

**Charity registration number 1195059 (England and Wales)**

**THRIVE AT FIVE**  
**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

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Trustees	L Joy OBE G Gordon OBE M Davies MA, MSc Dr J Grenier CBE B Levinson OBE E Stanton T Scott	(Appointed 24 March 2025)
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Aida Cable	
Charity number	1195059	
Independent Auditors	Gerald Edelman LLP 73 Cornhill London EC3V 3QQ	
Bankers	CAF Bank Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4JQ	
Registered office	73 Cornhill London EC3V 3QQ	
Legal advisors	Stone King LLP Boundary House 91 Charterhouse Street London EC1M 6HR	

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THRIVE AT FIVE

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# THRIVE AT FIVE

## CEO STATEMENT

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

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We are delighted to share with you our annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025.

Our work spans the whole of a child's early journey, from strengthening support for families in the earliest months through to improving the quality and consistency of early years provision and the wider systems that shape children's developmental outcomes. We operate across the breadth of the health, education, public, private and voluntary sectors to help ensure children receive consistent, high-quality support at the right time.

Everything Thrive at Five does is to ensure all children in their early years have the strong foundations they need for life and learning. We bring together and work alongside local communities, families and partners to join up and strengthen the early years system, supporting children to thrive from pregnancy to five.

Thanks to our many partners and supporters Thrive at Five now has programmes in three places: in Stoke-on-Trent; Redcar and Cleveland; and Middlesbrough. We expect to launch our first programme in Scotland in 2026. We also have to thank the many people who have volunteered their exceptional knowledge and expertise, including members of our Advisory Council, the Evaluation Advisory Group and Scotland start up group.

Our goal, everywhere we work, is to achieve, with our partners, long-term, sustained improvements in children's developmental outcomes, with progress in England measured by the proportion of children reaching a Good Level of Development (GLD) at age five. We know how difficult this is in places where families are facing multiple forms of disadvantage. Over the past 2 years, while the percentage of children reaching a Good Level of Development nationally has increased to 69.3%, the percentage of children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) has decreased to 51.3%.

Our partnership in Stoke-on-Trent is bucking the trend for the children eligible for FSM. Our approach is showing promising signs of progress: in the last year our seven Abbey Hulton and Bentilee primary schools recorded an 11.4 percentage point increase in FSM-eligible children achieving a GLD (52.8% in 2024 to 64.2% in 2025) .

The robust implementation of evidenced interventions is key to having made this difference. In the past year, innovative thinking and exceptional partners in Stoke-on-Trent have enabled volunteer students and peripatetic staff to deliver the full 20 weeks of the Nuffield Early Language intervention to every child that needed support with their early language and communication.

Working closely alongside communities is making a difference to outreach and engagement with parents. Many are isolated and alone at home, with few places to go to or lacking the trust or confidence to reach out for support. Our Parent Connectors work in our communities, building trusted relationships with families where they are. In Redcar & Cleveland our Parent Connectors are in around 20 outreach locations every week. In Stoke-on-Trent, the number of parent, baby and toddler groups in Thrive at Five wards has increased fivefold, and parents and carers now report higher levels of satisfaction with information and support, particularly during key stages of early childhood.

In the past year, we have continued testing, learning and refining our work, sharing knowledge across programmes to accelerate progress and embed best practice in early years. By drawing together insight from across our programmes, we are strengthening implementation, refining delivery and developing a place-based and person-centred approach that can be scaled to deliver change in many communities.

We recognise that changing the way communities and local systems work together takes time. Building trust, strengthening collaboration and embedding new ways of working cannot be rushed. However, even following the relatively short time we have been operating in Stoke-on-Trent, we are seeing local enthusiasm to extend the work beyond Abbey Hulton and Bentilee.

Encouragingly, our Local Authority partners have expressed a desire for Thrive at Five to provide support in additional wards and to explore a longer-term strategic partnership. This presents a significant opportunity: to deepen our impact locally and to test how our place-based model can operate as a sustained system partnership rather than a time-limited programme.

*"I would say it's the closest collaboration that we've had in terms of partners. We've had partners before, but I can't say that we've worked hand in hand on the ground as much" (Practitioner, Stoke on Trent)*

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## CEO STATEMENT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

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These results are a testament to the Thrive at Five approach: deep partnership with local systems and communities, dedicated place-based backbone capacity, disciplined implementation of evidence-based interventions, and shared learning that strengthens both practice and system change. It was a special moment to have this recognized and be highlighted as an example of collaborative working at the Government's Civil Society Summit in July 2025.

*"...I have heard much about the work going on in Stoke, including the Thrive at Five programme. I would love to see or hear more about what is going on there, because I have heard wonderful things It demonstrates the value of ensuring that services are responsive to what parents want, as well as the being a clear set of expectations about minimum levels of support alongside that, really targeted to the needs of communities and parents. That was where Sure Start was at its best: Listening to communities, working with communities and building that trusts, including among families who might otherwise not feel able to access that kind of service." (Bridget Phillipson MP, Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities) Parliament, 7 July 2005*

This year has also marked significant organisational growth. We have doubled in size, strengthening our local leadership and delivery capacity. We welcomed three new Programme Directors with extensive skills and knowledge from working in local and national Government. This strengthening of leadership capacity positions us well for the next phase of delivery, with deeper local partnerships and sustainable growth. The University of Staffordshire bestowed on our CEO the Award of Honorary Doctor of Letter in recognition of her exemplary devotion, drive and passion in developing the Thrive at Five Charity and outstanding contributions to the health and wellbeing of society.

As we approach the five-year anniversary of Thrive at Five becoming a charity, there is much to celebrate. We are proud to have built solid foundations for the journey ahead, that will allow us to support many more children to Thrive at Five.

### Appreciation and thanks

#### Donors

Denise Coates Foundation  
Stoke-on-Trent City Council  
MariaMarina Foundation  
Segelman Trust  
Ethos Foundation  
Woodsmith Foundation  
KPMG Foundation  
The Dulverton Trust  
Auxilio Support Limited  
The Symondson Foundation  
Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cleveland  
The Dilkes Family Foundation  
Fidelity UK Foundation  
Julia Rausing Trust  
Middlesbrough Council  
Nuffield Foundation  
Posettes Foundation  
Quatrefoil Giving Fund  
The Schroder Foundation  
STV Children's Appeal

THRIVE AT FIVE

CEO STATEMENT (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

**Advisory Council**


Dr Ruth Lightbody  
Jean Carwood Edwards  
Anna Tarrant  
Laura Barbour  
Professor Jacqueline Barnes  
Kathryn Boulton  
Naomi Eisenstadt  
Pasco Fearon  
Alain GregoireJean Gross CBE  
Sally Hogg  
Alison Morton  
Gayle Munro  
Liz Weaver

