

Play for Progress



Annual Report & Finance Statements Year Ending 31 August 2025

Company Number 09157780 | Charity Number 1166328

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Letter from our Chair of Trustees

I am honoured and deeply excited to have joined Play for Progress as Chair of Trustees in May 2025. I have long admired the extraordinary work of this organisation, and the opportunity to help lead and support this team - and the young people at its heart - is one I embrace with great enthusiasm.



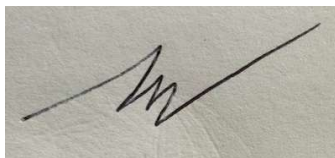
I come to this role having spent twenty years in New York leading Futures and Options, a non-profit focused on career development opportunities for underserved young people. That experience taught me the profound difference that consistent, compassionate, and creative support can make in a young person's life. What Play for Progress does - and the way it does it - speaks directly to everything I believe in.

I have seen firsthand the need for this crucial work in our society today, and the impact that this creative and compassionate approach has for unaccompanied refugee and asylum-seeking young people. The combination of artistic engagement, therapeutic support, advocacy and community that Play for Progress offers is rare, and it works.

I join the Board with a wealth of professional experience across the arts, finance, therapy, medicine, the third sector, conflict policy and humanitarian issues. Together, we are committed to ensuring that Play for Progress has the governance, resources and strategy to grow sustainably and continue this vital work for many years to come.

To our staff, volunteers, partners and funders - thank you for everything you do and everything you make possible. I look forward to working alongside you all.

Warmest Regards,



Anne Benedict

Chair of Trustees, Play for Progress

Letter from our Executive Director



It is with humility and deep gratitude that I write to you in this year's annual report. This has been a year defined by two words: fortifying and growing, albeit with some growing pains. We have invested in our foundations - our strategy, our leadership, our systems and our resilience - while continuing to show up weekly, for the young people at the heart of everything we do. None of what you will read in these pages would be possible without our extraordinary team, our dedicated trustees, our generous funders, our supporters, partners & collaborators and the young people themselves - who continue to inspire us beyond measure.

A New Strategy for a New Chapter

We began the year with a moment of real significance: the launch of our new three-year organisational strategy for 2024–2027. Developed with the generous support of the This Day Foundation, the process was exactly what a strategy process should be - deeply collaborative, genuinely inclusive, and rooted in the voices of those who matter most.

The process brought together our whole team at an away day in Brighton, and included meaningful consultation with young people, trustees, and our wider network of partners. What emerged is a strategy we are truly proud of - one that is ambitious yet grounded, and that reflects who we are and where we are going.

Our five strategic goals for 2024–2027 are:

- Consolidate our core support services for young people and scope the feasibility of new programmes to meet emerging needs;
- Continue to build on the leadership of young people with lived experience in organisational governance and decision-making;
- Invest in electronic systems to support casework, therapy and music team staff to record notes and share information more efficiently;
- Expand our impact by supporting others to implement trauma-informed organisational health models;
- Increase awareness in the refugee sector through marketing, collaboration, and partnerships with stakeholders and other charities.

These five goals will continue to guide our work, our decisions and our ambitions. We are excited about what lies ahead.

Strengthening Our Leadership

I am absolutely delighted to share that after a thorough and considered search, we have appointed our new Chair of the Board - and what an appointment it is.

Anne is an experienced corporate and charity executive who has led organisations across a remarkable range of sectors, including media, technology and healthcare, with particular expertise in people and human resources. Her breadth of experience, her values, and her commitment to our mission make her an exceptional fit for Play for Progress. The Board is stronger for having her at its helm, and I know our whole organisation will benefit enormously from her leadership, wisdom and energy.

Anne, on behalf of the entire team and the young people we serve - welcome. We are so glad you are here.

A Strong Year for Funding and Resilience

Despite the challenging funding landscape, this has been one of our strongest years yet for securing funding - a reflection of the trust that funders are placing in our work and our approach. I am proud to share three landmark grants that will significantly strengthen our resilience and capacity for years to come.

£105,000

**Esmée Fairbairn
Foundation
(Multi-year)**

£188,000

**City Bridge
Foundation
(Multi-year)**

\$100,000

**Hidden Healing
Fund
(Single grant)**

The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation grant of £105,000 over multiple years was awarded following a rigorous selection process, and Play for Progress was proud to be one of just ten youth organisations chosen to receive this funding to further develop youth-led creativity. What made this moment particularly special was that, for the very first time, a young leader was involved in the funding assessment process itself.

Sam represented Play for Progress with real courage and eloquence, speaking directly to the Esmee team about his experience as a young leader and how young people's voices are central to shaping our programmes. When we received the news, his words said it all:

"I am absolutely over the moon to hear this fantastic news! Congratulations to everyone involved - I am truly delighted by this achievement. Securing £105,000 over the next three years is an incredible milestone, and it speaks volumes about the hard work and dedication from the entire team."

Sam, we could not agree more. And we are so proud of you.

We also secured our largest ever multi-year grant from the City Bridge Foundation of £188,000 over three years - a truly significant investment in our future. And we are honoured to be one of only 3 UK charities awarded our biggest ever single grant of \$100,000 from the US-based Hidden Healing Fund. This is in recognition of our use of creative methods to support the mental health of marginalised young people.

Facing the Challenges Ahead

We would not be honest if we did not acknowledge that this year has also brought significant challenges. The continued hostility towards migrant communities - fuelled by far-right activism and damaging media rhetoric - has created a climate of fear and uncertainty for many of the young people we support. These are not abstract political debates to us. They are the lived reality of the young people who walk through our doors. Sadly war and conflict continues unabated across the world displacing even more young people and causing more harm.

We will continue to stand firmly beside them, to speak up, and to do what we do best: create safe, nurturing spaces where young people can heal, survive and thrive - regardless of what is happening in the world outside.

Looking Ahead with Hope

As we look ahead to our tenth anniversary in 2026, we do so with hope, ambition, and deep gratitude for every person who is part of this community - for the young people who trust us, for the team who give so much of themselves every day, for our trustees who guide us with care and wisdom, and for every funder, partner and supporter who believes in what we do.

With love and gratitude,



Bridget Banda

Executive Director, Play for Progress

Who We Are

Play for Progress (PfP) is an award-winning, trauma-informed creative charity that supports unaccompanied young people seeking asylum. Registered as a charity in 2016, we are based at the Croydon Buddhist Centre and have worked with over 1,000 young people since 2014.

Our work is built around reducing isolation and re-traumatisation, developing practical and social skills, and improving the wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable young people in our community. At any one time, more than 500 asylum-seeking young people are based in Croydon - and we support 70% of them.



The specific challenges our young people face include:

- Navigating complex and often frightening asylum cases
- Significant language barriers
- Repeated, short-notice relocations on top of usual adolescent stressors
- Lack of access to supportive housing, stable adults, and appropriate medical support
- Extreme trauma, PTSD, sleep deprivation, and interrupted emotional development

The anti-migrant riots and increasing hostility toward refugees and asylum seekers in the UK have caused many of our young people to feel unsafe and excluded from their communities. Our trauma-informed approach - and our insistence on the importance of play - means that young people can continue to thrive and grow even in this climate.

The young people we first worked with, now in their twenties, support their community of peers as Young Leaders - meeting regularly to provide feedback, run projects, and act as session assistants. This year, we employed two of those young people as Casework and Youth Development Officers.

Our Mission and Approach

Our mission is to ensure that young displaced people seeking refuge have the community to survive, the space to heal, and the stability to thrive. These three words are not just a tagline. They are the architecture of everything we do.

Survive: Finding Strength in Community

Stability and consistency are essential for young people facing uncertainty. Our weekly sessions run at the same times each week, providing a dependable space where young people can connect, develop skills, and receive support. Whether through music, art, shared meals, or one-to-one guidance, every young person knows they are part of a community that is here for them.



Heal: A Space for Reflection and Growth

Processing trauma and rebuilding confidence takes time. Our team, trained in trauma-informed practice, provides a space where young people can build confidence, process their experiences, and find ways to express themselves - where they feel seen, heard, and valued.

