

# BRIGHT SPARKS TRUST

England & Wales · Charity number 1196765

## Details

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Other names	BRIGHT SPARKS
Status	Registered
Legal form	Trust
Registered	2021-11-25
Register	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

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Website	<a href="http://www.brightsparkstrust.org">www.brightsparkstrust.org</a>

## Activities

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**Objects:** FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE RELIEF OF POVERTY AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN MALAWI WHO WOULD OTHERWISE NOT BE ABLE TO AFFORD TO ACCESS HIGH LEVEL EDUCATION BY:A) AWARDING TO SUCH PERSONS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR THE PAYMENT OF FEES TENABLE AT ANY SECONDARY SCHOOL OR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER OR FURTHER EDUCATION;B) PROVIDING ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO ENSURE THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS OF ATTENDING SUCH INSTITUTIONS ARE MET, FOR PURPOSES SUCH AS SCHOOL UNIFORMS, BOOKS AND STATIONERY, TRANSPORT BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL.

**Activities:** For the public benefit, the advancement of education and the relief of poverty among young people in Malawi who would otherwise not be able to afford to access high level education by:a) awarding to such persons scholarships for the payment of fees tenable at any secondary school or institution of higher or further education;b) providing additional financial assistance to ensure the basic requ

## Classification

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- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Education/training
- **Who:** Children/young People

## Geography

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- Malawi

## Finances

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Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-08-31	£21,393	£39,415	-	-
2024-08-31	£64,919	£38,021	-	-
2023-08-31	£18,020	£31,139	-	-
2022-08-31	£33,418	£19,599	-	-

## Trustees

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Name	Role	Appointed
Alastair John Child	Chair	2021-11-23
Benjamin Griffiths		2021-11-23
SHANNON MAUREEN GONZALEZ ATKINSON		2021-11-23

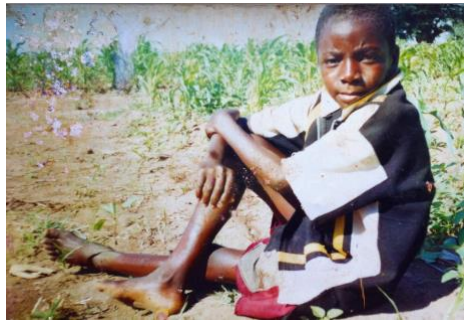
**BRIGHT SPARKS TRUST**

England & Wales - Charity number 1196765

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# Accounts

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# Trustee's Annual Report #9

**FY: 01 SEPTEMBER 2023 – 31 AUGUST 2024**

## Bright Sparks Trust

Charity Commission ref: 1196765  
HMRC Gift Aid ref: EW40119

20 Banbury Road  
Stratford Upon Avon, CV37 7HY, UK

[www.brightsparkstrust.org](http://www.brightsparkstrust.org)  
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*247 Secondary  
School  
Scholarships  
provided to date*

*60 University  
Scholarships  
provided to date*

## Highlights and Challenges

### Strategic Highlights

In Malawi, primary education is free, allowing children from vulnerable backgrounds to earn a place at prestigious National Schools. However, the higher fees for secondary education are a barrier to bright vulnerable children completing their education and fulfilling their academic potential. This is the problem that our charity is focused on solving; intervening to ensure bright vulnerable students complete their secondary and higher education in order to break the cycle of poverty in which they are trapped, and to allow them to enjoy successful careers that benefit themselves, their families, communities, and Malawian society as a whole.

As a young charity, the Trustees are proud of our strategy and operating model. We believe that we are offering a unique intervention in Malawi by focusing on children who are both bright and needy by local standards, then supporting their secondary and tertiary education in a comprehensive manner at the very best academic institutions possible, despite lower cost alternatives.

Our close partnership with the schools and students in our programme ensures that we are efficient and effective. We do not believe that third party donations should be consumed by management and overheads costs until absolutely necessary. Our highly lean operating model, our own investment as Trustees to cover all overheads and our approach to work with our alumni to manage our activities on a voluntary basis means that we offer absolute value to our donors, with all donations currently reaching student beneficiaries.

The Trustees continue to take motivation from the evidence of our programme as manifested through our current alumni. We are in regular contact with graduates of the programme including two teachers, a doctor and chartered accountant who benefitted from our initial programme for 10 years between 2004 and 2015. We see the transformation to their lives, the ripple effect of their investment, support and inspiration back into the communities where they grew up and we look ahead to great prospects as these achievers become increasingly influential leaders in Malawian society. These promising individuals would not have broken out of the cycle of poverty without Bright Sparks intervention and support.

*Governed by the  
Charity Commission  
for England and  
Wales*

Our approach is to support bright vulnerable students over the long term of their academic career. We are now starting to see graduates completing university from the program cycle that we initiated in 2014, having been supported by Bright Sparks throughout 4 years of Secondary School and 4 years at university, with a 1 year break in-between.

Bright Sparks Trust has been governed by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, since 25 November, 2021.

### Operating Highlights

Over the past operating year, we awarded 30 new secondary school scholarships and continued to support 77 existing scholars across our 3 partner schools. 0 of our scholars started receiving new financial assistance from other sources, something we actively verify in case we no longer need to fund such students. 0 scholarships were terminated due to under performance academically. 0 scholars dropped out of school this year. 25 scholars graduated from secondary school, bringing our lifetime total to 146 scholars that have completed secondary education thanks to our support.

*49% of secondary  
school scholars are  
girls*

49% active secondary school scholars are girls, compared to 47% last year, as a result of the Trustees earlier decision to double the number of scholarships we award at Lilongwe Girls Secondary School. We have learned from one of our partner schools that educates both boys and girls that they prefer to allocate our scholarships to boys where possible because they have another organization supporting their students that is similar to ours but only supports girls. When putting the students first, this seems fair and may limit our ability to maintain gender parity across our scholarship portfolio, nevertheless we are proud to reach 49% having been at 31% five years ago.

All of our scholars received additional financial assistance in the form of grants for books, uniforms, bus transport, stationery and other priority items. Our prior experience suggests that this support is key to enable our scholars to focus on their studies on a level playing field with other students. Two years ago we made a significant change in how additional assistance grants were disbursed to students, now channeling the funds via trusted alumni rather than school staff. This model offers us three points of assurance as opposed to two, with students, staff and alumni all now reporting to us the status of funding distribution. The model has worked extremely well so far. We continually increase the amount of funding provided each year in line with Malawi inflation rates.