**Evaluation Advisory Group**


Professor Jacqueline Barnes  
Dr Tony Munton  
Eleanor Ireland  
Chris Cuthbert  
Sally Hogg  
Professor Gabriella Conti  
Dr Gayle Munro  
Peter Richards

**Scotland Startup Group**


Glenn Carter  
Jean Carwood-Edwards  
Dr Leah Cronin  
Merle Davies  
Professor Aline-Wendy Dunlop MBE  
Jacqueline Lamb  
Professor John McKendrick  
Satwat Rehman  
Dr Eileen Scott  
of Staffordshire, VAST, Woodsmith Foundation, YMCA North Staffordshire

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Grant Gordon OBE  
Co-Founder and Co- Chair  
Date: 23/3/2026

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Larissa Joy OBE  
Co-Founder and Co-Chair  
24/3/2026

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Elizabeth Stanton  
Trustee  
23/3/2026

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## TRUSTEES REPORT

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

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The Trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

#### **Vision and Mission**

Everything Thrive at Five does is to ensure all children in their early years have the strong foundations they need for life and learning. We bring together and work alongside local communities, families and partners to join up and strengthen the early years system, supporting children to thrive from pregnancy to five.

#### **Objectives and activities**

We work in communities facing hardship to strengthen early years systems and improve children's developmental outcomes from pregnancy to five.

By supporting families, strengthening early years provision and improving how the wider early childhood system functions, we contribute to sustained improvements in outcomes and to narrowing gaps in disadvantage.

In its fourth year, Thrive at Five has been through planned and fast-paced growth and development. We set our sights on deepening our work in Stoke-on-Trent and Redcar & Cleveland, establishing programmes in two new local authority areas and have achieved our objectives:

- Developed the existing programme in Stoke-on-Trent (in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee), to incorporate workstreams focussed on parent wellbeing and parent infant relationships.
- Scoped the potential for scaling into other parts of Stoke-on-Trent, and to start embedding our approach into the local early years system.
- Shifted our focus in Redcar and Cleveland from co-design to implementation of initial workstreams, using the experience and learning from Stoke-on-Trent to guide the approach.
- Used cycles of testing, learning and refining to inform our national Playbook.
- Continued discussions to finalise a collaboration agreement with Middlesbrough Council and start deep dive discovery – through quantitative and qualitative analysis - of needs, opportunities and challenges
- Recruited a Director for Scotland to adapt our approach for a different national context and to lay the path for a first programme.

With each programme focussed on approximately 2,500 children aged 5 and under, we will have the potential from 2026, to reach over 10,000 babies and children aged five and under, over 4 areas.

Our evolving national Playbook captures an approach that is agile, flexible and innovative. It provides tools and guidance for place-based implementation, allowing for adaptation to meet the challenges and opportunities of different, local contexts.

We are committed to sharing our learning as we go, and this year we have contributed to opportunities to influence national policy and practice, including through our presentation at the Department for Education, Family Hub strategy away day and our live discussion with Bridget Philipson MP at the Civil Society Summit.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

### Progress and achievements

The Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

### Context

Work to improve outcomes in early childhood has been given a welcome boost by the launch, in July 2025, of the UK Government’s Best Start in Life initiative. This comes with an ambitious national target of 75% of all children reaching a Good Level of Development by age 5, by the end of the 2027/28 academic year.

While lower targets have been set for children on Free School Meals, the challenge is significant. In 2024/25 only 51.3% of children Eligible for Free Schools Meals in England reached a Good Level of Development. **The difference in outcomes for children from more disadvantaged households is marked and has increased in the past two years.** Thrive at Five is swimming against this tide by contributing to improvements in school readiness.

In England, there are approximately 1/5 children (21.8%) in low income families, with low income defined by Government as people living in households with income below 60% of the median in that year. In our wards, this number doubles, and in the case of Middlesbrough it is much higher. See table below.

Stoke-on-Trent	Redcar and Cleveland	Middlesbrough
Abbey Hulton – 44.6% Bentilee – 45.1%	Dormanstown – 42.2% Eston – 39.4% Grangetown – 48.1% Kirkleatham – 29% South Bank – 42.1%	Central – 67.4% Newport – 85.2%

Percentage of children in relative low income families in the wards we are working in, financial year ending 2024.

### Our approach

What distinguishes Thrive at Five is not just what we do, but how we work. Our work is guided by a multi-pronged theory of change and is informed by the principles of Collective Impact. We recognise that sustained improvement depends on coordinated progress across multiple, reinforcing conditions.





# THRIVE AT FIVE

## TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

Our approach combines high quality implementation of evidence-based support for families (direct work) with sustained work to strengthen practice and improve how the wider early years system functions (enabling work). This enables both immediate positive changes for children and longer-term improvements in the way that the system works.

In practice, Thrive at Five:

- supports evidence-based interventions to be delivered well, consistently and at scale, improving outcomes for children and families in the short term
- works alongside partners to strengthen workforce practice, parent engagement, use of data and cross sector collaboration, creating the conditions for sustained improvement

To make this possible, we combine strong local leadership with national coordination. In each place, Thrive at Five works through a locally recruited backbone team in partnership with the local authority. These backbone teams bring additional capacity, coordination and expertise into the early years system. They build trusted relationships with families and partners, strengthen outreach and engagement, support collaboration across services, and help align effort around shared outcomes.

Local backbone teams are supported by Thrive at Five's central team. The central team secures and develops partnerships, supports structured programme set up, provides specialist implementation expertise, oversees data and evaluation, and connects learning across places. This ensures that local delivery benefits from national insight, robust evidence and shared experience, while maintaining fidelity to our approach.

Together, strong local leadership and central coordination enable consistent quality while allowing thoughtful adaptation to local context. Learning from each place is systematically captured and fed back into future delivery, strengthening impact across programmes over time and supporting wider system improvement.

To capture learning and strengthen both our current and future ways of working, we are developing a practical, experience-informed Thrive at Five Playbook - a resource that can be applied in other communities to improve early childhood outcomes now and in the years ahead.

#### Stoke-on-Trent

##### **Impact**

##### **Good Level of Development**

There are early and very promising signs of progress towards improving children's outcomes in Stoke-on-Trent. In the seven primary schools in our two target wards there was:

- on average 1.2 percentage point increase in children reaching GLD, to 63.0% in 2025, which compares favourably with a small city-wide increase of 0.6 percentage points, to 64.5% in 2025.
- an 11.4 percentage point increase in FSM-eligible children reaching GLD from 52.8% to 64.2% over the last year, versus a city-wide decrease of 0.5%, and an overall 13 percentage point increase since 2022.

#### Year 1 evaluation by the Centre for Evidence and Implementation Evaluation (CEI)

Our evaluation work is generously supported by The Nuffield Foundation.