Thrive: The Stability to Move Forward

By running our sessions at the same times each week with a consistent and trusted team, we create an environment where young people feel secure enough to plan ahead. Over time, this allows them to share not only their challenges but also their dreams - and we work alongside them to turn those aspirations into reality.



Our Services

Creative Programmes & Events

We deliver three strands under the umbrella of Creative Programmes & Events:

Recording, Arranging and Writing (RAW) - Thursday Music Sessions

Our flagship Thursday evening session invites young people to experiment with instruments, share their own music, and record their creations alongside our team of musicians and producers. RAW ran for 38 weeks across the year, providing a consistent and joyful space for young people to develop skills, build confidence, and forge genuine friendships. Music, for many of our young people, is a language that needs no translation.



This year the team continued to develop structured activities alongside flexible creative play - opening warm-ups, songs, games, breakout groups, and one-to-one lessons. We also began work on RAW Volume III, an album of music written, recorded, and created entirely by our young people.

Half Term Projects

Three times a year, we run intensive creative projects that bring together different departments, guest artists, and partner organisations. This year's projects featured visual artist Dima, whose work sparked rich conversations and creative exploration across the group, as well as acclaimed music producer Hector, who facilitated the creation of several young people-led tracks and beats.





We also welcomed back artist PiNS for a street fashion project in October, during which young people designed and painted T-shirts.

Our half term cultural trip was organised by Dima - starting with lunch and a tour of the Tate Modern and ending with a carefully mapped walk along the river from Blackfriars to London Bridge and a visit to Borough market. Dima shared the rich history and culture of the area and of these iconic London landmarks.

Creative Outreach and Partnerships

This year brought several exciting outreach milestones in our outreach and events programmes:

- An 8-week songwriting and creative project with Handel Hendrix House and Unfold - creating songs, soundscapes, poems, and images, all to be exhibited at HHH in Autumn 2025
- Our annual performance and workshop at the V&A for Refugee Week - a public-facing music, sound, and movement event co-led by staff and young people
- Music sessions at Lambeth College, reaching young people in a new setting
- A joyful visit from Sandblast Arts and a group of Sahrawi young people in July 2025
- A music performance at the Refugee Council Children's Section party in September 2024



Creative Arts Therapy (CAT) - Tuesday Sessions

Tuesday evenings offer a relaxed creative arts space led by our qualified drama therapists - all HCPC and BADTH accredited. Young people can make art, spend time together, and share a meal in a safe and welcoming setting. Over the year, we delivered 241 hours of creative therapy, offering a vital space for young people to process trauma and begin to heal.



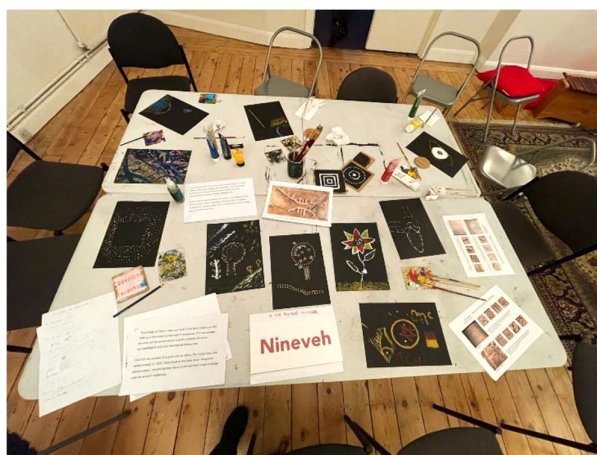
This year brought real growth in the group: young people showed increasing maturity and openness, introducing and exploring sensitive topics - family, relationships, faith, ambitions - in ways that reflect genuine trust in the space and in each other. Every single session was attended, including during Ramadan, where we adapted our approach with cultural sensitivity and flexibility.



A major milestone this year was the Therapy Team's contribution to our Refugee Week presence at the V&A. Young people created a large painted Big Heart artwork, which accompanied our performance in the courtyard - a powerful moment of co-creation, communal decision-making, and shared expression beyond our usual walls.

Creative English

This year we introduced a new programme - 'Creative English' run twice a month by Dima in collaboration with both the Therapy and Music team. While traditional English classes can feel abstract or disconnected from lived experience, creative English uses art, storytelling, music, drama, and visual work to make language learning feel relevant and personal - young people learn as a group words and structures through things that matter to them.



Language is more than grammar and vocabulary - it is the key to belonging. For many of the young people we work with, limited English is one of the most significant barriers they face to:

- Accessing services
- Navigating the asylum system
- Making themselves understood by the professionals who hold so much power over their lives.

Traditional English classes, however well-intentioned, can feel exposing and anxiety-inducing for young people carrying the weight of trauma and may not always be a safe place to learn.



Creative English therefore grew out of our recognition that there is a better way. By weaving language learning into art-making, storytelling, and creative exploration, we create a space where young people can develop their English in a way that feels natural, meaningful, and safe. The art provides a gentle distance; the creativity provides a reason to speak. And in the process, young people do not just learn a language - they find a voice and create connection and community.

The young people had fun exploring the theme for Refugee Week 'Community as a Superpower' during their creative English session and produced some wonderful artwork.

Support Services

We deliver two core support services alongside our Creative offerings:

Casework

The delivery of casework support remains one of our priorities. Cuts to essential services, growing pressures on local councils, and increasingly restrictive policies have made it harder than ever for young people to access housing, education, and healthcare.

Our casework team provided critical advocacy and guidance throughout the year, supporting 47 young people through complex cases spanning homelessness, education, health, finances, immigration, and age assessment. We coordinated closely with social workers, schools, the

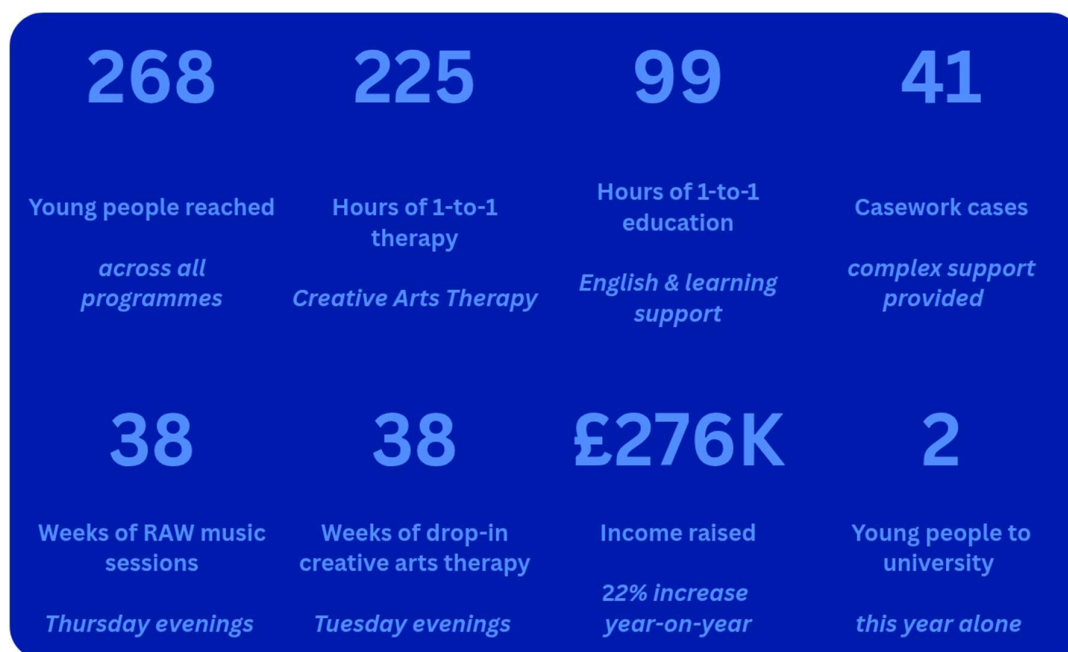
Home Office, and the London Borough of Croydon - navigating a system that can feel impenetrable - always with the young person at the centre of every decision.

