

The Children's Trust

Annual report and accounts 2023/2024



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A message from our chair

This is my first annual report since being appointed as chair of the board of trustees in October 2023, taking over from Duncan Ingram. Our grateful thanks go to Duncan for his leadership over the years.

Personally, I feel deeply honoured to have taken on this role for The Children's Trust, which only recently celebrated forty years of bringing care and education to thousands of children, who have experienced an acquired brain injury or have a neurodisability.

We have an amazing team of professionals working for The Children's Trust, whose sole purpose is to provide the best possible service to the children and families we have the responsibility and privilege to support, whether they call our site in Tadworth their home, stay with us for only a few months or come here to go to school.

I have witnessed firsthand the care that is shown to the children, young people and their families, and I am humbled by what I have seen.

Our Board meetings involve hearing from young people and their families about the experiences they have with The Children's Trust. That may be about improvements that have come about from their time with us, what it is like to be supported here or feedback from their travels away from Tadworth. Hearing their stories is heart-warming and sometimes challenging. All their stories can teach us something.

Everyone here is focussed on doing the very best we can and putting the child first in everything we do. That care and compassion has been recognised by our regulators and in February 2024, a Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection found:

"Children and young people receiving intensive rehabilitation at The Children's Trust, were supported by excellent staff who were committed to supporting achievement and success' adding, 'staff enable children and young people to have maximum control and choice in their lives."

Coming out of the covid pandemic was a challenging time for The Children's Trust, as it has been for many charities. It has therefore been a time of learning and change for our staff and volunteers, who have had to adapt to new ways of working following an organisational restructure which was about making us as efficient as possible in these challenging times.

It has also been a time of change within our leadership team, and I was delighted to be involved in the selection of our new chief executive, Mike Thiedke, who joined us in November 2023.

In addition, we welcomed Steve Harris as our new finance director and Michelle Martin as our director of fundraising and communications. Alongside my appointment, we also welcomed new trustees to The Children's Trust.

Christine Brooks, Rory Litherland and Marian Ridley joined during the financial year and brought a vast experience from across both the health and commercial sectors. The Children's Trust is already benefiting from their knowledge. Regrettably, Christine's appointment has been short-lived due to her plans to relocate overseas with her family. I would like to thank Christine for her valuable contributions and wish her and her family all the best.

We also said goodbye to Anne Walker, who served as a trustee for seven years. We thank her for her valued contribution. Special thanks also go to Mike Maddick, who stepped up as our interim chief executive during this period. I am delighted that Mike continues with us in his role of director of resources.

It has been a time of massive change and upheaval for everyone here at The Children's Trust, so my thanks go to the very special people who bring our promises to life every day, be that our staff or our large team of volunteers, without whom we could not deliver what we need to for the young people we are entrusted to support.

My thanks also go to my fellow trustees, who are committed to ensuring we deliver on the needs of the children, young people, and families that we support, as well as the needs of everyone working here at The Children's Trust. They give us their time freely and for that we are all very grateful.

I also would like to thank our many partners who fund the children and young people we support, whether that's through the NHS, local authorities or in some cases governments of other

countries, we need their continued support to continue to deliver the special outcomes we strive for every day.

We are fortunate that both individuals and companies raise funds on our behalf, and we cannot overstate how grateful we are for their support.

Last year was challenging but we are stronger as a result. We are now looking to the future and embarking on a process to develop a new strategy that will ensure we can continue to meet the needs of children and young people in what is an

ever-changing world. We see this next phase as an opportunity for further transformation enabling us to support even more children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability.

Thank you,

Steve Flanagan
Chair of Trustees

“Everyone here is focussed on doing the very best we can and putting the child first in everything we do.”





A message from our chief executive

Since joining The Children's Trust in November 2023, I have been struck by the determination of all our colleagues and the many volunteers. All their energy and passion are focused on supporting children, young people, and their families to embrace their uniqueness, navigate realities, envision possibilities, conquer obstacles, and assert their right to achieve their goals. I am immensely thankful to all of you. Without you, our work would simply not be possible.

