

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

England & Wales · Charity number 1168090

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	10197205
Registered	2016-07-06
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Early Childhood Partnership 30 Meadway Bedford MK41 9HU
Phone	01923 353612
Email	admin@ecpbedford.org
Website	www.ecpbedford.org

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CHARITY ARE:1. TO PROVIDE PARENTS, EXPECTANT PARENTS AND CARERS WITH EDUCATION TO ASSIST THEM TO DEVELOP THEIR PARENTING, SOCIAL AND PERSONAL SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES TO ENABLE THEM TO ENHANCE THE OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN; 2. TO PROMOTE AND PRESERVE THE HEALTH OF PARENTS, EXPECTANT PARENTS, CARERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE; AND3. TO RELIEVE AND GIVE SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE TO PARENTS, EXPECTANT PARENTS, CARERS AND YOUNG CHILDREN WHO ARE IN CONDITIONS OF NEED, HARDSHIP OR DISTRESS BY REASON OF THEIR SOCIAL, PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL OR ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES.

Activities: ECP is a locally based not for profit organisation that exists to deliver Children's Centre and associated services to local families, parents, carers and young children. It does this through leading and managing commissioned contracts from local authorities.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Disability, Economic/community Development/employment
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Scotland
- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£2,012,893	£1,966,432	£579,536	45
2024-03-31	£1,969,623	£1,905,157	£533,075	46
2023-03-31	£1,817,880	£1,758,287	£468,609	54
2022-03-31	£1,838,518	£1,837,081	£409,016	55
2021-03-31	£1,896,986	£1,569,716	£407,579	43

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Nicola Grinstead		2025-01-22
Rev Richard Atkinson		2025-01-22

Accounts

Registered company:

10197205

Registered Charity:

1168090

**EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

CONTENTS

	Page
Corporate information	3
Report of the Trustee Board	4
Operating & financial review and Strategic Report	11
Independent auditor's report to the members of Early Childhood Partnership	14
Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)	17
Balance sheet	18
Statement of cash flows	19
Notes to the financial statements	20

CORPORATE INFORMATION

TRUSTEE BOARD

Chair

Deborah James (resigned 10 December 2024)
Bishop Richard Atkinson OBE (from 22 January 2025)

Trustees:

Deborah James (resigned 10 December 2024)
Robert Thompson
Bishop Richard Atkinson OBE (from 22 January 2025)
Nicola Grinstead (from 22 January 2025)
Jeannie Kate Bayliss (resigned 11 December 2024)

Company Secretary:

Michael Howe

Business Managers:

Linzi Schier
Nicola Lee

CORPORATE INFORMATION

Registered charity number:

1168090

Registered company number:

10197205

Registered office:

30 Meadway, Bedford, MK41 9HU

Website:

www.ecpbedford.org

Parent Company:

One YMCA, Charter House, Watford, WD17 2RT, www.oneymca.org

AUDITORS, BANKERS, INVESTMENT MANAGER AND SOLICITORS

Auditor (External)

HaysMac LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1AG

Auditor (Internal)

Beever and Struthers, 15 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8LP

Bankers:

HSBC Plc, 44-52 Lattimore Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3XL

Solicitors:

Bates Wells Braithwaite LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1BE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

The Trustee Board presents its annual report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Organisation

The Charity operates from a number of centres across Bedfordshire.

The Charity's main activities are to deliver the children's centre contract in Bedford Borough, as well as Therapeutic and Specialist Support Services including Domestic Abuse, Perpetrators and Sexual Violence. The Trustee Board is responsible for the operation of the Charity. Its Business Managers' report to the Trustee Board and are line managed by the Group Chief Executive. The Trustee Board is supported by a Company Secretary.

The Charity closely works with a number of non-profit organisations. These are:

- FACES Bedford – volunteer management,
- Bedford Nursery Schools– provision of children's centre teaching and educational support
- One YMCA – provision of group and corporate services support.
- Signpost – provision of counselling services.

Given that these organisations work closely with the Charity, a conflict-of-interest policy is in place and all necessary matters are disclosed.

Trustee Board

The Trustee Board is responsible for the overall governance of the Charity. Those who have served during the year are set out on page 3. They hold a dual role of being Trustees of a registered Charity as well as being directors for the purposes of the Companies Act.

In accordance with the Articles of Association, Trustees serve for a three-year term after which they retire. A retiring member of the Trustee Board shall be eligible for re-election for a second and third full-term, but then having served a third term, must stand down as an elected member for a period of one year. Trustees can only serve for a maximum of nine years.

Strategic management

The Trustee Board is responsible for setting an appropriate strategy for the Charity. It also ensures that relevant performance measures are in place.

During the year, the Trustee Board:

- Undertook the necessary legal and governance steps to maintain the work of the Charity,
- Reviewed key policies,
- Scrutinised the service delivery plans and targets,
- Received reports on performance,
- Reviewed strategic risk,
- Ensured that policies and control frameworks were in place.

As the Charity is a subsidiary of One YMCA, it benefits from a broader committee structure that operates on a Group basis and ensures that detailed governance arrangements are established and monitored. The structure is set out in the following matrix.

ONE YMCA - TRUSTEE BOARD

Sub Committees



Subsidiary Boards

ECP 4x Meetings	Signpost 4x Meetings	Development Company 4x Meetings
ECP Strategies	Signpost Strategies	Oversee development projects
Service updates and KPIs	Service updates and KPIs for Counselling Service And Fundraising	Review development progress, milestones and pipeline
Recommending budgets and financial performance monitoring	Recommending budgets and financial performance monitoring	Undertake due diligence and scrutiny of development proposals
Scrutiny of safeguarding arrangements	Scrutiny of safeguarding arrangements	Review and monitor development budgets
Membership, Succession and AGM	Membership, Succession and AGM	Membership, Succession and AGM

Recruitment of members of the Trustee Board

Members of the Trustee Board were recruited from partner organisations and comprise the following skill sets:

- Head Teacher,
- Head of Early Years,
- Corporate Strategy,
- Project Management.

New Trustees are inducted into the governance arrangements by the Company Secretary using an agreed framework and ongoing training is provided through a combination of trustee updates, attendance at Charity conferences / training events and bespoke training. A number of the Trustees also serve or have served as Trustees of other charities, which broadens the available skills base and the exposure to training and best practice of the Charity sector. On a periodic basis, the Trustee Board reviews its skills mix to ensure that any recruitment exercises are targeted at areas of need.

Management arrangements

The role of the Business Manager is provided jointly by the Head of Family Services and Head of Therapeutic Specialist Support Services for the Group and reports to the Group Chief Executive. The Company Secretary supports the Board and provides governance and corporate services advice. They act within the authority delegated by the Trustee Board.

Employees

The strength of the Charity lies in the quality of all its employees and their contribution to achieving the goals of the objectives set for each department. The Charity shares information on its objectives, progress and activities through regular management and staff departmental meetings.

The Charity is committed to equal opportunities both in recruitment and retention of employees.

Gender pay reporting

The Charity has adopted the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage as the baseline for all employees who are engaged on a permanent contract of employment and are not apprentices. Moreover, the Charity has utilised an established job evaluation scheme to ensure that all job roles are properly assessed against an equal pay criteria. The overall workforce is 100% female.

The gender pay reporting principles demonstrate the following position as a snapshot on 5 April 2025 was:

- Mean gender pay gap – None
- Median gender pay gap – None
- Mean bonus gender pay gap – None
- Median bonus gender pay gap – None
- Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment - None
- Proportion of females receiving a bonus payment – None
- Proportion of males and females in each quartile pay band – All Quartiles – 100% female

As at the date of this report, the Charity was not required to submit gender pay statistics due to its size.

Indemnity insurance

The Charity's insurance policies indemnify the Trustee Board and Officers against liability when acting for the Charity providing their actions are not reckless or fraudulent.

Health and Safety

The Trustees are aware of their responsibilities on all matters relating to health and safety. The Charity has prepared detailed health and safety policies and provides staff training and education on health and safety matters. During the year, the Parent Charity's health and safety committee met on three occasions comprising of representatives of all service areas including this Charity. The meetings were chaired by the Director of Operations and one of the Charity's children's centre Managers is a permanent Committee member.

Safeguarding

The Charity takes the protection of its service users, staff and volunteers very seriously. As a result, along with the Parent Charity, it has implemented a robust suite of Safeguarding measures, including comprehensive Policies and Procedures, as well as a clear Safeguarding reporting flowchart and a Safeguarding Link Trustee. There is also an active Safeguarding Leads Group, which meets regularly to review trends and learning from the range of safeguarding issues raised within the period. This Group is chaired by the Associate Director of Family Support and Group Designated Safeguarding Lead and is attended by senior ECP staff members.

Safeguarding Data

The Charity takes the view that a key method of safeguarding people is to safeguard their data. As a result, it makes use of the external Data Protection Officer services of the Group, which are led by a specialist lawyer. The Charity holds a great deal of personal and sensitive data about children and their families, so it takes care to map where data is held and to undertake Data Protection Impact Assessments where appropriate. The Charity's senior staff also participate in the Data Group along with the Parent Charity, which, among other things, also considers cyber security and protection from external attacks.

Public Benefit

The Trustee Board held service users at the heart of its approach to formulating the strategic objectives and associated strategies. In doing so, the Trustee Board referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when planning for the future. Through the work that the Charity undertakes in its service areas, it delivers public benefit and serves a wide range of people, many of whom are vulnerable.

Complaints

There is a clear and simple complaints policy available to all service users. All complaints received are reported to the relevant Manager and are monitored by the Company Secretary to help ensure an appropriate and timely resolution and also to help identify any recurring issues that may require a different approach.

Donations

No charitable or political donations were made by ECP during the year.

Going Concern

The Executive has modelled income and expenditure as well as cashflows over the foreseeable future and demonstrated that both are resilient. The main contract with Bedford Borough Council was renewed for a 5-year term from October 2021 which gives greater financial certainty.

Accordingly, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. Consequently, they continue to support the going concern basis in preparing financial statements.

Reserves Policy

Reserves that are unrestricted funds held by the Charity should be sufficient to meet all payment obligations and to contribute to the Charity fulfilling its aims and purposes. The target level of free reserves is determined annually by the Trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for specific purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

The reserves as at 31 March 2025 were as follows:

<u>Reserves</u>	<u>£</u>
Revenue reserve	£442,461
Restricted funds	£137,075
Total funds	£579,536

The revenue reserve amounted to £442,461 which are classed as free reserves. In determining the level of unrestricted funds held as free reserves to cover working balances and payment obligations without any designation or subject to earmarking for particular purposes, the Trustees have taken into account the following matters:

- Three months of salary and running costs are approximately £491k.
- Bedford Borough Council have a fixed monthly payment plan embedded in the Charity's largest contract which ensures timely cash flow.
- Bedford Borough Council's payments are being received on a timely basis in advance of meeting expenditure.
- There is an inter-company loan and debenture in place with One YMCA for short-term cash flow support if required (2024: £Nil), and
- Group business interruption insurance cover is in place with a two-year indemnity period.

Accordingly, the Trustees consider it prudent to retain working balances of £60-100k in cash at each month end that are not designated or earmarked in order to meet unforeseen risks or obligations. This is an ongoing objective which is currently being met.

Risk Management

The Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring that an active risk management process is in place and forms part of the ongoing organisational activity. During the year, the Parent Charity reviewed the group risk management policy. The strategic risk register is a standing item at each Group Trustee Board meeting and was reviewed four times. The register identifies the types of risks the Charity faces and prioritises them in terms of potential impact and likelihood of occurrence. The Trustees are satisfied that the internal financial controls comply in all material respects with the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission and has established a separate internal audit function (carried out by an independent internal audit firm) to review risks on a rotational basis.

The principal risks affecting the Charity relate to loss of contract income or mismanagement of a Safeguarding issue. We undertake regular strategic meetings with Bedford Borough Council to monitor the service level agreement. We have received positive feedback and work internally to ensure that our services are well managed and exceed expectations. The management of the safeguarding risks are detailed in the Risks and Uncertainties section on page 13.

The Trustees confirm that they have identified and understand the risks to which the Charity is subject and that they are being actively managed.

Internal Controls Assurance

The Trustees acknowledge their overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the whole system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

The system of internal control is designed to manage, rather than eliminate, the risk of failure to achieve business objectives, and to provide reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

The process for identifying, evaluating and managing the significant risks faced by the Charity is ongoing. The Trustee Board reviews the strategic risk register at every meeting.

Key elements of the control framework include: -

- Board-approved terms of reference,
- Clearly defined management responsibilities for the identification, evaluation and control of significant risks,
- Formal recruitment, retention, training and development policies for all staff,
- Established authorisation and appraisal procedures for significant new initiatives and commitments,
- Regular review of cash flow,
- Regular reporting on key business objectives, targets and outcomes,
- Board approved Code of Conduct,
- Board approved safeguarding, health & safety, whistleblowing, anti-fraud and corruption policies,
- Board approved fraud policies, covering prevention, detection and reporting, together with recoverability of assets.

A fraud register is maintained and is reviewed by the Group CFO on a regular basis. During the year there were no findings of fraudulent activity.

The Board benefits from internal controls work undertaken by the Parent Charity on corporate services activities. The Parent Charity monitored the internal audit plan for the Group throughout the year.

Code of Governance

The Parent Charity complies with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance (2020) on a Group basis which incorporates the activities of the Charity. During the year, the compliance framework has been reviewed. As an evolving organisation, the Charity will continue to review and develop its governance in order to best serve its beneficiaries.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

The Trustee Board is responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustee Board, Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustee Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable laws). Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the surplus or deficit of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements 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 business; and
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees confirm that:

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

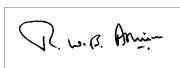
Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

- so far as each Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditors is unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approval

The Report of the Trustee Board was approved by the Trustees on 25 September 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Bishop Richard Atkinson OBE
Chair and Trustee

OPERATING & FINANCIAL REVIEW AND STRATEGIC REPORT

Introduction

The report and accounts for the financial year ending on 31 March 2025 are set out in this document.

Principal Activity

The Charity's principal activity is to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

- Child development and school readiness;
- Parenting aspirations and parenting skills;
- Child and family health and life changes;
- Improving the wellbeing of young children;
- Making arrangements to secure that early childhood services are provided in an integrated manner to facilitate access to services, maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children.

These activities are delivered from a number of Centres, virtual platforms and additional outreach sites in the Bedfordshire area.

Partners

Early Childhood Partnership works in close partnership with three not-for-profit organisations:

- FACES Bedford (registered Charity),
- Peter Pan Training Partnership (not-for-profit),
- One YMCA (registered Charity).

The Charity is led by its Trustee Board and Co-Business Managers with governance support from its Company Secretary.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

During the year, the Charity has worked in a strategic manner so that it:

- Operates the children's centre service on behalf of Bedford Borough Council for the benefit of service users,
- Delivers excellent Therapeutic Support Services to families in need,
- Acts as the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) to the Local Authority,
- Ensures that effective governance arrangements are in force,
- Works across the Bedfordshire area,
- Improves the outcomes for parents and children who are benefitting from the services provided,
- Operates within a leaner and more efficient funding framework.

The Trustee Board supports these measures and the ways that they can maximise the resources available for delivering the Charity's objectives and serving beneficiaries.

Financial review

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for Charities. The Charity returned an operating surplus of £46,461 (2024: £64,466). On an ongoing basis, the Trustee Board is committed to operating a balanced operating budget.

During the 2024/25 financial year, the Trustee Board has focused the staff team upon delivering a programme to improve underlying effectiveness of the children's centre operations and the development of new Therapeutic and Specialist Support Services so that the Charity is well placed for the future. This included:

- Delivering an improved level of performance against Bedford Borough Council's key performance indicators,
- Securing a variety of contracts and funding to extend and develop work with the most vulnerable children and families, including Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service, Play Therapy, perpetrator programmes and Domestic Abuse Support.

Objectives and Strategy

The Charity's objects are to:

- to provide parents, expectant parents and carers with education to assist them to develop their parenting, social and personal skills and capabilities to enable them to enhance the outcomes for young children;
- to promote and preserve the health of parents, expectant parents, carers and young people; and
- to relieve and give support and assistance to parents, expectant parents, carers and young children who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by reason of their social, physical, emotional or economic circumstances.

The strategies employed to achieve the Charity's objectives are to:

- Operate children's centre services so that operations take place through two main work-streams:
 - Family support targeted services,
 - Children's centre universal services.
- Align and monitoring contract and partner key performance indicators (KPI);
- Deliver the service delivery plan that aligns the contract and the needs of beneficiaries; and
- Develop and deliver a range of Therapeutic and Support Services to children and families who need it most.

Achievements and performance

In relation to the strategic objectives, the Charity has made a positive impact upon many lives during the year.

Service delivery plan developed to deliver KPIs and new operating model.

- The Council Contract and Partner service level agreements have been delivered.
- The contract KPIs have been delivered.
- The Service delivery plan has continued to develop the Charity's operating model.
- The Charity's staff deliver the core services via two work streams of: Family support, Universal services.
- The standard of service delivery has been rated as "Good" by Bedford Borough Council.
- New Therapeutic and Specialist Support Service established and working effectively.
- New Contracts and grant funding secured for future years.

Matrix management and partnership working in action

- Family Support Practitioners are aligned to early year providers as link-workers and liaison arrangements established.
- School and educational support being provided by Peter Pan Teaching School Alliance is driving up the standards of service delivery and offering effective peer support.
- The Charity's website, Facebook and bookings portal are in full use by beneficiaries.

General

- Providing children's centre services to children and supporting vulnerable children with targeted support;
- Making excellent progress in developing the Bedford Borough children's centres with a "Good" assessment being maintained throughout the year;
- Continuing to foster close partnerships and working relationships with social care and health services for the benefit of the families who are cared for;
- Developing new, much-needed services that respond to local needs.

The services provided are subject to Commissioner review and the suite of outcomes and key performance indicators agreed in the Council's contract. Performance against these is monitored on a regular basis.

Strategic developments on new activities

The Charity has worked hard to incorporate and deliver services in a compressed timescale. It will seek to expand its operations when it is prudent and sensible to do so and where there is a need to expand the delivery of services to beneficiaries.

Looking to the future

The Charity is committed to developing a strong and vibrant organisation in order to serve its beneficiaries and the local community. In doing so, it will

- Develop existing service delivery,
- Build upon the foundations established in the incorporation to attract new business in areas of strength,
- Improve value for money,
- Challenge expenditure levels,
- Ensure that all service areas are exceeding performance targets.

Risks and uncertainties

Risks that may prevent the Charity achieving its objectives are considered and reviewed by the Group Trustee Board on a periodic basis as part of the corporate planning processes. The risks are recorded and assessed in terms of their impact and probability. Major risks, presenting the greatest threats to the Charity are reported to the Group Trustee Board at every meeting. The Charity's major risks relate to:

- Loss of contract income,
- Safeguarding / service user reputational incident,
- Key performance indicator compliance,
- Partner effectiveness,
- Property legislative compliance relating to local authority buildings.

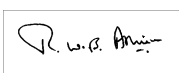
One of the principal risks relates to safeguarding given the beneficiary group that is being worked with. Whilst the Trustee Board reviews controls and standards, One YMCA provides extensive safeguarding support through its Safeguarding Leads Meeting which operates on a Group basis to challenge, support and review the protection and prevention arrangements in force. ECP's Head of Family Support attends the Safeguarding Leads meeting as well as advising on any concerns for the Charity. The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed by One YMCA, the Business Managers and Partners to ensure that it meets the needs of the services being provided.

On an annual basis, the Group reviews its key policies and controls frameworks. These included the financial regulations as well as the Code of Governance, committee terms of reference, code of conduct, safeguarding, fraud, whistleblowing, health & safety and equal opportunities policies.

The risk management and internal controls arrangements are described in more detail in the Report of the Trustee Board on pages 8 and 9.

Approval

In approving the Operating and Financial Review, the Trustees are also approving the Strategic Report in their capacity as directors of the Charity. The Operating and Financial Review and the Strategic Report were approved by the Trustee Board on 25 September 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Bishop Richard Atkinson OBE
Chair and Trustee

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Early Childhood Partnership for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern.

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Report of the Trustee Board, and the Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustee Board, the Operating and Financial Review and the Strategic Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report contained within the Report of the Trustee Board and the Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustee Board (which incorporates the director's report), the Operating and Financial Review and the Strategic Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities of the Trustee Board set out on page 9, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to Charity Law, Company Law, Safeguarding regulations, Ofsted and Health and Safety regulations, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011, and we considered other factors such as taxation compliance.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to areas of

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025

estimation uncertainty and manual accounting journals. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing a sample of manual journals; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their accounting estimates

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tracey Young (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of HaysMac LLP, Statutory Auditor
Date 23 October 2025

10 Queen Street Place
London
EC4R 1AG

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating the income and expenditure account)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

		<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2025</u> <u>£</u>	<u>2025</u> <u>£</u>	<u>2025</u> <u>£</u>	<u>2024</u> <u>£</u>
Income					
Donations and legacies	3	2,500	-	2,500	7,014
Charitable activities	3	1,591,295	419,098	2,010,393	1,962,609
Total income		1,593,795	419,098	2,012,893	1,969,623
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	4	1,595,451	370,981	1,966,432	1,905,157
Total expenditure		1,595,451	370,981	1,966,432	1,905,157
Net income		(1,656)	48,117	46,461	64,466
Transfers between funds	11	92,572	(92,572)	-	-
Net movement in funds		90,916	(44,455)	46,461	64,466
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds at start of period		351,545	181,530	533,075	468,609
Total funds carried forward	11	442,461	137,075	579,536	533,075

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

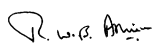
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

Registered company 10197205

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2025</u> £	<u>2024</u> £
Current assets			
Debtors	8	141,284	137,958
Cash at bank and in hand		621,790	1,148,152
Total current assets		763,074	1,286,110
Liabilities			
Creditors: falling due within one year	9	154,838	724,335
Total current liabilities		154,838	724,335
Net current assets		608,236	561,775
Provisions for liabilities and charges	10	28,700	28,700
Total Net Assets		579,536	533,075
The funds of the Charity			
Unrestricted funds		442,461	351,545
Restricted funds		137,075	181,530
Total Charity funds	11	579,536	533,075

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

The accounts were approved by the Trustee Board on 25 September 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:



Bishop Richard Atkinson OBE
Chair and Trustee

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	<u>2025</u> £	<u>2024</u> £
Net (outflow) / cash inflow from operating activities	(526,362)	501,147
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	1,148,152	647,005
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	621,790	1,148,152
Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities		
Net income for the year	46,461	64,466
(Increase) in debtors	(3,326)	(56,554)
(Decrease) / increase in creditors and provisions	(569,497)	493,235
Net cash (outflow) / inflow from operating activities	(526,362)	501,147
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash	621,790	1,148,152
Cash equivalents	-	-
Total cash and cash equivalents	621,790	1,148,152

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. Status

The Company is limited by guarantee, registered under the Companies Act 2006 registration number 10197205 and a registered Charity number 1168090. The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The registered office is 30 Meadway, Bedford, MK41 9HU.

The sole corporate member is One YMCA.

The Member of the Company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required (not exceeding £1.00) to the assets of the Company in the event of the same being wound up while it is a member for payment of the debt and liabilities of the Company contracted and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up. If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Company there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, shall transferred to the Member (One YMCA) or if the Member no longer exists or declined to receive the assets, then to the National Council of Young Men's Christian Association (Incorporated) or, in the event that these routes are inoperable, as directed by the Charity Commission.

