

Gecko Community

Empower, Inspire, Educate

Annual Trustee report

Year Ending 30th September 2022

Aims and Description of the charity

Gecko Community is a registered Charity (1195860) providing innovative teaching, therapeutic projects and mentoring. We are a Neurodivergent led Charity and we are uniquely skilled in supporting neurodivergent young people. Our Mentors and Teachers are highly skilled and experienced. We understand our young people from a neurodivergent perspective as most of us are Autistic, ADHD, PDA and/or dyslexic.

We have expertise in:

- Pathological Demand Avoidance/Persistent Drive for Autonomy (PDA)
- Monotropic thinking styles
- Alexithymia
- Autistic Masking
- Autistic Burnout
- Double Empathy Theory
- Trauma/cPTSD

We support young people aged between 5 -25 who are

- ADHD
- Autistic
- experiencing anxiety and mental ill health
- at risk from exclusion or have self-excluded from formal education
- Experiencing bullying and trauma

Young people can be with us because they're out of school, while they wait for a placement or as part of their EOTAS package. We support neurodivergent young people for as long as they need.

We aim to inspire, support and educate young people who have been let down by mainstream education and who need alternative teaching methods.

Referral process

We currently have 91 young people with us who are either in academic sessions or mentoring sessions. Sessions are important pieces of social interaction and young people can attend online with the choice to be on or off camera, speak or type, email or share communication types through music, film, stories or gaming platforms.

Any student can join us. Referrals come in through Families, Schools, Local authorities or the Third Sector e.g. Social Services.

Staff

Our staffing team has rapidly expanded to 16 members with some full time and more part time in order to best support our team's physical and mental wellbeing. Our motto is that Gecko needs to work for us, too. We do not believe in tiers or hierarchies and treat all staff as equals and part of our team. People do not work for Gecko Community, they work with us.

Although all appointments are open to Neurotypicals and Neurodivergents alike, currently almost all our staff members are ND and many are Autistic or ADHD. This means that we truly understand how our brains and our young peoples' brains work and can empathise with their journeys, adapting to a learning style that best suits them. All staff understand that Gecko is entirely student-led.

Supporting our staff

As we grow we are giving thought as to how best to support our staff and their wellbeing. With this in mind almost half our staff have supervision, we are aiming for all our staff to have this. This is 1:1, confidential, monthly support by trained counsellors.

We are also now running weekly teacher meetings and mentor meetings. These may involve discussing young people, teaching methods and supporting one another/

Investments made in our staff and training opportunities:

Autism Awareness - Kieran Rose

PDA - Mel Duncan

Self Harm - Mel Duncan

LBGQT - Mel Duncan / Kim Roberts

Safeguarding Training - CPD Online

Deaf Awareness Training from Swindon Deaf Society

Mentoring sessions

Mentor sessions are led by the young person. The aim is to support them in exploring their neurology through a neurodivergent-affirming lens, re-building self-confidence, helping them re-discover their love of learning (on their terms) and act as a positive Neurodivergent

role model. Mentors also support young people who are in crisis, have cPTSD and work therapeutically with them to process trauma.

All sessions are student led. Self-discovery and recovery is achieved through the therapeutic relationship between the mentor and the young person. The length of this process is determined by the young person and is organic, not time limited or prescriptive.

All mentors use a trauma informed framework (PACE).

Academic Sessions

With an expanding staff and student profile, we are now able to offer sessions in English Literature and Language, Drama and play therapy, Art, History, Science including Physics, Computer Science and Biology, and Maths.

We offer GCSEs in English Language and Literature, Maths, Computer Science and Biology.

We now have staff members running ASDAN programmes. We offer ASDAN subjects which include short courses in Animal Care, English, Environmental, Expressive Arts, Foodwise, History, Living Independently and Mathematics.

A new member of staff is trained to teach Bronze and Silver Arts Award.

Our support and what this means

We are widely recognised and acclaimed in the Autistic community and are currently oversubscribed with a waiting list. We are full this academic year. With us, our students are able to learn about their true selves through a Neurodivergent lens.

We have very positive feedback from young people and their adults on our new website. Some examples are:

'My 15 year old daughter has been having English project sessions and mentor sessions with Gecko Community for the last five months. She is autistic and struggles with severe anxiety. She had reached burnout and could no longer access mainstream school due to school based trauma. Gecko has really helped our daughter to gently re-engage with education at her own pace and on her own terms. Their young person led therapeutic techniques have really helped and my daughter looks forward to her Gecko sessions. "My daughter loves working with Gecko, it has given her confidence back in learning." 'The tutor always listens and adjusts the way of working to suit her needs. Gecko really understands the needs of children and, most importantly, they listen to the child' 'My child is struggling with autistic burnout, manifesting in depression and deep social anxiety and has been out of education for the last two years. I was struggling to find help for her despite being under the care of Camhs. I found out about Gecko through an autistic led training course.'

