through the school. The same MAT also delivers Schools Linking across its five very different secondary schools, enabling pupils to connect and explore key questions about identity, community and belonging as they move into the next phase of their education.

Scaling our work to more communities across the UK. Cardiff Schools Linking Programme will launch in Autumn 2025, supporting the delivery of outcomes in the Anti Racist Wales Action Plan. We have established a strong partnership in Wales with the team at EMTAS (Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Services), Children's Services and Cardiff Council. Drawing on deep local knowledge, the team at EMTAS has recruited and matched 16 classes across Cardiff. From the 2025–26 academic year, these children will have new opportunities to connect across difference as part of the wider Schools Linking network.

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Sharing learning and good practice with colleagues in Northern Ireland. We were delighted to collaborate with Queens University Belfast (QUB) on planning a conference to exchange learning between practitioners in Northern Ireland and England in May 2025. Key representatives have been invited from Shared Education, Integrated Education, Peace Plus, academia and the Education Authority.

Creating new resources for schools to help build understanding across difference. We developed new classroom and assembly resources in response to key challenges experienced in our Local Areas last year. 'The Day After' assembly resources highlighted solidarity after the disorder experienced in the UK in Summer 2024, while 'If You Knew My Story…' helped pupils appreciate the lived experiences of new arrivals and refugee students within their school communities. Each resource reminds pupils that we are all shaped by stories that influence and impact each day of our lives and that, through kindness and understanding, we can all make a difference in the lives of others. These resources were also shared with schools that don't currently run a Schools Linking programme.

'From the high-quality resources, excellent organisation and support for delivery and great enrichment contacts and experiences, it has been a huge benefit to our school to be part of The Linking Network. It is so important for our children to recognise the benefit of a multicultural society and the richness of learning that comes from different backgrounds and faiths.' Headteacher, Kirklees Schools Linking Programme

'The school ensures it prepares pupils for life beyond the locality. For example, it has twinned with a school in a contrasting location. This helps pupils to develop their understanding of diversity in modern Britain.' Flax Bourton CofE Primary Ofsted Inspection Report, April 2025 (the school takes part in Schools Linking)

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Schools Linking Area	Organisation leading Schools Linking	Date Linking Established
Bradford	The Linking Network, Bradford in partnership with Bradford Council	2001
Oldham	Gallery Oldham, Oldham Council.	2001
Kirklees	Shape North, supported by Kirklees Council	2006
London (FBF)	Faith and Belief Forum (FBF)in London	2007
Buckinghamshire	Buckinghamshire Council	2009
Luton	Luton First Teaching Alliance on behalf of Luton Council	2009
Stockport	Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council	2009
Calderdale	Calderdale Museums Service, Calderdale Council)	2010
Kent	The Education People, Kent County Council)	2010
Bolton	Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service (ACIS), Bolton Council	2013
Pendle	Building Bridges Pendle	2014
Birmingham	Faith and Belief Forum, Birmingham	2017
Blackburn with Darwen	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	2017
Burnley	Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, Lancashire Council	2017
Derby	Derby Open Centre (Programme formerly held by Global Education Derby)	2017
Manchester	HOME, a creative arts venue, supported by Manchester City Council	2017
Rochdale	Rochdale Borough Council	2017
Rotherham	Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY)	2017
Sheffield	Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY)	2017
Waltham Forest	Faith and Belief Forum, London	2017
Bury	Fair Futures CIC, Bury	2018
Leicester and Leicestershire	Project FREE CIC, Leicester	2018
Newcastle and Gateshead	Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (Laing Art Gallery), Newcastle and Gateshead City Council;	2018
Tower Hamlets	Global Learning London, Tower Hamlets Local Authority	2018
Leeds	Leeds DEC (Development Education Centre)	2019
Bristol	Bridges for Communities, Bristol	2020

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2. Intergenerational Linking

“My daughter has loved coming; she’s really enjoyed it. She tells me about Jean, her Gran Friend, all the time.” - Parent

“I shall miss them when they don’t come any more, please can we make sure they visit again?” - Resident

“It was good when they came to visit us at school because they were drawing with us. We were all hoping Renee would come and she did!” - Pupil

Intergenerational Linking brings together young people in schools with older people living in care homes, independent living or from community groups. Through Intergenerational Linking, young and older people share time and stories which creates meaningful and lasting relationships between generations. This helps schools connect positively with their wider community and we know there are huge benefits in terms of combating loneliness and building well-being. The intersectional nature of Intergenerational Linking also has the potential to challenge hate and build social cohesion.

This year we advanced our vision of Bradford becoming an Intergenerational District, where every school builds lasting connections with older people’s settings. We expanded to 67 partnerships, engaging 2,200 pupils and around 1,000 older people across 21 of 23 postcodes. Alongside this growth, we strengthened our model through new activities and resources, expanded Dementia Ambassador training, in-depth evaluation and national sharing of best practice.

This work is amplified by the strong support of Bradford Council and the wider community. The Council’s backing, including access to their portal and newsletters, has helped us extend our reach, while local media and partner organisations have championed the programme through their own channels.

This year, a partnership with Bradford 2025 City of Culture enabled Creative Practitioners to bring the ‘Intergenerational Play’ project to 20 Links across the district. Their work introduced new activities, gathered fresh insights and raised the profile of Intergenerational Linking in Bradford, creating more opportunities for joy, friendship and connection across generations.

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Key Achievements 2024–25:

Expanded reach and stronger relationships - We are now working across 50 older people's settings in Bradford – including 39 care homes, 10 independent living centres and 2 community groups. 16 settings now have more than one active Link, showing the strong value placed on these connections. On the schools' side, 4 nurseries, 46 primary schools and 15 secondary schools are now part of Intergenerational Linking, spread across Bradford and reaching children of all ages.

Creative enrichment through Bradford 2025 - In partnership with Bradford 2025, the Intergenerational Play project strengthened 10 existing Links and created 10 new connections across the district. Through arts, storytelling and imaginative play, children and older people deepened and built on enriching relationships. These partnerships have also raised the profile of the programme.

Developing a rich variety of activities and resources - This year, children and older people have connected through reading, gardening, play and creative projects that have sparked joy and conversation. With funding support, we expanded our online collection of Intergenerational Linking resources, offering practical tools for every stage of the journey from preparation to first meetings, to sustaining long-term connections. Through facilitator observations and our partnership with Bradford 2025, we developed a new bank of playful and creative resources that actively encourage interaction and support connection across generations. These tested resources, built on experience and insight, are now enriching our network and support schools and care settings with the tools to foster meaningful, lasting relationships.

Expanding Dementia Ambassador Training - We trained 60 Health & Social Care students as Dementia Ambassadors in a Bradford secondary school and piloted our first workshop for primary pupils. Co-developed with dementia specialists, the training is age-appropriate, practical and demonstrates the role young people can play in raising dementia awareness. The results have been powerful: children spoke with pride about their learning, recalled dementia's impact in creative ways and showed greater empathy and patience during care home visits. Staff observed how the training visibly deepened the quality of interactions with residents. Building on these successes, we see significant potential to expand this strand of work in the year ahead.

As our programme grows, intergenerational relationships are strengthening and meaningful, lasting connections are taking root across the district. We are seeing ripple effects in schools, families and communities, where the impact of these relationships continues to spread:

"I've been teaching for over 25 years and hand on heart I can say it was one of the most magical experiences of my career." - Deputy Headteacher

"My son has talked about coming here and how he's met someone who is 102 years old! His Grandma doesn't speak English but he's told her about some of the people he's met. He has loved it and will be sad today that it's finished." - Parent

"I truly hope that every time a child like myself visits it brings happiness and joy to the residents' hearts" - Pupil

"My favourite afternoon at work for a long time!!! It was such a joy to see the children and residents having such a great time and to hear that some of the residents who do not normally show any enjoyment in any activities spent the whole session smiling was just amazing." - Assistant Vice Principle

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3. Developing a learning organisation that empowers our network across the country

We believe every child and young person should have the opportunity to form high quality connections across difference during their education journey in primary, secondary and special schools. To achieve this, we are continuing to strengthen our Linking programmes - creating an environment where schools and teachers feel empowered to celebrate and embed this work, and where our wider network can continue to learn from and inspire one another.

Understanding the impact of Schools Linking from our link teachers.
In Autumn 2024, before they started Schools Linking in their classes, just 23% of the 335 teachers surveyed felt their pupils had substantive opportunities to interact with others from different backgrounds. 92% felt that Schools Linking would be beneficial to their pupils' confidence in future contact with new people. By Spring 2025, 64% felt that their pupils were already feeling more/much more confident at mixing with others from different backgrounds.

In answer to the question about the observed impact of Schools Linking on their children by the end of the Linking Year the 3 most common themes from the teacher survey were: increasing confidence and self-esteem, providing opportunities for friendship and positive interactions and increased understanding of and respect for diversity.

Evidence-informed practice. We continue to evolve our Linking model based on relevant evidence to ensure that Linking is effective in building confidence in meaningful contact across all forms of difference. Research input on the power of designing 'synchronicity' into shared activities in order to build connection shaped new classroom resource development for the programme. Input from research at the University of Exeter into the critical role of ' Felt Understanding' in Intergroup relations - that feeling understood and listened to by other groups leads to more trust and positive views of others sparked reflection on additional ways we could put this research into practice in our Linking programmes.

Evaluating Intergenerational Linking. This year, our researcher-in-residence, Dr Lindsey Cameron (University of Kent), began a comprehensive mixed-method evaluation of Bradford Intergenerational Linking. Using observations, interviews and surveys, the study is capturing impact on wellbeing, social connection and attitudes to ageing. Building on previous evaluations, this bespoke research will help us pinpoint the mechanisms that make Intergenerational Linking effective, strengthening both our practice and the wider evidence base.

Sharing our learning and Intergenerational Linking model across the country - Alongside evaluation, we are committed to sharing our model nationally to inspire wider intergenerational practice. This year we contributed to intergenerational networks, including Creating Intergenerational Communities (CIC), Gen-All, United for All Ages and Southeast Intergenerational Community of Practice. Through this, we have connected with practitioners across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Spain. With funding from City St George's, University of London, we undertook follow-up research to our Care Home FaNs: Intergenerational Linking project to capture the ongoing impact 18 months on. The report demonstrated the long-term impact of the local broker-led model and highlighted how securing further funding and participating in cultural events has strengthened sustainability. We will continue to promote Bradford as a leading example of intergenerational practice, contributing to the growing national evidence base.

Communications strengthened to help raise awareness and understanding nationally: We showcased examples of how Linking can support community cohesion through an Impact Report published in early 2025, regular newsletters and articles on our website and our 4th national Schools Linking Celebration Week. We know there is more to do to highlight the extent of the difficult and important work led by our Local Areas across the country.

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Working to affect systems change: We sought opportunities to share perspectives, trends and our learning about good practice on building connection and community cohesion in schools and communities. We meet regularly with civil servants at MHCLG. We are active members of a national Cohesion Network convened by Belong. We submitted evidence in a number of reviews; the House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee, the Independent Communities and Cohesion Commission; the MHCLG Independent Review into civil unrest in Leicester and the Department for Education Curriculum & Assessment Review call for evidence. We were encouraged by the Interim Report (March 2025) of the DfE review, which stated: *"...it will be important that we also make sure they encounter the unfamiliar, and have their horizons stretched and broadened…Inclusion is also prompted by shared experiences, the creation of connections, and the ability to see and experience a wide range of perspectives".*

4. Looking ahead to 2025-2026

Our priorities for the academic year 2025-2026 are to:

1. **Enable the continued nationwide delivery of transformative programmes and approaches that build meaningful connections across all forms of difference in schools and their communities**

   We will support and equip our 26 Local Areas, including Cardiff Schools Linking, to deliver a high-quality Schools Linking programme that is responsive to their emerging issues and is woven into the fabric of their communities. We will support all of our Local Areas to create forums for meaningful discussion with pupils and wider stakeholders as well as further explore the power of family engagement. A number of new Local Authority Areas and Multi-Academy Trusts have expressed the desire to establish Schools Linking in their schools - we would like to explore ways they could join the network. We look forward to the ongoing mutual exchange of learning with colleagues working on intergroup contact with schools in Northern Ireland. We will continue to build on our high quality Intergenerational Linking model in Bradford.

2. **Continue to develop a learning organisation that empowers our network across the country to flourish**

   We are excited to build on our work with researchers in the field of Intergroup Contact Theory so that the latest research continues to shape and improve our programmes alongside the insights we gather from pupils, teachers and wider stakeholders. We will continue to work with our national network of 26 Local Areas to share learning and experience from the ground in order to inform policy and wider practice so that more pupils can connect meaningfully across difference, feel a sense of belonging and thrive in their communities.

3. **Continue to build the sustainability of The Linking Network in order to drive our collective impact over the long term**

   Our expert team in our Bradford hub will continue to collaborate with our skilled Board of Trustees and our vibrant network of local facilitators nationally to deliver together across our organisational goals. We will work closely with our funders and seek to develop new partnerships in order to secure ongoing support for our collective work and meet the increased demand for our Linking programmes.

Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. The legislation defines fundraising as 'soliciting or otherwise procuring money or other property for charitable purposes'. The charity has raised funds with an online campaign for the Big Give. The charity has received no complaints in relation to fundraising activity for the year under review.

Given the nature of the funding of the charity the Trustees consider that it remains appropriate not to be voluntarily bound to be regulated by the Fundraising Regulator.

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Financial review

During the year the charity received income of £823,196 (2024 £541,456) of which £513,847 (2024 £520,000) was restricted. The charity incurred expenditure of £815,385 (2024 £440,772) including £607,273 (2024 £363,052) from restricted funds. During the year transfers were made to restricted from unrestricted funds of £13,000 (2024 £nil). This resulted in net income of £7,811 (2024 net income £100,684).

This year the capacity grants paid to our local Schools Linking Programmes for the academic year 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 were both paid in this tax year. This shows as a lower cost in the previous tax year and higher cost in 2024-2025- this was due to the timing of the start date of work with a new funder.

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds, excluding fixed assets, should be maintained at a level of a range of at least nine months operating costs, this amounts to £606,000. The trustees consider that reserves at this level ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities, and crucially the disbursement of grants to Local Areas in advance of each academic year, while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised.

Unrestricted funds at 31.3.25 £597,473 (2024 £508,876).

Risk management

The Board of Trustees review the Risk Register on a regular basis, which details operational and safeguarding risks relating to our work with children and young people as well as risks that relate to the sustainability and growth of our programmes. Examples include:

- Capacity pressures in schools create challenges for participation in our Linking Programmes. In particular, there are pressing needs within schools to support pupils and their families with the challenges of SEND, mental health and poverty as well as many demands for curriculum time.
- Cost pressures in schools are a barrier to participation. For example, transport costs are now incredibly high, increasing the cost of Schools Linking visits. In addition, hosting visits in neutral venues has become more expensive. As a result, in around 50% of our Local areas, it's not currently possible to arrange first visits at neutral venues and this means that pupils are missing out on important cultural experiences that could strengthen their sense of local belonging.
- Turnover of key staff in schools, care settings and local partners, who play a central role in making Schools or Intergenerational Linking happen, can disrupt the flow of the Linking journey.
- The funding context across Local Authorities and the voluntary sector is a risk to the sustainability of our Schools Linking partners in Local Areas.

Actions that mitigate these risks include awareness raising of the importance and positive impact of the work; increased support from the TLN core team for local facilitators and link teachers; the continuation of the capacity grant to support the local facilitators; equipping local areas to fundraise locally in order to enhance and expand the programmes; adaptations to the programmes that offer additional low cost ways for pupils to connect with their link; advice and guidance given during training with link teachers on safeguarding during Linking activities and to demonstrate how Linking promotes achievement and can be embedded in the curriculum; comprehensive lesson plans and all requisite materials in order to reduce teacher workload; keeping training and resources to deliver the programme free for schools and local areas; and regularly updating our policies and procedures.

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Structure, governance and management
The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), registered on 9 October 2015 in England and Wales.

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Bishop Toby Howarth	
Rev Denise Poole	
Wahida Shaffi	(Resigned 20 July 2024)
Yvette Thomas	
Ameerah Turner-Desai	(Resigned 21 October 2024)
Zahra Niazi	
Alisha Batool	(Appointed 21 October 2024)
Alexandra Enyori	(Appointed 2 July 2024)
Molly Conrad	(Appointed 7 July 2025)

Trustees are recruited through interview with a panel of Trustees based on the skills they can provide to the Charity. New Trustees are trained through mentoring by more experienced Trustees and ad-hoc training courses as considered appropriate.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

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Acknowledgements

The Trustees and the team would like to thank the Local Area Facilitators and their teams, teachers and practitioners, headteachers, Local Authorities, voluntary sector organisations, teams in cultural and sporting venues, researchers at Kent University and Queen's University, Belfast and analyst support at Bradford Council for their dedication through this year.

The shared collaborative commitment by so many people to providing children and young people joyful experiences across all forms of difference that develop relationships, empathy and critical thinking is creating stronger, more cohesive communities.

We would like to thank all our funders – both new funders this year and longstanding funders. New funders this Financial Year included: the UK Fund at the ***National Lottery Community Fund*** *which is now funding a three-year programme, 'Living well together: Children and Young people contributing to social cohesion'. This began in September 2024 and builds on our existing Schools Linking work;* ***Schroder Foundation****, funding Intergenerational Linking in Bradford from Summer 2024 and as part of Bradford's City of Culture,* ***Bradford 2025*** *is funding an intergenerational project which focuses on the theme of 'play'.We are immensely grateful to* ***Pears Foundation, MHCLG*** *(Ministry Housing Communities and Local Government),* ***A&S Sainsbury Charitable Fund, Garfield Weston, Child Friendly Bradford, Bradford Council and the Dulverton Trust*** *for their continued investment in the work of TLN.*

Bradford Council's ongoing support over decades, including provision of office space for our team is highly valued enabling our work to flourish locally and share good practice nationally.

We also want to recognise the importance of the local organisations across our network that lead Schools Linking and the local sources of funding that areas in the network have been able to access to support their Schools Linking programme.

The Linking Network Trustees and Team wish to acknowledge their appreciation for the long-standing commitment of Pears Foundation to our work which has enabled our sustainability. Pears support has not just been financial; they have supported the Board, team and network through visits, insight, additional resource from people and advice particularly at times of challenge.

We also want to acknowledge the investment towards Linking programme costs by participating schools and older people's settings that makes the impact and reach of the network possible.

The Trustees would like to express their gratitude to the whole staff team for the development of TLN's work through this challenging year, which is thanks to their professionalism, commitment, and hard work; particular thanks are expressed to the Co-directors for continuing to inspire and lead the Network.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Signed by:

Toby Howarth

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Bishop Toby Howarth
Trustee
Dated: 17 December 2025

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THE LINKING NETWORK

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LINKING NETWORK

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Linking Network (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or

3 the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Signed by:

Alison Whalley

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Alison Whalley FCA

Azets Audit Services Ltd

Carlton House

Grammar School Street

Bradford

BD1 4NS

Dated: 17 December 2025

Docusign Envelope ID: FEE05530-DC3E-4292-91F1-090231F84AA7

THE LINKING NETWORK

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	**3**	282,500	419,500	702,000	-	439,000	439,000
Charitable activities	**4**	2,276	93,987	96,263	6,624	81,000	87,624
Investments	**5**	24,933	-	24,933	14,832	-	14,832
Total income		309,709	513,487	823,196	21,456	520,000	541,456
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	**6**	208,112	607,273	815,385	71,720	369,052	440,772
Net incoming/ (outgoing) resources before transfers		101,597	(93,786)	7,811	(50,264)	150,948	100,684
Gross transfers between funds		(13,000)	13,000	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds		88,597	(80,786)	7,811	(50,264)	150,948	100,684
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		508,876	607,291	1,116,167	559,140	456,343	1,015,483
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		597,473	526,505	1,123,978	508,876	607,291	1,116,167

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

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THE LINKING NETWORK

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Current assets					
Debtors	**12**	2,254		130,631	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,184,518		991,320	
		1,186,772		1,121,951	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**13**	(62,794)		(5,784)	
Net current assets			1,123,978		1,116,167
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**14**		526,505		607,291
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	**15**	566,500		500,000	
General unrestricted funds		30,973		8,876	
			597,473		508,876
			1,123,978		1,116,167

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 17 December 2025

Signed by:
Toby Howarth
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Bishop Toby Howarth
Trustee

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THE LINKING NETWORK

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	**19**		168,265		236,587
Investing activities					
Investment income received		24,933		14,832	
Net cash generated from investing activities			24,933		14,832
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			193,198		251,419
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			991,320		739,901
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,184,518		991,320

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THE LINKING NETWORK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Linking Network is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), registered in England and Wales on 9 October 2015. It is governed by a constitution as amended 19 February 2016.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

The Trustees have considered the expected cash flows for the next two years and they consider that the Charity will be able to meet its obligations as they fall due for the foreseeable future. The financial statements are therefore prepared on the going concern basis.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out the resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

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1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.6 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.7 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.8 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.9 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

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2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Restricted funds
	2025	2025	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Donations and gifts	12,500	-	12,500	-
Grants listed below	270,000	419,500	689,500	439,000
	282,500	419,500	702,000	439,000
Grants receivable for core activities				
Pears Foundation	250,000	75,000	325,000	300,000
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	255,500	255,500	-
The Dulverton Trust	-	35,000	35,000	35,000
Bradford Council	-	24,000	24,000	40,000
Sainsbury	20,000	-	20,000	-
Schroder	-	30,000	30,000	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	-	-	64,000
	270,000	419,500	689,500	439,000

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4 Charitable activities

	Charitable Income 2025 £	Charitable Income 2024 £
Beyond the Gate	6,276	12,624
Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Geovernment (MHCLG) formerly Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)	75,000	75,000
Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture	14,987	-
	96,263	87,624
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	2,276	6,624
Restricted funds	93,987	81,000
	96,263	87,624

The Schools Linking Programme receives funding through MHCLG and Pears Foundation.

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Interest receivable	24,933	14,832

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6 Charitable activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs	315,986	338,128
Programme costs	417,335	36,992
Sessional advisors	51,218	39,369
Promotional and website	3,162	2,476
	787,701	416,965
Share of support costs (see note 8)	23,328	19,847
Share of governance costs (see note 8)	4,356	3,960
	815,385	440,772
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	208,112	71,720
Restricted funds	607,273	369,052
	815,385	440,772

Included in the Programme costs are capacity funds paid to Schools Linking Programmes listed in note 7.
Internal Linking Network costs are included in the project costs, amounting to £20,000.
Grant audit fees are included in programme costs £1,188 (2024 £1,080).

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7 Capacity Funds

	2025	2024
	£	£
Faith & Belief Forum Birmingham	16,500	-
Blackburn with Darwen Council	16,500	-
Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service, Bolton Council	16,500	-
Bridges for Communities, Bristol	16,500	-
Buckinghamshire County Council	16,500	-
Burnley & Pendle Faith Centre, Lancashire County Council	16,500	-
Fair Futures, Bury	16,500	-
Derby Open Centre	16,500	-
The Education People, Kent	16,500	-
Kirklees Council (Shape North)	16,500	7,000
Development Education Centre, Leeds	16,500	-
Project Free, Leicester	16,500	-
Faith & Belief forum, London	16,500	-
Hillborough Junior School, Luton	16,500	-
HOME, Manchester	16,500	-
Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle & Gateshead City Council	16,500	-
Oldham Gallery	16,500	-
Building Bridges Pendle	16,500	-
Derby Open Centre	-	7,000
Rochdale Borough Council	16,500	-
Rotherham Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire	16,500	-
Sheffield Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire	16,500	-
Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council (Stockport)	16,500	-
Global Learning London, Tower Hamlets	16,500	-
	-	-
	379,500	14,000

Included in the progamme costs are £379,500 of Linking Network Grants. In this tax year local areas received two rounds of grants due to the timing of funding to TLN. Round One payments were paid in April 2024 rather than March 2024.

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8 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2025	Support costs	Governance costs	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Phone and broadband	1,190	-	1,190	1,231	-	1,231
General office costs	4,378	-	4,378	4,719	-	4,719
IT	2,718	-	2,718	3,193	-	3,193
Insurance	1,672	-	1,672	1,673	-	1,673
Travel and subsistence	10,407	-	10,407	7,995	-	7,995
Bank charges	223	-	223	216	-	216
Legal and professional	2,740	-	2,740	820	-	820
Independent examination fees	-	4,356	4,356	-	3,960	3,960
	23,328	4,356	27,684	19,847	3,960	23,807
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	23,328	4,356	27,684	19,847	3,960	23,807

All costs are apportioned to the sole activity of the charity.

Bradford Council provide office space and training facilities as in kind support to the charity. Pears Foundation also provide support and training as in kind support to the charity. Local Authority and voluntary sector organisations leading the programme in their area and participating schools invest in their local programme costs. The value of these donations have not been included in the financial statements as a value cannot be reliably estimated for these donations.

Governance costs includes payments to the independent examiner of £4,356 for examination fees (2024- £3,960).

9 Trustees

One trustees of the charity received £712 remuneration for work done, (2024 £217, one trustee). One trustees received a total of £15 reimbursed for travel expenses, (2024 £nil). No other benefits or expenses from the charity were received during the current or prior year.

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10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
	9	9

Employment costs	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	269,955	295,501
Social security costs	18,264	23,375
Other pension costs	27,767	19,252
	315,986	338,128

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the current or previous financial year.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

12 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	-	126,887
Prepayments and accrued income	2,254	3,744
	2,254	130,631

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	1,751	742
Grants committed not paid	55,500	-
Accruals and deferred income	5,543	5,042
	62,794	5,784

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14 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Revaluations, gains and losses	Balance at 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
MHCLG	-	75,000	(75,000)	-	-	75,000	(75,000)	-	-
The UK Fund - Children's Impact on Cohesion	-	-	-	-	-	255,500	(139,917)	(7,000)	108,583
Pears Foundation Core Schools Linking	275,000	250,000	(144,349)	-	380,651	75,000	(151,597)	-	304,054
Pears Foundation Matched Funding	15,627	-	(2,564)	-	13,063	-	(2,649)	-	10,414
Pears Additional Funding	-	50,000	-		50,000	-	(50,000)	-	-
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	64,000	-	-	64,000	-	(64,000)	-	-
The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund	20,000	-	(20,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council	122,101	-	(57,524)	-	64,577	-	(15,607)	-	48,970
The Dulverton Trust - Core Funding	-	35,000	-	-	35,000	35,000	(35,000)	-	35,000
Bradford Council Intergenerational Linking	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
The Dulverton Trust - Rural Intergenerational Linking	23,615	-	(23,615)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bradford City of Culture 2025 - Intergenerational Play	-	-	-	-	-	14,987	(5,720)	-	9,267
Schroder	-	-	-	-	-	30,000	(27,270)	-	2,730
Bradford Schools Linking	-	-	-	-	-	-	(9,955)	10,000	45
Bradford Council Living Well Social Action Project	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Calderdale Schools Linking	-	-	-	-	-	-	(9,870)	10,000	130
Bradfford Council - Child Friendly Project	-	-	-	-	-	24,000	(16,688)	-	7,312
Beyond the School Gates Research Project	-	6,000	(6,000)	-	-	4,000	(4,000)	-	-

14 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

	456,343	520,000	(369,052)	-	607,291	513,487	(607,273)	13,000	526,505

MHCLG provided grant funding for Schools Linking in a partnership between MHCLG and Pears Foundation.
The UK Fund - Connected Communities, National Lottery: Living well together: Children and Young People contributing to social cohesion
Pears Foundation - core Schools Linking Funding.
Bradford City of Culture 2025 commissioned Intergenerational Play.
Schroder Foundation grant for Bradford Intergenerational Linking.
Dulverton Trust grant in 2023-24 for core funding for 2024-25
Bradford Council Child Friendly Project including pupil action for wellbeing.
Beyond the School Gates - Research Project funded by British Academy and Nuffield Foundation.