2. Principal accounting policies

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities second edition, effective 1 January 2019, preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

In the view of the trustees in applying the accounting policies adopted, the only area of judgement relates to the provision for dilapidations as disclosed in 10. No other judgements were required that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements nor do any estimates or assumptions made carry a significant risk of material adjustment in the next financial year. No complex financial instruments are held.

(a) Basis of accounting

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction values unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes. Those assets measured at fair value are re-measured at each balance sheet date.

(b) Going concern

The Charity's business activities, its current financial position and factors likely to affect its future development are set out within the Operating and Financial Review. On this basis, the Trustee Board has a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. As a consequence, they continue to support the going concern basis in preparing financial statements. No material uncertainties exist.

(c) Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when:

- a) the Charity becomes entitled to the resources,
- b) it is more likely than not that the Charity will receive the resources,
- c) the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Contractual income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities once the Charity has delivered its obligations.

(d) Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The Charity has incurred expenditure on support costs. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the Charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

(e) Debtors and creditors

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment and short-term creditors and measured at the transaction price.

(f) Deferred income

Where income has been received in respect of service to be provided in a future period, the relevant income has been deferred as a creditor.

(g) Operating leases

Rentals payable under the operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term. The benefits of lease incentives are recognised in income and expenditure over the lease period.

(h) Provisions for Liabilities

Provision has been made for expected property costs at the end of the leases based on the lease terms, management's assessment of the property condition and external evidence supporting the likely costs. The estimation involves a level of judgment and will be reassessed annually.

(i) Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**3. Income**

	Unrestricted Funds <u>2025</u> £	Restricted Funds <u>2025</u> £	Total Funds <u>2025</u> £	Total Funds <u>2024</u> £
Donations and legacies				
Donations	2,500	-	2,500	7,014
Charitable activities				
Bedford Borough Council children's centres	1,155,059	-	1,155,059	1,139,935
Therapeutic and specialist support services	-	338,375	338,375	227,642
Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA)	222,454	55,374	277,838	221,018
Perpetrator	22,410	-	22,410	54,461
Counselling and Play Therapy	35,239	-	35,239	73,729
Play Therapy	63,706	-	63,706	29,510
Community Link Worker	-	25,349	25,349	27,252
Family Hubs	-	-	-	41,374
Chrysalis Victim Care Support	-	-	-	29,997
Other	92,427	-	92,427	117,691
Total income	1,593,795	419,098	2,012,893	1,969,623

Restricted income received in 2025 relating to charitable activities totalled £419,098 (2024: £227,642).

4. Expenditure

	Unrestricted Funds <u>2025</u> £	Restricted Funds <u>2025</u> £	Total Funds <u>2025</u> £	Total Funds <u>2024</u> £
Charitable activities				
Children's centre service delivery	1,230,954	-	1,230,954	975,103
Programme delivery by partner organisations	58,110	-	58,110	58,110
Therapeutic and specialist support services	53,651	370,981	424,632	514,262
Support costs	252,736	-	252,736	357,682
Total expenditure	1,595,451	370,981	1,966,432	1,905,157

Restricted expenditure relating to charitable activities in 2025 totalled £370,981 (2024: £232,147)

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**5. Support costs**

2025	<u>Children's Centre 2025</u> £	<u>Therapeutic Services 2025</u> £	<u>Total funds 2025</u> £
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT) for audit services	5,532	3,688	9,220
Company secretarial	3,000	2,000	5,000
Governance costs	8,532	5,688	14,220
Finance, human resources, property & safety (inc. VAT)	166,573	71,943	238,516
Total support costs	175,105	77,631	252,736

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned between the children's centres and Therapeutic Services based upon the time spent on each activity.

2024	<u>Children's Centre 2024</u> £	<u>Therapeutic Services 2024</u> £	<u>Total funds 2024</u> £
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT) for audit services	5,940	3,960	9,900
Company secretarial	3,000	2,000	5,000
Governance costs	8,940	5,960	14,900
Finance, human resources, property & safety (inc. VAT)	239,851	102,931	342,782
Total support costs	248,791	108,891	357,682

6.**Trustee Board**

The Trustees are the non-executive directors of the Company and are also the Trustee Board. None of the Trustee Board received emoluments. No expenses were reimbursed during the financial period (2024: nil).

7. Employee information

Average monthly number of employees	2025	2024
	No	No
Children's centres	25.0	24.8
Therapeutic Support Services	20.0	20.9
Total	45.0	45.7

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
Staff costs (for the above persons)		
Wages and salaries	1,188,766	957,629
Social security costs	101,193	85,523
Other pension costs	41,632	34,886
	1,331,591	1,075,038

There were no employees earning more than £60,000 per annum (2024: nil).

The aggregate emoluments of key management personnel were £17,800 (2024: £13,362).

8. Debtors

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade debtors	105,087	84,016
Amount owed by One YMCA	2,030	27,606
Prepayments and accrued income	34,167	26,336
	141,284	137,958

9. Creditors**Amounts falling due within one year**

	2025	2024
	£	£
Trade creditors	1,679	14,632
Accruals	48,511	176,671
Deferred income	77,333	156,520
Other taxes and social security costs	20,283	18,430
Other creditors	7,032	10,300
Amounts owed to One YMCA	-	347,782
	154,838	724,335

10. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2025	2024
	£	£
At 1st April	28,700	28,700
Arising / (used) during the year	-	-
At 31 March	28,700	28,700

A provision for dilapidations to premises is being held to cover the costs of any necessary reinstatement and repairs to the properties at the termination of the leases.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**11. Fund analysis - 2025**

Fund	<u>Funds b/f</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Transfer</u>	<u>Funds c/f</u>
Unrestricted - general purposes	351,545	1,593,795	1,595,451	92,572	442,461
Restricted Funds:					
Big Lottery - Horizons Project	30,661	174,525	139,114	(35,619)	30,453
ISVA LGBTQ	4,405	55,373	43,683	(16,095)	-
Community Link Worker	-	25,349	23,857	(1,492)	-
Steele Charitable Trust	5,000	5,000	7,953	(2,047)	-
Harpur Trust	16,138	68,853	46,348	(26,046)	12,597
Domestic Abuse Counselling	-	44,999	38,155	(6,844)	-
Sexual Violence Counselling	-	44,999	40,570	(4,429)	-
One YMCA	125,326	-	31,301	-	94,025
Restricted funds	181,530	419,098	370,981	(92,572)	137,075
Total Funds	533,075	2,012,893	1,966,433	-	579,536

Big Lottery Fund – Horizons Project

A project working with families affected by domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and parental mental health issues.

Children In Need

A grant funding the provision of a full-time therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Bedford.

Harpur Trust

A grant funding the provision of a full-time play therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Bedford.

Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit

A project delivering targeted play therapy for children across Bedfordshire.

Steele Charitable Trust

A grant funding the provision of a full-time play therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Luton.

ISVA LGBTQ

This project delivers independent sexual violence advocacy for victims from the LGBTQ community.

Community Link Worker

This project delivers community development work through our network of children's centres, linking in with volunteer led sessions to encourage engagement in additional activities for families.

Domestic Abuse Counselling

Domestic abuse is identified as an area of focus in Bedfordshire with a need for the continuation of a service to support adult victims of domestic abuse crime through the provision of counselling. This project offers counselling services to victims of domestic abuse in Bedfordshire.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**Sexual Violence Counselling**

This project delivers 1-1 counselling and emotional support sessions for adult sexual violence victims in Bedfordshire.

One YMCA

Funds of £125,326 from One YMCA were brought forward from the previous year with expenditure of £31,301. The donation was made to ECP for its existing and new activities

Fund analysis - 2024

Fund	<u>Funds</u> <u>b/f</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Transfer</u>	<u>Funds c/f</u>
Unrestricted - general purposes	307,349	1,741,981	1,673,010	(24,775)	351,545
Restricted Funds:					
Big Lottery - Horizons Project	-	123,672	144,288	51,277	30,661
Children In Need	2,958	-	-	(2,958)	-
Male Victims	2,179	-	-	(2,179)	-
Violence & Exploitation Reduction Unit	11,741	-	-	(11,741)	-
ISVA LGBTQ	12,398	40,759	31,878	(16,874)	4,405
Community Link Worker	6,658	25,349	23,119	(8,888)	-
Steele Charitable Trust	-	30,000	25,000	-	5,000
Harpur Trust	-	7,862	7,862	16,138	16,138
One YMCA	125,326	-	-	-	125,326
Restricted funds	161,260	227,642	232,147	24,775	181,530
Total Funds	468,609	1,969,624	1,905,157	-	533,075

12. Taxation

The Company is a registered Charity qualifying for relief from income and capital gains taxes on its Charitable activities.

13. Related party transactions**One YMCA**

For the financial period under review, Bishop Richard Atkinson OBE, chair of the Trustees, was also a Trustee of One YMCA. One YMCA provides central services to the Charity such as finance, human resources, safety & compliance and company secretarial work on an arm's length basis. A charge was made for these services amounting to £243,516 (inclusive of VAT) (2024: £347,782).

The Charity benefits from an inter-company loan facility for short term cash flow purposes. It was not used in 2024/25. When used, interest is chargeable, it is subject to a debenture deed and One YMCA has a registered charge in respect of it. There is currently a nil balance (2024: £Nil).

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Signpost

Signpost provided counselling services to the Charity amounting to £63,548 (2024: Nil) during the year. These services were funded from the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence counselling grants awarded to the Charity during the year.

Others

The Charity received funds from Bedfordshire Council for provision of children services. These funds also contribute to services offered by third party; Peter Pan Training partnership and FACES Bedford.

For the financial year under review:

1. A charge of £28,140 (2024: £28,140) was paid in respect of Peter Pan Training Partnership for services during the financial year. Deborah James, a trustee, was a member of the strategic governing board of Peter Pan Training Partnership which provides teaching and education support.
2. A charge was made by FACES Bedford for services amounting to £29,970 (2024: £29,970). Jeannie Kate Bayliss, a trustee, was a trustee of Faces Bedford who provide volunteering support.

Conflicts of interest

A conflicts of interest policy is in force, and all interests are declared. Where appropriate, conflicted trustees do not participate in decisions.

14. Operating lease commitments

There are a number of leases in place for children's centre properties. The rent at each property is £1.

Accounts

Registered company:
Registered Charity:

10197205
1168090

**EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

CONTENTS

	Page
Corporate information	3
Report of the Trustee Board	4
Operating & financial review and Strategic Report	11
Independent auditor's report to the members of Early Childhood Partnership	14
Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)	17
Balance sheet	18
Statement of cash flows	19
Notes to the financial statements	20

CORPORATE INFORMATION

TRUSTEE BOARD

Chair Sal Thirlway (resigned 28 September 2023)
Deborah James (from 29 September 2023)

Trustees: Eve Burt (resigned 28 September 2023)
Deborah James
Sal Thirlway (resigned 18 October 2023)
Robert Thompson
Jennie Bayliss (from 29 September 2023)

Company Secretary: Michael Howe

Business Managers: Linzi Schier
Nicola Lee

CORPORATE INFORMATION

Registered Charity: 1168090
Registered company: 10197205
Registered office: 30 Meadway, Bedford, MK41 9HU
Website: www.ecpbedford.org

Parent Company: One YMCA, Charter House, Watford, WD17 2RT, www.oneymca.org

AUDITORS, BANKERS, INVESTMENT MANAGER AND SOLICITORS

Auditor (External) HaysMac LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1AG

Auditor (Internal) Beever and Struthers, 15 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8LP

Bankers: HSBC Plc, 44-52 Lattimore Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3XL

Solicitors: Bates Wells Braithwaite LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1BE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

The Trustee Board presents its annual report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Organisation

The Charity operates from a number of centres across Bedfordshire.

The Charity's main activities are to deliver the children's centre contract in Bedford Borough, as well as Therapeutic and Specialist Support Services including Domestic Abuse, Perpetrators and Sexual Violence. The Trustee Board is responsible for the operation of the Charity. Its Business Managers' reports to the Trustee Board and are line managed by the Group Chief Executive. The Trustee Board is supported by a Company Secretary.

The Charity closely works with a number of non-profit organisations. These are:

- FACES Bedford – volunteer management,
- Bedford Nursery Schools– provision of children's centre teaching and educational support
- One YMCA – provision of group and corporate services support.

Given that these organisations work closely with the Charity, a conflict-of-interest policy is in place and all necessary matters are disclosed.

Trustee Board

The Trustee Board is responsible for the overall governance of the Charity. Those who have served during the year are set out on page 3. They hold a dual role of being Trustees of a registered Charity as well as being directors for the purposes of the Companies Act.

In accordance with the Articles of Association, Trustees serve for a three-year term after which they retire. A retiring member of the Trustee Board shall be eligible for re-election for a second and third full-term, but then having served a third term, must stand down as an elected member for a period of one year. Trustees can only serve for a maximum of nine years.

Strategic management

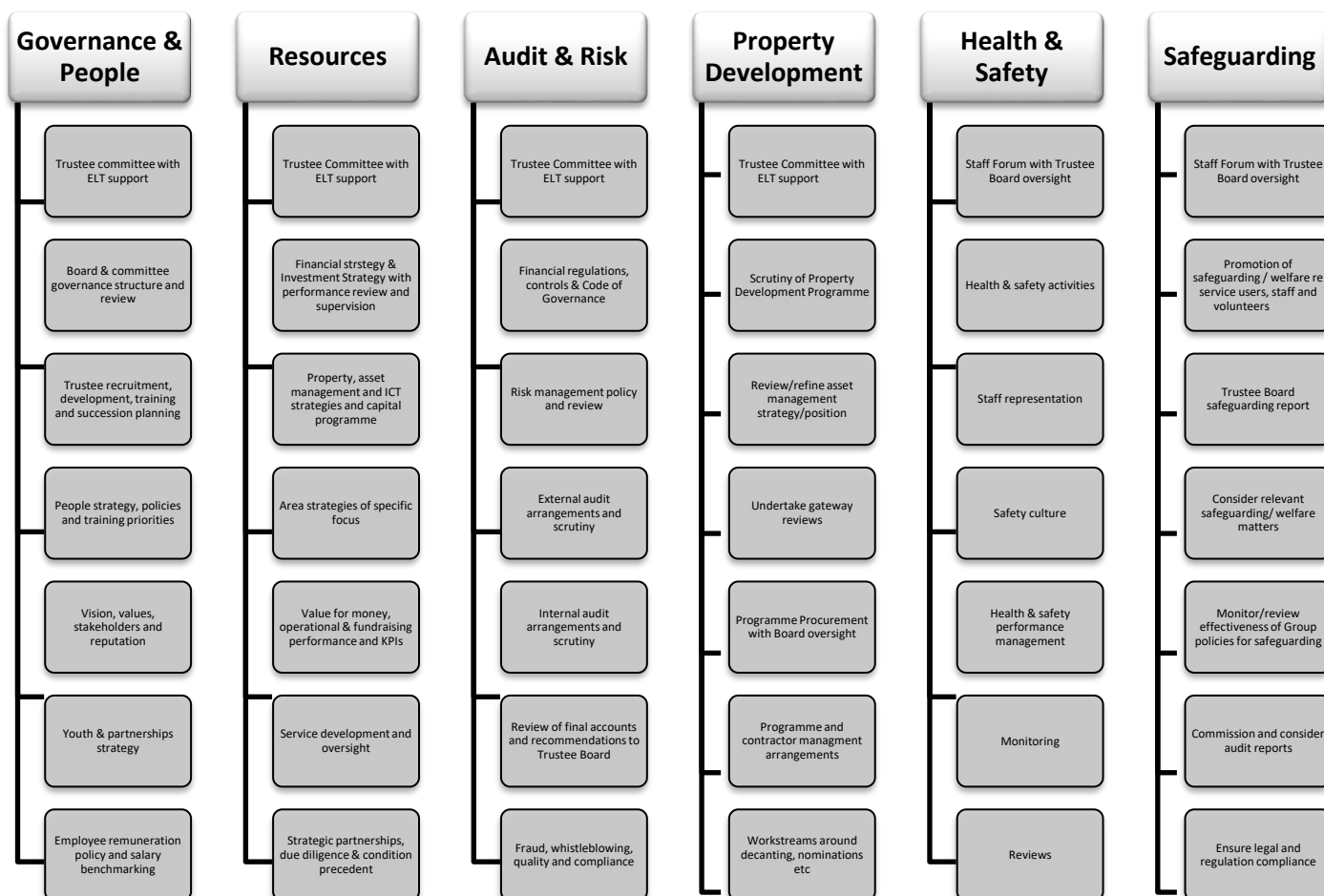
The Trustee Board is responsible for setting an appropriate strategy for the Charity. It also ensures that relevant performance measures are in place.

During the year, the Trustee Board:

- Undertook the necessary legal and governance steps to maintain the work of the Charity,
- Reviewed key policies,
- Scrutinised the service delivery plans and targets,
- Received reports on performance,
- Reviewed strategic risk,
- Ensured that policies and control frameworks were in place.

As the Charity is a subsidiary of One YMCA, it benefits from a broader committee structure that operates on a Group basis and ensures that detailed governance arrangements are established and monitored. The structure is set out in the following matrix.

ONE YMCA - TRUSTEE BOARD



EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP, SIGNPOST & HAVEN FIRST TRUSTEE BOARDS

ONE YMCA DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

One YMCA subsidiary company, responsible for delivering the strategic requirements of the YMCA Trustee Board, supported by an Independent Director

Recruitment of members of the Trustee Board

Members of the Trustee Board were recruited from partner organisations and comprise the following skill sets:

- Head Teacher,
- Head of Early Years,
- Corporate Strategy,
- Project Management.

New Trustees are inducted into the governance arrangements by the Company Secretary using an agreed framework and ongoing training is provided through a combination of trustee updates, attendance at Charity conferences / training events and bespoke training. A number of the Trustees also serve or have served as Trustees of other charities, which broadens the available skills base and the exposure to training and best practice of the Charity sector. On a periodic basis, the Trustee Board reviews its skills mix to ensure that any recruitment exercises are targeted at areas of need.

Management arrangements

The role of the Business Manager is provided jointly by the Head of Family Services and Head of Therapeutic Specialist Support Services for the Group and reports to the Group Chief Executive. The Company Secretary supports the Board and provides governance and corporate services advice. They act within the authority delegated by the Trustee Board.

Salary levels are reviewed annually and uses agreed NJC pay scales (local government pay scales which are extensively used in the voluntary sector) as a guideline for identifying pay scales and banding, including those for key management posts. Any proposed amendments to salary scales or remuneration of key staff is taken to the Board for final decision.

Employees

The strength of the Charity lies in the quality of all its employees and their contribution to achieving the goals of the objectives set for each department. The Charity shares information on its objectives, progress and activities through regular management and staff departmental meetings.

The Charity is committed to equal opportunities both in recruitment and retention of employees.

Gender pay reporting

The Charity has adopted the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage as the baseline for all employees who are engaged on a permanent contract of employment and are not apprentices. Moreover, the Charity has utilised an established job evaluation scheme to ensure that all job roles are properly assessed against an equal pay criteria. The overall workforce is 100% female.

The gender pay reporting principles demonstrate the following position as a snapshot on 5 April 2024 was:

- Mean gender pay gap – None
- Median gender pay gap – None
- Mean bonus gender pay gap – None
- Median bonus gender pay gap – None
- Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment - None
- Proportion of females receiving a bonus payment – None
- Proportion of males and females in each quartile pay band – All Quartiles – 100% female

As at the date of this report, the Charity was not required to submit gender pay statistics due to its size.

Indemnity insurance

The Charity's insurance policies indemnify the Trustee Board and Officers against liability when acting for the Charity providing their actions are not reckless or fraudulent.

Health and Safety

The Trustees are aware of their responsibilities on all matters relating to health and safety. The Charity has prepared detailed health and safety policies and provides staff training and education on health and safety matters. During the year, the Parent Charity's health and safety committee met on three occasions comprising of representatives of all service areas including this Charity. The meetings were chaired by the Director of Operations and one of the Charity's children's centre Managers is a permanent Committee member.

Safeguarding

The Charity takes the protection of its service users, staff and volunteers very seriously. As a result, along with the Parent Charity, it has implemented a robust suite of Safeguarding measures, including comprehensive Policies and Procedures, as well as a clear Safeguarding reporting flowchart and a Safeguarding Link Trustee, who is also the chair of the ECP Board. There is also an active Safeguarding Leads Group, which meets regularly to review trends and learning from the range of safeguarding issues raised within the period. This Group is chaired by the Group Chief Executive and is attended by senior ECP staff members.

Safeguarding Data

The Charity takes the view that a key method of safeguarding people is to safeguard their data. As a result, it makes use of the external Data Protection Officer services of the Group, which are led by a specialist lawyer. The Charity holds a great deal of personal and sensitive data about children and their families, so it takes care to map where data is held and to undertake Data Protection Impact Assessments where appropriate. The Charity's senior staff also participate in the Data Group along with the Parent Charity, which, among other things, also considers cyber security and protection from external attacks.

Public Benefit

The Trustee Board held service users at the heart of its approach to formulating the strategic objectives and associated strategies. In doing so, the Trustee Board referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when planning for the future. Through the work that the Charity undertakes in its service areas, it delivers public benefit and serves a wide range of people, many of whom are vulnerable.

Complaints

There is a clear and simple complaints policy available to all service users. All complaints received are reported to the relevant Manager and are monitored by the Company Secretary to help ensure an appropriate and timely resolution and also to help identify any recurring issues that may require a different approach.

Donations

No charitable or political donations were made by ECP during the year.

Going Concern

The Executive has modelled income and expenditure as well as cashflows over the foreseeable future and demonstrated that both are resilient. The main contract with Bedford Borough Council was renewed for a 5-year term from October 2021 which gives greater financial certainty.

Accordingly, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. Consequently, they continue to support the going concern basis in preparing financial statements.

Reserves Policy

Reserves that are unrestricted funds held by the Charity should be sufficient to meet all payment obligations and to contribute to the Charity fulfilling its aims and purposes. The target level of free reserves is determined annually by the Trustees.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

Restricted funds can only be used for specific purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements. The reserves as at 31 March 2024 were as follows:

<u>Reserves</u>	<u>£</u>
Revenue reserve	£351,545
Restricted funds	£181,530
Total funds	<u>£533,075</u>

The revenue reserve amounted to £351,545 which are classed as free reserves. In determining the level of unrestricted funds held as free reserves to cover working balances and payment obligations without any designation or subject to earmarking for particular purposes, the Trustees have taken into account the following matters:

- Three months of salary and running costs are approximately £476k.
- Bedford Borough Council have a fixed monthly payment plan embedded in the Charity's largest contract which ensures timely cash flow.
- Bedford Borough Council's payments are being received on a timely basis in advance of meeting expenditure.
- There is an inter-company loan and debenture in place with One YMCA for short-term cash flow support if required (2023: £Nil), and
- Group business interruption insurance cover is in place with a two-year indemnity period.

Accordingly, the Trustees consider it prudent to retain working balances of £60-100k in cash at each month end that are not designated or earmarked in order to meet unforeseen risks or obligations. This is an ongoing objective which is currently being met.

Risk Management

The Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring that an active risk management process is in place and forms part of the ongoing organisational activity. During the year, the Parent Charity reviewed the group risk management policy. The strategic risk register is a standing item at each Group Trustee Board meeting and was reviewed four times. The register identifies the types of risks the Charity faces and prioritises them in terms of potential impact and likelihood of occurrence. The Trustees are satisfied that the internal financial controls comply in all material respects with the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission and has established a separate internal audit function (carried out by an independent internal audit firm) to review risks on a rotational basis.

