



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period 06/04/22 to 05/04/23

Charity name: Bridge Schools Support

Charity registration number: 1186110

Objectives and Activities

The Trust Deed states **the objects of the charity** as:

For the public benefit to promote the teaching of ESL (English as a Second Language) and other languages in the context of traditional values in such ways as the trustees think fit, in particular but not exclusively by making grants to organisations offering ESL across the world.

Our activities:

- Making grants to organisations
- Raising donations from the public
- Providing volunteer teachers to the organisations
- Training and mentoring teachers

The organisations helped:

- **Rio Vivo church** in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It has a ministry of free English classes.
- **Bridge Professional Development Centre** in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It is a business but also upskills employees, trains missionaries and models ESL best practices. It offers soft skills training (leadership, communication, customer service ...) and languages (English, Amharic, Arabic).
- **222 Ministries** serving Iranians worldwide. During the year, they changed their name to **Transform Iran**. We lead their online English classes with students paying a subsidised fee.

Our policy on grant-making:

- Only to organisations, not individuals.
- Organisations must offer ESL in the context of traditional values.
- Organisations must be in good relationship with one of our trustees or their church.
- If the organisation is a business, we fund non-core costs like scholarships, staff training etc.

Public Benefit:

The Trustees have had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance. In particular:

- Our beneficiary organisations serve the general public – anyone who wants the classes. Brazil offers free classes, 222 subsidised classes and Ethiopia upskills employees and disseminates best practice.
- Better English equips students for better social integration, better jobs and better educational opportunities.

Achievements and Performance

Rio Vivo church and Pulse Classes, Brazil

The English classes are run by the church. We made monthly grants totalling £23,435 to run them. The church used it mainly for the salary of the school leader.

As the year finished in April:

- Michael and Fernanda had decided to leave Brazil and move to England.
- The church had seen many individuals blessed, but few had stayed and it was decided to close it. The premises were vacated. Michael and Fernanda are mentoring one couple to continue a group in their home.
- The classes had their September semester with the usual seven online classes and one in-person class in the church premises. The February semester was reduced to three online classes, in anticipation of the church closing and because of fewer teachers.
- In retrospect, the classes have served their purpose in being a key to reaching out to the community. Several were added to the church, including the couple above and Eva who is doing an internship in Hope Bromley. Many visited the church. But Covid increased online classes at the expense of in-person classes and connection to the church declined.

Alpha was run once with four students from higher classes.

Bridge PDC (= Professional Development Centre), Ethiopia:

In 2020-21, we gave £5k emergency funding to avoid bankruptcy during Covid. There was also civil war. In 2021-22, we decided they must stand on their feet as a business and we only funded £2k for non-core expenses. This year also non-core expenses: £1,419 for a staff retreat, their zoom licence and some books.

Last year, they just survived. This year Abay reports they are nicely covering costs. Their main service of 'soft skills' training is expanding. The customers are NGOs, government bodies and companies. A recent example: leading a team-building retreat for 75 WHO staff. Some English courses continue: a kids summer school; a free course for Ethiopian missionary couples (taught online by Americans in a missionary training college in USA); Rob taught another course while mentoring one of their teachers.

Abay says 'the common thread to my life is knowing God and making disciples'.

In church he is an elder. With Bridge staff, he tries to mentor them and includes weekly prayer (optional because they are of different religious backgrounds). In Bridge, he hosts a group for men aiming to be better fathers. The motive for Bridge's main service of soft skills is bringing to Ethiopia best practice in business management, staff relations etc. At the same time, he is supportive of mission: the free course mentioned above and a recent partnership agreement made with SIM.

As Bridge grows and can pay him more, he hopes to reduce time taking consulting work with British Council.

E2GO (English To Go) with 222 ministries:

Covid turned our dreams of a school in Istanbul into plans for online classes.

In 2020-21 we ran pilot classes with some church leaders as students.

In 2021-22 we trained and gathered a team; we planned for launch.

This year, we had three ten-week courses. The first had 3 levels with 40 students completing. The third had 5 levels with nearly 50 students completing. Students came mostly from Turkey, Iran and UK. The protests in Iran led to government controls on the internet and few able to join our classes. Numbers lost there were matched by our connecting to a London church with lots of Iranians.

The team grew to include Hamid (project leader and teacher), his wife (teacher) and daughter (enroller); two other Iranians in Turkey as teachers; two teachers in UK. Rob directs/advises, but with authority and ownership clearly with 222 Ministries.

We use the English File course books also used in Brazil. This has facilitated two teachers moving between Brazil and Iran. Bible-based worksheets are used occasionally. So far, all students are connected with 222 churches and so they are Christians. 222 allows some staff to spend their time employed by 222 on the project. We pay three of the Iranians a small amount decided by 222. Students pay a nominal fee to 222.

The big event of the year was the tragic earthquake in eastern Turkey about 200km from Mersin. Buildings there were damaged and the population were told to live outdoors for a while. The little church, including four of our team, were focussed on surviving and, bless them, helping others. We made an appeal and gave £2,015 to 222. Our term-4 was delayed, but has just started.

Rob and Richard made a second visit to Mersin to connect with the team.

Other:

RB church in **Adelaide** has one class once a week. Alex was mentored by Rob in an Ethiopian class, then started the one in Adelaide, also online. Rob advises and helps.

Hope English project in RB Hope Bromley: this has a café and two online classes, both weekly. Good team. Small numbers of students (Ukrainian and various others). Some students bridged to the church. Rob jointly launched it with Lynne Upton who now effectively leads it. One team member being mentored by a teacher in our Iran classes.