Prior Year
MHCLG provided grant funding for Schools Linking in a partnership between MHCLG and Pears Foundation.
Pears Social Action 5428/6200 - Funding from Pears iwill Fund, a fund created by the National Lottery Community Fund, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.
Pears Foundation Core Schools Linking - core funding for TLN Schools Linking in a three way partnership between DLUHC, DfE and Pears Foundation.
Pears Foundation Matched Funding provided funding match funding for local areas to access local funds.
Pears Foundation gave additional funding in the year.
Garfield Weston Foundation grant for core funding in 2024-2025.
Dulverton Trust grant for core funding in 2024-2025.
Bradford Council - grant to develop Secondary Intergenerational Linking in Bradford.
Bradford Council funded the living well and social action project.
Beyond the School Gates – Research Project funded by British Academy and Nuffield Foundation.

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15 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2024	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Intended contractual committments	500,000	-	500,000	66,500	566,500
Schools Linking Programmes	14,000	(14,000)	-	-	-
	514,000	(14,000)	500,000	66,500	566,500

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16 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	45,140	21,456	(71,720)	14,000	8,876	309,709	(208,112)	(79,500)	30,973
Designated funds	514,000	-	-	(14,000)	500,000	-	-	66,500	566,500
Restricted funds	456,343	520,000	(369,052)	-	607,291	513,487	(607,273)	13,000	526,505
	1,015,483	541,456	440,772	-	1,116,167	823,196	(815,385)	-	1,123,978

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Designated funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025	Unrestricted funds 2024	Designated funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 are represented by:								
Current assets/(liabilities)	30,973	566,500	526,505	1,123,978	8,876	500,000	607,291	1,116,167
	30,973	566,500	526,505	1,123,978	8,876	500,000	607,291	1,116,167

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18 Related party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel
The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows.

	2025	2024
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	128,778	125,287

Transactions with related parties
During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

One Trustees were paid £712 during the year for work done (2024: £217, one trustee). This is allowed in the constitution and was agreed by the Trustees. Expenses of £15 were paid to one trustee during the year (2024 £nil).

19 Cash generated from operations

	2025	2024
	£	£
Surplus for the year	7,811	100,684
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(24,933)	(14,832)
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease in debtors	128,377	151,606
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	57,010	(871)
Cash generated from operations	168,265	236,587

THE LINKING NETWORK

England & Wales - Charity number 1163901

Accounts

Docusign Envelope ID: BABF1E17-5FE8-4AEB-A6A0-461E72A9CDB7

THE LINKING NETWORK

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Charity Registration No. 1163901

Docusign Envelope ID: BABF1E17-5FE8-4AEB-A6A0-461E72A9CDB7

THE LINKING NETWORK

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Bishop Toby Howarth	
	Rev Denise Poole	
	Yvette Thomas	
	Zahra Niazi	
	Alisha Batool	(Appointed 21 October 2024)
	Alexandra Enyori	(Appointed 2 July 2024)
Charity number	1163901	
Principal address	Britannia House Hall Ings Bradford BD1 1HX	
Independent examiner	Alison Whalley FCA Azets Audit Services Ltd Carlton House Grammar School Street Bradford BD1 4NS	
Bankers	CCLA Investment Management 1 Angle Lane London EC4V 4ET Unity Trust Bank Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2HB	

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THE LINKING NETWORK

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THE LINKING NETWORK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's constitution as amended 19 February 2016, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019)

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects are

To advance the education of children and young people, in particular by:

- promoting and supporting participation in projects involving children and young people from different social, religious, economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds;
- providing support for educators and trainers through action, research and professional development in conjunction with other institutions;
- developing resources for use in the classroom or other educational settings;
- offering guidance and support for school leaders and governors in strengthening the process of embedding linking and citizenship within schools.

To advance equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony in particular by:

- advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony;
- foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds, in particular by providing support and encouragement for schools' participation in projects with other schools with significantly different populations and/or to work within their own diverse communities in order to enhance the understanding of identity, equality and diversity;
- cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity, racial and religious harmony.

To advance citizenship in children, young people and communities.

The charity has made good progress towards achieving these objectives this year, as evidenced by the activities, outcomes and achievements listed below.

Public benefit statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities our trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

Message from the Chair

On behalf of the TLN Board, may I offer a huge thank you to all of our local facilitators and partner schools who make up The Linking Network for their vital work in building and sustaining the Network across their areas. Especially in times of distress and division, our schools can often become the front lines of trust and resilience-building in our communities. We can easily be overwhelmed by negativity, but I am regularly inspired by stories of teachers and practitioners who with skill and love are enabling our young people to navigate extraordinary challenges with wisdom and even joy. The past year has demonstrated like never before the value of creating opportunities for children and young people to connect, build relationships and feel comfortable with difference. We literally couldn't do it without the work of our partners - the teachers, schools, local authorities, charitable and cultural organisations who engage with this work and the funders who make it possible. We thank you all for your care, commitment and energy.

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THE LINKING NETWORK

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Introductory Remarks

The Linking Network (TLN) inspires and equips schools to support children and young people to build meaningful connections across all forms of difference. Our work creates space for meaningful conversations within the school curriculum, guided by four key questions: Who Am I? Who are we? Where do we live? How do we all live well together?

There is strong evidence that high levels of **meaningful contact** between people from different social, ethnic, faith or geographical backgrounds can **reduce prejudice, increase trust and understanding** and lead to a **greater sense of togetherness.** Across the UK there are children and young people growing up in **isolated and segregated schools and communities** where there are limited opportunities for sustained social mixing and for developing positive relations with others from different communities. At the same time, discourse in the media and society can be **increasingly divisive and more fearful** and quicker to blame others. When our earliest perceptions of people who are different to us are negative then anxiety and fear shape our encounters later in life. On the other hand, if we have early experiences with new and different people that **foster curiosity, encourage understanding and are joyful**, we carry these experiences with us, and they shape our life-long expectations of belonging for ourselves and those around us. Our linking programmes enable children to develop skills of enquiry, critical thinking, reflection and communication, as well as provide the opportunity for children and young people to meet others across all forms of difference, gain confidence in contact, build new relationships, work together and contribute to the wider community.

Our network of local facilitators delivering **Schools Linking** in **25 Local Authority Areas** has continued to be collaborative, mutually supportive and determined to provide the very best opportunities to build local social cohesion. Large numbers of schools chose to create opportunities for their pupils to meet others and we have had another successful year with a great deal of new development and learning. We aimed to provide opportunities for as many children and young people as possible to connect across difference and build understanding whilst recognising the significant challenges posed by the cost-of-living crisis, capacity issues in local authorities and the voluntary sector and the need to respond sensitively to global events.

We also worked towards **embedding our Intergenerational Linking programme in Bradford**, moving towards our vision of **Bradford as an intergenerational district** with every school having a long-term, meaningful connection with an older person's setting. Alongside this, we wanted to continue to be connected to other intergenerational practitioners nationally.

Our local delivery in Bradford of Intergenerational and Schools Linking Programmes and our SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) network has continued to infom our support to other local authority areas and we are grateful for the partnership with Bradford Council, schools and many other stakeholders.

Up and down the country there has been so much care and dedication from teachers, headteachers, communities, colleagues in local authorities and civil society resulting in joyful opportunities for children and young people to meet with others who are in some way different to them. We would like to recognise the children and young people across all our partner schools who take part in linking with such enthusiasm, curiosity and courage.

We know how easy it is for any of us to fall into the trap of believing stereotypes about each other and to remain in our comfort zones rather than seeking out people who are different to us and exploring what life is like from their perspective and what we share in common. At TLN we truly believe in the capacity we all have in contributing to a society where we can all live well together.

Our work is organised into four strands:

- Schools Linking Programme
- Intergenerational Linking Programme
- Teaching Resources
- SMSC Teacher Training

A summary of the activities and outcomes of each of our strands of work during the year April 2023-March 2024 are outlined below in turn. Section 5 concludes the trustees' report by looking ahead to 2024-2025.

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Schools Linking Programme

National Schools Linking Programme
Summary
Our Schools Linking Programme has grown significantly over the past eight years from 11 areas in 2016 to 25 Local Authority Areas in 2024. This year, we aimed to support the network to find a pathway for Schools Linking that was right for each local context and the schools they worked with. Working in this adaptive way has meant that **engagement has been sustained and headteachers have continued to prioritise this non-statutory but crucial work.** A key part of our funding model is the capacity grants that TLN provides to all Local Areas in order to facilitate Schools Linking and adapt it to their context.

Key achievements in 2023-2024

- **Our reach: in 2023-24 we** had programmes running in **25 Local Authority Areas,** with over **24,000 pupils** from **approximately 850 classes** engaged in Schools Linking. A list of all participating areas and the programme lead organisations is included in Table 1 below.
- **A blended approach to teacher training:** In recognition of the pressures on schools, we have offered both **online** and **in-person Continuous Professional Development for teachers.** Nine of the Local Areas delivered their own training using materials developed by TLN and TLN delivered training in fourteen areas. Throughout the whole programme, we have been mindful of **teacher workload and wellbeing**.
- **A flexible model**: We recognise the huge value of **first meetings in a neutral space** that shared visits to theatres, art galleries, museums and sporting venues provide; such visits have been an important feature of our programmes since 2001. Due to stretched schools budgets, not all schools have been able to afford the neutral venue visits this year. These schools have still been able to retain a strong high quality Schools Linking programme and have prioritised the more affordable **school visits between the paired classes**. We are pleased to say that some areas of the network such as Bristol, Bury, Luton, Newcastle and Rochdale have found ways to sustain the enriching neutral space visits as well. We would like to support more areas to be able to do this next year.
- **National partnerships**: A partnership with the **British Library** led to not only promoting their **Step Inside Your Story** materials as an alternative vehicle for exploring identity, but also to offering a live session with the Children's Laureate, Joseph Coelho. He modelled how to use the fantastic Step Inside Your Story British Library primary school resources.
- **Support and connection for Local Facilitators** continued with four **online meetings through the year as well as an in person meeting in the North and the South.** These meetings enabled all local facilitators to share best practice and learn from one another so that they can in turn effectively support the teachers in their areas. The TLN core team also meets regularly with Local Area facilitators to support the development of Schools Linking in their area.
- New work on **Special Mainstream Linking** was undertaken and training and case study videos were created.
- **Guided by the latest Research:** Working closely with our Researcher in Residence, Dr Lindsey Cameron, means we have continued to ensure that our programme is evidence-informed and rooted in the latest insights from her field of research, namely Intergroup Contact Theory. As well as following closely the key conditions in **Intergroup Contact Theory** throughout our linking process, we have also been responding to the latest discoveries in this field, namely the importance of **'synchrony'** (the spontaneous rhythmic coordination of actions, emotions, thoughts, and physiological processes across time between two or more individuals) and of **'felt understanding'** (the belief that another social group understand and accept the perspectives of my group, including beliefs, values, and experiences). We are sharing these insights with teachers and updating our resources so that opportunities for these important features of intergroup contact are maximised.
- **Social Action embedded in Schools Linking:** In the Spring and Summer Term of the Schools Linking Year, the vast majority of linked classes engaged in **Social Action**, including environmental action and campaigning**,** learning and sharing Sign Supported English and gathering examples of positive news stories and distributing them via a children's newsletter. TLN provides a structured approach that incorporates the **# i will principles** of high-quality social action and crucially offers an opportunity for pupils to gain insight into shared values with their linked class. Social action also builds pupils' sense of agency and wellbeing and provides the common goals and collaboration recognised as optimal conditions for effective intergroup contact.

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- **Schools Linking Celebration Week (SLCW):** SLCW provides a collective moment for children and young people to celebrate and share their stories of Linking and feel a sense of what they're part of. The week in June **explored the key question, 'How do we all live well together?'** with lesson and assembly resources provided to schools. **3000 children** from over **100 classes** across England also joined a live lesson during which they took part in a range of participatory activities. Pupils were able to connect with others and were able to see that they were a part of a national community of linking schools. Some Local Areas organised celebration events to help share their linking achievements, for example Oldham Gallery exhibited work from all 26 schools and in Kirklees, a series of celebration events were held to share their Carry My Story work with members of the local community.

Spotlight on Secondary Linking

Secondary School Linking takes different forms. Some schools use the programme to **link with another school**, as with our primary programme, whilst others use it to build better relationships **within the school** in recognition of students 'self-segregating' in terms of their friendship groups. Whichever model of linking is followed, at its heart, the process helps pupils to explore identity, become comfortable with difference and build connections.

13 Local Authority Areas across the network participated in Secondary Schools Linking, with **106 groups** involving approximately **1300 students**, with many sharing their learning across their year group back in school.

Powerful cultural, artistic and social opportunities catalysed dialogue between linked students: For example, in Bradford, two schools partnered on a Disability Awareness Link with input from a local charity Equality Together to share with their peers a better understanding of living with disabilities. A Bradford multi academy trust opted to link across all five of their secondary schools. In Bolton, students from five schools developed work on identity after exploring art from people who had experienced the Holocaust; in Kent, a newly established link brought together students to consider what a 'connected community' would look like and the barriers that prevent this before committing to a 'personal pledge' to help bring about a more cohesive society; in **Leicester** a group of schools prioritised 'In School Linking' to help students connect across groups they might be alongside but otherwise not interact with and in Pendle **dialogue sessions** used an innovative approach the team call 'Talkeoke' where students had opportunity to sit in a circle round a microphone to share their thoughts. TLN produced a short video including interviews with teachers and students about their experience and the impact of the work to help share the power of Schools Linking with schools that haven't joined the network yet.

Students:

"I enjoyed today so much because I found someone that was similar to me and I found someone different but we still got along"

"It's fun to meet new people even though I'm not the most confident at first"

Teachers:

"It felt like a really valuable opportunity for students and staff!"

" I think the content is fantastic – it's outstanding, it's relevant; it's looking at issues that they're currently dealing with in society; and how different people experience different spaces. Having that content in the materials is great, but what I like is that it doesn't just raise the discussion around the content, but - what actions can <u>we</u> take, to make sure we have a fairer, more inclusive society? It doesn't just raise the issue but looks at how, as good citizens, we can have a collective approach."

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Table 1: TLN reach across England

Schools Linking Area	Organisation leading Schools Linking	Date Linking Est.
Bradford	The Linking Network, Bradford in partnership with Bradford Council	2001
Oldham	Gallery Oldham, supported by Oldham Council.	2001
Kirklees	Kirklees Council	2006
London (FBF)	Faith and Belief Forum (FBF)in London	2007
Buckinghamshire	Buckinghamshire Council	2009
Luton	Luton First Teaching Alliance on behalf of Luton Council	2009
Stockport	Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council	2009
Calderdale	TLN (formerly held by Calderdale Museums Service)	2010
Kent	The Education People, Kent County Council)	2010
Bolton	Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service (ACIS), Bolton Council	2013
Pendle	Building Bridges Pendle	2014
Birmingham	Faith and Belief Forum, Birmingham	2017
Blackburn with Darwen	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	2017
Burnley	Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, Lancashire Council	2017
Derby	Derby Open Centre (Programme formerly held by Global Education Derby)	2017
Manchester	HOME, a creative arts venue, supported by Manchester City Council	2017
Rochdale	Rochdale Borough Council	2017
Rotherham	Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY)	2017
Sheffield	Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY)	2017
Waltham Forest	Faith and Belief Forum, London	2017
Bury	Fair Futures CIC. (Programme formerly held by Bury Council)	2018
Leicester	Project FREE CIC (Programme formerly held by St Philip's Centre)	2018
Newcastle and Gateshead	Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (Laing Art Gallery), Newcastle and Gateshead City Council;	2018
Tower Hamlets	Global Learning London, Tower Hamlets Local Authority	2018
Leeds	Leeds DEC (Development Education Centre)	2019
Bristol	Bridges for Communities, Bristol	2020

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Benefits of Schools Linking

Independent research reinforcing the value of Schools Linking

The **Department for Education** (DFE) commissioned an independent evaluation of Schools Linking by Miles Hewstone, from the University of Oxford for the '**Social Integration in Schools and Colleges Research Report'**. This was published in **May 2023.** He reported that there was **'robust evidence'** to show that TLN's schools linking programmes had: *'**positive impact on many aspects of pupils' skills, attitudes, perceptions and behaviours**, including: • respect for others • confidence that they could mix with children from another group • broadened the social groups with whom pupils interact'.* For the full report, follow this link: https://thelinkingnetwork.org.uk/evaluation/

The **British Academy and Nuffield Foundation** funded research **'Beyond the School Gates: Children's Contribution to Social Cohesion'** published initial findings in January 2024. This collaborative research project undertaken by six Universities, highlighted the opportunities offered by Schools Linking to stimulate interactions between children across lines of difference: *'In our research, schools tended to be cited as the main route through which children's contribution to community integration could be effectively fostered. This was because schools were sites of day-to-day interaction among children, and even when schools were not themselves diverse, there was a practical opportunity to introduce diversity through exchange programmes such as The Linking Network.'*

Spotlight on our Observational Study

Our researcher in residence, Dr. L. Cameron from The University of Kent published a report of her observation study of Schools Linking that highlighted the following:

- **Schools Linking develops children's social skills, builds bonds across communities, and opens children up to crossing lines of difference.** Children embraced the opportunity to interact with children who were different to them. All children were supported in interacting effectively, with staff present to step in and encourage where necessary. Throughout the Linking day children explored similarities and differences between themselves and their linking partners with openness, and ease, including questions around religion, identity, and language. Shared experiences, such as watching a play, creative work and dance, created a sense of 'togetherness', building bonds across the linked schools, as well as encouraging cooperation and teamwork.
- **TLN design and format ensures positive social mixing and impact on social skills and bonding**. For example, TLN neutral venue visits create a sense of equal status that is essential for effective social mixing. Synchrony is incorporated into Linking activities because Psychological research tells us these types of activities build bonds across lines of difference and creates the right conditions for positive social mixing.

1 Sakr, M., Haberstroh, C. & Dujczynski, M. (2024) Beyond School Gates: How local policy can enable children's contribution to community integration. Available online: www.beyondschoolgates.org

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What our stakeholders are saying about Linking

Pupils:
A Year 3 pupil who had struggled all year engaging with the curriculum and had a challenging range of needs commented following a successful class visit with his linking class, 'Well that was a success for the human race!'

Another Linking pupil commented 'I can't wait to meet Ethan! He likes coding, just like me! I think we could be good friends'

Teachers:

'Over the years, I have seen the project grow and develop giving our young people amazing opportunities, experiences and memories. I will always cherish the visit to the theatre, something many of our children would never get to experience without this project.'

'It has made them understand the cultural difference and similarities with people they might not usually consider communicating or interacting with.'

'Thank you for doing it. It is one of the most important things we do in school.'

'It's always engaging and detailed and welcoming. The resources and books are great and well received.'

When we surveyed around 300 teachers in Autumn 2023, before they started Schools Linking in their classes, only 17% felt their pupils had substantive opportunities to interact with others from different backgrounds and only 18% felt their pupils were confident in mixing with others; 94% felt that schools linking is beneficial to their pupils' confidence in future contact with new people. By Spring 2024, 85% felt well/very equipped to lead schools linking for the rest of the academic year; 71% of teachers felt that their pupils were feeling either more/much more confident at mixing with others from different backgrounds.

A teacher in Buckinghamshire shared that one pair of children, partnered up on their face-to-face class visit, discovered that they were both carers. This was not a part of their lives that either child had readily spoken about to others before, but on this day, were seen to both grow in confidence as they animatedly shared their experiences with each other.

Headteacher:
'From the high-quality resources, excellent organisation and support for delivery and great enrichment contacts and experiences, it has been a huge benefit to our school to be part of The Linking Network. It is so important for our children to recognise the benefit of a multicultural society and the richness of learning that comes from different backgrounds and faiths. The Schools Linking Programme offers us this and the connections our children have made were priceless. The excellent timely communication and knowledge have helped us navigate the initiative that has now become firmly embedded into our curriculum.' ***Headteacher, Lancashire Schools Linking Primary School, 2023***

Local Facilitator:
'There are still pronounced social divisions between many different localities here, exacerbated by the pandemic. However, the majority of linking schools in our area would not be engaged in linking without this programme, due to being time and budget poor. Many of the schools serving more isolated, out-of-town localities recognise the immense value of providing their children with such life-enhancing experiences at an early age.' **Local Facilitator of the Sheffield and Rotherham programme**.

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Bradford Schools Linking Programme
Summary
Established in **2001**, the Bradford Schools Linking Programme is delivered directly by the TLN core team. Once again, this year we met teachers delivering Schools Linking who took part in their programme themselves as a child and who talk enthusiastically about the powerful and lasting impact it had on them.

Key Achievements in 2023-24
Bradford Primary Schools Linking

- **4,200** pupils, **140** classes from **83** schools across Bradford formed **70 links.**
- **8 in person training sessions** took place for Linking Teachers to meet and plan during the Autumn and Spring terms.
- **Multi Academy Trust (MAT) model –** Bradford Diocesan Academy Trust (BDAT), wanted their 15 primary schools to link in pairs within their Trust and to combine the linking process with their organisation's values. TLN has been working with BDAT to establish this new model, adapting the teacher resources and training materials. **In Year 3, 11** pairs of classes followed the TLN model, but adapted to a focus on their value of **'compassion'.** This year, a second year of linking was developed for the **Year 4** cohort of 22 classes, with '**aspiration**' as the value. Plans are now in place to again build on this for a third year so that next year's **Year 5** classes will focus on '**resilience**'. BDAT has continued the Schools Linking journey into their five secondary schools.
- Working with **Child Friendly Bradford**, TLN was able to offer Bradford schools an enhanced programme for their Social Action in the Spring Term. We provided copies of a book to inspire children, a live lesson with the author and a small amount of funding for classes to put towards their social action projects. Over 50 Bradford schools attended the live lesson and there was a huge variety of actions taken from seed planting to promoting safe parking to spreading happiness. Being able to support schools in this way galvanised them to engage in the Social Action aspect of linking, creating opportunities for children to appreciate the shared values that they each have and building a sense of agency and voice.

Impact Quotes:
"It was a superb project last year on so many levels." Year 4/5 Bradford Linking teacher
"It is good to meet different people. To see different faiths and environments. We can learn from them and make new friends." Year 5 Bradford linking pupil

Bradford Secondary Schools Linking and Secondary Engagement

- **240 pupils** in **7 links** from **13 schools** across Bradford. Themes included Connecting Together, Taking Action, Pupil Leadership and Voice, Disability Awareness, and Maths Challenges
- Windrush 75 Assemblies were co-delivered with members of the Windrush community in Bradford.

What our Stakholders are saying about Secondary Linking:
'It's important because if you can meet new people now, you can do it in the future'

'It's good to Link because it's fun to meet new peoplenow, even though I'm not the most confident at first'

"I've really enjoyed today, it's made me realise I need to speak up about injustices that I see. I also have developed the skills of communication and being able to interact and speak to people I don't know. I have been able to reflect on what I value in my life in terms of values and standing up for what I believe. I think events like this are important in order to encourage young people to stand up for themselves and speak out against injustices." Bradford Linking Student

The Linking Network has provided outstanding opportunities for students at Bradford Diocesan Academy Trust (BDAT). Our students have really benefited from the opportunities to connect with young people from other contexts. They have enabled students to make new connections and to gain confidence. The sessions were thought-provoking, engaging and perfectly pitched. Linking Network programmes are extremely valuable and impactful. They really do enable students and communities to link!
Jonathan Kennedy, Deputy Headteacher, Belle Vue Girls' Academy, BDAT

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Intergenerational Linking Programme

We have been developing Intergenerational Linking since 2019. We use the following definition of intergenerational practice in our Intergenerational Linking programmes:

'Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between different generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities. Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the younger and older generations have to offer each other and those around them.' (Beth Johnson Foundation, 2009).

Bradford Intergenerational Linking Programme
Summary
This year we have continued to deliver Intergenerational Linking in Bradford bringing together young people in schools with older people living in care homes, independent living schemes and community groups. This builds on our success and learning from the Care Home FaNs: Intergenerational Linking project (2019-2022) and Secondary Intergenerational Linking with the Better Mental Health Fund. Our long-term vision is for **Bradford to be an Intergenerational District** so that all 256 schools have a sustained relationship with a local older people's group. This year we have focussed on deepening the connections through Intergenerational Linking, to ensure intergenerational experiences are positive and meaningful for all.

Key Achievements in 2023-24

- **60 links between schools and care homes, independent living schemes and older people's community groups were supported.** This included logistics, administration, communication between the linked pairs as well as resources and activities for Intergenerational Linking.
- **Rich variety of activities**: Intergenerational experiences have been a journey that includes preparation exchanges and face-to-face visits. There has been a wide range of activities that links have chosen to engage in such as gardening, armchair aerobics, games, reading and drama. All have brought a huge amount of joy and increased understanding between participants.
- A **Bradford Intergenerational Linking Celebration event** was held on 26th June 2023. 180 people of all generations from schools, care homes and independent living schemes came together at the Mercure Bradford Bankfield Hotel to celebrate all of the wonderful intergenerational connections that have been happening across Bradford. Guests from across the district, including the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Bradford, also joined in the celebrations.
- **Dementia ambassador training** was delivered to students from five secondary schools. This was designed in collaboration with dementia consultants following dementia awareness training for the TLN team with the University of Bradford, Centre for Applied Dementia studies.
- **Comprehensive resources for Intergenerational Linking** were designed and hosted on our website. These help staff at schools and care homes to ensure effective intergenerational contact.

What our Stakeholders are saying about Intergenerational Linking:
"It's nice to see the little ones here. My grandchildren are grown up now so it's lovely to have them here." – older resident
"I'm enjoying it so much, I'm thinking of volunteering at the home." – secondary student
"Brilliant to see this intergenerational connection for our community. From my work on ageing and social care, I know the positive benefits this can bring to children and older adults alike." – Community Leader
"My mum will never believe I've got a friend who's 100!" – primary aged pupil
"That feeling of wellbeing is actually evident in our home…there's just this high level of energy, this buzz, this joy when the school children are in the building." – care home owner.

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Intergenerational Linking - National Programme across England
Summary
This year TLN has continued to be involved in national networks for intergenerational practice in order to share learnings, best practice and to collectively raise the profile of this work to a wider audience.
Key Achievements in 2023-24

- We facilitated a **quarterly sharing network** with organisations in other localities that continue to run Intergenerational Linking to share and disseminate best practice.
- We presented our Intergenerational Linking work at **national forums** organised by Generations Working Together and South West Intergenerational network
- We began a **pilot programme for Creating Intergenerational Communities** with Apples and Honey Nightingale, Generations Working Together and Linking Generations Northern Ireland. This involves trialling a toolkit for intergenerational best practice in Bradford.
- We have **advised Kent University and DCMS** about new intergenerational initiatives

Rural Intergenerational Linking
Summary
This exciting new project focused on developing a sense of ownership and agency for older and younger people living in rural areas, increasing their confidence in contact with others. We were granted funding from **The Dulverton Trust** to work with four schools in rural communities to create opportunities for younger and older people to explore a shared area of interest or concern together and then communicate their suggestions for social change at **'Listening Days'** where they could present together to local people with power. The funding was for work from September 2022 - September 2023.
Key Achievements in 2023-24

- **Six schools took part** - four secondaries, one after-school club and two primaries across Calder Valley, West and North Yorkshire. Teacher training, preparation for linking and then a series of meetings followed our Linking Model. The Listening Events provided powerful, engaging opportunities for younger and older people to share their concerns and films have been produced to share their voices.
- A **digital toolkit and project report** was completed and is available to download from our website.
- Dr Lindsey Cameron undertook an evaluation of the project with key findings that Intergenerational Linking could successfully challenge age stereotypes, build confidence in contact and empower social action in rural communities.