The principal risks affecting the Charity relate to loss of contract income or mismanagement of a Safeguarding issue. We undertake regular strategic meetings with Bedford Borough Council to monitor the service level agreement. We have received positive feedback and work internally to ensure that our services are well managed and exceed expectations. The management of the safeguarding risks are detailed in the Risks and Uncertainties section on page 13.

The Trustees confirm that they have identified and understand the risks to which the Charity is subject and that they are being actively managed.

Internal Controls Assurance

The Trustees acknowledge their overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the whole system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

The system of internal control is designed to manage, rather than eliminate, the risk of failure to achieve business objectives, and to provide reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The process for identifying, evaluating and managing the significant risks faced by the Charity is ongoing. The Trustee Board reviews the strategic risk register at every meeting.

Key elements of the control framework include: -

- Board-approved terms of reference,
- Clearly defined management responsibilities for the identification, evaluation and control of significant risks,
- Formal recruitment, retention, training and development policies for all staff,
- Established authorisation and appraisal procedures for significant new initiatives and commitments,
- Regular review of cash flow,
- Regular reporting on key business objectives, targets and outcomes,
- Board approved Code of Conduct,
- Board approved safeguarding, health & safety, whistleblowing, anti-fraud and corruption policies,
- Board approved fraud policies, covering prevention, detection and reporting, together with recoverability of assets.

A fraud register is maintained and is reviewed by the Group CFO on a regular basis. During the year there were no findings of fraudulent activity.

The Board benefits from internal controls work undertaken by the Parent Charity on corporate services activities. The Parent Charity monitored the internal audit plan for the Group throughout the year.

Code of Governance

The Parent Charity complies with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance (2020) on a Group basis which incorporates the activities of the Charity. During the year, the compliance framework has been reviewed. As an evolving organisation, the Charity will continue to review and develop its governance in order to best serve its beneficiaries.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD FOR THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

General Financial Responsibilities

The Trustee Board is responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustee Board, Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustee Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable laws). Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the surplus or deficit of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements 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 business; and
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

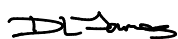
The Trustees confirm that:

- so far as each Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditors is unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approval

The Report of the Trustee Board was approved by the Trustees on 16 December 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Deborah James
Chair and Trustee

OPERATING & FINANCIAL REVIEW AND STRATEGIC REPORT

Introduction

The report and accounts for the financial year ending on 31 March 2024 are set out in this document.

Principal Activity

The Charity's principal activity is to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

- Child development and school readiness;
- Parenting aspirations and parenting skills;
- Child and family health and life changes;
- Improving the wellbeing of young children;
- Making arrangements to secure that early childhood services are provided in an integrated manner to facilitate access to services, maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children.

These activities are delivered from a number of Centres, virtual platforms and additional outreach sites in the Bedfordshire area.

Partners

Early Childhood Partnership works in close partnership with three not-for-profit organisations:

- FACES Bedford (registered Charity),
- Peter Pan Training Partnership (not-for-profit),
- One YMCA (registered Charity).

The Charity is led by its Trustee Board and Co-Business Managers with governance support from its Company Secretary.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

During the year, the Charity has worked in a strategic manner so that it:

- Operates the children's centre service on behalf of Bedford Borough Council for the benefit of service users,
- Delivers excellent Therapeutic Support Services to families in need,
- Acts as the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) to the Local Authority,
- Ensures that effective governance arrangements are in force,
- Works across the Bedfordshire area,
- Improves the outcomes for parents and children who are benefitting from the services provided,
- Operates within a leaner and more efficient funding framework.

The Trustee Board supports these measures and the ways that they can maximise the resources available for delivering the Charity's objectives and serving beneficiaries.

Financial review

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for Charities. The Charity returned an operating surplus of £64,466 (2023: £59,593). On an ongoing basis, the Trustee Board is committed to operating a balanced operating budget.

During the 2023/24 financial year, the Trustee Board has focused the staff team upon delivering a programme to improve underlying effectiveness of the children's centre operations and the development of new Therapeutic and Specialist Support Services so that the Charity is well placed for the future. This included:

- Delivering an improved level of performance against Bedford Borough Council's key performance indicators,
- Securing a variety of contracts and funding to extend and develop work with the most vulnerable children and families, including Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service, Play Therapy, perpetrator programmes and Domestic Abuse Support.

Objectives and Strategy

The Charity's objects are to:

- to provide parents, expectant parents and carers with education to assist them to develop their parenting, social and personal skills and capabilities to enable them to enhance the outcomes for young children;
- to promote and preserve the health of parents, expectant parents, carers and young people; and
- to relieve and give support and assistance to parents, expectant parents, carers and young children who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by reason of their social, physical, emotional or economic circumstances.

The strategies employed to achieve the Charity's objectives are to:

- Operate children's centre services so that operations take place through two main work-streams:
 - Family support targeted services,
 - Children's centre universal services.
- Align and monitoring contract and partner key performance indicators (KPI);
- Deliver the service delivery plan that aligns the contract and the needs of beneficiaries; and
- Develop and deliver a range of Therapeutic and Support Services to children and families who need it most.

Achievements and performance

In relation to the strategic objectives, the Charity has made a positive impact upon many lives during the year.

Service delivery plan developed to deliver KPIs and new operating model.

- The Council Contract and Partner service level agreements have been delivered.
- The contract KPIs have been delivered.
- The Service delivery plan has continued to develop the Charity's operating model.
- The Charity's staff deliver the core services via two work streams of: Family support, Universal services.
- The standard of service delivery has been rated as "Good" by Bedford Borough Council.
- New Therapeutic and Specialist Support Service established and working effectively.
- New Contracts and grant funding secured for future years.

Matrix management and partnership working in action

- Family Support Practitioners are aligned to early year providers as link-workers and liaison arrangements established.
- School and educational support being provided by Peter Pan Teaching School Alliance is driving up the standards of service delivery and offering effective peer support.
- The Charity's website, Facebook and bookings portal are in full use by beneficiaries.

General

- Providing children's centre services to children and supporting vulnerable children with targeted support;
- Making excellent progress in developing the Bedford Borough children's centres with a "Good" assessment being maintained throughout the year;
- Continuing to foster close partnerships and working relationships with social care and health services for the benefit of the families who are cared for;
- Developing new, much-needed services that respond to local needs.

The services provided are subject to Commissioner review and the suite of outcomes and key performance indicators agreed in the Council's contract. Performance against these is monitored on a regular basis.

Strategic developments on new activities

The Charity has worked hard to incorporate and deliver services in a compressed timescale. It will seek to expand its operations when it is prudent and sensible to do so and where there is a need to expand the delivery of services to beneficiaries.

Looking to the future

The Charity is committed to developing a strong and vibrant organisation in order to serve its beneficiaries and the local community. In doing so, it will

- Develop existing service delivery,
- Build upon the foundations established in the incorporation to attract new business in areas of strength,
- Improve value for money,
- Challenge expenditure levels,
- Ensure that all service areas are exceeding performance targets.

Risks and uncertainties

Risks that may prevent the Charity achieving its objectives are considered and reviewed by the Group Trustee Board on a periodic basis as part of the corporate planning processes. The risks are recorded and assessed in terms of their impact and probability. Major risks, presenting the greatest threats to the Charity are reported to the Group Trustee Board at every meeting. The Charity's major risks relate to:

- Loss of contract income,
- Safeguarding / service user reputational incident,
- Key performance indicator compliance,
- Partner effectiveness,
- Property legislative compliance relating to local authority buildings.

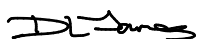
One of the principal risks relates to safeguarding given the beneficiary group that is being worked with. Whilst the Trustee Board reviews controls and standards, One YMCA provides extensive safeguarding support through its Safeguarding Leads Meeting which operates on a Group basis to challenge, support and review the protection and prevention arrangements in force. ECP's Head of Family Support attends the Safeguarding Leads meeting as well as advising on any concerns for the Charity. The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed by One YMCA, the Business Managers and Partners to ensure that it meets the needs of the services being provided.

On an annual basis, the Group reviews its key policies and controls frameworks. These included the financial regulations as well as the Code of Governance, committee terms of reference, code of conduct, safeguarding, fraud, whistleblowing, health & safety and equal opportunities policies.

The risk management and internal controls arrangements are described in more detail in the Report of the Trustee Board on pages 8 and 9.

Approval

In approving the Operating and Financial Review, the Trustees are also approving the Strategic Report in their capacity as directors of the Charity. The Operating and Financial Review and the Strategic Report were approved by the Trustee Board on 16 December 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Deborah James
Chair and Trustee

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Early Childhood Partnership for the year-ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern.

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Report of the Trustee Board, and the Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustee Board, the Operating and Financial Review and the Strategic Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report contained within the Report of the Trustee Board and the Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustee Board (which incorporates the director's report), the Operating and Financial Review or the Strategic Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities of the Trustee Board set out on page 9, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to Charity Law, Safeguarding regulations, Ofsted and Health and Safety regulations, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011, and we considered other factors such as taxation compliance.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to areas of estimation uncertainty and manual accounting journals. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing a sample of manual journals; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their accounting estimates

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tracey Young (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of HaysMac LLP, Statutory Auditor
Date 18 December 2024

10 Queen Street Place
London
EC4R 1AG

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**(Incorporating the income and expenditure account)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

		<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>	<u>Unrestricted & Total Funds</u>
	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
		<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Income					
Donations and legacies	3	7,014	-	7,014	4,031
Charitable activities	3	1,734,967	227,642	1,962,609	1,813,849
Total income		1,741,981	227,642	1,969,623	1,817,880
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	4	1,673,010	232,147	1,905,157	1,758,287
Total expenditure		1,673,010	232,147	1,905,157	1,758,287
Net income		68,971	(4,505)	64,466	59,593
Transfers between funds		(24,775)	24,775	-	
Net movement in funds		44,196	20,270	64,466	59,593
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds at start of period		307,349	161,260	468,609	409,016
Total funds carried forward	11	351,545	181,530	533,075	468,609

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP
Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

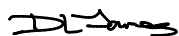
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

Registered company 10197205

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2024</u> £	<u>2023</u> £
Current assets			
Debtors	8	137,958	81,404
Cash at bank and in hand		1,148,152	647,005
Total current assets		1,286,110	728,409
 Liabilities			
Creditors: falling due within one year	9	724,335	231,100
Total current liabilities		724,335	231,100
 Net current assets		561,775	497,309
 Provisions for liabilities and charges	10	28,700	28,700
Total Net Assets		533,075	468,609
 The funds of the Charity			
Unrestricted funds		351,545	307,349
Restricted funds		181,530	161,260
Total Charity funds	11	533,075	468,609

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

The accounts were approved by the Trustee Board on 16 December 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:



Deborah James
Chair and Trustee

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	<u>2024</u> £	<u>2023</u> £
Net cash inflow /(outflow) from operating activities	501,147	(56,509)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	647,005	703,514
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	<u>1,148,152</u>	<u>647,005</u>
Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities		
Net income for the year	64,466	59,593
(Increase) in debtors	(56,554)	(44,898)
Increase /(decrease) in creditors and provisions	493,235	(71,204)
Net cash inflow /(outflow) from operating activities	<u>501,147</u>	<u>(56,509)</u>
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash	1,148,152	647,005
Cash equivalents	-	-
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>1,148,152</u>	<u>647,005</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. Status

The Company is limited by guarantee, registered under the Companies Act 2006 registration number 10197205 and a registered Charity number 1168090. The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The registered office is 30 Meadway, Bedford, MK41 9HU.

The sole corporate member is One YMCA.

The Member of the Company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required (not exceeding £1.00) to the assets of the Company in the event of the same being wound up while it is a member for payment of the debt and liabilities of the Company contracted and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up. If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Company there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, shall transferred to the Member (One YMCA) or if the Member no longer exists or declined to receive the assets, then to the National Council of Young Men's Christian Association (Incorporated) or, in the event that these routes are inoperable, as directed by the Charity Commission.

2. Principal accounting policies

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities second edition, effective 1 January 2019, preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

In the view of the trustees in applying the accounting policies adopted, the only area of judgement relates to the provision for dilapidations as disclosed in 10. No other judgements were required that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements nor do any estimates or assumptions made carry a significant risk of material adjustment in the next financial year. No complex financial instruments are held.

(a) Basis of accounting

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction values unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes. Those assets measured at fair value are re-measured at each balance sheet date.

(b) Going concern

The Charity's business activities, its current financial position and factors likely to affect its future development are set out within the Operating and Financial Review. On this basis, the Trustee Board has a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. As a consequence, they continue to support the going concern basis in preparing financial statements. No material uncertainties exist.

(c) Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when:

- a) the Charity becomes entitled to the resources,
- b) it is more likely than not that the Charity will receive the resources,
- c) the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Contractual income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities once the Charity has delivered its obligations.

(d) Volunteer help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the Report of the Trustee Board

(e) Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings, they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The Charity has incurred expenditure on support costs. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the Charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

(f) Debtors and creditors

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment and short-term creditors are measured at the transaction price.

(g) Deferred income

Where income has been received in respect of service to be provided in a future period, the relevant income has been deferred as a creditor.

(h) Operating leases

Rentals payable under the operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term. The benefits of lease incentives are recognised in income and expenditure over the lease period.

(i) Pensions

Group Personal Pension Plan (defined contribution)

The Charity makes contributions to a group personal pension plan (defined contribution) provided by Aviva which is open to all employees.

(j) Provisions for Liabilities

Provision has been made for expected property costs at the end of the leases based on the lease terms, management's assessment of the property condition and external evidence supporting the likely costs. The estimation involves a level of judgment and will be reassessed annually.

(k) Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**3. Income**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	<u>2024</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies				
Donations	7,014	-	7,014	4,031
Charitable activities				
Bedford Borough Council children's centres	1,139,935	-	1,139,935	992,597
Therapeutic and specialist support services	-	227,642	227,642	275,798
Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA)	221,018	-	221,018	242,128
Perpetrator	54,461	-	54,461	76,871
Counselling and Play Therapy	73,729	-	73,729	91,032
Play Therapy	29,510	-	29,510	29,510
Community Link Worker	27,252	-	27,252	-
Family Hubs	41,374	-	41,374	-
Chrysalis Victim Care Support	29,997	-	29,997	-
Other	117,691	-	117,691	105,913
Total income	1,741,981	227,642	1,969,623	1,817,880

Restricted income received in 2024 relating to charitable activities totalled £227,642 (2023: £275,798).

4. Expenditure

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	<u>2024</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
	£	£	£	£
Charitable activities				
Children's centre service delivery	975,103	-	975,103	906,158
Programme delivery by partner organisations	58,110	-	58,110	58,110
Therapeutic and specialist support services	282,115	232,147	514,262	647,365
Support costs	357,682	-	357,682	146,654
Total expenditure	1,673,010	232,147	1,905,157	1,758,287

Restricted expenditure relating to charitable activities in 2024 totalled £232,147 (2023: £260,941.)

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**5. Support costs**

	<u>Children's Centre</u>	<u>Therapeutic Services</u>	<u>Total funds</u>	<u>Total funds</u>
	<u>2024</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Auditors' remuneration (excluding VAT) for audit services	5,940	3,960	9,900	6,583
Company secretarial	3,000	2,000	5,000	5,000
Governance costs	8,940	5,960	14,900	11,583
Finance, human resources, property & safety (inc. VAT)	239,851	102,931	342,782	135,071
Total support costs	248,791	108,891	357,682	146,654

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned between the children's centres and Therapeutic Services based upon the time spent on each activity.

6. Trustee Board

The Trustees are the non-executive directors of the Company and are also the Trustee Board. None of the Trustee Board received emoluments. No expenses were reimbursed during the financial period (2023: nil).

7. Employee information

Average monthly number of employees	2024	2023
	No	No
Children's centres	24.8	26.1
Therapeutic Support Services	20.9	27.8
Total	45.7	53.9
Staff costs (for the above persons)	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	957,629	1,058,990
Social security costs	85,523	95,683
Other pension costs	34,886	41,599
	1,075,038	1,196,272

There were no employees earning more than £60,000 per annum (2023: nil).

The aggregate emoluments of key management personnel were £13,362 (2023: £44,619).

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**8. Debtors**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	84,016	37,000
Amount owed by One YMCA	27,606	1,240
Prepayments and accrued income	26,336	43,164
	137,958	81,404

9. Creditors**Amounts falling due within one year**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	14,632	18,907
Accruals	176,671	99,829
Deferred income	156,520	91,143
Other taxes and social security costs	18,430	10,951
Other creditors	10,300	10,270
Amounts owed to One YMCA	347,782	-
	724,335	231,100

10. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1st April	28,700	28,700
Arising / (used) during the year	-	-
At 31 March	28,700	28,700

A provision for dilapidations to premises is being held to cover the costs of any necessary reinstatement and repairs to the properties at the termination of the leases.

11. Fund analysis - 2024

Fund	Funds b/f	Income	Expenditure	Transfer	Funds c/f
Unrestricted - general purposes	307,349	1,741,981	1,673,010	(24,775)	351,545
Restricted Funds:					
Big Lottery - Horizons Project	-	123,672	144,288	51,277	30,661
Children In Need	2,958	-	-	(2,958)	-
Male Victims	2,179	-	-	(2,179)	-
Violence & Exploitation Reduction Unit	11,741	-	-	(11,741)	-
ISVA LGBTQ	12,398	40,759	31,878	(16,874)	4,405
Community Link Worker	6,658	25,349	23,119	(8,888)	-
Steele Charitable Trust	-	30,000	25,000	-	5,000
Harpur Trust	-	7,862	7,862	16,138	16,138
One YMCA	125,326	-	-	-	125,326
Restricted funds	161,260	227,642	232,147	24,775	181,530
Total Funds	468,609	1,969,624	1,905,157	-	533,075

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**Big Lottery Fund – Horizons Project**

A project working with families affected by domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and parental mental health issues.

Children In Need

A grant funding the provision of a full-time therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Bedford.

Harpur Trust

A grant funding the provision of a full-time play therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Bedford.

Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit

A project delivering targeted play therapy for children across Bedfordshire.

Steele Charitable Trust

A grant funding the provision of a full-time play therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Luton.

ISVA LGBTQ

This project delivers independent sexual violence advocacy for victims from the LGBTQ community.

Community Link Worker

This project delivers community development work through our network of children's centres, linking in with volunteer led sessions to encourage engagement in additional activities for families.

One YMCA

Funds of £131,301 from One YMCA were brought forward from the previous year with expenditure of £5,975. The donation was made to ECP for its existing and new activities

Fund analysis - 2023

Fund	Funds b/f	Income	Expenditure	Transfer	Funds c/f
Unrestricted - general purposes	277,715	1,542,082	1,497,346	(15,102)	307,349
Restricted Funds:					
Big Lottery - Horizons Project	-	134,054	136,907	2,853	-
Children In Need	-	9,578	6,620	-	2,958
Male Victims	-	10,041	7,862	-	2,179
Violence & Exploitation Reduction Unit	-	12,360	619	-	11,741
ISVA LGBTQ	-	33,890	21,492	-	12,398
Community Link Worker	-	25,349	18,691	-	6,658
Steele Charitable Trust	-	30,000	41,855	11,855	-
Harpur Trust	-	20,526	20,920	394	-
One YMCA	131,301	-	5,975	-	125,326
Restricted funds	131,301	275,798	260,941	15,102	161,260
Total Funds	409,016	1,817,880	1,758,287	-	468,609

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

12. Taxation

The Company is a registered Charity qualifying for relief from income and capital gains taxes on its Charitable activities.

13. Related party transactions

One YMCA

For the financial period under review, one of the Trustees was also a Trustee of One YMCA, Sal Thirlway. One YMCA provides central services to the Charity such as finance, human resources, safety & compliance and company secretarial work on an arm's length basis. A charge was made for these services amounting to £347,782 (inclusive of VAT) (2023: £140,071).

The Charity benefits from an inter-company loan facility for short term cash flow purposes. It was not used in 2023/24. When used, interest is chargeable, it is subject to a debenture deed and One YMCA has a registered charge in respect of it. There is currently a nil balance (2023: £Nil).

Others

For the financial year under review:

1. A charge of £28,140 (2023: £28,140) was paid in respect of Peter Pan Training Partnership for services during the financial year. Deborah James, a trustee, was a member of the strategic governing board of Peter Pan Training Partnership which provides teaching and education support.
2. A charge was made by FACES Bedford for services amounting to £29,970 (2023: £29,970). Eve Burt and Jennie Bayliss, trustees, were trustees of Faces Bedford who provide volunteering support.

Conflicts of interest

A conflicts of interest policy is in force and all interests are declared. Where appropriate, conflicted trustees do not participate in decisions.

14. Operating lease commitments

There are a number of leases in place for children's centre properties. The rent at each property is £1.

Accounts

Registered company:
Registered Charity:

10197205
1168090

**EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

CONTENTS

	Page
Corporate information	3
Report of the Trustee Board	4
Operating & financial review and Strategic Report	11
Independent auditor's report to the members of Early Childhood Partnership	15
Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)	18
Balance sheet	19
Statement of cash flows	20
Notes to the financial statements	21

CORPORATE INFORMATION

TRUSTEE BOARD

Chair Sal Thirlway (resigned 28 September 2023)
Deborah James (from 29 September 2023)

Trustees: Eve Burt (resigned 28 September 2023)
Deborah James
Sal Thirlway (resigned 18 October 2023)
Robert Thompson
Jennie Bayliss (from 29 September 2023)

Company Secretary: Michael Howe

Business Managers: Serreta Pritchard (until 3 February 2023)
Linzi Schier (from 4 February 2023)
Nicola Lee (from 4 February 2023)

CORPORATE INFORMATION

Registered Charity: 1168090
Registered company: 10197205
Registered office: 30 Meadway, Bedford, MK41 9HU
Website: www.ecpbedford.org

Parent Company: One YMCA, Charter House, Watford, WD17 2RT, www.oneymca.org

AUDITORS, BANKERS, INVESTMENT MANAGER AND SOLICITORS

Auditor (External) Haysmacintyre LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1AG

Auditor (Internal) Beever and Struthers, 15 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8LP

Bankers: HSBC Plc, 44-52 Lattimore Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3XL

Solicitors: Bates Wells Braithwaite LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1BE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

The Trustee Board presents its annual report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Organisation

The Charity operates out of a number of centres across Bedfordshire.

The Charity's main activities are to deliver the children's centre contract in Bedford Borough, as well as Therapeutic and Specialist Support Services including Domestic Abuse, Perpetrators and Sexual Violence. The Trustee Board is responsible for the operation of the Charity. Its Business Manager reports to the Trustee Board and is line managed by the Group Chief Executive. The Trustee Board is supported by a Company Secretary.

The Charity closely works with a number of non-profit organisations. These are:

- FACES Bedford – volunteer management,
- Peter Pan Teaching Schools Alliance – provision of children's centre teaching and educational support,
- One YMCA – provision of group and corporate services support.

Given that these organisations work closely with the Charity, a conflict of interest policy is in place and all necessary matters are disclosed.

Trustee Board

The Trustee Board is responsible for the overall governance of the Charity. Those who have served during the year are set out on page 3. They hold a dual role of being Trustees of a registered Charity as well as being directors for the purposes of the Companies Act.

In accordance with the Articles of Association, Trustees serve for a three-year term after which they retire. A retiring member of the Trustee Board shall be eligible for re-election for a second and third full-term, but then having served a third term, must stand down as an elected member for a period of one year. Trustees can only serve for a maximum of nine years.