Education

Our Education programme takes a highly individualised approach, with English tutors offering one-to-one support tailored to each young person's specific needs. Over the year we delivered 99 hours of one-to-one education support - helping young people with everything from foundational English to university preparation, alongside support with schoolwork and casework-related learning.



Our Impact in 2024-2025



Who We Reached

We work with young people between the ages of 13 and 25, the majority of whom identify as male. We are proud to have maintained our girls' membership throughout the year and remain committed to finding new ways to grow and support female membership going forward.

The most common countries of origin for new arrivals this year were Sudan, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea - countries where conflict, persecution, and instability continue to displace thousands of young lives every year.

Young People's Achievements

Two more of our young people progressed to university this year and one graduated and is working his dream job in bio medical science. These are young people who arrived in this country alone, without family, often without a word of English. This is perhaps our most profound measure of impact.

Beyond university, we saw young people step into greater independence, take up leadership roles, cook for their



communities, master new instruments, create original music and art, and begin to plan for futures they once could not imagine.

Organisational Achievements

This was a year of genuine organisational growth:

- We increased our income, raising £276,000 - a 22% increase on the previous year
- We increased our casework capacity
- We introduced a new programme: Creative English
- We employed two young leaders with lived experience as Casework and Youth Development Officers
- We secured two major multi-year grants from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and City Bridge Foundation
- We were one of 3 UK organisations awarded our biggest-ever unrestricted grant of \$100,000 by the Hidden Healing Fund (USA), in recognition of using creative methods to tackle mental health in marginalised young people
- We delivered our first INSET day, strengthening team reflection and collaboration

**"I want to come back
every week."
- A**

Creative Programmes: Achievements, Activities and Milestones

This has been a year of real creative momentum for our Creative Programmes team. Across Thursday RAW sessions, half term projects, and a busy programme of outreach and events, the team delivered 59 sessions in total - 38 Thursday sessions, 9 half term sessions, and 12 outreach and events. Music remained at the heart of it all, but this year saw deepening collaboration across art forms, departments, and communities.



38

Thursday RAW
sessions

9

Half Term sessions

12

Outreach sessions
and Events

Team Growth and Staff Updates

This year brought welcome growth and some exciting returns to the creative programmes team. Instrumentalist and composer Anna became a regular team member in our Thursday music team, also co-facilitating several half term sessions and outreach projects. Musician and psychologist Laura returned after a break for PhD studies, stepping back into Thursday sessions and outreach work. Laura also introduced therapeutically-informed movement and meditation into our Thursday sessions - offering a grounding practice that provides an alternative creative and therapeutic outlet for young people alongside music and the arts.



Dima returned as a regular Visual Arts and Creative English facilitator, co-leading two half term projects alongside the music team.

We also welcomed back artist PiNS, who had last collaborated with us in 2020, for our October half term - facilitating a street fashion project in which young people designed and painted their own T-shirts.

And we were thrilled to collaborate with guest music producer Hector, who worked with young people on the Handel Hendrix House / Unfold partnership project and our May half term, helping them create original tracks and beats using pedals, loops, and recording software.



Internally, the music team held a full reflective feedback session during our first-ever INSET day - gathering ideas, dreams, and aspirations for the future of Play for Progress. The team also reinvigorated the structure of Thursday sessions, reintroducing opening warm-ups, group songs and games, breakout groups, one-to-one lessons, and a closing circle. This balance of structure and flexible creative play has given sessions a renewed sense of rhythm and intention. We also began work on RAW Volume III - an album written, recorded, and created entirely by our young people.



Young People's Achievements

One of the most meaningful aspects of this year was the depth of individual creative engagement we saw. Several young people committed to sustained one-to-one learning over extended periods, developing real skills and producing original work. Among the highlights were the following young people who made clear progress through the year:

- **YP1** recorded original vocals - both singing and rap, directed musicians for recording sessions, and wrote original songs.
- **YP2** recorded original songs and rap, took piano lessons, built beats, and began learning guitar.
- **YP3** progressed through advanced guitar, drums, piano, drum machine, and production software - writing and recording several original songs and directing musicians in the studio.

"I really enjoyed the drums. I want to come back and keep learning."
- H

- **YP4** explored piano, production, guitar, and drums - and in one extended session created a complete track on his own, using synth, drums, and piano.
- **YP5** attended regular guitar lessons.
- **YP6** took regular piano lessons.
- **YP7** took regular clarinet lessons.
- **YP8**, who came to us through the Unfold partnership, took guitar lessons, worked on songwriting, and recorded - including a collaboration with YP2.

Beyond individual journeys, the group creative energy this year was electric. Weekly ad hoc and group lessons in drumming, guitar, piano, and music production proved particularly popular, alongside some trumpet, clarinet, and violin. Young Leader H returned to play and record clarinet and led percussion sessions - teaching other young people rhythms and drumming techniques. Multiple group music jams were led and conducted by young people themselves.

One young person independently learned to use Canva and created a design for Play for Progress. And young people who attended the V&A performance helped lead the public workshop and played instruments live - for some, the first time they had ever performed in front of an audience outside of our sessions.

Perhaps most beautifully, this year saw multiple collaborations between young people creating and recording music together - including young people who had not previously known each other. Music became not just a skill to learn, but a bridge between people.



"The guitar lessons are giving me so much energy. I can't wait to go home and practise."
- S

Outreach, Events and Collaborations

This was a rich year for outreach and partnership work, with both new and historic partnerships:

Refugee Council Children's Section party

In September 2024, one of our Young Leaders performed on drums at the Refugee Council Children's section party - a proud moment for the young person and for the team.



Handel Hendrix House

Our most significant outreach project of the year was the eight-week collaboration with Handel Hendrix House and Unfold - a songwriting and creative residency with young people attending Unfold's drop-in sessions in Westminster.



Based at the Handel Hendrix House museum, the project drew inspiration from the lives and music of Hendrix and Handel, with young people creating songs, soundscapes, poems, and visual work, and learning instruments including guitar, harpsichord, keyboard, and percussion. The resulting tracks and artworks were exhibited at Handel Hendrix House in Autumn 2025. The impact extended beyond the project itself: one young person from Unfold began attending our Thursday sessions and continued guitar and songwriting work with us for the rest of the year.

V&A Performance

Our annual Refugee Week performance and workshop at the V&A was another highlight - a public-facing music, sound, and movement event in the museum's courtyard, co-led by staff and young people. This year was the most collaborative we have ever produced. For the first time, the music team worked cross-departmentally with the Creative Arts Therapy team -



with therapist Theo leading elements of therapeutic movement and breathwork, and CAT group members creating the large painted Big Heart artwork that accompanied the music parade through the courtyard. It was a true expression of what Play for Progress is: creative, therapeutic, communal, and led by the young people at its heart.

Lambeth College

The music team also delivered two outreach sessions at Lambeth College during the Summer Term, one focused on instruments and group songwriting, and one on creating collaborative tracks with drum machines and production software. The students thoroughly enjoyed the sessions and were very engaged.

Sandblast Arts

In July Sandblast Arts visited our Thursday sessions with a group of Saharawi young people - a session the team described as filled with joy. Music filled the room throughout, and the visiting group shared a song they had written together, singing and playing drums and guitars. Our Head of Organisational Health has worked with Sandblast and the Saharawi Refugee Community since 2010, and this collaboration was full of joy, music and connection.

The Saharawi children, known as the 'Messengers of Peace', come from the Saharawi refugee camps in southwest Algeria, where tens of thousands of Saharawis have lived in forced exile for over five



decades. According to the United Nations, the Saharawi refugee population is one of the longest-standing protracted refugee situations in the world, a stark reminder of the international community's failure to uphold their fundamental right to self-determination.

Despite the harsh conditions of exile, the Saharawi people have demonstrated extraordinary resilience. They are often referred to as "the most organised refugees in the world," a testament to their dignity, discipline, and collective commitment to justice.

PFP have exhibited work from the Saharawi community in partnership with Emma Brown and Olive Branch Arts in the past to raise awareness about the Saharawi plight. We look forward to collaborating with Sandblast and this incredibly inspiring community again in the future, building relationships through creative expression, love and solidarity.