The first year report from CEI reported that *"considerable progress has been made in implementing Thrive at Five within Stoke-on-Trent. The approach is very widely and warmly endorsed. There is a high level of confidence that it will catalyse new ways of working that will achieve real improvements in early years support, parenting and early years outcomes and promising early evidence of change."*

*"Interviews with system leaders and practitioners described Thrive at Five as playing a catalytic role in improving collaboration across services. System leaders and practitioners report better partnership working and deeper engagement with parents and communities." CEI report page 2*

In June 2025, we welcomed a new Programme Director for Stoke-on-Trent, bringing extensive experience from leading a multi-award-winning early childhood initiative and over two decades of work across schools and local government in the East Midlands and South Yorkshire.

THRIVE AT FIVE

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

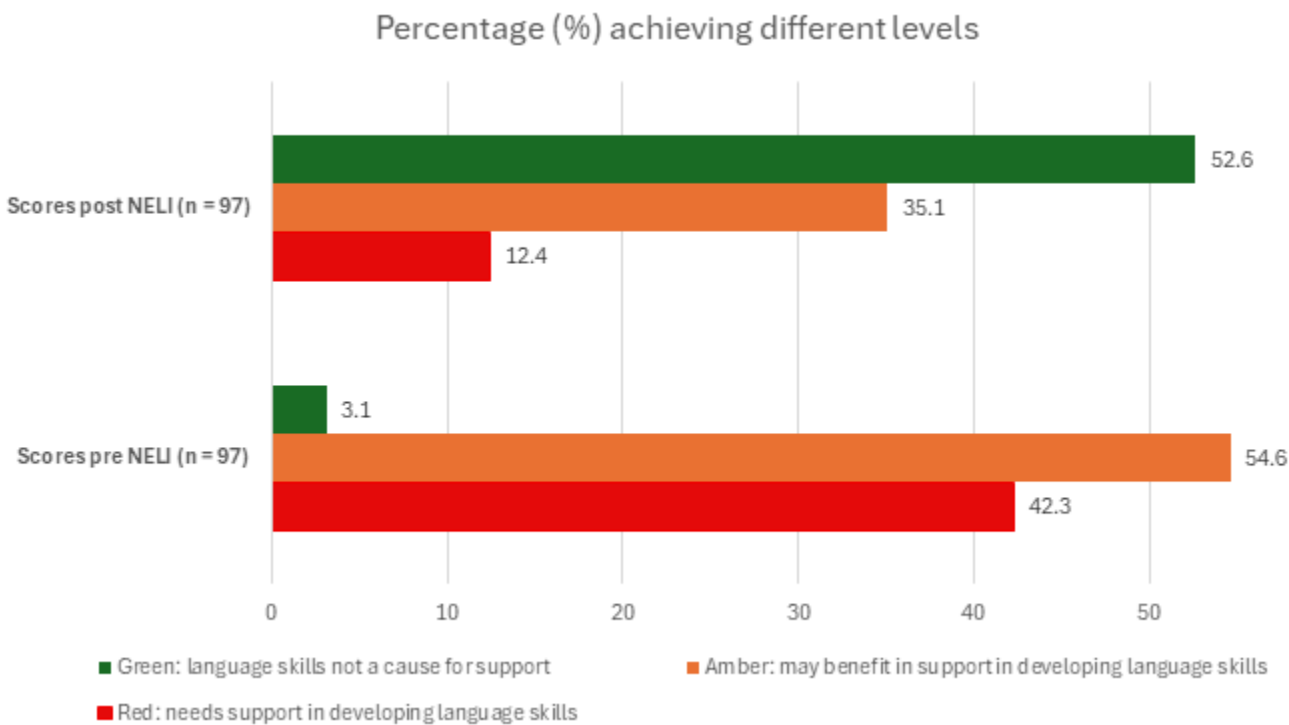
- This year, in our ward areas in Stoke-on-Trent we have:
- Continued to support the rigorous and at scale implementation of early language interventions in nurseries and schools to improve outcomes for all children needing additional help.
  - Supported initial implementation of PEEP Learning Together with parents to improve home learning environments
  - Codesigned with multiple partners a new strand of work to scale up support for parent infant relationships

Improving Early language and Communication: Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI)

We are in the third year of supporting an innovative and collaborative solution to address the capacity challenge faced by schools, with many children needing additional support with early language and communication. The co-designed solution involves volunteer students from the University of Staffordshire deliver the intervention overseen by peripatetic teaching support staff.

18 students from the University of Staffordshire trained to deliver NELI

All children in Reception who required extra support received it.



Improving early language and communication: Talking Time

Peripatetic support staff enabled the delivery of the programme to 152 children across nursery classes in six Thrive at Five schools in 2024-25 and evaluated outcomes based on the 147 children who completed the assessment.

- The majority of children increased their scores, and their summer scores (at the end of the intervention) were significantly higher than the autumn.
- Three quarters of children were categorised as not having a problem by the end of the school year, preparing them well for their reception year.
- Thrive at Five's work has been recognised as 'good practice' nationally by Oxford Education, with two local teachers now featuring in Talking Time training materials.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

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#### **Improving the Home Learning Environment: PEEP Learning Together**

Thrive at Five facilitated PEEP training for 24 early years practitioners from seven partner schools, early life workers from the local authority and two partner charities. Piloted in the 2024-25 school year, 20 families across 4 of the seven schools attended this evidence-based programme.

Parents repeatedly reported that the sessions helped them bond and build a stronger relationship with their child. Findings from language screening also suggest that language skills improved.

Over 90% of parents agreed that PEEP had increased their confidence and knowledge about how to help their child learn at home. There were also examples of how PEEP activities at home had facilitated better sibling relationships.

Facilitators (teachers) reported that the sessions had helped them build relationships with parents and improve everyday practice by explaining learning outcomes to parents.

*"I've found that since coming into school my child's wanted to sit and learn through play at home with me too." – PEEP parent*

#### **Strengthening Parent Infant Relationships: Video Interaction Guidance (VIG)**

Discussions with partners from across the early year systems helped to refine an ambition for scaled up training in Newborn Behavioural Observation (NBO) and a scale up in delivery of Video Interactive Guidance ("VIG"). Video Interaction Guidance is an evidence-based video feedback tool, designed to promote sensitive and responsive parent infant interactions. It is a strengths-based approach and involves recording brief moments of parent infant interaction and supporting the parent to reflect on the interactions and ultimately to strengthen them. Video feedback is a well-established feature of local work across the country to enhance parent infant relationships. However, our project is testing how the approach can be delivered as a broadly available offer for local families with very young children in Abbey Hulton and Bentilee.

#### **Parental engagement**

**Parent connectors** continue to build relationships with local families, providing information and building connections with the local early years system. Stoke-on-Trent City Council has replicated this role, employing early life workers in family hubs.

*"I suffer with anxiety massively, so for me it can be really intimidating to go into a room full of mums, but here I don't feel that and it's really lovely here. You can just talk to them, and if you say you're struggling as well, no one looks at you like you're a bad parent." Parent*

Five times as many parent, baby and toddler groups are now in our two wards offering 201 places a week, some in school settings.