*Trustee verification mission carried out successfully in September 2023*

We have in-depth background information on all our scholars to ensure that we are identifying the neediest and brightest students. We continued our verification program with alumni volunteer representatives visiting schools to verify students were receiving and benefitting from the intended assistance. We carried out our third layer of verification in September 2023 with a Trustee visit to Malawi, visiting all schools, meeting all students, and visiting a sample of students homes.

*University Support program continued with 38 students at top tier Malawian colleges*

Finally, we continued our university support program, comprised of financial grants dispersed direct to Bright Sparks students who have earned a place at one of the top universities in the country. Our students are being supported by government with tuition and upkeep loans, therefore we have designed our financial support to compliment this with a “Book Prize” that enables students to purchase IT equipment and study materials, to keep up with the students from wealthier backgrounds. Having seen a steady decline in number of secondary school scholars reaching university in previous years, the trustees are pleased to note that this year we awarded the highest ever number of new scholarships to 17 university entrants, compared to 12 the previous year. The Trustees have noted the lower percentage of girls benefitting from our university Book Prize, with only 15 of our 50 beneficiaries being girls. 6 of our 17 new scholarships awarded this year were girls. We believe that ratio will increase in coming years once the impact of our decision to increase scholarships at Lilongwe Girls Secondary school plays through.

*£63,579 in donations raised*

**Financial Highlights**

We opened the year with £68,942 in available funds. We received £63,579 in donations and £1,340 in UK Gift Aid. We transferred £36,019 to Malawi for scholarships and student assistance, while incurring £2001 in overhead costs for website, banking fees and expenses for our September 2023 field mission. We closed the year with £95,840 in available funds held in our Bright Sparks Trust accounts at the Co-Operative Bank in the U.K.

All overhead costs are deducted from Trustee donated funds held in a separate management account to our third party donations account. We remain committed to ensure all our third party donations go to scholarships and assistance to our students, with all management costs being covered by Trustee donations for the foreseeable future.

**Challenges**

Our primary challenge we face is now the administrative burden of the university “Book Prize” program, now that we have grown the program from 11 students five years ago, to 50 total in

this last year. Each of the students is in constant direct one to one communication with the Trustees, and this is stretching our capacity as volunteers. As a result, this year the Trustees partnered with DoTank, a consulting organisation, to design an online web platform through which students can apply and manage their Book Prize efficiently. This year saw the successful launch of this platform at [my.brightsparkstrust.com](http://my.brightsparkstrust.com). The Trustees are deeply grateful for the pro-bono support DoTank is extending to Bright Sparks Trust.

The academic calendar remains disrupted as universities catch up from pandemic closures at different timings. Whilst this is causing an administrative challenge, so far the Trustees have managed to ensure all students are receiving the right support at the right time. We have extended advance funding where students have challenging individual circumstances, as a short term exception to our normal standardized approach.

Two years ago, the Trustees conducted analysis to set a target level of funds on account. It was agreed that this should be based on future liability considering a conservative estimate of future donations and the cost of all current scholars assuming their scholarships would be funded through to completion of school or university (not both, i.e. fund school students to the completion of school and university students to the completion of university). The result of this analysis was that we are targeting holding £39,000 in funds on account as our sustainable level, assuming 120 students in secondary school and 60 students at university at any one time. We continue to hold this target for funds on account.

### Looking Ahead

Looking ahead to the next year, the Trustees are focused on: the continued development and expansion of the online web platform for our university Book Prize program; fund raising; selection of and supporting the next cohort of scholars; governance and reporting.

The Trustees would like to sincerely thank all supporters of Bright Sparks for their generosity, without which none of our work in Malawi would be possible.



Alastair Child, Trustee and Founder  
September 7, 2024

## Structure, Governance, Management

### Structure

**Governing Document:** Trust Deed, executed 23 November 2021

**How the Charity is constituted:** UK Charitable Trust

### Governance

**Names of Trustees who manage the Charity:**

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
<b>Alastair Child</b>	Trustee, Founder	Whole year	Trustees
<b>Shannon Gonzalez</b>	Trustee	Whole year	Trustees
<b>Benjamin Griffiths</b>	Trustee	Whole year	Trustees

**Trustee selection methods:** Resolution of the Trustees

### Objects

The objects of the charity ('the objects') are:

For the public benefit, the advancement of education and the relief of poverty among young people in Malawi who would otherwise not be able to afford to access high level education by:

- a) awarding to such persons scholarships for the payment of fees tenable at any secondary school or institution of higher or further education;
- b) providing additional financial assistance to ensure the basic requirements of attending such institutions are met, for purposes such as school uniforms, books and stationery, transport between home and school.

*Sincere thanks to our alumni volunteers Patrick Chimzimu, Doctor Boston Zimba, Arnold Berma, Hendrix Zimba and to Deborah Msuku.*

### Management

One trustee meeting was held on 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 and the Trustees further visited Malawi in September 2023 for verification and program review. The Trustees remain in close contact throughout the year.

Bright Sparks Trust is run by volunteers and the Trustees would like to sincerely thank Patrick James Chimzimu, Doctor Boston Zimba, Arnold Berma, Hendrix Zimba and Deborah Msuku who represent the Charity in Malawi in interactions with schools and our students.



We aim to maximise the number of girls that benefit. Currently 46 of our 97 secondary school scholars and 9 of our 38 university scholars are girls.

## **Objectives, Activities, Performance**

### **Summary of the objects of Bright Sparks Trust (as per Trust Deed)**

For the public benefit, the advancement of education and the relief of poverty among young people in Malawi who would otherwise not be able to afford to access high level education.

### **Summary of main activities**

- 1) Awarding to such persons scholarships for the payment of fees tenable at any secondary school or institution of higher or further education.
- 2) Providing additional financial assistance to ensure the basic requirements of attending such institutions are met, for purposes such as school uniforms, books and stationery, transport between home and school.
- 3) Verification of vulnerable status, academic performance and behavior of scholars.
- 4) Verification that funds reach beneficiaries as intended.
- 5) Fundraising to enable scholarships and financial assistance to be provided to as many students as possible, without compromising the commitment of Bright Sparks Trust to continue to support students to the end of their current school or university education cycle.