We all continuously strive for excellence in all aspects of our life-changing work. This ethos is reflected in a comment made by Ofsted Education after rating The Children's Trust School 'Outstanding' in September 2023:

"Staff are determined that pupils should experience life in all its richness, regardless of their special educational needs or disabilities."

We are proud to be the UK's leading charity for children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability. Between 2021 and 2023, 95% of families who completed the 'Friends and Family test' said they would recommend The Children's Trust to friends, family and other parents who needed similar care or treatment. In 2023-2024, two thirds of local health authorities across the UK referred children and young people to The Children's Trust. This highlights the confidence that healthcare professionals across the UK place in our ability to deliver high-quality care to those living with the most complex disabilities.

40,000

children every year, in the UK are left with a brain injury from an accident or illness

We know that every year, 40,000 children in the UK are left with a brain injury from an accident or illness, and it can be devastating. We hear from regional health authorities that there is an urgent need for our specialist support, with health and social care systems so stretched.

We know that healthcare is ever changing, and we, as an organisation, can never stand still.

This is why we remain steadfast in our commitment to delivering high-quality care, fostering a culture of safety and continuous learning and innovation. I am proud to be able to share some examples of this in this Annual Report.

We are extremely grateful that we can count on so many supporters, who provide us with their expertise, time and contribute financially. This helps us to deliver the services so many children, young people and their families desperately need, and allows us to continuously improve and evolve. Very importantly, it also supports us on our journey to move from financial stability to long term financial sustainability.

As we develop our new strategy, after what has been a challenging time at The Children's Trust, we can build on a renewed sense of opportunity to shape our future together. We know it will require transformation of what we do and how we do it to support even more children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability - now and in the future.

It is this ambition that drives me, and everyone at The Children's Trust.

Thank you,

Mike Thiedke
Chief Executive

About us

Who we are and what we do

The Children's Trust is the UK's leading charity for children with brain injury and neurodisability. We provide a range of rehabilitation, education, care, and community services to children and young people from across the UK with acquired brain injury (ABI), neurodisability and complex needs.

Our services are provided through:

Rehabilitation

Our Rehabilitation service provides individually tailored, multidisciplinary rehabilitation programmes at our national specialist centre for children who have experienced a brain injury.

Through our highly skilled teams, we work with children and young people to give them the opportunity to live the best life possible.

Located just south of London in Tadworth, Surrey, our national specialist centre is home to the UK's largest rehabilitation service for children with acquired brain injury. We are widely recognised as the country's leading centre of excellence, providing highly intensive rehabilitation services.

The Children's Trust School

The Children's Trust School provides education for children with complex needs, alongside multiple barriers to learning. The school also offers an early year's programme.

Community Rehabilitation Service

Our Community Rehabilitation Service offers digital resources, national virtual advice and consultation, as well as community rehabilitation and outpatient packages, for children with acquired brain injury.



Highlights – A year in a glance

Award-winning community provision

We know that we provide a vital lifeline for children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability, so we never stop trying to reach as many families as possible.

We were delighted to win the Innovation in Neurorehabilitation of the Year award at the NeuroRehab Times Awards for the transformation of our Community Rehabilitation Service. Our Bumps Happen digital information campaign was also commended for the Remote Rehabilitation Initiative of the Year award. It is a real achievement to have been recognised in both categories, particularly given the exceptionally high standard and number of entries.

Read more: See Jack’s story on how support in the community enabled him to manage the effects of his brain injury in the classroom, or discover the full scope of our Community Rehabilitation Service on page 20.



You are ‘Outstanding’

This year The Children’s Trust School achieved an ‘Outstanding’ rating following our Ofsted Education inspection in September 2023, indicating that we are providing the highest quality of education, therapy and care for the children and young people we support.

Driven by a commitment to continual improvement and growth, our school development plan aligns with the financial year and incorporates new, research-based initiatives such as the inclusive ‘Create and Sing’ programme with the Royal Ballet and Opera House. This plan also ensures the effective implementation of ongoing evidence-based projects, reflecting our dedication to enhancing educational outcomes for all our young people.