Fundraiser Concert

In November 2024 we held a Fundraiser Concert, bringing together musicians from across the Play for Progress community - current and former staff, with affiliated artists - to raise funds towards family reunification. It was a joyful evening and a reminder of the extraordinary network of artists who believe in and support this work. One of the highlights of the evening was an outstanding performance from BGT Finalist Tenor Innocent Masuku whose rich and powerful voice left the audience in awe.



Creative Arts Therapy: Achievements, Activities and Milestones

Our Tuesday Creative Arts Therapy sessions continued to be a cornerstone of our provision this year - a space of genuine warmth, trust, and growth. Led by our team of qualified dramatherapists, these sessions offer young people the opportunity to make art, share a meal, and be together in a setting that prioritises their wellbeing and healing.



Team Developments

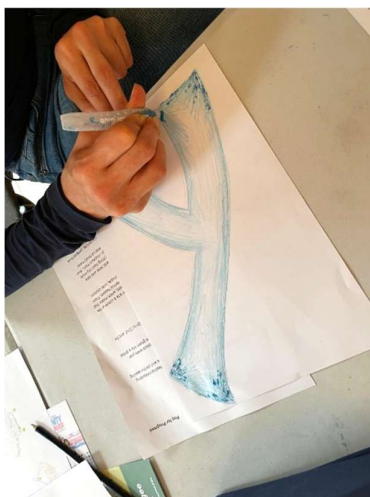
In September 2024, Becky returned fully from adoption leave, bringing renewed capacity and leadership to the therapy team. Her return also prompted an important structural change: recognising that the combined role of Head of Therapy and Organisational Health carried too much responsibility for one person, the role was split. Therapist Theo became Head of Therapy and Becky became Head of Organisational Health - a division that has strengthened both functions.

This year also marked the completion of Myriam's first full year as a graduate drama therapist at Play for Progress, and two years since she joined us as a trainee. Myriam is now a fully experienced member of the therapy team. All four therapists - Becky, Nina, Myriam, and Theo - continued to offer one-to-one therapy sessions, with Myriam, Nina, and Theo co-facilitating the weekly CAT group sessions.

Cross-Departmental Collaboration

This year brought exciting cross-departmental collaboration into the CAT space. When members of the therapy team had planned absences, colleagues from the music team stepped in as guest co-facilitators - combining dramatherapy approaches such as storytelling and story-making with music-led activities including improvisation, soundscapes, and vocal

work. These sessions demonstrated the natural affinity between our therapeutic and musical strands, and the creative richness that emerges when teams work together.



In June and July 2025, we piloted a new collaboration with visual artist Dima, hosting monthly Creative English group sessions focused on self-expression and wellbeing. These sessions wove together language learning and psychological support - helping young people develop practical English skills alongside the life skills needed to access services, advance educationally, and promote their own wellbeing. The pilot confirmed something important: educational and psychological aims can be powerfully and naturally combined through arts and creativity in a community space.

The Young People: What We Saw This Year

The depth of engagement in CAT this year was striking. Young people regularly brought friends along to sessions - a quiet but powerful signal of how safe and valued they feel within the space. Many shared that they find Tuesdays relaxing and calm; for young people whose lives are marked by uncertainty and upheaval, this matters enormously.

Not a single session went unattended across the entire year - a testament to the community that has been built. Even during Ramadan, young people continued to come, and the team adapted with cultural sensitivity: exploring hand crafts and knitting, self-reflection and intention-setting, and verbal and written exploration. The space remained inclusive to young people of all faiths and none. Towards the end of the year, we welcomed our first female participant in CAT after a long period - a development the whole team celebrated.

Young people this year showed increasing maturity, openness, and trust - introducing and exploring sensitive topics that had previously remained unspoken, including family, relationships, success, and love. While the protective distance of art was always maintained, this willingness to go deeper reflected genuine growth in the group's sense of safety and community.

Milestone: The Big Heart at the V&A

For the first time, the Therapy Team played a central role in shaping Play for Progress's presence at the V&A during Refugee Week - and the result was something extraordinary. Over three weeks, the CAT group worked collaboratively to create a large painted artwork in the shape of a heart, drawing on the full range of the group's creative languages: body sculpts, drawing, crafts, and writing in multiple languages.



The Big Heart accompanied the music parade in the V&A courtyard - a moment in which the usually private, inward-facing work of the therapy group was shared publicly and proudly. Young people demonstrated high levels of creativity and collaboration, and the therapists held a space of genuine co-creation, agency, and communal decision-making. It was a project that belonged to the young people from beginning to end.

When we asked young people to share words that reminded them of Play for Progress, they offered:

Love, Sharing, Caring, Community and Communication

Outreach: Lambeth College Workshops

In June, therapists Theo and Myriam facilitated two outreach workshops at Lambeth College as part of Play for Progress's wider outreach work. Both sessions were very well attended, with ESOL students engaging openly and enthusiastically throughout.

The workshops had a dual purpose: to offer young people practical skills for grounding, relaxation, emotional regulation, and a healthy connection with the body; and to introduce Play for Progress as a welcoming space for future engagement. Using dramatherapy and mindfulness activities - including passing a clap, mirroring emotions, breathing exercises, and working with postcards - participants expressed themselves, connected with their bodies, and built connection with others in the room. The sessions offered a meaningful glimpse of what Play for Progress can offer, and served as a direct pathway for new young people to find their way to us.

Support Services and 1-to-1 Support: Impact

1-to-1 Therapy

Over the year we delivered 241 hours of therapeutic support, reflecting the increasingly hostile environment faced by young people seeking asylum. The ongoing migrant hostilities culminating in far right demonstrations and attacks on migrant hotels have heightened anxiety and fear, making it even more difficult for young people to feel safe and secure. In response, our therapeutic approach focuses on equipping young people with practical tools to manage stress and anxiety. We teach grounding techniques that help them regulate their emotions and avoid triggering a fight-or-flight response. Our sessions provide a space where they can process their experiences and build resilience, supporting them in navigating a system that often feels stacked against them. However, meaningful healing can only begin when they have a stable foundation, and much of our work is about preparing them for that moment.

Education

Our Education programme provides a highly individualised approach to learning, with English tutors offering one-to-one support tailored to each young person's specific needs. This flexible model ensures that young people receive guidance on everything from foundational English skills to preparing for university, alongside support with schoolwork and casework-related learning. Our approach prioritises not just academic progress but also the practical skills that foster independence and reduce vulnerability. 80% of the students who accessed the service this year reported an increase in confidence. The other 20% already had a good knowledge of English, and just wanted additional support to increase their vocabulary or improve their writing and were already confident.

Two of the young people were considering GCSE English, however, they weren't confident enough to pursue it last school year, but feel more confident to do it this school year. We are excited for them and are confident they will do well.

Casework

We are seeing increased need from young people on a weekly basis, and with many other services closing, there are often not good referral options for young people to find help elsewhere.

We were delighted to increase capacity in casework by bringing in Zoe, an experienced youth caseworker from The Refugee Council to support Eren on a freelance basis. We said goodbye to Eren in April and welcomed Maddy as our new casework and advocacy coordinator. Maddy brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from working in various migrant charities in casework.

Our Approach

We take a "with, not for" approach, supporting young people to understand and engage with the systems around them while recognising the limits of what can or should be expected of them.

Key aspects of our approach include:

- **Relational Casework:** Each young person is paired with a consistent and trusted caseworker who advocates on their behalf, offers emotional support, and helps them build the confidence and skills to take an active role in their own case.
- **Accessible Information:** We tackle misinformation by clearly explaining rights, processes, and entitlements in plain language. We help young people make sense of the UK's systems in a way that feels manageable and empowering.
- **Collaboration Across Services:** Our casework team works closely with our Creative Arts and Therapeutic (CAT) service to identify emerging needs and embed life skills and emotional learning across all our programmes.
- **Responsive and Adaptive Support:** We recognise that every young person's journey is different. Our work adapts in real time to changing circumstances, from housing crises to unexpected decisions on immigration status.