*"I would say some of our strongest parent engagement is with children that aren't ready for school because parents are coming in and bringing their children at the earliest opportunity." System Leader*

*"You can see the impact that it has on the children when they come into our nursery settings. Nine times out of 10 we can say 'You can tell they've been to a playgroup.'" Workstream staff*

**The annual school readiness campaign** is gaining momentum; 93% of parents felt confident about their child starting school after support from Thrive at Five. 1,500+ children received extra support to help them be ready for starting school or nursery.

**Community events** throughout the year increase contact with more parents. A hugely successful Summer Play and Move event supported by partners had 286 attendees, 34 adults and 44 children and a significant increase in the ethnic and gender diversity of attendees.

**Thrive at Five's Facebook** page reached 2,500 followers in June/Aug 2025 mostly local families, with content to increase parents' knowledge and skills.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

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#### **Strengthening systems and practice**

The backbone team in Stoke-on-Trent is now working with over 400 local stakeholders to improve the way they work with each other, and with parents.

*"Almost without exception, the systems leaders, workstream staff and practitioners we interviewed pointed to positive changes for practice and systems which they considered either wholly or partly attributable to Thrive at Five."*

*"Thrive has shown how different institutions can work together and create a cohesive strategy that's got good evidence base and impact data." System Leader*

#### **Improving data collection and use**

A new system for data gathering by health visitors began this year using tools to provide a more accurate and in-depth picture of parent and child needs, parent wellbeing, strength of parent-infant relationships, early communication.

The second ever Parents Survey in January 2025 attracted 299 respondents (up from 187 previous year):

- 80% of respondents were aware of parent, baby and toddler groups in Thrive at Five wards, compared to 59% in non-Thrive at Five wards
- Regular engagement is strongly linked to higher confidence in accessing help and satisfaction of information quality.

*"I know Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent very well. I know the levels of deprivation. I don't think I understood the level of isolation that some of these families experience, how excluded they are from opportunities that I would just think are accessible to everyone." Systems Leader, CEI Report*

#### **Workforce development**

In July 2025, 84 early years professionals attended the conference, Thriving Communication in the Early Years with keynote speaker Jean Gross CBE, on Why Early Language Matters: The Latest Evidence. Attendees of the conference said they were inspired by the content. Some have since made communication and language support a greater priority in their settings, while others are exploring ways to develop a community of practice. Some schools applied what they learned by working with parents to support their children's communication skills.

#### **Redcar & Cleveland**

The programme has progressed this year from the Discovery phase - consulting with over 150 local parents and stakeholders, mapping community assets and gaps in support - into co-designing workstreams. The programme area includes five wards, Grangetown, Southbank, Kirkleatham, Eston and Dormanstown that encompass four family hubs and a fifth that is outside our wards (but is accessible to some families).

In January 2025 the team launched the programme at a '1001 Days' conference, with 110 delegates across 40 organisations, uniting parents, practitioners and community partners to shape the local early years strategy.

Our Early Years Education Lead has built relationships with the 13 schools in our target wards – almost double the number of schools that we currently partner with in Stoke-on-Trent. This important, foundational work will help unlock the potential for the Local Authority's School Readiness Strategy and best ways to support implementation of early years programmes, including:

- WellComm - a data gathering and assessment tool to identify children with speech and language development issues, combined with use of the "Big Book of Ideas" to address identified needs.
- Early Talk Boost – to support early language and communication in nursery.
- Mouse Club - supporting children getting ready to start school

#### **Parental engagement**

**Parent connectors** in Redcar & Cleveland have taken learning from Stoke-on-Trent, enabling the team to stand up outreach work at pace. Four Parent Connectors are supporting a rota of visits to 20 venues, meeting 200 parents and 200 children each week.

## THRIVE AT FIVE

### TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

Adding value to the offer of the Family Hubs, there has been a focus on reaching the most isolated families. We want to reach deep into communities and Parent Connectors, with their relational skills and understanding of parents needs vital to achieving this ambition. They foster close working relationships with universal and specialist midwifery services and attend antenatal clinic and glucose clinics.

In addition, we are piloting an innovative scheme for limited home visits by Parent Connectors alongside health visitors. The health visiting team identify isolated families who might benefit from connection with support in the community and invite Parent Connectors to join a mandatory health check of mum and baby. An introduction by the health visitor in a safe space helps to build trust; the Parent Connectors – a friendly face from the community – explains the support that is available and arranges to meet mum at a Family Hub or parent, baby and toddler group. Initial indications are that this minimal intervention can be enough to build confidence and encourage mums leave home, sometimes for the first time.

#### **Parent, baby and toddler groups**

Supporting existing and new parent baby and toddler groups ensures parents have more accessible places to go, and partnering with local voluntary organisations allows the team to reach deep into the community.

*"We initially began visiting the Women's Refuge every other week, building relationships and trust by helping with craft and cooking sessions and giving mums the opportunity to chat about how we can help." Parent Connector.*

#### **Communications**

Our expert communications teamwork supports additional connection: 630 visitors to our Facebook group for information on local events/services.

Working alongside partners enabled the delivery of a first campaign focussed perinatal mental health campaign which reached over 25,000 people across our wards, brought together multiple partners, including midwives and health visitors, and is continuing to be implemented by the family hub.



# THRIVE AT FIVE

## TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

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Community events are drawing in a wider group of parents. This includes our new 'Bumps and Babies' sessions offering both social connection and access to support. A system-wide working group held in March 2025 included health, family hubs, voluntary and community sector organisations and parents from Grangetown to co-produce 'baby shower' style parental engagement events welcoming 58 families. The summer is not an easy time for our families, when having children at home increases costs and pressure. A beach visit took children and 29 adults, many for the first time creating closer, trusted relationships with Family Hub staff and the potential for increased engagement in the future.

#### Improving the system

##### **Data gathering**

A first annual parents survey was completed by 179 respondents and found parents report strong engagement with early years services, but digital engagement lags behind with only 15% regularly using the Family Hub app and 53% using the website. 43% of parents remain unconfident in knowing where to seek help and just 28% feel they have strong support networks. This data is invaluable insight to how we can, alongside partners, focus our support for parents going forward.

##### **Strengthening practice**

Two local Thrive at Five conferences have given practitioners access, for the first time, to lead academics and time to meet each other, reflect and learn. In January 2025 110 attendees, and in June 2025, the Happy, Healthy and Ready to Learn conference co-produced with system leaders, highlighted the latest research on language rich environments, the importance of play, best practice of school/parent engagement and systemic approaches to improving early language and communication.

#### **Middlesbrough**

A partnership agreement was signed with Middlesbrough Council in early July 2025, with the Council committing £600,000 over three years towards Thrive at Five's work, focused initially on the ward areas of Newport and Central.

