



ANNUAL REPORT

2024

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The trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year to 31st March 2024.

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Great Open Door

www.greatopendoor.org.uk

No. 1169471

Charity

VISION AND VALUES

Offering schools exceptional resources that capture children's imaginations.

Our Vision: who we are

Our vision is to 'raise the next generation to know their God.' This is fulfilled by teaching the Christian faith and Christian moral values to primary school children in Harlow Essex and the surrounding area in engaging and relevant ways so that they can make an informed choice about belief in God and following His Son, Jesus Christ. We also seek to support students in their spiritual, social and moral development.

Our Values: who we aim to be

Great Open Door aims to offer schools exceptional resources, which capture children's imaginations, by combining the following Values

Passion and Conviction: which communicates

Creativity and Originality: which is memorable

Continuous Improvement: which increases our skills and develops the team's faith

Prayerfulness: which continually acknowledges that this is the Lord's work

Diligence: which demonstrates professionalism and the desire to serve

Partnering: which recognises the importance of fostering good working relationships with schools, churches, and the local community.

Objects of the Charity

To advance the Christian faith among young people and families, in schools and groups, and in conjunction with the churches in Harlow Essex and the surrounding area.

Public Benefit Statement

The Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and believe that their activities meet the public benefit guidance by teaching Christian values and the Christian faith to school children in every local school we are invited into and by encouraging greater partnerships between schools and churches. We assist schools by reinforcing their values, aligning programmes with the national curriculum and by helping them to meet their

requirements for collective acts of worship. We provide this service regularly and without charge in schools and in the community. There are no restrictions on children and young people having access to this service.

WHAT WE ACHIEVED

The trustees were thankful to see a productive year despite disruptions to school life through RAAC, teacher strikes and the state funeral.

The Trustees are confident that the ministry can move forward serving our local schools with an enlarged assembly team enabling us to offer assemblies, seasonal workshops, additional RE lessons and increasing our assembly inclusivity.

The “Turning Worries into Prayers” programme ran from January to July 2023. This assembly recognises the importance of sharing worries rather than carrying them as secret burdens and explains that Christians can share their worries and concerns with Jesus through prayer. Lively dramas, including the ever-popular Shrek and the Talking Donkey held the children’s attention as did practical applications of these principles. Pupil feedback confirms they understood the message and enjoyed the variety of assembly content.

September saw rehearsals flowing into delivery of the “Making a Difference” programme. This assembly makes a powerful point that with Jesus helping us we can make a difference through kindness. Pupil feedback included “this was not just the best assembly but the best experience EVER!” A teacher from Jerounds came up to the team after the assembly to say “the message was so relevant with vaping and social media examples.”

The Great Open Door Christmas workshop programme was delivered by two smaller teams in November this year. The workshop looked at Christmas traditions and identifies what is festive fluff, that can get in the way of celebrating the birth of Jesus, and what really relates and is important to the nativity story. Seven schools were visited delivering to combined years 5 & 6 pupils.

A trial Puppet lunch club was offered at St Albans in March to teach 9 young evangelists how to use puppets and perform “Jesus you’re amazing”. Three workshops led by Andy Walker, Pam Harknett and Jo Hargrave enabled the pupils to deliver a wonderful performance for a school Easter assembly. The sessions proved there was the interest and enough time to produce constructive content.

Lessons explaining the Trinity were delivered to year 3 pupils in two schools by Tina Liu, Pam Harknett and Jo Hargrave. Delivery was timed around Pentecost and celebrated the coming of the Holy Spirit in power on the first church as well as looking at one God in three persons.

Jo Hargrave met with All Nations Christian College, Ware to offer two possible placements for students, namely making our assemblies more inclusive and devising RE lessons for the new syllabus. Students did not take up the offer this year. We will review what we offer and hopefully provide placement opportunities again next year.

Pam Wright has assisted the assembly team in making deliveries more accessible for partially sighted pupils. With an awareness of how to improve pupil accessibility, Pam engaged with a pupil from Fawbert & Barnard School before the assembly giving them an opportunity to feel puppets, look close up at costumes and scenery and gave a running dialogue of scene changes during the assembly. Going forward we are offering this provision to each school when bookings are made. To date one further primary school has accepted this additional help.

In the year under review the Great Open Door made 29 school visits delivering two assembly programmes, 7 Christmas workshops, 3 puppet workshops and 2 trinity lessons. We are delighted that New Hall Primary School has started taking assemblies from Great Open Door.