The breadth and complexity of casework is best highlighted by the case of EY below which stood out this year. We take our hats off to the casework team for their tenacity, radical love and timely advocacy in what can only be described as difficult and heartbreaking work.

Casework Case Study: EY's Story

When EY first came to Play for Progress, she came carrying something that no young person should have to carry alone: a complex asylum case, a social care system that had let her down, and a deep and understandable reluctance to trust the adults around her.

She had no ARC - the asylum identity card that is essential for accessing services and proving status. Her solicitor felt inaccessible and dismissive. And her social worker, despite

their efforts, had made errors in recording her story - errors that meant EY was asked, again and again, to revisit the most painful moments of her life. Each retelling was its own small trauma. EY felt unheard. She felt invisible. She felt, as so many of our young people do, that the system designed to protect her was instead one more thing to survive.

Getting the Basics Right

Our caseworker Zoe started, as we always do, by listening. Then she got to work. She met with EY's social worker to understand what support was already in place and to avoid duplicating effort - and then began organising monthly network meetings, bringing together the professionals around EY so that actions were followed through and progress was tracked. For a young person who had experienced so many dropped threads, this consistency mattered.

One of the first things Zoe did was source a new solicitor - someone she knew personally and trusted, with a trauma-informed approach and a genuine commitment to working well with young people seeking asylum. The relationship EY had with her legal support changed immediately. For the first time, she felt her case was in safe hands.

The ARC - the identity card that EY's social worker, advocate, and solicitor had not known how to obtain - arrived within a week of our caseworker submitting the online form. A small thing, perhaps, in isolation. But for EY, it was proof that someone knew how to navigate this system on her behalf. It was proof that she was not alone.

The Interview, and What Followed

Zoe worked alongside the new solicitor and EY to gather the evidence needed for her asylum claim. And on the day of EY's substantive interview - one of the most significant and frightening moments in any asylum seeker's journey - she was there, sitting beside her as a Responsible Adult, offering quiet and steady support. EY was also referred to our therapeutic services, so that she had somewhere to take the emotional weight of what she was going through.

To our great delight and relief, several months later, EY was granted asylum.

But the road did not smooth from there. Shortly afterwards, EY's accommodation placement came to an end. The stability she had been building was pulled away, and she entered a period of intense emotional unrest. At a time when other professionals could not reach her, our caseworker could. They met her where she was. They went for a hot chocolate. They talked through the practical next steps, one at a time, making the overwhelming feel manageable. On the way home, Zoe stopped to buy bubble bath - in a scent EY liked - something small and grounding to carry with her into the evening. Care, in this work, sometimes looks like paperwork and phone calls. And sometimes it looks like that.

"EY is such an important person and I hope that her path will be smoother from now on so that she can achieve all she is capable of. You and your organisation and contacts have clearly been an enormous help to her and I have been very impressed by you and your work. Yours is the most effective and supportive work I have come across by far!"

- feedback for our Casework team from Coram Voice

With, Not For

When EY turned 18, our caseworker Zoe supported her through the transition to working with a Personal Advisor - a new relationship, a new professional to learn to trust. For EY, who finds it hard to open up to new people, this was not a small ask. But the foundation of trust she had built with her caseworker gave her something to stand on. Slowly, she began to ease into new working relationships. Slowly, she began to take on more by herself.

EY and Zoe are still in touch. But the nature of their contact has changed, and that change is the whole point. EY no longer reaches out for complete support. She reaches out to share an update, to ask for advice, to check in. She is leading her own life, bit by bit, with a little less help each time. Our approach to casework has always been 'with, not for' - walking alongside young people to build the confidence and skills they need, rather than doing things on their behalf. EY is living proof of what that looks like when it works.

She came to us unheard, overwhelmed, and alone in a system she could not navigate. She is leaving, slowly and on her own terms, with the tools to navigate it herself. That is what Play for Progress is for.

Youth Development Programme

Young people are not just the recipients of our work - they are its co-creators. We are committed to continuing to develop our youth leadership programme, creating more structured opportunities for young people to take active roles in shaping, delivering and advocating for Play for Progress. Their voices and their leadership are central to our future. Under the careful guidance of Joe, our Head of Youth Development, the young leaders thrived, achieving the following milestones:

1. For the first time, 2 young leaders Adam and Ahmed were invited to join the interview panel for the recruitment of our Casework and Advocacy Coordinator. It felt important they should have a say in who gets hired for such a key interfacing role with young people. They gave Maddy the seal of approval after a grilling, but it was hard to say afterwards who was more nervous during the interview, them or Maddy! Suffice to say they chose the best candidate, Maddy's calm and patient nature along with her expert knowledge of casework is just what the young people need.
2. Another first this year was the involvement of a young leader in the funding assessment process. Sam was invited to join the funder assessment call along with executive director Bridget, fundraiser Jodie and the youth leadership trustee Vernon. The multi year grant for Youth led creativity, was for a whopping £105 000 from Esme Fairbairn Foundation and extremely competitive, so a lot was at stake. To our great pride, Sam did really well articulating to the Esme team his experience as a young leader and how young people's voices were central to shaping the programs at Play for Progress (PFP). He said afterwards that he learnt a lot and now appreciated the hard work that goes into fundraising. When advised we had been awarded the grant he said 'I am absolutely over the moon to hear this fantastic news!'
3. Reza, a young leader studying Social Science at Durham University was invited to a staff training day and offered helpful insights to the team about young people's changing needs and the support they require. Reza is passionate about inspiring more young people to go to university. Plans are underway for him to run workshops and online mentoring sessions for young people wishing to take this pathway.

To support young leaders' involvement, we provide trauma-informed training to ensure that young people can engage safely and confidently without being placed in uncomfortable or inappropriate situations. This year the regular meetings and dinners where young people share their experiences and feedback with our youth leadership trustee Vernon, were held every term, helping to inform key decisions for governance.

Case Study: DZ's Story

Names and identifying details have been changed to protect the young person's privacy. Published with full consent.

Learning to Cook, Learning to Live

When DZ first walked through the doors of Play for Progress in October 2022, he carried with him the weight that so many of our young people carry: uncertainty about his home, anxiety about his future, and the deep, quiet exhaustion of someone who has had to grow up far too quickly and far from everything familiar.

He was funny, though. Even in those early days, his wit and intelligence shone through. And he kept coming back.

A Moment of Crisis

By early 2025, those working closely with DZ noticed something worrying. As a result of a physical health condition and the trauma he carried and the toll it was taking on his mental health, DZ had stopped eating properly. He had lost a significant amount of weight. His doctor urged him to gain weight - but DZ had never learned to cook, and the very idea of preparing food filled him with dread. He avoided the kitchen entirely. What should have been a source of nourishment had become another source of anxiety.

For DZ's caseworker Zoe, who had built a careful and trusting relationship with him over years, this was a clear signal. She brought the concern to the safeguarding meeting, and together with our therapist, they began to think creatively about how to help. When asked what challenges he was facing, DZ responded:

**"A lot, I had a PA issue, a cooking issue, a house problem. The therapist helped me a lot with my mental health."
- DZ**

A Different Kind of Therapy

DZ's therapist Theo made a decision that was as simple as it was inspired: they would cook together.



From March 2025, the two of them began meeting for sessions that took place not in a therapy room but in a kitchen. Theo brought the ingredients and the recipes. Together, they chopped and stirred and tasted. They talked about nutrition and food shopping, about how to preserve ingredients and make them last. They explored the cultural meaning of food - what people eat, why they eat it, what it means to share a meal - and as they cooked they talked. About his life. About where he had come from and where he hoped to go. About the things that frightened him and the things that made him laugh.

The kitchen became what the therapy room sometimes could not: a relaxed, human, unhurried space. A space where conversation happened naturally, between the chopping and the stirring, between the smell of something beginning to cook and the satisfaction of something almost ready.

Between March and August 2025, DZ and Theo shared twelve cooking sessions, lasting two to three hours, as well as a visit to a local market together. They also continued with seventeen conventional therapy sessions, where DZ's growing confidence began to open doors to deeper conversations - about his faith, his relationships, his dreams, and the philosophical questions that occupied his sharp and restless mind.