## Achievements and Performance

*97 school  
scholarships  
funded this year*

*20 scholars  
graduated from  
secondary school*

*121 secondary  
school graduates to  
date in the lifetime  
of the charity*

<b>SECONDARY SCHOOL</b>		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Scholarships terminated due to academic performance / behaviour	Boys	0	1	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	1	0
Students dropping out	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	0	1	0
	Total	0	1	0
Scholarships terminated due to students no longer needing financial support	Boys	0	1	0
	Girls	0	1	0
	Total	0	2	0
Existing Scholarships continued	Boys	40	35	40
	Girls	28	33	37
	Total	68	68	77
New Scholarships awarded	Boys	13	16	15
	Girls	13	13	15
	Total	26	29	30
<b>Total Scholarships funded this year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>55</b>
	<b>Girls</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>52</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>107</b>
Total graduates completing school this year	Boys	15	12	12
	Girls	7	8	13
	Total	22	20	25
Total graduates completing school in the lifetime of the charity	Boys	73	85	97
	Girls	28	36	49
	Total	101	121	146
Total students successfully supported (i.e. excluding drop outs and terminations)	Boys	114	129	144
	Girls	65	77	92
	Total	179	206	236
Total students supported over the lifetime of the charity (included those who did not complete school)	Boys	122	138	153
	Girls	66	79	94
	Total	188	217	247

*38 university  
scholarships  
funded this year*

UNIVERSITY		2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Scholarships terminated due to academic performance / behaviour	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	0
Students dropping out	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	0
Scholarships terminated due to students no longer needing financial support	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	0
Existing Scholarships continued	Boys	17	21	24
	Girls	3	5	9
	Total	20	26	33
New Scholarships awarded	Boys	6	8	11
	Girls	2	4	6
	Total	8	12	17
<b>Total Scholarships funded this year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>35</b>
	<b>Girls</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>50</b>
Total graduates completing university this year	Boys	2	7	7
	Girls	0	0	3
	Total	2	7	10
Total graduates completing university in the lifetime of the charity	Boys	5	12	17
	Girls	0	0	3
	Total	5	12	20
Total students successfully supported (i.e. excluding drop outs and terminations)	Boys	26	34	45
	Girls	5	9	15
	Total	31	43	60
Total students supported over the lifetime of the charity (included those who did not complete school)	Boys	26	34	45
	Girls	5	9	15
	Total	31	43	60

Verification activities (secondary school):

- Review of student behavior: 0 student scholarships terminated.
- Review of student academic performance: 0 student scholarships terminated.
- Review of duplication with other organisations: 0 student scholarships terminated.
- Review of new student needy status:
  - 1st level verification completed – school teacher interview and assessment
  - 2nd level completed – Bright Sparks representative interview and assessment
  - 3rd level completed – Bright Sparks representative visits to schools and home visits took place successfully in September 2023

Fund raising activities:

- The income from regular monthly donors was £7,513. Remaining donations of £51,646 have come from one-off donations that we do not assume to be repeated in future years.
- Most of our donors are directly known by the Trustees or former Trustees. Our website is proving effective at providing prospective donors with a place to review our charity and donate in a secure manner.
- We are not seeing success in converting supporters to donors through social media, despite our Facebook page having 245 followers.
- This year we continued our corporate giving program with Google. Google employee donations are matched and doubled by Google and this year we raised £820. Whilst this is a competitive process each year, we are aiming to be listed as one of Google's charities for future years.

## Financial Review

### Financial Summary

#### Structure of finances

Two bank accounts are held at the Co-operative bank under the charity, one for donations for scholarships and the second for management overheads funded by the Trustees.

#### Summary of incomes and expenditures - UK

September 2023 to August 2024	Coop Account 1		Coop Account 2		TOTAL
	(Donations and Scholarships)		(Trustees Management Costs)		
Opening Balance	£	64,229.78	£	4,712.61	£ 68,942.39
Donations received (less Stripe online payment fees)		£ 59,979.08	£	3,600.00	£ 63,579.08
HMRC Gift Aid received	£	1,340.00	£	-	£ 1,340.00
Interest received	£	-	£	-	£ -
Scholarship outgoings (fees and additional assistance)	-£	36,019.29			-£ 36,019.29
Overhead Costs (bank charges, administration etc.)			-£	2,001.79	-£ 2,001.79
Closing Balance	£	89,529.57	£	6,310.82	£ 95,840.39

We opened the year with £68,942 in available funds. We received £63,579 in donations and £1,340 in UK Gift Aid. We transferred £36,019 to Malawi for scholarships and student assistance, while incurring £2,002 in overhead costs for website, banking fees and expenses for our September 2023 field mission. We closed the year with £95,840 in available funds held in our Bright Sparks Trust accounts at the Co-Operative Bank in the U.K.

All overhead costs, £2,002, are deducted from Trustee donated funds held in a separate management account to third party donations. We remain committed to ensure all our third party donations go to scholarships and assistance to our students, with all management costs being covered by Trustee donations for the foreseeable future.

Administrative overhead costs are taken from the Bright Sparks Trust No. 2 Co-operative Bank account, which receives funds from the Trustees and is used solely for management costs. In this way our principal Bright Sparks Trust account (Co-op Account 1) is used solely for receiving donations and making payments for student school fees and additional assistance grants.

Our funds on account are significantly higher than the target level of £39,000. This is the result of a major one off lump sum donation this year that we do not assume we can depend on in

future years. The Trustees will monitor the balance of donations and outgoings in coming years before taking any action.

In terms of currency exchange rates, the long-term trend is devaluation of the Malawian Kwacha against the British Pound. The Malawi kwacha started the year at 1,355 and ended at 2,319 following a significant and sudden devaluation in November 2023. The long term trend is for the kwacha to lose value relative to the pound. When our Founder first taught in Malawi in 2004, the rate was 200 Malawi kwacha to the British pound. Whilst this means we are buying much greater amounts of Kwacha per pound donated, this is balanced by very high inflation rates driving up the costs of school fees and we are choosing to increase Additional Assistance at schools and Book Prize at University by the inflation rate also.

### Independent Examination of Accounts

The Trustees commissioned an Independent Examination of the 2021-22 Bright Sparks Trust accounts for the first time in February 2023. The examination of the accounts was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Charity Commission for England and Wales and was conducted by Paxton Independent Examiners, a part of the independent company Paxton based in the UK. The examination was concluded with no discrepancies and no suggestions for improvement. Due to lower fund raising levels in 2022-23, no Independent Examination was required this past year. The Trustees will conduct an Independent Examination of the 2023-24 accounts during the coming year due to the higher donations levels realized.

### Funds materially in deficit

The Trustees are pleased to report that Bright Sparks Trust holds no debts.

Notwithstanding, we intend to ensure we are always able to fund the completion of scholars' education. It is our objective not to have to terminate a scholarship due to shortage of funds. With our scholarships now lasting 8-10 years through secondary and tertiary education, this is a long-term commitment to each individual.