What our Stakeholders are saying about Rural Intergenerational Linking:
'I think their ideas and concerns were far more, far better formulated than I expected them to be, which is a credit to them.' – *older participant reflecting on younger participants*

'When we met the older people, we realised they weren't actually much different from us.' – young participant

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Teacher Resources
Summary
We have continued to create age-appropriate classroom and assembly resources to equip schools to support children and young people to build understanding across differences creating space for difficult conversations in school. Our resources are **written by teachers, for teachers** and are available to all schools. As a network we have continued to seek to support schools to respond to issues that arise. As well as resources that support our Schools Linking and Intergenerational Linking Programmes, our resources include approaches to Social Action and Family Engagement. Our Programmes and Resources support schools to deliver key curriculum objectives across Personal Development, SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development), PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education), Relationships Education and Citizenship.

Key Achievements 2023-24

- Windrush 75 Resources: We shared resources **to support schools to share the Windrush 75 story.** These were developed in partnership with Windrush Generations Bradford, the Windrush 75 Network, British Futures and the Black and African Heritage Network in Bradford. The resources included films of members of the Bradford Windrush Generation visiting Bradford Primary, Secondary and Sixth Form Colleges to share their story.
- We wrote and shared guidance for schools across our networks on **nurturing conversations around difficult topics and handling difficult issues** in school due to external events
- **Black History Month 2023 –** a new resource was developed and shared called 'Moving Mountains', which focused on the BHM 2023 theme Saluting our Sisters, celebrating Black British women's achievements.

SMSC Teacher Training
Summary
We have continued to provide support and training to support schools to develop their pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC)** education helping teachers to create space in the classroom and school for dialogue around identity, equalities, inclusion, and diversity. We deliver initial teacher training, staff meetings and leadership training. The training creates space for reflection on existing good practice and identifying new opportunities to move forward. It enables schools to productively apply the Personal Development and SMSC aspects of the Ofsted framework and build their culture and ethos. All our training has continued to share practical classroom resources and strategies that schools can use to teach SMSC, challenge misconceptions and prejudice, create inclusive, representative classrooms and build work on identity and sense of belonging into their curriculum.

Key Achievements in 2023-2024

- **Termly SMSC Secondary Leaders Network meetings.** Agenda items are responsive and this year included academic presentations on Intergroup Contact; reviews of current Ofsted SMSC focus; discussion on pupil wellbeing and nurturing approaches in schools due to external events.
- **Delivered Leading SMSC from Class to Whole School course**. This supports school leaders to evaluate their current provision for SMSC and create strategies and action plans to foster change. Delegates fed back that the training was 'thought provoking, informative, empowering, insightful' and that the training 'provides very good resources'
- ***SMSC In the Curriculum*** *delivered to* ***Primary and Secondary Initial Teacher Training students*** *at* ***Huddersfield University****. Common words chosen to describe the training included: Transformative, social justice, inclusive, empowering, moving, enlightening, inclusive, useful, practical. Participants shared the following reflections: 'This showed me ways to approach inclusivity through activities and games rather than just a sit down chat with children to recognise difference'; 'I loved the activities and will definitely be trying these on placement.'*

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Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. The legislation defines fundraising as 'soliciting or otherwise procuring money or other property for charitable purposes'. The charity has raised funds with an online campaign for the Big Give. The charity has received no complaints in relation to fundraising activity for the year under review.

Given the nature of the funding of the charity the Trustees consider that it remains appropriate not to be voluntarily bound to be regulated by the Fundraising Regulator.

Financial review

During the year the charity received income of £541,456 (2023 £492,003) of which £514,000 (2023 £480,220) was restricted. The charity incurred expenditure of £440,772 (2023 £640,875) including £363,052 (2023 £487,741) from restricted funds. During the year transfers were made from restricted to unrestricted funds of £nil (2023 £18). This resulted in net income of £100,684 (2023 net expenditure £148,872).

The payment of capacity funds to local Schools Linking Programme areas amounting to £175,000 was deferred to the year 2024-2025 due to TLN awaiting confirmation of grant funding.

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds, excluding fixed assets, which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level in the range of at least nine months to eighteen months expenditure (£330,0069 - £660,138).

The trustees consider this to be strategically important as we support local authorities and NGO's annually to deliver our programme in their area and we provide administration funds to local areas in March each year so that they can begin delivering their work in the run up to the following academic year. This means we are operating over an 18-month cycle. By providing security to local areas by March, they can retain the expert experienced staffing needed to run the programme who can begin recruiting schools well in advance of the start of the academic year. We hold back the amount needed for grants each year so that we can award these in a stable and timely manner.

The trustees also consider that reserves at this level ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised.

Unrestricted funds at 31.3.24 £508,876 (2023 £559,140).

Risks

Our Board reviews our Risk Register on a regular basis. Key current risks include the reality of **squeezed school budgets and workload related pressures**. This is reducing capacity in schools and can mean that some schools, despite believing this work is a priority, can find they are unable to take part. Equally, Local Authority squeezed budgets and workload may lead to reduced capacity to engage in leading a local Schools Linking Programme in their area. Actions that mitigate these risks include awareness raising of the importance and positive impact of the work; **increased support from the TLN core team** for local facilitators; **adaptations to the programme**; **Advice and guidance** given during training to demonstrate how the school linking activities can enhance existing curriculum demands and are not additional to these; **Comprehensive lesson plans and all requisite materials** in order to reduce teacher workload and training and resources to deliver the programme are free to schools and local areas.

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Looking ahead to 2024-2025

Our priorities for the academic year 2024-2025 are to:

1. **Enable the continued nationwide delivery of transformative programmes and approaches that build meaningful connections across all forms of difference in schools and their communities:** We will support and equip our existing Local Areas to develop and deliver high quality Schools Linking that becomes woven into the fabric of schools and communities and is responsive to their emerging issues. We will also scope out the potential for Schools Linking with partners in Wales and share mutual learning about building connections between schools with partners in Northern Ireland. We will develop and strengthen our high-quality model of Intergenerational Linking in Bradford to discover what it might mean to be an Intergenerational District. We will establish new Pupil Advisory and Stakeholder Groups to build the perspectives, expertise and experience of children, young people, teachers and other key stakeholders into The Linking Network's strategy and programmes. We will continue to Inspire and equip schools across the country to help children and young people to shift misperceptions and build understanding across difference through providing high quality SMSC resources, training and guidance.

2. **Continue to develop a learning organisation that empowers our network across the country to thrive:** We will evolve our model based on relevant evidence to ensure that Linking is effective in building confidence in meaningful contact across all forms of difference. We will strengthen our communications to affirm and energise our network and introduce Linking to new audiences. We will work with partners to stimulate national policy and practice that challenges polarisation and enables communities to flourish across difference.

3. **Continue to build the sustainability of The Linking Network in order to drive our collective impact over the long term**: We will develop and expand our funder and supporter base across the country in order to secure ongoing investment in our collective work. We will continue to build an expert team in our Bradford hub, skilled Board of Trustees and a vibrant network of local facilitators nationally that deliver collaboratively across our organisational goals.

We look forward to working with existing and new partners to deliver this work.

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Structure, governance and management

The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), registered on 9 October 2015 in England and Wales.

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Bishop Toby Howarth	
Rev Denise Poole	
Wahida Shaffi	(Resigned 20 July 2024)
Yvette Thomas	
Ameerah Turner-Desai	(Resigned 21 October 2024)
Zahra Niazi	
Alisha Batool	(Appointed 21 October 2024)
Alexandra Enyori	(Appointed 2 July 2024)

Trustees are recruited through interview with a panel of Trustees based on the skills they can provide to the Charity. New Trustees are trained through mentoring by more experienced Trustees and ad-hoc training courses as considered appropriate.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all our funders – both new funders this year and longstanding supportive funders. We are immensely grateful to Pears Foundation, MHCLG (Ministry Housing Communities and Local Government), A&S Sainsbury Charitable Fund, and Dulverton Trust for their continued investment in the work of TLN as well as additional funding from the Dulverton Trust # i will Fund for our Rural Intergenerational Linking work. The funding partnership between MHCLG, DfE and Pears Foundation which was established in 2017 has been a driving force behind the expansion of Schools Linking to 25 Local Areas in England. DfE funding ended in March 2023 but they stated they have been 'proud to have been able to support the positive and valuable work of The Linking Network's school linking programme over the past several years; and we continue to remain supportive of the programme's aims to promote integration and community cohesion'.

The Linking Network Trustees and Team wish to acknowledge their appreciation of the long standing commitment of Pears Foundation to our work which has enabled our sustainability. Pears support has not just been financial; they have supported the Board, team and network through visits, insight, additional resource from people and advice particularly at times of challenge.

Bradford Council's ongoing support, including provision of desk space, is highly valued. We are grateful for the new Intergenerational Linking funding from Stronger communities, Bradford Council. We also want to recognise the importance of local sources of funding that other areas in the network have been able to access to support their Schools Linking programme.

New funders this Financial Year included Garfield Weston Foundation and Public Health funding through Child Friendly Bradford. We are delighted that Schroder Foundation will be funding Intergenerational Linking in Bradford from Summer 2024 and the UK Fund at the National Lottery Community Fund have agreed to fund a three year programme 'Living well together: Children and Young people contributing to social cohesion' from September 2024 building on our existing Schools Linking work.

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We also want to acknowledge the investment towards Linking programme costs by participating schools and older people's settings that makes the impact and reach of the network possible. This ongoing support has enabled our work to continue to thrive.

The Trustess would like to express their gratitude to the whole staff team for the development of TLN's work through this challenging year, which is thanks to their professionalism, commitment, hard work; particular thanks are expressed to the Co-directors for continuing to inspire and lead the Network. The Trustees and staff would also like to thank the Local Area facilitators and their teams, teachers and practitioners, headteachers, Local Authorities, voluntary sector organisations, teams in cultural and sporting venues, researchers at Kent University, our analyst at Bradford Council, NHS England and Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council and all of the funders and supporters for their dedication through this year, We are grateful for the shared collaborative commitment to providing children and young people opportunities to develop relationships, empathy, critical thinking and contribute to wider society.

(2) The # I will fund is made possible thanks to a joint investment from The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to support young people to access high quality social action opportunities

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Signed by:

Bishop Toby Howarth

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Bishop Toby Howarth
Trustee
Dated: 19 December 2024

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THE LINKING NETWORK

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LINKING NETWORK

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Linking Network (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or

3 the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Signed by:
Alison Whalley
Alison Whalley FCA
Azets Audit Services Ltd

Carlton House
Grammar School Street
Bradford
BD1 4NS

Dated: 19 December 2024

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THE LINKING NETWORK

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	**3**	-	439,000	439,000	-	382,586	382,586
Charitable activities	**4**	6,624	81,000	87,624	7,039	97,634	104,673
Investments	**5**	14,832	-	14,832	4,744	-	4,744
Total income		21,456	520,000	541,456	11,783	480,220	492,003
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	**6**	71,720	369,052	440,772	153,134	487,741	640,875
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	(18)	18	-
Net (expenditure)/income for the year/ Net movement in funds		(50,264)	150,948	100,684	(141,369)	(7,503)	(148,872)
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		559,140	456,343	1,015,483	700,509	463,846	1,164,355
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		508,876	607,291	1,116,167	559,140	456,343	1,015,483

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

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THE LINKING NETWORK

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Current assets					
Debtors	**12**	130,631		282,237	
Cash at bank and in hand		991,320		739,901	
		1,121,951		1,022,138	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**13**	(5,784)		(6,655)	
Net current assets			1,116,167		1,015,483
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**14**		607,291		456,343
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	**15**	500,000		514,000	
General unrestricted funds		8,876		45,140	
			508,876		559,140
			1,116,167		1,015,483

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 19 December 2024

Signed by:
Bishop Toby Howarth
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Bishop Toby Howarth
Trustee

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THE LINKING NETWORK

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	**19**		236,587		(300,658)
Investing activities					
Investment income received		14,832		4,744	
Net cash generated from investing activities			14,832		4,744
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			251,419		(295,914)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			739,901		1,035,815
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			991,320		739,901

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THE LINKING NETWORK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Linking Network is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), registered in England and Wales on 9 October 2015. It is governed by a constitution as amended 19 February 2016.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

The Trustees have considered the expected cash flows for the next two years and they consider that the Charity will be able to meet its obligations as they fall due for the foreseeable future. The financial statements are therefore prepared on the going concern basis.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out the resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

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1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.6 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.7 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.8 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.9 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

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2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	Restricted funds	Restricted funds
	2024	2023
	£	£
Grants listed below	439,000	382,586
Grants receivable for core activities		
Pears Foundation	300,000	275,000
The Dulverton Trust	35,000	36,000
Bradford Council	40,000	-
My Home Life Intergenerational - National	-	51,586
The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund	-	20,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	64,000	-
	439,000	382,586

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4 Charitable activities

	Charitable Income 2024 £	Charitable Income 2023 £
Service delivery	12,624	10,673
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)	75,000	-
MHCLG in partnership with Department for Education (DfE).	-	94,000
	87,624	104,673
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	6,624	7,039
Restricted funds	81,000	97,634
	87,624	104,673

The Schools Linking Programme receives funding through DLUHC and Pears Foundation. In previous years it was a 3 way funding partnership between Pears Foundation, DLUHC and DfE.

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £
Interest receivable	14,832	4,744

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6 Charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Staff costs	338,128	308,976
Programme costs	36,992	206,462
Sessional advisors	39,369	90,667
Donations	-	176
Promotional and website	2,476	12,049
	416,965	618,330
Share of support costs (see note 8)	19,847	18,915
Share of governance costs (see note 8)	3,960	3,630
	440,772	640,875
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	71,720	153,134
Restricted funds	369,052	487,741
	440,772	640,875

Included in the Programme costs are capacity funds paid to Linking Programmes listed in note 7.
Grant audit fees are included in programme costs £1,080 (2023 £990).

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7 Capacity Funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
Faith & Belief Forum Birmingham	-	7,000
Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service Bolton Council	-	7,000
Blackburn and Darwen Council	-	7,000
Bridges for Communities, Bristol	-	7,000
Buckinghamshire Country Council	-	7,000
Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, Lancashire County Council	-	7,000
Fair Futures, Bury Linking	-	7,000
Global Education Derby	-	7,000
The Education People, Kent	-	7,000
Development Education Centre, Leeds	-	7,000
St Philip's Centre, Leicester	-	7,000
Faith & Belief Forum, London	-	7,000
HOME, Manchester	-	14,000
Luton First Teaching Alliance on behalf of Luton Borough Council	-	7,000
Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle & Gateshead City Council	-	7,000
Derby Open Centre	7,000	-
Carry My Story, Kirklees Council	7,000	
Oldham Council	-	7,000
Building Bridges Pendle	-	7,000
Rochdale Borough Council	-	7,000
Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire	-	7,000
Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council (Stockport)	-	7,000
Humanities Education Centre, Tower Hamlets	-	7,000
Faith & Belief Forum, Waltham Forest	-	-
	14,000	154,000

The payment of capacity funds to local Schools Linking Programme areas amounting to £175,000 was deferred to the year 2024-2025 due to TLN awaiting confirmation of grant funding.

Internal grants of £7,000 each to Calderdale and Bradford were included in project costs.

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8 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2024	Support costs	Governance costs	2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Phone and broadband	1,231	-	1,231	1,004	-	1,004
General office costs	4,719	-	4,719	2,640	-	2,640
IT	3,193	-	3,193	2,411	-	2,411
Rent	-	-	-	348	-	348
Insurance	1,673	-	1,673	1,619	-	1,619
Travel and subsistence	7,995	-	7,995	9,607	-	9,607
Bank charges	216	-	216	221	-	221
Legal and professional	820	-	820	1,065	-	1,065
Independent examination fees	-	3,960	3,960	-	3,630	3,630
	19,847	3,960	23,807	18,915	3,630	22,545
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	19,847	3,960	23,807	18,915	3,630	22,545

All costs are apportioned to the sole activity of the charity.

Bradford Council provide office space and training facilities as an in kind support of the charity. The value of this donation has not been included in the financial statements as a value cannot be reliably estimated for the donation,

Governance costs includes payments to the independent examiner of £3,960 for examination fees (2023- £3,630).

9 Trustees

One trustee of the charity received £217 remuneration for work done, (2023 £1,850, one trustee). No other benefits or expenses from the charity were received during the current or prior year.

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10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2024 Number	2023 Number
	9	8

Employment costs	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	295,501	261,460
Social security costs	23,375	28,902
Other pension costs	19,252	18,614
	338,128	308,976

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the current or previous financial year.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxationof Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

12 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	126,887	275,895
Prepayments and accrued income	3,744	6,342
	130,631	282,237

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	742	2,034
Accruals and deferred income	5,042	4,621
	5,784	6,655

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14 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Dfe (Schools Linking)	-	94,000	(94,000)	-	-	-	-	-
DLUHC	-	-	-	-	-	75,000	75,000	-
Pears iWill Fund (Social Action 6200)	50,000	-	(50,000)	-	-	-	-	-
Pears Foundation Core Schools Linking	158,071	275,000	(158,071)	-	275,000	250,000	(144,349)	380,651
Pears Foundation Matched Funding	26,926	-	(11,299)	-	15,627	-	(2,564)	13,063
Pears Foundation Additional	-	-	-	-	-	50,000	-	50,000
Garfiled Weston Foundation	-	-	-	-	-	64,000	-	64,000
The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund	20,000	20,000	(20,000)	-	20,000	-	(20,000)	-
Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council	164,084	-	(41,983)	-	122,101	-	(57,524)	64,577
The Dulverton Trust	30,000	-	(30,000)	-	-	35,000	-	35,000
Bradford Council Intergenerational Linking	7,607	-	(7,607)	-	-	20,000	(20,000)	-
The Dulverton Trust Rural Intergenerational	-	36,000	(12,385)	-	23,615	-	(23,615)	-
My Home Life	-	51,586	(51,586)	-	-	-	-	-
Bradford Council/Living Well/Social Action Project	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	(20,000)	-
Bradford Schools Linking	7,000	-	(7,000)	-	-	-	-	-
Big Give	158	-	(176)	18	-	-	-	-
Beyond the School Gates	-	3,634	(3,634)	-	-	6,000	(6,000)	-
	463,846	480,220	(487,741)	18	456,343	395,000	(294,052)	607,291

14 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

DfE provided grant funding for Schools Linking across The Linking Network in a three-way partnership between DfE, DLUHC and Pears Foundation.
DLUHC provided grant funding for Schools Linking across The Linking Network in a two way partnership between the DLUHC and Pears Foundation.
Pears Social Action 5428/6200 - Funding from Pears iwill Fund, a fund created by the National Lottery Community Fund, the department of Culture, Media and Sport.
Pears Foundation Core Schools Linking - core funding for TLN Schools Linking in a three way partnership between DLUHC, DfE and Pears Foundaton.
Pears Foundation Matched Funding provided funding match funding for local areas to access local funds.
Pears Foundation gave additional funding in the year.
Garfield Weston Foundation grant for core funding in 2024-2025.
The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund - grant for core funding.
Dulverton Trust grant for core funding in 20204-2025.
Bradford Council - grant to develop Secondary Intergenerational Linking in Bradford.
Dulverton Trust Rural Intergenerational - Funding for an Intergenerational Project in rural areas.
My Home Life - Care Home FaNs Intergenerational Linking is being funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust and the iwill Fund, a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department of Digital Culture, Media and Sport.
Bradford Council funded the living well and social action project.
Big Give Christmas Challenge-fundraiser with matched funding from the Dulverton Trust.
Beyond the School Gates – Research Project funded by British Academy and Nuffield Foundation.

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15 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 April 2022	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2023	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
Contingency fund	500,000	-	500,000	-	500,000
Schools Linking Programmes	84,000	(70,000)	14,000	(14,000)	-
Strategic Develpment	36,000	(36,000)	-	-	-
	620,000	(106,000)	514,000	(14,000)	500,000

Funds were transferred in the prior year due to expenditure made for grants to areas leading Schools Linking Programmes and for future strategic development. The transfer in the current year represents the use of Schools linking Programmes grants.

16 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2024
	£		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	80,509	11,783	(153,134)	105,982	45,140	21,456	(71,720)	14,000	8,876
Designated funds	620,000	-	-	(106,000)	514,000	-	-	(14,000)	500,000
Restricted funds	463,846	480,220	(487,741)	18	456,343	520,000	(369,052)	-	607,291
	1,164,355	492,003	640,875	-	1,015,483	541,456	(440,772)	-	1,116,167

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2024	Designated funds 2024	Restricted funds 2024	Total 2024	Unrestricted funds 2023	Designated funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:								
Current assets/(liabilities)	8,876	500,000	607,291	1,116,167	45,140	514,000	456,343	1,015,483
	8,876	500,000	607,291	1,116,167	45,140	514,000	456,343	1,015,483

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18 Related party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel
The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows.

	2024	2023
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	125,287	128,553

Transactions with related parties
During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

An amount of £217 was paid to one Trustee during the year for work done (2023: £1,850, one trustee). This is allowed in the constitution and was agreed by the Trustees. No other benefits or expenses from the charity were received during the current of prior year.

19 Cash generated from operations

	2024	2023
	£	£
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	100,684	(148,872)
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(14,832)	(4,744)
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	151,606	(148,194)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(871)	1,152
Cash generated from/(absorbed by) operations	236,587	(300,658)

THE LINKING NETWORK

England & Wales - Charity number 1163901

Accounts

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THE LINKING NETWORK

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Charity Registration No. 1163901

The Linking Network

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THE LINKING NETWORK

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Bishop Toby Howarth	
	Rev Denise Poole	
	Wahida Shaffi	
	Yvette Thomas	
	Ameerah Turner-Desai	
	Zahra Niazi	(Appointed 1 September 2022)
	Zoe Mawson	(Resigned 31 August 2022)
Charity number	1163901	
Principal address	Margaret McMillan Tower Princes Way Bradford BD1 1NN	
Independent examiner	Azets Audit Services Ltd Carlton House Grammar School Street Bradford BD1 4NS	
Bankers	CCLA Investment Management 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET	
	Unity Trust Bank Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2HB	

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THE LINKING NETWORK

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THE LINKING NETWORK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's constitution as amended 19 February 2016, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019)

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects are

To advance the education of children and young people, in particular by:

- promoting and supporting participation in projects involving children and young people from different social, religious, economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds;
- providing support for educators and trainers through action, research and professional development in conjunction with other institutions;
- developing resources for use in the classroom or other educational settings;
- offering guidance and support for school leaders and governors in strengthening the process of embedding linking and citizenship within schools.

To advance equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony in particular by:

- advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony;
- foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds, in particular by providing support and encouragement for schools' participation in projects with other schools with significantly different populations and/or to work within their own diverse communities in order to enhance the understanding of identity, equality and diversity;
- cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity, racial and religious harmony.

To advance citizenship in children, young people and communities.

The charity has made good progress towards achieving these objectives this year, as evidenced by the activities, outcomes and achievements listed below.

Public benefit statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities our trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

Introductory Remarks

Our vision is that all children and young people are comfortable and confident in connecting meaningfully with others they wouldn't otherwise meet so that they are inspired to create welcoming, kind and connected communities.

The Linking Network works to support schools to develop and deepen young people's knowledge and understanding of identity, diversity, equality and community, creating space for discussion of these issues within the school curriculum and supporting teachers to address them. All of our work underpins schools' essential work to promote pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) development.

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The reality is that across the UK there are children and young people growing up in **isolated and segregated schools and communities** where there are limited opportunities for sustained social mixing and for developing positive relations with others from different communities. At the same time, discourse in the media and society has become **increasingly divisive, more fearful** and quicker to blame others, particularly exasperated during the pandemic. When our earliest perceptions of people who are different to us are negative then anxiety and fear shapes our encounters later in life. On the other hand, if we have early experiences of new and different people that **foster curiosity, encourage understanding and are joyful**, we carry these experiences with us, and they shape our life-long expectations of belonging for ourselves and those around us. There is strong evidence that high levels of meaningful contact between people from different social, ethnic, faith or geographical backgrounds can reduce prejudice, increase trust and understanding and lead to a greater sense of togetherness. Our linking programmes enable children to develop skills of enquiry, critical thinking, reflection and communication, as well as providing the opportunity for children and young people to meet others across lines of difference, gain confidence in contact, build new relationships, work together and contribute to the wider community. Our work is organised into four key strands:

- Schools Linking Programme
- Intergenerational Linking Programme
- Teaching Resources
- SMSC Teacher Training

Key goals for 2022-23

We set out to **secure our Linking Programmes post-Covid** whilst also recognising the challenges posed by the cost-of-living crisis. We aimed to find a pathway that was right for schools in this context - **blending the learning from virtual linking with previous experiential learning**. It was another challenging year for schools and communities but despite this, schools have remained committed to creating opportunities for their pupils to meet others and we have had a successful year with a great deal of new development and learning. As restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic eased in Summer 2022, we have been able to return to more face-to-face activities whilst retaining learning and practice from virtual linking.

We aimed to **embed our Intergenerational Linking programme in Bradford**, moving towards our vision of **Bradford as an intergenerational district** with every school having a long-term, meaningful connection with an older person's setting. Alongside this, we wanted to continue to be connected to other intergenerational practitioners nationally.

Our network of local facilitators delivering Schools Linking in **27 Local Authority Areas** has continued to be collaborative, mutually supportive and determined to provide the very best opportunities to build local social cohesion. Our delivery of Intergenerational and Schools Linking Programmes in Bradford working closely with schools and community settings has continued to be supported at scale by schools choosing to prioritise building connections, believing in the significant benefit to their pupils. Our support for other areas continues to be derived from the experience we gain through our local delivery of both Intergenerational and Schools Linking and this has been even more important than ever through the Covid-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis. Up and down the country there is so much care and dedication from teachers, headteachers, communities, colleagues in local authorities and civil society resulting in joyful opportunities for children and young people to meet with others.

In the words of **Zahra Niazi, TLN Trustee and Strategic Lead, Equality and Diversity, Bradford Council** *'We all know that this work has never been more needed - the issues we face in society have been exposed and exacerbated by the recent pandemic. We know how easy it is for any of us to fall into the trap of believing stereotypes about each other and to remain in our comfort zones rather than seeking out people who are different to us and exploring what life is like from their perspective and what we share in common. I'm heartened by how hopeful the work is - at TLN we truly believe in the capacity we all have in contributing to creating a society where we can all live well together.'*

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A summary of the activities and outcomes of each of our strands of work during the year April 2022-March 2023 are outlined below in turn. Section 5 concludes the trustees' report by looking ahead to 2023-2024.

