



MAGIC FOR SMILES

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31st December 2022

Charity:	Magic for Smiles (MFS)
Registration number:	1182676
Address:	77 Percy St, Oxford OX4 3AD
Trustee names:	Sioned Jones (Chair), Anne Cooper

The Trustees present their report for the year ended 31 December 2022

1. Structure, Governance, Management

Structure

Magic for Smiles (MFS) is a charitable incorporated organisation constituted under the foundation model and registered on 28 March 2019.

Governance

For the reporting period the charity has two trustees and a technical adviser. The trustees were recruited in November 2020 on the basis of their ability to provide the necessary support to the charity's mission, especially with its need to increase its funding and profile – this recruitment required skills, knowledge, experience and a willingness to give the required time. One trustee had to leave for personal reasons (Stella Jones) but we have Sioned Jones (Chair), and Anne Cooper (fundraising lead). We have not recruited a replacement third trustee as currently have not recognised a gap in skills required on the board. This is continually monitored.

The trustees met quarterly during the year to monitor the activities of the charity against its strategic objectives and review and amend these, as well as providing more frequent support, advice and governance of the charity. Outside the meetings the Chair provided accounting and payment services to the magician. Each of the meetings was attended by Jamie Balfour-Paul, the Founder and de-facto CEO of the charity.

Management

Day to day management of the charity is carried out, on a voluntary basis by Jamie Balfour-Paul. He is also the charity's humanitarian magician and for this work he is employed by the charity on a consultancy basis and is remunerated. He is supported in the charity's management by the Trustees.

2. Objectives and Activities

The charitable objects of Magic for Smiles are: *the relief and assistance of refugees and other vulnerable children in the Lebanon and other countries of the Middle East and beyond through the provision of magic as a form of entertainment and psychosocial support, with a view to the relief of stress and trauma and improving the lives of such persons.*

With the end of pandemic restrictions in the region, and before that in the UK (which left MFS obliged to work online for the most part), trips to the region resumed during the year while work in the UK expanded. The focus was on refugees (and host communities) in Turkey, while Jordan was still catching up post COVID and while Lebanon remained on pause due to visa restrictions. These three countries were chosen when the charity was set up because they have the highest per capita refugee populations in the world. The online work to Syria (which cannot be accessed physically) continued according to capacity. The main development during the year was the expansion in the UK market. The three objectives in place for the year were:

Objective 1: MFS to become more established regionally and in UK

Objective 2: MFS to focus down on sustained partnerships as well as further consolidation of its spread in the region.

Objective 3: Successful sustained funding secured from at least two trusts or foundations

The Trustees confirm they have given due regard to the Charity Commission's published guidance on public benefit when determining the charities activities.

3. Achievements and Performance,

Objective 1: Regional and UK establishment

With the significant easing of restrictions due to the COVID pandemic, MFS was able to expand its operations in the Middle East and in the UK. We conducted double the events of 2021 (which was a year that still had pandemic restrictions) mainly due to the increase in UK work.

Events totalled 64 (57 shows including 5 for fundraising, 7 workshops) benefiting 3575 children. Over half the shows (39) were in the UK, and all the workshops along with the rest of the shows in two visits to Turkey. Jordan was not visited in 2022 as partner organisations still faced restrictions due to COVID and due to the impact of COVID had less funds and staff.

By way of comparison, previous FYs saw the following:

FY 2021 32 events (all shows bar one workshop) for 1515 children

FY 2020 48 events (28 shows, 20 workshops) for 1574 children

FY 2019 59 events all in the Middle East (plus 9 networking & fundraising events) for 4055 children

Very positive feedback was secured through the evaluations which happen after most events and with the reviews on the website <https://magicforsmiles.com/reviews>. The shows impact particularly on emotional benefits (especially entertainment, de-stressing and happiness), cognitive benefits (concentration, analysis and imagination) and social benefits (especially interaction, and self-confidence) even if one off which was the majority of cases. And as regards workshops, with the increased number of workshops (in Turkey), an impact emphasis was made on social benefits (self-confidence and self-esteem) gained through performance.

MFS continued to strengthen its profile through its visibility and networking events (magic conventions) as well as on social media targeting humanitarian and magic communities.

One UK partner reviewed as follows:

"For some of our refugee children in Berkshire today was really magical. They were entertained by the spellbinding Jamie Jibberish, a humanitarian magician from Magic for Smiles, who uses his conjuring to help vulnerable children feel better. To see him performing for this group of kids who have been through so much, and hardly ever get any sort of treats, was utterly heartwarming. They were totally taken out of themselves, and gasped laughed and exclaimed in wonder as Jamie performed a succession of brilliant tricks...totally these guys felt part of something – and even better something fun"

Objective 2: Sustained partnerships

MFS partners in the region started recovering from the pandemic with the absence of restrictions but funding cuts still affected capacity for programming, while restrictions in the UK were mainly lifted earlier in 2021. Partnerships increased from 7 to 10 in the UK, and from 2 to 6 in Turkey, with 1 in Syria continuing and 1 in Lebanon both via very gratifying and humbling impactful online work.

The UK work has introduced the biggest expansion in sustained partnership but this upturn has been mainly due to the increased number of asylum seekers in hotels. We continue to have the anecdotal evidence of the very positive feedback described above, but have still not been able to secure the partnership and funding for conducting impact research on the ground – however, the nature of the transient location of the asylum seekers staying temporarily in hotels and moving regularly would make the type of research work we want to undertake difficult but we still seek funding and a

partnership where a longer term programme of shows and tuition workshops can take place with a group.

Objective 3: Grant funding from two trusts and increased awareness

No regular trust was found to provide ongoing funding – it seems the legacy of funding cuts due to COVID were one factor. However, some trusts from 2021 were able to contribute in 2022 as laid out below.

4. Financial review

Total income for the year 2022 was £17,006.74, a small increase on the 2021 income of £14,882.60.

Expenditure for the year 2022 was £24,002.03 which was significantly more than in 2021 of £9,174.16 due to the fact we were able to travel internationally and undertake double the amount of shows than in 2021. The charity does not have a reserves policy but strives to have sufficient funding to cover the running costs and shows for the following three months, £6,000 but with a minimum cash in the bank of £200. As of 31st December 2022 there was £6,737.24 cash in the bank.

Fundraising:

Magic for Smiles currently raises the majority of its funds, from donations from the general public, through its online presence on Just Giving And direct donations. In 2022 this was a total of £9,839.74

The remainder of funds came from grants, £6,000, and contributions from partner organisations, £1,167.00

We do not work with professional fundraisers.

5. Details of any funds held as a custodian trustee

No funds are held as a custodian trustee.