Alongside the therapeutic work, DZ's casework continued. Zoe supported him to stabilise his accommodation and to enrol in college, as well as to access a summer course to help him prepare.

He began attending group creative arts therapy sessions, where he engaged openly and generously with others, contributing to activities and discussions in ways that surprised even himself. He joined the Thursday RAW music sessions and the half-term projects, joining on music sessions and showing an interest in visual arts/design.

He became, gradually, part of the community.

Something Shifts

Progress was not always linear. There were hard weeks - weeks that took skill, and patience, and a great deal of care to get through.

But something was shifting. DZ started to cook at home by himself. He found a recipe online and made it, alone, in his own kitchen. He put on weight. He started to look after himself with a new intentionality - as though he had begun to believe, quietly but firmly, that he was worth looking after.

When September came and DZ started college, the cooking sessions became less frequent - his days were fuller, his life was filling up. The sessions shifted into something more reflective: exploring his goals and his dreams, processing the past and planning for the future. DZ, who had once struggled to imagine tomorrow, was beginning to think in terms of years.

The Chef at the Party

At Play for Progress, we mark the end of each term with a celebration - food, music, laughter, and the particular warmth of a group of people who have been through things together and come out the other side still standing.

At two of the last three end-of-term parties, DZ was the chef.

He had found the recipes himself - dishes from his own culture, food that carried memory and meaning. He arrived prepared. And then, with quiet pride, he guided Theo through how to cook them, the roles gently, beautifully reversed. He cooked for everyone. He stood in that kitchen and he fed his community.

**"I can cook and look after myself now."
- DZ**

Where DZ is now

Today, DZ is settled in his home. He is attending college. He cooks for himself - and sometimes for others. He is more socially engaged, more confident, more present. He brings his humour and his warmth and his intelligence to the Play for Progress community, and the community is better for it.

His therapist Theo reflects on what stands out most: "DZ's openness, his resilience even in the hardest of times, and his resourceful sense of humour. His intelligence, his integrity, and his willingness to sit with the big questions - about life, about faith, about who he is and who he wants to be."

DZ still accesses support at Play for Progress. There is more road ahead, and he will not walk it alone. But the young man who once dreaded the kitchen now knows how to feed himself, how to nourish himself - and how to share that nourishment with others.

That is not a small thing. That is everything.

"I became a good person. I Don't know the other word, but now I am good. Now I have a house and now I am more independent. I don't need so much help now, and I have a lot of plans now. I see a future now."

- DZ

Trauma-Informed Practice & Organisational Health and Wellbeing

Organisational Health and Wellbeing

As part of our continued commitment to a trauma-informed and reflective approach, we have made key structural changes within our Therapy & Organisational Health team. Theo became Head of Therapy and Becky became Head of Organisational Health - a move that has strengthened both functions.

To maintain a high standard of reflective practice, structured one-to-one supervision is in place for all key staff. Regular group reflections are also held across departments, fostering a shared understanding of trauma-informed practice. These sessions address key themes such as transitions, self-care, and group dynamics, incorporating creative techniques like storytelling, movement, and metaphor to support emotional regulation and resilience.

Each team has dedicated reflection sessions led by a member of the therapy team, offering a space for deeper discussion, shared learning, and support. In addition, all teams conduct their own check-ins and check-outs before and after every session, ensuring that both young people and staff feel prepared, heard, and supported.



Recognising the emotional toll of working in this sector, we have prioritised internal supervision for team leads, allowing them to step back, process challenges, and maintain their own well-being. Senior management also receive external supervision to ensure they are supported in leading the organisation effectively. This year we introduced our first Inset Day which enabled teams to spend time together planning for the term ahead. It worked so well that we plan to continue these at the beginning of each school term.

Our approach to organisational health acknowledges that in order to provide the best support to young people, we must also take care of our staff.

Trauma-Informed Practice

Our understanding of trauma-informed practice has evolved significantly in recent years, shaping both our internal operations and the way we engage with young people. Regular whole-organisation training sessions, led by our Head of Organisational Health Becky, ensure that trauma awareness is embedded in every aspect of our work.



Regular whole-organisation training sessions, led by our Head of Organisational Health, provide a space to explore the latest research and practical applications, encouraging our team to reflect on how we can continuously improve our approach. These sessions not only keep us

informed about new developments in trauma science but also create opportunities for open dialogue, ensuring that our practices remain both relevant and responsive.

As our expertise has grown, we have been increasingly invited to provide training for other organisations. In addition to our annual commitment to deliver trauma training at Bow Arts, this year we were also privileged to deliver trauma informed training at a UK Youth Residential attended by over 100 youth charities. Additionally we were invited by one of our funders Lloyds Banking Foundation to co deliver an online training session to 50 of their grantees who wanted to explore what Trauma Informed practice could look like for their organisations. The sessions went extremely well and received excellent reviews, we look forward to sharing our learning more widely in the coming year.

Looking Ahead

As we approach our tenth anniversary in 2026, we do so with genuine excitement and clear purpose. Our plans for the year ahead are organised around three priorities:

1. Sustain

We will continue to deliver our annual programme of support from the Croydon Buddhist Centre, remaining flexible to adapt to the changing needs of the young people we serve.

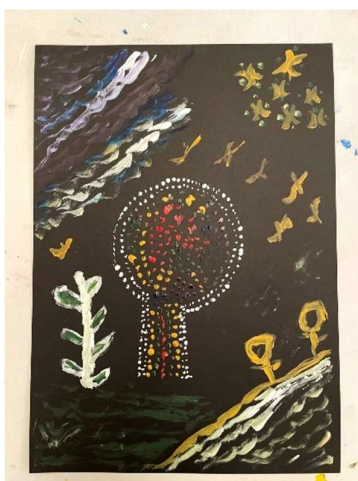
2. Strengthen

We are building organisational resilience to respond to increased demand and the growing external hostility toward migrants. This includes strengthening our systems - including InForm, our new CRM - staff wellbeing, and our long-term financial stability.

3. Grow

Growing Our Youth Leadership Programme

Young people are not just the recipients of our work - they are its co-creators. We are committed to continuing to develop our youth leadership programme, creating more structured opportunities for young people to take active roles in shaping, delivering and advocating for Play for Progress. Their voices and their leadership are central to our future.



Expanding Casework and Education Capacity

The demand for our casework and education support continues to grow, and we are determined to meet it. Our ambition for 2025–2026 is to double our capacity in both areas - ensuring that more young people can access the advocacy, guidance and learning support they urgently need. In a landscape of shrinking statutory provision, this work has never been more important.



What We're Excited About

2026 is our tenth anniversary, and we are celebrating it in the best way we know: by centring our young people and sharing their stories. Key moments in our anniversary year include:

- A performance at the V&A during Refugee Week in June 2026 - young people showcasing their work to a public audience
- An exhibition celebrating 10 years of Play for Progress at the Museum of Croydon (27 May – 31 August 2026) - engaging the local community in dialogue about the realities of migration and the stories of young people seeking asylum



These are not just celebrations. They are opportunities to challenge unhelpful media narratives, to build bridges, and to demonstrate - in the most visible and powerful way - what becomes possible when young people are given community, space, and stability.

"Our support has helped nearly 1000 young people build confidence, find community, and realise their potential. We are just getting started."

Finances and Fundraising

Thanks to the dedicated work of our fundraising team, we have built a more structured and sustainable approach to income generation. By diversifying our income streams and strengthening funder relationships, we have been able to grow our finances in a way that directly enables the growth of our services.

Highlight	Detail
Total income 2024–2025	£276,242
Year-on-year growth	22% increase
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	Multi-year grant awarded
City Bridge Foundation	Multi-year grant awarded
Hidden Healing Fund (USA)	\$100,000 - our largest-ever unrestricted grant

We are privileged to be one of just ten youth organisations chosen to receive this funding from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to further develop youth-led creativity. The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation is a truly transformative funder that offers vital, long-term, and flexible funding that empowers organizations to move from survival to growth, making them feel seen, heard, and understood.

