

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1196287

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31 MARCH 2025
FOR
THE FAMILY CENTRE (DEAF CHILDREN)**

THE FAMILY CENTRE (DEAF CHILDREN)

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

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THE FAMILY CENTRE (DEAF CHILDREN)

Report of the Trustees FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the period ended 31 March 2025.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity number

1196287

Other Charity name

FCDC

Principal address

Elmfield School for Deaf Children
Sheridan Road
Bristol
BS7 0PU

Trustees

Neil Curry	Chair/Treasurer
Sonya Brewer	Secretary (resigned 23 September 2024)
Sarah Evans	Trustee
Stephen Thompson	Trustee
Hattie Axford	Trustee (Removed during period)
Elizabeth Lawrence	Trustee (appointed 21 October 2024)
Samantha Lautieri	Trustee (appointed 21 October 2024)
Kaish Powell	Trustee (appointed 21 October 2024)

During this period Sonya Brewster stood down as Secretary.

Bankers

Cater Allen
9 Nelson Street
Bradford
BD1 5AN

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Document

The charity is managed by a Constitution, as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) which was approved by the Charity Commission on 27 October 2021. The Constitution is accepted as current or updated as necessary for the AGM which took place on 25 November 2023.

Operational Management

The Centre Manager, Helen Davies, was recruited in January 2021. Helen is responsible for service delivery, financial management, safeguarding and the charity's day-to-day operations. Helen brings a diverse skills set and significant management experience to her crucial role at the charity. She holds a Diploma in Business and Finance (BTEC National Diploma) and is a qualified Safeguarding Lead and Specialist Practitioner (Level 3). She is also qualified in British Sign Language (Level 1) and has personal lived experience of child deafness within her family. Helen line manages a small team of staff, volunteers, sessional workers and contracted professionals to support the delivery and sustainability of the charity's services, activities and events

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Report of the Trustees

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Recruitment and appointment of new Trustees

Trustees are appointed at the AGM and serve for a term of 3 years, after which they may stand for re-election. The CIO's new Constitution requires the Board of Trustees to consist of a minimum of 4 Trustees. Trustees used to be, what was classified as 'full members' (full members being those who live with deafness in the family who are paid members of the charity). Following adoption of the CIO Constitution in 2021, FCDC no longer has paid members. In addition, Trustees, as hearing loss experts with lived experience or having other relevant skills and/or expertise to offer the Board and charity, can be invited onto the Trustee Board, if this would further the benefit to FCDC. These Trustees would then step down at the next AGM and could offer themselves up for election. Sub-committees can also be formed when required. Going forward, we continue to look to invite professionals to support trustee meetings and the Board to improve the skills and knowledge matrix of the team. The remaining Trustees agreed to continue their roles as Trustees, the current number of Trustees is 6, with another person about to join the Board in the next financial year.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The objectives of the CIO are:

- To reduce isolation, increase socialisation and strengthen links with the community of deaf children and their families.
- To develop children's deaf identity, self confidence and self-esteem.
- To improve deaf awareness within families and the community.

The promotion of social inclusion and the provision of education among deaf children and their families in Bristol and the surrounding area, who may be excluded from society, or parts of society, as a result of being deaf (where deaf is defined as mild to profound hearing loss).

In 2024, we further developed these aims to include:

- To enable parents, carers, deaf children, hearing siblings and Children of Deaf Adults (CODA's) to connect and find friends.
- To improve family cohesion within the families of deaf children.
- To improve communication methods within families.
- To provide financially sustainable, needs-led, strengths-based, family-centred, holistic support services that meet identified needs of local families with hearing loss

Significant Activities:

Summary of main activities in relation to the objects of the charity are;

- To provide a base for local families and carers of deaf children to discuss, to meet, to interact freely with professionals and to have access to resources, information and training as required.
- To provide activities and events for deaf children/young people, children of deaf adults (CODAs) and their siblings to find and meet with their peers to share experiences and find support to help promote personal identity and confidence.
- To work in partnership with other agencies and providers of services for the benefit of families with deaf children.
- To provide practical support, including BSL courses, to help with communication within deaf families.
- To provide health and well-being activities for deaf children, young people and their families
- To promote, encourage or otherwise undertake organised research into the effects of deafness and the family, and to publish the useful results of such research.
- To organise public meetings, lectures, conferences and seminars for the consideration and discussion of problems arising out of childhood deafness and the family.

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Report of the Trustees

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

- To promote and encourage the education and training of professionals, students and other persons for the furtherance of the education and support of the families of deaf children.
- To raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons or body corporate by way of subscription, covenant, donation, affiliation fees, legacies, grants or otherwise to assist in fulfilling the purpose of the charity.
- The geographical area which is covered by our services includes Bristol, Bath, North-East Somerset, South Gloucestershire, other areas in the South West of England eg. Taunton and Exeter and South Wales.