In November, we appointed a new Director of Programmes for Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland, who brings extensive experience from a decade working in frontline safeguarding across local authorities in the Northeast.

Having a single director working across both Local Authorities provides efficiencies, achieves cost savings and reduces duplication, particularly as the two areas share overarching public sector functions such as public health.

The Learning and Impact team is undertaking a planned 6-month Discovery Phase to listen to parents, carers, teachers and health providers to shape the best approach for children in Middlesbrough. Discovery will map assets, local support services and gather community insights, with sharper focus around our intermediate outcomes.

*"Children in our town deserve the best start in life and equal access to support and opportunities and we believe our partnership with Thrive at Five can help to deliver that." Mark Adams, Director of Public Health, South Tees*

#### **Scotland**

In May 2025, we welcomed a Programme Director for Scotland, seconded from the Scottish Government, to lead the development of our first programme in the country. The role focuses on scoping and negotiating work in an area where poverty is significantly affecting children's early years outcomes, ensuring strong alignment with Scottish policy priorities and creating the potential for future national scaling.

Our new Programme Director joined from a senior leadership position in Early Learning and Childcare within the Scottish Government. A three-year grant from the STV Children's Appeal is supporting the development of our work in Scotland, and Scottish Government data analysts are collaborating with Thrive at Five to identify a shortlist of areas where Health Visitor data aligns with local poverty indicators.

We are aiming to secure a partnership with a first Local Authority area in our 2026/27 financial year.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

#### Central Team

Thrive at Five's central team resources local backbone teams providing knowledge and capacity to support communications; local discovery; data use, monitoring and evaluation. The team rolls out training and development for the local backbone teams; leads the development of the Playbook; provides access to national and international experts and advisors; and leads on advocacy and policy influencing work. Other core functions include fundraising finances, HR and IT.

#### Advisory Council and Evaluation Advisory Group

An Evaluation Advisory Group has been formed, chaired by Professor Jacqueline Barnes, to provide independent review and expertise guidance.

To keep our teams informed with relevant expertise, we've expanded our Advisory Council. New members include Anna Tarrant, Professor of Sociology at the University of Lincoln, and Jean Carwood-Edwards, former CEO of Early Years Scotland. The 13-member Council brings deep expertise including in neuroscience, perinatal mental health, evaluation and social research

#### Shaping national strategy

In a year when the Government announced its commitment to ensuring children have the best start in life, Thrive at Five steeply increased its contribution to policy influencing for the early years. The Government's Best Start in Life strategy and ambitious target for 75% of children to achieve a GLD by 2028, marked a change in national policy with the early years returning to the centre stage. We intensified our communications and stakeholder relations to focus on working at a national, strategic level to promote the importance of joined up, data-evidenced work and parent engagement to improve early years outcomes.

- In March 2025, Thrive at Five was invited to present at the DfE Family Hubs strategy away day.
- In June 2025, DfE senior civil servants visited Stoke-on-Trent to learn about our impact.
- In July 2025 The Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP, Secretary of State for Education, cited Thrive at Five when discussing in Parliament the new Best Start for Life policy, as an exemplar of the collaborative, holistic approach the government is endorsing to improve outcomes for children.
- In July 2025, Thrive at Five was invited by the Secretary of State to present our work at the [Civil Society Summit](#) (event led by the Prime Minister) and led a panel she hosted for discussion of our model.



'When we started working with schools in Stoke-on-Trent three years ago, one school baselined less than 30% at the age expected levels for communication and language. We're delighted that this year that same school has more than 85% achieving the Early Learning Goal for communication and language.' CEO Aida Cable presenting at the Civil Society Summit in June 2025.

#### Collaborating for change with others in the early years

Other national stakeholder relationships continue to deepen and grow. Activities included:

- Being consulted in the development of BBC Children in Need's Early Years programme review and their new programme Communities for Children, tackling child poverty.



# THRIVE AT FIVE

## TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

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- Contributing to NESTA's New Era of Integration in Early Years project.
- Becoming a member of the Steering Group supporting the Centre for Young Lives with their "Fresh Start for supporting Families" project.
- Contributing to work of OxEd & Assessment on scaling evidence-based language interventions.
- Supporting the University of Oxford's research on digital technologies and young children.

#### Looking ahead

##### Testing, Learning and refining Thrive at Five's approach in 4 areas

Over the course of the next year we will have programmes up and running in 4 different geographical areas, including one in Scotland.

- In Stoke-on-Trent, the local backbone team will start embedding and sustaining our work in our first 2 target wards, while extending our activities into additional wards. We will strengthen our partnership with Stoke City Council to continue supporting system improvement and strengthened practice across the City.
- In Redcar & Cleveland, we will work closely with a growing number of partners to ensure there are data and evidence-informed workstreams that will support improvements in parent wellbeing, parent infant relationships, the home learning environment and early language and communication.
- In Middlesbrough, we expect to complete our discovery work, recruit our local backbone team and embark on some early projects aligned with school readiness and designed to significantly increase engagement with communities in Central ward and Newport ward.
- In Scotland, we aim to partner with a first Local Authority and start recruiting our local backbone team. Ready ourselves for that work we will collaborate with NESTA and others who are addressing the challenges of fragmented data across health, family hubs, social care and education by mapping current data and its use, working together to align data with each other and improve overall use, interpretation and practical application. We will form a stakeholder advisory group as a critical friend, generate communications and review outcome measures in our Theory of Change so they are appropriate for use in Scotland.

Across all our programmes we will find opportunities to support the strategic development by our Local Authorities, of their Best Start in Life plans, and use our evaluations to refine our collective work. Working in more places will enable us to review and improve the content in our Playbook. We envisage that we will evolve our strategies for parent outreach and engagement (including communications) and refine our model of practice for parent connectors. We will also evolve the training and support required by first-class local, backbone teams.

*"Early Years remains a huge need, but what I'm pleased to say is – and Thrive at Five have been part of the reason for this – is that it's much higher profile now. It's much higher on everybody's agenda, and it really wasn't before Thrive." System Leader.*

#### Strengthening the organisation

In the past year We have more than doubled capacity to enable us to work at greater scale to help more children have better outcomes for life and learning. Over the next year, working across 4 places, we expect to increase to 50 staff. The team is building a strong funding pipeline to support growth of the organisation. We have invested in fundraising capacity, including 3 FTE staff, supported by 2 consultants.

In anticipation of the demands created by a growing charitable business, we will:

- Strengthen our finance capacity by recruiting a strategic, hands-on Finance Director to support national growth, deliver financial insight, and help sustain higher targets through effective bid modelling.
- Strengthen our HR capacity, building a new people team
- Create a training strategy and equipping line managers with knowledge and tools to meet needs, including a co-produced 'expectations guide'
- Run an audit of policies/processes to identify gaps/priorities, ensuring we support our people and protect our culture as we grow.
- Act on staff survey feedback through working groups focused on key areas like decision-making, support for working parents, mental wellbeing and lived experience.