Strategic management

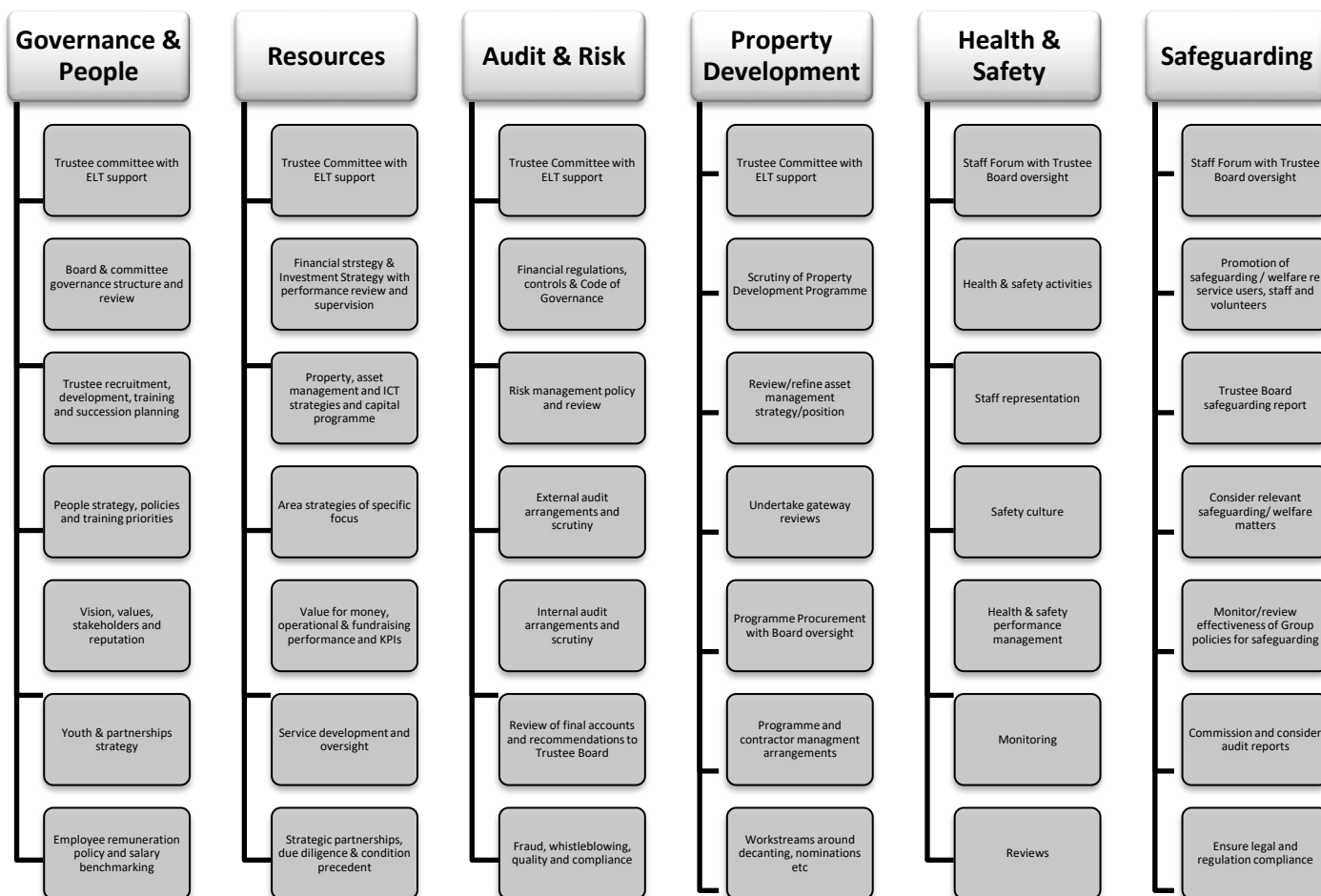
The Trustee Board is responsible for setting an appropriate strategy for the Charity. It also ensures that relevant performance measures are in place.

During the year, the Trustee Board:

- Undertook the necessary legal and governance steps to maintain the work of the Charity,
- Reviewed key policies,
- Scrutinised the service delivery plans and targets,
- Received reports on performance,
- Reviewed strategic risk,
- Ensured that policies and control frameworks were in place.

As the Charity is a subsidiary of One YMCA, it benefits from a broader committee structure that operates on a Group basis and ensures that detailed governance arrangements are established and monitored. The structure is set out in the following matrix.

ONE YMCA - TRUSTEE BOARD



EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP, SIGNPOST & HAVEN FIRST TRUSTEE BOARDS

ONE YMCA DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

One YMCA subsidiary company, responsible for delivering the strategic requirements of the YMCA Trustee Board, supported by an Independent Director

Recruitment of members of the Trustee Board

Members of the Trustee Board were recruited from partner organisations and comprise the following skill sets:

- Children's Services Commissioner
- Head Teacher,
- Head of Early Years,
- Corporate Strategy.

New Trustees are inducted into the governance arrangements by the Company Secretary using an agreed framework and ongoing training is provided through a combination of: trustee updates, attendance at Charity conferences / training events and bespoke training. A number of the Trustees also serve, or have served as Trustees of other charities which broadens the available skills base and the exposure to training and best practice of the Charity sector. On a periodic basis, the Trustee Board reviews its skills mix in order to ensure that any recruitment exercises are targeted at areas of need.

Management arrangements

The role of the Business Manager is provided jointly by the Head of Family Services and Head of Therapeutic Specialist Support Services for the Group and reports to the Group Chief Executive. The Company Secretary supports the Board and provides governance and corporate services advice. They act within the authority delegated by the Trustee Board. Further support can be drawn from the Partners and Parent Charity. Remuneration for key management personnel is set in line with the Parent Charity and is externally benchmarked.

Employees

The strength of the Charity lies in the quality of all its employees and their contribution to achieving the goals of the objectives set for each department. The Charity shares information on its objectives, progress and activities through regular management and staff departmental meetings.

The Charity is committed to equal opportunities both in recruitment and retention of employees.

Gender pay reporting

The Charity has adopted the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage as the baseline for all employees who are engaged on a permanent contract of employment and are not apprentices. Moreover, the Charity has utilised an established job evaluation scheme to ensure that all job roles are properly assessed against an equal pay criteria. The overall workforce is 100% female.

The gender pay reporting principles demonstrate the following position as a snapshot on 5 April 2023 was:

- Mean gender pay gap – None
- Median gender pay gap – None
- Mean bonus gender pay gap – None
- Median bonus gender pay gap – None
- Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment - None
- Proportion of females receiving a bonus payment – None
- Proportion of males and females in each quartile pay band – All Quartiles – 100% female

As at the date of this report, the Charity was not required to submit gender pay statistics due to its size.

Indemnity insurance

The Charity's insurance policies indemnify the Trustee Board and Officers against liability when acting for the Charity providing their actions are not reckless or fraudulent.

Health and Safety

The Trustees are aware of their responsibilities on all matters relating to health and safety. The Charity has prepared detailed health and safety policies and provides staff training and education on health and safety matters. During the year, the Parent Charity's health and safety committee met on three occasions comprising

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

of representatives of all service areas including this Charity. The meetings were chaired by the Director of Operations and one of the Charity's children's centre Managers is a permanent Committee member.

Safeguarding

The Charity takes the protection of its service users, staff and volunteers very seriously. As a result, along with the Parent Charity, it has implemented a robust suite of Safeguarding measures, including comprehensive Policies and Procedures, as well as a clear Safeguarding reporting flowchart and a Safeguarding Link Trustee, who is also the chair of the ECP Board. There is also an active Safeguarding Leads Group, which meets regularly to review trends and learning from the range of safeguarding issues raised within the period. This Group is chaired by the Group Chief Executive and is attended by senior ECP staff members.

Safeguarding Data

The Charity takes the view that a key method of safeguarding people is to safeguard their data. As a result, it makes use of the external Data Protection Officer services of the Group, which are led by a specialist lawyer. The Charity holds a great deal of personal and sensitive data about children and their families, so it takes care to map where data is held and to undertake Data Protection Impact Assessments where appropriate. The Charity's senior staff also participate in the Data Group along with the Parent Charity, which, among other things, also considers cyber security and protection from external attacks.

Creditors' payments

The Charity's aim is to pay purchase invoices within 30 days of receipt, or earlier if agreed with the supplier.

Public Benefit

The Trustee Board held service users at the heart of its approach to formulating the strategic objectives and associated strategies. In doing so, the Trustee Board referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when planning for the future. Through the work that the Charity undertakes in its service areas, it delivers public benefit and serves a wide range of people, many of whom are vulnerable.

Complaints

There is a clear and simple complaints policy available to all service users. All complaints received are reported to the relevant Manager and are monitored by the Company Secretary to help ensure an appropriate and timely resolution and also to help identify any recurring issues that may require a different approach.

Donations

No charitable or political donations were made by ECP during the year.

Going Concern

The Executive has modelled income and expenditure as well as cashflows over the foreseeable future and demonstrated that both are resilient. The main contract with Bedford Borough Council was renewed for a 5 year term from October 2021 which gives greater financial certainty.

Accordingly, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. As a consequence, they continue to support the going concern basis in preparing financial statements.

Reserves Policy

Reserves that are unrestricted funds held by the Charity should be sufficient to meet all payment obligations and to contribute to the Charity fulfilling its aims and purposes. The target level of free reserves is determined annually by the Trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

The reserves as at 31 March 2023 were as follows:

<u>Reserves</u>	<u>£</u>
Revenue reserve	£307,349
Restricted funds	£161,260
Total funds	<u>£468,609</u>

The revenue reserve amounted to £307,349 which are classed as free reserves. In determining the level of unrestricted funds held as free reserves to cover working balances and payment obligations without any designation or subject to earmarking for particular purposes, the Trustees have taken into account the following matters:

- Three months of salary and running costs are approximately £450k
- Bedford Borough Council have a fixed monthly payment plan embedded in the Charity's largest contract which ensures timely cash flow,
- Bedford Borough Council's payments are being received on a timely basis in advance of meeting expenditure,
- There is an inter-company loan and debenture in place with One YMCA for short-term cash flow support if required (2022: £Nil), and
- Group business interruption insurance cover is in place with a two-year indemnity period.

Accordingly, the Trustees consider it prudent to retain working balances of £60-100k in cash at each month end that are not designated or earmarked in order to meet unforeseen risks or obligations. This is an ongoing objective which is currently being met.

Risk Management

The Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring that an active risk management process is in place and forms part of the ongoing organisational activity. During the year, the Parent Charity reviewed the group risk management policy. The strategic risk register is a standing item at each Group Trustee Board meeting and was reviewed four times. The register identifies the types of risks the Charity faces and prioritises them in terms of potential impact and likelihood of occurrence. The Trustees are satisfied that the internal financial controls comply in all material respects with the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission and has established a separate internal audit function (carried out by an independent internal audit firm) to review risks on a rotational basis. The principal risks affecting the Charity relate to loss of contract income or mismanagement of a Safeguarding issue. We undertake regular strategic meetings with Bedford Borough Council to monitor the service level agreement. We have received positive feedback and work internally to ensure that our services are well managed and exceed expectations. The management of the safeguarding risks are detailed in the Risks and Uncertainties section on page 14.

The Trustees confirm that they have identified and understand the risks to which the Charity is subject and that they are being actively managed.

Internal Controls Assurance

The Trustees acknowledge their overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the whole system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

The system of internal control is designed to manage, rather than eliminate, the risk of failure to achieve business objectives, and to provide reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

The process for identifying, evaluating and managing the significant risks faced by the Charity is ongoing. The Trustee Board reviews the strategic risk register at every meeting.

Key elements of the control framework include:-

- Board-approved terms of reference,
- Clearly defined management responsibilities for the identification, evaluation and control of significant risks,
- Formal recruitment, retention, training and development policies for all staff,
- Established authorisation and appraisal procedures for significant new initiatives and commitments,
- Regular review of cash flow,
- Regular reporting on key business objectives, targets and outcomes,
- Board approved Code of Conduct,
- Board approved safeguarding, health & safety, whistle-blowing, anti-fraud and corruption policies,
- Board approved fraud policies, covering prevention, detection and reporting, together with recoverability of assets.

A fraud register is maintained and is reviewed by the Group CFO on a regular basis. During the year there were no findings of fraudulent activity.

The Board benefits from internal controls work undertaken by the Parent Charity on corporate services activities.

The Parent Charity monitored the internal audit plan for the Group throughout the year.

Code of Governance

The Parent Charity complies with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance (2020) on a Group basis which incorporates the activities of the Charity. During the course of the year, the compliance framework has been reviewed. As an evolving organisation, the Charity will continue to review and develop its governance in order to best serve its beneficiaries.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD FOR THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

General Financial Responsibilities

The Trustee Board is responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustee Board, Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustee Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable laws). Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the surplus or deficit of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements 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 business; and
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

The Trustees confirm that:

- so far as each Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditors is unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approval

The Report of the Trustee Board was approved by the Trustees on 22 December 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Deborah James
Chair & Trustee

OPERATING & FINANCIAL REVIEW AND STRATEGIC REPORT

Introduction

The report and accounts for the financial year ending on 31 March 2023 are set out in this document.

Principal Activity

The Charity's principal activity is to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

- Child development and school readiness;
- Parenting aspirations and parenting skills;
- Child and family health and life changes;
- Improving the wellbeing of young children;
- Making arrangements to secure that early childhood services are provided in an integrated manner to facilitate access to services, maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children.

These activities are delivered from a number of Centres, virtual platforms and additional outreach sites in the Bedfordshire area.

Partners

Early Childhood Partnership works in close partnership with three not-for-profit organisations:

- FACES Bedford (registered Charity),
- Peter Pan Training Partnership (not-for-profit),
- One YMCA (registered Charity).

The Charity is led by its Trustee Board and Co-Business Managers with governance support from its Company Secretary.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

During the year, the Charity has worked in a strategic manner so that it:

- Operates the children's centre service on behalf of Bedford Borough Council for the benefit of service users,
- Delivers excellent Therapeutic Support Services to families in need,
- Acts as the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) to the Local Authority,
- Ensures that effective governance arrangements are in force,
- Works across the Bedfordshire area,
- Improves the outcomes for parents and children who are benefitting from the services provided,
- Operates within a leaner and more efficient funding framework.

The Trustee Board supports these measures and the ways that they can maximise the resources available for delivering the Charity's objectives and serving beneficiaries.

Financial review

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for Charities. The Charity returned an operating surplus of £59,593 (2022: £1,437).

During the 2022/23 financial year, the Trustee Board has focused the staff team upon delivering a programme to improve underlying effectiveness of the children's centre operations and the development of new Therapeutic and Specialist Support Services so that the Charity is well placed for the future. This included:

- Delivering an improved level of performance against Bedford Borough Council's key performance indicators,
- Securing a variety of contracts and funding to extend and develop work with the most vulnerable children and families, including Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service, Play Therapy, perpetrator programmes and Domestic Abuse Support,
- Amending internal governance and delivery structure to meet the current needs of families and organisation,

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

- Operating partner service level agreements,
- Setting out scheme of delegation,
- Strengthening operations through business and service delivery leadership and planning.

On an ongoing basis, the Trustee Board is committed to operating a balanced operating budget.

Value for money

The Charity's objective is to provide children's centre and Therapeutic & Specialist Support Services to meet the needs of its beneficiaries. The key driver is to achieve a balance between reasonable cost and excellent quality.

The Charity measures its value for money in terms of impacts, outcomes and outputs as well as financial ones. This includes:

- Service quality,
- Social benefits to individuals and communities,
- Key performance indicators and benchmarking,
- Financial returns,
- Benefits to the organisation.

The Charity's value for money strategy is to:

- Generate appropriate surpluses to maintain a viable organisation and to continue to provide and develop services for beneficiaries, both present and future;
- Ensure that high levels of customer satisfaction are achieved;
- Live up to the Charity's values in the delivery of services and impact.

As a commissioned service provider, the value for money objectives over the next three years are to:

- Increase the value and effectiveness of the children's centre and Therapeutic & Specialist Support Services provided,
- Release efficiency savings that can be recycled into front line services for more beneficiaries,
- Work in partnership with other charities and local authorities to develop funding models, secure efficiencies and/or take on additional work where it is sensible and prudent to do so,
- Use volunteers to broaden the range of services available,
- In consultation with the Advisory Board, improve children's centre services to meet their needs.

Over the last year, the Charity has continued to make good progress in delivering value for money. Activities that develop the effectiveness of the Charity have embraced beneficiary impact, operational improvement and good governance.

The Charity's on-going commitment to value for money and continuous improvement will remain a key priority given the challenges to income streams that every commissioned service provider faces and the need to keep service users at the heart of decision making. Specific on-going activities will include:

- Performance managing outcomes and costs,
- Responding to service user needs,
- Maintaining high key performance indicator levels,
- Responding to commissioner funding decisions,
- Developing service level agreement outcomes to enhance impact, effectiveness, and efficiency,
- Investing in the culture and values to maximise the Charity's potential, value for money and continuous improvement.

External Influences

As a Charity delivering community services, the Charity is influenced by Government policies towards children's services.

Objectives and Strategy

The Charity's objects are to:

- to provide parents, expectant parents and carers with education to assist them to develop their parenting, social and personal skills and capabilities to enable them to enhance the outcomes for young children;
- to promote and preserve the health of parents, expectant parents, carers and young people; and
- to relieve and give support and assistance to parents, expectant parents, carers and young children who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by reason of their social, physical, emotional or economic circumstances.

The strategies employed to achieve the Charity's objectives are to:

- Operate children's centre services so that operations take place through two main work-streams:
 - Family support targeted services,
 - Children's centre universal services.
- Align and monitoring contract and partner key performance indicators (KPI);
- Deliver the service delivery plan that aligns the contract and the needs of beneficiaries; and
- Develop and deliver a range of Therapeutic and Support Services to children and families who need it most.

Achievements and performance

In relation to the strategic objectives, the Charity has made a positive impact upon many lives during the year.

Service delivery plan developed to deliver KPIs and new operating model

- The Council Contract and Partner service level agreements have been delivered;
- The contract KPIs have been exceeded;
- The Service delivery plan has continued to develop the Charity's operating model;
- The Charity's staff deliver the core services via two work streams of: Family support, Universal services;
- The standard of service delivery has been rated as "Good" by Bedford Borough Council;
- New Therapeutic and Specialist Support Service established and working effectively;
- New Contracts and grant funding secured for future years.

Matrix management and partnership working in action

- Family Support Practitioners are aligned to early year providers as link-workers and liaison arrangements established;
- School and educational support being provided by Peter Pan Teaching School Alliance is driving up the standards of service delivery and offering effective peer support;
- The Charity's website, Facebook and bookings portal are in full use by beneficiaries.

General

- Providing children's centre services to children and supporting vulnerable children with targeted support;
- Making excellent progress in developing the Bedford Borough children's centres with a "Good" assessment being maintained throughout the year;
- Continuing to foster close partnerships and working relationships with social care and health services for the benefit of the families who are cared for;
- Developing new, much-needed services that respond to local needs.

The services provided are subject to Commissioner review and the suite of outcomes and key performance indicators agreed in the Council's contract. Performance against these is monitored on a regular basis.

Strategic developments on new activities

The Charity has worked hard to incorporate and deliver services in a compressed timescale. It will seek to expand its operations when it is prudent and sensible to do so and where there is a need to expand the delivery of services to beneficiaries.

Looking to the future

The Charity is committed to developing a strong and vibrant organisation in order to serve its beneficiaries and the local community. In doing so, it will

- Develop existing service delivery,
- Build upon the foundations established in the incorporation to attract new business in areas of strength,
- Improve value for money,
- Challenge expenditure levels,
- Ensure that all service areas are exceeding performance targets.

Risks and uncertainties

Risks that may prevent the Charity achieving its objectives are considered and reviewed by the Group Trustee Board on a periodic basis as part of the corporate planning processes. The risks are recorded and assessed in terms of their impact and probability. Major risks, presenting the greatest threats to the Charity are reported to the Group Trustee Board at every meeting. The Charity's major risks relate to:

- Loss of contract income,
- Safeguarding / service user reputational incident,
- Key performance indicator compliance,
- Partner effectiveness,
- Property legislative compliance relating to local authority buildings

One of the principal risks relates to safeguarding given the beneficiary group that is being worked with. Whilst the Trustee Board reviews controls and standards, One YMCA provides extensive safeguarding support through its Safeguarding Leads Meeting which operates on a Group basis to challenge, support and review the protection and prevention arrangements in force. ECPs Head of Family Support attends the Safeguarding Leads meeting as well as advising on any concerns for the Charity. The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed by One YMCA, the Business Managers and Partners to ensure that it meets the needs of the services being provided.

On an annual basis, the Group reviews its key policies and controls frameworks. These included the financial regulations as well as the Code of Governance, committee terms of reference, code of conduct, safeguarding, fraud, whistleblowing, health & safety and equal opportunities policies. The most recent review took place in the Summer/Autumn 2023 and is incorporated within the forward plans on an annual cycle.

The risk management and internal controls arrangements are described in more detail in the Report of the Trustee Board on pages 8 and 9.

Approval

In approving the Operating and Financial Review, the Trustees are also approving the Strategic Report in their capacity as directors of the Charity. The Operating and Financial Review and the Strategic Report were approved by the Trustee Board on 22 December 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Deborah James
Chair and Trustee

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Early Childhood Partnership for the year-ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Report of the Trustee Board, and the Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Trustee Board, the Operating and Financial Review and the Strategic Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report contained within the Report of the Trustee Board and the Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustee Board (which incorporates the director's report), the Operating and Financial Review or the Strategic Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities of the Trustee Board set out on page 9, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to Charity Law, Ofsted and Health and Safety regulations, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011, and we considered other factors such as taxation compliance.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to areas of estimation uncertainty and manual accounting journals. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing a sample of manual journals; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their accounting estimates

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tracey Young (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Haysmacintyre LLP, Statutory Auditor
Date 28.12.23

10 Queen Street Place
London
EC4R 1AG

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**(Incorporating the income and expenditure account)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

		<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
		<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Income					
Donations and legacies	3	4,031	-	4,031	4,220
Charitable activities	3	1,538,051	275,798	1,813,849	1,834,298
Total income		1,542,082	275,798	1,817,880	1,838,518
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	4	1,497,346	260,941	1,758,287	1,837,081
Total expenditure		1,497,346	260,941	1,758,287	1,837,081
Net income		44,736	14,857	59,593	1,437
Transfers between funds		(15,102)	15,102	-	-
Net movement in funds		29,634	29,959	59,593	1,437
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds at start of period		277,715	131,301	409,016	407,579
Total funds carried forward	11	307,349	161,260	468,609	409,016

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

Registered company 10197205

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2023</u> £	<u>2022</u> £
Current assets			
Debtors	8	81,404	36,506
Cash at bank and in hand		647,005	703,514
Total current assets		728,409	740,020
Liabilities			
Creditors: falling due within one year	9	231,100	302,304
Total current liabilities		231,100	302,304
Net current assets		497,309	437,716
Provisions for liabilities and charges	10	28,700	28,700
Total Net Assets		468,609	409,016
The funds of the Charity			
Unrestricted funds		307,349	277,715
Restricted funds		161,260	131,301
Total Charity funds	11	468,609	409,016

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

The accounts were approved by the Trustee Board on 22 December 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:



Deborah James
Chair and Trustee

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	<u>2023</u> £	<u>2022</u> £
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities	(56,509)	61,837
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	703,514	641,677
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	<u>647,005</u>	<u>703,514</u>
Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities		
Net income for the year	59,593	1,437
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(44,898)	41,244
(Decrease)/increase in creditors and provisions	(71,204)	19,156
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from operating activities	<u>(56,509)</u>	<u>61,837</u>
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash	647,005	703,514
Cash equivalents	-	-
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>647,005</u>	<u>703,514</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. Status

The Company is limited by guarantee, registered under the Companies Act 2006 registration number 10197205 and a registered Charity number 1168090. The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The registered office is 30 Meadway, Bedford, MK41 9HU.