'Gecko has lit a fire under my child with regard to English! An incredible transformation from a reluctant student of English to one who is now thinking of doing it at A-level. Gecko "get it". They get the anxiety and understand the traumatic experiences that my child has sadly undergone in mainstream school.'

Our Website

We have recently created a new website which gives a clear overview of the charity and allows young people and their adults to find out more. <https://geckocommunity.org.uk>

Safeguarding

Our young people have been through traumatic experiences in their school time. Some have a diagnosis of PTSD. Some of our young people self-harm and some young people have tried to commit suicide. All our staff are Level 2 Safeguard trained and we have one Designated Safeguarding Lead (Level 3 trained) and one Deputy (Level 2 trained).

Partnerships and support

These are the people we are partnered with:

- Kieran Rose (Neurodivergent) - he is 'The Autistic Advocate' and runs the 'Inside of Autism' training which all our staff members have attended (mandatory training). He also supports staff on the training session and is responsible for some of our young people finding us.
- Jodie Smitten (Neurodivergent) (BSc Hons Psy - PG Cert - MA Autism - MBPs) is an independent specialist working with autistic children, their families and their schools. She has many years experience of working with autistic children. Jodie also holds a honours degree in psychology, a post graduate certificate in autism and holds a Masters in Autism from Sheffield Hallam University. Jodie is also one of our trustees.
- Nic King (Neurodivergent). Nic is a parent to one of our students and has also set up the fantastic NeuroBears which is a website 'for autistic young people aged 8-14 (ish) who want to learn what it means to be Autistic in a really positive way.'
- Catherine Eveness (Neurodivergent). Catherine is a certified Theraplay® Practitioner who set up Theraplay South West. She offers some of our families Parental Support.

Finances

- We have a three tier payment system for our fees. We receive donations which we use to support our low income families, they pay £15 or £20 a session. For high income families, they pay £35 a session. For schools and LAs, they pay £50 or £60 a session. (When schools and LAs are involved we send weekly or half termly reports and attendance data. We also attend monthly or half termly meetings and attend Annual Reviews.)

- We have received a donation of £15,000 each year from Wrenlabs. We use this to support our grant funded spaces.
- We receive £1000 each year from the Singer Foundation. This supports our staff Supervision costs.
- We receive approximately £1500 in Spring each year, from the Ingles Foundation which is used for staff training.
- We gave everyone a 5% pay rise in July 2022 to try and support the rise of the cost of living due to higher than normal inflation rates.
- We gave everyone a 5% winter support pay boost in December (and will do so too for January and February) to support the higher than usual cost of fuel, food and necessities during the colder months.
- We are aiming to build reserves for three months of staff wages.

Breakdown of student numbers, in relation to finances

We have 91 students to date. Of these, 52 are school or LA supported. 39 are family funded. Of these 18 are low income families and 21 are high income families. (A low income family might be a single parent family, a family whose key wage earner has had to stop working to support their child or a family on benefits.)

These 39 families who are with us, of the total 91, means 43% of our students have no Government funding or support. Many are fighting for this support but it is incredibly hard to get. All their children are legally entitled to an appropriate education but it is usually a fight with a Local Authority to get this.

Looking at our session numbers is very interesting and shows another picture. We run 162 sessions a week. Of these, 114 are funded by schools or LAs. This is 70% of our sessions. Low income families have 23 sessions a week and high income families have 25 sessions a week. Low income families have only 14% of our sessions. (High income families have 16%.)

It is clear that with funding, so much more can be received. This makes it very important for us to fundraise and enable our low income families to have access to more sessions.

Going forwards

We are not planning to recruit anymore staff this academic year, or for a few years. We are now focusing on improving what we do already.

We want to fundraise more to support our low income families.

Signed by the Chair of Trustees

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is enclosed within a large, loopy oval shape. The letters 'V', 'M', and 'A' are prominent and interconnected.