Patient Safety Incident Response Framework

This year we introduced the new NHS Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) at The Children’s Trust. The key objective of PSIRF is to embed patient safety incident responses within a wider system of improvement, enabling a significant cultural shift towards systematic patient safety management. We will work to ensure that openness is not just a policy and expectation, but a practice embedded in our daily interactions and our strategic initiatives.

Financial KPIs	31/3/2024	31/4/2023
	£'000	£'000
Total income	33,613	27,944
Total expenditure	33,070	35,071
Year end trade debtors	3,398	1,187
Year end trade creditors	1,202	424
Cash and investments balance	4,325	3,789

Harnessing the power of technology

As the only paediatric neurorehabilitation centre for children in the UK with paediatric technology, we have implemented several cutting-edge neurotechnologies to enhance our rehabilitation and educational services for children with complex physical needs.

Innowalk Pro: Recently introduced, this robotic-aided device supports both upper and lower limb movement, aiding children in rehabilitation and school settings. The benefits include reducing spasticity, enabling standing when sometimes this is not possible in a standing frame, improving alertness and sleep, providing exercise for non-ambulant children, and enhancing engagement and communication.

Upper limb robotics: Diego & Pablo: These devices complement occupational therapy and physiotherapy by offering de-weighting against gravity and repetitive movements during recovery. They support re-learning of functional tasks such as completing schoolwork, dressing, eating, and drinking. This technology can be combined with virtual reality gaming or task-specific training for enhanced outcomes.

Wearable technology: Lusio and Gripable: These mobile technologies can be used to retrain muscles and increase strength, supporting recovery and functional tasks.

Assistive technology: We utilise Eyegaze technology to support children in playing, exploring games and art, selecting yes/no options, accessing communication grids, and using switch control methods such as head switches. This also includes drive decks that offer independent movement in powered mobility.

PEGASO ventilator: As part of our commitment to exploring innovative medical technologies, we are utilising the PEGASO ventilator from Italy for a young person we support. This is part of an experimental research process aimed at evaluating the ventilator’s potential benefits and effectiveness in providing advanced respiratory support. The PEGASO ventilator, known for its innovative features and capabilities, is being assessed for its ability to enhance respiratory care for children with complex medical needs. Through this research collaboration, we hope to contribute valuable insights and potentially advance the standard of respiratory care available to young patients.



Pioneering vital research

Our therapy colleagues have been actively involved in various research activities and conference presentations this year. We had six abstracts accepted by the International Paediatric Brain Injury Society (IPBIS) on psychological therapies. Additionally, our team presented at the World Federation for Neurorehabilitation (WFNR) and have submitted to the CYPF Royal College of Occupational Therapists national conference, where we shared our work on implementing and translating knowledge of an upper limb pathway in paediatric neurorehabilitation.

Our interdisciplinary team have an accepted co-designed abstract showcasing “Riley’s Rehab”. This focused on optimising participation during neurorehabilitation and involved contributions from the rehabilitation team, community rehabilitation, and the medical team. We are also presenting a poster on communication systems in a specialist school provision at the Communication Matters conference.

Our consultant clinical psychologist has been part of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guideline development for rehabilitation for chronic neurological 5 disorders including acquired brain injury, commissioned by NHS England.

Our impact in numbers

Overall reach

472
children reached

61
children, on average, at our
Tadworth site per day, across
both our school and
rehabilitation services

95%
of families would recommend us
to their friends, family, and other
parents if they needed similar
care or treatment