The sole corporate member is One YMCA.

The Member of the Company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required (not exceeding £1.00) to the assets of the Company in the event of the same being wound up while it is a member for payment of the debt and liabilities of the Company contracted and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up. If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Company there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, shall transferred to the Member (One YMCA) or if the Member no longer exists or declined to receive the assets, then to the National Council of Young Men's Christian Association (Incorporated) or, in the event that these routes are inoperable, as directed by the Charity Commission.

2. Principal accounting policies

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities second edition, effective 1 January 2019, preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

In the view of the trustees in applying the accounting policies adopted, the only area of judgement relates to the provision for dilapidations as disclosed in 10. No other judgements were required that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements nor do any estimates or assumptions made carry a significant risk of material adjustment in the next financial year. No complex financial instruments are held.

(a) Basis of accounting

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction values unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes. Those assets measured at fair value are re-measured at each balance sheet date.

(b) Going concern

The Charity's business activities, its current financial position and factors likely to affect its future development are set out within the Operating and Financial Review. On this basis, the Trustee Board has a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. As a consequence, they continue to support the going concern basis in preparing financial statements. No material uncertainties exist.

(c) Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when:

- a) the Charity becomes entitled to the resources,
- b) it is more likely than not that the Charity will receive the resources;
- c) the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Contractual income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities once the Charity has delivered its obligations.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

(d) **Volunteer help**

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the Trustees' annual report.

(e) **Expenditure**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The Charity has incurred expenditure on support costs. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the Charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

(f) **Debtors and creditors**

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment and short-term creditors and measured at the transaction price.

(g) **Deferred income**

Where income has been received in respect of service to be provided in a future period, the relevant income has been deferred as a creditor.

(h) **Operating leases**

Rentals payable under the operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term. The benefits of lease incentives entered into after the date of transition to FRS102 are recognised in income and expenditure over the lease period.

(i) **Pensions**

Group Personal Pension Plan (defined contribution)

The Charity also makes contributions to a group personal pension plan (defined contribution) provided by Aviva which is open to all employees.

(j) **Provisions for Liabilities**

Provision has been made for expected property costs at the end of the leases based on the lease terms, management's assessment of the property condition and external evidence supporting the likely costs. The estimation involves a level of judgment and will be reassessed annually.

(k) **Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**3. Income**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies				
Donations	4,031	-	4,031	4,220
Charitable activities				
Bedford Borough Council children's centres contract	992,597	-	992,597	1,041,540
Therapeutic and specialist support services	-	275,798	275,798	355,484
Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA)	242,128	-	242,128	268,589
Perpetrator	76,871	-	76,871	79,062
Counselling and Play Therapy	91,032	-	91,032	-
Play Therapy	29,510	-	29,510	-
Other	105,913	-	105,913	89,623
Total income	1,542,082	275,798	1,817,880	1,838,518

Restricted income received in 2022 relating to charitable activities totalled £359,641

4. Expenditure

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total funds	Total funds
	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
	£	£	£	£
Charitable activities				
Children's centre service delivery	906,158	-	906,158	887,641
Programme delivery by partner organisations	58,110	-	58,110	61,035
Therapeutic and specialist support services	386,424	260,941	647,365	650,702
Support costs	146,654	-	146,654	237,703
Total expenditure	1,497,346	260,941	1,758,287	1,837,081

Restricted expenditure relating to charitable activities in 2022 totalled £378,340

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

5. Support costs

	<u>Children's Centre 2023</u> £	<u>Therapeutic Services 2023</u> £	<u>Total funds 2023</u> £	<u>Total funds 2022</u> £
Auditors remuneration (excluding VAT) for audit services	3,950	2,633	6,583	4,700
Company secretarial	3,000	2,000	5,000	5,000
Governance costs	6,950	4,633	11,583	9,700
Finance, human resources, property & safety (inc. VAT)	81,043	54,028	135,071	228,003
Total support costs	87,993	58,661	146,654	237,703

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned between the children's centres and Therapeutic Services based upon the time spent on each activity.

6. Trustee Board

The Trustees are the non-executive directors of the Company and are also the Trustee Board. None of the Trustee Board received emoluments. No expenses were reimbursed during the financial period (2022: nil).

7. Employee information

Average monthly number of employees	2023	2022
	No	No
Children's centres	26.1	28.9
Therapeutic Support Services	27.8	25.6
Total	53.9	54.5
	2023	2022
Staff costs (for the above persons)	£	£
Wages and salaries	1,058,990	1,021,250
Social security costs	95,683	83,473
Other pension costs	41,599	38,232
	1,196,272	1,142,955

There were no employees earning more than £60,000 per annum (2022: nil).

The aggregate emoluments of key management personnel were £44,619 (2022: £37,396). The role of Business Manager was performed by the Director of Family Services employed by One YMCA and recharged to the Charity until 3 February 2023. From 4 February 2023, the role of Business Manager was fulfilled by the Head of Family Services and Head of Therapeutic Support Services employed by One YMCA and recharged to the Charity.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**8. Debtors**

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	37,000	23,703
Amount owed to One YMCA	1,240	11,857
Prepayments and accrued income	43,164	946
	81,404	36,506

9. Creditors**Amounts falling due within one year**

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	18,907	7,571
Accruals	99,829	69,145
Deferred income	91,143	68,440
Other taxes and social security costs	10,951	19,177
Other creditors	10,270	17,971
Amounts owed to parent company	-	120,000
	231,100	302,304

10. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	2023 £	2022 £
At 1 April	28,700	72,000
Used during the year	-	(43,300)
At 31 March	28,700	28,700

A provision for dilapidations to premises is being held to cover the costs of any necessary reinstatement and repairs to the properties at the termination of the leases.

11. Fund analysis - 2023

Fund	<u>Funds b/f</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Transfer</u>	<u>Funds c/f</u>
Unrestricted - general purposes	277,715	1,542,082	1,497,346	(15,102)	307,349
Restricted Funds:					
Big Lottery - Horizons Project		134,054	136,907	2,853	-
Children In Need		9,578	6,620	-	2,958
Harper Trust		20,526	20,920	394	-
Male Victims		10,041	7,862	-	2,179
Violence & Exploitation Reduction Unit		12,360	619	-	11,740
Steele Charitable Trust		30,000	41,855	11,855	-
ISVA LGBTQ		33,890	21,492	-	12,398
Community Link Worker		25,349	18,691	-	6,658
One YMCA	131,301	-	5,975	-	125,326
Total Restricted Funds	131,301	275,798	260,941	15,102	161,260
Total Funds	409,016	1,817,880	1,758,287	0	468,609

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**Big Lottery Fund – Horizons Project**

A project working with families affected by domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and parental mental health issues. Funding of £134,054 was received against expenditure during 2023.

Children In Need

A grant funding the provision of a full-time therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Bedford. Funding of £9,578 was received against expenditure of £6,620 during 2023.

Harpur Trust

A grant funding the provision of a full-time play therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Bedford. Funding of £20,526 was received against expenditure of £20,920 during 2023.

Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit

A project delivering targeted play therapy for children across Bedfordshire. Funding of £12,360 was received during the year of which £619 was expended.

STEEL

A grant funding the provision of a full-time play therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Luton. Funding of £30,000 was received during the year and £41,855 was expended.

ISVA LGBTQ

This project delivers independent sexual violence advocacy for victims from the LGBTQ community. Funding of £33,890 was received against expenditure of £21,492.

Community Link Worker

This project delivers community development work through our network of children's centres, linking in with volunteer led sessions to encourage engagement in additional activities for families. Funding of £25,349 was received against expenditure of £18,691.

One YMCA

Funds of £131,301 from One YMCA were brought forward from the previous year with expenditure of £5,975. The donation was made to ECP for its existing and new activities.

Fund analysis - 2022

Fund	<u>Funds b/f</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Funds c/f</u>
Unrestricted - general purposes	257,579	1,478,877	1,458,741	277,715
Restricted Funds:				
Big Lottery – Horizons Project	-	158,103	158,103	-
Children in Need	-	31,866	31,866	-
Harpur Trust	-	33,539	33,539	-
Male Victims	-	65,801	65,801	-
Violence & Exploitation Reduction Unit	-	17,474	17,474	-
Bedfordshire OPCC-Play Therapy	-	16,685	16,685	-
Steele Charitable Trust	-	25,000	25,000	-
Youth empowerment fund	-	2,017	2,017	-
HAF grant -BBC	-	5,000	5,000	-
National Lottery - Dads Aloud	-	2,444	2,444	-
Wishing Tree	-	1,712	1,712	-
One YMCA	150,000	-	18,699	131,301
Total	407,579	1,838,518	1,837,081	409,016

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

12. Taxation

The Company is a registered Charity qualifying for relief from income and capital gains taxes on its Charitable activities.

13. Related party transactions

One YMCA

For the financial period under review, one of the Trustees was also a Trustee of One YMCA, Sal Thirlway. One YMCA provides central services to the Charity such as finance, human resources, safety & compliance and company secretarial work on an arm's length basis. A charge was made for these services amounting to £73,450 (inclusive of VAT) (2022: £78,198). In addition to this, a charge of £44,619 (inclusive of VAT) was made for key management personnel during 2022/23 (2022: £37,396) and a charge of £22,000 (inclusive of VAT) was made for marketing services during 2022/23 (2022: £22,000).

The Charity benefits from an inter-company loan facility for short term cash flow purposes. It was not used in 2022/23. When used, interest is chargeable, it is subject to a debenture deed and One YMCA has a registered charge in respect of it. There is currently a nil balance (2022: £Nil).

Others

For the financial year under review:

- a) A charge of £28,140 (2022: £30,040) was paid in respect of Peter Pan Training Partnership for services during the financial year. Deborah James, a trustee, was a member of the strategic governing board of Peter Pan Training Partnership which provides teaching and education support.
- b) A charge was made by FACES Bedford for services amounting to £29,970 (2022: £31,995). Eve Burt served as a trustee of the Charity and she was also a trustee of FACES Bedford who provide volunteering support.

Conflicts of interest

A conflicts of interest policy is in force and all interests are declared. Where appropriate, conflicted trustees do not participate in decisions.

14. Operating lease commitments

There are a number of leases in place for children's centre properties. The rent at each property is £1.

Accounts

Registered company:

10197205

Registered Charity:

1168090

**EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

CONTENTS

	Page
Corporate information	3
Report of the Trustee Board	4
Operating & financial review and Strategic Report	11
Independent auditor's report to the members of Early Childhood Partnership	15
Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)	18
Balance sheet	19
Statement of cash flows	20
Notes to the financial statements	21

CORPORATE INFORMATION

TRUSTEE BOARD

Chair

Sal Thirlway

Trustees:

Eve Burt
Deborah James
Sal Thirlway
Robert Thompson
Alan Victor (resigned 2 December 2021)

Company Secretary:

Jonathan Kalemara (resigned 30 April 2022)
Michael Howe (from 1 May 2022)

Business Manager:

Serreta Pritchard

CORPORATE INFORMATION

Registered Charity:

1168090

Registered company:

10197205

Registered office:

30 Meadway, Bedford, MK41 9HU

Website:

www.ecpbedford.org

Parent Company:

One YMCA, Charter House, Watford, WD17 2RT, www.oneymca.org

AUDITORS, BANKERS, INVESTMENT MANAGER AND SOLICITORS

Auditor (External)

Haysmacintyre LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1AG

Auditor (Internal)

Beever and Struthers, 15 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8LP

Bankers:

HSBC Plc, 44-52 Lattimore Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3XL

Solicitors:

Bates Wells Braithwaite LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1BE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

The Trustee Board presents its annual report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Organisation

The Charity operates out of a number of centres across Bedfordshire.

The Charity's main activities are to deliver the children's centre contract in Bedford Borough, as well as Therapeutic and Specialist Support Services including Domestic Abuse, Perpetrators and Sexual Violence. The Trustee Board is responsible for the operation of the Charity. Its Business Manager reports to the Trustee Board and is line managed by the Group Chief Executive. The Trustee Board is supported by a Company Secretary.

The Charity closely works with a number of non-profit organisations. These are:

- FACES Bedford – volunteer management,
- Peter Pan Teaching Schools Alliance – provision of children's centre teaching and educational support,
- One YMCA – provision of group and corporate services support.

Given that these organisations work closely with the Charity, a conflict of interest policy is in place and all necessary matters are disclosed.

Trustee Board

The Trustee Board is responsible for the overall governance of the Charity. Those who have served during the year are set out on page 3. They hold a dual role of being Trustees of a registered Charity as well as being directors for the purposes of the Companies Act.

In accordance with the Articles of Association, Trustees serve for a three-year term after which they retire. A retiring member of the Trustee Board shall be eligible for re-election for a second and third full-term, but then having served a third term, must stand down as an elected member for a period of one year. Trustees can only serve for a maximum of nine years.

Strategic management

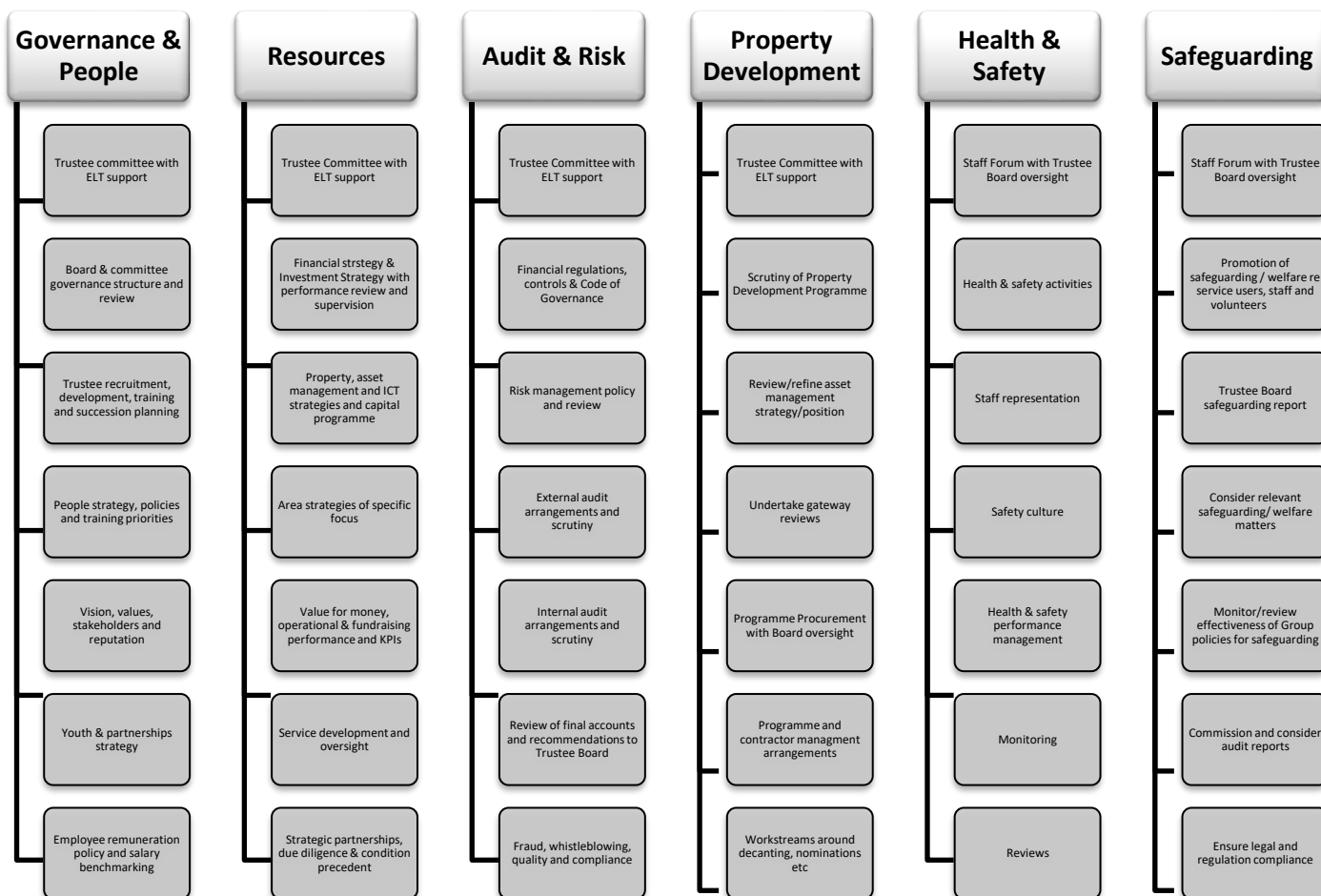
The Trustee Board is responsible for setting an appropriate strategy for the Charity. It also ensures that relevant performance measures are in place.

During the year, the Trustee Board:

- Undertook the necessary legal and governance steps to maintain the work of the Charity,
- Reviewed key policies,
- Scrutinised the service delivery plans and targets,
- Received reports on performance,
- Reviewed strategic risk,
- Ensured that policies and control frameworks were in place.

As the Charity is a subsidiary of One YMCA, it benefits from a broader committee structure that operates on a Group basis and ensures that detailed governance arrangements are established and monitored. The structure is set out in the following matrix.

ONE YMCA - TRUSTEE BOARD



EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP and SIGNPOST - TRUSTEE BOARDS

ONE YMCA DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

One YMCA subsidiary company, responsible for delivering the strategic requirements of the YMCA Trustee Board, supported by an Independent Director
Dormant until 31/03/22 and Active since 1/4/22

Recruitment of members of the Trustee Board

Members of the Trustee Board were recruited from partner organisations and comprise the following skill sets:

- Children's Services Commissioner
- Head Teacher,
- Head of Early Years,
- Corporate Strategy.

New Trustees are inducted into the governance arrangements by the Company Secretary using an agreed framework and ongoing training is provided through a combination of: trustee updates, attendance at Charity conferences / training events and bespoke training. A number of the Trustees also serve, or have served as Trustees of other charities which broadens the available skills base and the exposure to training and best practice of the Charity sector. On a periodic basis, the Trustee Board reviews its skills mix in order to ensure that any recruitment exercises are targeted at areas of need.

Management arrangements

The role of Business Manager is provided by the Director of Family Services for the Group and reports to the Group Chief Executive. The Company Secretary supports the Board and provides governance and corporate services advice. They act within the authority delegated by the Trustee Board. Further support can be drawn from the Partners and Parent Charity. Remuneration for key management personnel is set in line with the Parent Charity and is externally benchmarked.

Employees

The strength of the Charity lies in the quality of all its employees and their contribution to achieving the goals of the objectives set for each department. The Charity shares information on its objectives, progress and activities through regular management and staff departmental meetings.

The Charity is committed to equal opportunities both in recruitment and retention of employees.

Gender pay reporting

The Charity has adopted the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage as the baseline for all employees who are engaged on a permanent contract of employment and are not apprentices. Moreover, the Charity has utilised an established job evaluation scheme to ensure that all job roles are properly assessed against an equal pay criteria. The overall workforce is 100% female.

The gender pay reporting principles demonstrate the following position as a snapshot on 5 April 2022 was:

- Mean gender pay gap – None
- Median gender pay gap – None
- Mean bonus gender pay gap – None
- Median bonus gender pay gap – None
- Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment - None
- Proportion of females receiving a bonus payment – None
- Proportion of males and females in each quartile pay band – All Quartiles – 100% female

As at the date of this report, the Charity was not required to submit gender pay statistics due to its size.

Indemnity insurance

The Charity's insurance policies indemnify the Trustee Board and Officers against liability when acting for the Charity providing their actions are not reckless or fraudulent.

Health and Safety

The Trustees are aware of their responsibilities on all matters relating to health and safety. The Charity has prepared detailed health and safety policies and provides staff training and education on health and safety matters. During the year, the Parent Charity's health and safety committee met on three occasions comprising of representatives of all service areas including this Charity. The meetings were chaired by the Director of Operations and one of the Charity's children's centre Managers is a permanent Committee member.

Safeguarding

The Charity takes the protection of its service users, staff and volunteers very seriously. As a result, along with the Parent Charity, it has implemented a robust suite of Safeguarding measures, including comprehensive Policies and Procedures, as well as a clear Safeguarding reporting flowchart and a Safeguarding Link Trustee, who is also the chair of the ECP Board. There is also an active Safeguarding Leads Group, which meets regularly to review trends and learning from the range of safeguarding issues raised within the period. This Group is chaired by the ECP Business Manager and is attended by senior ECP staff members.

Safeguarding Data

The Charity takes the view that a key method of safeguarding people is to safeguard their data. As a result, it makes use of the external Data Protection Officer services of the Group, which are led by a specialist lawyer. The Charity holds a great deal of personal and sensitive data about children and their families, so it takes care to map where data is held and to undertake Data Protection Impact Assessments where appropriate. The Charity's senior staff also participate in the Data Group along with the Parent Charity, which, among other things, also considers cyber security and protection from external attacks.

Creditors' payments

The Charity's aim is to pay purchase invoices within 30 days of receipt, or earlier if agreed with the supplier.

Public Benefit

The Trustee Board held service users at the heart of its approach to formulating the strategic objectives and associated strategies. In doing so, the Trustee Board referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when planning for the future. Through the work that the Charity undertakes in its service areas, it delivers public benefit and serves a wide range of people, many of whom are vulnerable.

Complaints

There is a clear and simple complaints policy available to all service users. All complaints received are reported to the relevant Manager and are monitored by the Business Manager to help ensure an appropriate and timely resolution and also to help identify any recurring issues that may require a different approach.

Donations

No charitable or political donations were made by ECP during the year.

Going Concern

The Executive has modelled income and expenditure as well as cashflows over the foreseeable future and demonstrated that both are resilient. The main contract with Bedford Borough Council was renewed for a 5 year term from October 2021 which gives greater financial certainty.

Accordingly, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity and the Group have adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. As a consequence, they continue to support the going concern basis in preparing financial statements.

Reserves Policy

Reserves that are unrestricted funds held by the Charity should be sufficient to meet all payment obligations and to contribute to the Charity fulfilling its aims and purposes. The target level of free reserves is determined annually by the Trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

The reserves as at 31 March 2022 were as follows:

<u>Reserves</u>	<u>£</u>
Revenue reserve	£277,715
Restricted funds	£131,301
Total funds	<u>£409,016</u>

The revenue reserve amounted to £277,715 which are classed as free reserves. In determining the level of unrestricted funds held as free reserves to cover working balances and payment obligations without any designation or subject to earmarking for particular purposes, the Trustees have taken into account the following matters:

- Three months of salary and running costs are approximately £450k
- Bedford Borough Council have a fixed monthly payment plan embedded in the Charity's largest contract which ensures timely cash flow,
- Bedford Borough Council's payments are being received on a timely basis in advance of meeting expenditure,
- There is an inter-company loan and debenture in place with One YMCA for short-term cash flow support if required (2021: £Nil), and
- Group business interruption insurance cover is in place with a two-year indemnity period.

Accordingly, the Trustees consider it prudent to retain working balances of £60-100k in cash at each month end that are not designated or earmarked in order to meet unforeseen risks or obligations. This is an ongoing objective which is currently being met.

Risk Management

The Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring that an active risk management process is in place and forms part of the ongoing organisational activity. During the year, the Parent Charity reviewed the group risk management policy. The strategic risk register is a standing item at each Group Trustee Board meeting and was reviewed four times. The register identifies the types of risks the Charity faces and prioritises them in terms of potential impact and likelihood of occurrence. The Trustees are satisfied that the internal financial controls comply in all material respects with the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission and has established a separate internal audit function (carried out by an independent internal audit firm) to review risks on a rotational basis. The principal risks affecting the Charity relate to loss of contract income or mismanagement of a Safeguarding issue. We undertake regular strategic meetings with Bedford Borough Council to monitor the service level agreement. We have received positive feedback and work internally to ensure that our services are well managed and exceed expectations. The management of the safeguarding risks are detailed in the Risks and Uncertainties section on page 16.