Public benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty under the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when planning and reviewing the objectives and activities of The Family Centre (Deaf Children).

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

In 2023-2024, FCDC contracted a Voscur-approved external fundraising consultant in order to:

- Enhance the financial sustainability of the charity.
- Support the FCDC team with a new grant application to the National Lottery Community Fund.
- Identify new fundraising and income generation opportunities.
- Assist the FCDC team with the development of a new fundraising strategy.
- Improve staff/trustee bid writing skills and fundraising knowledge through a tailored mentoring programme which was funded by the Quartet Community Foundation.
- Support the submission of grant applications to new and previous funders.
- Increase grant application success rates.

This contractual arrangement proved to be very successful and resulted in the charity securing a major grant from the National Lottery Community Fund (£242,796) for a new 5-year project '*Improving the Lives of Deaf Children and their Families 2024-2029*' in April 2024.

The grant award is for 5 years, but will taper off in the last 2 years of the project. The planned budget for this 5-year project is £668,787. Therefore, FCDC requires significant match funding (£425,991) from other income sources to successfully deliver the project and maintain the integrity of the charity's planned activities and services over this period. Nevertheless, the National Lottery grant gives us a significant financial boost and base to secure our future through to April 2029.

In addition, FCDC successfully secured core funding from BBC Children in Need in June 2024. This Children in Need grant, which is £90,000 over 3 years, funds approximately 95% of the Centre Manager's salary costs and also serves to meet the charity's National Lottery match funding requirements.

Since securing these grants from National Lottery Community Fund and BBC Children in Need, we have also been successful in securing grants from the following funders in 2024-2025:

- St James Place Charitable Foundation to fund our Teddy Ear Clinics and community outreach programme.
- Medlock Charitable Trust to fund our 'Health, Happiness and Wellbeing' project.
- Quartet Community Foundation to fund in-house fundraising skills and knowledge development.
- The Society of Merchant Venturers to fund monthly peer support meet ups for local deaf young people (01 June 2025 -31 May 2025).
- Holiday and Food Programme funding (HAF) to fund activities and events that promote healthy eating and lifestyles (Spring and Summer 2024 events)
- A Bristol City Council Social Action grant to fund our deaf youth peer support meet ups (until 31 May 2025)
- A small grant from Bath Half Marathon Fund to fund a small number of family-focused sports events.

THE FAMILY CENTRE (DEAF CHILDREN)

Report of the Trustees FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

These significant fundraising achievements in 2024-2025 have allowed us to plan for the future in the knowledge of our financial security for the next 4 or 5 years, vindicating our decision to increase our workforce capacity with a new Development Officer role.

Furthermore, this grant success not only enables us to meet our National Lottery project match funding requirements but also enables FCDC to continue to develop and improve our services as well as secure our financial future against an increasingly competitive, more restrictive grant funding landscape.

The National Lottery Community Fund grant provides essential funding for core costs, overheads and some of our 5-year project activities. Therefore, we have secured other grants (as detailed previously) to enable us to provide additional activities and services that form part of our 5-year project, but which are not funded by the National Lottery and will continue to do so over the next 4 years. These activities and services include:

- Monthly parent/toddler coffee mornings and support network events for families, wellbeing workshops, talks, informal networking and advice between parents and professionals and opportunity for children to meet similar others in relaxed space.
- Family days out and festive seasonal parties during the school holidays and at weekends to facilitate family networking and peer support.
- Family and children-focussed BSL courses.
- Appropriate accessible outdoor activities for deaf children and their siblings, providing them with the opportunity to meet up with their peers, have fun, try out new activities, develop new skills whilst simultaneously improving their confidence and wellbeing.
- Counselling support to individual parents/carers and deaf young people.
- Teddy Ear Centre Clinics to help normalise hearing loss for the whole family and wider community, and to help reduce children's anxieties in relation to hearing devices and audiology appointments.
- Play Therapy and Child Psychotherapy activities.
- Parent/carer well-being workshops.
- A wide range of social and recreational activities for CODAs, d/Deaf children and their families.
- A monthly youth group for local d/Deaf young people which is youth-led and aims to facilitate peer support and social interaction.
- Avon Fire & Rescue support services (Free home safety checks & free deaf fire alarms).
- Targeted community outreach activities and events in diverse communities across Bristol and the surrounding areas.

The provision of core funding also allows us to expand on our activities and services in order to meet the support needs of our service users.