Three years ago the Trustees conducted analysis to set a target level of funds on account. It was agreed that this should be based on future liability considering a conservative estimate of future donations and the cost of all current scholars assuming their scholarships would be funded through to completion of school or university (not both, i.e. fund school students to the completion of school and university students to the completion of university). The result of this analysis was that we are targeting holding £39,000 in funds on account as our sustainable level, assuming 120 students in secondary school and 60 students at university at any one

time. We are not seeing our funds on account migrate to that level, and they remain high due to the lower than expected success of students reaching university. We had factored in a 50% success rate.

### Principal Sources of Funds

The principal source of funds for Bright Sparks Trust is donations either as one-off lump sums or recurring monthly donations.

We ensure that we claim Gift Aid on all our donations from willing UK tax paying donors.

### Suggested donation level

We set our suggested donation level based on costs of fees, additional assistance grants, and with consideration of fluctuating exchange rate levels and potential school fee increases and additional assistance grant increase due to inflation. Inflation is historically high in Malawi. We have increased our suggested donation level to £20 per month to cover one student in school and £40 per month to cover one student at university.

## Risk Assessment

The trustees acknowledge their responsibility for protecting the charity and its beneficiaries from risk. The process for risk identification and mitigation is to follow guidance from the UK Charity Commission (Guidance: Charities and Risk Management - CC26) and review risks as part of annual reporting and Trustee meetings.

CATEGORY	RISK	IMPACT	LIKELY	CONTROL
GOVERNANCE	Reporting accuracy and timeliness	Moderate	Highly probable	REDUCE Develop an online digital management tool Introduce incentive for school staff
	Loss of key representatives in Malawi e.g. to studies abroad	Major	Probable	REDUCE Diversify number of representatives Standardize and document procedures
	Over-dependence on one Trustee	Minor	Highly probable	ACCEPT
OPERATIONS	Better-off children benefit	Extreme	Possible	SHARE, REDUCE Verification of vulnerable status through 1) school staff assessment, 2) Bright Sparks student proposal process, 3) field verification through random home visits.
	Assistance grants do not reach beneficiaries	Extreme	Possible	SHARE, REDUCE Verification that funds reach beneficiaries through 1) school bursary committee report to Bright Sparks, 2) student signatures, 3) direct confirmation with students.
	Duplication with other bursary providers	Major	Possible	SHARE, REDUCE Verification of no duplication by 1) requiring schools to disclose all bursaries from all providers, 2) direct confirmation with students.
	Conduct of volunteers puts vulnerable children at risk	Extreme	Possible	SHARE, REDUCE Publish a code of conduct and share with Bright Sparks volunteers

FINANCIAL	Over dependence on ad hoc donations	Major	Highly probable	REDUCE Establish and manage to a target level of funds on account to ensure sustainability of scholarships
	Malawi inflation leading to rising fees and costs	Moderate	Possible	ACCEPT Monitor inflation rates and forex to ensure ongoing affordability.
	Compliance with donor imposed restrictions	Major	Possible	AVOID Refrain from offering donors the ability to allocate specific scholars to their donations
EXTERNAL	Malawi gov'n withholds loans to BST scholars	Extreme	Possible	SHARE Offer a different form of support than Tuition and Upkeep loans provided by government
	Relationship with major funders	Major	Possible	REDUCE Invite major funders on field visits Share annual report with all donors Communicate via social media
	Public perception of credibility	Moderate	Possible	REDUCE Quality reporting Adoption of Commission guidelines
	Claims of mistreatment by beneficiaries	Moderate	Possible	REDUCE Standardize protocols in Operating Manual
COMPLIANCE	Compliance with UK regulations	Extreme	Possible	REDUCE Apply and adhere to UK Charity Commission requirements

**Impact categories:** insignificant, minor, moderate, major, extreme

**Likelihood categories:** remote, unlikely, possible, probable, highly probable

**Control categories:**

- Avoid – end the related activity
- Transfer – delegate activity to a third party
- Share – partner with a third party
- Reduce – implement risk mitigation procedures
- Insure – insurance to cover liability
- Accept – no action taken as risk is unlikely or low impact

**Declaration of direct communication with minors**




As part of their review of Risk Management protocols, the Trustees decided to include in this annual report the instances where direct communication has been established by any representative of Bright Sparks Trust with a child under the age of 18. Our Code of Conduct advises representatives to only enter direct communication with a child *“only where necessary to support the best interests of the child”* and to *“disclose all instances ... to the trustees of Bright Sparks Trust”*.

Current disclosures: none. The previous case reported in last year's annual report has now been closed following the graduation of the student from school and passing her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Nevertheless, we continue to conduct our actions in the same manner in this special case.

## Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees

Signature			
Name	Alastair Child	Shannon Gonzalez	Benjamin Griffiths
Position	Trustee, Founder	Trustee	Trustee
Date	27/11/24	30/11/24	01/12/24

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## Contact Information

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**Alastair Child**

Trustee, Founder

Tel +52 442 467 9455

achild@brightsparkstrust.org

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## Charitable Trust Information

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**Bright Sparks Trust**

20 Banbury Road  
Stratford Upon Avon, CV37 7HY, UK

Tel 01789 299080

[www.brightsparkstrust.org](http://www.brightsparkstrust.org)

UK HMRC Charities Reference: EW40119

Charity Commission for England and Wales Reference: 1196765






## Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	9/1/2023	To	31/8/24
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### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>				
Donations	63,579	-	-	63,579
HMRC Gift Aid	1,340	-	-	1,340
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>64,919</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>64,919</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>				
	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>64,919</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>64,919</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>				
Scholarships awarded	36,019	-	-	36,019
Overheads	2,002	-	-	2,002
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>38,021</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>38,021</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see</b>				
	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>38,021</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>38,021</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>26,898</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>26,898</b>
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	68,942	-	-	68,942
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>95,840</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>95,840</b>

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Donations account	89,530	-
	Overheads account	6,311	-
		-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>95,840</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details	-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>			-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own</b>			-
	Details	Fund to which	Amount due
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>			-
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the	Signature	Print Name	
		ALASTAIR JOHN CHILD	

# CC16a

Last year  
to the nearest £

-
-
-

-
-

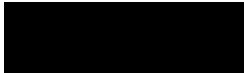
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-
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-
-
-
-



**Endowment  
to nearest £**

-
-
-
-

OK

**Endowment  
funds**

to nearest £

-
---

Current value  
(optional)

-
---

Current value  
(optional)

-
---

When due (optional)

--

Date of approval

27/11/2024



**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

Bright Sparks Trust

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31 August 2024

**Charity no  
(if any)**

1196765

**Set out on pages**

1 to 3 (including these 2 pages)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/08/2024.