For the last year, risk management has been primarily focused on managing and in some cases mitigating the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the safety of our service users and staff along with the resilience of the Charity. Trustees and the Executive Team set out to explore ways in which our assets and resources would be used to support the vulnerable people we serve through this difficult period. The Executive Team and Trustees put in place an action plan to address these areas and have worked with the Senior Leadership Team to successfully deliver the plan.

The Trustees confirm that they have identified and understand the risks to which the Charity is subject and that they are being actively managed.

Internal Controls Assurance

The Trustees acknowledge their overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the whole system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

The system of internal control is designed to manage, rather than eliminate, the risk of failure to achieve business objectives, and to provide reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The process for identifying, evaluating and managing the significant risks faced by the Charity is ongoing. The Trustee Board reviews the strategic risk register at every meeting.

Key elements of the control framework include:-

- Board-approved terms of reference,
- Clearly defined management responsibilities for the identification, evaluation and control of significant risks,
- Formal recruitment, retention, training and development policies for all staff,
- Established authorisation and appraisal procedures for significant new initiatives and commitments,
- Regular review of cash flow,
- Regular reporting on key business objectives, targets and outcomes,
- Board approved Code of Conduct,
- Board approved safeguarding, health & safety, whistle-blowing, anti-fraud and corruption policies,
- Board approved fraud policies, covering prevention, detection and reporting, together with recoverability of assets.

A fraud register is maintained and is reviewed by the Company Secretary on a regular basis. During the year there were no findings of fraudulent activity.

The Board benefits from internal controls work undertaken by the Parent Charity on corporate services activities.

The Parent Charity monitored the internal audit plan for the Group throughout the year.

Code of Governance

The Parent Charity complies with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance (2020) on a Group basis which incorporates the activities of the Charity. During the course of the year, the compliance framework has been reviewed. As an evolving organisation, the Charity will continue to review and develop its governance in order to best serve its beneficiaries.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD FOR THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

General Financial Responsibilities

The Trustee Board is responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustee Board, Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustee Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable laws). Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the surplus or deficit of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements 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 business; and
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees confirm that:

- so far as each Director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditors is unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approval

The Report of the Trustee Board was approved by the Trustees on 15 September 2022 and signed on their behalf by:



Sal Thirlway
Chair & Trustee

OPERATING & FINANCIAL REVIEW AND STRATEGIC REPORT

Introduction

The report and accounts for the financial year ending on 31 March 2022 are set out in this document.

Principal Activity

The Charity's principal activity is to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

- Child development and school readiness;
- Parenting aspirations and parenting skills;
- Child and family health and life changes;
- Improving the wellbeing of young children;
- Making arrangements to secure that early childhood services are provided in an integrated manner to facilitate access to services, maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children.

These activities are delivered from a number of Centres, virtual platforms and additional outreach sites in the Bedfordshire area.

Partners

Early Childhood Partnership works in close partnership with three not-for-profit organisations:

- FACES Bedford (registered Charity),
- Peter Pan Training Partnership (not-for-profit),
- One YMCA (registered Charity).

The Charity is led by its Trustee Board and Business Manager with governance support from its Company Secretary.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

During the year, the Charity has worked in a strategic manner so that it:

- Operates the children's centre service on behalf of Bedford Borough Council for the benefit of service users,
- Delivers excellent Therapeutic Support Services to families in need,
- Acts as the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) to the Local Authority,
- Ensures that effective governance arrangements are in force,
- Works across the Bedfordshire area,
- Improves the outcomes for parents and children who are benefitting from the services provided,
- Operates within a leaner and more efficient funding framework.

The Trustee Board supports these measures and the ways that they can maximise the resources available for delivering the Charity's objectives and serving beneficiaries.

Financial review

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for Charities. The Charity returned an operating surplus of £1,437 (2021: £327,270).

During the 2021/22 financial year, the Trustee Board has focused the staff team upon delivering a programme to improve underlying effectiveness of the children's centre operations and the development of new Therapeutic and Specialist Support Services so that the Charity is well placed for the future. This included:

- Delivering an improved level of performance against Bedford Borough Council's key performance indicators,
- Securing a variety of contracts and funding to extend and develop work with the most vulnerable children and families, including Independent Sexual Violence Advisory Service, Play Therapy, perpetrator programmes and Domestic Abuse Support,
- Amending internal governance and delivery structure to meet the current needs of families and organisation,

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

- Operating partner service level agreements,
- Setting out scheme of delegation,
- Strengthening operations through business and service delivery leadership and planning.

On an ongoing basis, the Trustee Board is committed to operating a balanced operating budget.

Value for money

The Charity's objective is to provide children's centre and Therapeutic & Specialist Support Services to meet the needs of its beneficiaries. The key driver is to achieve a balance between reasonable cost and excellent quality.

The Charity measures its value for money in terms of impacts, outcomes and outputs as well as financial ones. This includes:

- Service quality,
- Social benefits to individuals and communities,
- Key performance indicators and benchmarking,
- Financial returns,
- Benefits to the organisation.

The Charity's value for money strategy is to:

- Generate appropriate surpluses to maintain a viable organisation and to continue to provide and develop services for beneficiaries, both present and future;
- Ensure that high levels of customer satisfaction are achieved;
- Live up to the Charity's values in the delivery of services and impact.

As a commissioned service provider, the value for money objectives over the next three years are to:

- Increase the value and effectiveness of the children's centre and Therapeutic & Specialist Support Services provided,
- Release efficiency savings that can be recycled into front line services for more beneficiaries,
- Work in partnership with other charities and local authorities to develop funding models, secure efficiencies and/or take on additional work where it is sensible and prudent to do so,
- Use volunteers to broaden the range of services available,
- In consultation with the Advisory Board, improve children's centre services to meet their needs.

Over the last year, the Charity has continued to make good progress in delivering value for money. Activities that develop the effectiveness of the Charity have embraced beneficiary impact, operational improvement and good governance.

The Charity's on-going commitment to value for money and continuous improvement will remain a key priority given the challenges to income streams that every commissioned service provider faces and the need to keep service users at the heart of decision making. Specific on-going activities will include:

- Performance managing outcomes and costs,
- Responding to service user needs,
- Maintaining high key performance indicator levels,
- Responding to commissioner funding decisions,
- Developing service level agreement outcomes to enhance impact, effectiveness, and efficiency,
- Investing in the culture and values to maximise the Charity's potential, value for money and continuous improvement.

External Influences

As a Charity delivering community services, the Charity is influenced by Government policies towards children's services.

Objectives and Strategy

The Charity's objects are to:

- to provide parents, expectant parents and carers with education to assist them to develop their parenting, social and personal skills and capabilities to enable them to enhance the outcomes for young children;
- to promote and preserve the health of parents, expectant parents, carers and young people; and
- to relieve and give support and assistance to parents, expectant parents, carers and young children who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by reason of their social, physical, emotional or economic circumstances.

The strategies employed to achieve the Charity's objectives are to:

- Operate children's centre services so that operations take place through two main work-streams:
 - Family support targeted services,
 - Children's centre universal services.
- Align and monitoring contract and partner key performance indicators (KPI);
- Deliver the service delivery plan that aligns the contract and the needs of beneficiaries; and
- Develop and deliver a range of Therapeutic and Support Services to children and families who need it most.

Achievements and performance

In relation to the strategic objectives, the Charity has made a positive impact upon many lives during the year.

Service delivery plan developed to deliver KPIs and new operating model

- The Council Contract and Partner service level agreements have been delivered;
- The contract KPIs have been exceeded;
- The Service delivery plan has continued to develop the Charity's operating model;
- The Charity's staff deliver the core services via two work streams of: Family support, Universal services;
- The standard of service delivery has been rated as "Good" by Bedford Borough Council;
- New Therapeutic and Specialist Support Service established and working effectively;
- New Contracts and grant funding secured for future years.

Matrix management and partnership working in action

- Family Support Practitioners are aligned to early year providers as link-workers and liaison arrangements established;
- School and educational support being provided by Peter Pan Teaching School Alliance is driving up the standards of service delivery and offering effective peer support;
- The Charity's website, Facebook and bookings portal are in full use by beneficiaries.

General

- Providing children's centre services to children and supporting vulnerable children with targeted support;
- Making excellent progress in developing the Bedford Borough children's centres with a "Good" assessment being maintained throughout the year;
- Continuing to foster close partnerships and working relationships with social care and health services for the benefit of the families who are cared for;
- Developing new, much-needed services that respond to local needs.

The services provided are subject to Commissioner review and the suite of outcomes and key performance indicators agreed in the Council's contract. Performance against these is monitored on a regular basis.

Strategic developments on new activities

The Charity has worked hard to incorporate and deliver services in a compressed timescale. It will seek to expand its operations when it is prudent and sensible to do so and where there is a need to expand the delivery of services to beneficiaries.

Looking to the future

The Charity is committed to developing a strong and vibrant organisation in order to serve its beneficiaries and the local community. In doing so, it will

- Develop existing service delivery,
- Build upon the foundations established in the incorporation to attract new business in areas of strength,
- Improve value for money,
- Challenge expenditure levels,
- Ensure that all service areas are exceeding performance targets.

Risks and uncertainties

Risks that may prevent the Charity achieving its objectives are considered and reviewed by the Group Trustee Board on a periodic basis as part of the corporate planning processes. The risks are recorded and assessed in terms of their impact and probability. Major risks, presenting the greatest threats to the Charity are reported to the Group Trustee Board at every meeting. The Charity's major risks relate to:

- Loss of contract income,
- Safeguarding / service user reputational incident,
- Key performance indicator compliance,
- Partner effectiveness,
- Property legislative compliance relating to local authority buildings
- Service user reluctance to re-engage following Covid-19.

One of the principal risks relates to safeguarding given the beneficiary group that is being worked with. Whilst the Trustee Board reviews controls and standards, One YMCA provides extensive safeguarding support through its Safeguarding Leads Meeting which operates on a Group basis to challenge, support and review the protection and prevention arrangements in force. ECPs Head of Family Support attends the Safeguarding Leads meeting as well as advising on any concerns for the Charity. The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed by One YMCA, the Business Manager and Partners to ensure that it meets the needs of the services being provided.

On an annual basis, the Group reviews its key policies and controls frameworks. These included the financial regulations as well as the Code of Governance, committee terms of reference, code of conduct, safeguarding, fraud, whistleblowing, health & safety and equal opportunities policies. The next review is scheduled for Summer/Autumn 2022.

The risk management and internal controls arrangements are described in more detail in the Report of the Trustee Board on pages 8 and 9.

Approval

In approving the Operating and Financial Review, the Trustees are also approving the Strategic Report in their capacity as directors of the Charity. The Operating and Financial Review and the Strategic Report were approved by the Trustee Board on 15 September 2022 and signed on their behalf by:



Sal Thirlway
Chair and Trustee

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS AND TRUSTEES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Early Childhood Partnership for the year-ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Report of the Trustee Board, and the Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

- the information given in the Report of the Trustee Board, the Operating and Financial Review and the Strategic Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report contained within the Report of the Trustee Board and the Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Trustee Board (which incorporates the director's report), the Operating and Financial Review or the Strategic Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities of the Trustee Board set out on page 10, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to Charity Law, Ofsted and Health and Safety regulations, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011, and we considered other factors such as taxation compliance.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to areas of estimation uncertainty and manual accounting journals. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing a sample of manual journals; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tracey Young (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Haysmacintyre LLP, Statutory Auditor
Date 28.9.22

10 Queen Street Place
London
EC4R 1AG

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
(Incorporating the income and expenditure account)
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2022

		<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>	<u>Unrestricted & Total Funds</u>
	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2022</u> <u>£</u>	<u>2022</u> <u>£</u>	<u>2022</u> <u>£</u>	<u>2021</u> <u>£</u>
Income					
Donations and legacies	3	4,220	-	4,220	160,509
Charitable activities	3	1,474,657	359,641	1,834,298	1,736,477
Total income		1,478,877	359,641	1,838,518	1,896,986
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	4	1,458,741	378,340	1,837,081	1,569,716
Total expenditure		1,458,741	378,340	1,837,081	1,569,716
Net income /(expenditure)		20,136	(18,699)	1,437	327,270
Net movement in funds		20,136	(18,699)	1,437	327,270
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds at start of period		257,579	150,000	407,579	80,309
Total funds carried forward	11	277,715	131,301	409,016	407,579

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

Registered company 10197205

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2022</u> £	<u>2021</u> £
Current assets			
Debtors	8	36,506	77,750
Cash at bank and in hand		703,514	641,677
Total current assets		740,020	719,427
Liabilities			
Creditors: falling due within one year	9	302,304	239,848
Total current liabilities		302,304	239,848
Net current assets		437,716	479,579
Provisions for liabilities and charges	10	28,700	72,000
Total Net Assets		409,016	407,579
The funds of the Charity			
Unrestricted funds		277,715	257,579
Restricted funds		131,301	150,000
Total Charity funds	11	409,016	407,579

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

The accounts were approved by the Trustee Board on 15 September 2022 and were signed on its behalf by:

Sal Thirlway



Chair and Trustee

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2022

	<u>2022</u> £	<u>2021</u> £
Net cash inflow from operating activities	61,837	361,951
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	641,677	279,726
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	<u>703,514</u>	<u>641,677</u>
Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating act		
Net income for the year	1,437	327,270
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	41,244	14,109
Increase in creditors and provisions	19,156	20,572
Net cash inflow from operating activities	<u>61,837</u>	<u>361,951</u>
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash	703,514	641,677
Cash equivalents	-	-
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>703,514</u>	<u>641,677</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1. Status

The Company is limited by guarantee, registered under the Companies Act 2006 registration number 10197205 and a registered Charity number 1168090. The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The registered office is 30 Meadway, Bedford, MK41 9HU.

The sole corporate member is One YMCA.

The Member of the Company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required (not exceeding £1.00) to the assets of the Company in the event of the same being wound up while it is a member for payment of the debt and liabilities of the Company contracted and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up. If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Company there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, shall transferred to the Member (One YMCA) or if the Member no longer exists or declined to receive the assets, then to the National Council of Young Men's Christian Association (Incorporated) or, in the event that these routes are inoperable, as directed by the Charity Commission.

2. Principal accounting policies

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities second edition, effective 1 January 2019, preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

In the view of the trustees in applying the accounting policies adopted, the only area of judgement relates to the provision for dilapidations as disclosed in 10. No other judgements were required that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements nor do any estimates or assumptions made carry a significant risk of material adjustment in the next financial year. No complex financial instruments are held.

(a) Basis of accounting

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction values unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes. Those assets measured at fair value are re-measured at each balance sheet date.

(b) Going concern

The Charity's business activities, its current financial position and factors likely to affect its future development are set out within the Operating and Financial Review. On this basis, the Trustee Board has a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. As a consequence, they continue to support the going concern basis in preparing financial statements. No material uncertainties exist.

(c) Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when:

- a) the Charity becomes entitled to the resources,
- b) it is more likely than not that the Charity will receive the resources;
- c) the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Contractual income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities once the Charity has delivered its obligations.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

(d) **Volunteer help**

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the Trustees' annual report.

(e) **Expenditure**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The Charity has incurred expenditure on support costs. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the Charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

(f) **Debtors and creditors**

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment and short-term creditors and measured at the transaction price.

(g) **Deferred income**

Where income has been received in respect of service to be provided in a future period, the relevant income has been deferred as a creditor.

(h) **Operating leases**

Rentals payable under the operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term. The benefits of lease incentives entered into after the date of transition to FRS102 are recognised in income and expenditure over the lease period.

(i) **Pensions**

Group Personal Pension Plan (defined contribution)

The Charity also makes contributions to a group personal pension plan (defined contribution) provided by Aviva which is open to all employees.

(j) **Provisions for Liabilities**

Provision has been made for expected property costs at the end of the leases based on the lease terms, management's assessment of the property condition and external evidence supporting the likely costs. The estimation involves a level of judgment and will be reassessed annually.

(k) **Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

3. Income

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies				
Donations		-	4,220	160,509
Charitable activities	4,220			
Bedford Borough Council children's centres contract	1,041,540	-	1,041,540	1,090,768
Therapeutic and specialist support services	-	355,484	355,484	579,383
Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA)	268,589	-	268,589	-
Perpetrator	79,062	-	79,062	-
Other	85,466	4,157	89,623	66,326
Total income	1,478,877	359,641	1,838,518	1,896,986

Restricted income received in 2021 relating to charitable activities totalled £368,849

4. Expenditure

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total funds	Total funds
	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
	£	£	£	£
Charitable activities				
Children's centre service delivery	883,484	4,157	887,641	978,923
Programme delivery by partner organisations	61,035	-	61,035	78,030
Therapeutic and specialist support services	276,519	374,183	650,702	363,213
Support costs	237,703	-	237,703	149,550
Total expenditure	1,458,741	378,340	1,837,081	1,569,716

Restricted expenditure relating to charitable activities in 2021 totalled £389,182.

5. Support costs

	Children's Centre	Therapeutic Services	Total funds	Total funds
	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
	£	£	£	£
Auditors remuneration (excluding VAT) for audit services	2,820	1,880	4,700	3,500
Company secretarial	3,000	2,000	5,000	5,000
Governance costs	5,820	3,880	9,700	8,500
Finance, human resources, property & safety (inc. VAT)	136,802	91,201	228,003	141,050
Total support costs	142,622	95,081	237,703	149,550

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned between the children's centres and Therapeutic Services based upon the time spent on each activity.

6. Trustee Board

The Trustees are the non-executive directors of the Company and are also the Trustee Board. None of the Trustee Board received emoluments. No expenses were reimbursed during the financial period (2021: nil).

7. Employee information

Average monthly number of employees	2022	2021
	No	No
Children's centres	28.9	28.8
Therapeutic Support Services	25.6	14.5
Total	54.5	43.3

	2022	2021
	£	£
Staff costs (for the above persons)		
Wages and salaries	1,021,250	907,746
Social security costs	83,473	73,311
Other pension costs	38,232	33,745
	1,142,955	1,014,802

There were no employees earning more than £60,000 per annum (2021: nil).

The aggregate emoluments of key management personnel were £37,396 (2021: £37,228). The role of Business Manager is performed by the Director of Family Services employed by One YMCA and recharged to the Charity as detailed in note 13.

8. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade debtors	23,703	57,316
Prepayments and accrued income	12,803	20,434
	36,506	77,750

9. Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	7,571	44,349
Accruals	69,145	75,196
Deferred income	68,440	63,727
Other taxes and social security costs	19,177	16,940
Other creditors	17,971	23,776
Amounts owed to parent company	120,000	15,860
	302,304	239,848

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**10. Provisions for liabilities and charges**

	2022	2021
	£	£
At 1 April	72,000	72,000
Used during the year	(43,300)	-
At 31 March	28,700	72,000

A provision for dilapidations to premises is being held to cover the costs of any necessary reinstatement and repairs to the properties at the termination of the leases.

11. Fund analysis - 2022

Fund	<u>Funds b/f</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Funds c/f</u>
Unrestricted - general purposes	257,579	1,478,877	1,458,741	277,715
Restricted Funds:				
Friends of Eastcott	-			-
Big Lottery – Horizons Project	-	158,103	158,103	-
Children in Need	-	31,866	31,866	-
Harpur Trust	-	33,539	33,539	-
Male Victims	-	65,801	65,801	-
Violence & Exploitation Reduction Unit	-	17,474	17,474	-
Bedfordshire OPCC-Play Therapy	-	16,685	16,685	-
Steele Charitable Trust	-	25,000	25,000	-
Youth empowerment fund	-	2,017	2,017	-
HAF grant -BBC	-	5,000	5,000	-
National Lottery - Dads Aloud	-	2,444	2,444	-
Wishing Tree	-	1,712	1,712	-
One YMCA	150,000	-	18,699	131,301

Total	407,579	1,838,518	1,837,081	409,016	

Big Lottery Fund – Horizons Project

A project working with families affected by domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and parental mental health issues. Funding of £158,103 was received against expenditure during 2022.

Fund analysis continued**Children In Need**

A grant funding the provision of a full-time therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Bedford. Funding of £41,444 was received against expenditure of £31,866 during 2022 and the balance of £9,578 was held within deferred income.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Harpur Trust

A grant funding the provision of a full time play therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Bedford. Funding of £34,065 was received against expenditure of £33,539 during 2022 and the balance of £526 was held within deferred income.

Bedfordshire OPCC

This funded Safety Net, a Bedfordshire wide partnership supporting victims of domestic abuse. ECP delivered Our TALK:4M peer group programme which is aimed at empowering men to cope and recover from domestic abuse, and to feel they have a sense of belonging and support in their community. We have adapted the Liberty Programme to be gender neutral, offering a specialist males programme. Funding of £69,850 was received during the year against expenditure of £65,801. A balance of £4,049 was held within deferred income.

Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit

A project delivering targeted play therapy for children across Bedfordshire. Funding of £18,284 was received during the year of which £17,474 was expended and the balance of £810 was held within deferred income.

Bedfordshire OPCC

A project delivering targeted play therapy for children across Bedfordshire. Funding of £16,685 was received against expenditure during 2022.

Bedford BC - Youth Empowerment Fund

To develop a young person My Choice programme and pilot with a youth group. Funding of £15,000 was received during the year of which £2,017 was expended and the balance of £12,983 was held within deferred income.

National Lottery

Funding of £2,444 was received against expenditure during 2022 to fund a project (Dad's Aloud), supporting; fathers, parenting skills and bringing families together.

Bedford Borough Council - Wishing Tree

A donation of £1,712 was received from Bedford Borough Council for ECP Children's Centres to oversee the Wishing Tree Appeal. A local project to support families in poverty access Christmas gifts.

STEEL

A grant funding the provision of a full-time play therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse in Luton. Funding of £30,000 was received during the year of which £25,000 was expended and the balance of £5,000 was held within deferred income.

HAF grant BBC

Funding of £5,000 was received against expenditure during 2022 from the Bedford Borough Council to support our core services on food poverty and holiday activities.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

Fund analysis - 2021				
Fund	<u>Funds b/f</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Funds c/</u>
Unrestricted - general purposes	62,153	1,375,960	1,180,533	257,579
Restricted Funds:				
Friends of Eastcott	18,156	-	18,156	
Big Lottery – Horizons Project	-	164,474	164,474	
Children in Need	-	39,383	39,383	
Harpur Trust	-	44,813	44,813	
Male Victims	-	74,857	74,857	
Violence & Exploitation Reduction Unit	-	22,182	22,182	
Bedfordshire and Luton Community	-	6,504	6,504	
Children in Need Covid Booster	-	3,600	3,600	
CAST (Comic Relief)	-	5,000	5,000	
Bedfordshire police	-	1,223	1,223	
National Lottery - Dads Aloud	-	4,313	4,313	
Wishing Tree	-	3,500	3,500	
One YMCA	-	150,000	-	150,000
Safelives	-	1,176	1,176	
Total	80,309	1,896,986	1,569,715	407,579

12. Taxation

The Company is a registered Charity qualifying for relief from income and capital gains taxes on its Charitable activities.