We are absolutely delighted to have been awarded a significant 3-year grant from City Bridge Foundation - London's biggest independent charity funder. City Bridge Foundation not only maintains five London bridges but also bridges divides in society and supports organisations working to tackle inequality.

The Hidden Healing Fund grant was awarded to just 11 organisations across the US and UK, recognising charities that use creative methods to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people from marginalised communities. To receive this recognition nearly a decade after our founding is a testament to the quality and importance of our work.

Funding will support our Creative Arts Therapy programme for asylum-seeking young people, along with 1-to-1 education and 1-to-1 therapy sessions. It's also supporting our Young Leaders' important role in welcoming and mentoring new participants. This vital funding is already making a brilliant difference to our work, helping us grow and develop our services.

**"Play for Progress is like a family. I know
I can come here and everyone will be
here and we eat food together. Play for
Progress works really hard."
- S**

This year we've also been supported by Garfield Weston Foundation and National Lottery Awards for All - a real endorsement of the impact our work has for young people in need of creativity, care and compassion.

Our Partners and Funders

We are deeply grateful to all the organisations and individuals whose support makes this work possible. Our partnerships span the arts, philanthropy, community organisations, and statutory services.

Funders and grant-makers:

- Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
- City Bridge Foundation
- Hidden Healing Fund (USA)
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- National Lottery Awards for All
- Mary Kinross Trust
- Lloyds Bank Foundation
- Arts Council England (ACE)
- Children in Need
- Evan Cornish
- Samuel Gardner Memorial Trust
- London Catalyst
- This Day Foundation
- ASDA Foundation Young Futures Fund
- Kathleen Hannay Memorial Charity
- Team Lewis Foundation
- Compass Pathways



Creative and community partners:

- Handel Hendrix House and Unfold - 8-week songwriting residency
- V&A Museum - annual Refugee Week performance and workshop
- Sandblast Arts - collaborative music session with Sahrawi young people
- Refugee Council - Children's Section events
- Lambeth College - outreach: music and creative sessions
- Croydon Buddhist Centre - our home



Guest artists and collaborators:

- Dima Karout - visual artist and Creative English facilitator
- PiNS - street fashion and visual arts
- Hector Plimmer - music producer
- Innocent Masuku - opera singer
- Djanan Turan - musician
- Shem Fillmore - musician
- Gabriel Moreno - musician and poet
- Hannah Lovell - musician
- HAE - music ensemble

References and Administrative Details

Charity Name: Play for Progress

Charity Registration Number: 1166328

Company Registration Number: 09157780

Principal Address & Registered Office:

377-399 London Road,
Camberley,
Surrey GU15 3HL

TRUSTEES of the Charity & DIRECTORS of the Company

– who served in the reporting period and those appointed since as at the reporting date:

Reina Alameddine Appointed 13 September 2023

Julia Dawn Beart Appointed 28 January 2025

Anne Marie Benedict Appointed 24 March 2025

Keisha Crooks Appointed 30 July 2024

Vernon Freyer Appointed 11 September 2023

Alison Griffin Appointed 01 March 2025

Naomi Popli (née Webb) Appointed 5 March 2021

Harmin Sijercic Appointed 13 September 2023

TRUSTEES of the Charity & DIRECTORS of the Company (cont.)

Sally Hogg

Appointed 11 September 2023 and resigned 28
January 2025

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:

Emmaus Chartered Accountants Ltd

377-399 London Road,
Camberley,
Surrey GU15 3HL

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Charity was incorporated as a Company on 1 August 2014 with the Company registration number 09157780 and was registered as a Charity under the Charity number 1166328 on 1 April 2016. It is governed by its constitution set out in the Memorandum and Articles incorporated 08 June 2015 as amended by special resolutions dated 25 January 2016.

Play for Progress is a Registered Charity, and a Company limited by guarantee, not having share capital. Every Trustee undertakes to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charitable company in the event of it being wound-up during the period of membership, or within one year thereafter. The current members of the Charitable Company are the Trustees and Directors.

Management

The overall strategic direction of the Charity is determined by the Trustees who met quarterly in 2024-2025 to consider all matters of relevance to the Charity.

The day-to-day management of the Charity is carried out by the Executive Director Bridget Banda.

Recruitment, Appointment, Election, Induction and Training of Trustees

If the Trustees decide that it would be advantageous to the charity to have one or more new Trustee for example after a skills audit has shown a required expertise not present in the current members, then this will be agreed at a meeting of the Trustees, either as an agenda item or upon request of an extraordinary meeting by at least two of the current Trustees.

Such Trustees may have put themselves forward, have been approached by a current Trustee or there may be a requirement for such a Trustee without having a specific person in mind at the time. In this latter case, the current Trustees will decide upon the most appropriate way of recruiting.

Trustee Appointment

Appointment will be by vote of the Trustees of the Charity at a properly convened meeting of the Trustees. The meeting will only be valid if at least half of the current Trustees are present. Election will be by a simple majority of the Trustees voting in favour of the proposed Trustee.

Trustee Induction and Training

Existing Trustees induct and train new Trustees using the Trustee induction pack. All Trustees are responsible for staying up to date with small Charity good practice and seeking training opportunities where possible.

Risk Management

The Board acknowledges their responsibility to appropriately manage the risks the organisation is vulnerable to. We maintain a Risk Register to capture and assess the risks identified, to better enable us to determine how each risk should be managed. The Board reviews the Risk Register as a standing item on the agenda at every trustee meeting to ensure that the charity's exposure to risk is minimised. As a Board, the Trustees are risk averse, and will therefore do everything in their power to minimise the Charity's exposure to risk at all times. Risk management and corporate governance matters are seen as the collective responsibility of all Trustees.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

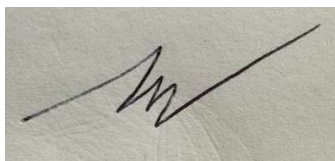
The Trustees (who are also the Directors of Play for Progress for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations. Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law, the Trustees are preparing the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice and applicable law). Under company law, the Trustees must not approve financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period.

In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- ◆ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ◆ observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- ◆ make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ◆ state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- ◆ prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation;
- ◆ ensure the Charitable Company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charitable Company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charitable Company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charitable Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charitable Company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from the legislation in other jurisdictions.

This report was approved by the trustees on 18/05/2026 and was signed for and on behalf of the board by Anne Benedict.



Trustee

Financial Statements

UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(including Income & Expenditure Account)

for the year ended 31 August 2025

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
	Notes	£	£	£	£
INCOME from					
Donations	1	194,031	77,404	271,435	223,602
Other Income	1	4,807	-	4,807	3,390
TOTAL INCOME		198,838	77,404	276,242	226,992
EXPENDITURE on					
Raising funds	2	20,675	-	20,675	20,815
Charitable activities	2	170,859	78,039	248,898	216,469
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		191,534	78,039	269,572	237,284
NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR & NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		7,304	(635)	6,669	(10,291)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Fund balances brought forward at 1 September 2024		42,599	2,475.00	45,074	55,365
FUND BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 AUGUST 2025					
	8	49,903	1,840	51,743	45,074

The net movement in funds for the year arises from the charitable company's continuing operations.

No separate Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses has been presented as all such gains and losses are dealt with in the Statement of Financial Activities.

A detailed analysis of the comparative 2024 SOFA is included on the following page.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(including Income & Expenditure Account)

for the year ended **31 August 2024**

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024
	Notes	£	£	£
INCOME from				
Donations	1	174,902	48,700	223,602
Other Income	1	3,390	-	3,390
TOTAL INCOME		178,292	48,700	226,992
EXPENDITURE on				
Raising funds	2	20,315	500	20,815
Charitable activities	2	170,744	45,725	216,469
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		191,059	46,225	237,284
NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR & NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		(12,766)	2,475	(10,291)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS				
Fund balances brought forward at 1 September 2024		55,365	-	55,365
FUND BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31 AUGUST 2024				
	6	42,599	2,475	45,074

UNAUDITED BALANCE SHEET
as at 31 August 2025

Company Number: 09157780

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible fixed assets	5	-	-
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at bank and in hand		96,287	54,352
Debtors	6	2,910	2,245
		99,198	56,597
LIABILITIES			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	7	47,455	11,523
NET CURRENT ASSETS		51,743	45,074
NET ASSETS		51,743	45,074
THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY			
Income funds			
Unrestricted General Fund	8	49,903	42,599
Restricted Fund	8	1,840	2,475
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS		51,743	45,074

The Company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

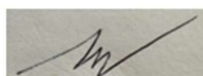
These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 18/05/2026

and were signed on its behalf by



Bridget Banda



Anne Benedict

Accounting Policies

Charity Information

Play for Progress is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office and business address is Emmaus Chartered Accountants, 377-399 London Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 3HL.