1. **Schools Linking Programme**

1a) Summary of the National Schools Linking Programme Network in 2022-23
Our Schools Linking Programme has grown significantly over the past six years from 11 to 27 Local Authority Areas. This year, we aimed to support the network to find a pathway for Schools Linking that was right for their local context and the schools they worked with. Working in this adaptive way has meant that **engagement has been sustained and headteachers continue to prioritise this non-statutory but crucial work.**

This year our national Schools Linking work has been supported by a **three-way funding partnership** between the **Department for Education, the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities and Pears Foundation as well as support from Dulverton Trust and A&B Sainsbury's Charitable Fund**.
This ongoing support has enabled our Schools Linking Programme to grow significantly from 11 Local Authority Areas in 2017 to 27 Local Authority Areas in 2022-23
Key achievements in 2022-2023

- **Our reach: in 2022-23 we successfully exceeded our targets which were to reach at least 20,000 pupils in 600 classes in 25 Local Authority Areas.** We have had programmes running in **27 Local Authority Areas,** with over **26,000 pupils** from **circa 880 classes** engaged in Schools Linking.
- **A blended approach to teacher training:** In recognition of the pressures on schools, we have offered both **online** and **in-person Continuing Professional Development (CPD) holding 67 CPD sessions across the Network. Thirteen** of the Local Areas delivered their own training using materials developed by TLN and TLN delivered in **fourteen** areas.
- **A flexible model**: We recognise the huge value of **first meetings in** the neutral space that shared visits to theatres, art galleries, museums and sporting venues provide; such visits have been an important feature of our programmes over time. However due to stretched budgets in schools, each Local Area decided on whether to return to using **Neutral Venue visits** and **class visits** to each school or to move to only **class visits**. Local facilitators continued to explore reestablishing enrichment opportunities.
- Throughout the whole programme, we have been mindful of **teacher workload and wellbeing**.
- **New supportive resources for Class Visits** were developed to give teachers and especially new teachers guidance to effectively organise and facilitate class visits between schools.
- **Support and connection for Local Facilitators** continued with four **online Network meetings** as well as the first **face to face Network meeting** in 4 years in **March 2023 in Manchester**. These meetings enabled all Local Facilitators to have the most up to date evidence-based best practice models so that they could in turn effectively support their teachers. As well as collective Network Meetings, the TLN core team provides bespoke 1-1 sessions with Local Area facilitators to support the development of Schools Linking in their area.
- **Continued support and new resources for Family Engagement** were provided to schools in order to enable families and communities to engage in their children's experience of social cohesion through Schools Linking. Schools Linking Celebration Week enhanced the impact of our wider work with families. The majority of teachers engaged told us they had shared their linking activities with their pupils' families in some way and we expect this trend to continue.
- **Special School Linking Returned**: this important area of schools linking has been successfully re-established following the necessary pause caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. In order to raise awareness and inspire new partnerships a new link in Calderdale between a mainstream and special school was carefully followed and supported so that learning and insights could be shared with the Network. A short film of this case study has been produced and shared.

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1b) Social Action embedded in Primary Schools Linking

Summary

In the Spring and Summer Term of the Schools Linking Year, pairs of linked classes engage in **Social Action** together undertaking formal and informal activities to make a positive difference to others, their community or the environment. TLN provides a structured approach that incorporates the **# iwill principles** of high-quality social action. By linking classes sharing what they care about and their plans for Social Action they have agreed, the connections established during the Autumn Term are deepened with pupils gaining insight into shared values. This provides the common goals and collaboration recognised as optimal conditions for effective intergroup contact. Embedding opportunities to participate in youth social action builds experience of civic participation and pupils' sense of agency. We have been very excited about the uptake of this approach. The development of this work on embedding Youth Social Action into Schools Linking received funding from the Pears # iwill fund.

Key Achievements in 2022-23

- **97% of teachers surveyed planned to enable their pupils to select and carry out a piece of Social Action.**
- **A rich range of examples of Social Action took place** and were shared with families and communities on social media. For example, **environmental action and campaigning** and **learning and sharing Sign Supported English.**

1c) Secondary Linking

Summary

Secondary School Linking takes different forms. Some schools use the programme to **link with another school**, as with our primary programme, whilst others use it to build better relationships **within the school** in recognition of students 'self-segregating' in terms of their friendship groups. Whichever model of linking is followed, at its heart, the process helps pupils to explore identity, become comfortable with difference and build connections.

Key Achievements:

- **Secondary reach: 13 Local Authority Areas** across the network participated in Secondary Schools Linking, with **64 groups** of students from **56 schools** taking part with many sharing their learning across their year group back in school.
- **Powerful cultural, artistic and social opportunities catalysed dialogue between linked students. local funding to enhance the offer to schools:** Several areas sourced local funding to enhance the offer to schools. For example in Bolton, students from 5 schools developed work on identity after exploring art from people who had experienced the **Holocaust**; in Burnley students worked with **Burnley Youth Theatre** to discuss identity and combating the negative impact of prejudice and in **Pendle** a dialogue specialist led sessions using a process they call 'Talkeoke'**.**
- **Communicating the Story:** TLN produced a short video including interviews with teachers and students about their experience and the impact of the work.to help share the potential for impact with other schools.

Impact Quotes:

'I found the whole process of schools linking together fantastic for the learners and even for me… they are expanding their boundaries and borders…a lot of our students tend not to have this experience of interaction… the depth of communication has been so profound.' Secondary Liking Teacher

'It's pretty cool to be able to see different people's perspectives…being able to step outside your comfort zone really helps with confidence, and you get to see the way other people think and other people's opinions' Year 9 Pupil

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1d) Schools Linking Celebration Week (SLCW)
Summary
SLCW was established in Summer 2022 in order to provide a collective moment for children and young people to celebrate and share their stories of linking and feel the power and solidarity of others who are part of the Linking movement up and down the country. It is also an opportunity to create a joined-up national story of the power and impact of TLN's work to local and national decision makers, funders and wider communities.
Key Achievements in 2022-23

- **In early June 2022, 3,900 children** from **130 classes** across England joined a live lesson during which they took part in a range of participatory activities. Pupils were able to connect with others and were able to see that they were a part of a national community of linking schools.
- The week **explored the key question, 'How do we all live well together?' with new lesson and assembly resources provided to schools with new opportunities for pupil voice.**
- **SLCW July 2023**: Building on the success of the previous celebration preparation for this event began in the Autumn term.
- **National and local celebrations**: Some Local Areas organised celebration events to help share their linking achievements, for example **Oldham Gallery** exhibited work from all 26 schools in the Oldham Linking Programme. A live streamed event was held in Bradford **City Hall**, with Headteachers and pupils from Girlington and Eldwick Primary Schools who were the very first Linking Schools in 2001 and more recent Linking Schools sharing their perspectives and celebrating their work and achievements. Key members of the Council and partner organisations attended in order to raise awareness of Schools Linking in Bradford and nationally.

1e) Bradford Schools Linking Programme
Summary
Established in **2001**, The Bradford Schools Linking Programme is delivered directly by the TLN core team. We are now beginning to see teachers delivering Schools Linking who took part in their programme themselves as a child and who talk enthusiastically about the powerful and lasting impact it had on them. The work in Bradford received funding from Bradford Council through the Bradford for Everyone Programme, Bradford Council.

Key Achievements in 2022-23
Bradford Primary Schools Linking

- **3,510** pupils, **117** classes from **64** schools across Bradford formed **58 links.**
- **9 face to face training sessions** for Linking Teachers to meet and plan were held during the Autumn and Spring terms. Feedback strongly supported the positive connections as we were able to return to in-person training.
- **New Multi Academy Trust (MAT) model piloted –** A large Bradford MAT wanted their primary schools to link in pairs within their Trust and to combine the linking process with their organisation's values. TLN worked with the MAT to establish this new way of working, adapting the teacher resources and training materials. **Twenty-six classes** linked between **15** primary schools in the Academy. Plans to continue this pilot are in place, developing materials for a second year of linking between classes again aligned with the MAT values.

Impact Quotes:
"I love being part of the Linking Programme and it has intensified my connection to inclusion, diversity, equality and freedom." Linking Teacher

"I did Schools Linking when I was in Year 4. It was really important. It helped me learn a lot about people that lived not too far from me but were a little bit different to me. When I went to secondary, a lot of the children that I linked with were there. And then the same when I trained to teach. So, these are people who I still know personally and professionally once I trained to teach." Linking Alumni and now Bradford Linking Teacher, Bradford.

I did Schools Linking when I was in Year 4 and now I am leading Linking with my Year 3 class. I remember it being a really fun experience. I remember walking down to the other primary school. It was quite different, so I remember learning about cultures and other people which was really interesting.' Linking Alumni and now Bradford Linking Teacher

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Bradford Secondary Schools Linking and Secondary Engagement

- **252 pupils** in **17 groups** from **7 schools** across Bradford formed links.
- 21 workshops and assemblies were delivered by TLN on themes including Anti Racism, Diversity Stories in Bradford, Linking and Windrush 75 which were co-delivered with members of the Bradford Windrush Generation.

Impact Quote:

At first, I was thinking I don't really want to be here. But like not in a bad way, just in an awkward way because I've never seen these people before…but then after a while you tend to like them, and you want to stay in touch." Schools Linking pupil.

'I've been leading Linking in my school with another neighbouring school for five years now. Linking brings communities together. It gives students a voice. It helps them explore differences and see the similarities between one another. It helps them recognise each other's values. Schools Linking Teacher

1f) Impact of Schools Linking

Key Learning:

Dr. L. Cameron from **The University of Kent led the design of our research including observation of pupil meetings, teacher surveys and interviews. She published a report** '***They're here! Lighting the spark of friendship through schools linking.'*** Key findings regarding the active ingredients for positive experiences at a neutral venue were teacher planning and preparation, facilitators and teachers' enthusiasm, time limits on tasks, recognising and addressing social anxiety, the need for teachers to support interactions where needed.

The **Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities** (DLUHC) commissioned an independent evaluation of Schools Linking by **IFF,** published in August 2022. This research revealed the following impact on primary school students as a result of participating in a Schools Linking Programme:

- 83% were more respectful of other young people from different backgrounds.
- 79% felt a greater sense of belonging to their local area.
- 79% felt more comfortable talking to young people from different backgrounds about what makes them similar and what makes them different.
- 75% had had more opportunities to mix with young people from different backgrounds.
- 71% were more motivated to work with other young people in the local area to improve the neighbourhood.

From our Teacher Survey: 100% of teachers surveyed believe Schools Linking is beneficial to their pupils' confidence in future contact with others different to themselves, develops their pupils' respect for others and social skills as well as providing opportunities for PSHE, Citizenship, RSE and SMSC links (381 teachers responded - this is 43% of Linking teachers)

Teacher Quote:

"This project is having a fundamental impact on my children's understanding of the world around them. It is hugely important and massively appreciated."

Pupil Quote:

"I thought I wasn't going to make any new friends, but I've made lots."

Headteacher Quote:

"Lark Hill Primary is a small school (161 pupils), serving a community with significant disadvantage (57% PPM & 47% SEND). The school population is not as ethnically diverse as many others and many of our pupils have very little experience of life outside Edgeley, never mind Stockport. The Schools Linking Programme is a vital part of our efforts to broaden pupils' horizons culturally and geographically and to support social skills and good mental health."

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Local Facilitator Quote:
"We are proud to have created a positive space where Bristol's young people can learn about each other and consider how to make Bristol a place where all its different communities are celebrated and belong." Bristol

Ofsted Quote:
"*Pupils are keen to talk about their links with a school that serves pupils from a culturally diverse community in the local area. Pupils enjoy the different activities that they do together with pupils from the partner school, to help them understand about different people in modern Britain." Ofsted December 2022*

The list of **Local Areas**, their lead local partner and the year the programme was established is set out below.

Schools Linking Area	Organisation leading Schools Linking	Date Linking Established
Birmingham	Faith and Belief Forum, Birmingham	2017
Bolton	Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service (ACIS), Bolton Council	2013
Blackburn with Darwen	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	2017
Bradford	The Linking Network, Bradford in partnership with Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council	2001
Bristol	Bridges for Communities, Bristol	2020
Buckinghamshire	Buckinghamshire Council	2009
Burnley	Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, Lancashire Council	2017
Bury	CLAS (Curriculum and Language Access Service), Bury Council	2018
Calderdale	Calderdale Museums Service, Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council	2010
Derby	Global Education Derby	2017
Kent	Inclusion Support Service (ISS), Kent County Council	2010
Kirklees	Kirklees Council	2006
Leeds	Leeds DEC (Development Education Centre)	2019
Leicester	St Philip's Centre, Leicester	2018
London (FBF)	Faith and Belief Forum (FBF)in London	2007
Luton	Luton First Teaching Alliance on behalf of Luton Council	2009
Manchester	Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council for Manchester	2017
Newcastle and Gateshead	Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (Laing Art Gallery), Newcastle and Gateshead City Council;	2018
Nottinghamshire	Nottinghamshire County Council	2018
Oldham	Oldham Council. Oldham Schools Linking began linking in 2001 and joined The Linking Network in 2015	2001
Pendle	Building Bridges Pendle	2014
Peterborough*	Peterborough City Culture, Peterborough City Council	2019
Rochdale	Rochdale Borough Council	2017
Rotherham	Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY)	2017
Sheffield	Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY)	2017
Stockport	Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council	2009
Tower Hamlets	Global Learning London, Tower Hamlets (Development Education Centre)	2018
Waltham Forest	Faith and Belief Forum, London	2017
Walsall*	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council	2018

* These Local Areas paused their Linking during the academic year 2022-23.

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2. Intergenerational Linking Programme

We have been developing Intergenerational Linking since 2019. We use the following definition of intergenerational practice in our Intergenerational Linking programmes:

'Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between different generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities. Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the younger and older generations have to offer each other and those around them.' (Beth Johnson Foundation, 2009).

2a) Intergenerational Linking - National Programme across England
Summary
This year TLN continued to work in partnership with **My Home Life England** to deliver the Care Home FaNs: Intergenerational Linking Project, England's largest intergenerational project linking children and young people from schools and youth groups with older people living in care home, particularly in areas which are less socio-economically advantaged.
Key Achievements in 2022-23

- **11 areas in England** delivered Intergenerational Linking including five areas which also deliver Schools Linking (Bradford, Bury, Derby, Leeds & Leicester).
- **4000 young people and 2000 older people** participated in the project across England over the duration of the programme.
- We facilitated a quarterly sharing network to connect together and disseminate best practice.
- We disseminated outcomes from the project at conferences (Only Connect) and webinars.
- We produced a handbook for schools and care homes to support Intergenerational Linking
- In collaboration with the project's researcher, Dr Briony Jain, we produced a full research report and research summary

2b) Bradford Intergenerational Linking Programme
Summary
This year we have continued to deliver Intergenerational Linking in Bradford bringing together young people in schools with older people living in care homes, independent living schemes and community groups. This builds on the success and positive response from the Care Home FaNs project in Bradford and secondary school Intergenerational Linking work through the Better Mental Health Fund. **Our Vision is for Bradford to be an Intergenerational District** so that all 256 schools have a long-term relationship with a local older people's group.
Key Achievements in 2022-23

- **48 links between schools and care homes, independent living schemes and older people's community groups were supported.** This support includes logistical and admin support, communication support and resources and activities for Intergenerational Linking. Intergenerational experiences have been a combination of remote exchanges and increasing face-to-face visits as Covid-19 restrictions and pressures eased through the year. Through the course of this year, we grew from 20 links to 48 links.
- **Rich variety of activities**: There has been a wide range of activities that links have chosen to engage in such as gardening, armchair aerobics, games, reading and drama. All have brought a huge amount of joy and increased understanding between participants.
- A **Bradford Intergenerational Linking Celebration event** is **planned for June 2023** to bring together some of the older and younger people involved in Intergenerational Linking.

Impact Quote:
"The visit was very well received and helped breathe some really positive energy into our setting." Care Home Activity Coordinator

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2c) Rural Intergenerational Linking
Summary
This exciting new project focused on developing a sense of ownership and agency for older and younger people living in rural areas, increasing their confidence in contact with others. We were granted funding from **The Dulverton Trust** to work with four schools in rural communities to create opportunities for younger and older people to explore a shared area of interest or concern together and then communicate their suggestions for social change at **'Listening Days'** where they could present together to local people with power. The funding was for work from September 2022 - September 2023.
Key Achievements in 2022-23

- **6 schools took part** - 4 secondaries, 1 after-school club and 2 primaries across Calder Valley, West and North Yorkshire. Teacher training, preparation for linking and then a series of meetings followed our Linking Model. The Listening Events provided powerful, engaging opportunities for younger and older people to share their concerns and films have been produced to share their voices.
- The preparation of a Digital toolkit is underway and an evaluation by Kent University.
- We saw friendships built across the generations and assumptions about different generations challenged:

Impact Quotes:
'I had an idea about what teenagers were like. If I hadn't come, I wouldn't have known. They are so lovely.' Older participant

'*I thought they would judge us. But they didn't. We had the same concerns*.' Younger participant.

2d) The impact of Intergenerational Linking
Key Learning
Some key findings from the national research report include:

- Intergenerational Linking brings **positive outcomes to both young and older people** living in care homes, including children with additional needs.
- The most effective intergenerational activities were **goal-directed** and based on ideas from young and older people themselves.
- In-person activities generally yielded more positive and meaningful interactions but there was **real value in virtual/ remote connection** especially in preparation for future meetings
- The right organisational structure was essential for success – including local facilitators and national support.

Findings from My Home Life and The Linking Network (2023). *Care Home Friends and Neighbours (Care Home FaNs): Intergenerational Linking Project Final Report: Discovering the untapped potential and social value of connecting young people with older people living in care homes.* City, University of London.
Impact Quotes:
"I can't tell you how made up the children were - they said they felt so happy but emotional afterwards! Please accept sincere thanks for the time you and your staff have taken to write these with the residents. It really is so appreciated. We all can't wait to write back next!". Teacher

"I can honestly say our residents were beyond made up with the letters they received too, it was really quite emotional Care home manager."

"Look at that girl over there talking to that older person – she never talks in class; I can't believe how different she is here!" Teacher

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3. Teacher Resources
Summary
We offer age-appropriate classroom and assembly resources for teachers to use, to support young people in deepening their knowledge and understanding of identity, community, and equality, creating space for discussion in school to foster social cohesion and integration. Our resources are **written by teachers, for teachers** and are available to all schools to support them with needs identified which are often in response to issues that arise in their communities. The resources support our Schools Linking and Intergenerational Linking Programmes as well as key themes including Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Social Cohesion and Integration, Social Action and Family Engagement. Resources deliver English, PSHE, Citizenship Objectives and SMSC expectations.
Key Achievements 2022-23

- We continued to offer classroom and assembly resources for schools to use. For example, we created a new resource to address student concerns regarding the way the news cycle moved on from the Pakistan Floods highlighting the match funding available through the Disasters Emergency Committee; a new resource highlighting Commonwealth engagement in World War I and II and we provided new book recommendations that supported schools to ensure representation.
- **Resources to support schools to share the Windrush 75 story are being developed in partnership with** Windrush Generations Bradford, the Windrush 75 Network, British Futures and the Black and African Heritage Network in Bradford. We were proud to co-deliver with four members of the Bradford Windrush Generation in Bradford Primary, Secondary and Sixth Form Colleges to share their story.

4. SMSC Teacher Training
Summary
We provide support and training to support schools to develop their pupils' **spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC)** education helping teachers to create space in the classroom and school for dialogue around identity, equalities, inclusion, and diversity. We deliver initial teacher training, staff meetings and leadership training. The training creates space for reflection on existing good practice and identifying new opportunities to move forward. It enables schools to productively apply the Personal Development and SMSC aspects of the Ofsted framework and build their culture and ethos. All our training shares practical classroom resources and strategies that schools can use to teach SMSC, challenge misconceptions and prejudice, create inclusive, representative classrooms and build work on identity and sense of belonging into their curriculum.
SMSC covers a broad range of outcomes, and the context is constantly evolving. Through our Linking Programmes and engagement, we seek to keep ourselves up to date with the issues that impact children and young people in the classroom and resources, training and support constantly changing to support the demands of what it means to be a child or young person.
Key achievements in 2022-23

- **Delivered 6 Leading SMSC from Class to Whole School** courses. This supports school leaders to evaluate their current provision for SMSC and create strategies and action plans to foster change. Delegates fed back that the training was '*Empowering, Confident, Insightful '. This will help us [as a school] to create more opportunities for cultural variation within the curriculum and more experiences*.
- **SMSC In the Curriculum** delivered to **135 Initial Teacher Training students** at **Huddersfield University**. Common words chosen to describe the training included *Insightful, encouraging, motivational, informative, inclusive, and eye-opening. "Great resources that supported the learning and made me think about different ways to link SMSC to different lessons.'*
- **'Building the Muscle for Difficult Conversations' training** hosted in Bradford for secondary students, teachers and council officers in order, 'to equip individuals and communities with the ability to listen and learn across divides. The training was delivered by Daniel Wehrenfennig and funded by Pears Foundation. Teachers and council staff who attended highly valued the input for its practical application. Sith form students reported they found the sessions, '*eye-opening*', *'really enjoyable*' and *'helpful in difficult situations*.

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5. Looking ahead to 2023-2024

- **Maximise the impact** of the Network of experienced Linking practitioners across the country to disseminate good practice for integration, gather information about priorities for action on cohesion and galvanise and support more schools to offer their pupils opportunities to Link.
- Continue to **develop ways to share the story of the work** taking place across the country including through Schools Linking Celebration Week 2023.
- Continue to navigate the challenges of squeezed school budgets through **offering different models of Linking** across the Network.
- **Reach out to partners** to help us catalyse powerful enrichment opportunities for pupils meeting for the first time in neutral spaces.
- **Share the power of Special-Mainstream Linking** and encourage more schools to take part.
- Invest in the **co-design and co-production** of our programmes with our beneficiaries and improve our systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of our work.
- Co-develop a **Vision of Bradford as an Intergenerational District**
- Continue to create **supportive resources and toolkits** as a result of our intergenerational work.

Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. The legislation defines fundraising as 'soliciting or otherwise procuring money or other property for charitable purposes'. The charity has raised funds with an online campaign for the Big Give. The charity has received no complaints in relation to fundraising activity for the year under review.

Given the nature of the funding of the charity the Trustees consider that it remains appropriate not to be voluntarily bound to be regulated by the Fundraising Regulator.

Financial review

During the year the charity received income of £492,003 (2022 £797,648) of which £480,220 (2022 £792,888) was restricted. The charity incurred expenditure of £640,875 (2022 £543,919) including £487,741 (2022 £544,504) from restricted funds. During the year transfers were made from restricted to unrestricted funds of £18 (2022 £265,311) due to a release of restrictions by the funder. This resulted in net expenditure of £148,872 (2022 net income £253,729).

Our level of reserves as of 31st March 2023 was equivalent to 10 months operating costs (£534,063). It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds, excluding fixed assets, which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level in the range of at least nine months to eighteen months expenditure (£480,000 - £960,000).

The trustees consider this to be strategically important as we support local authorities and NGO's annually to deliver our programme in their area and we provide administration funds to local areas in March each year so that they can begin delivering their work in the run up to the following academic year. This means we are operating over an 18-month cycle. By providing security to local areas by March, they can retain the expert experienced staffing needed to run the programme who can begin recruiting schools well in advance of the start of the academic year. We hold back the amount needed for grants each year so that we can award these in a stable and timely manner.

The trustees also consider that reserves at this level ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised.

Unrestricted funds at 31.3.23 £559,140 (2022 £700,509).

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Risks

Our Board reviews our Risk Register on a regular basis. Key current risks include the reality of **squeezed school budgets and workload related pressures**. This is reducing capacity in schools and can mean that some schools, despite believing this work is a priority, can find they are unable to take part. Equally, Local Authority squeezed budgets and workload may lead to reduced capacity to engage in leading a local Schools Linking Programme in their area. Actions that mitigate these risks include awareness raising of the importance and positive impact of the work; **increased support from the TLN core team** for local facilitators; **adaptations to the programme**; **Advice and guidance** given during training to demonstrate how the school linking activities can enhance existing curriculum demands and are not additional to these; **Comprehensive lesson plans and all requisite materials** in order to reduce teacher workload and training and resources to deliver the programme are free to schools and local areas.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation CIO), registered on 9 October 2015 in England and Wales.

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Bishop Toby Howarth	
Rev Denise Poole	
Wahida Shaffi	
Zoe Mawson	(Resigned 31 August 2022)
Yvette Thomas	
Ameerah Turner-Desai	
Zahra Niazi	(Appointed 1 September 2022)

Trustees are recruited through interview with a panel of Trustees based on the skills they can provide to the Charity. New Trustees are trained through mentoring by more experienced Trustees and ad-hoc training courses as considered appropriate.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

Acknowledgements

The Trustees would like to express their gratitude to the whole staff team for the development of TLN's work through this challenging year which is thanks to their professionalism, commitment, and hard work.

The Trustees and staff would also like to thank the networks of practitioners, teams of staff, sessional advisors, teachers, headteachers, Local Authority and NGO staff, teams in cultural and sporting venues, researchers at Kent University, colleagues at My Home Life England, analysts at Bradford Council, NHS England and Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council and all funders for their dedication through this year. We thank Pears Foundation for their ongoing support and input. We are grateful for the shared collaborative commitment to providing children and young people opportunities to develop relationships, empathy, critical thinking and contribute to wider society.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

DocuSigned by:
Bishop Toby Howarth
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Bishop Toby Howarth
Trustee
Dated: 18 December 2023

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THE LINKING NETWORK

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LINKING NETWORK

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Linking Network (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity, you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or

3 the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

DocuSigned by:
Alison Whalley
Alison Whalley FCA
Azets Audit Services Ltd

Carlton House
Grammar School Street
Bradford
BD1 4NS

Dated: 18 December 2023

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THE LINKING NETWORK

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	**3**	-	382,586	382,586	-	448,238	448,238
Charitable activities	**4**	7,039	97,634	104,673	4,575	344,650	349,225
Investments	**5**	4,744	-	4,744	185	-	185
Total income		11,783	480,220	492,003	4,760	792,888	797,648
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	**6**	153,134	487,741	640,875	(585)	544,504	543,919
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(141,351)	(7,521)	(148,872)	5,345	248,384	253,729
Gross transfers between funds		(18)	18	-	265,311	(265,311)	-
Net (expenditure)/income for the year/ Net movement in funds		(141,369)	(7,503)	(148,872)	270,656	(16,927)	253,729
Fund balances at 1 April 2022		700,509	463,846	1,164,355	429,853	480,773	910,626
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		559,140	456,343	1,015,483	700,509	463,846	1,164,355

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

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THE LINKING NETWORK

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Current assets					
Debtors	**12**	282,237		134,043	
Cash at bank and in hand		739,901		1,035,815	
		1,022,138		1,169,858	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**13**	(6,655)		(5,503)	
Net current assets			1,015,483		1,164,355
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**14**		456,343		463,846
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	**15**	514,000		620,000	
General unrestricted funds		45,140		80,509	
			559,140		700,509
			1,015,483		1,164,355

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 18 December 2023

DocuSigned by:
Bishop Toby Howarth
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Bishop Toby Howarth
Trustee

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THE LINKING NETWORK

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash absorbed by operations	**19**		(300,658)		(21,824)
Investing activities					
Investment income received		4,744		185	
Net cash generated from investing activities			4,744		185
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents			(295,914)		(21,639)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,035,815		1,057,454
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			739,901		1,035,815

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THE LINKING NETWORK

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Linking Network is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), registered in England and Wales on 9 October 2015. It is governed by a constitution as amended 19 February 2016.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, [modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value]. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

The Trustees have considered the expected cash flows for the next two years and they consider that the Charity will be able to meet its obligations as they fall due for the foreseeable future. The financial statements are therefore prepared on the going concern basis.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

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1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out the resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

1.6 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.7 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.8 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.9 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

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2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	Restricted funds	Restricted funds
	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations and gifts	-	1,760
Grants listed below	382,586	446,478
	382,586	448,238
Grants receivable for core activities		
Pears Foundation	275,000	300,000
The Dulverton Trust	36,000	30,000
Bradford Council	-	30,000
My Home Life Intergenerational - National	51,586	50,767
My Home Life Intergenerational - Bradford	-	15,711
The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund	20,000	20,000
	382,586	446,478

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4 Charitable activities

	Charitable Income 2023 £	Charitable Income 2022 £
Service delivery	10,673	4,725
Bradford Council	-	150,000
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) previously MHCLG in partnership with Department for Education (DfE).	94,000	194,500
	104,673	349,225
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	7,039	4,575
Restricted funds	97,634	344,650
	104,673	349,225

The Schools Linking Programme receives funding through a 3 way funding partnership between Pears Foundation, DLUHC and DfE.