In this next financial year, we will develop our scenario planning for Thrive at Five's future. The Social Business Trust has secured external business support from Ernst & Young.



**THRIVE AT FIVE**

**TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

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**Restricted Funds**

The charity holds restricted funds as detailed in note 17. The balance at 30 June 2025 was £279,326 (30 June 2024: £714,468).

**Risk management practices**

In line with governance best practice, the Trustees are committed to maintaining a strong risk management framework that supports Thrive at Five to proactively manage risks.

Thrive at Five has a risk register which is reviewed annually by the members of the Finance and Risk and the Board of Trustees. The risk register is used as a tool throughout the year to manage operational and strategic delivery. Risks are scored according to the likelihood and impact of the risk occurring, with the management of each risk assigned to a senior member of staff. The changes to the risks are reviewed alongside the actions being taken to mitigate the risks.

The table below highlights the strategic risks that have been identified and explains how these risks are being mitigated within the Charity.

Prioritising safeguarding children and vulnerable people	The Charity accords the highest priority to managing safeguarding risk and all staff undertake annual training for child protection as well as Prevent training to support people susceptible to radicalisation. The Charity has a comprehensive safeguarding policy, which is reviewed annually, and which is designed in conjunction with a safeguarding expert. Staff in contact with children must hold Level 2 safeguarding qualifications and are required to attend in-person paediatric first aid training. Our safeguarding leads are staff members (one national and one for each local programme) who are Level 3 qualified we have a Trustee with overall responsibility for safeguarding, and each of these individuals has professional experience in this critical area. We have designed a clear process for staff to follow should a safeguarding concern arise.
Protecting personal data	The Charity has GDPR policies which are reviewed annually by the Finance and Risk committee and employees have training to ensure they understand the policies. The policy ensures that staff have access only to data required for the task in hand and where required sensitive documents are password protected. The Charity regularly reviews the personal data that is collected, used, processed and retained and has processes in place to ensure that personal data is appropriately protected across the organisation.
Ensuring adequacy of funds	The Charity is committed to our long-term objectives of delivering systemic improvement in the outcomes for children in the early years in our pathfinder sites. Each pathfinder is planned based on a seven-year investment horizon, with the exception of Stoke-on-Trent, our trailblazer site where we plan a ten-year investment. As such the ability to raise long-term multi-year funding arrangements to implement our vision is key to our success. The Charity's growth plans are contingent on securing pledged funds and we continually review our funding pipeline and weigh the likelihood of securing these in our Finance and Risk committee meetings. To mitigate the risk of our income we have grant agreements in place for all our key donors.
Gathering data to demonstrate impact	The Charity recognizes that the success of the Thrive at Five methodology is contingent upon the ability to demonstrate the impact we are having in the community. The Charity has partnered with the Centre for Evidence and Implementation (CEI) to evaluate our programmes. The management and roll-out of our programmes are carefully designed and we are collaborating with credible partners who use the best practice methodology. Local Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) data is gathered and analysed on an annual basis. Our internal learning and impact team conduct pilot-year evaluation of workstreams drawing on quantitative and qualitative data. In Stoke-on-Trent, our first pathfinder, we are working with the public health team to strengthen their data gathering and measurement system which will support Thrive at Five's evaluation to inform improvements in the local early years system.

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# THRIVE AT FIVE

## TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

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Retaining key staff and succession planning	The organisation has developed succession plans for senior roles to include external and internal development of staff. We have ensured that all files are saved on a central cloud-based site, which is accessed by key personnel. We ensure that the senior leadership team meet regularly and have oversight across the whole organisation and all key developments.
Safeguarding staff	The Charity recognizes that it is important to ensure that our staff feel safe while working in the community. We have policies in place to ensure that our staff are not placed in difficult situations and that we have the necessary escalation measures in place. New staff attend training courses designed to help keep them safe.

The Trustees are satisfied that the major risks identified have been reviewed and systems or procedures have been established to manage those risks. Trustees have reviewed the financial impact of the risks occurring and have used them to help inform the reserves required as above.

### Structure, governance and management

The charity was established by a constitution dated 5 July 2021 and was formed as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

The charity is governed under its Constitution adopted on incorporation.

### Governance

The Trustees consider the Board of Trustees to be the key organ of governance for the organisation in charge of directing and controlling how the charity achieves its mission while managing risk. All trustees gave their time freely and no trustees received remuneration in the year. Ms. L Holst's three-year term with the Charity was completed on the 30th of November 2024. Ms T Scott joined the Board in 2025. She has over 35 years' experience in management, consulting and coaching. She worked at Schroders from 2008 and was appointed Chief of Staff at Schroders in 2016. The Trustees meet formally four times a year under joint chairs Grant Gordon OBE and Larissa Joy OBE. The Board of Trustees bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to enhance the Charity' governance and strategic planning.

The Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

- L Joy OBE
- G Gordon OBE
- M Davies MA, MSc
- L Holst (resigned 30th November 2024)
- Dr J Grenier CBE
- B Levinson OBE
- E Stanton
- T Scott (appointed 24 March 2025)

The Board of Trustees as a body can appoint new members to act on behalf of the charity under the statutory power given to them. On our appointment, new Trustees are appraised of the constitution, financial and all other relevant matters appertaining to the charity. They are also advised as to the responsibilities placed upon them as Trustees pursuant to charity law and good practice. Where necessary appropriate training is provided both initially and on an ongoing basis.

### Senior Management

The Trustees have delegated authority to the Chief Executive and the Senior Leadership Team for the day-to-day management of the Charity. The Leadership Team is led by the Chief Executive, Ms. Aida Cable, who has the delegated authority to deliver the strategy and business plans for the organisation, including income generation, and overseeing the work of pathfinder sites each with backbone teams.

**THRIVE AT FIVE**

**TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

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**Staff**

At the end of June 2025, Thrive at Five had 29 employees including local Parent Connectors, this is a significant increase compared to seventeen employees at June 2024. During the financial year, the central team has expanded to a contingent of ten, nine staff were employed in Stoke-on-Trent and ten in Redcar & Cleveland. We secured the secondment of our programme lead in Scotland team. A consultant finance director and two fundraising consultants supported the Charity.

Subsequent to the end of the financial year we secured a full-time Finance Director and our first People Advisor (HR) who will lead the Charity in its next growth phase.

**Public Benefit Statement**

The Trustees confirm that in their opinion, they have complied with their duty to have due regards to the guidance on public benefit published issued by the Charity Commission, in the exercise of their powers and responsibilities as detailed in the trust deed and under charity law.

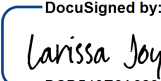
**Disclosure of information to auditor**

Each of the Trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditor is aware of such information.

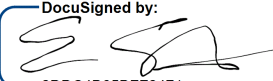
**Going concern**

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the Trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

The Board of Trustees approved the Trustee's report.