13. Related party transactions**One YMCA**

For the financial period under review, two of the Trustees are also Trustees of One YMCA. They were: Sal Thirlway and Alan Victor. One YMCA provides central services to the Charity such as finance, human resources, safety & compliance and company secretarial work on an arm's length basis. A charge was made for these services amounting to £78,198 (inclusive of VAT) (2021: £96,000). In addition to this, a charge of £37,396 (inclusive of VAT) was made for key management personnel during 2021/22 (2021: £33,494) and a charge of £22,000 (inclusive of VAT) was made for marketing services during 2021/22 (2021: £3,666). An amount of £120,000 has been accrued for charges not yet billed relating to 2021/22 (2021: £13,997) and shown as a balance due to One YMCA. The level of the accrual reflects the cost of the retendering of the successful rescue of the Bedford Borough Children's Centre contract as well as additional reporting, communication and fundraising costs for other smaller grants.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

The Charity benefits from an inter-company loan facility for short term cash flow purposes. It was not used in 2021/22. When used, interest is chargeable, it is subject to a debenture deed and One YMCA has a registered charge in respect of it. There is currently a nil balance (2021: £Nil).

Others

For the financial year under review:

- a) A charge of £30,040 (2021: £54,434) was paid in respect of Peter Pan Training Partnership for services during the financial year. Deborah James, a trustee, was a member of the strategic governing board of Peter Pan Training Partnership which provides teaching and education support.
- b) A charge was made by FACES Bedford for services amounting to £31,995(2021: £21,600). Eve Burt served as a trustee of the Charity and she was also a trustee of FACES Bedford who provide volunteering support.
- c) The wife of a trustee was employed throughout the year as a Domestic Violence Administrator. During the year her remuneration was £11,268

Conflicts of interest

A conflicts of interest policy is in force and all interests are declared. Where appropriate, conflicted trustees do not participate in decisions.

14. Operating lease commitments

There are a number of leases in place for children's centre properties. The rent at each property is £1.

Accounts

Registered company:
Registered Charity:

10197205
1168090

**EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP
(LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

CONTENTS

	Page
Corporate information	3
Report of the Trustee Board	4
Operating & financial review and Strategic Report	11
Independent auditor's report to the members of Early Childhood Partnership	17
Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)	20
Balance sheet	21
Statement of cash flows	22
Notes to the financial statements	23

CORPORATE INFORMATION

TRUSTEE BOARD

Chair	Sal Thirlway
Trustees:	Eve Burt Deborah James Sal Thirlway Robert Thompson Alan Victor
Company Secretary:	Jonathan Kalemara
Business Manager:	Serreta Pritchard

CORPORATE INFORMATION

Registered Charity:	1168090
Registered company:	10197205
Registered office:	30 Meadway, Bedford, MK41 9HU
Website:	www.ecpbedford.org
Parent Company:	One YMCA, Charter House, Watford, WD17 2RT, www.oneymca.org

AUDITORS, BANKERS, INVESTMENT MANAGER AND SOLICITORS

Auditor (External)	Haysmacintyre LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1AG
Auditor (Internal)	BDO (UK) LLP, 55 Baker Street, London, W1U 7EU to 31 March 2021 Beever and Struthers, 15 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8LP
Bankers:	HSBC Plc, 44-52 Lattimore Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire, AL1 3XL
Solicitors:	Bates Wells Braithwaite LLP, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1BE

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

The Trustee Board presents its annual report together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Organisation

The Charity operates out of a number of centres across Bedfordshire.

The Charity's main activities are to deliver the children's centre contract in Bedford Borough, as well as Therapeutic and Specialist Support Services including Domestic Abuse, Perpetrators and Sexual Violence. The Trustee Board is responsible for the operation of the Charity. Its Business Manager reports to the Trustee Board and is line managed by the Group Chief Executive. The Trustee Board is supported by a Company Secretary.

The Charity closely works with a number of non-profit organisations. These are:

- FACES Bedford – volunteer management,
- Peter Pan Teaching Schools Alliance – provision of children's centre teaching and educational support,
- One YMCA – provision of group and corporate services support.

Given that these organisations work closely with the Charity, a conflict of interest policy is in place and all necessary matters are disclosed.

Trustee Board

The Trustee Board is responsible for the overall governance of the Charity. Those who have served during the year are set out on page 3. They hold a dual role of being Trustees of a registered Charity as well as being directors for the purposes of the Companies Act.

In accordance with the Articles of Association, Trustees serve for a three-year term after which they retire. A retiring member of the Trustee Board shall be eligible for re-election for a second and third full-term, but then having served a third term, must stand down as an elected member for a period of one year. Trustees can only serve for a maximum of nine years.

Strategic management

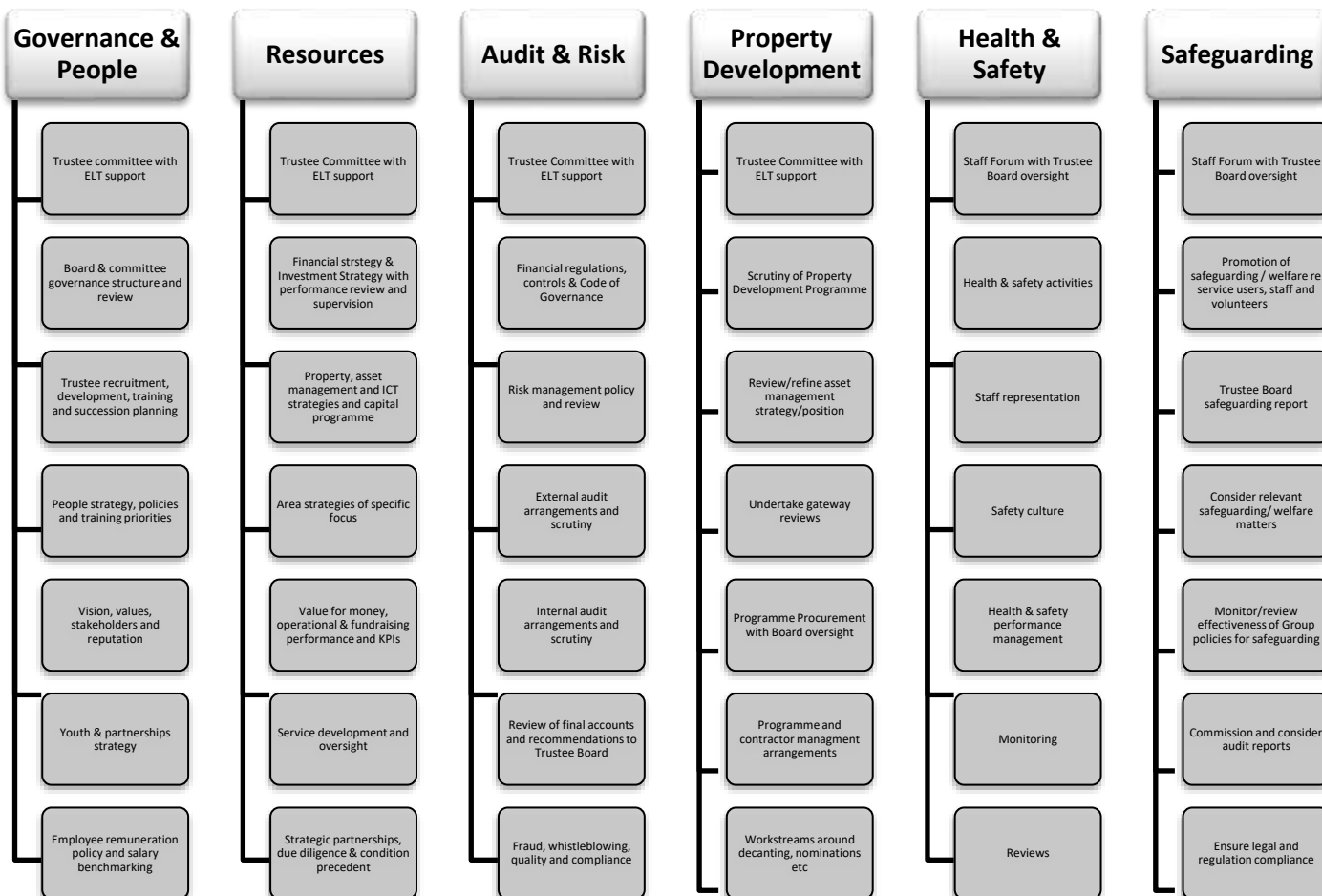
The Trustee Board is responsible for setting an appropriate strategy for the Charity. It also ensures that relevant performance measures are in place.

During the year, the Trustee Board:

- Undertook the necessary legal and governance steps to maintain the work of the Charity,
- Reviewed key policies,
- Scrutinised the service delivery plans and targets,
- Received reports on performance,
- Reviewed strategic risk,
- Ensured that policies and control frameworks were in place.

As the Charity is a subsidiary of One YMCA, it benefits from a broader committee structure that operates on a Group basis and ensures that detailed governance arrangements are established and monitored. The structure is set out in the following matrix.

ONE YMCA - TRUSTEE BOARD



EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP - TRUSTEE BOARD

Recruitment of members of the Trustee Board

Members of the Trustee Board were recruited from partner organisations and comprise the following skill sets:

- Children's Services Commissioner
- Head Teacher,
- Head of Early Years,
- Corporate Strategy.

New Trustees are inducted into the governance arrangements by the Company Secretary using an agreed framework and ongoing training is provided through a combination of: trustee updates, attendance at Charity conferences / training events and bespoke training. A number of the Trustees also serve, or have served as Trustees of other charities which broadens the available skills base and the exposure to training and best practice of the Charity sector. On a periodic basis, the Trustee Board reviews its skills mix in order to ensure that any recruitment exercises are targeted at areas of need.

Management arrangements

The role of Business Manager is provided by the Director of Family Services for the Group and reports to the Group Chief Executive. The Company Secretary supports the Board and provides governance and corporate services advice. They act within the authority delegated by the Trustee Board. Further support can be drawn from the Partners and Parent Charity. Remuneration for key management personnel is set in line with the Parent Charity and is externally benchmarked.

Employees

The strength of the Charity lies in the quality of all its employees and their contribution to achieving the goals of the objectives set for each department. The Charity shares information on its objectives, progress and activities through regular management and staff departmental meetings.

The Charity is committed to equal opportunities both in recruitment and retention of employees.

Gender pay reporting

The Charity has adopted the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage as the baseline for all employees who are engaged on a permanent contract of employment and are not apprentices. Moreover, the Charity has utilised an established job evaluation scheme to ensure that all job roles are properly assessed against an equal pay criteria. The overall workforce is 100% female.

The gender pay reporting principles demonstrate the following position as a snapshot on 5 April 2021 was:

- Mean gender pay gap – None
- Median gender pay gap – None
- Mean bonus gender pay gap – None
- Median bonus gender pay gap – None
- Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment - None
- Proportion of females receiving a bonus payment – None
- Proportion of males and females in each quartile pay band – All Quartiles – 100% female

As at the date of this report, the Charity was not required to submit gender pay statistics due to its size.

Indemnity insurance

The Charity's insurance policies indemnify the Trustee Board and Officers against liability when acting for the Charity providing their actions are not reckless or fraudulent.

Health and Safety

The Trustees are aware of their responsibilities on all matters relating to health and safety. The Charity has prepared detailed health and safety policies and provides staff training and education on health and safety matters. During the year, the Parent Charity's health and safety committee met on three occasions comprising of representatives of all service areas including this Charity. The meetings were chaired by the Director of Operations and one of the Charity's children's centre Managers is a permanent Committee member.

Safeguarding

The Charity takes the protection of its service users, staff and volunteers very seriously. As a result, along with the Parent Charity, it has implemented a robust suite of Safeguarding measures, including comprehensive Policies and Procedures, as well as a clear Safeguarding reporting flowchart and a Safeguarding Link Trustee, who is also the chair of the ECP Board. There is also an active Safeguarding Leads Group, which meets regularly to review trends and learning from the range of safeguarding issues raised within the period. This Group is chaired by the ECP Business Manager and is attended by senior ECP staff members.

Safeguarding Data

The Charity takes the view that a key method of safeguarding people is to safeguard their data. As a result, it makes use of the external Data Protection Officer services of the Group, which are led by a specialist lawyer. The Charity holds a great deal of personal and sensitive data about children and their families, so it takes care to map where data is held and to undertake Data Protection Impact Assessments where appropriate. The Charity's senior staff also participate in the Data Group along with the Parent Charity, which, among other things, also considers cyber security and protection from external attacks.

Creditors' payments

The Charity's aim is to pay purchase invoices within 30 days of receipt, or earlier if agreed with the supplier.

Public Benefit

The Trustee Board held service users at the heart of its approach to formulating the strategic objectives and associated strategies. In doing so, the Trustee Board referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when planning for the future. Through the work that the Charity undertakes in its service areas, it delivers public benefit and serves a wide range of people, many of whom are vulnerable.

Complaints

There is a clear and simple complaints policy available to all service users. All complaints received are reported to the relevant Manager and are monitored by the Business Manager to help ensure an appropriate and timely resolution and also to help identify any recurring issues that may require a different approach.

Donations

No charitable or political donations were made by ECP during the year.

One YMCA donated £150,000 to ECP to be spread in equal amounts across the next three years, restricted to the service delivery and administration costs for existing and new activities delivered by ECP staff which help the wider Group's ambition and strategy to "Double its Impact".

Going Concern

In light of the material uncertainties arising from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic the Trustees have reviewed the Charity's financial position and financial forecasts to test how those uncertainties might affect the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. The Executive has modelled income and expenditure as well as cashflows over the foreseeable future and demonstrated that both are resilient. The main contract with Bedford Borough Council was renewed for a 5 year term from October 2021 which gives greater financial certainty.

Accordingly, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Charity and the Group have adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. As a consequence, they continue to support the going concern basis in preparing financial statements.

Reserves Policy

Reserves that are unrestricted funds held by the Charity should be sufficient to meet all payment obligations and to contribute to the Charity fulfilling its aims and purposes. The target level of free reserves is determined annually by the Trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

The reserves as at 31 March 2021 were as follows:

<u>Reserves</u>	<u>£</u>
Revenue reserve	£257,579
Restricted funds	£150,000
Total funds	<u>£407,579</u>

The revenue reserve amounted to £257,579 which are classed as free reserves. In determining the level of unrestricted funds held as free reserves to cover working balances and payment obligations without any designation or subject to earmarking for particular purposes, the Trustees have taken into account the following matters:

- Three months of salary and running costs are approximately £450k
- Bedford Borough Council have a fixed monthly payment plan embedded in the Charity's largest contract which ensures timely cash flow,
- Bedford Borough Council's payments are being received on a timely basis in advance of meeting expenditure,
- There is an inter-company loan and debenture in place with One YMCA for short-term cash flow support if required (2020: £Nil), and
- Group business interruption insurance cover is in place with a two-year indemnity period.

Accordingly, the Trustees consider it prudent to retain working balances of £60-100k in cash at each month end that are not designated or earmarked in order to meet unforeseen risks or obligations. This is an ongoing objective which is currently being met.

Risk Management

The Trustee Board is responsible for ensuring that an active risk management process is in place and forms part of the ongoing organisational activity. During the year, the Parent Charity reviewed the group risk management policy. The strategic risk register is a standing item at each Group Trustee Board meeting and was reviewed four times. The register identifies the types of risks the Charity faces and prioritises them in terms of potential impact and likelihood of occurrence. The Trustees are satisfied that the internal financial controls comply in all material respects with the guidelines issued by the Charity Commission and has established a separate internal audit function (carried out by an independent internal audit firm) to review risks on a rotational basis. The principal risks affecting the Charity relate to loss of contract income or mismanagement of a Safeguarding issue. We undertake regular strategic meetings with Bedford Borough Council to monitor the service level agreement. We have received positive feedback and work internally to ensure that our services are well managed and exceed expectations. The management of the safeguarding risks are detailed in the Risks and Uncertainties section on page 16.

For the last year, risk management has been primarily focused on managing and in some cases mitigating the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the safety of our service users and staff along with the resilience of the Charity. Trustees and the Executive Team set out to explore ways in which our assets and resources would be used to support the vulnerable people we serve through this difficult period. The Executive Team and Trustees

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

put in place an action plan to address these areas and have worked with the Senior Leadership Team to successfully deliver the plan.

The Trustees confirm that they have identified and understand the risks to which the Charity is subject and that they are being actively managed.

Internal Controls Assurance

The Trustees acknowledge their overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining the whole system of internal control and for reviewing its effectiveness.

The system of internal control is designed to manage, rather than eliminate, the risk of failure to achieve business objectives, and to provide reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material misstatement or loss.

The process for identifying, evaluating and managing the significant risks faced by the Charity is ongoing. The Trustee Board reviews the strategic risk register at every meeting.

Key elements of the control framework include:-

- Board-approved terms of reference,
- Clearly defined management responsibilities for the identification, evaluation and control of significant risks,
- Formal recruitment, retention, training and development policies for all staff,
- Established authorisation and appraisal procedures for significant new initiatives and commitments,
- Regular review of cash flow,
- Regular reporting on key business objectives, targets and outcomes,
- Board approved Code of Conduct,
- Board approved safeguarding, health & safety, whistle-blowing, anti-fraud and corruption policies,
- Board approved fraud policies, covering prevention, detection and reporting, together with recoverability of assets.

A fraud register is maintained and is reviewed by the Company Secretary on a regular basis. During the year there were no findings of fraudulent activity.

The Board benefits from internal controls work undertaken by the Parent Charity on corporate services activities. This included the handling of receipts and payments.

The Parent Charity monitored the internal audit plan for the Group throughout the year.

Code of Governance

The Parent Charity complies with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance (2015) on a Group basis which incorporates the activities of the Charity. During the course of the year, the compliance framework has been reviewed. As an evolving organisation, the Charity will continue to review and develop its governance in order to best serve its beneficiaries.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD FOR THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

General Financial Responsibilities

The Trustee Board is responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustee Board, Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustee Board to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable laws). Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and the surplus or deficit of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements 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 business; and
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the Charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees confirm that:

- so far as each Director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Charity's auditors is unaware; and
- the Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as Trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors is aware of that information.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approval

The Report of the Trustee Board was approved by the Trustees on 6 July 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



Sal Thirlway
Chair & Trustee

OPERATING & FINANCIAL REVIEW AND STRATEGIC REPORT

Introduction

The report and accounts for the financial year ending on 31 March 2021 are set out in this document.

Principal Activity

The Charity's principal activity is to improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in:

- Child development and school readiness;
- Parenting aspirations and parenting skills;
- Child and family health and life changes;
- Improving the wellbeing of young children;
- Making arrangements to secure that early childhood services are provided in an integrated manner to facilitate access to services, maximising the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children.

These activities are delivered from a number of Centres, virtual platforms and additional outreach sites in the Bedfordshire area.

Partners

Early Childhood Partnership works in close partnership with three not-for-profit organisations:

- FACES Bedford (registered Charity),
- Peter Pan Teaching School Alliance (not-for-profit),
- One YMCA (registered Charity).

The Charity is led by its Trustee Board and Business Manager with governance support from its Company Secretary.

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

During the year, the Charity has worked in a strategic manner so that it:

- Operates the children's centre service on behalf of Bedford Borough Council for the benefit of service users,
- Delivers excellent Therapeutic Support Services to families in need,
- Acts as the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) to the Local Authority,
- Ensures that effective governance arrangements are in force,
- Works across the Bedfordshire area,
- Improves the outcomes for parents and children who are benefitting from the services provided,
- Operates within a leaner and more efficient funding framework.

The Trustee Board supports these measures and the ways that they can maximise the resources available for delivering the Charity's objectives and serving beneficiaries.

Financial review

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) for Charities. The Charity returned an operating surplus of £327,270 (2020: £61,095).

During the 2020/21 financial year, the Trustee Board has focused the staff team upon delivering a programme to improve underlying effectiveness of the children's centre operations and the development of new Therapeutic Support Services so that the Charity is well placed for the future. This included:

- Delivering an improved level of performance against Bedford Borough Council's key performance indicators,
- Securing a variety of contracts and funding to extend and develop work with the most vulnerable children and families, including ISVA, Play Therapy and Domestic Abuse Support,
- Amending internal governance and delivery structure to meet the current needs of families and organisation,
- Operating partner service level agreements,

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

- Setting out scheme of delegation,
- Strengthening operations through business and service delivery leadership and planning.

On an ongoing basis, the Trustee Board is committed to operating a balanced operating budget.

It is pleasing to report that the Charity received a performance incentive payment during the year. This was as a result of achieving the stretch targets in the Bedford children's centre contract.

Value for money

The Charity's objective is to provide children's centre and Therapeutic & Specialist Support Services to meet the needs of its beneficiaries. The key driver is to achieve a balance between reasonable cost and excellent quality.

The Charity measures its value for money in terms of impacts, outcomes and outputs as well as financial ones. This includes:

- Service quality,
- Social benefits to individuals and communities,
- Key performance indicators and benchmarking,
- Financial returns,
- Benefits to the organisation.

The Charity's value for money strategy is to:

- Generate appropriate surpluses to maintain a viable organisation and to continue to provide and develop services for beneficiaries, both present and future;
- Ensure that high levels of customer satisfaction are achieved;
- Live up to the Charity's values in the delivery of services and impact.

As a commissioned service provider, the value for money objectives over the next three years are to:

- Increase the value and effectiveness of the children's centre and Therapeutic & Specialist Support Services provided,
- Release efficiency savings that can be recycled into front line services for more beneficiaries,
- Work in partnership with other charities and local authorities to develop funding models, secure efficiencies and/or take on additional work where it is sensible and prudent to do so,
- Use volunteers to broaden the range of services available,
- In consultation with the Advisory Board, improve children's centre services to meet their needs.

Over the last year, the Charity has continued to make good progress in delivering value for money. Activities that develop the effectiveness of the Charity have embraced beneficiary impact, operational improvement and good governance.