The Trustees believe there has never been a more important time to share God's message of hope and love with the next generation and are seeking to extend the reach of the ministry.

Praise be to God!

Volunteers

The ministry continues to be blessed with a wonderful team of committed and enthusiastic volunteers who have worked very hard delivering assemblies. On 31 March 2024 the volunteers were: Agnes Amofa, Pam Harknett, Angela Hodgson, Tina Liu, Andy Walker, Fiona Willmore and Paul Welfare 'The Sound Man' who, together with Jo Hargrave, the paid part time Schools Work Team Leader, comprise the assembly team going into schools. The Trustees are thankful for these amazing volunteers, without which the ministry could not function.

The Trustees are thankful to Andy Walker for both up-sizing his car and clearing space in his garage to store & transit current assembly props each week.

The Trustees are delighted that the team has gained three new members: Tina Liu expressed a desire to join the team last year and has fully participated since April bringing with her, her experience of delivering assemblies in primary schools with Stort Valley Schools Trust. Fiona Willmore joined in September and brings a servant heart and a willingness to give anything a go. Pam Wright has joined the team on call, in an advisory capacity, to help those pupils with sight impairment to fully engage in our assemblies.

Being blessed with a number of new team members we ran an in-house puppet training day for the whole team in December. Paul Welfare and Agnes Amofa

attended an additional day's puppet training with One Way UK in Braintree in April 2024.

In addition to the assembly team in September 2023 Michelle Walker joined as an administration volunteer. Having experienced problems in managing workload Jo Hargrave is very grateful to receive this office support liaising with schools for assembly, workshop and RE lesson bookings.

We conclude the year intentionally praying for another male volunteer to join the ministry. As well as helping to maintain a good gender balance it would be particularly timely to have another 'Roady' on the team!

Trustees

The Trustees on 31 March 2024 were Phil Gray, Chair of Trustees, Ron Kingsmill, Treasurer, Sarah Mitchell, Secretary and Safeguarding Trustee and Davina Smith.

Phil Gray retired as a trustee at the conclusion of the June trustees meeting held on 24 June 2024. This marked 21 years since he founded Great Open Door's ministry and formulated its vision, strategy and values.

The trustees were delighted to appoint Sarah Mitchell the next Chair of Trustees. Sarah continues to be the Safeguarding Trustee. The trustees were also delighted to appoint Paul Welfare as a trustee on 24 June 2024. Paul has been a faithful member of the schools ministry team and is now its longest serving member. He has agreed to become the Secretary. Davina Smith has agreed to produce the accounts, a role previously undertaken by Phil Gray. Ron Kingsmill's appointment as a trustee will end on 4th October 2025 as this will be the end of his second term of office.

At the trustees meeting held on 24 June 2024 it was agreed to change the address of the registered office to: 6 The Chantry Harlow Essex CM20 2LX

Safeguarding

The Safeguarding Trustee ensured that the protocols for appointing new team members were followed rigorously and that all DBS checks were carried out in a timely manner. The team and trustees are encouraged to add their DBS to the update service and information about dates of update are shared with the Safeguarding Trustee. The safeguarding Trustee has also given reminders to report any concerns however minor to the schools at the time or as soon after as possible.

Sound System

Last year the Trustees began a major upgrade of the sound system, when six aging radio mics were replaced with modern high quality Wi-Fi radio mics and attendant headsets, etc. The upgrade was completed this year with the purchase of two further high quality Wi-Fi radio mics. The eight Wi-Fi radio mics

were then racked to ensure that they are secure when transported and quick and easy to set up and operate within school halls. The Trustees wish to express their heartfelt thanks to Owen Jenkins who volunteered to expertly rack the mics and mixer, etc. Owen proved to be an answer to prayer by diligently and promptly completing the upgrade of the sound system

The Trustees wish to thank our supporters who responded to the appeal to fund these further improvements to the sound system. Their generous donations raised £1,000, which was more than enough to pay for the final stage of the upgrade.

Website

The Trustees wish to thank Barry Wales, who designed the website, for his ongoing help and advice. The Trustees are also grateful to Harefield Church who continue to pay the website maintenance costs on behalf of the ministry.

Great Open Door's online resources can be easily accessed via <https://greatopendoor.org.uk/online-resources/>

Prayer

In September 2023 Great Open Door celebrated 20 years of active ministry into local primary schools with a combined "soak in" and celebration event at Lighthouse Church. This was well attended by many past team members, trustees and prayer supporters. There were various creative prayer stations, a wonderful cake and amazing testimonies from two previous students, Caleb and Jonathan!