**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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

**Signed:** D Warren

**Date:** 13/01/2025

**Name:** Darren Warren – Paxton Independent Examiners

**Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):**

F M A A T

**Address:**

61a High Street South

Rushden, Northants

NN10 0RA

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

**Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**



## Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	1/9/2023	To	31/08/2024
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### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>				
Donations	63,579	-	-	63,579
HMRC Gift Aid	1,340	-	-	1,340
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>64,919</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>64,919</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>				
	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>64,919</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>64,919</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>				
Scholarships awarded	36,019	-	-	36,019
Overheads	2,002	-	-	2,002
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>38,021</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>38,021</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see</b>				
	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>38,021</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>38,021</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>26,898</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>26,898</b>
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	68,942	-	-	68,942
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>95,840</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>95,840</b>

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Donations account	89,530	-	-
	Overheads account	6,311	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>95,840</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		<b>Unrestricted funds to nearest £</b>	<b>Restricted funds to nearest £</b>	<b>Endowment funds to nearest £</b>
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which	Amount due	When due (optional)
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			ALASTAIR JOHN CHILD	27/11/2024

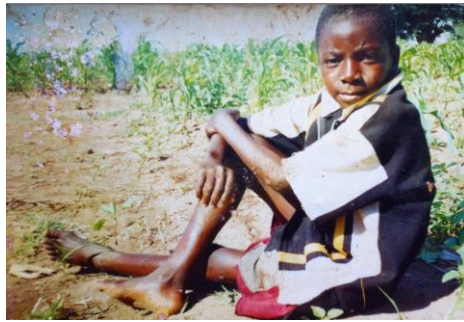
**BRIGHT SPARKS TRUST**

England & Wales - Charity number 1196765

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# Accounts

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# Trustee's Annual Report #7

**FY: 01 SEPTEMBER 2021 – 31 AUGUST 2022**

## Bright Sparks Trust

Charity Commission ref: 1196765  
HMRC Gift Aid ref: EW40119

20 Banbury Road  
Stratford Upon Avon, CV37 7HY, UK

[www.brightsparkstrust.org](http://www.brightsparkstrust.org)  
[achild@brightsparkstrust.org](mailto:achild@brightsparkstrust.org)

### Contents

Highlights and Challenges	1
Structure, Governance, Management	5
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Contact Information	16
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*188 Secondary  
School  
Scholarships  
provided to date*

*29 University  
Scholarships  
provided to date*

## Highlights and Challenges

### Strategic Highlights

In Malawi, primary education is free, allowing children from vulnerable backgrounds to earn a place at prestigious National Schools. However, the higher fees for secondary education are a barrier to bright vulnerable children completing their education and fulfilling their academic potential. This is the problem that our charity is focused on solving; intervening to ensure bright vulnerable students complete their secondary and higher education in order to break the cycle of poverty in which they are trapped, and to allow them to enjoy successful careers that benefit themselves, their families, communities, and Malawian society as a whole.

As a young charity, the Trustees are proud of our strategy and operating model. We believe that we are offering a unique intervention in Malawi by focusing on children who are both bright and needy by local standards, then supporting their secondary and tertiary education in a comprehensive manner at the very best academic institutions possible, despite lower cost alternatives.

Our close partnership with the schools and students in our programme ensures that we are efficient and effective. We do not believe that third party donations should be consumed by management and overheads costs until absolutely necessary. Our highly lean operating model, our own investment as Trustees to cover all overheads and our approach to work with our alumni to manage our activities on a voluntary basis means that we offer absolute value to our donors, with all donations currently reaching student beneficiaries.

The Trustees continue to take motivation from the evidence of our programme as manifested through our current alumni. We are in regular contact with graduates of the programme including two teachers, a doctor and chartered accountant who benefitted from our initial programme for 10 years between 2004 and 2015. We see the transformation to their lives, the ripple effect of their investment, support and inspiration back into the communities where they grew up and we look ahead to great prospects as these achievers become increasingly influential leaders in Malawian society. These promising individuals would not have broken out of the cycle of poverty without Bright Sparks intervention and support.

We are now starting to see graduates from secondary school entering university from the program cycle that we initiated in 2014, and we have now operationalized our university support program, targeting Bright Sparks scholars that earn a place at one of the University of Malawi colleges, which offer the highest quality tertiary education in Malawi. In doing so we are upholding our philosophy of supporting bright vulnerable students over the long term of their academic career.

*Registered with Charity Commission for England and Wales*

This year we completed our registration with the Charity Commission for England and Wales on 25 November 2021, and are now a registered charity under their governance, with charity number 1196765. The process required us to adjust and re-execute our Trust Deed.

### Operating Highlights

*The Trustees continued to suspend termination of scholarships due to academic criteria, as a result of the disruption to teaching caused by pandemic related school closures.*

Over the past operating year, we awarded 26 new secondary school scholarships and continued to support 68 existing scholars across our 3 partner schools. None of our scholars started receiving new financial assistance from other sources. No scholarships were terminated due to under performance academically due to a decision taken by the Trustees to suspend our academic performance criteria as a result of the disruption to teaching caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures. No scholars dropped out this year. Whilst the end of the academic year has again been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are anticipating that 23 scholars will graduate from secondary school, bringing our lifetime total to 102 scholars that have completed secondary education thanks to our support.

41 of our 94 active secondary school scholars are girls (44%), compared to 33 last year, as a result of the Trustees decision to double the number of scholarships we award at Lilongwe Girls Secondary School. We have learned from one of our partner schools that educates both boys and girls that they prefer to allocate our scholarships to boys where possible because they have another organization supporting their students that is similar to ours but only supports girls. When putting the students first, this seems fair and may limit our ability to reach full gender parity across our scholarship portfolio, nevertheless we are proud to reach 44% having been at 31% three years ago.

All of our scholars received additional financial assistance in the form of grants for books, uniforms, bus transport, stationery and other priority items. Our prior experience suggests that this support is key to enable our scholars to focus on their studies on a level playing field with other students. This year we made a significant change in how additional assistance grants

were disbursed to students, now channeling the funds via trusted alumni rather than school staff. This model offers us three points of assurance as opposed to two, with students, staff and alumni all now reporting to us the status of funding distribution.

We have in-depth background information on all our scholars to ensure that we are identifying the neediest and brightest students. We continued our verification programme this year despite challenges from the Pandemic. We postponed our Trustee visit and instead relied on volunteer representatives visiting schools to verify students were receiving and benefitting from the intended assistance.

