



MAGIC FOR SMILES

Report of the Trustees for the Year Ended 31st December 2023

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 2023

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). Given the small turnover of the charity we have not recruited a replacement third trustee.

The trustees met during the year to monitor the activities of the charity against its strategic objectives and review and amend these, as well as providing support, advice and governance of the charity. Outside the meetings the Chair provided accounting and payment services to the magician. Meetings were 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, by Jamie Balfour-Paul. He is also the charity's humanitarian magician and for this work he is employed by the charity on a self-employed consultancy basis and is remunerated on presentation of invoices. 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.*

The objectives in place for the year were:

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

Objective 4: A more compassionate and fairer policy environment for asylum seekers in the UK, and a response to other regional crises where MFS could add value.

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

COVID put Jordan as hard to reach for visitors from early 2020 until late 2022. Turkey though did open earlier in 2022, so that Magic For Smiles could resume its face to face work, with mainly Syrian refugee children. It of course in 2023 suffered the horrific earthquake in the southeast region where Magic For Smiles had previously been operating in, as well as in North East Syria. Thus, it only became possible and sensible (with the focus in South East Turkey being on life saving work) to visit

Jordan during 2023. 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 (not displaced people) in the world. Work has continued over the last few years to build a presence and partnerships, but it remains a challenge due to the impact of the COVID pandemic, other disasters and limited capacity of partners, including in doing virtual work with them. Therefore, a significant focus in 2023 was in the UK.

In total we conducted 56 events: 37 in the UK, and 17 in Jordan (including 4 workshops) – numbers were slightly down in 2022 due to reduced workshops (demand had been high but partners saw funding cuts take effect) and reduced fundraising events (fewer private parties). Total beneficiaries were 3560 (with the number in the UK being around half adult family members).

By way of comparison, previous FYs saw the following:

FY 2022 64 events (including 7 workshops) for 3575 children

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

Although funding limitations mean that we have not identified a partner organisation to conduct research to generate impact evidence, good anecdotal evidence is building up. Very positive feedback continued to be 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 number of workshops in Jordan, an impact emphasis is made on social benefits (self-confidence and self-esteem) gained through performance.

Review from a partner in Jordan:

The magic workshop training and performance organized by Magic for Smiles was truly fantastic. The children who participated were engaged, enthusiastic, and showed great progress throughout the program. The workshop was well-structured, providing a perfect balance of learning and fun.

The trainer did an excellent job of teaching the children various magic tricks and techniques. he was patient, encouraging, and made sure that each child understood the tricks and could perform them confidently. The workshop not only taught the children magic but also helped boost their self-confidence and stage presence. It was inspiring to see how the kids blossomed and gained more self-assurance with each performance.

The highlight of the program was the final performance by the kids. They showcased their newfound skills and wowed the audience with their magic tricks. It was evident that they had worked hard and practiced diligently to perfect their performances. The pride and joy on their faces were truly heartwarming.

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

Objective 2: Sustained partnerships

Funding cuts persist in the region with donors having less funds and shifting them to respond in Ukraine, Yemen and Gaza. This means staff and therefore key contacts leave the partner organisation, or there is just no programme for children that is not essential lifesaving. The volume

of Syrian refugees within the region, and who inspired (along with Palestinians in Lebanon) the founding of Magic For Smiles, and the earthquake in Turkey mean there is less focus on them with too many competing demands for funding, especially for shelter.

In the UK, as above where funding for the partner organisation is an increasing constraint, it is not funding for Magic For Smiles that is impacting the programme and partnership building but the change in government policies that means asylum seekers and refugees are moving from hotels, where volunteer groups could support them and arrange our shows and workshops. It also means the volunteers, with whom Magic For Smiles works, are focused on providing alternative accommodation for these vulnerable people rather than organising activities for the children and their families.

In summary, partnerships have been disrupted by funding and staff changes but within the UK Care4Calais has offered the most sustained partnership.

Objective 3: Grant funding from two trusts and increased awareness

No regular trust income was found to provide ongoing funding. However, we are very grateful for the continued and new support from several trusts with the main ones outlined in the finance section below.

Objective 4: Asylum seeker and other policy influencing as the situation dictates

The main event during the year was the Illegal Migration Bill which was passed in autumn 2023, despite many attempts at influencing especially in the Lords. The outcome is that how you reach the UK, usually with no choice overrides the reason why you fled, creating 1000s of asylum seekers in limbo. If the objective was to reduce the hotel bill, it is noteworthy that in 2002 there were more asylum claims but no reliance on hotels. Also, again through demonstrations and letter writing, much time was spent pushing back on the immorality and legal issues around the Rwanda scheme. Finally in October 2023, the war on Gaza started. From a basic humanity perspective MFS has been active in the regular protests calling for a ceasefire and an end to arms transfers.

4. Financial review

Total income for the year 2023 was £12,756 as compared to £17,007 from 2022.

Expenditure for the year 2023 was £14,955 as compared to £24,002 2022 due to a greater proportion in 2022 of shows in the UK than in the region and which are costed differently. The charity does not have a reserves policy but strives to manage expenditure so that there is always at least £200 in the charity account. As of 31st December 2023, there was £4,539 cash in the bank.

Fundraising:


Magic for Smiles raised the majority of its funds, from donations from the general public, through its online presence on Justgiving (also on our website) via two appeals and an ongoing presence. Trust income was received from the Stanton Ballard Charitable Trust, Lord Faringdon Charitable Trust, and Leslie Farrer Brown Trust. Some partners are able to make a contribution to shows and that raised £2,124 in 2023.

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.

Annual Accounts

 CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES	Magic for Smiles			1182676		CC16a
	Receipts and payments accounts					
	For the period from	Period start date 01/01/2023	To	Period end date 31/12/2023		
Section A Receipts and payments						
	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £	
A1 Receipts						
Grants	-	2,000	-	2,000	6,000	
Donations	8,632	-	-	8,632	9,840	
Earned income (donations from shows)	2,124	-	-	2,124	1,167	
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	10,756	2,000	-	12,756	17,007	
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).						
	-	-	-	-		
	-	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	
Total receipts	10,756	2,000	-	12,756	17,007	
A3 Payments						
Humanitarian Magician	7,994	1,100	-	9,094	16,350	
IT, administration and membership	2,643	-	-	2,643	2,466	
Magic supplies	130	-	-	130	881	
UK travel and expenses	1,610	-	-	1,610	1,808	
International travel	1,478	-	-	1,478	2,497	
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	13,855	1,100	-	14,955	24,002	
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)						
	-	-	-	-		
	-	-	-	-		
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-	
Total payments	13,855	1,100	-	14,955	24,002	
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 3,099	900	-	- 2,199	- 6,995	
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-	
A6 Cash funds last year end	6,738	-	-	6,738	13,733	
Cash funds this year end	3,639	900	-	4,539	6,738	

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	At bank	4,539	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	4,539	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	Agreement Error	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	Details		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities	Details		-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	S M Jones	Sioned M Jones	23/10/2024	

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	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
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		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	4,539	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	Agreement Error	OK
	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
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