Initiative	Status, saving or gain	Comments
Children's centre services		
Deliver the budget for the Bedfordshire area	£327k surplus	The budget maximised the deployment of financial resources for beneficiaries.
Deliver the children's centre contract to the required performance levels	Successfully delivering the contract	The children's centre contract is underpinned by a series of key performance indicators (KPI) sitting within four performance areas. These KPIs are regularly monitored by the Trustee Board, Council and managers. The team members are clear about which KPIs their activities contribute to, and they understand the links between the KPIs and achieving good outcomes for our children and families. In 2020/21 the Charity achieved two out of three incentivisation KPI targets. These targets covered the number of children seen at the children's centres, target groups engaging in children's centres services, parents reporting increased confidence in age appropriate child development and parents making positive progress in the education and

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Initiative	Status, saving or gain	Comments
		learning area of the family star for targeted intervention. This allowed us to increase staff time to enable us to support more vulnerable families.
	Achieving performance	Activities are delivered in each centre as part of the termly timetable along with family support activities and home visiting. These activities interface with the KPIs and a simple performance management system of “plan, deliver, review and develop” means that good progress is being made to meet targets. The Data Officer, in partnership with the local authority, is now using the children’s centre database to produce increasingly robust evidence of performance.
	Meeting the needs of beneficiaries	The design and delivery of the timetable of activities is informed by local available data. There is an appropriate split between universal, targeted and perinatal activities. For example, ECP deliver Parents as First Teachers (PAFT) as the parenting programme of choice and this is delivered as a targeted service, with the addition of PAFT Connections as a universal group activity. The perinatal team offers Baby Brasseries across five centres, a daily breast-feeding support session, weekly ante natal classes for first time parents (BBB) and one to one support ante-natally and post-natally. In 2020 they worked hard to ensure a high-quality universal service offer was available remotely. This included live and pre-recorded sessions on social media as well as videos to replace information sessions such as Introduction to Solid Food and Preparing for Baby. Our targeted work also was delivered via video or telephone, ensuring that families continued to receive the support they needed despite the pandemic restrictions.
	Expanding the reach of services	The Charity continues to focus on its success in engaging with priority or excluded groups and are increasingly able to use data to focus resources where they are most needed. The team works with the local authority to deliver play activities on local traveller sites which are very popular. The Charity is supporting a new unborn baby pathway with BBC Head of Social Care. Children’s centres are one of the lead providers for antenatal work to support the Social Worker’s unborn baby single assessment.
	Obtaining positive beneficiary feedback	The Charity’s fourth parent survey was carried out at the end of 2020 specifically asking about support offered during the pandemic. We received very positive feedback and a good response rate. Parent feedback was collected via our social media sites. Our effective online parents’ forum continues to generate a great deal of discussion. When emerging needs arise, this online forum is a good space to start early discussions with the community to respond to these emerging needs.
Achieve the contract key performance indicator requirements to the satisfaction of the commissioner	Successfully delivering the contract	Monitoring meetings with the local authority take place three times a year. These meetings form part of the annual review. Following our end of year Contract Monitoring visit, our commissioners wrote to us saying “I have been so impressed with the resilience that you have all shown through this challenging period. The creative skills that you have used to enable families to access services via technology have been superb and I have enjoyed watching some of you tell stories and lead singing sessions.” The local authority highlighted priority action areas, including the production of a performance report that could be shared with local councillors.
	Continuously planning for future improvements	There is clarity around the priority areas for development in the coming year. The Charity will be looking to compare its performance, particularly in relation to registration and seen figures, with a particular emphasis on targeted groups. The areas for development reflect feedback from the local authority arising from the monitoring meetings and form the basis of the annual service development plan. This plan is considered by the management team and updated monthly.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

Initiative	Status, saving or gain	Comments
Service Delivery Plan (SDP) established to improve delivery to beneficiaries	Adopting a reflective practice to develop services	ECP has a service delivery plan which allows us to reflect on how well the Charity is meeting the required outcomes for families. It is used to evaluate strengths and identify areas for improvement. Team members are also encouraged to work reflectively. Each team member completes at least one case study per month where they consider “what worked well” with a particular family, and “even better if”, what they might have done differently. This reflective practice continues into their monthly supervision, where they are supported to consider how past experience can inform future practice.
	Embracing effective planning	The SDP focuses on annual targets and breaks them down into a series of priority actions. The SDP is completed with input from a range of stakeholders. It is actioned by the management team and updated monthly and is considered by the Trustees Board and at the monitoring meetings with Bedford Borough Council.
	Monitoring performance and progress	The SDP operates on a RAG system (red, amber, green) with good progress being made. All priority actions are now set against the appropriate KPI(s) and each action is the responsibility of a named person and time limited.
Efficiencies		
Releasing operational savings to increase the workforce delivering front line services	Effectively managing partners’ Service Level Agreements (SLAs)	Regular contract monitoring meetings take place between the Charity’s Partners and the Business Manager. Each partner reports back on the progress it is making towards meeting the service requirements of their service level agreement. This regular performance review is a key part of the Charity’s objective of maximising the benefit of services to parents, prospective parents and young children. Each contract monitoring meeting is also used as an opportunity to develop further joint working outside the contract frameworks.
Governance and support services		
Develop ICT accreditation for information security	External accreditation	The Cyber Essentials accreditation remains in place for information security purposes.
Undertake a finance and electronic payments internal audit	Complete	A finance and electronic payments internal audit was undertaken by BDO and a substantial assurance rating was achieved.
Scrutinise electronic payments via internal audit	Complete	A full review of expenditure payments was undertaken by BDO using data analysis methods to ensure probity and good order. This encompassed every individual payment made. A positive assurance rating was obtained in 2020.
Undertake benchmarking on financial matters	Comparing performance	The Parent Charity participated in the Charity Finance Group’s Finance Count benchmarking initiative.
	Developing for the future	The electronic ordering, commitments and invoicing system was successfully implemented. It now automates a number of manual processes and deliver efficiencies.
Undertake benchmarking on people matters	Comparing performance	The Parent Charity participated in the Charity Finance Group’s People Count benchmarking initiative. Opportunities for organisational development are sought for continuous improvement
	Developing for the future	Our restructured staff team are now able to work more fluidly across the whole of Borough.

The Charity’s on-going commitment to value for money and continuous improvement will remain a key priority given the challenges to income streams that every commissioned service provider faces and the need to keep service users at the heart of decision making. Specific on-going activities will include:

- Performance managing outcomes and costs,
- Responding to service user needs,
- Maintaining high key performance indicator levels,

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

- Responding to commissioner funding decisions,
- Developing service level agreement outcomes to enhance impact, effectiveness and efficiency,
- Investing in the culture and values to maximise the Charity's potential, value for money and continuous improvement.

External Influences

As a Charity delivering community services, the Charity is influenced by Government policies towards children's services.

Objectives and Strategy

The Charity's objects are to:

- to provide parents, expectant parents and carers with education to assist them to develop their parenting, social and personal skills and capabilities to enable them to enhance the outcomes for young children;
- to promote and preserve the health of parents, expectant parents, carers and young people; and
- to relieve and give support and assistance to parents, expectant parents, carers and young children who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress by reason of their social, physical, emotional or economic circumstances.

The strategies employed to achieve the Charity's objectives are to:

- Operate children's centre services so that operations take place through two main work-streams:
 - Family support targeted services,
 - Children's centre universal services.
- Align and monitoring contract and partner key performance indicators (KPI);
- Deliver the service delivery plan that aligns the contract and the needs of beneficiaries; and
- Develop and deliver a range of Therapeutic and Support Services to children and families who need it most.

Achievements and performance

In relation to the strategic objectives, the Charity has made a positive impact upon many lives during the year.

Service delivery plan developed to deliver KPIs and new operating model

- The Council Contract and Partner service level agreements have been delivered;
- The contract KPIs have been exceeded;
- The Service delivery plan has continued to develop the Charity's operating model;
- The Charity's staff deliver the core services via two work streams of: Family support, Universal services;
- The standard of service delivery has been rated as "Good" by Bedford Borough Council;
- New Therapeutic Support Service established and working effectively;
- New Contracts and grant funding secured for future years.

Matrix management and partnership working in action

- Family Support Practitioners are aligned to early year providers as link-workers and liaison arrangements established;
- School and educational support being provided by Peter Pan Teaching School Alliance is driving up the standards of service delivery and offering effective peer support;
- The Charity's website, Facebook and bookings portal are in full use by beneficiaries.

General

- Providing children's centre services to children and supporting vulnerable children with targeted support;
- Making excellent progress in developing the Bedford Borough children's centres with a "Good" assessment being maintained throughout the year;
- Continuing to foster close partnerships and working relationships with social care and health services for the benefit of the families who are cared for;
- Developing new, much-needed services that respond to local needs.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

The services provided are subject to Commissioner review and the suite of outcomes and key performance indicators agreed in the Council's contract. Performance against these is monitored on a regular basis.

Strategic developments on new activities

The Charity has worked hard to incorporate and deliver services in a compressed timescale. It will seek to expand its operations when it is prudent and sensible to do so and where there is a need to expand the delivery of services to beneficiaries.

Looking to the future

The Charity is committed to developing a strong and vibrant organisation in order to serve its beneficiaries and the local community. In doing so, it will

- Develop existing service delivery,
- Build upon the foundations established in the incorporation to attract new business in areas of strength,
- Improve value for money,
- Challenge expenditure levels,
- Ensure that all service areas are exceeding performance targets.

Risks and uncertainties

Risks that may prevent the Charity achieving its objectives are considered and reviewed by the Group Trustee Board on a periodic basis as part of the corporate planning processes. The risks are recorded and assessed in terms of their impact and probability. Major risks, presenting the greatest threats to the Charity are reported to the Group Trustee Board at every meeting. The Charity's major risks relate to:

- Loss of contract income,
- Safeguarding / service user reputational incident,
- Key performance indicator compliance,
- Partner effectiveness,
- Property legislative compliance relating to local authority buildings
- Service user reluctance to re-engage following Covid-19.

One of the principal risks relates to safeguarding given the beneficiary group that is being worked with. Whilst the Trustee Board reviews controls and standards, One YMCA provides extensive safeguarding support through its Safeguarding Leads Meeting which operates on a Group basis to challenge, support and review the protection and prevention arrangements in force. ECPs Head of Family Support attends the Safeguarding Leads meeting as well as advising on any concerns for the Charity. The Safeguarding Policy is regularly reviewed by One YMCA, the Business Manager and Partners to ensure that it meets the needs of the services being provided.

On an annual basis, the Group reviews its key policies and controls frameworks. These included the financial regulations as well as the Code of Governance, committee terms of reference, code of conduct, safeguarding, fraud, whistleblowing, health & safety and equal opportunities policies. The next review is scheduled for Summer/Autumn 2021.

The risk management and internal controls arrangements are described in more detail in the Report of the Trustee Board on pages 8 and 9.

Approval

In approving the Operating and Financial Review, the Trustees are also approving the Strategic Report in their capacity as directors of the Charity. The Operating and Financial Review and the Strategic Report were approved by the Trustee Board on 6 July 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



Sal Thirlway
Chair and Trustee

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Early Childhood Partnership for the year-ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of the charitable company's net movement in funds, including the income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Report of the Board, and the Operating and financial review and Strategic Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Report of the Board, the Operating and financial review and the Strategic Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report contained within the Report of the Board and the Operating and Financial Review and Strategic Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Report of the Board (which incorporates the director's report), the operating and financial review or the strategic report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable company; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities of the Trustee Board set out on page 10, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to the regulation of registered charities, regulation by Ofsted and Health and Safety regulation, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011, and we considered other factors such as taxation compliance.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to areas of estimation uncertainty and manual accounting journals. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators and tax authorities;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Evaluating management's controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing a sample of manual journals; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tracey Young (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Haysmacintyre LLP, Statutory
Auditor Date 10 September 2021

10 Queen Street Place
London

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**(Incorporating the income and expenditure account)****FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021**

		<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>	<u>Unrestricted & Total Funds</u>
	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2021</u> <u>£</u>	<u>2021</u> <u>£</u>	<u>2021</u> <u>£</u>	<u>2020</u> <u>£</u>
Income					
Donations and legacies	3	9,332	151,177	160,509	-
Charitable activities	3	1,366,628	369,849	1,736,477	1,141,866
Total income		1,375,960	521,026	1,896,986	1,141,866
Expenditure					
Charitable activities	4	1,180,534	389,182	1,569,716	1,080,771
Total expenditure		1,180,534	389,182	1,569,716	1,080,771
Net income		195,426	131,844	327,270	61,095
Net movement in funds		195,426	131,844	327,270	61,095
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds at start of period		80,309	-	80,309	19,214
Total funds carried forward	11	257,579	150,000	407,579	80,309

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

Registered company 10197205

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2021</u> £	<u>2020</u> £
Current assets			
Debtors	8	77,750	91,860
Cash at bank and in hand		641,677	279,726
Total current assets		719,427	371,585
Liabilities			
Creditors: falling due within one year	9	239,848	219,276
Total current liabilities		239,848	219,276
Net current assets		479,579	152,309
Provisions for liabilities and charges	10	72,000	72,000
Total Net Assets		407,579	80,309
The funds of the Charity			
Unrestricted funds		257,579	62,153
Restricted funds		150,000	18,156
Total Charity funds	11	407,579	80,309

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

The accounts were approved by the Trustee Board on 6 July 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:

Sal Thirlway



Chair and Trustee

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021

	<u>2021</u> £	<u>2020</u> £
Net cash inflow from operating activities	361,951	111,454
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	279,726	168,272
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	<u>641,677</u>	<u>279,726</u>
Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities:		
Net income for the year	327,270	61,095
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	14,109	(67,793)
Increase in creditors	20,572	118,151
Net cash inflow from operating activities	<u>361,951</u>	<u>111,453</u>
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash	641,677	279,726
Cash equivalents	-	-
Total cash and cash equivalents	<u>641,677</u>	<u>279,726</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. Status

The Company is limited by guarantee, registered under the Companies Act 2006 registration number 10197205 and a registered Charity number 1168090. The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The registered office is 30 Meadway, Bedford, MK41 9HU.

The sole corporate member is One YMCA.

The Member of the Company undertakes to contribute such amount as may be required (not exceeding £1.00) to the assets of the Company in the event of the same being wound up while it is a member for payment of the debt and liabilities of the Company contracted and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up. If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Company there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, shall transferred to the Member (One YMCA) or if the Member no longer exists or declined to receive the assets, then to the National Council of Young Men's Christian Association (Incorporated) or, in the event that these routes are inoperable, as directed by the Charity Commission.

2. Principal accounting policies

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities second edition, effective 1 January 2019, preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

In the view of the trustees in applying the accounting policies adopted, the only area of judgement relates to the provision for dilapidations as disclosed in 2(j). No other judgements were required that have a significant effect on the amounts recognised in the financial statements nor do any estimates or assumptions made carry a significant risk of material adjustment in the next financial year. No complex financial instruments are held.

(a) Basis of accounting

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction values unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes. Those assets measured at fair value are re-measured at each balance sheet date.

(b) Going concern

The Charity's business activities, its current financial position and factors likely to affect its future development are set out within the Operating and Financial Review. On this basis, the Trustee Board has a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, being a period of twelve months after the date on which the report and financial statements are signed. As a consequence, they continue to support the going concern basis in preparing financial statements. No material uncertainties exist.

(c) Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when:

- a) the Charity becomes entitled to the resources,
- b) it is more likely than not that the Charity will receive the resources;
- c) the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability

Contractual income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities once the Charity has delivered its obligations.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

(d) **Volunteer help**

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts, but is described in the Trustees' annual report.

(e) **Expenditure**

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

The Charity has incurred expenditure on support costs. Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the Charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the Charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

(f) **Debtors and creditors**

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment and short-term creditors and measured at the transaction price.

(g) **Deferred income**

Where income has been received in respect of service to be provided in a future period, the relevant income has been deferred as a creditor.

(h) **Operating leases**

Rentals payable under the operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term. The benefits of lease incentives entered into after the date of transition to FRS102 are recognised in income and expenditure over the lease period.

(i) **Pensions**

Group Personal Pension Plan (defined contribution)

The Charity also makes contributions to a group personal pension plan (defined contribution) provided by Aviva which is open to all employees.

(j) **Provisions for Liabilities**

Provision has been made for expected property costs at the end of the leases based on the lease terms, management's assessment of the property condition and external evidence supporting the likely costs. The estimation involves a level of judgment and will be reassessed annually.

(k) **Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the Charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**3. Income**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
	<u>2021</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies				
Donations	9,332	151,177	160,509	-
Charitable activities				
Bedford Borough Council children's centres contract	1,090,768	-	1,090,768	1,072,025
Therapeutic and specialist support services	209,534	369,849	579,383	20,409
Other	66,326	-	66,326	49,432
Total income	1,375,960	521,026	1,896,986	1,141,866

Restricted income received in 2020 relating to charitable activities totalled £20,409.

4. Expenditure

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total funds	Total funds
	<u>2021</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
	£	£	£	£
Charitable activities				
Children's centre service delivery	952,954	25,969	978,923	717,216
Programme delivery by partner organisations	78,030	-	78,030	265,054
Therapeutic and specialist support services	-	363,213	363,213	-
Support costs	149,550	-	149,550	98,500
Total expenditure	1,180,534	389,132	1,569,716	1,080,770

Restricted expenditure relating to charitable activities in 2020 totalled £2,253.

5. Support costs

	Children's Centre	Therapeutic Services	Total funds	Total funds
	<u>2021</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
	£	£	£	£
Auditors remuneration (excluding VAT) for audit services	2,553	947	3,500	2,500
Company secretarial	3,647	1,353	5,000	5,000
Governance costs	6,200	2,300	8,500	7,500
Finance, human resources, property & safety (inc. VAT)	102,879	38,171	141,050	91,000
Total support costs	109,078	40,472	149,550	98,500

Support costs and governance costs are apportioned between the children's centres and Therapeutic Services based upon the time spent on each activity.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**6. Trustee Board**

The Trustees are the non-executive directors of the Company and are also the Trustee Board. None of the Trustee Board received emoluments. No expenses were reimbursed during the financial period (2020: nil).

7. Employee information

Average monthly number of employees	2021	2020
	No	No
Children's centres	28.8	26.7
Therapeutic Support Services	14.5	-
Total	43.3	26.7

	2021	2020
	£	£
Staff costs (for the above persons)		
Wages and salaries	907,746	404,741
Social security costs	73,311	28,217
Other pension costs	33,745	15,470
	1,014,802	448,428

There were no employees earning more than £60,000 per annum (2020: nil).

The aggregate emoluments of key management personnel were £37,228 (2020: £22,602). The role of Business Manager is performed by the Director of Family Services employed by One YMCA and recharged to the Charity as detailed in note 13.

8. Debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade debtors	57,316	91,860
Prepayments and accrued income	20,434	-
	77,750	91,860

9. Creditors**Amounts falling due within one year**

	2021	2020
	£	£
Trade creditors	44,349	15,728
Accruals	75,196	76,014
Deferred income	63,727	110,650
Other taxes and social security costs	16,940	10,329
Other creditors	23,776	3,869
Amounts owed to parent company	15,860	2,686
	239,848	219,276

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**10. Provisions for liabilities and charges**

	2021	2020
	£	£
At 1 April	72,000	47,000
Arising during the year	-	25,000
Used during the year	-	-
At 31 March	72,000	72,000

A provision for dilapidations to premises is being held to cover the costs of any necessary reinstatement and repairs to the properties at the termination of the leases.

11. Fund analysis - 2021

Fund	<u>Funds b/f</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Funds c/f</u>
Unrestricted - general purposes	62,153	1,375,960	1,180,533	257,579
Restricted Funds:				
Friends of Eastcott	18,156	-	18,156	-
Big Lottery – Horizons Project	-	164,474	164,474	-
Children in Need	-	39,383	39,383	-
Harpur Trust	-	44,813	44,813	-
Male Victims	-	74,857	74,857	-
Violence & Exploitation Reduction Unit	-	22,182	22,182	-
Bedfordshire and Luton Community	-	6,504	6,504	-
Children in Need Covid Booster	-	3,600	3,600	-
CAST (Comic Relief)	-	5,000	5,000	-
Bedfordshire police	-	1,223	1,223	-
National Lottery - Dads Aloud	-	4,313	4,313	-
Wishing Tree	-	3,500	3,500	-
One YMCA	-	150,000	-	150,000
Safelives	-	1,176	1,176	-
Total	80,309	1,896,986	1,569,715	407,579

Big Lottery Fund – Horizons Project

A project working with families affected by domestic abuse, parental substance misuse and parental mental health issues. Funding of £164,474 was received against expenditure during 2021.

Children In Need

A grant funding the provision of a full-time therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse. Funding of £39,383 was received against expenditure during 2021.

Harpur Trust

A grant funding the provision of a full time play therapist supporting children affected by domestic abuse. Funding of £44,813 was received against expenditure during 2021.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Fund analysis continued

Male Victims

A project supporting male victims of domestic abuse. Funding of £15,000 was received during the year from the People's Postcode Trust against expenditure incurred and £95,699 was received from the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner against expenditure of £59,857. A balance of £35,842 was held within deferred income.

Violence and Exploitation Reduction Unit

A project delivering targeted play therapy for children. Funding of £36,000 was received during the year of which £22,182 was expended and the balance of £13,820 was held within deferred income.

Bedfordshire and Luton Community

Covid-19 funding of £6,504 was awarded during the year to purchase laptops.

Children In Need – Covid Booster

A grant of £3,600 for the provision of emotional and wellbeing support for children affected by domestic abuse and Covid-19.

CAST (Comic Relief)

A grant of £5,000 was awarded to explore the use of digital services.

Bedfordshire Police

Funding of £1,223 was awarded to provide pop up banners relating to male victims.

National Lottery Grant – Dads Aloud

Early Childhood Partnership was awarded a grant from The National Lottery Awards for All fund during 2020. The funding allows the Charity to run a weekly group for fathers and their children aged under five. It provides them the opportunity to build social networks, creates an informal support system and strengthens relationships in and around the community. During 2021 £4,313 was expended with a balance of £2,444 being held in deferred income.

Wishing Tree

A donation of £3,500 was received from the Wishing Tree Appeal to fund overtime working for Christmas workshops.

Safelives

A donation of £1,176 to fund staff laptops was received from Safelives.

Friends of Eastcotts Fund

A fund of £18,156 was transferred to Early Childhood Partnership in 2020 to fund the replacement of items at the Eastcotts children's centre. The funds were raised by the local community and was fully expended in 2021.

One YMCA

A donation of £150,000 was made by One YMCA to ECP to be spread in equal amounts across the next three years, restricted to the service delivery and administration costs for existing and new activities delivered by ECP staff which help the wider Group in the aspiration to "Double its Impact".

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**Fund analysis - 2020**

Fund	<u>Funds b/f</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Funds c/f</u>
Unrestricted – general purposes	19,214	1,121,457	1,078,518	62,153
Restricted – Friends of Eastcott	-	18,156	-	18,156
Restricted – National Lottery	-	2,253	2,253	-
Total	19,214	1,141,866	1,080,771	80,309

12. Taxation

The Company is a registered Charity qualifying for relief from income and capital gains taxes on its Charitable activities.

13. Related party transactionsOne YMCA

For the financial period under review, two of the Trustees are also Trustees of One YMCA. They were: Sal Thirlway and Alan Victor. One YMCA provides central services to the Charity such as finance, human resources, safety & compliance and company secretarial work on an arm's length basis. A charge was made for these services amounting to £96,000 (inclusive of VAT) (2020: £96,000). In addition to this a charge of £33,494 (inclusive of VAT) was made for key management personnel during 2020/21 (2020: £27,123) and a charge of £3,666 (inclusive of VAT) was made for marketing services during 2020/21 (2020: nil). An amount of £13,997 is accrued for charges not yet billed relating to 2020/21 (2020: £2,686) and shown as a balance due to One YMCA.

The Charity benefits from an inter-company loan facility for short term cash flow purposes. It was not used in 2019/20. When used, interest is chargeable, it is subject to a debenture deed and One YMCA has a registered charge in respect of it. There is currently a nil balance (2020: £Nil).

Others

For the financial year under review:

- A charge of £54,434 (2020: £38,030) was paid in respect of Peter Pan Teaching Schools Alliance for services during the financial year. An amount of £2,535 is accrued for charges not yet billed relating to 2020/21 (2020: £12,675). In addition, £10,451 (2020: £8,887) was paid in respect of site costs for two properties. Deborah James, a trustee, was a member of the strategic governing board of Peter Pan Teaching Schools Alliance which provides teaching and education support.
- A charge was made by FACES Bedford for services amounting to £21,600 (2020: £32,400). An amount of £10,800 is accrued for charges not yet billed relating to 2020/21. Eve Burt served as a trustee of the Charity and she was also a trustee of FACES Bedford who provide volunteering support.
- The wife of a trustee was employed throughout the year as a Domestic Violence Administrator. During the year her remuneration was £14,208.

Conflicts of interest

A conflicts of interest policy is in force and all interests are declared. Where appropriate, conflicted trustees do not participate in decisions.

NOTES TO THE REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

14. Operating lease commitments

There are a number of leases in place for children's centre properties. The rent at each property is £1.

15. Post balance sheet events

Following a competitive tendering process, the Charity has retained the Bedford Borough children's centre contract, with an average income of £993k per year, across five years. This achievement creates significant financial stability for the charity, but more importantly, allows us to reach, engage and help transform the lives of thousands of local families. We look forward to working with the Council and other ECP Partners to deliver this new contract.