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared to comply with current statutory requirements (principally being the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011), under the historical cost convention, and in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice. The recommendations in *Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statements of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102 (effective from 1 January 2019)* have been followed. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the period.

The charitable company is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS102.

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

Going Concern

At the time of approving the accounts there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Reserves Policy

Normally the charity trustees would consider it prudent to hold between 3 and 6 months of budgeted expenditure in free reserves in order to cover the future needs of the charity and any delays in obtaining income. We consider this range to be between £65k and £130k currently.

At 31 August 2025 the charity had unrestricted funds of £49,903 which would be considered free reserves under the Charity Commission definition, this was below policy guidelines but not considered a risk as an additional £35,750 was deferred until financial year 2025/6.

Incoming Resources

General donations and other similar types of voluntary income are brought into account when receivable. Donated income is included gross of any attributable tax recoverable, where relevant. Donations given for specific purposes are treated as restricted income.

Resources Expended

Resources expended are allocated directly to the charitable company's principal activities where the costs can be so identified. All other costs are classified as support costs and are apportioned between those same categories on the basis of the trustees' estimate of relevant, appropriate and allocations.

Governance costs are the costs associated with the charitable company's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements. In particular, they include estimated proportions of support costs, including legal, professional and accountancy fees.

Fund Accounting

The general fund comprises the accumulated surpluses of unrestricted incoming resources over resources expended, which are available for use in furtherance of the general objectives of the charitable company.

Designated funds are a particular form of unrestricted funds consisting of amounts, which have been allocated or designated for specific purposes by the trustees. The use of designated funds remains at the discretion of the trustees. Restricted funds are funds subject to specific conditions imposed by donors. The purpose and use of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the accounts. Amounts unspent at the year-end are carried forward in the balance sheet.

Financial Instruments

The charitable company 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 charitable company's balance sheet when the charitable company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

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.

Taxation

No provision for taxation arises on the income of the company due to its charitable status.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are measured at cost, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

- ◆ Musical instruments - 5 years straight line
- ◆ Computer equipment - 5 years straight line.

NOTES TO THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 31 August 2025

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total
			2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
1 VOLUNTARY INCOME				
Donations	4,662	-	4,662	7,604
Grants	189,369	77,404	266,773	215,998
Other Income	4,807	-	4,807	3,390
	198,838	77,404	276,242	226,992
2 RESOURCES EXPENDED				
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total
			2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Cost of sales				
Fundraising	20,331	-	20,331	20,516
Website	344	-	344	299
	20,675	-	20,675	20,815
Charitable expenditure				
Direct costs:				
Teaching programmes	137,244	76,010	213,252	183,103
Support costs:				
Independent examination fees	1,514	-	1,514	1,470
Non direct HQ Costs	31,571	2,029	33,601	31,475
Bank charges	530	-	530	420
	170,859	78,039	248,897	216,468

NOTES TO THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 31 August 2025

3 EMPLOYEES

Employment costs	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	123,404	82,762
	<u>123,404</u>	<u>82,762</u>

The average number of employees during the year was 5 (2024: 5). There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more (2024: nil).

The average number of employees during the year was 5 (2024: 5), the increase in salaries reflects our Executive Director's full year salary. Staff numbers remained the same as our Head of Youth Development stepped down in the year. There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more (2024: nil).

4 INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS FEE

	2025 £	2024 £
	1,514	1,470
	<u>1,514</u>	<u>1,470</u>

5 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

Cost	Music Equipment £
At 1 September 2024	2,799
Additions	-
At 31 August 2025	<u>2,799</u>
Depreciation	
At 1 September 2024	2,799
Depreciation charged in the year	-
At 31 August 2025	<u>2,799</u>
Carrying amount	
At 31 August 2025	<u>-</u>
At 31 August 2024	<u>-</u>

NOTES TO THE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 31 August 2025

6 DEBTORS

	2025	2024
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	2,620	-
Prepayments and accrued income	290	294
Taxation and social security costs refund due	-	1,951
	<u>2,910</u>	<u>2,245</u>

7 CREDITORS

	2025	2024
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade creditors	6,084	2,688
Other creditors	39,747	8,835
Taxation and social security costs	1,624	-
	<u>47,455</u>	<u>11,523</u>

8 THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY

	Balance at 1 September 2024	Income	Expenditure	Balance at 31 August 2025
	£	£	£	£
<i>Income Funds</i>	45,074	276,242	269,573	51,743
- Restricted Fund	2,475	77,404	78,039	1,840
- General unrestricted fund	42,599	198,838	191,534	49,903
Summary of restricted fund	£	£	£	£
Handel Hendrix	-	1,640	1,640	-
London Catalyst	-	5,000	5,000	-
National Lottery (Awards for All)	-	20,000	20,000	-
Arts Council (ACE)	-	3,000	3,000	-
Samuel Gardiner	-	1,000	1,000	-
D'Oyly Carte	-	6,000	6,000	-
City Bridge	-	30,764	28,924	1,840
Blue Thread	2,475	10,000	12,475	-
Total Restricted Fund	<u>2,475</u>	<u>77,404</u>	<u>78,039</u>	<u>1,840</u>

Purposes of restricted funds:

Handel Hendrix	Contribution to Raw activities
London Catalyst	Contribution to CAT activities
National Lottery (Awards for All)	Contribution to CAT activities
Arts Council (ACE)	Funding for Raw Autumn term, contribution to 2 half term events and 1:1 therapy
Sammuel Gardiner	Contribution to Raw Spring Term
D'Oyly Carte	Funding for CAT activities
City Bridge	Contribution towards 1:1 therapy, education and youth development
Blue Thread	Development and roll out of strategy

for the year ended 31 August 2025

8 THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY cont.

	Balance at 1 September 2023	Income	Expenditure	Balance at 31 August 2024
	£	£	£	£
<i>Income Funds</i>	55,365	226,992	(237,284)	45,074
- Restricted Fund	-	48,700	(46,225)	2,475
- General unrestricted fund	55,365	178,292	(191,059)	42,599
Summary of restricted fund	£	£	£	£
V and A Museum	-	1,200	1,200	-
Radcliffe Trust	-	5,000	5,000	-
Arts Council	-	27,000	27,000	-
SYP	-	8,000	8,000	-
Swan Mountain	-	4,000	4,000	-
Blue Thread	-	3,500	1,025	2,475
Total Restricted Fund	-	48,700	46,225	2,475

Purposes of restricted funds:

V and A Museum	- Contribution to Community Engagement Project
Radcliffe Trust	- Funding for Raw Activities
Arts Council	- Funding for Raw Activities
SYP	- Funding for young leaders training and development
Swan Mountain	- Funding for CAT summer term
Blue Thread	- Funding for strategic planning work

9 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted Reserves	Restricted Reserves	Total Reserves
	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 August 2025 represented by:	60,653	(8,910)	51,743
Fixed assets	-	-	-
Current assets	97,358	1,840	99,198
Current liabilities	36,705	10,750	47,455
	60,653	(8,910)	51,743

10 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

There were no related party transactions during the year.

Play for Progress
Year Ended 31st August 2025

Independent Examiner's Report to Play for Progress

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Play for Progress for the year ended 31st August 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

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:

- (1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
- (2) the accounts do not accord with those records; or
- (3) the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act 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; or
- (4) the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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 accounts to be reached.



Sarah Shearer FCA BSc AICB
377-399 London Road
Camberley
Surrey
GU15 3HL
26th May 2026