In addition, the National Lottery Community Fund and St James Place Charitable Foundation grants have enabled us to extend our community reach further and achieve increased deaf community engagement with our services as well as participation in our activities as shown by the remarkable increase in attendance at our events during the financial year 2024-2025.

This illustrates how FCDC is growing from strength to strength and is becoming a tangible community asset in the South West. We are also an important charity partner for Local Authority Sensory Support Services and take part in quarterly Bristol Council community support meetings.

"The Family Centre (Deaf Children) collaborates with the Sensory Support Service in a variety of ways. Recently the Family Centre ran a Teddy Ear clinic which was a huge success. They also provide additional support such as transport for families who may otherwise find it difficult to participate in local groups. The Family Centre provides weekend and holiday events that enable parents and children to meet up. Some lifelong friendships have been made through these events." Local Sensory Support Services.

Family Sign BSL courses continued to take place via Zoom and have received very positive feedback. This delivery method allows for much more flexible attendance and helps increase attendance rates as it enables additional family members to take part in the sessions from the comfort of their own homes. Improvements to Zoom teaching is that the teaching is supplemented by a face-to-face session at the beginning and end of the course, which helps in student familiarity and eases any course apprehension and anxiety.

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Report of the Trustees

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

During this reporting period, a suitably qualified and experienced BSL proficient counsellor was recruited and contracted by FCDC to deliver the charity's counselling service. This service continues to be offered flexibly by providing the option of face-to-face or online counselling for families.

Partnership Working

The Family Centre has developed a range of partnerships and collaborations that enable staff to share knowledge and resources with other organisations. This enables all agencies to extend their offers to families and to deaf children: joint working brings cost benefits as well as a wider range of options for members. The Family Centre developed many of these new collaborative projects listening to members. Examples include:

- Identifying the need for new projects including Family Sign, Play Therapy, Parent/Carer wellbeing workshops, KS3+ Activities/workshops, Coffee/Family mornings in disadvantaged areas.
- Working with Bristol City Council, the Sensory Support Service, Elmfield School for Deaf Children, and the deaf community to help develop bespoke Family Sign Language and producing videos which are accessible to all. They focus on the actual BSL an average family would need. These are Bristol specific.
- Staff have been trained to restructure the website to add new BSL accessible content.
- Working with Avon and Somerset Fire and Rescue so that Centre families can be referred for home safety visits. These include a fire safety check, advice on home fire safety, and the testing and fitting of new deaf smoke alarms.
- Working with Unique Voice, Children's Scrapstore and Children's Kitchen, to develop and provide summer holiday cookery and craft packs.
- Organising events in collaboration with a wide range of organisations in Bristol including with:
 - Little Hands
 - Bristol Deaf Children's Society
 - Trinity Centre Music
 - The Flying Seagull Project
 - Boing! Soft Play
 - Bannerman Road Children's Community Centre
 - Bristol Life Skills Centre
 - The Square Food Foundation, Community Kitchen
 - Circus Starr
 - Blue Sky Tennis Foundation
 - Bristol Family Cycle Centre
 - Bristol Deaf Youth Club
 - Centre for Deaf and Hard of Hearing
 - St Marys Redcliffe
 - Avon Valley Railway
 - Hearing dogs for Deaf people
 - Great Western Railway
 - Lawrence Weston Community Farm
 - Golden Hill Community Garden
 - SENDSenses
 - Cube
 - Bristol Rovers - Youth disability football
 - Deaf Studies Trust

THE FAMILY CENTRE (DEAF CHILDREN)

Report of the Trustees FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Staff

The Family Centre staff team consists of three members; a Centre Manager contracted to work 33 hours per week, a Families and Events Officer contracted to work 32 hours per week, and a Development Officer contracted to work 24 hours per week

Operations

FCDC's office is based at Elmfield School for Deaf Children in Bristol, where many of our activities also take place.

The school relocated to a new site in Horfield, Bristol in September 2023 and FCDC moved with the school. We have been successfully operating from our new office base within the school since this date.

Operations continue to be run well within the limited resources that we have with the staff having worked tirelessly to develop and provide high-quality events, activities and services.

The FCDC team continue to ensure that our Policies and Procedures are regularly revised, improved, updated and communicated to staff, volunteers, service users and other key stakeholders appropriately. This also ensures that our funders can be assured that are policies and procedures not only meet the charity's legal obligations and statutory requirements but are compiled based on VCSE sector good practice.