Rehabilitation

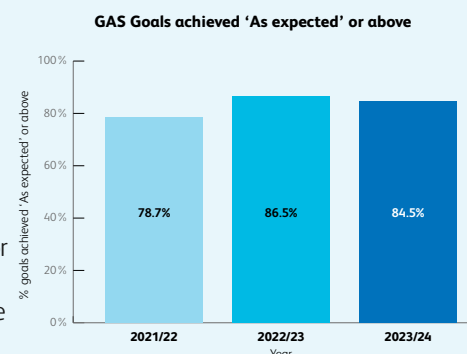
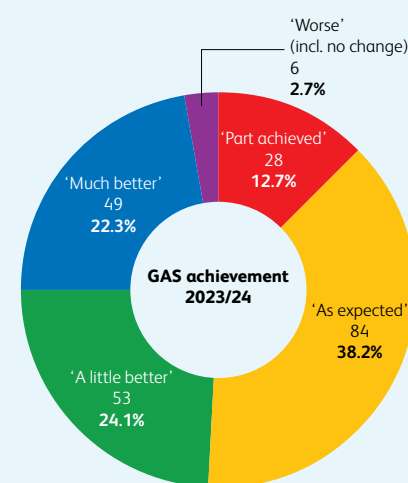
85
children and young people
received intensive rehabilitation at
our national specialist centre
following a brain injury

220
goals were set by children and
their families

85%
of the goals were achieved
'as expected' or above with 22%
of goals 'much better' than
expected and 24% of goals 'a
little better' than expected

- 85 children and young people received intensive rehabilitation at our national specialist centre following a brain injury (82 children and young people in 2022/23 and 2021/22).
- The average (median) length of stay for a child or young person receiving rehabilitation was 12 weeks.
- 220 goals were set by children and their families using the Goal Attainment Scale (GAS).
- Rehabilitation goals are set collaboratively with children and young people and their families, including what the expected and much more than expected goals might be. The goals are reviewed at least once a week during multidisciplinary team meetings and goals are adjusted if progress is achieved.
- At the end of the placement the overall GAS goals are reviewed with the multidisciplinary team, children and young people, and their family. A coordinating professional takes on a single point of contact with the child or young person and family to

- review the final goals of placement and rate whether they have achieved what was set out. Discussion takes place around what ongoing goals for the child or young person may be and how this can be shared with community professionals to continue further rehabilitation support and ongoing work on goals with the home setting.
- Upon discharge from The Children's Trust, out of the rehabilitation goals that have been achieved, 85% of the goals were achieved 'as expected' or above with 22% of goals 'much better' than expected and 24% of goals 'a little better' than expected.
- This demonstrates effectiveness in rehabilitation interventions and that some children and young people are exceeding expectations following their neurorehabilitation treatment. Whilst defining goals, consideration is given around setting the 'just right' challenge. This is important so that the team can capture the opportunity to develop new or compensatory skills within rehabilitation treatment sessions, that will be achievable for the child or young person.