Weekly 'Pause for Prayer' emails have continued to supporters as part of a long-term strategy to build on the prayer foundation. The aim of these brief focused prayer bulletins is to increase contact with supporters by encouraging the desire to pray for Great Open Door's schools ministry and support Christian teachers in schools. Some churches use this information to regularly feed Great Open Door into church prayers.

The Trustees are thankful to everyone who has supported the ministry in prayer.

Mission Partner

Great Open Door is a Local Mission Partner of Scripture Union. This provides the ministry opportunities for networking and offers training and resources in various aspects of youth and children's work.

Jo Hargrave benefitted from a SU retreat in Manchester in May which was refreshing, reviving and re-affirming. At the event a discussion of the national trend towards young people feeling respect is earned helped with the local experience of assembly halls being more chaotic post Covid. Future programmes will have control mechanisms outlined up front and maintained during each assembly.

Heart 4 Harlow

The Trustees are grateful for the work of Heart 4 Harlow and for their enthusiastic support and endorsement of our ministry, both in terms of prayer and support with publicity.

In an effort to raise awareness within the churches of opportunities to volunteer with Great

Open Door and serve within our schools we visited Gateway Freedom Church in May and

Jo Hargrave assisted St Marys Churchgate Street with their Easter workshop at New Hall

school in February. The aim is for Great Open Door to benefit from local links and also encourage churches to prayerfully build links with the ministry and with their local schools.

LEGAL & ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered charity name Great Open Door

Registered charity number: 1169471

The Trustees who served the charity during the period and since the year end were as follows:

P Gray (Resigned 24th June 2024)
R Kingsmill (Appointed 4th October 2022)
S Mitchell (Appointed 29 July 2023)
D Smith (Appointed 29 July 2023)
P Welfare (Appointed 24th June 2024)

Registered Office: 6 The Chantry
Harlow
Essex
CM20 2LX

Bankers: Lloyds Bank Plc
25 Gresham Street
London
EC2V 7HN

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by

S. Mitchell
Sarah Mitchell
Trustee

3rd October 2024

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Trustees present their Income and Expenditure Account for the year under review and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 March 2024. The Trustees do not consider it necessary to have an independent examiner's report as the income of the charity is below the £25,000 threshold to require this and the financial activities are very straightforward.

Income for the period under review was £6,291 and expenditure on charitable activities was £9,332, leaving cash funds of £2,202 at the year end. Charitable expenditure included £942 spent on the sound system purchasing two Wi-Fi radio microphones and subsequently racking a total of eight radio microphones, together with charitable donations totaling £1,000 to Scripture Union, the Christian Drama Resource Centre and Prayer Spaces in Schools.

We are grateful to the churches, individuals and trusts who have supported the ministry and who continue to fund our work.

Total assets amounted to £4,902 including the estimated value of the portable sound system (£2,500) and puppets and props (£200) many of which were gifted to the charity. The Trustees are grateful for all the goods and services donated to the charity.

During the period under review Great Open Door acted as the custodian of the cash funds of Puppets Galore, a Christian schools work charity with similar objects and values to Great Open Door. At 31 March 2024 Puppets Galore's cash funds amounted to £1,128.

There were no outstanding liabilities at 31 March 2024.

FINANCIAL REPORT

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

12 months ended 31 March 2024

	2024	2023
	Year £	Year £
Income from Charitable Activities		
Donations		
Churches	1,003,919	1,075,728
Individuals		46
Gift Aid	1,300	5
	6,219	8,424
Total Income		
Expenditure on Charitable Activities		
Subcontractor Services	6,835	6,404
Assemblies & Lessons	176	241
Sound System	942	2498
Insurance	261	261
Prayer		25
Miscellaneous	56	
Training	62	
Donations	1,000	
	9,332	9,429
Total Expenditure		
		1,0
Excess of Expenditure over Income		
	3,113	05
	5,315	6,320
Cash Funds at 31 March 2023/31 March 2022	-	
Excess of Expenditure over Income		
	3,113	1,005
		£5,
Cash Funds at 31 March 2024/31 March 2023		
	£2,202	315

FINANCIAL REPORT

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

As at 31 March 2024

Assets	£	£
Cash Funds		
Unrestricted Funds		2,202
Donated Items at Valuation		
Sound and PA Equipment	2,500	
Puppets and Props	200	
		2,700
Total Assets		£4,902