*University Support program continued with 26 students at top tier Malawian colleges*

Finally, we continued our university support program, launched last year and comprised of financial grants dispersed direct to Bright Sparks students who have earned a place at one of the top universities in the country. There is a one year gap between secondary school and university in Malawi, therefore we anticipate the number of students will increase steadily in the coming years as more secondary school scholars graduate. Our students are being supported by government with tuition and upkeep loans, therefore we have designed our financial support to compliment this and enable students to purchase IT equipment and study materials, to keep up with the students from wealthier backgrounds. This has been particularly powerful this year as students spent extended periods of time at home with universities closed during lockdown. The trustees note that we are seeing less Bright Sparks scholars reach university each year and this will be a subject of research and analysis in our next visit to Malawi.

### Financial Highlights

*£30,423 in donations raised*

We opened the year with £68,243 in available funds, received £30,423 in donations and £2,993 in Gift Aid. We transferred £19,329 to Malawi for scholarships and student assistance, £8,799 for secondary school students and £10,530 for university students, while incurring £270.39 in overhead costs for our website and banking fees. We closed the year with £82,061 in available funds held in our Bright Sparks Trust accounts at the Co-Operative Bank in the U.K.

All overhead costs are deducted from Trustee donated funds held in a separate management account to our third party donations account. We remain committed to ensure all our third party donations go to scholarships and assistance to our students, with all management costs being covered by Trustee donations for the foreseeable future.

### Challenges

Our primary challenge has continued to be the disruption to the academic calendar due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent impact on our efficiency of operations. The government of Malawi is running a compressed academic calendar and we expect timings to be back to normal in 2023.

Last year the Trustees conducted analysis to set a target level of funds on account. It was agreed that this should be based on future liability considering a conservative estimate of future donations and the cost of all current scholars assuming their scholarships would be funded through to completion of school or university (not both, i.e. fund school students to the completion of school and university students to the completion of university). The result of this analysis was that we are targeting holding £39,000 in funds on account as our sustainable level, assuming 120 students in secondary school and 60 students at university at any one time.

We are benefitting from our membership of the Charity Commission for England and Wales and their governance and supporting materials are enabling us to strengthen policies and operations. This year we introduced new measures to safeguard the well-being of children benefitting from the charity's efforts, including a new Code of Conduct guiding the actions of representatives of the charity to ensure the best interests of vulnerable children are protected.

### Looking Ahead

Looking ahead to the next year, the Trustees are focused on: resetting operations back to their standard rhythm as the academic calendar returns to normal, selection of and supporting the next cohort of scholars, the continued growth of our university support program, building a stable online operational hub, fund raising and visiting Malawi to review and verify our program.

The Trustees would like to sincerely thank all supporters of Bright Sparks for their generosity, without which none of our work in Malawi would be possible.



Alastair Child, Trustee and Founder  
September 7, 2022

## Structure, Governance, Management

### Structure

**Governing Document:** Trust Deed, executed 23 November 2021

**How the Charity is constituted:** UK Charitable Trust

### Governance

**Names of Trustees who manage the Charity:**

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
<b>Alastair Child</b>	Trustee, Founder	Whole year	Trustees
<b>Shannon Gonzalez</b>	Trustee	Whole year	Trustees
<b>Benjamin Griffiths</b>	Trustee	Whole year	Trustees

**Trustee selection methods:** Resolution of the Trustees

### Objects

The objects of the charity ('the objects') are:

For the public benefit, the advancement of education and the relief of poverty among young people in Malawi who would otherwise not be able to afford to access high level education by:

- a) awarding to such persons scholarships for the payment of fees tenable at any secondary school or institution of higher or further education;
- b) providing additional financial assistance to ensure the basic requirements of attending such institutions are met, for purposes such as school uniforms, books and stationery, transport between home and school.

*Sincere thanks to our alumni volunteers Patrick Chimzimu, Doctor Boston Zimba, Arnold Berma, Hendrix Zimba and to Deborah Msuku.*

### Management

Two trustee meetings were held on the following dates: 24 September 2021 and 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The Trustees remain in close contact throughout the year.

Bright Sparks Trust is run by volunteers and the Trustees would like to sincerely thank Patrick James Chimzimu, Doctor Boston Zimba, Arnold Berma, Hendrix Zimba and Deborah Msuku who represent the Charity in Malawi in interactions with schools and our students.



We are intent on growing the number of girls that we award scholarships to. Currently 41 of our 94 secondary school scholars are girls.

## **Objectives, Activities, Performance**

### **Summary of the objects of Bright Sparks Trust (as per Trust Deed)**

For the public benefit, the advancement of education and the relief of poverty among young people in Malawi who would otherwise not be able to afford to access high level education.

### **Summary of main activities**

- 1) Awarding to such persons scholarships for the payment of fees tenable at any secondary school or institution of higher or further education.
- 2) Providing additional financial assistance to ensure the basic requirements of attending such institutions are met, for purposes such as school uniforms, books and stationery, transport between home and school.
- 3) Verification of vulnerable status, academic performance and behavior of scholars.
- 4) Verification that funds reach beneficiaries as intended.
- 5) Fundraising to enable scholarships and financial assistance to be provided to as many students as possible, without compromising the commitment of Bright Sparks Trust to continue to support students to the end of their current school or university education cycle.

## Achievements and Performance

94 school  
scholarships  
funded this year

23 of the existing  
scholars to  
graduate at the end  
of the delayed  
2021-22 academic  
year

102 secondary  
school graduates to  
date in the lifetime  
of the charity

<b>SECONDARY SCHOOL</b>		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Scholarships terminated due to academic performance / behaviour	Boys	2	0	0
	Girls	1	0	0
	Total	3	0	0
Students dropping out	Boys	0	2	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	2	0
Scholarships terminated due to students no longer needing financial support	Boys	2	1	0
	Girls	1	0	0
	Total	3	1	0
Existing Scholarships continued	Boys	35	31	40
	Girls	15	19	28
	Total	50	50	68
New Scholarships awarded	Boys	7	23	13
	Girls	7	14	13
	Total	14	37	26
<b>Total Scholarships funded this year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>53</b>
	<b>Girls</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>41</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>94</b>
Total graduates completing school this year	Boys	8	14	16
	Girls	3	5	7
	Total	11	19	23
Total graduates completing school in the lifetime of the charity	Boys	44	58	74
	Girls	16	21	28
	Total	60	79	102
Total students successfully supported (i.e. excluding drop outs and terminations)	Boys	80	101	114
	Girls	38	52	65
	Total	118	153	179
Total students supported over the lifetime of the charity (included those who did not complete school)	Boys	86	109	122
	Girls	39	53	66
	Total	125	162	188