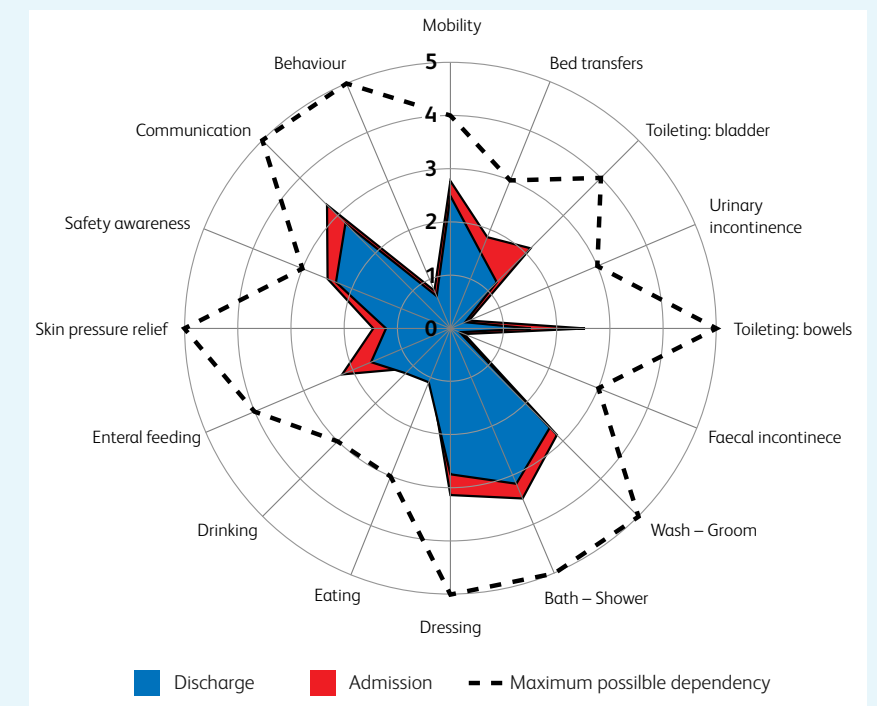
Northwick Park Dependency Score 2023/24

The Northwick Park Dependency Score provides an assessment of patient care needs. It is a scale incorporating activities of daily living, communication, safety awareness and behavioural management.

Overall, the areas of greatest average reduction in dependency for children and young people discharged from a rehabilitation stay in 2023/24 were:

- Toileting: bladder (42.0%)
- Toileting: bowels (40.3%)
- Faecal incontinence (30.3%)

Improvements on discharge were observed in areas including communication, feeding, bathing, mobility and transfers.



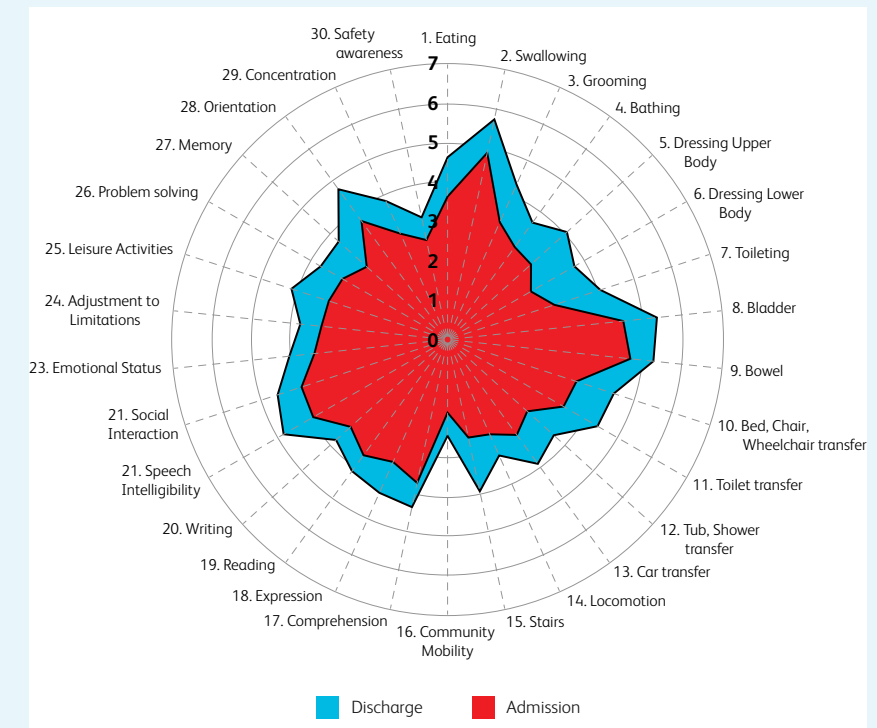
Smaller the better

FIM+FAM 2023/24

FIM+FAM: The Functional Independence Measure and Functional Assessment Measure.

The UK FIM+FAM is designed for measuring disability in the brain-injured population. It has an ordinal scoring system for all 30 items from 1-7 (1=complete dependence and 7=fully independent).

Overall, greatest improvements observed in the FIM+FAM for children and young people discharged from a rehabilitation stay in 2023/24 were for the areas of 'Bowel', 'Bladder' and 'Emotional status', as well as improvements made in activities of daily living including washing and dressing, speech and language, leisure, and areas of schoolwork.