Governance

This year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) took place on 15th October 2024. Board of Trustee meetings took place at 4 weekly intervals throughout 2024-2025 with regular attendance by all Trustees. Trustee meetings continue to take place via Zoom as this has helped to facilitate regular Trustee attendance and participation.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Gift Aid

The CIO registered with HMRC for Gift Aid on 6th March 2024 and this registration was backdated by HMRC to 27th October 2021, the date of the new Charity Registration number. An application for Gift Aid relief was made to HMRC with monies received from HMRC on 12th June 2025. This has now resulted in the Charity having to complete annual Tax Returns to HMRC for the first time.

Reserves policy

Over the last few years, to allow for operations to continue at the required level, our reserves had been slowly depleted. Donations income has helped us to build up our reserves to cover any unexpected costs. By the end of this period, we built up our reserves back up to 3 months' worth of full activity expenditure as a reserve amount, which equates to almost 5 months of reduced activity or base expenditure. Our reserves more than provided for the necessary finance for activities to continue unabated with much of our activity being funded by restricted grants received for specific activities.. Some FCDC activities generate a small income through donations from families. In addition, donations and some unrestricted funds were also received from individuals and organisations to support the charity's work throughout the year.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:

Chair/Treasurer – Neil Curry

4 September 2025

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Family Centre (Deaf Children)

I report to the Charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 8 to 11.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity's Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Matthew Bracher
Gravita
6-8 Bath Street
Bristol
BS1 6HL

4 September 2025

THE FAMILY CENTRE (DEAF CHILDREN)

**STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
RECEIPTS				
Event income, donations and subscriptions	5,690	-	5,690	11,732
Grants	-	140,764	140,764	73,290
Interest received	319	-	319	223
TOTAL RECEIPTS	6,009	140,764	146,773	85,245
PAYMENTS				
Event charges	1,097	25,047	26,144	19,077
Office costs	-	4,306	4,306	4,553
Purchase of equipment	-	1,807	1,807	1,178
Governance	-	852	852	816
Staff costs	5,044	68,949	73,993	57,325
Consultancy fees	7,565	7,764	15,329	15,507
Other support costs	-	262	262	473
TOTAL PAYMENTS	13,706	108,987	122,693	98,929
NET OF RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS)	(7,697)	31,777	24,080	(13,684)
Total funds brought forward	36,643	-	36,643	50,327
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	28,946	31,777	60,723	36,643

THE FAMILY CENTRE (DEAF CHILDREN)

**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2025 Total funds £	2024 Total funds £
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash funds - Cater Allen ending 6730	5,720	1,035	6,755	3,011
Cash funds - Cater Allen ending 0972	-	30,742	30,742	7,205
Cash funds - Scottish Widows account	23,199	-	23,199	26,392
Cash funds - Paypal account	<u>27</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>35</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>28,946</u>	<u>31,777</u>	<u>60,723</u>	<u>36,643</u>
FUNDS				
Unrestricted funds			28,946	36,643
Restricted funds			<u>31,777</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL FUNDS			<u>60,723</u>	<u>36,643</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and were signed on its behalf by:

Chair/Treasurer – Neil Curry

4 September 2025

THE FAMILY CENTRE (DEAF CHILDREN)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011.

The Financial Statements are drawn up on the Receipts and Payments basis of accounting. All donations and other income are therefore accounted for when received and all expenditure is accounted for when paid.

Fund accounting

Restricted funds comprise amounts received for special purposes and used for those purposes during the year or held for those purposes at the balance sheet date. The use of donations and grants received for a specific purpose is restricted to that purpose.

2. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Balance brought forward	Receipts in period	Payments in period	Balance carried forward
Lottery year 1 Fund	-	70,745	(66,827)	3,918
HAF Spring 2025 Fund	-	1,519	(585)	934
Children in Need Fund	-	31,400	(23,159)	8,241
St James Place Fund	-	9,980	(2,168)	7,812
Medlock Fund	-	5,000	(2,946)	2,054
Social Action Small Grant Fund	-	4,890	(948)	3,942
Society of Merchant Ventures Fund	-	4,752	-	4,752
Cashforkids Fund	-	2,980	(2,980)	-
HAF Spring Fund	-	1,350	(1,350)	-
HAF Summer Fund	-	1,800	(1,746)	54
Bath Half	-	985	(985)	-
Quartet Express Grant Fund	-	4,980	(4,980)	-
Cooking Equipment Grant Fund	-	383	(313)	70
	-	140,764	(108,987)	31,777

The restricted funds reflect grant funding received for specific projects or activities.

3. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	Balance brought forward	Receipts in period	Payments in period	Balance carried forward
General Fund	36,643	6,009	(13,706)	28,946
	36,643	6,009	(13,706)	28,946

THE FAMILY CENTRE (DEAF CHILDREN)

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

The Trustees all give freely of their time and expertise.

Trustees' expenses

During the year no Trustee had expenses reimbursed by the Charity.