*26 university  
scholarships  
funded this year*

UNIVERSITY		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Scholarships terminated due to academic performance / behaviour	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	0
Students dropping out	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	0
Scholarships terminated due to students no longer needing financial support	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	0
Existing Scholarships continued	Boys	0	10	17
	Girls	0	1	3
	Total	0	11	20
New Scholarships awarded	Boys	10	7	4
	Girls	1	2	2
	Total	11	9	6
<b>Total Scholarships funded this year</b>	<b>Boys</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21</b>
	<b>Girls</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>26</b>
Total graduates completing university this year	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	0
Total graduates completing university in the lifetime of the charity	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	3	3	3
Total students successfully supported (i.e. excluding drop outs and terminations)	Boys	13	20	24
	Girls	1	3	5
	Total	14	23	29
Total students supported over the lifetime of the charity (included those who did not complete school)	Boys	13	20	24
	Girls	1	3	5
	Total	14	23	29

Verification (secondary school):

- Review of student behavior: 0 student scholarships terminated.
- Review of student academic performance: 0 student scholarships terminated.
- Review of duplication with other organisations: 0 student scholarship terminated.
- Review of new student needy status:
  - 1st level verification completed – school teacher interview and assessment
  - 2nd level completed – Bright Sparks representative interview and assessment
  - 3rd level not carried out – Bright Sparks representative visits to home village

Fund raising activities:

- The income from regular monthly donors was £10,051. Remaining donations of £19,605 have come from one off donations that we do not assume to be repeated in future years.
- Most of our donors are directly known by the Trustees or former Trustees. Our website is proving effective at providing prospective donors with a place to review our charity and donate in a secure manner.
- We are not seeing success in converting supporters to donors through social media, despite our Facebook page having 235 followers.
- This year we continued our corporate giving program with Google. Google employee donations are matched and doubled by Google and this year we raised £767. Whilst this is a competitive process each year, we are aiming to be listed as one of Google's charities for future years.

## Financial Review

### Financial Summary

#### Structure of finances

Two bank accounts are held at the Co-operative bank under the charity, one for donations for scholarships and the second for management overheads funded by the Trustees.

#### Summary of incomes and expenditures - UK

September 2020 to August 2021	Coop Account 1	Coop Account 2	TOTAL
	(donations and scholarships)	(Trustees Management Costs)	
Opening Balance	£ 64,690.49	£ 3,553.02	£ 68,243.51
Donations received (less Stripe online payment fees)	£ 29,823.57	£ 600.00	£ 30,423.57
HMRC Gift Aid received	£ 2,993.96	£ -	£ 2,993.96
Interest received	£ -	£ -	£ -
Scholarship outgoings (fees and additional assistance)	-£ 19,329.00		-£ 19,329.00
Overhead Costs (bank charges, administration etc.)	£ -	-£ 270.39	-£ 270.39
Closing Balance	£ 78,179.02	£ 3,882.63	£ 82,061.65

We opened the year with £68,243 in available funds, received £30,423 in donations. We received £2,993 in UK Gift Aid. We transferred £19,329 to Malawi for scholarships and student assistance, while incurring £270 in overhead costs for website costs, online banking payment fees and non-sterling transaction fees. We closed the year with £82,061 in available funds held in our Bright Sparks Trust accounts at the Co-Operative Bank in the U.K.

All overhead costs, £270, are deducted from Trustee donated funds held in a separate management account to third party donations. We remain committed to ensure all our third party donations go to scholarships and assistance to our students, with all management costs being covered by Trustee donations for the foreseeable future.

Administrative overhead costs are taken from the Bright Sparks Trust No. 2 Co-operative Bank account, which receives funds from the Trustees and is used solely for management costs. In this way our principal Bright Sparks Trust account (Co-op Account 1) is used solely for receiving donations and making payments for student school fees and additional assistance grants.

In terms of currency exchange rates, the long-term trend is devaluation of the Malawian Kwacha against the British Pound. The Malawi kwacha started the year at 1,120 and ended at 1,191. The long term trend is for the kwacha to lose value relative to the pound. When our Founder first taught in Malawi in 2004, the rate was 200 Malawi kwacha to the British pound.

### Funds materially in deficit

The Trustees are pleased to report that Bright Sparks Trust holds no debts.

Notwithstanding, we intend to ensure we are always able to fund the completion of scholars' education. It is our objective not to have to terminate a scholarship due to shortage of funds. With our scholarships now lasting 8-10 years through secondary and tertiary education, this is a long-term commitment to each individual.

Last year the Trustees conducted analysis to set a target level of funds on account. It was agreed that this should be based on future liability considering a conservative estimate of future donations and the cost of all current scholars assuming their scholarships would be funded through to completion of school or university (not both, i.e. fund school students to the completion of school and university students to the completion of university). The result of this analysis was that we are targeting holding £39,000 in funds on account as our sustainable level, assuming 120 students in secondary school and 60 students at university at any one time. We are not seeing our funds on account migrate to that level, and they remain high due to the lower than expected success of students reaching university. We had factored in a 50% success rate, whereas this year only 26% of graduating students succeeded.

### Principal Sources of Funds

The principal source of funds for Bright Sparks Trust is donations either as one-off lump sums or recurring monthly donations.

We ensure that we claim Gift Aid on all our donations from willing UK tax paying donors.

### Suggested donation level

We set our suggested donation level based on costs of fees, additional assistance grants, and with consideration of fluctuating exchange rate levels and potential school fee increases and additional assistance grant increase due to inflation. Inflation is historically high in Malawi, however, has slowed in the last few years. Currently we continue to suggest to donors a monthly contribution of £15 per month to cover one student in school.

## Risk Assessment

The trustees acknowledge their responsibility for protecting the charity and its beneficiaries from risk. The process for risk identification and mitigation is to follow guidance from the UK Charity Commission (Guidance: Charities and Risk Management - CC26) and review risks as part of annual reporting and Trustee meetings.