Bigger the better

Our impact in numbers

The Children's Trust School

43

children and young people attended our school

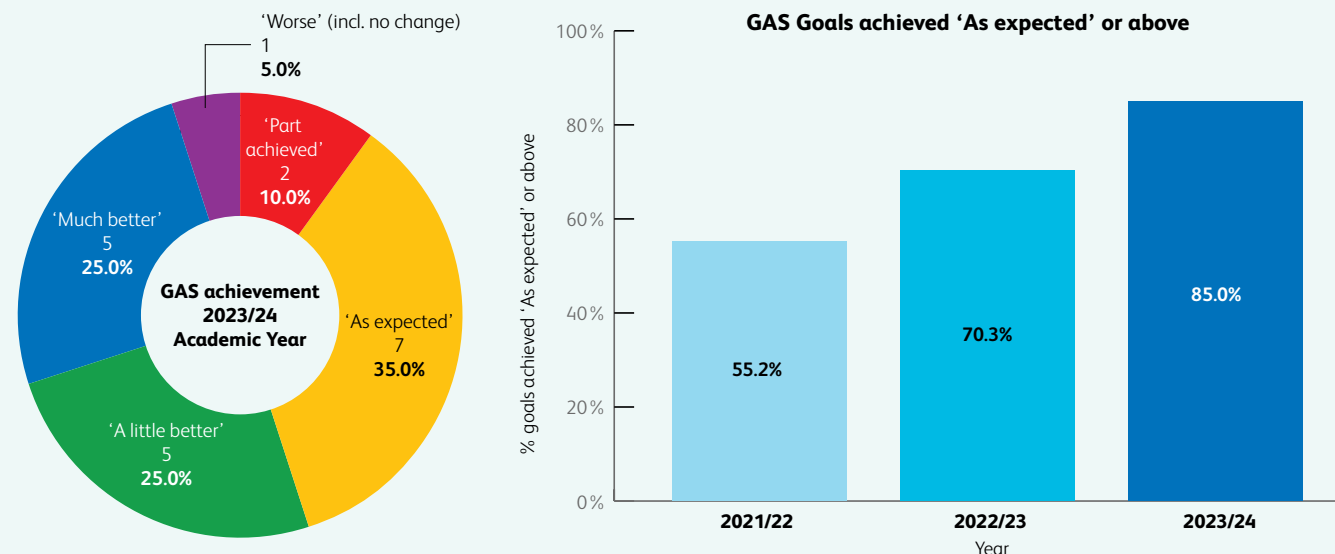
21

parents and children attended our parent-child group, Taddies

85%

of the goals were achieved 'As expected' or above at the end of the academic year

- 43 children and young people attended our school (comprising 35 residential learners and eight day learners).
- 7 babies and children attended our nursery.
- 21 parents and children attended our parent-child group, Taddies.
- 20 therapy goals were set for children and young people attending The Children's Trust school using the Goal Attainment Scale (GAS).
- At the end of the academic year 85% of the goals were achieved 'as expected', 'more than expected' or 'much more than expected'. This is an increase in goal achievement from previous years. We believe the team have been setting more sensitive goals to measure progress and they have also introduced the goal-based outcome to measure additional goals around quality of life.



Returning home

84% of the children and young people we support were able to return to their family home with minor or no adaptations.

Back to school

81% of school-aged children who underwent rehabilitation at The Children's Trust were able to return to their previous educational setting. When previously measured, only 60% of school-aged children were able to return to their previous educational setting.

Community Rehabilitation Services

74,572

unique visitors accessed support and information

328

children and young people were supported by the Community Rehabilitation team in 2023/24.

206

children and young people were supported with follow up support and advice

- 74,572 unique visitors accessed support and information on our Brain Injury Hub and Bumps Happen pages.
- In addition, the Community Rehabilitation team supported 328 children and young people in 2023/24.
- 23 children and young people were supported through an (ICB) Integrated Care Board funded 'Tier 3' package, delivered in home, school, community settings and outpatient settings.
- 99 children and young people were supported with advice and consultation virtually through our voluntary funded 'Tier 2' package.
- 206 children and young people were supported with follow up support and advice at key transition stages through being part of the Community Rehabilitation Service's long-term register.



Our core services

Residential neurorehabilitation

The residential neurorehabilitation we provide to children with brain injury at our national specialist centre in Tadworth, Surrey, is the largest service of its kind in the UK.