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Interest receivable	4,744	185

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6 Charitable activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs	308,976	272,459
Programme costs	206,462	182,478
Sessional advisors	90,667	58,826
Donations	176	1,602
Promotional and website	12,049	11,924
	618,330	527,289
Share of support costs (see note 8)	18,915	13,330
Share of governance costs (see note 8)	3,630	3,300
	640,875	543,919
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	153,134	(585)
Restricted funds	487,741	544,504
	640,875	543,919

Included in the Programme costs are capacity funds paid to Linking Programmes listed in note 7.
Grant audit fees are included in programme costs £990 (2022 £900).

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7 Capacity Funds

	2023	2022
	£	£
Faith & Belief Forum Birmingham	7,000	7,000
Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service Bolton Council	7,000	3,670
Blackburn and Darwen Council	7,000	7,000
Bridges for Communities, Bristol	7,000	7,000
Buckinghamshire Country Council	7,000	7,000
Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, Lancashire County Council	7,000	7,000
Curriculum & Language Access Service, Bury Council	-	7,000
Fair Futures, Bury Linking	7,000	-
Global Education Derby	7,000	7,000
The Education People, Kent	7,000	7,000
Carry My Story, Kirklees Council	-	7,000
Development Education Centre, Leeds	7,000	7,000
St Philip's Centre, Leicester	7,000	7,000
Faith & Belief Forum, London	7,000	7,000
HOME, Manchester	14,000	-
Luton First Teaching Alliance on behalf of Luton Borough Council	7,000	7,000
Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle & Gateshead City Council	7,000	7,000
Nottinghamshire County Council	-	7,000
Oldham Council	7,000	7,000
Building Bridges Pendle	7,000	7,000
Rochdale Borough Council	7,000	7,000
Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire	7,000	10,000
Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council (Stockport)	7,000	7,000
Humanities Education Centre, Tower Hamlets	7,000	7,000
Walsall Council	-	10,000
Faith & Belief Forum, Waltham Forest	-	3,000
	154,000	166,670

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8 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023	Support costs	Governance costs	2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Phone and broadband	1,004	-	1,004	1,013	-	1,013
General office costs	2,640	-	2,640	887	-	887
IT	2,411	-	2,411	2,888	-	2,888
Rent	348	-	348	3,227	-	3,227
Insurance	1,619	-	1,619	1,725	-	1,725
Travel and subsistence	9,607	-	9,607	2,553	-	2,553
Bank charges	221	-	221	214	-	214
Legal and professional	1,065	-	1,065	823	-	823
Independent examination fees	-	3,630	3,630	-	3,300	3,300
	18,915	3,630	22,545	13,330	3,300	16,630
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	18,915	3,630	22,545	13,330	3,300	16,630

All costs are apportioned to the sole activity of the charity.

Bradford Council provide office space and training facilities as an in kind support of the charity. The value of this donation has not been included in the financial statements as a value cannot be reliably estimated for the donation,

Governance costs includes payments to the independent examiner of £3,630 for examination fees (2022- £3,300).

9 Trustees

One trustee of the charity received £1,850 remuneration for work done, (2022 £400, one trustee). No other benefits or expenses from the charity were received during the current or prior year.

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10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
	8	8

Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	261,460	237,191
Social security costs	28,902	19,440
Other pension costs	18,614	15,828
	308,976	272,459

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the current or previous financial year.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

12 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	275,895	125,520
Prepayments and accrued income	6,342	8,523
	282,237	134,043

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	2,034	1,303
Accruals	4,621	4,200
	6,655	5,503

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14 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
DLUHC and DfE (Schools Linking)	-	194,500	(194,500)	-	-	94,000	(94,000)	-	-
Pears iWill Fund (Social Action 6200)	-	50,000	-	-	50,000	-	(50,000)	-	-
Pears Foundation Core Schools Linking	265,311	250,000	(84,929)	(272,311)	158,071	275,000	(158,071)	-	275,000
Pears Foundation Matched Funding	30,426	-	(3,500)	-	26,926	-	(11,299)	-	15,627
The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund	-	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000	(20,000)	-	20,000
Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council	100,000	150,000	(85,916)	-	164,084	-	(41,983)	-	122,101
The Dulverton Trust	30,000	30,000	(30,000)	-	30,000	-	(30,000)	-	-
Bradford Council Intergenerational Linking	-	30,000	(22,393)	-	7,607	-	(7,607)	-	-
The Dulverton Trust Rural Intergenerational	-	-	-	-	-	36,000	(12,385)	-	23,615
My Home Life	-	45,978	(45,978)	-	-	51,586	(51,586)	-	-
Pears Foundation (Network Capacity Grant)	30,000	-	(30,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pears iWill Fund (Social action 5428)	14,686	-	(14,686)	-	-	-	-	-	-
My Home Life Intergenerational Linking	-	20,500	(20,854)	354	-	-	-	-	-
Bradford Schools Linking	9,000	-	(9,000)	7,000	7,000	-	(7,000)	-	-
Bradford Council Light Installation Project	1,350	150	(1,146)	(354)	-	-	-	-	-
Big Give	-	1,760	(1,602)	-	158	-	(176)	18	-
Beyond the gate	-	-	-	-	-	3,634	(3,634)	-	-
	480,773	792,888	(544,504)	(265,311)	463,846	480,220	(487,741)	18	456,343

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14 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

DLUHC and DfE provided grant funding for Schools Linking across The Linking Network in a three-way partnership between DfE, DLUHC and Pears Foundation.
Pears Social Action 5428/6200 - Funding from Pears iwill Fund, a fund created by the National Lottery Community Fund, the department of Culture, Media and Sport and Pears Foundation, has supported our work to embed social action in primary linking.
Pears Foundation Core Schools Linking - core funding for TLN Schools Linking in a three way partnership between DLUHC, DfE and Pears Foundation.
Pears Foundation Matched Funding provided funding match funding for local areas to access local funds, this opportunity was ongoing through 2020-2021 and into 2021-2023.
Pears Foundation (Network Capacity Grant) to support ongoing capacity building.
The Bradford for Everyone Programme, Bradford Council provided grant funding for work across Bradford and this work is ongoing.
Bradford Schools Linking - grant for Schools Linking in Bradford. Bradford Council - grant to create a presentation of creative Bradford Intergenerational Linking work.
Bradford Council - grant to develop Secondary Intergenerational Linking in Bradford.
My Home Life - Care Home FaNs Intergenerational Linking is being funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust and the iwill Fund, a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. TLN is a partner with Care Home Fans employing the Youth Social Action Lead for the programme.
Dulverton Trust grant in 2020-2021 for core funding for 2022-2023
Dulverton Trust Rural Intergenerational - Funding for an Intergenerational Project in rural areas
The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund - grant for core funding in 2021-2022 and into 2022-2023.
Big Give Christmas Challenge -fundraiser with matched funding from the Dulverton Trust.
Beyond the School Gates – Research Project funded by British Academy and Nuffield Foundation

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15 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 April 2021	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2022	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Contingency fund	350,000	150,000	500,000	-	500,000
Schools Linking Programmes	-	84,000	84,000	(70,000)	14,000
Strategic Development	-	36,000	36,000	(36,000)	-
	350,000	270,000	620,000	(106,000)	514,000

Funds were transferred in the prior year due to expenditure made for grants to areas leading Schools Linking Programmes and for future strategic development.

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16 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	79,853	6,760	(1,415)	(4,689)	80,509	11,783	(153,134)	105,982	45,140
Designated funds	350,000	-	-	270,000	620,000	-	-	(106,000)	514,000
Restricted funds	480,773	792,888	(544,504)	(265,311)	463,846	480,220	(487,741)	18	456,343
	910,626	799,648	545,919	-	1,164,355	492,003	640,875	-	1,015,483

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2023	Designated funds 2023	Restricted funds 2023	Total 2023	Unrestricted funds 2022	Designated funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:								
Current assets/(liabilities)	45,140	514,000	456,343	1,015,483	80,509	620,000	463,846	1,164,355
	45,140	514,000	456,343	1,015,483	80,509	620,000	463,846	1,164,355

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18 Related party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel
The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows.

	2023	2022
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	128,553	113,023

Transactions with related parties
During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

An amount of £1,850 was paid to one Trustee during the year for work done (2022: £400, one trustee). This is allowed in the constitution and was agreed by the Trustees. There have been no other related party transactions during the year (2022 none).

19 Cash generated from operations

	2023	2022
	£	£
(Deficit)/surplus for the year	(148,872)	253,729
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(4,744)	(185)
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase) in debtors	(148,194)	(126,634)
Increase in creditors	1,152	1,266
(Decrease) in deferred income	-	(150,000)
Cash absorbed by operations	(300,658)	(21,824)

THE LINKING NETWORK

England & Wales - Charity number 1163901

Accounts

THE LINKING NETWORK

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Charity Registration No. 1163901



THE LINKING NETWORK

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Bishop Toby Howarth	
	Rev Denise Poole	
	Wahida Shaffi	
	Yvette Thomas	(Appointed 17 June 2021)
	Ameerah Turner-Desai	(Appointed 17 June 2021)
	Zahra Niazi	(Appointed 1 September 2022)
	Zoe Mawson	(Resigned 31 August 2022)
Charity number	1163901	
Principal address	Margaret McMillan Tower Princes Way Bradford BD1 1NN	
Independent examiner	Naylor Wintersgill Limited Carlton House Grammar School Street Bradford BD1 4NS	
Bankers	CCLA Investment Management 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET	
	Unity Trust Bank Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2HB	

THE LINKING NETWORK

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THE LINKING NETWORK

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's constitution as amended 19 February 2016, the Charities Act 2011 and “Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)” (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019)

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects are

To advance the education of children and young people, in particular by:

- promoting and supporting participation in projects involving children and young people from different social, religious, economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds;
- providing support for educators and trainers through action, research and professional development in conjunction with other institutions;
- developing resources for use in the classroom or other educational settings;
- offering guidance and support for school leaders and governors in strengthening the process of embedding linking and citizenship within schools.

To advance equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony in particular by:

- advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony;
- foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds, in particular by providing support and encouragement for schools' participation in projects with other schools with significantly different populations and/or to work within their own diverse communities in order to enhance the understanding of identity, equality and diversity;
- cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity, racial and religious harmony.

To advance citizenship in children, young people and communities.

Public benefit statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities our trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission’s general guidance on public benefit.

Introductory Remarks

Our vision is that all children and young people are inspired to create welcoming, kind and connected communities where everyone can live well together.

We support children and young people to consider carefully, with others

Who am I? Who are we? Where do we live? How do we all live together?

These are vital questions for children and young people in the UK, who are negotiating an increasingly complex society. They are also challenging questions that lead to difficult conversations that teachers do not always feel confident or equipped to tackle within the classroom.

We all know how much the pandemic isolated children and young people over this year so that their connections to others became more narrow and the opportunities to meet new people and mix with a wide range of people were more limited. We think it is essential for children to encounter and learn to appreciate the thoughts and views of others beyond their own circle. Linking can dispel the traps of fear, suspicion, blame, misperception, stereotypes, prejudice, racism and hate in an age-appropriate manner.

The Linking Network works to support schools to develop and deepen young people's knowledge and understanding of identity, diversity, equality and community, creating space for discussion of these issues within the school curriculum and supporting teachers to address them. There is strong evidence that high levels of meaningful contact between people from different backgrounds, classes, nationalities, faith or belief, ages or other differentiating characteristics can reduce prejudice; increase trust and understanding between groups and lead to a greater sense of togetherness. It enables children to develop skills of enquiry, critical thinking, reflection and communication, as well as providing the opportunity for children and young people to meet, gain confidence in contact, build new relationships, work together and contribute to the wider community. Our programme is also about improving achievement across the curriculum and giving children a voice and vital skills for life.

Linking requires careful facilitation, teacher training and a supportive culture and ethos in schools and older people's groups. This is why we work with a locally rooted network of partners that knows their schools and communities deeply. Using detailed demographic data, they are able to match schools that have very different pupil populations, wouldn't normally get the chance to meet and will benefit the most out of coming together during a year-long link.

Our work is organised into four key programmes:

Schools Linking Programme
Intergenerational Linking Programme
SMSC Resources For Teachers and Classroom
SMC Teacher Training

The Linking Network core team is based in Bradford and coordinates the National Schools Linking Programme convening a network of Local Facilitators who lead Schools Linking across England. We provide a structured programme of training, resources and support to enable schools to build high quality links over a whole academic year. The core team also facilitates an Intergenerational Linking Programme across England in partnership with My Home Life England. Alongside this, the team offers resources and SMSC training to schools across England. All our programmes underpin schools' essential work to develop pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development (SMSC) and Personal Development. In addition to this national coordination role, the team leads the Bradford Primary and Secondary Schools Linking Programmes, Bradford Intergenerational Linking and convenes the Bradford SMSC Secondary Leaders Network. Our delivery in Bradford informs our support for work across the country and as a network we collectively collaborate, innovate and develop the work. We are committed to learning and development, and we are helped in this by Dr Lindsey Cameron, Developmental Psychologist, Kent University and Researcher in Residence to The Linking Network who specialises in prejudice reduction in children and young people.

Together, we've achieved a lot in the last year despite the ongoing disruption due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions that prevented face to face contact during this time. Highlights include hundreds of meaningful virtual links between schools that otherwise wouldn't have interacted, the commitment of teachers who attended live online training to plan their year- long linking programme, a vibrant network of experienced local partners embedded in their locality lead Schools Linking in 29 Local Areas, a growing intergenerational linking programme and planning for our Schools Linking Celebration week in July 2022.

A summary of the activities and outcomes of each of our strands of work during the year April 2021-March 2022 are outlined below in turn. Section 5 concludes the trustees' report by looking ahead to 2022-2023.

1. Schools Linking Programme

a) **Summary of the National Schools Linking Programme Network in 29 areas**
Schools Linking is the longest running of The Linking Network's programmes. It enables children to develop skills of enquiry, critical thinking, reflection and communication, as well as providing the opportunity for children and young people to meet, gain confidence in contact, build new relationships, work together and contribute to the wider community. It is delivered in 29 local authority areas by a lead local partner: either a local authority or a local non-profit organisation. The work in each area is coordinated by a staff member who is employed by the Local Partner to be the School's Linking Facilitator in their area and lead the programme.

Using their local expertise and knowledge, a Local Facilitator's role is to weave together a local Schools Linking Programme. At the heart of these local programme is a network of schools in which single classes of the same age group, but with perceived differences are matched by the local facilitator. The classes embark on a year-long programme to explore their own and other people's identities, incorporating meetings with their link class both online and in-person. The facilitator also builds relationships with local civic institutions, cultural sites, arts venues, football clubs etc which then provide locations for face-to-face meetings and sources of skills and experiences to enhance the Linking journey.

The Local Facilitator with their individual expertise and local knowledge receives training from The Linking Network in social contact theory, developmental psychology and the fully resourced Linking Processs to ensure the greatest possible positive impact on young people through the programme. The Local Facilitator with the support of The Linking Network's small Bradford-based core team then trains local teachers in these concepts and the specific classroom activities and lessons. The Bradford-based core team provides regular network meetings for the Local Facilitators so they can connect with each other and share learning and opportunities for impact within and beyond the network.

We capture evidence around the impact of these experiences on young people.

'Childhood and adolescence are a critical age in the development of intergroup attitudes and behaviours, and the attitudes developed at this age can continue into adulthood. – so really, childhood and adolescence is the best opportunity we have to encourage positive intergroup attitudes. In fact, cross group friendships have been described as one of the most powerful prejudice reduction tools available to us. All of this means that the work of the Linking Network is one of the most powerful tools we have to inoculate children against prejudice and encourage positive attitudes and behaviours towards difference.' Dr L.Cameron, Kent University.

Since 2017, Schools Linking work has been supported by a three-way funding partnership between the Department for Education, The Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities and Pears Foundation. This has seen our Schools Linking Programme grow from 11 local areas in 2017 to 29 local areas this year 2022. This means that the number of pupils directly engaged in Schools Linking each year has grown from 12,000 in 2017 to 29,000 in 2022.

Key achievements in 2021-2022

- Headteachers of 578 schools in 29 local areas across England signed up 967 classes with 29,000 pupils for Schools Linking
- Building on adjustments made to the programme during the previous year Linking was delivered as a virtual programme in the Autumn Term and it became clear that social distancing within and between school communities was an ongoing necessity throughout this year.
- The Linking Network core team delivered live online training in 20 areas whilst in another 9 areas the Local Facilitator delivered training using TLN materials.
- Live video calls were added as an integral aspect of the programme. As many primary school teachers had not held a class-to-class video call before we created a new online webinar to support teachers. Schools fed back the enjoyment these live calls brought when children were in bubbles and our evaluation by Kent University recognised the impact.
- TLN commissioned a teacher of the deaf to create bespoke primary video clips for pupils to learn Sign Supported English. This was a valuable active citizenship opportunity for Linking classes and was taken up by a high number of primary linking schools.
- The Special -Mainstream Linking was rightly paused during the Covid pandemic due to the wide range of pressures and the need for the work to be face to face. We were pleased to keep developing resources to support future work and teachers who had successfully led effective Special-Mainstream Schools Linking prior to the pandemic worked with us to create new Guidance, which was published in Summer 2021.
- We created six new resources to help primary schools engage parents in their linking journey. Research shows a strong bidirectional impact between families and children. Surveys of Linking Teachers this year told us that 67% of primary linking teachers shared the programme with families despite the challenges they were facing due to Covid 19 through this academic year. For example Oldham Schools Linking built on this and worked with Oldham Gallery to produce an Oldham Schools Linking Exhibition, using the arts as a vehicle for Linking and reaching out to families from every school in the programme was displayed in the gallery.
- We added clearer sign posting to curriculum objectives in all resources recognising Linking positively impacts on all aspects of literacy development and many aspects of curriculum.
  'Teachers appreciated the explicit links to the curriculum which allowed them to fit linking into their busy timetable.' L Cameron, Kent University. 'The discussions this has then generated in our classrooms has been very powerful and has linked with our R.E and PSHE lessons' Greater Manchester Teacher February 2022 'Linking is a gift for English' Rochdale Borough Council
- 'We held six live, online Local Facilitator Network meetings through 2021-2022 which brought together all 29 Local Facilitators. These were instead of the twice-yearly face-to-face network days held prior to Covid. Meeting online continued to be effective in enabling us to connect, gather information and share best practice, through what was once again a challenging and turbulent year for schools and communities. The network provides an effective mechanism to rapidly gather and share thinking in times of challenge to social cohesion for pupils. The network is highly experienced with 15 local facilitators having worked in the field of cohesion in education for at least a decade and on average colleagues have 6 years of experience running Schools Linking. Linking helps to support local areas with wider aspects of integration as some of the teams that support new arrivals, refugees and asylum seeker pupils also lead Schools Linking. Local Authorities were clear that Schools Linking supported their priorities, including pandemic recovery, achievement, literacy, well-being and social cohesion.

The list of Local Areas, their lead local partner and the year the programme was established is set out below.

Schools Linking Area	Organisation leading Schools Linking	Date Linking Established
Birmingham	Faith and Belief Forum, Birmingham	2017
Bolton	Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service (ACIS), Bolton Council	2013
Blackburn with Darwen	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	2017
Bradford	The Linking Network, Bradford in partnership with Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council	2001
Bristol	Bridges for Communities, Bristol	2020
Buckinghamshire	Buckinghamshire Council	2009
Burnley	Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, Lancashire Council	2017
Bury	CLAS (Curriculum and Language Access Service), Bury Council	2018
Calderdale	Calderdale Museums Service, Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council	2010
Derby	Global Education Derby	2017
Kent	Inclusion Support Service (ISS), Kent County Council	2010
Kirklees	Kirklees Council	2006
Leeds	Leeds DEC (Development Education Centre)	2019
Leicester	St Philip's Centre, Leicester	2018
London (FBF)	Faith and Belief Forum (FBF)in London	2007
Luton	Luton First Teaching Alliance on behalf of Luton Council	2009
Manchester	Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council for Manchester	2017
Newcastle and Gateshead	Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (Laing Art Gallery), Newcastle and Gateshead City Council;	2018
Nottinghamshire	Nottinghamshire County Council	2018
Oldham	Oldham Council	2001
Pendle	Building Bridges Pendle	2014
Peterborough	Peterborough City Culture, Peterborough City Council	2019
Rochdale	Rochdale Borough Council	2017
Rotherham	Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY)	2017
Sheffield	Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY)	2017
Stockport	Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council	2009
Tower Hamlets	Global Learning London, Tower Hamlets (Development Education Centre)	2018
Waltham Forest	Faith and Belief Forum, London	2017
Walsall	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council	2018

b) Spotlight: Social Action within Schools Linking

Summary

In Phase 2 of the Schools Linking Year, pairs of linked classes engage in Social Action together. Social Action refers to formal and informal activities that young people do together to make a positive difference to others, their community or the environment. Helping children and young people recognise ways their small positive actions can collectively make a big difference helps build their sense of agency and optimism. Social Action provides many of the criteria for the most effective social contact including, collaborative activity, common goals and meaningful interaction. We considered research into the potential impact of building common ground between Linking classes which confirmed that taking part in social action together helps linked classes recognise their shared values. We provide training and resources that embed the six #iwill principles of high-quality youth social action (Child-led, Challenging, Embedded, Socially impactful, Reflective and Progressive) in a carefully structured, age-appropriate series of lessons and activities. The programme includes a Philosophy for Children session on social action, high quality texts, family engagement resources and live online calls between the linked classes to meet and share their chosen social action. Through sharing the things they care about and the actions that they take, the pupils in linking classes broaden their perception of one another.

Key Achievements in 2021-2022

Embedding Social Action continued to be integral to our Virtual Primary Schools Linking Programme. In Summer 2021 the materials were trialed in Beckfoot Heaton Primary School which informed the development of new teacher training materials for 2021-2022. This development work was supported by Pears Foundation and the #iwill Fund (a joint investment from The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport).

Impact Quotes from Linking Teachers

'The children have loved taking part in Social Action in the Schools Linking Programme. It's made me realise how important it is and how it needn't be an add on to school life. It's so much fun and it's been really empowering for the children to know the change they can bring about' Primary Linking Teacher

'A sense of agency, the ability to make a choice that impacts meaningfully on the world around us, was sadly lacking for so many children during lockdown and the new TLN Phase 2 Social Action resources build this back in spades. For many children this is more than a lesson, it's a profound realisation. Amongst the developing friendships between the classes and sense of shared objectives, they get the chance to do more than just talk about what is important to them. As is right and proper, the social action choice is child led. Teachers guide the process with carefully planned activities, but the ownership of the idea rests firmly with the class.' Rochdale Borough Council

c) Spotlight: Shuttle Dialogue Linking in Secondary Schools

Summary

Shuttle Dialogue Linking for Secondary Schools is a new flexible 5 session programme. The programme encourages students to explore their own identity and that of those around them, with an emphasis on connecting with others. It encourages pupils to be open minded, remain curious and seek understanding rather than fixed positions. It supports young people to practise and inhabit a mindset which seeks to connect rather than separate across difference. Both teachers then exchange or 'shuttle' the ideas and responses to the other group ready for the next session. Teachers attend training with their Link Partner. The sessions are fully resourced with stimuli for dialogue, video clips, guidelines for dialogue, reflection activities and a structure for capturing the ideas of the group on a theme.

Key Achievements in 2021-2022

- This year 8 local authority areas across the network participated in virtual Secondary Schools Linking as face-to-face interactions between students were not able to resume due to the need for social distancing. The interest from schools was strong, however the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on school life remained a more significant factor than we had all hoped so some areas and schools who intended to run the programme during the year had to delay the start until demands on staff were reduced.
- 5 local authority areas continued with the existing Schools Linking model with 36 classes in23 schools signing up to take part.
- 3 local authority areas piloted the new Shuttle Dialogue for Secondary Linking approach with 27 groups from 16 schools
- We refreshed the Shuttle Dialogue resources during the year to ensure they remained relevant as events in wider society took place.
- Where schools were able to use the programme they reported it had a strong impact. Some schools used the programme to link with another school, whilst others used it to build better relationships within the school following extended periods of home learning and classes remaining in bubbles, or a recognition of students 'self-segregating' in terms of their friendship groups.
- Schools found students benefited from the feeling of safety of connecting thoughtfully and gradually through virtual linking. This means that when we are able to reincorporate face to face links, we will retain the Shuttle Dialogue approach. This is confirmed by research evidence that indicates that exploration initially in the safety of your own classroom can reduce anxiety and prepare students for more meaningful subsequent face to face meetings

Impact Quotes from Linking Teachers

'Rochdale Islamic Academy for girls relishes the opportunity to explore identity, promote community and champion equality through the Shuttle Dialogue Linking programme. We hope through this programme that students will have the self-esteem, confidence and resilience to make positive contributions.' Rochdale Deputy Headteacher.

'The Shuttle Dialogue resources offer so much discussion on important issues such as Islamophobia, they encourage students to consider how to be an upstander and not a bystander. This opportunity is about building communities, people being seen and valued. ' Leicester Secondary Teacher

d) Spotlight: Schools Linking Celebration Week

In late 2021 we started making preparations for the first Schools Linking Celebration Week in June 2022. The plans were a response to Local Facilitators and schools encouraging The Linking Network to tell a powerful, hopeful, national story of what Schools Linking delivers for young people and their communities.

The purpose of this week of national celebration was to provide:

1. A moment for children and young people to celebrate and share their stories of linking and feel the power and solidarity of others who are part of the Linking movement up and down the country.
2. An opportunity to create a joined-up national story of the power and impact of TLN's work to local and national decision makers, funders and wider communities.

e) Spotlight: Bradford Primary Schools Linking Programme

Summary
The Bradford Schools Linking Programme began bringing pupils together across the district in 2001. This work received additional funding from Bradford Council for 2019-2022 from the Bradford for Everyone Programme, Bradford Council as part of the DCLG Integration Area Programme.

Key Achievements in 2021-2022

The commitment from schools for connecting children through Schools Linking across the Bradford District, continued strongly in 2021-2022, despite the huge impact of the pandemic on school life. 120 classes (3,600 pupils) from 67 primary schools signed up to the virtual schools linking programme, with headteachers believing their children would benefit from connecting across the district. A number of schools paused linking preferring to resume when face to face linking returns and we supported all schools in their decision making during this turbulent time for schools. There was a general sense of optimism at the beginning of the academic year in the online training sessions that Bradford's Linked Classes would be able to meet face to face. However, as the year progressed this proved not to be possible and so the programme operated virtually. We had confidence in this approach due to research evidence that although virtual linking is not as high impact as face to face it has significant impact and is especially useful for building confidence in future contact.