CATEGORY	RISK	IMPACT	LIKELY	CONTROL
GOVERNANCE	Reporting accuracy and timeliness	Moderate	Highly probable	REDUCE Develop an online digital management tool Introduce incentive for school staff
	Loss of key representatives in Malawi e.g. to studies abroad	Major	Probable	REDUCE Diversify number of representatives Standardize and document procedures
	Over-dependence on one Trustee	Minor	Highly probable	ACCEPT
OPERATIONS	Better-off children benefit	Extreme	Possible	SHARE, REDUCE Verification of vulnerable status through 1) school staff assessment, 2) Bright Sparks student proposal process, 3) field verification through random home visits.
	Assistance grants do not reach beneficiaries	Extreme	Possible	SHARE, REDUCE Verification that funds reach beneficiaries through 1) school bursary committee report to Bright Sparks, 2) student signatures, 3) direct confirmation with students.
	Duplication with other bursary providers	Major	Possible	SHARE, REDUCE Verification of no duplication by 1) requiring schools to disclose all bursaries from all providers, 2) direct confirmation with students.
	Conduct of volunteers puts vulnerable children at risk	Extreme	Possible	SHARE, REDUCE Publish a code of conduct and share with Bright Sparks volunteers

FINANCIAL	Over dependence on ad hoc donations	Major	Highly probable	REDUCE Establish and manage to a target level of funds on account to ensure sustainability of scholarships
	Malawi inflation leading to rising fees and costs	Moderate	Possible	ACCEPT Monitor inflation rates and forex to ensure ongoing affordability.
	Compliance with donor imposed restrictions	Major	Possible	AVOID Refrain from offering donors the ability to allocate specific scholars to their donations
EXTERNAL	Malawi gov'n withholds loans to BST scholars	Extreme	Possible	SHARE Propose agreement with Higher Education Student Loans and Grant Board that scholars receive loans
	Relationship with major funders	Major	Possible	REDUCE Invite major funders on field visits Share annual report with all donors Communicate via social media
	Public perception of credibility	Moderate	Possible	REDUCE Quality reporting Adoption of Commission guidelines
	Claims of mistreatment by beneficiaries	Moderate	Possible	REDUCE Standardize protocols in Operating Manual
COMPLIANCE	Compliance with UK regulations	Extreme	Possible	REDUCE Apply and adhere to UK Charity Commission requirements

**Impact categories:** insignificant, minor, moderate, major, extreme

**Likelihood categories:** remote, unlikely, possible, probable, highly probable



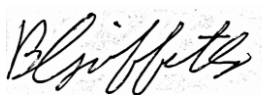
**Control categories:**

- Avoid – end the related activity
- Transfer – delegate activity to a third party
- Share – partner with a third party
- Reduce – implement risk mitigation procedures
- Insure – insurance to cover liability
- Accept – no action taken as risk is unlikely or low impact

## Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees

Signature			
Name	Alastair Child	Shannon Gonzalez	Benjamin Griffiths
Position	Trustee, Founder	Trustee	Trustee
Date	7/9/22	23/9/22	23/9/22

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## Contact Information

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**Alastair Child**

Trustee, Founder

Tel +52 442 467 9455

achild@brightsparkstrust.org

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## Charitable Trust Information

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**Bright Sparks Trust**

20 Banbury Road  
Stratford Upon Avon, CV37 7HY, UK

Tel 01789 299080

[www.brightsparkstrust.org](http://www.brightsparkstrust.org)

UK HMRC Charities Reference: EW40119

Charity Commission for England and Wales Reference: 1196765





**Receipts and pa**

For the period  
from

01/09/2021

**Section A Receipts and payments**

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>		
x	30,424	-
HMRC Gift Aid	2,994	-
<b>Sub total</b> (Gross income for AR)	<b>33,418</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>		
	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>33,418</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>		
Scholarships awarded	19,329	-
Overheads	270	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>19,599</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>		
	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>19,599</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>13,818</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	-	-
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	68,244	-
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>82,062</b>	<b>-</b>

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

Categories	Details
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Donations account
	Overheads account

**Total cash funds**

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))

**B2 Other monetary assets**

**Details**

**B3 Investment assets**

**Details**

**B4 Assets retained for the charity's**


**Details**

**B5 Liabilities**

**Details**

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

Signature

	1196765
<b>Payments accounts</b>	
To	31/8/22

<b>CC16a</b>
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**Summary of funds**

<b>Endowment funds</b> to the nearest £	<b>Total funds</b> to the nearest £	<b>Last year</b> to the nearest £
-	30,424	-
-	2,994	-
-	<b>33,418</b>	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	<b>33,418</b>	-
-	19,329	-
-	270	-
-	<b>19,599</b>	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	<b>19,599</b>	-
-	<b>13,818</b>	-
-	-	-
-	<b>68,244</b>	-
-	<b>82,062</b>	-

**Summary of the period**

<b>Unrestricted funds</b> to nearest £	<b>Restricted funds</b> to nearest £	<b>Endowment funds</b> to nearest £
78,179	-	-
3,883	-	-

-
<b>82,062</b>

OK

**Unrestricted funds**

to nearest £

-
---

**Fund to which asset belongs**

--

**Fund to which asset belongs**

--

**Fund to which liability relates**

--

-
-

OK

**Restricted funds**

to nearest £

-
---

**Cost (optional)**

-
---

**Cost (optional)**

-
---

**Amount due (optional)**

-
---

-
-

OK

**Endowment funds**

to nearest £

-
---

**Current value (optional)**

-
---

**Current value (optional)**

-
---

**When due (optional)**

--

Print Name

ALASTAIR JOHN CHILD
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Date of approval

07/09/2022
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**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

Charity Name  
Bright Sparks Trust

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

31 August 2022

**Charity no  
(if any)**

1196765

**Set out on pages**

1 to 3 (including these 2 pages)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/08/2022.

**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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 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 (other than that disclosed below \*) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

**Signed:** D Warren

**Date:** 07/02/2023

**Name:** Darren Warren – Paxton Independent Examiners

**Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):**

F M A A T

**Address:**

61a High Street South

Rushden, Northants

NN10 0RA

**Section B****Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

**Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**



**Receipts and payments accounts**

For the period from	01/09/2021	To	31/8/22
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**Section A Receipts and payments**

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
x	30,424	-	-	30,424	-
HMRC Gift Aid	2,994	-	-	2,994	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>33,418</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33,418</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>33,418</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33,418</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Scholarships awarded	19,329	-	-	19,329	-
Overheads	270	-	-	270	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>19,599</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>19,599</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>19,599</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>19,599</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>13,818</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,818</b>	<b>-</b>
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	68,244	-	-	68,244	-
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>82,062</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>82,062</b>	<b>-</b>

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Donations account	64,690	-	-
	Overheads account	3,553	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>68,244</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details	-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
Signed on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		ALASTAIR JOHN CHILD	7 Sept 2022	