



Accounts and Trustees' Annual Report (29/11/2021 - 30/09/2022)

UP Autism Community

Charity Number: 1196821

Trustees' Report

About UP Autism Community

Up Autism Community is a small charity based in Hertfordshire. Established in 2021, we are passionate about supporting neurodiverse children and their families. We organise social events from sensory play groups to swimming sessions for children and their families. Our aim is to create a supportive community where children can socialise in a safe and non-judgemental environment and parents or carers can seek support, friendship and advice.

Organised events and activities

In our inaugural year, the charity dedicated its efforts to exploring a diverse range of events and activities, seeking to identify the specific needs of the local community. Through a series of engaging initiatives, we actively sought feedback from neurodiverse children and their families, striving to understand their preferences and aspirations. By closely listening to the community, we aimed to discover the most suitable forms of support and engagement, ensuring that our future endeavours catered to their unique needs.



In our first year we organised the following activities:

- A trip to Marsh Farm Animal Adventure Park,
- A swimming session at Aspire Leisure Centre,
- A trip to Hemel Hempstead DJ's Play Park,
- Trips to various local events (e.g., 'Teddy Bears' picnic' at Lydekker park)
- Parents / carers drop in sessions.

Engagement with local fire station

We are also proud to have offered our free consultancy services to the Borehamwood Fire Station, assisting them in implementing their first "quiet hour" within their annual open day. The quiet hour was specifically designed for inclusivity, and this included families with neurodiverse children. This initiative aims to create a calm and welcoming environment, accommodating individuals with sensory sensitivities and alleviating anxiety, while providing an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the fire station and interact with the incredible firefighters in a supportive setting.



Social media presence

We recognise the importance of building strong connections and effectively communicating with our community. To achieve this, the charity established active social media channels on Facebook and Instagram, providing a platform to engage with our audience and share information about our events and initiatives. Additionally, we created a LinkedIn profile to facilitate future engagement with the business community, fostering potential partnerships and collaborations to further support our mission of empowering neurodiverse children and their families.

UP on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/upcommunity.herts>

UP on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/upcommunity.herts>

UP on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/up-autism-community>

Future initiatives

Sensory play groups

Through the feedback received from the families we engaged with, we have discerned a clear demand for regular Sensory Play Groups. With this understanding, the charity plans to organise monthly sessions in a spacious community hall. These inclusive gatherings will feature an array of stimulating activities, including a bouncy castle and a wide selection of sensory toys, designed to cater specifically to the needs of neurodiverse children. By inviting families from the community, we aim to create a welcoming and supportive environment where children can thrive, and families can forge connections with others who share similar experiences. Considering various expenses such as bouncy castle hire (£75), community hall rental (£60), and refreshments (£15), we estimate the cost to organise one session to be approximately £150.

Fundraising

In order to cover the expenses of our monthly sensory play groups and sustain our operations, the charity will actively pursue various fundraising avenues. We have already registered with EasyFundraising (<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>), a platform that enables our supporters to raise donations at no additional cost to them while they shop online. Additionally, we will request participants of our sensory play groups to consider making voluntary donations, contributing towards the continuity and growth of our initiatives. In our commitment to securing additional financial support, we will explore and pursue other creative and strategic fundraising approaches, such as seeking grants, hosting community events, partnering with local businesses, and engaging in crowdfunding campaigns. By diversifying our fundraising efforts, we aim to generate sustainable resources that will enable us to continue providing vital services to neurodiverse children and their families.

Website development

In addition to our active presence on social media platforms, the charity plans to develop a user-friendly and informative website using the popular WordPress platform. With our registered domain, www.upcommunity.org.uk, already in place, this website will serve as a valuable complement to our social media effort as it will provide a centralised hub for

comprehensive information, resources, and updates. By utilizing this platform, we aim to enhance our ability to connect with the community, share success stories, and raise awareness about the unique needs of neurodiverse children and their families. We are fortunate to have secured cloud email services through a generous cloud service provider, free of charge and we hope to explore the possibility of hosting our website with the same provider.

Public organisations and local events

Following our successful engagement with Borehamwood Fire Station, we will look to extend our support and offer expertise to any organisations seeking to organise inclusive events that accommodate neurodiverse children. We are eager to work with other public organisations and the local authorities to implement similar initiatives by providing guidance, resources, and consultancy services to ensure that events are aligned with the needs of neurodiverse children and their families.

Engagement with professionals

We will actively seek to engage with professionals who specialise in working with neurodiverse children, with the aim of exploring the feasibility of providing subsidised services such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and music therapy. We recognise the immense value and importance of these interventions in enhancing the well-being and development of neurodiverse children. By collaborating with skilled professionals in the field, we aim to make these vital services more accessible and affordable to families who may face financial barriers.

Charity name change

After careful consideration Up Autism Community has decided to change its name to Up Community. This decision reflects our dedication to creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all neurodiverse children and their families, regardless of specific diagnoses. By removing the term "autism" from our name, we aim to eliminate any potential negative connotations associated with the word and ensure that our services are not limited solely to children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Once formalised, the change will be reported to Charity Commission.

Accounts

Revenue up to 30/09/2022:	£566.00
Loan from trustees (0% interest):	£500.00
Donations from supporters:	£66.00
Expenses up to 30/09/2022:	£549.73
Administrative costs:	£29.95
Transport:	£378.20
Booking / entrance fees:	£118.00
Other costs:	£23.58
Payments to staff / trustees:	£0.00
Expenses claimed by staff / trustees:	£0.00
Balance on 30/09/2022:	£16.27

Marcin Pajdzik
Chairman
Up Autism Community