Impact Quotes from Linking Teachers
'Being part of Schools Linking is one of the best bits of Year 3!

'It was valuable for children with low self- confidence having the opportunity to meet new people and explore individuality.'

f) Spotlight: The Impact of Schools Linking

Key Learning in 2021-2022

Dr L. Cameron supported the design of teacher surveys and carried out independent research **'Virtual Linking in the midst of a Pandemic: insights from linking teachers'** published in September 2021.This provided us with insights which were embedded into the programme design for the following academic year. Findings included the following: ''Children were excited by virtual linking, it builds confidence, they learn to talk about themselves, they explore identity, develop and model social skills, it supports transition, it helps to go beyond the bubble, and it makes the unfamiliar familiar.'

- Teachers noted that linking helps children to resist negative attitudes and counteract negative messages they may receive outside of the classroom. '*It is a key time in their development to catch children.'*
- One reason face to face Linking is so effective is because it's fun and interactive, so children not only learn from and develop skills for meeting someone new, but also associate meeting new people with a positive experience. *Classes playing games together virtually provide shared memorable moments. 'The excitement we normally see for face-to-face linking was still there'*
- Linking helped children to go outside of the bubble. 'Virtual Linking is a useful vehicle to explore young people's experiences of living through a pandemic. 'TLN resources provide a useful framework for children to acknowledge their experiences and bring home that they are not alone; other children are also struggling with some of the same challenges.'
- Teachers noted that Linking is good for transition and helping children prepare for secondary school as it gives them a chance to experience meeting children outside of their own school.*' Linking seems a logical place to have the children reflect in Key Stage 2 at that sort of tipping point of their lives.'*

Recommendations from the research included:

- Strategic use of interactive online activities suggested by TLN to create enjoyable, positive, friendly, memorable learning experiences because the children enjoyed it hugely.
- Use a hybrid model involving both virtual and face to face linking when it is possible to have face to face linking again. The virtual meetings with games could be used before every meeting because it was really successful. It really helped the children to break down some barriers.

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities commissioned an independent evaluation of Schools Linking. This research revealed the following impact on primary school students as a result of participating in a Schools Linking Programme:

- 83% were more respectful of other young people from different backgrounds.
- 79% felt a greater sense of belonging to their local area.
- 79% felt more comfortable talking to young people from different backgrounds about what makes them similar and what makes them different.
- 75% had had more opportunities to mix with young people from different backgrounds.
- 71% were more motivated to work with other young people in the local area to improve the neighbourhood.

The research was undertaken by IFF and the full report can be viewed here.

What others say about Schools Linking Programme

Primary Linking Pupils

'It changed my personality towards other people and made me think more good thoughts about them.' Kirklees Linking Pupil

'I have enjoyed that we got to know another school and learn stuff about people that I didn't even know.' Kirklees Linking Pupil

Secondary Linking Pupils

'At first when I started linking, I was unsure about how I felt. The very first session I felt really confident but at the same time I felt nervous, but I got to meet a lot of new people. Towards the middle of the linking sessions, I started to feel more confident because I started to get used to it. Towards the very end of linking, I knew I was going to miss expressing my choices and showing how I felt about a lot of things and getting to know about others' opinions. I went through a really fun journey in linking, it inspired me to do things that I never thought I could do. Linking made me feel more confident about communicating to others and expressing my opinions'.

Primary Linking Teachers

'Children are now aware of the need to be respectful and not to judge people based on media reports.' Linking Teacher, Kent University Research Interview

'The planning and resources are all good and easy to follow. I am living proof that anyone can do this!' Linking Teacher, Kent University Interviews

'Our reasons for taking part in Schools Linking are to create enjoyment and build community, sense of self and sense of place.' Bristol Linking Teacher

'Linking has shown children that we don't exist just in our little bubble, but there are children in other places, and we can link with them, we can talk to them, we can learn from them.' Linking Teacher, Kent University Research Interview

Secondary Linking Teachers

'The Linking Programme provides a great opportunity for students to consider what makes a vibrant community. The resources are highly engaging and extremely powerful.' Bradford Secondary Teacher

'Linking has given our students a voice-it's enriching, the material widens the lens, it awakened our students that they can bring their authentic selves.' Leicester Secondary Teacher

Headteacher

'What I know as a headteacher is that connecting with others is the key to so many important life skills all children need. Connecting with people from different backgrounds and cultures to your own brings so many benefits. It widens experience, builds confidence in meeting new people, expands our world view, changes thinking, removes barriers, builds on children's natural curiosity and much, much more. We all know that one powerful way to combat prejudice is to connect with other people's perspectives. Schools Linking does this perfectly.' Kathryn Swales, Headteacher, Girlington Primary, 2022

Comments from Local Schools Linking Facilitators leading a Programme in their local area:

Bristol Schools Linking Facilitator, Bridges for Communities, Bristol
A huge thank you for funding and supporting school linking to start in Bristol. Like many cities, our city has seen problems around social cohesion. School linking is a great place to start in helping our young people to reach across perceived divides and to build relationships

Oldham Schools Linking Programme led by Oldham Council, Greater Manchester
A key priority is to ensure children and young people have the opportunity to meet and break down barriers. The Linking Programme meets strategic priorities around community cohesion, ending hate crime. Funding helps us involve more classes giving opportunities to many more children.

Kent Schools Linking Programme led by Kent County Council
As a main gateway into the UK, it is vital we offer Schools Linking to ensure that teachers and schools have the tools to proactively promote social integration. The engaging resources developed by our colleagues at The Linking Network can effectively support schools to help pupils develop an understanding and respect for themselves and others and explore identity and equality thus opening dialogue between different groups of pupils, their families and the wider community.

Buckinghamshire Schools Linking Programme led by Buckinghamshire Council
'The Linking Network has enabled so many school pupils to experience life outside their own community. The high-quality training offered is appreciated by teachers and supports capacity at LA level to deliver the programme.

Birmingham Schools Linking Programme, Faith Belief Forum.
'Thank you TLN for your support with all the virtual resources and extensive thinking into non-direct contact theory. It has been invaluable in planning our hybrid programme for the year. The network meetings have also been inspiring, reassuring and encouraging. Schools have appreciated the supportive approach. Many schools have said they have seen how disconnected communities have become throughout the pandemic and they are keen to give their students the opportunity to open their worlds up again. We believe Linking is paramount to bringing back encounter, dialogue, connection and understanding of others.

Leicester and Leicestershire Schools Linking Programme led by St Philips Centre, Leicester
'School Linking is crucial to the post-Covid recovery across our region and the significant increase in schools taking part this year is a clear testimony of this and just how important our work is considered to be by schools. Without the funding it would not be possible for the work to go ahead. If our young people have no reference points with which to challenge false stereotypes and prejudices that they may hear then they are likely to believe them and perpetuate these divisions in their lives'

Bury Schools Linking Programme led by Bury Council, Greater Manchester.
'The impact of Covid continues to be felt, and in schools we can see how much children (and adults) have missed being together. Schools Linking offers a safe way for children to start reconnecting with each other and looking beyond their immediate environment to build friendships with people they might not otherwise come into contact with.'

2. Intergenerational Linking Programme

a) Overview
We have been developing Intergenerational Linking since 2019. We seek to build equitable partnerships between schools or youth groups with care homes or older people's groups in order to build confidence in contact, dispel misperceptions, develop skills of communication, empathy, trust providing the opportunity for children and young people to meet, gain confidence in contact, build new relationships, work together and contribute to the wider community

b) Intergenerational Linking - National Programme across England

Summary
Care Home Friends and Neighbours Intergenerational Linking Project is an exciting national initiative from My Home Life England (MHLE) and The Linking Network (TLN). The three-year programme of work aims to co-create, pilot and deliver a range of intergenerational, sustainable, community engagement initiatives in the social care sector, with the purpose of connecting the residents of care homes for older people, with children aged 5-14 years old, in local schools and youth organisations, in a way which is flexible, practically achievable and self-sustaining. Care Home FaNs Intergenerational Linking is being funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust and the Error in formula ->Error in formula # iwill Fund, a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. In addition, TLN received NHS funding to develop Intergenerational Linking between young people aged 10 and over with older people.

Key Achievements in 2021-2022

- This year 11 local authority areas are delivering Intergenerational Linking with support from The Linking Network in partnership with the Care Home Friends and Neighbours Project at My Home Life England.
- The programme reached 3,300 pupils with 110 links across 11 areas.
- Five of the areas delivering Intergenerational Linking also deliver Schools Linking. These areas are Bradford, Bury, Derby, Leeds and Leicester
- Six of the areas are new relationships for TLN and we have been delighted to work with organisations in Bristol, Cornwall, Enfield, Newcastle, Plymouth and Sefton
- We held a Quarterly Sharing Network which was an effective mechanism to connect and to disseminate best practice on Intergenerational Linking and share and learn together and has strengthened the work.
- We are currently writing a Teacher Guide for Intergenerational Linking in a similar style to the guidance TLN provides for Schools Linking to increase the wrap-around support to teachers delivering the programme with their classes.

c) Bradford Intergenerational Linking Programme

Summary
We have been directly delivering Intergenerational Linking in Bradford since 2019. The programme had to be virtual during the pandemic and this necessitated innovation to ensure meaningful interaction. The work has been joyful and heart-warming. During one link the children shared their hopes and dreams and the older people shared advice to the children in return with messages.

Key Achievements in 2021-2022

- 9 Primary Classes, 1 school council and 1 youth group linked with 8 care homes and this work reached 330 children and 180 older people. As the year progressed more schools expressed interest. This work was jointly funded by the #iwill fund and Dunhill Medical Trust.
- 10 Secondary schools formed Links with a care home or older people's group and this work reached 1300 11–24-year-olds and 195 55+ year olds. This work was funded by Public Health England via Bradford for Everyone to combat loneliness and isolation.

d) The impact of Intergenerational Linking

A research report with project findings will be published in 2023 but some clear learnings have already been established:

- Intergenerational linking can bring joy and promote well-being for both older and younger people, and the wider community.
- The role of the facilitator can be crucial in enabling and sustaining these connections with the challenges of bringing together two busy and high-pressure sectors.
- Relationships and good communication are absolutely key to successful and long-term linking.
- Preparatory work for the younger people around care homes, dementia and challenging misconceptions about older people is hugely beneficial.

Impact Quotes

'A lot of older people are kind and full of wisdom 'Child in Sefton

'Taking part in this project has been like a second childhood' Older person in Cornwall

"After the visit I asked Marjorie if she was tired and she said no, she felt the most energised she had in years!" – Care Home Employee

'It makes us feel alive again' – Leicester Residents

'Thank you so much. It's moments like this in teaching that remind you why you do the job! The children absolutely loved it and are already discussing ideas for another meeting' Bradford Teacher

'*Being part of the Intergenerational project has given our pupils a real sense of connection with the local community, helping them to feel grounded and part of a wider, local, social network - something that during recent times has been particularly lacking. Pupils have been enthusiastic about making and maintaining links with our local residential home which has broadened their outlook and made them more reflective of themselves and their own families and multi-generational links. The Intergenerational project has provided expertise, resources and practical support to ensure that the project has been a success for all involved. Their drive and enthusiasm built capacity and supported us at each step'* Headteacher in Leicester

3. SMSC Resources for Teachers and Classrooms

a. Summary and Key Achievements

Summary
We offer age-appropriate classroom and assembly resources for teachers to use, to support young people in deepening their knowledge and understanding of identity, community, and equality, creating space for discussion in school to foster social cohesion and integration. Our resources are written by teachers, for teachers and are available to all schools to support the need expressed by schools. The resources support our Schools Linking and Intergenerational Linking Programmes as well as key themes such as Social Action, Family Engagement, Classroom Lessons, Assemblies and Using Books. Resources deliver English, PSHE, Citizenship Objectives and SMSC expectations.

Key Achievements in 2021-2022
This year, TLN continued to share curriculum resources which reach over 200,000 pupils annually via their teachers. The resources were distributed by local authorities and charities in the TLN network. For example, Buckinghamshire Council Public Health team distributed our resources this year to all their schools to support PSHE and well-being.

- **Family Engagement Resources**. We created 6 new family engagement resources to accompany the Virtual Schools Linking Programme 2021-2022. These resources support schools to engage parents in their children's experience of the Schools Linking programme
- **Social Action in Primary Linking Resources**. We refined the resources that support Linking Classes to explore social action together.
- **Partnership Resources.** We added further stories to the inclusive '#RememberTogether' Remembrance Assembly for Primary and Secondary Schools using resources from The Royal British Legion and the Remember Together campaign. We created a new primary assembly on upholding Human Rights using materials from Amnesty Education.
- **Secondary Resources** Through the year, we were able to respond to challenges that emerged, including picking up on themes and concerns being shared by young people via social media. We produced resources for inclusive remembrance and Handling Sensitive Themes in the Classroom. We collated and shared ways classroom teachers could support pupils in response to the conflict in Ukraine. We created an assembly that was well received about the situation of refugees all around the world, which reminded pupils that the lives of many people around the world can change suddenly and dramatically due to war, encouraging students to reflect on how they can respond.

SMSC Teacher Training

a) Summary and Key Achievements
Summary
We provide support, training and resources to support schools to develop their pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education. We deliver initial teacher training, staff meetings and leadership training. The training creates space for reflection on existing good practice and identifying new opportunities to move forward. It enables schools to productively apply the Personal Development and SMSC aspects of the Ofsted framework. All our training shares practical classroom resources and strategies that schools can use to teach SMSC, challenge misconceptions and prejudice, create inclusive, representative classrooms and build work on identity and sense of belonging into their curriculum, and whole school provision. We also offer support and review for school culture and ethos

Due to the broad outcomes of SMSC; these strands are constantly evolving in light of the world around us. This means that we have to keep ourselves up to date with developments in pedagogy and issues that impact our children in the classroom. Hence our resources, training and support is constantly changing to meet the demands and rigours of what it means to be a student in 2022.

Culham St Gabriel's Trust previously provided grant funding for this Action Research alongside ongoing funding from Pears Foundation.

Key Achievements and impact in 2021-2022

- Built on our work in 2020-2021 to redevelop our previously face to face SMSC Training Courses as live online interactive sessions and developed tailored versions of Leading SMSC CPD for Primary, Secondary and Special Schools.
- Delivered the training for leaders from 74 schools across the country many of whom are part of the Schools Linking programme.
- Delivered new staff development training on using books in primary schools to ensure representation across the protected characteristics.
- Delivered new bespoke SMSC in the Curriculum training to the 44 staff members at a Pupil Referral Unit. We tailored the training and resources to their context with very positive feedback.
- Delivered refreshed Initial Teacher Training on SMSC in the Curriculum: Building an Inclusive and Representative Classroom to 130 initial teacher BEd and PGCE trainees at Huddersfield University.

Impact Quotes from Schools Leaders on Leading SMSC 2021-2022

'I valued the insight and information on how to assess where my school currently is, thinking about next steps and the amazing amount of resources that we can use to support the development of SMSC.'

'Clarity of the wide range of possible areas that need attention, excellent tried-and-tested resources'

'Informative, thought provoking, powerful, focused, practical, poignant, friendly.' Words used to describe the course from the teacher evaluation survey

I will go back into school ensuring I and other teachers are not 'telling a single story' but are promoting and including more diversity in literature

Impact Quotes from Head of Pupil Referral Unit
'All staff felt that the content was relevant and appreciated that the SMSC training was specific to our type of special provision - it felt it had been made just for us! We liked the various types of delivery in the course. The references to resources and activity examples were great and we will certainly be using these.' Northampton Pupil Referral Unit, Nov 2021

Impact Quotes following Initial Teacher Training
'Amazing, thoughtful and inspiring training' BEd Student, September 2021

'Massively endorse The Linking Network… our trainees engage with this yearly and are always impacted strongly! Highly recommended' Senior Lecturer, Huddersfield University, March 2022

b) Spotlight: Bradford Secondary Engagement through the 'SMSC Leaders Network'

Summary
We directly deliver secondary work in Bradford and share what we learn across the Network of Schools Linking Programmes. We were funded by Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council from 2019-2022 in order to engage with 10 secondary schools.

Key Achievements in 2021-2022

- There was commitment and energy from schools across the Bradford Metropolitan District to engage in this area of work and this year we exceeded our target and reached 24 Bradford Secondary Schools through the different strands of our work
- During the year, we delivered Shuttle Dialogue Linking in six schools and Intergenerational Linking in 11 schools
- We created and shared classroom and assembly resources across the Bradford District
- We continued to facilitate the Bradford Secondary SMSC Leaders Network with three online meetings during the year. The agenda for each meeting was set by the needs of the Network members and included guest speakers, or a teacher sharing an example of good practice from their own setting. The meetings are responsive to the current context, so when an issue arises which impacts on school life (whether international such as a natural disaster or conflict situation, or changes to Ofsted guidance to schools) we are able to quickly provide resources and updates for staff. For example, in June 2021 we focused on how best schools should respond to the Ofsted report on Peer on Peer (now termed Child on Child) abuse. The teachers involved tell us they appreciate the SMSC Network, both for the opportunity to meet colleagues from other schools and also the resources and updates we are able to provide.

c) Spotlight: Research and Learning informing Schools Linking and the wider SMSC work of the Network

Dr L. Cameron, Kent University created webinars sharing research insights into aspects of social contact theory. These have been shared at Network Meetings to inform and inspire us and this helps develop our collective thinking.

- **Building Common Ground through Virtual Linking – the psychology behind building social action into linking.** April 2021
- **Intergroup contact and children's intergroup attitudes: The role of families** June 2021
- **Five ways to help young people resist stereotypes and challenge prejudice** November 2021
- **Cross- group interactions: why and how?** February 2022

These webinars are freely available on our website for schools to view at any time.

Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. The legislation defines fundraising as 'soliciting or otherwise procuring money or other property for charitable purposes'. The charity has raised funds with an online campaign for the Big Give. The charity has received no complaints in relation to fundraising activity for the year under review.

Given the nature of the funding of the charity the Trustees consider that it remains appropriate not to be voluntarily bound to be regulated by the Fundraising Regulator.

Financial review

During the year the charity received income of £797,648 (2021 £896,770) of which £792,888 (2021 £895,546) was restricted. The charity incurred expenditure of £543,919 (2021 £657,693) including £544,504 (2021 £656,766) from restricted funds. During the year transfers were made from restricted to unrestricted funds of £265,311 (2021 £Nil) due to a release of restrictions by the funder. During the year a transfer was made to designated funds of £270,000 for a contingency fund, grants to schools linking and strategic development. This resulted in net income of £253,729 (2021 £239,077) of which £5,345 (2021 £297) was unrestricted and £248,384 (2021 £238,780) was restricted.

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds, excluding fixed assets, which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to between nine month's to eighteen months expenditure. This equates to between £409,000 and £818,000. The trustees considers that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year. Unrestricted, undesignated reserves at 31 March 2022 stood at £80,509 (2021 - £429,853).

The trustees consider this to be strategically important as we support local authorities and NGO's annually to deliver our programme in their area and we provide funds for this by March each year so that they can deliver their work in the following academic year. This means we are operating over an 18-month cycle. By providing security to local areas by March, they can retain the expert experienced staffing needed to run the programme and lead local facilitators can begin recruiting schools well in advance of the start of the academic year. We hold back the amount needed for grants each year so that we can award these in a stable and timely manner.

The trustees also consider that reserves at this level ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised.

Our level of reserves became higher during the covid pandemic as our costs for running Schools Linking and Intergenerational Linking and Teacher Training were temporarily lower due to a move to predominantly online activities. This level of reserves was maintained throughout the 2021-2022 tax year but will be reduced by the end of March 2023 by investing in the expansion of our newest programme, Intergenerational Linking, building our infrastructure for Schools Linking to deepen our impact and investing in capacity for communications and capacity for research and evaluation.

The trustees has assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

5. Looking ahead to 2022-2023

It is evident that the impacts of the pandemic upon children, young people and schools are considerable and need multiple approaches over time to aid recovery. Our priority will be to continue to reflect on the best way forward for building children's and young people's sense of self and belonging, and their connection with others. We will keep listening to ensure all of our programmes are right for schools and adapt them accordingly. We will adapt as necessary to changing circumstances such as cost of living crisis and levels of COVID-19 in school communities following public health guidance to schools. We remain committed to supporting schools with their decision-making regarding linking knowing that the relationships between school communities, supported by their local programme leadership, are a long-term journey.

We will continue to support schools to find ways for their pupils to have effective contact with others outside their immediate circle through resources, training and programmes

The Linking Network's overarching Goals and Objectives for 2022-2023 are as follows:

- To sustain, embed and deepen meaningful and positive Schools Linking experiences for children and young people.

  Deliver Schools Linking opportunities (via teacher training, activities and resources and local area coordination by a facilitator) in at least 25 local authority areas across England maintaining the reach, quality and impact that TLN has become known for. This will include creating a new blended approach incorporating the learning from virtual linking during the pandemic with face to face linking maximising the benefits of both.
  Provide specialist tailored support, resources and guidance that enables local facilitators to build a place based Schools Linking programme in their area.
  Sustain linking across the country and welcome further schools into the programme with targeted school recruitment and matching taking place across the Schools Linking programme areas.
  Create meaningful opportunities for the local area facilitators to connect with each other and share learning and opportunities for impact within and beyond the network
  Continue to promote experience of youth social action embedded in the schools linking programme in order to build civic participation and sense of agency for children and young people
  Continue to support the Network to deepen the impact of the programme through intentionally sharing the programme with families and school communities building on research which shows the bidirectional impact families and children have upon one another.
  Support local facilitators to continue building and strengthening their local cross-sector networks of schools, children's services, multi academy trusts, cultural and other institutions to support impact on pupils
  Develop our support for special and mainstream schools who wish to link once face to face contact becomes possible again

- To continue to develop Intergenerational Linking opportunities between schools and care homes and older people's groups working directly in Bradford and continuing to develop work across England in partnership with My Home Life England

- To continue to offer curriculum and assembly resources and training that foster social cohesion, creating a pathway through primary school and offering tutorials and assemblies to secondary schools. Our training and resources help meet the need schools are expressing for a curriculum that ensures representation, addresses the twin traps of hate and fear and helps us all build a kinder, more connected society.

- To deliver our well received SMSC (spiritual, moral, social and cultural education) training and expert advice to schools and teacher training institutions in order to support the development of school curriculum provision and culture and ethos.

- To influence local and national government and other funders to dedicate the money and support schools and local authorities need in order to deliver Schools Linking and Intergenerational Linking Programmes to build connection and a sense of belonging.

- Undertake research into what works, continuing to learn in order to develop our programmes and impact.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation CIO), registered on 9 October 2015 in England and Wales.

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Bishop Toby Howarth	
Rev Denise Poole	
Wahida Shaffi	
Zoe Mawson	(Resigned 31 August 2022)
Yvette Thomas	(Appointed 17 June 2021)
Ameerah Turner-Desai	(Appointed 17 June 2021)
Zahra Niazi	(Appointed 1 September 2022)

Trustees are recruited through interview with a panel of Trustees based on the skills they can provide to the Charity. New Trustees are trained through mentoring by more experienced Trustees and ad-hoc training courses as considered appropriate.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

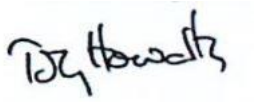
Acknowledgements

The Trustees would like to express their gratitude to the whole staff team for the development of TLN's work through this challenging year which is thanks to their professionalism, commitment, and hard work.

The Trustees and staff would also like to thank the networks of practitioners, teams of staff, sessional advisors, teachers, Local Authority and NGO staff, researchers at Kent University, colleagues at My Home Life England, analysts at Bradford Council and funders for their dedication through this year. We are grateful for their shared collaborative commitment to providing children and young people opportunities to develop relationships, empathy, critical thinking and contribute to wider society.

The trustees, staff team and network colleagues are grateful to all our funders-Pears Foundation, DfE, DLUHC, Dulverton Trust, Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund, Pears #iwill Fund, the Bradford for Everyone Programme, Bradford Metropolitan District Council, Dunhill Medical Trust and the '#iwill' fund, a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport for their strong support and commitment throughout this challenging year, as we responded to the needs of schools and communities. The trustees and staff want to thank the Pears Foundation, not only for funding, but also for the skills and expertise which they offer so generously. We are grateful for their very practical support, advocacy and wise counsel. We thank all our funders, partners and supporters for their vision and belief in the societal benefits of the work.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



Bishop Toby Howarth
Trustee
Dated: 12 January 2023

THE LINKING NETWORK

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LINKING NETWORK

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Linking Network (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or

3 the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Alison Whalley FCA
Naylor Wintersgill Limited

Carlton House
Grammar School Street
Bradford
BD1 4NS

Dated: 12 January 2023

THE LINKING NETWORK

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	**3**	-	448,238	448,238	-	454,058	454,058
Charitable activities	**4**	4,575	344,650	349,225	940	441,488	442,428
Investments	**5**	185	-	185	284	-	284
Total income		4,760	792,888	797,648	1,224	895,546	896,770
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	**6**	(585)	544,504	543,919	927	656,766	657,693
Net incoming resources before transfers		5,345	248,384	253,729	297	238,780	239,077
Gross transfers between funds		265,311	(265,311)	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/ Net movement in funds		270,656	(16,927)	253,729	297	238,780	239,077
Fund balances at 1 April 2021		429,853	480,773	910,626	429,556	241,993	671,549
Fund balances at 31 March 2022		700,509	463,846	1,164,355	429,853	480,773	910,626

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

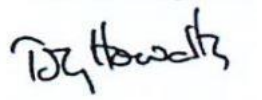
THE LINKING NETWORK

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	£	2021 £	£
Current assets					
Debtors	**11**	134,043		7,409	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,035,815		1,057,454	
		1,169,858		1,064,863	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**12**	(5,503)		(154,237)	
Net current assets			1,164,355		910,626
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**14**		463,846		480,773
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	**15**	620,000		350,000	
General unrestricted funds		80,509		79,853	
			700,509		429,853
			1,164,355		910,626

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 12 January 2023



Bishop Toby Howarth
Trustee

THE LINKING NETWORK

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	**19**		(21,824)		398,461
Investing activities					
Investment income received		185		284	
Net cash generated from investing activities			185		284
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents			(21,639)		398,745
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			1,057,454		658,709
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,035,815		1,057,454

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Linking Network is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), registered in England and Wales on 9 October 2015. It is governed by a constitution as amended 19 February 2016.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, [modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value]. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

The Trustees have considered the expected cash flows for the next two years and they consider that the Charity will be able to meet its obligations as they fall due for the foreseeable future. The financial statements are therefore prepared on the going concern basis.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out the resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

1.6 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.7 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.8 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.9 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	Restricted funds	Restricted funds
	2022	**2021**
	£	**£**
Donations and gifts	1,760	-
Grants listed below	446,478	454,058
	448,238	454,058
Grants receivable for core activities		
Pears Foundation	300,000	339,650
Culham St Gabriel's Trust	-	15,000
The Dulverton Trust	30,000	30,000
Bradford Council	30,000	4,800
My Home Life Intergenerational - National	50,767	49,108
My Home Life Intergenerational - Bradford	15,711	15,500
The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund	20,000	-
	446,478	454,058

4 Charitable activities

	Charitable Income 2022 £	Charitable Income 2021 £
Service delivery	4,725	940
Bradford Council	150,000	-
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) previously MHCLG in partnership with Department for Education (DfE).	194,500	441,488
	349,225	442,428
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	4,575	940
Restricted funds	344,650	441,488
	349,225	442,428

The Schools Linking Programme receives funding through a 3 way funding partnership between Pears Foundation, DLUHC and DfE.