Interaction between the projects:

Rob is the glue that holds it together. Some teachers have moved from one project to another. Common resources are the English File course book and various websites. Any teacher training comes from the same provider. Each project has its own team meetings (no joint ones).

Financial Review: 6/4/20 – 5/4/21

| | | <i>this year</i> | <i>last year</i> |
|-----------------|---|------------------|------------------|
| Incoming | Opening balance | 5,654 | 7,904 |
| | Gifts (from 5 churches and 30 individuals) | <u>27,877</u> | <u>18,604</u> |
| | Total Incoming | 33,531 | 26,508 |
| | | | |
| Outgoing | Brazil, Rio Vivo grants (mainly salary for the school leader) | 23,435 | 17,880 |
| | Brazil, poor appeal | | 62 |
| | Ethiopia grants (staff retreat, books, zoom) | 1,419 | 2,063 |
| | Iran: grants (salaries, laptops, medical help, training) | 1,572 | 579 |
| | Iran: visit to Turkey by Rob and Richard | 686 | |
| | Iran: earthquake appeal | 2,015 | |
| | Expenses (zoom, bank ...) | <u>261</u> | <u>269</u> |
| | Total Outgoing | 29,389 | 20,854 |
| | | | |
| | Closing balance | 4,142 | 5,654 |

Gift-Aid:

We made our third claim in July: £2,772. We claim annually.

Fund raising:

Individual: Through the personal networks and regular prayer letters of trustee Rob Rawlins and school leader Michael Rawlins in Brazil.

Churches: All connected with Michael (four Regions Beyond, one from his student days).

Donors specify how their donations should be allocated. If not specified, then 'open'.

Pattern of giving:

30 individual donors:

- 15 by monthly standing order £6,840
- 11 regulars, 1-3 times a year or in response to our appeals £5,368
- Only 4 donors are new this year 800

5 churches:

- 3 give monthly: RB-Hope, RB-Birmingham, Michael's Liverpool church £3,810
- 2 gave large one-off gifts: RB-Penge, RB-Adelaide £8,296

Gift-Aid on the previous year's donations £2,772

The regular giving and the two large church gifts made us in healthy balance most of the year. In December, we dipped to nearly zero and Rob made an appeal in his prayer letter. That brought us back to a healthy balance for the rest of the year.

Reserves:

We have none, except the bank balance. If donations dry up, so will our grants. Recipients know our monthly commitment depends on continuing donations. We have no other commitments, so we need no reserves.

Voluntary:

Expenses were £261: mainly a zoom licence and bank charges.

Rob and Richard's second trip to visit the Iranian team cost £686: mainly flights and car hire. We now pay three Iranians for their time at the rate decided by 222. This amount is only about £100pm (between them) - low because of exchange rates and 222's tight belt.

All other outgoings were grants. Other teachers are voluntary. The trustees are voluntary. Rob's running the charity is voluntary.

Risk:

If Rob were off sick, no one is currently available or trained to run the charity.

Structure, Governance and Management

The governing document is a trust deed.

Trustees:

- Meet 3 times a year. Rob sends an update report before each meeting.
- This year we have had our minimum of 3 trustees.
- Lisa completed her 3-year commitment and was re-appointed for 2 years. Rob and Chris should resign (and be re-appointed hopefully) at the next AGM.
- Gary Carvosso was invited to the last meeting. He agreed to two more as invitee.
- New trustees will receive our document 'Being a trustee of BSS' and will be assigned an existing trustee as a mentor.

Reference and Administrative details

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Charity name: | Bridge Schools Support |
| Other names used: | none |
| Registered charity number: | 1186110 |
| Address: | 320 Hither Green Lane, London SE13 6TS |
| Trustees: | Robert Champion Rawlins (chairman) } |
| | Lisa Jane Wilson } all acted all year |
| | Christopher Andrew Marston } |
| Runs the charity: | Rob Rawlins |

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)

| | |
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| | |
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Full name(s)

Robert Champion Rawlins

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Position (eg Secretary,
Chair, etc)

Chair

| |
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| |
|--|

Date

xx/x/2023

| |
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Bridge Schools Support

Statement of Financial Activities: 2022-2023

from 6/4/2022 to 5/4/2023

Incomings

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Opening balance on 6/4/2022 | 5,654.40 |
| Gifts: Unrestricted | 6,913.68 |
| Gifts: Restricted: Rio Vivo Support | 20,963.30 |
| <u>Total incomings:</u> | 33,531.38 |

Less Outgoings

| | |
|--|------------------|
| From Unrestricted account to Ethiopia | 1,419.30 |
| From Unrestricted account to Iran | 4,273.40 |
| From Restricted ac to Rio Vivo Support | 23,435.00 |
| Expenses (detail below) | <u>261.22</u> |
| <u>Total outgoings:</u> | 29,388.92 |

Closing balance on 5/4/2023 **4,142.46**

Expenses detail:

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Zoom licence | 143.88 |
| EFL resources | 44.54 |
| Bank charges | <u>72.80</u> |
| <u>Total Expenses:</u> | 261.22 |

Statement of Assets and Liabilites on 5/4/2023

Assets: Only cash held in bank (the closing balance) 4,142.00

Liabilities: None. We only receive gifts and make grants.
We make no commitments to our beneficiaries for future grants.
They know grants are dependent on gifts received.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

RcRawlins

Robert Champion Rawlins. Chair of Trustees

117 Marvels Lane,
Grove Park,
London SE12 9PP
16th May, 2023

To: Trustees of Bridge Schools Support

As an independent examiner of the accounts of Bridge Schools Support, I affirm that I have no personal relationship with the trustees.

Having examined the report, I have found no discrepancies.

RKPlummer

Richard Plummer