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**L Joy OBE**  
**Trustee**  
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**G Gordon OBE**  
**Trustee**  
23/3/2026

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**Elizabeth Stanton**  
**Trustee**  
23/3/2026

## **THRIVE AT FIVE**

### **STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### ***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025***

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The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They 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.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THRIVE AT FIVE

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### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Thrive at Five (the 'charity') for the year ended 30 June 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including 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 charity's affairs as at 30 June 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, 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 Charities Act 2011.

### 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 charity'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 other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. 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 course of 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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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.

### Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the Trustees report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE TRUSTEES OF THRIVE AT FIVE

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### Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees responsibilities, the Trustees 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 charity'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 cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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.

We planned our audit so that we have a reasonable expectation of detecting material misstatements in the financial statements resulting from irregularities, fraud or non-compliance with law or regulations.

### Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- The engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- Enquiring of management of whether they are aware of any non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Enquiring of management whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud.
- Enquiring of management their internal controls established to mitigate risk related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- Discussions amongst the engagement team on how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud. As part of this discussion, we identified potential for fraud in the following areas; posting of unusual journals.
- Obtaining understanding of the legal and regulatory framework the company operates in focusing on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the Charities Act 2011, tax legislation, data protection, anti-bribery, employment law, anti-money laundering regulations, and health and safety .

### Audit response to risks identified

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships.
- Audited the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries for appropriateness and
- Investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.
- Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias.

## THRIVE AT FIVE

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE TRUSTEES OF THRIVE AT FIVE

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In response to the risk of irregularities and non compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but are not limited to:

- Agreeing financial statements disclosures to underlying supporting documentation.
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- Enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation claims.

The test nature and other inherent limitations of an audit, together with the inherent limitations of any accounting and internal control system, mean that there is an unavoidable risk that even some material misstatements in respect of irregularities may remain undiscovered even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with ISAs (UK). Furthermore, the more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely that we would become aware of non-compliance.

Our examination should therefore not be relied upon to disclose all such material misstatements or frauds, errors or instances of non-compliance that might exist. The responsibility for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and non-compliance with law or regulations rests with the trustees.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://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 charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees 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 charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Signed by:



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**Rowan Lindsay (Senior Statutory Auditor)**

For and on behalf of Gerald Edelman LLP, Statutory Auditor

Chartered Accountants

73 Cornhill

London

EC3V 3QQ

Date: ..25/3/2026.....

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
<b>Income from:</b>							
Donations and legacies	3	812,850	929,299	1,742,149	857,633	885,484	1,743,117
Investments	4	40,811	-	40,811	33,994	-	33,994
<b>Total income</b>		<b>853,661</b>	<b>929,299</b>	<b>1,782,960</b>	<b>891,627</b>	<b>885,484</b>	<b>1,777,111</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Raising funds	5	113,476	872	114,348	49,252	330	49,582
Charitable activities	6	588,789	1,363,569	1,952,358	458,247	830,685	1,288,932
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>702,265</b>	<b>1,364,441</b>	<b>2,066,706</b>	<b>507,499</b>	<b>831,015</b>	<b>1,338,514</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) and movement in funds</b>		<b>151,396</b>	<b>(435,142)</b>	<b>(283,746)</b>	<b>384,128</b>	<b>54,469</b>	<b>438,597</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Fund balances at 1 July 2024		1,518,119	714,468	2,232,587	1,133,991	659,999	1,793,990
<b>Fund balances at 30 June 2025</b>		<b>1,669,515</b>	<b>279,326</b>	<b>1,948,841</b>	<b>1,518,119</b>	<b>714,468</b>	<b>2,232,587</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.



# THRIVE AT FIVE

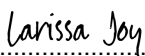
## BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

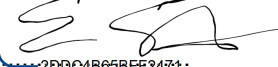
	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	12		19,790		11,090
Investments	13		1		1
			<u>19,791</u>		<u>11,091</u>
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors	14	307,109		271,229	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>1,844,689</u>		<u>2,087,257</u>	
		2,151,798		2,358,486	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	15	<u>(222,748)</u>		<u>(136,990)</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>1,929,050</u>		<u>2,221,496</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>1,948,841</u>		<u>2,232,587</u>
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds	17		279,326		714,468
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
Designated funds	18	651,395		1,518,120	
General unrestricted funds		<u>1,018,120</u>		<u>(1)</u>	
			<u>1,669,515</u>		<u>1,518,119</u>
			<u>1,948,841</u>		<u>2,232,587</u>

24/3/2026

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on .....

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 L Joy OBE  
 Trustee

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 G Gordon OBE  
 Trustee

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 Elizabeth Stanton  
 Trustee

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>					
Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	21		(268,899)		359,978
<b>Investing activities</b>					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(14,587)		(9,894)	
Proceeds from disposal of tangible fixed assets		107		-	
Investment income received		40,811		33,994	
<b>Net cash generated from investing activities</b>			26,331		24,100
<b>Net cash generated from financing activities</b>			-		-
<b>Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>			(242,568)		384,078
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			2,087,257		1,703,179
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>			1,844,689		2,087,257

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

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#### 1 Accounting policies

##### Charity information

Thrive at Five is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is 73 Cornhill, London, EC3V 3QQ.

##### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

##### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the Trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

##### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

##### 1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Government grants are recognised at the fair value of the asset received or receivable when there is reasonable assurance that the grant conditions will be met and the grants will be received.

A grant that specifies performance conditions is recognised in income when the performance conditions are met. Where a grant does not specify performance conditions it is recognised in income when the proceeds are received or receivable. A grant received before the recognition criteria are satisfied is recognised as a liability.

#### 1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure on charitable activities includes direct costs relating to the objectives of the charity as well as support costs in the form of administration expenses. Support costs include governance costs comprising expenditure involving the public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice. These costs include independent examination and legal fees and also those meeting its statutory obligations.

#### 1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Computers	25% straight line
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The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

#### 1.7 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

#### 1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

#### 1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

#### 1.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

##### **Basic financial assets**

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

##### **Basic financial liabilities**

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

##### **Derecognition of financial liabilities**

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

#### 1.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

#### 1.12 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

#### 1.13 Leases

Rentals payable under operating leases, including any lease incentives received, are charged as an expense on a straight line basis over the term of the relevant lease.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

#### 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

#### 3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Grants	812,850	929,299	1,742,149	857,633	885,484	1,743,117

As outlined by SORP FRS102, donated services are to be included in the accounts at the amount that the charity would have spent on similar services, should they not have been received as donations.