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2021 £
Interest receivable	185	284

6 Charitable activities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Staff costs	272,459	289,001
Programme costs	182,478	296,409
Sessional advisors	58,826	56,945
Donations	1,602	-
Promotional and website	11,924	4,421
	527,289	646,776
Share of support costs (see note 8)	13,330	7,893
Share of governance costs (see note 8)	3,300	3,024
	543,919	657,693
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	(585)	927
Restricted funds	544,504	656,766
	543,919	657,693

Included in the Programme costs are grants to Linking Programmes listed in note 7.
Grant audit fees are included in programme costs £900 (2021 £900).

7 Grants payable

	2022	2021
	£	£
Grants to institutions:		
Faith & Belief Forum Birmingham	7,000	7,000
Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service Bolton Council	3,670	17,000
Blackburn and Darwen Council	7,000	-
Bridges for Communities, Bristol	7,000	7,000
Buckinghamshire Country Council	7,000	17,000
Burnley & Pendle Faith Centre, Lancashire County Council	7,000	17,000
Curriculum & Language Access Service, Bury Council	7,000	17,000
Calderdale Museums Service, Calderdale Council	-	7,000
Global Education Derby	7,000	7,000
Inclusions Support Service, Kent	7,000	17,000
Carry My Story, Kirklees Council	7,000	7,000
Development Education Centre, Leeds	7,000	17,000
St Philip's Centre, Leicester	7,000	7,000
Faith & Belief Forum, London	7,000	17,000
Luton First Teaching Alliance on behalf of Luton Borough Council	7,000	7,000
Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council (Manchester)	-	10,000
Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle & Gateshead City Council	7,000	7,000
Nottinghamshire County Council	7,000	17,000
Oldham Council	7,000	17,000
Building Bridges Pendle	7,000	7,000
Rochdale Borough Council	7,000	17,000
Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire (Rotherham)	3,000	3,000
Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire (Sheffield)	7,000	7,000
Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council (Stockport)	7,000	17,000
Humanities Education Centre, Tower Hamlets	7,000	7,000
Walsall Council	10,000	-
Faith & Belief Forum, Waltham Forest	3,000	3,000
	166,670	280,000

8 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2022	Support costs	Governance costs	2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Phone and broadband	1,013	-	1,013	981	-	981
General office costs	887	-	887	1,810	-	1,810
IT	2,888	-	2,888	2,887	-	2,887
Rent	3,227	-	3,227	-	-	-
Insurance	1,725	-	1,725	1,725	-	1,725
Travel and subsistence	2,553	-	2,553	106	-	106
Bank charges	214	-	214	199	-	199
Legal and professional	823	-	823	185	-	185
Independent examination fees	-	3,300	3,300	-	3,024	3,024
	13,330	3,300	16,630	7,893	3,024	10,917
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	13,330	3,300	16,630	7,893	3,024	10,917

All costs are apportioned to the sole activity of the charity.

In kind support of the charity desk space is provided by Bradford Council. The value of this donation has not been included in the financial statements as a value cannot be reliably estimated for the donation,

Governance costs includes payments to the independent examiner of £3,300 for examination fees (2021- £3,024).

9 Trustees

One trustee of the charity received £400 remuneration for work done, (2021 £nil). No other benefits or expenses from the charity were received during the current or prior year.

10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2022 Number	2021 Number
	8	8

Employment costs	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	237,191	251,655
Social security costs	19,440	20,903
Other pension costs	15,828	16,443
	272,459	289,001

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the current or previous financial year.

11 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	125,520	220
Prepayments and accrued income	8,523	7,189
	134,043	7,409

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Deferred income	**13**	-	150,000
Trade creditors		1,303	341
Accruals		4,200	3,896
		5,503	154,237

13 Deferred income

	2022	2021
	£	£
Other deferred income	-	150,000

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Brought forward	150,000	10,000
Received in year	-	150,000
Released in year	(150,000)	(10,000)
Carried forward	-	150,000

Deferred income comprises funds received where the conditions for the project were not yet been fully met, because the project commenced on 1 April 2021.

14 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
DLUHC and DfE (Schools Linking)	-	391,488	(391,488)	-	-	194,500	(194,500)	-	-
Pears #iwill Fund (Social Action 6200)	-	-	-	-	-	50,000	-	-	50,000
Pears Foundation Core Schools Linking	-	309,650	(27,339)	(17,000)	265,311	250,000	(84,929)	(272,311)	158,071
Pears Foundation Matched Funding	34,006	-	(1,580)	(2,000)	30,426	-	(3,500)	-	26,926
Culham St Gabriel's	-	15,000	(15,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	-	-	20,000
Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council	169,705	-	(69,705)	-	100,000	150,000	(85,916)	-	164,084
The Dulverton Trust	-	30,000	-	-	30,000	30,000	(30,000)	-	30,000
Bradford Council Intergenerational Linking	-	-	-	-	-	30,000	(22,393)	-	7,607
My Home Life	-	49,108	(49,108)	-	-	45,978	(45,978)	-	-
Pears Foundation (Network Capacity Grant)	-	30,000	-	-	30,000	-	(30,000)	-	-
Pears #iwill Fund (Social action 5428)	38,282	-	(23,596)	-	14,686	-	(14,686)	-	-
Department for Education Extension	-	50,000	(50,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-
My Home Life Intergenerational Linking	-	15,500	(15,500)	-	-	20,500	(20,854)	354	-
Bradford Council (Critical Thinking Training Project)	-	3,450	(3,450)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bradford Schools Linking	-	-	(10,000)	19,000	9,000	-	(9,000)	7,000	7,000
Bradford Council Light Installation Project	-	1,350	-	-	1,350	150	(1,146)	(354)	-
Big Give	-	-	-	-	-	1,760	(1,602)	-	158
	241,993	895,546	(656,766)	-	480,773	792,888	(544,504)	(265,311)	463,846

14 Restricted funds **(Continued)**

DLUHC and DfE provided grant funding for Schools Linking across The Linking Network in a three-way partnership between DfE, DLUHC and Pears Foundation.

Pears Social Action 5428/6200 - Funding from Pears #iwill Fund, a fund created by the National Lottery Community Fund, the department of Culture, Media and Sport and Pears Foundation, has supported our work to embed social action in primary linking.

Pears Foundation Core Schools Linking - core funding for TLN Schools Linking in a three way partnership between DLUHC, DfE and Pears Foundation.

Pears Foundation Matched Funding provided funding match funding for local areas to access local funds, this opportunity was ongoing through 2020-2021 and into 2021-2023.

Pears Foundation (Network Capacity Grant) to support ongoing capacity building.

The Bradford for Everyone Programme, Bradford Council provided grant funding for work across Bradford and this work is ongoing.

Bradford Schools Linking - grant for Schools Linking in Bradford.

Bradford Council - grant to create a presentation of creative Bradford Intergenerational Linking work.

Bradford Council - grant to develop Secondary Intergenerational Linking in Bradford.

My Home Life - Care Home FaNs Intergenerational Linking is being funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust and the #iwill Fund, a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. TLN is a partner with Care Home Fans employing the Youth Social Action Lead for the programme.

My Home Life - Intergenerational Linking Bradford. We received a grant to lead a pioneer site in Bradford.

Dulverton Trust grant in 2020-2021 for core funding for 2022-2023

The Alan and Babette Sainsbury Charitable Fund - grant for core funding in 2021-2022 and into 2022-2023.

Big Give Christmas Challenge -fundraiser with matched funding from the Dulverton Trust.

15 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 April 2020	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2021	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Contingency fund	-	350,000	350,000	150,000	500,000
Schools Linking Programmes	-	-	-	84,000	84,000
Strategic Develpment	-	-	-	36,000	36,000
	-	350,000	350,000	270,000	620,000

Funds have been transferred in the year to provide for grants to areas leading Schools Linking Programmes and for future strategic development.

16 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2021	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2022
	£		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	429,556	1,224	(927)	(350,000)	79,853	4,760	585	(4,689)	80,509
Designated funds	-	-	-	350,000	350,000	-	-	270,000	620,000
Restricted funds	241,993	895,546	(656,766)	-	480,773	792,888	(544,504)	(265,311)	463,846
	671,549	896,770	657,693	-	910,626	797,648	543,919	-	1,164,355

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2022	Designated funds 2022	Restricted funds 2022	Total 2022	Unrestricted funds 2021	Designated funds 2021	Restricted funds 2021	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2022 are represented by:								
Current assets/(liabilities)	80,509	620,000	463,846	1,164,355	79,853	350,000	480,773	910,626
	80,509	620,000	463,846	1,164,355	79,853	350,000	480,773	910,626

18 Related party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel
The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows.

	2022	2021
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	113,023	111,893

Transactions with related parties
During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

An amount of £400 was paid to one Trustee during the year for work done. This is allowed in the constitution and was agreed by the Trustees. There have been no other related party transactions during the year (2021 none).

19 Cash generated from operations	2022	2021
	£	£
Surplus for the year	253,729	239,077
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(185)	(284)
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(126,634)	8,839
Increase in creditors	1,266	829
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income	(150,000)	150,000
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	(21,824)	398,461

THE LINKING NETWORK

England & Wales - Charity number 1163901

Accounts

Charity Commission

The Linking Network

THE LINKING NETWORK

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Charity Registration No. 1163901

The Linking Network

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	Bishop Toby Howarth	
	Rev Denise Poole	
	Wahida Shaffi	
	Zoe Mawson	(Appointed 2 December 2020)
	Yvette Thomas	(Appointed 17 June 2021)
	Ameerah Turner-Desai	(Appointed 17 June 2021)
Charity number	1163901	
Principal address	Margaret McMillan Tower Princes Way Bradford BD1 1NN	
Independent examiner	Naylor Wintersgill Limited Carlton House Grammar School Street Bradford BD1 4NS	
Bankers	CCLA Investment Management 85 Queen Victoria Street London EC4V 4ET	
	Unity Trust Bank Brindley Place Birmingham B1 2HB	

THE LINKING NETWORK

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The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's constitution, as amended 19 February 2016, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019)

Objectives and activities

The charity's objects are to advance the education of children and young people, in particular by:

- promoting and supporting participation in projects involving children and young people from different social, religious, economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- providing support for educators and trainers through action, research and professional development in conjunction with other institutions
- developing resources for use in the classroom or other educational settings
- offering guidance and support for school leaders and governors in strengthening the process of embedding linking and citizenship within schools.

To advance equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony, in particular by:

- advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony
- foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds, in particular by providing support and encouragement for schools' participation in projects with other schools with significantly different populations, and/or to work within their own diverse communities, in order to enhance the understanding of identity, equality and diversity
- cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity, racial and religious harmony.

To advance citizenship in children, young people and communities.

About The Linking Network (TLN): the charity's main activities

TLN seeks to have a long-term impact on social cohesion and integration through our streams of work. We aim to support schools and communities in helping students to explore identity, promote community, champion equality, and develop dialogue and active citizenship. We do this by providing training, programmes, resources, and the facilitation of mutually beneficial networks. There are 7 main strands to our work:

1. The National Network of Schools Linking Programmes
2. Schools Linking Programmes
3. Social Action in Schools Linking
4. Resource Development
5. Intergenerational Linking
6. Spiritual, Moral, Social, and Cultural (SMSC) Teacher Training
7. The Linking Network in Bradford

The main elements and benefits of each of these strands of work and the impact and achievements during the year April 2020-March 2021 are outlined below in turn.

1. The National Network of Schools Linking Programmes

TLN supports a network of Schools Linking programmes in 29 local authority areas across England. The vision for the National Network of Schools Linking Programmes is one of locally owned programmes, that respond to their local context and receive national backing. TLN provides comprehensive resources that facilitators then share with linking teachers in their area, to enable them to run high quality linking programmes appropriate for their local context. The reach and cost effectiveness of the programme is made possible by this network of local partners, who are already deeply embedded and working with schools in their communities (for example, in a local NGO or in the Local Authority). This means that the funding provided has rapid and efficient impact and can capitalise on existing, trusted expertise and connections. All local areas are connected back to the experienced and expanding network, with regular contact and network meetings. The impact of the three-way partnership funding between DfE, MHCLG and Pears Foundation since 2017 has been remarkable, with growth from 11 to 29 Schools Linking Programmes. Over this time, the number of pupils directly engaged in Schools Linking each year, has grown to 30,000.

Impact: Achievements during the year (from April 2020-March 2021)

In 2020-2021 there were 29 local Schools Linking Programmes in the Network. These were located in Blackburn with Darwen, Birmingham, Bolton, Bradford, Bristol, Buckinghamshire, Burnley, Bury, Calderdale, Derby, Kent, Kirklees, Newcastle, North London, Leeds, Leicester, Luton, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottinghamshire, Oldham, Pendle, Peterborough, Sheffield, Stockport, Tower Hamlets, Rochdale, Rotherham, and Waltham Forest. Bridges for Communities, Bristol approached us and joined the network in Autumn 2020 launching Bristol Schools Linking in Spring 2021. Each programme has been able to respond to local context and priorities for social cohesion in their area.

This year we held six live, online network meetings which replaced the twice-yearly face to face network days. This proved to be a very effective way to connect, gather information and share best practice, through this challenging and turbulent year for schools and communities, in which the
Schools Linking programmes pivoted from face to face, to virtual linking. Dr Lindsey Cameron, Researcher in Residence to TLN, presented at each network meeting through the year. The programme also pivoted to offer live, online teacher training, with a flexible model where TLN co-delivered for some areas and others delivered the training themselves.

We have continued to work in 2020-2021 with colleagues employed in each of the following Local Authorities and NGOs. The year each area established Schools Linking is stated.

Schools Linking Area	Organisation leading Schools Linking	Date Linking Established
Birmingham	Faith and Belief Forum Birmingham	2017
Bolton	Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service (ACIS), Bolton Council	2013
Blackburn with Darwen	Blackburn with Darwen Council	2017
Bradford	The Linking Network, Bradford in partnership with Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council	2001
Bristol	Bridges for Communities, Bristol	2020
Buckinghamshire	Buckinghamshire County Council	2009
Burnley	Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, Lancashire Council	2017
Bury	CLAS (Curriculum and Language Access Service), Bury Council	2018
Calderdale	Calderdale Museums Service, Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council	2010
Derby	Global Education Derby	2017
Kent	Inclusion Support Service (ISS), Kent County Council	2010
Kirklees	Kirklees Council	2006
Leeds	Leeds DEC (Development Education Centre)	2019
Leicester	St Philip's Centre, Leicester	2018
London (FBF)	Faith and Belief Forum (FBF)in London	2007
Luton	Luton First Teaching Alliance on behalf of Luton Council	2009
Manchester	Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council for Manchester	2017
Newcastle and Gateshead	Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (Laing Art Gallery), Newcastle and Gateshead City Council;	2018
Nottinghamshire	Nottinghamshire County Council	2018
Oldham	Oldham Council	2001
Pendle	Building Bridges Pendle	2014
Peterborough	Peterborough Vivacity, Peterborough City Council	2019
Rochdale	Rochdale Borough Council	2017
Rotherham	Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY)	2017
Sheffield	Development Education Centre South Yorkshire (DECSY)	2017
Stockport	Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council	2009
Tower Hamlets	HEC Global Learning Centre, Tower Hamlets	2018
Waltham Forest	Faith and Belief Forum, Waltham Forest	2017
Walsall	Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council	2018

Feedback from Schools Linking Facilitators across the Network in March 2021

Afrasiab Anwar, Community Team Leader, Schools Improvement Service, Lancashire County Council and Burnley Schools Linking Facilitator: *'The Linking Network gives an opportunity for schools to get to know other schools within their local communities. Schools that, on the surface, would appear very, very different to their own. What the schools linking programme allows, is the opportunity for them to learn about one another. It's where they find out that actually they're not that different; they have the same hobbies, they have the same interests – lots and lots of similarities come out, but also, it's where they get the opportunity to see the differences.*
The expert knowledge, training and resources that TLN give to us equips us to celebrate our difference, rather than looking at differences as negative. You've just got to come see the children interact, to see the way that the two teachers and two classes work with one another. You will see the true impact that school linking has.'

Anna Wright, Bridges for Communities, Bristol Schools Linking Facilitator: *'School Linking helps to start address some of the social issues caused by people not meeting one another and trying to understand one another across the city – bringing children together, who otherwise would never meet, to talk about identity, community and belonging. As Bristol builds back after the pandemic, school linking gives children the chance to reflect and be part of the future of what Bristol becomes.'*

Rob Unwin, DECSY Sheffield/Rotherham: *'School linking is a valuable way of broadening children's horizons again through quality, structured communication with children from different communities and backgrounds but with shared experiences. Although schools and teachers have at times been under severe pandemic-related pressures, most have continued to make time for linking because it is so well-organised, constructive, and supportive and that it's bringing a little joy back into children's lives. Despite all the extra workload with absent colleagues and pupils, linked teachers are making time for this and jointly engaging with the activities. I don't think it's an exaggeration to say that this programme is likely to boost children's mental health during these difficult times. As a local area coordinator, I have really valued the provision of quality activities, CPD and support and being able to meet and share ideas and plans with other linking areas.'*

Revd. Tom Wilson, Director, St Philip's Centre, Leicester: *'The fact that our local programme is part of something national gives the necessary status to the programme, showing that it is not targeting the city or county of Leicester in particular, but that it is part of a project to bring the whole country together and keep us united in the face of a challenge whose scale is greater than anything any one in our generation has ever faced.'*

2. Schools Linking

The Schools Linking Programme facilitates sustained social mixing between school children in primary, secondary and special schools by connecting pairs of classes in a structured year long programme. Classes are partnered between contrasting schools, or within a school. We work with all kinds of school. The programme is delivered for all pupils in a year group, during the school day. TLN offers structured support and resources for teachers, helping them to create classroom-level connections between their schools, in thoughtfully planned, equitable ways. It enables children to develop skills of enquiry, critical thinking, reflection and communication, as well as providing the opportunity for children and young people to meet, build new relationships, work together and contribute to the wider community. Schools Linking is rooted in the curriculum, promotes achievement and supports Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE), Citizenship, RSE and English Objectives and addresses the spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development of pupils. The linking work is structured using 4 key questions: Who am I? Who are we? Where do we live? How do we all live together?

There is strong academic and empirical evidence that meaningful contact between people from different backgrounds can reduce prejudice, increase trust and understanding and build 'confidence in contact' in similar future contact. Evaluation by NFER (National Foundation for Educational Research) found Schools Linking impacts positively on respect for others and broadens the social groups with whom children interact. In 2011 The Runnymede Trust, UK's preeminent race equality think tank, cited Schools Linking as an example of good practice in relation to fostering dialogue and building social cohesion amongst school children (Shannahan 2018) and additionally with its focus on social action, belonging and anti-racism, cementing its presence in the area of social and racial justice. Evaluation and learning continue at the heart of the work, with a highly positive report from Coventry University in 2018. Dr Lindsey Cameron, Kent University has been Researcher in Residence to The Linking Network since 2018. Research findings on conditions that facilitate meaningful positive social mixing are fed into the network through teacher training and specialist classroom resources and are embedded into practice as essential principles for linking. Training offers teachers the opportunity to explore strategies for teaching issues of identity, diversity, community, and equality, while also developing reflective practice and deeper conversations.

Impact: Achievements during the year (from April 2020-March 2021)

Reach of Schools Linking

- **Participation in Schools Linking in the Academic Year 2019-2020:** Over 30,000 pupils in over 1063 classes, from over 700 schools, across 28 linking programmes, began their school linking year in Autumn 2019. Pupils exchanged work and met face to face at neutral venues and met again at class visits in the Spring Term 2020. When schools closed to most pupils, in March 2020, we paused the linking programme. When schools opened to all pupils in Summer Term 2020, linking classes exchanged creative messages to say goodbye and celebrate their learning.
- **Participation in Virtual Schools Linking in the Academic Year 2020-2021:** 27,740 pupils from 924 classes, in 29 local authority areas, were signed up to take part in Schools Linking by their headteachers.

New Virtual Primary Schools Linking 2020-2021

During Summer 2020, it was clear that a new approach would be needed for 2020-2021, as classes would not be able to meet face to face. As a core team and network, we developed a vision for a Virtual Primary Schools Linking programme for 2020-2021, a new creative digital model where classes do not meet face-to-face but build a sense of togetherness through a planned programme of lessons. We recognised that although linking that included face to face and virtual contact was ideal, research identified by Dr Lindsey Cameron from Kent University was clear that indirect or virtual contact can have significant impact.

The new Virtual Schools Linking Primary Programme was developed in Summer 2020 and launched in Autumn 2020, with resources tailored to an entirely digital year. Over 90 new resources including classroom linking lessons, digital support documents for teachers, a new virtual Schools Linking teacher guide, online training modules, family engagement activities, an online Theatre Play, Sign Supported English videos and storyteller sessions. All resources are free and easy to download, manageable for teachers, and work within social distancing requirements.

Partnerships and colleagues across the network enabled this rapid development of new tailored work for Virtual Schools Linking, including work on Digital Linking Support with The Curriculum Innovation Centre, Bradford Council; creative online workshops from the education teams at Cartwright Hall Museum and Art Gallery, Bradford Council; Bradford Cathedral and Kala Sangam; Rob Unwin, specialist P4C trainer at DECSY (Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire) supported us in creating new P4C materials; Matt Goodfellow recorded some of his poetry; Alia Alzougbi created an online storytelling clip and Leanne Chorekdjian -Jojaghaian, teacher, recorded Sign Supported English video clips. Oldham Gallery began

preparing an online Art Gallery to display work from all Oldham Schools Linking classes. M6 Theatre, Rochdale created a new online theatre play 'When we started singing' for Primary Schools Linking pupils across the country. Set in 2020 the film explores themes of loneliness and connection. The creation of the play was supported by Rochdale Borough Council, TLN, M6 Theatre, Arts Council England, Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale NHS CCG and The Tudor Trust.

We delivered over 40 live online training sessions across the network, supporting groups of paired linking teachers in local areas to plan for their linking year.

Feedback from teachers:
'The Linking Network has never been more valuable.' Rochdale Linking Teacher

'Schools Linking is creative and stimulating for the children. At a time when they could potentially feel shut off from their neighbours and wider community during COVID-19, the TLN project offers them a light on the horizon. The TLN team has been extremely helpful. They have tailored their support and resources to myself and my fellow link teacher so that they are Covid compliant. All of these resources have been easy to use and very professional. The quality of resources last year was fantastic. I used the ideas for meeting up with our linked school but also in my own lessons too. It is definitely an opportunity not to be missed.'
Buckinghamshire Linking Teacher

'Linking has a lot to offer for the Autumn term2020.Schools are already thinking about ways to mitigate and support wellbeing and mental health, and this is a research-led, tried and tested programme. Linking should absolutely be available because it is part of recovery and provides one way to expand a child's bubble virtually.' Rochdale Council School Improvement Officer

Shuttle Dialogue Linking for Secondary Schools
In the Autumn Term 2020 we created a new virtual approach, Secondary Shuttle Dialogue Linking. The programme is delivered in school, from the classroom by the class teacher, then the linking teachers exchange or 'shuttle' the ideas, perspectives and questions that students have, with another cohort of students, in between sessions. It can be used to connect two classes of students from different schools, or classes within a school. The five-session programme is fully resourced for teachers, with videos, guidelines for dialogue, reflection activities and a structure for sharing the learning across the school community. The sessions have teacher talk notes provided for each slide, so are ready to be delivered, but can also be edited and adapted to suit the needs of the students. The programme is focused on helping young people discover why connecting with others is something which can be positive for them, and to explore with them the opportunities and benefits it offers. We all know how much the pandemic has isolated us as a society. This is particularly true for children and young people. In many cases their connections to others have become narrower and the opportunities to meet new people and mix with a wide range of people has become more limited. Many of us are concerned about what the consequences of this might be, and our programme speaks directly to that risk. We think there is no better time for young people to be able to experience the thoughts and views of others beyond their own circle.
Secondary Schools in the Leicester/Leicestershire Schools Linking Programme tested the new approach.

'The resources offer so much discussion on important issues such as Islamophobia, they encourage students to consider how to be an upstander and not a bystander'. 'This opportunity is about building communities, people being seen and valued. ' Leicester Secondary Teacher, Spring 2021

'We deliver the programme to challenge stereotypes/prejudices. We know a simple act of interaction can make a huge change to the mindset of those involved.' Leicester St Philip's Centre

This work was funded by the three-way partnership between DfE, MHCLG and the Pears Foundation. We are incredibly grateful for all the collaborative support we received from so many different people and organisations, whose care and energy enabled us to rapidly create Virtual Linking ready for Autumn 2020.

Research and Evaluation of the National Schools Linking Programme
Dr Lindsey Cameron, Senior Lecturer, Psychology Department, Kent University and Researcher in Residence to The Linking Network, is guiding our evaluation and shares tailored research insights with us as a network. Through 2020-2021, Lindsey delivered 5 webinars at TLN Network Meetings: - Indirect Contact, - Intergenerational Contact: -Intergroup contact & children's intergroup attitudes: The role of families. - Building Common Ground through Shared Social Action in Virtual Linking; Negative Contact and Young people's diversity attitudes: Impact, Drivers and Interventions.

Research into the impact of indirect social contact informed our approach to Virtual Schools Linking for Primary and Secondary Schools for the academic Year 2020-2021. Being clear that research shows that while face to face social contact is the most effective, indirect contact can have a meaningful and valuable impact in reducing prejudice and building confidence in contact. Indirect contact from within the classroom, prior to face-to-face contact, has always been an important part of the Schools Linking Programme. The research into indirect contact gave us confidence to plan for entirely virtual contact.

IFF Research were commissioned by MHCLG to evaluate the Integrated Communities Programme (IAP) and Schools Linking across the IAP areas has been one aspect of their work. Dr L. Cameron supported IFF Research with the design of Schools Linking observations, and in Autumn 2019 they conducted a baseline observation of 15 Schools Linking meetings in IAP areas across the network. The plans to conduct end of year observations of face-to-face Schools Linking were disrupted by Covid -19 and they had to develop alternative processes to evaluate. We provided ongoing support to IFF for their evaluation from 2019 onwards.

Dr Cameron supported the design of teacher surveys and held evaluative interviews with stakeholders of the Schools Linking Programme in Summer 2020, and we were able to immediately adopt recommendations and put them into practice. A similar process with linking teachers is planned for Summer 2021.

3. Social Action in Primary Linking

As part of the Schools Linking Year, pairs of linked classes can choose to engage in Social Action together. Social action provides the collaborative activity, common goals and meaningful interaction that we know is needed to support effective social contact.

Impact: Achievements during the year (from April 2020-March 2021)
In 2020-2021 we redeveloped the way we embed Social Action into our Virtual Primary Schools Linking Programme, building the six #iwill principles of high quality youth social action **(Child-led, Challenging, Embedded, Socially impactful, Reflective and Progressive)** into the programme.

The new programme incorporated Philosophy for Children, high quality texts, family engagement resources and live online calls between the linked classes, to meet and share their chosen social action. Through sharing the things they care about and the actions that they take, the linking classes perception of one another is widened. All of these new resources are now available to linking schools on the TLN website along with a newly curated book list for primary social action, a song list, a range of blogs and new assemblies to model social action opportunities as well as a webinar from Dr Lindsey Cameron, Kent University on *'Building Common Ground through Shared Social Action in Primary Linking'*.