Vikki Mead

24th January 2023

Gecko Community CIO	
Period start date	09/14/2021

Section A Statement of financial activities (including summary income

Recommended categories by activity

Income (Note 3)

Income and endowments from:

Donations and legacies

Charitable activities

Other trading activities

Investments

Separate material item of income

Other

Total

Expenditure (Notes 6)

Expenditure

on:

Raising funds

Charitable activities

Separate material expense item

Other

Total

Net income/(expenditure) before tax for the reporting period

Net income/(expenditure) after tax before investment gains/(losses)

Net gains/
(losses) on
investments

Net income/(expenditure)

Extraordinary items

Transfers between funds

Guidance Note

Unrestricted funds

£

F01

S01	38468
S02	60612
S03	
S04	-
S05	10,000
S06	1,558
S07	110,638

S08	
S09	109,438
S10	1,200
S11	
S12	110,638

S13	-
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S14	
S15	-

S16	-
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S17	-
-----	---

S18	-
-----	---

S19	-
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Other recognised gains/(losses):
Gains and losses on revaluation of fixed assets for
the charity's own use

S20

Other gains/
(losses)

S21

Net movement in funds

S22

**Reconciliation
of funds:**

Total funds brought forward

S23

Total funds carried forward

S24

-
-
-
-
-
-

Charity No	1195860		
Company No			
To	Period end date	09/30/2022	

and expenditure account)

Restricted income funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year funds
£	£	£	£
F02	F03	F04	F05

		38,468	
110876	-	171,488	-
-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-
-	-	10,000	-
-	-	1,558	-
110,876	-	221,514	-

78,591		188,029	
		1,200	
78,591		189,229	

32,285		32,285	
32,285	-		-
-	-	-	-
32,285	-		-
-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-

-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-
32,285	-		-
-	-	-	-
32,285	-	32,285	-

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF GECKO COMMUNITY CIO

We report on the accounts of the charity for the period 14th September 2021 to 30th September 2022 which are appended.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES AND EXAMINERS

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) does not apply. It is our responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145(5)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to our attention.

BASIS OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT

Our examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosure in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence required by an audit and consequently, we do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.


INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS STATEMENT

In connection with our examination, no matter has come to our attention;

1. Which gives us reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirement
. to keeping accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act, and
. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act

have not been met, or;

2. To which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.


PRYOR BEGENT FRY & CO.
Chartered Accountants
13-15 Commercial Road
Hayle
Cornwall
TR27 4DE

9th December 2022

Gecko Community CIO

Charity Number: 1195860

Year Ending 30th September 2022

Balance Sheet

Current Assets

Bank	29,490
Debtors	3,259

Current Liabilities

Accrual	465
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Funds

Unrestricted funds	0
Restricted Funds	32285

Funds at 30th Sept. 2022 **32,285**

The Company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The director's acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102SORP.

Signed by one or two trustees/directors on behalf of all the trustees/directors

Print Name

Date

Gecko Community CIO		Charity No	1195860		
		Company No			
Period start date	14/09/2021	To	Period end date	30/09/2022	

Section A Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)

Recommended categories by activity	Guidance Note	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year funds
		£ F01	£ F02	£ F03	£ F04	£ F05
Income (Note 3)						
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies	S01	38468			38,468	
Charitable activities	S02	60612	110876	-	171,488	-
Other trading activities	S03		-	-	-	-
Investments	S04	-	-	-	-	-
Separate material item of income	S05	10,000	-	-	10,000	-
Other	S06	1,558	-	-	1,558	-
Total	S07	110,638	110,876	-	221,514	-
Expenditure (Notes 6)						
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	S08					
Charitable activities	S09	109,438	78,591		188,029	
Separate material expense item	S10	1,200			1,200	
Other	S11					
Total	S12	110,638	78,591		189,229	
Net income/(expenditure) before tax for	S13	-	32,285		32,285	
Tax payable	S14					
Net income/(expenditure) after tax before	S15	-	32,285	-		-
Net gains/(losses) on						
investments	S16	-	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure)	S17	-	32,285	-		-
Extraordinary items	S18	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers between funds	S19	-	-	-	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Gains and losses on revaluation of fixed	S20	-	-	-	-	-
Other						
gains/(losses)	S21	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	S22	-	32,285	-		-
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward	S23	-	-	-	-	-
Total funds carried forward	S24	-	32,285	-	32,285	-

Gecko Community CIO

Charity Number: 1195860

Year Ending 30th September 2022

Accounting Policies

Income

Recognition of income These are included in the statement of financial activities when:

- 1) the charity becomes entitled to the resources
- 2) it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources;
- 3) the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Offsetting There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses.

Grants and donations Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the general income recognition criteria are met (5.10 to 5.12 FRS SORP)

Government Grants The Charity has received £1,558 from the DWP.

Support costs The Charity has not incurred expenditure on support costs.

Volunteer help The value of any volunteer help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the Trustee's annual report.

Expenditure and Liabilities

Deferred income No material item of deferred income is included in the accounts.

Creditors The charity owes £465 for accounting preparation

Assets

Tangible Fixed assets The charity has no tangible fixed assets at present.

Intangible Fixed Assets The charity has no intangible fixed assets at present.