#### 4 Income from investments

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Interest receivable	40,811	33,994

#### 5 Raising funds

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
<u>Fundraising and publicity</u>						
Fundraising database	9,407	-	9,407	7,280		7,280
Fundraising consultants	85,295	-	85,295	37,769	-	37,769
Events and advertising	18,774	872	19,646	4,203	330	4,533
	113,476	872	114,348	49,252	330	49,582

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

### 6 Charitable activities

	Charitable Expenditure 2025 £	Charitable Expenditure 2024 £
Staff costs	1,249,299	726,814
Depreciation and impairment	5,780	2,722
Legal and professional	35,334	40,589
Evaluation costs	202,139	116,748
Staff recruitment	76,928	27,932
Staff training	11,254	7,973
Travel	30,394	19,165
Postage and stationery	91	2,551
General expenses	6,119	9,798
IT costs	25,827	10,869
Communication costs	79,778	75,262
Insurance	2,620	1,872
Premises expenses	26,405	21,809
Bank charges	66	68
Programmatic activities	114,210	126,719
Finance and admin consultancy	54,331	48,166
Discovery & Co-design	-	10,800
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed asset	107	-
Other charitable expenditure	11,770	-
Grant funding of activities (Cost of living)	3,000	25,875
Share of governance costs (see note 7)	16,906	13,200
	<u>1,952,358</u>	<u>1,288,932</u>
<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
Unrestricted funds	588,789	458,247
Restricted funds	1,363,569	830,685
	<u>1,952,358</u>	<u>1,288,932</u>

### 7 Support costs

Governance costs includes payments to the auditors of £16,906 (2024: £13,200) for audit and accounting fees.

### 8 Net movement in funds

	2025 £	2024 £
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Fees payable for the audit of the charity's financial statements	13,000	12,000
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	5,780	2,722
	<u>13,000</u>	<u>12,000</u>

THRIVE AT FIVE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

9 Trustees

None of the Trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year. Expenses totaling £573 (2024: £423) were refunded to a Trustee in the period under review.

10 Employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
National & Stoke team	26	13

Employment costs	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	1,099,423	619,645
Social security costs	125,033	64,720
Other pension costs	24,843	14,575
	1,249,299	698,940

Included within staff costs per the charitable activities note is secondment costs of £11,456 (2024: £28,453) and other ad hoc staff related costs.

An additional amount of £88,182 (2024 : £35,905) was spent for the purpose of staff recruitment and staff training which is reflected within Note 6 - Charitable Activities.

The number of employees whose annual remuneration was more than £60,000 is as follows:

	2025 Number	2024 Number
£60,000 - £70,000	1	1
£70,000 - £80,000	2	1
£80,000 - £90,000	1	-
£90,000 - £100,000	1	1

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel was £389,293 (2024: £385,771).

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.



# THRIVE AT FIVE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

### 12 Tangible fixed assets

	Computers £
<b>Cost</b>	
At 1 July 2024	15,003
Additions	14,587
Disposals	(147)
	<hr/>
At 30 June 2025	29,443
	<hr/>
<b>Depreciation and impairment</b>	
At 1 July 2024	3,913
Depreciation charged in the year	5,780
Eliminated in respect of disposals	(40)
	<hr/>
At 30 June 2025	9,653
	<hr/>
<b>Carrying amount</b>	
At 30 June 2025	19,790
	<hr/> <hr/>
At 30 June 2024	11,090
	<hr/> <hr/>

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

### 13 Fixed asset investments

	Unlisted investments £
<b>Cost</b>	
At 1 July 2024 & 30 June 2025	1
<b>Carrying amount</b>	
At 30 June 2025	1

The charity owns 100% of the issued share capital of Thrive at Five Trading Limited, a company registered in England & Wales. The subsidiary is dormant and is not consolidated into these financial statements.

### 14 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>		
Trade debtors	306,017	270,000
Other debtors	-	137
Prepayments and accrued income	1,092	1,092
	<u>307,109</u>	<u>271,229</u>

### 15 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Other taxation and social security	36,801	21,384
Trade creditors	77,443	35,819
Other creditors	4,769	2,774
Accruals and deferred income	103,735	77,013
	<u>222,748</u>	<u>136,990</u>

### 16 Retirement benefit schemes

	2025 £	2024 £
<b>Defined contribution schemes</b>		
Charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution schemes	<u>24,843</u>	<u>14,575</u>

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for all qualifying employees. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

#### 17 Restricted funds

	Movement in funds			Movement in funds			
	Balance at 1 July 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Balance at 1 July 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Stoke	565,070	535,484	(685,915)	414,639	525,509	(771,676)	-
Redcar & Cleveland	94,929	350,000	(145,100)	299,829	353,790	(542,765)	-
Scotland	-	-	-	-	50,000	(104,575)	54,575
	<u>659,999</u>	<u>885,484</u>	<u>(831,015)</u>	<u>714,468</u>	<u>929,299</u>	<u>(1,419,016)</u>	<u>(54,575)</u>
							<u>279,326</u>

Restricted funds of £279,326 (2024: £714,470) comprise of unspent funds to support the operations and activities of Thrive at Five in Abbey Hulton & Townsend and Bentilee & Ubberrley, in Stoke-on-Trent to the value of £168,472 and £110,854 (2024: £414,639 and £299,829) of unspent funds to support operations. The new activity during the year at Scotland had a transfer of £54,575 (2024: nil) and income of £50,000 (2024:nil) during the year which was all spent which resulted in the balance as at 30 June 2025 to be £0.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

#### 18 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 July 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 30 June 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	1,518,119	853,661	(647,690)	(54,575)	1,669,515
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
<b>Previous year:</b>	<b>At 1 July 2023</b>	<b>Incoming resources</b>	<b>Resources expended</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>At 30 June 2024</b>
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	1,133,991	891,627	(507,499)	-	1,518,119
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

#### 19 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2025	2025	2025
	£	£	£
<b>At 30 June 2025:</b>			
Tangible assets	19,790	-	19,790
Investments	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,649,724	279,326	1,929,050
	<u>1,669,515</u>	<u>279,326</u>	<u>1,948,841</u>
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total
	2024	2024	2024
	£	£	£
<b>At 30 June 2024:</b>			
Tangible assets	11,090	-	11,090
Investments	1	-	1
Current assets/(liabilities)	1,507,028	714,468	2,221,496
	<u>1,518,119</u>	<u>714,468</u>	<u>2,232,587</u>
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>

#### 20 Related party transactions

Donations of £150,000 (2024: £333,333) were received from the Ethos Foundation, a charity related to Mr. G Gordon.

# THRIVE AT FIVE

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

21	Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations	2025 £	2024 £
	(Deficit)/surplus for the year	(283,746)	438,597
	<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
	Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(40,811)	(33,994)
	Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	5,780	2,722
	<b>Movements in working capital:</b>		
	(Increase) in debtors	(35,880)	(71,229)
	Increase in creditors	85,758	23,882
	<b>Cash (absorbed by)/generated from operations</b>	<u>(268,899)</u>	<u>359,978</u>
	Difference	-	(1)
	Per cash flow statement page	<u>(268,899)</u>	<u>359,977</u>

## 22 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no material debt during the year.