This work was supported by the Pears #iwill Fund, created by Pears Foundation, and match funded by the #iwill Fund, a £54 million joint investment from The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

4. Resource Development

We offer age-appropriate classroom and assembly resources for teachers to use, to support young people in deepening their knowledge and understanding of identity, diversity, community, and equality, creating space for discussion in school. Our resources are written by teachers, for teachers.

Impact: Achievements during the year (from April 2020-March 2021)
This year, TLN has developed new curriculum resources, available to all schools, created by teachers for teachers, that deliver English, PSHE, Citizenship Objectives and SMSC expectations and are tailored to the changing circumstances and needs of schools and pupils through 2020-2021. Our resources reach over 200,000 pupils annually through our Schools Linking, Home Learning, Remote Teaching, Assembly and Intergenerational Linking Programmes.

- **Home Learning Resources** When schools closed to most pupils in March 2020, we developed over 100 Home Learning Resources, including some bilingual recorded resources, to continue to deliver our objectives during Covid-19. This additional work was funded by the Department of Education.

  "It's great to see that despite the restrictions, many of our schools are still able to support pupils in keeping up with our schools linking programme. St. Mary's CE Primary School, Rochdale, are proud to be involved and are supporting families learning at home. We've had some wonderful examples of linking activities being done at home, as well as with key worker children in school. From investigating family trees to creating identity shields, it has never been more important to talk about our communities and how we work together.' St Mary's CE Primary, Rochdale Council

- **Remote Teaching Resources** When schools moved to remote teaching for most pupils, in January 2021, we provided curriculum resources for Remote Teaching and Assemblies that delivered our core objectives. The resources were freely available to all schools.

- **Secondary Resources** Through the year, we were able to respond to challenges that emerged. For example, resources on Anti-rumour and Fake News, Mental Health and Well Being and representation. The resources were distributed by local authorities and charities in the TLN network.

- **Family Engagement Resources** We created 6 new family engagement resources to accompany the Virtual Schools Linking Programme 2020-2021, to support schools to engage their parents in their children's experience of the Schools Linking programme

- **Partnership Work** included creating a recorded **'Remember Together'** assembly using resources from The Royal British Legion; an assembly for the **/Together Coalition Thank You NHS Day** July 2020 and working with the **Belong Coalition** on a webinar on Radical Kindness;

  'What I have seen in Derby is that schools are ambitious in terms of what they want to do. They are heavily invested in Schools Linking and the relationship between the schools. Schools are picking up best practice and investing long term in developing staff skills and understanding, both within and outside ongoing linking class activity.' Yvonne Luce, GED, Derby

5. Intergenerational Linking

Care Home Friends and Neighbours Intergenerational Linking Project is an exciting national initiative from My Home Life England (MHLE) and The Linking Network (TLN). The three-year programme of work aims to co-create, pilot and deliver a range of intergenerational, sustainable, community engagement initiatives in the social care sector, with the purpose of connecting the residents of care homes for older people, with children aged 5-14 years old, in local schools and youth organisations, in a way which is flexible, practically achievable and self-sustaining. Care Home FaNs Intergenerational Linking is being funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust and the #iwill Fund, a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport.

Impact: Achievements during the year (from April 2020-March 2021)

The Linking Network has continued to work in partnership with My Home Life England (MHLE) on the Care Home FaNs: Intergenerational Linking project. TLN, was a pioneer site in Bradford for this project in 2020-2021, beginning to link young people aged 5-14 in schools or youth groups with older people living in care homes. This has been challenging against the backdrop of the Covid pandemic, but joyful in finding creative ways that generations can connect. For example, through introductory 'getting to know you' activities, shared artwork and exploration of memories through video, with funding from Bradford Council for a creative Light Installation as part of a local festival. TLN has created resources to support these activities in Bradford, as well as providing bespoke support for each intergenerational link. The learning from this work has been captured at a national level and in Autumn 2020, recruitment began for further organisations to apply for funding, to develop Intergenerational Linking in other areas. MHLE and TLN recruited a further 9 organisations across the country to be part of the Care Home FaNs Intergenerational Linking project. Support documents and guidance were produced, and induction sessions planned, to ensure these nine new organisations were well supported when their funding commenced in April 2021.

6. Spiritual, Moral, Social, And Cultural (SMSC) Teacher Training

We provide support, training and resources for schools to review their strategy and implement provision, to develop their pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education. The training shares practical classroom resources that schools can use to teach SMSC, challenge misconceptions and prejudice, create inclusive, representative classrooms and build work on equality, diversity, identity and community into their curriculum, and whole school provision. We deliver initial teacher training sessions, staff meetings and leadership training.

The training supports schools to effectively promote integration through the curriculum and whole school provision creating space for reflection on existing good practice and identifying new opportunities to move forward. It enables schools to productively apply the Personal Development and SMSC aspects of the Ofsted framework. We also offer support and review for school culture and ethos and convene a Network of Secondary SMSC Leaders to share good practice. Culham St Gabriel's Trust has provided grant funding for this Action Research alongside funding from Pears Foundation.

Impact: Achievements during the year (from April 2020-March 2021)

During Summer 2020 we redeveloped our SMSC courses from face to face into live and interactive, online training sessions. All the training, accompanying resources and review toolkit were updated to support schools in responding to the issues that arose throughout the year, connected to equalities and community, and for Ofsted changes. The training signposts delegates to practical resource examples, including curated book lists, TLN resources and to a wide range of organisations, such as Amnesty Education. Although the move to online delivery was because of Covid-19, interestingly, this will have potential as a delivery model into the future, as by removing geographical barriers, colleagues from across the country were able to

attend. We delivered Initial Teacher Training live online to over 100 teacher trainees at Huddersfield University. We continued to facilitate the Bradford Secondary SMSC Leaders Network through the year.

7. The Linking Network - Bradford Programmes

The Linking Network core team is based in Bradford and delivers the Bradford Schools Primary and Secondary Linking Programme, Intergenerational Linking Programmes and the Bradford SMSC Leaders Network. The core team have all worked in the Bradford District in education and community engagement. Our delivery in Bradford informs our support for the Network of Schools Linking programmes across the country.

Impact: Achievements during the year (from April 2020-March 2021)

Bradford Primary Schools Linking: The appetite for connecting children through Schools Linking across the Bradford District, continued strongly in 2020-2021, despite the huge impact of the pandemic on school life, with 84 primary schools signing up to the virtual schools linking programme, believing their children would benefit from connecting outside their bubbles. Through the year we delivered live, online Schools Linking training to 124 paired linking teachers, from 68 of these primary schools.

In January 2019, the Bradford for Everyone Programme at Bradford Council, asked us to aim for at least 50% of the district's children to take part in Schools Linking during their primary school years and provided additional funding to support this work. (Prior to this, in the 2018-2019 academic year, we were supporting 68 classes from 47 primary schools to link, which represented 25% of the cohort of the district's primary children taking part in their primary years.) We reached out to all primary schools in Spring 2019, and numbers rose dramatically for the 2019-2020 academic year, so that 195 classes in 94 Bradford primary schools, were linking, which was 69% of the cohort across the district. The numbers of primary schools engaging in the programme had doubled and the numbers of classes had nearly tripled. During the academic year 2020-2021, following the March 2020 lockdown, numbers were slightly reduced, so that 170 classes from 84 schools signed up for virtual Schools Linking, which was 64% of the cohort. As the pressures of Covid-19 unfolded in the Autumn Term, followed by the January school closures to most children, some schools decided to pause their links, so numbers taking part reduced to 124 classes from 68 primary schools linking which was 47% of the cohort.)

'We are very happy as a school, to go ahead again with Bradford Schools Linking for 2020-2021. We have thoroughly loved being a part of this dynamic, vibrant, and enriching community experience. We will be able to adapt our links to virtual visits for our pupils. Thank you so very much for giving us this wonderful and positive learning and life experience.' Year 4 Teacher, Bradford Primary School 2020

The Linking Network has been a crucial avenue through which to explore personal development. I think schools will be crying out for guidance on re-centering PSHE and tools that inspire develop *empathy and resilience in children and whole school strategies for achieving this.'* Deputy Head, Bradford Primary School, Summer 2020

Bradford Secondary Schools Linking: The Bradford for Everyone Programme set targets for TLN to support work on identity, diversity, community and equality, in at least 10 Bradford secondary schools through 2019-2021.

In 2019-2020 more than 30 groups of students, in 17 secondary schools, took part in face to face linking, and the SMSC Network across the district connected leaders from over 18 schools, to share good practice.

In 2020-2021 we pivoted to deliver the objectives we were working on differently and in total we engaged with 20 secondaries in multiple ways. Over 10 secondary schools shared the Secondary Home Learning Resources we created for students working at home, during the Summer Term 2020, and used our Remote Learning Lesson and Assembly Resources in Spring Term 2021.
The Bradford SMSC Secondary Leaders Network moved to meeting live, online, to share experiences and identify good practice. Meetings included connecting with Bradford Council Youth Services and Bradford Hate Crime Alliance and addressing challenges that emerged. SMSC Leads across 19 secondary schools engaged with the network. We went on to support 2 secondary schools to audit and develop their curriculum for SMSC.

We were commissioned by Bradford for Everyone to develop secondary resources based on the Anti-Rumour approach, developed by Intercultural Cities, to combat stereotypes and a sense of *them and us* in the context of Covid and challenge the suspicion and blame between different groups.

Priorities for next year

It is evident that the impacts of the pandemic upon children, young people and schools are serious and will be long-lasting. Our priority will be to continue to reflect on the best way forward for building children's and young people's sense of self and belonging, and their connection with others. We will keep listening to ensure all of our programmes are right for schools and adapt them accordingly. We will continue to support schools to find ways for their pupils to have effective contact with others outside their immediate circle. As a network, we are always committed to supporting schools with their decision-making regarding linking, and we will continue to do so, knowing that the relationships between school communities, supported by their local programme leadership, are a long-term journey.

- Further develop the Virtual Primary Schools Linking resources for 2021-2022, building on learning and evaluation from 2020-2021.
- Further developing Shuttle Dialogue for Secondary Schools Linking, building on learning and evaluation from 2020-2021.
- Enhance the support for Live Online Video Calls for Primary Schools, to further enhance the linking experience for primary children.
- Continue to support and connect with the Network of Schools Linking Programmes.
- Welcome new areas, wishing to run Schools Linking across their district, into the network.
- Gather video and photo images of Social Action in Primary Linking and continue to embed the work.
- Develop Special Mainstream Schools Linking Guidance, working with special schoolteachers who have led schools linking.
- Deliver Live online SMSC Training in different settings.
- Develop our work in Bradford.
- Continue to work in partnership with My Home Life and Care Home Fans and Neighbours, to further develop Intergenerational Linking between schools and care homes and keep innovating in the Bradford District. We recognise the value of effective intergenerational contact for building confidence in contact; Intergenerational Linking is now core work for The Linking Network.
- Continue to build evaluation and learning by working with Dr Lindsey Cameron, Kent University, to evaluate and develop the programme with a particular emphasis on gathering pupil and stakeholder voice.
- Refresh our website and communication.
- Continue to build the case for support for the national Network of Schools Linking programmes – working with DfE, DLUHC (formerly MHCLG), Pears Foundation and Dulverton Trust and supporting each local area to reach out for local funding to build sustainability.

For Case Studies and further information, see www.thelinkingnetwork.org.uk

Twitter: @Linking_Network and #SchoolsLinking #IntergenerationalLinking

Acknowledgements

The Trustees would like to express their gratitude to the whole staff team for the development of TLN's work through this challenging year which is thanks to their professionalism, commitment, and hard work.

The Trustees and staff would also like to thank the networks of practitioners, teams of staff, sessional advisors, teachers, Local Authority and NGO staff, and funders for their dedication through this year. We are grateful for their shared commitment to providing children, young people opportunities to develop relationship, empathy, critical thinking and contribute to wider society.

The trustees, staff team and network colleagues are grateful to all our funders-Pears Foundation, DfE, DLUHC (MHCLG), Dulverton Trust, Pears #iwill Fund, Dunhill Medical Trust and the #iwill fund, Culham St Gabriel's Trust, the Bradford for Everyone Programme, Bradford Council- for their strong support and commitment throughout this challenging year, as we responded to the needs of schools as a result of the pandemic, and for their vision and belief in the societal benefits of the work.

Public benefit statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, our trustees have given serious consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, specifically by:

(i) Advancing the education of children and young people, in particular by:

- promoting and supporting participation in projects involving children and young people from different social, religious, economic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds
- providing support for educators and trainers, through action, research and professional development in conjunction with other institutions
- developing resources for use in the classroom or other educational settings
- offering guidance and support for educators and trainers through action, research and professional development in conjunction with other institutions.

(ii) Advancing equality and diversity and religious and racial harmony in particular by:

- advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity, and religious and racial harmony
- foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds, in particular by providing support and encouragement for schools' participation in projects with other schools with significantly different populations, and/or to work within their own diverse communities in order to enhance the understanding of identity, equality and diversity
- cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity, racial and religious harmony.

(iii) Advancing citizenship in children, young people and communities.

Financial review

During the year the charity received income of £896,770 (2020 £797,373) of which £895,546 (2020 £764,839) was restricted. The charity incurred expenditure of £657,693 (2020 £545,415) including £656,766 (2020 £540,478) from restricted funds. During the year transfers were made from restricted to unrestricted funds of £Nil (2020 £65,253) due to a release of restrictions by the funder. During the year a transfer was made to designated funds of £350,000 for a contingency fund. This resulted in net income of £239,077 (2020 £251,958) of which £297 (2020 £92,850) was unrestricted and £238,780 (2020 £159,108) was restricted.

It is the policy of the charity that unrestricted funds, excluding fixed assets, which have not been designated for a specific use should be maintained at a level equivalent to between three and nine month's expenditure. This equates to between £238,000 and £328,000. The trustees considers that reserves at this level will ensure that, in the event of a significant drop in funding, they will be able to continue the charity's current activities while consideration is given to ways in which additional funds may be raised. This level of reserves has been maintained throughout the year.

Unrestricted reserves at 31 March 2021 stood at £429,853 (2020 - £429,556).

Risks

Key risks considered by trustees relate to the safeguarding of children and young people as their class connects virtually or face to face with pupils from another school. We mitigate the risk through detailed advice in teacher training sessions and written guidance which advises that each school should work within their own safeguarding policies and within any additional restrictions that their link school requires and also that information should be exchanged by teachers and not by pupils. The risk of transmission of Covid-19 is mitigated by resources to support virtual linking programmes with live online training for teachers.

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks.

Fundraising

Section 162a of the Charities Act 2011 requires charities to make a statement regarding fundraising activities. The legislation defines fundraising as 'soliciting or otherwise procuring money or other property for charitable purposes'. The charity does not actively raise funds from the public either directly or via use of an agent, accordingly no such amounts are presented in the financial statements for the year under review. The charity has received no complaints in relation to fundraising activity for the year under review.
Given the nature of the funding of the charity the Trustees consider that it remains appropriate not to be voluntarily bound to be regulated by the Fundraising Regulator.

Structure, governance and management
The charity is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), registered on 9 October 2015 in England and Wales.

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Bishop Toby Howarth	
Rev Denise Poole	
Wahida Shaffi	
Stephanie Longson	(Resigned 22 October 2020)
Zoe Mawson	(Appointed 2 December 2020)
Yvette Thomas	(Appointed 17 June 2021)
Ameerah Turner-Desai	(Appointed 17 June 2021)

Trustees are recruited through interview with a panel of Trustees based on the skills they can provide to the Charity. New Trustees are trained through mentoring by more experienced Trustees and ad-hoc training courses as considered appropriate.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Bishop Toby Howarth
Trustee
Dated: 9 December 2021

The Linking Network

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE LINKING NETWORK

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Linking Network (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or

2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or

3 the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

Alison Whalley FCA
Naylor Wintersgill Limited

Carlton House
Grammar School Street
Bradford
BD1 4NS

Dated: 9 December 2021

The Linking Network

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Total 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2020 £	Restricted funds 2020 £	Total 2020 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	3	-	454,058	454,058	-	198,351	198,351
Charitable activities	4	940	441,488	442,428	31,980	566,488	598,468
Investments	5	284	-	284	554	-	554
Total income		1,224	895,546	896,770	32,534	764,839	797,373
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	6	927	656,766	657,693	4,937	540,478	545,415
Gross transfers between funds		-	-	-	65,253	(65,253)	-
Net income for the year/ Net movement in funds		297	238,780	239,077	92,850	159,108	251,958
Fund balances at 1 April 2020		429,556	241,993	671,549	336,706	82,885	419,591
Fund balances at 31 March 2021		429,853	480,773	910,626	429,556	241,993	671,549

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The Linking Network

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	£	2020 £	£
Current assets					
Debtors	11	7,409		16,248	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,057,454		658,709	
		1,064,863		674,957	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(154,237)		(3,408)	
Net current assets			910,626		671,549
Income funds					
Restricted funds	14		480,773		241,993
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	15	350,000		-	
General unrestricted funds		79,853		429,556	
			429,853		429,556
			910,626		671,549

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 9 December 2021

Bishop Toby Howarth
Trustee

The Linking Network

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	19		398,461		435,790
Investing activities					
Interest received		284		554	
Net cash generated from investing activities			284		554
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			398,745		436,344
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			658,709		222,365
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			1,057,454		658,709

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Linking Network is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO), registered in England and Wales on 9 October 2015. It is governed by a constitution as amended 19 February 2016.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)". The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

The Trustees have considered they expected cash flows for the next two years and the consider that the Charity will be able to meet its obligations as they fall due for the foreseeable future. The financial statements are therefore prepared on the going concern basis.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

1 Accounting policies

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out the resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

1.6 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.7 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.8 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1 Accounting policies

1.9 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	Restricted funds	Restricted funds
	2021	2020
	£	£
Grants listed below	454,058	198,351
Grants receivable for core activities		
Pears Foundation	339,650	176,533
Culham St Gabriel's Trust	15,000	-
The Dulverton Trust	30,000	-
Bradford Council	4,800	-
Controlling Migration fund	-	7,500
My Home Life Intergenerational - National	49,108	14,318
My Home Life Intergenerational - Bradford	15,500	-
	454,058	198,351

4 Charitable activities

	Charitable Income 2021 £	Charitable Income 2020 £
Service delivery	940	31,980
Ministry of Housing. Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) including Department for Education (DfE)	441,488	566,488
	442,428	598,468
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	940	31,980
Restricted funds	441,488	566,488
	442,428	598,468

Matched funding
Matched funding for the MHCLG project is provided by Pears Foundation.

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Unrestricted funds 2020 £
Interest receivable	284	554

6 Charitable activities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Staff costs	289,001	242,012
Programme costs	296,409	217,378
Sessional advisors	56,945	52,014
Promotion and website	4,421	8,627
	646,776	520,031
Share of support costs (see note 8)	7,893	21,131
Share of governance costs (see note 8)	3,024	4,253
	657,693	545,415
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	927	4,937
Restricted funds	656,766	540,478
	657,693	545,415

Included in the Programme costs are grants listed in note 7.

7 Grants payable

	2021	2020
	£	£
Grants to institutions:		
Faith & Belief Forum Birmingham	7,000	10,000
Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service Bolton Council	17,000	-
Bridges for Communities, Bristol	7,000	-
Buckinghamshire Country Council	17,000	-
Burnley & Pendle Faith Centre, Lancashire County Council	17,000	-
Curriculum & Language Access Service, Bury Council	17,000	-
Calderdale Museums Service, Calderdale Council	7,000	10,000
Global Education Derby	7,000	10,000
Inclusions Support Service, Kent	17,000	-
Yorkshire Spirit, Kirklees	-	(11,000)
Carry My Story, Kirklees Council	7,000	21,000
Development Education Centre, Leeds	17,000	14,000
St Philip's Centre, Leicester	7,000	10,000
Faith & Belief Forum, London	17,000	-
Luton First Teaching Alliance on behalf of Luton Borough Council	7,000	10,000
Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council (Manchester)	10,000	-
Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle & Gateshead City Council	7,000	10,000
Nottinghamshire County Council	17,000	-
Oldham Council	17,000	-
Building Bridges Pendle	7,000	10,000
Vivacity, Peterborough	-	7,000
Rochdale Borough Council	17,000	-
Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire (Rotherham)	3,000	10,000
Development Education Centre, South Yorkshire (Sheffield)	7,000	10,000
Ethnic Diversity Service, Stockport Council (Stockport)	17,000	-
Humanities Education Centre, Tower Hamlets	7,000	10,000
Faith & Belief Forum, Waltham Forest	3,000	10,000
	280,000	141,000

8 Support costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2021	Support costs	Governance costs	2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Phone and broadband	981	-	981	1,060	-	1,060
General office costs	1,810	-	1,810	3,003	-	3,003
IT	2,887	-	2,887	3,314	-	3,314
Insurance	1,725	-	1,725	1,332	-	1,332
Travel and subsistence	106	-	106	11,981	-	11,981
Bank charges	199	-	199	251	-	251
Legal and professional	185	-	185	190	-	190
Accountancy	-	-	-	-	1,200	1,200
Independent examination fees	-	3,024	3,024	-	2,880	2,880
Trustees travel	-	-	-	-	173	173
	7,893	3,024	10,917	21,131	4,253	25,384
Analysed between						
Charitable activities	7,893	3,024	10,917	21,131	4,253	25,384

All costs are apportioned to the sole activity of the charity.

In kind support of desk space is provided by Bradford Council. The value of this donation has not been included in the financial statements as a value cannot be reliably estimated for the donation,

Governance costs includes payments to the independent examiner of £3,024 for examination fees and £nil for accountancy fees (2020- £2,880 examination fees and £1,200 for accountancy.)

9 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

Trustees travel expenses were paid out to nil trustees amounting to £nil in the year, (2020 - £173 travel, one trustee).

10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2021 Number	2020 Number
	8	7

Employment costs	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	251,655	209,872
Social security costs	20,903	17,717
Other pension costs	16,443	14,423
	289,001	242,012

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the current or previous financial year.

11 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	220	1,930
Prepayments and accrued income	7,189	14,318
	7,409	16,248

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Deferred income	13	150,000	-
Trade creditors		341	-
Accruals		3,896	3,408
		154,237	3,408

13 Deferred income

	2021	2020
	£	£
Other deferred income	150,000	-

Deferred income is included in the financial statements as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Brought forward	-	10,000
Received in year	150,000	-
Released in year	-	(10,000)
Carried forward	150,000	-

Deferred income comprises funds received where the conditions for the project were not yet been fully met, because the project commenced on 1 April 2021.

14 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds				Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 April 2019	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
MHCLG and DfE (Schools Linking)	30,130	391,488	(421,618)	-	-	391,488	(391,488)	-	-
Pears Foundation Social Action 1	5,755	-	(5,755)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pears Foundation Core Schools Linking	-	37,833	(5,280)	(32,553)	-	309,650	(27,339)	(17,000)	265,311
Pears Foundation Matched Funding	-	58,700	(21,994)	(2,700)	34,006	-	(1,580)	(2,000)	30,426
Culham St Gabriel's	-	-	-	-	-	15,000	(15,000)	-	-
Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council (MHCLG)	32,000	-	(31,800)	(200)	-	-	-	-	-
Bradford for Everyone, Bradford Council	-	175,000	(5,495)	200	169,705	-	(69,705)	-	100,000
The Dulverton Trust	15,000	-	(15,000)	-	-	30,000	-	-	30,000
Controlling Migration Fund, Bradford Council	-	7,500	(7,500)	-	-	-	-	-	-
My Home Life	-	14,318	(14,318)	-	-	49,108	(49,108)	-	-
Pears Foundation (Network Capacity Grant)	-	30,000	-	(30,000)	-	30,000	-	-	30,000
Pears Foundation (Social Action 2)	-	50,000	(11,718)	-	38,282	-	(23,596)	-	14,686
Department for Education Extension	-	-	-	-	-	50,000	(50,000)	-	-
My Home Life Intergenerational Linking Bradford	-	-	-	-	-	15,500	(15,500)	-	-
Bradford Council (Critical Thinking Training Project)	-	-	-	-	-	3,450	(3,450)	-	-
Bradford Schools Linking	-	-	-	-	-	-	(10,000)	19,000	9,000
Bradford Council Light Installation Project	-	-	-	-	-	1,350	-	-	1,350
	82,885	764,839	(540,478)	(65,253)	241,993	895,546	(656,766)	-	480,773

14 Restricted funds

MHCLG and DfE provided grant funding for Schools Linking across The Linking Network in a three-way partnership between DfE, MHCLG and Pears Foundation.

Pears Foundation Core Schools Linking - core funding for TLN Schools Linking in a three-way partnership between MHCLG, DfE and Pears Foundation - as above.

The Department of Education provided extension funding to support Schools Linking to pivot from face to face to virtual through the Summer Term 2020

Pears Social Action1 - Funding from the Pears #iwill Fund, a fund created by the National Lottery Community Fund, the Department of Culture, Media & Sport and Pears Foundation, has supported our work to embed social action in primary linking.

Pears Social Action 2 - Funding from the Pears #iwill Fund, a fund created by the National Lottery Community Fund, the Department of Culture, Media & Sport and Pears Foundation, has supported our work to embed social action in primary linking.

Pears Foundation Matched Funding provided match funding for local areas to access local funds, this opportunity was ongoing through 2020-2021 and 2021-2022.

Pears Foundation (Network Capacity Grant) to support ongoing capacity building.

The Bradford for Everyone Programme, Bradford Council provided grant funding for work across Bradford and this work is ongoing.

Bradford Council (Critical Thinking Training) - funding working group developing work in schools on Critical Thinking

Dulverton Trust grant in 2019-2020 for core funding for Schools Linking 2021-2022

The Bradford for Everyone Programme at Bradford Council provided funding for TLN to take part in the Critical Thinking Training Project.

Bradford Schools Linking – grant for Schools Linking in Bradford

Culham St Gabriel's Trust -grant funding to support Action Research into SMSC Training.

Bradford Council -grant to create a Light Installation for Bradford LiT of creative Bradford Intergenerational Linking work

My Home Life - Care Home FaNs Intergenerational Linking is being funded by The Dunhill Medical Trust and the #iwill Fund, a joint investment between The National Lottery Community Fund and the Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. TLN is a partner with Care Home Fans employing the Youth Social Action Lead for the programme.

My Home Life - Intergenerational Linking Bradford We received a grant to lead a pioneer site in Bradford.

During 2021 £nil (2020 £65,253) from The Pears Foundation was transferred to general funds at it had been released by the funder.

15 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds			
	Incoming resources	Balance at 1 April 2020	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£	£	£	£
Contingency fund	-	-	350,000	350,000
	-	-	350,000	350,000

16 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2019	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 April 2020	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	336,706	32,534	(4,937)	65,253	429,556	1,224	(927)	-	429,853
Restricted funds	82,885	764,839	(540,478)	(65,253)	241,993	895,546	(656,766)	-	480,773
	419,591	797,373	545,415	-	671,549	896,770	657,693	-	910,626

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2021	2021	2021	2020	2020	2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March 2021 are represented by:						
Current assets/(liabilities)	429,853	480,773	910,626	429,556	241,993	671,549
	429,853	480,773	910,626	429,556	241,993	671,549

18 Related party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel is as follows.

	2021	2020
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	101,569	101,591

There have been no other related party transactions during the year (2020 none).

19 Cash generated from operations

	2021	2020
	£	£
Surplus for the year	239,077	251,958
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(284)	(554)
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease in debtors	8,839	197,068
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	829	(2,682)
Increase/(decrease) in deferred income	150,000	(10,000)
Cash generated from operations	398,461	435,790