The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) of doctors, nurses, carers, allied health professionals and psychologists support a holistic neurorehabilitation offer, assessing and setting meaningful goals for children, young people, and families to work on for the duration of their placement. Goals may focus on re-learning or regaining skills or adapting to a new disability, with a focus on home, school, and community settings. Families may be supported in learning care competencies such as tracheostomy management or suctioning before returning home.

The therapies team is made up of physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, music therapists, psychologists, health play specialists and multi-disciplinary technicians who provide goal-led therapy, focusing on enhancing children's participation in everyday, meaningful activities which are important to them. The teams offer specialisms in supporting children with eating and drinking, respiratory care, complex movement disorder management, assistive technology and moving and handling. High intensity and dosage of therapy is provided to children receiving neurorehabilitation. The psychological therapies team provide emotional and mental health support to children and families, offering brain injury education and trauma informed practice.



Harley's rehabilitation journey



Harley worked with the therapy teams to set his goals.

Harley, aged 14, acquired a brain injury after an accident on his electric scooter put his life in danger.

In August 2023, Harley was riding his electrical scooter, when he unexpectedly fell off with severe consequences. His injuries were so significant that he stopped breathing for 13 minutes.

An air ambulance was called but could not access the scene, so he was transferred by road ambulance to Nottingham Hospital – a 45-minute drive away. On arrival at the hospital, it was discovered that Harley had fractured his skull and had a brain clot. He was rushed into surgery and subsequently put on a life support machine.

One day at a time

Harley spent the next four months in hospital as his condition stabilised. During that time, he was taken off the life support machine and moved to a hospital ward where he started to regain consciousness. It was a challenging time for Harley; he was breathing through a tracheostomy, being fed through a tube into his stomach and he needed surgery to replace parts of his skull. He was unable to communicate verbally and was unable to move or lift his head and limbs from the hospital bed.

On 3 January 2024, Harley was transferred to The Children's Trust for a residential rehabilitation placement.

Starting the road to recovery

Soon after his arrival at The Children's Trust things started to turn around for Harley. The high dosage of medication he was on was increasing his fatigue, so the medical team worked to reduce this safely. This gave Harley the energy to focus on his rehabilitation goals.

Harley worked with the therapy teams to set his goals. He received a weekly timetable of personalised therapy sessions, including physiotherapy, hydrotherapy and occupational therapy, and education sessions.

Intensive physiotherapy

His biggest goal was to be able to walk again. When he arrived, Harley had no movement in his left side and had no independent mobility.

Mum, Claire explains "We worked and worked on [his mobility] and now he can lift his leg to steps, stand on a box, come back down. It's unbelievable, in a matter of weeks... unbelievable."

Harley received a weekly timetable of personalised therapy sessions, including physiotherapy, hydrotherapy and occupational therapy, and education sessions.

Support for the family

Claire has been able to stay with Harley throughout his placement, which has helped keep him settled and happy. It has also meant that she could learn strategies to support Harley's progress when they go home. Claire told us "Being here, I've got into the routine with him now and I know that I can do it at home. It's a marvellous place - honestly, what you've done for him - it really is. He feels safe here. We couldn't wish for anything better."

Moving forward

After 16 weeks at The Children's Trust, Harley was ready to go back home with his mum, Claire. He is determined to continue his rehabilitation and achieve his goals with the support of services within his community.

Claire tells us "People didn't give us much hope. They said 'he might not be able to talk, eat again' all these things, and every one we just tick off – tick, tick, tick, you've done it. I'm really proud of him."

The family had to make some adaptations to their home so that it was accessible to Harley, which will likely be ongoing as his needs change. Harley will also need to transfer to a new school, better suited to his current needs.

"It's a marvellous place - honestly, what you've done for him - it really is. He feels safe here."
– Claire

Hope for the future

Despite the challenges, Harley and his mum Claire are hopeful for their next chapter and all it holds. Harley is looking forward to getting a place at a new school and wants to continue with some new hobbies that he developed during his rehabilitation, including horse riding and swimming.

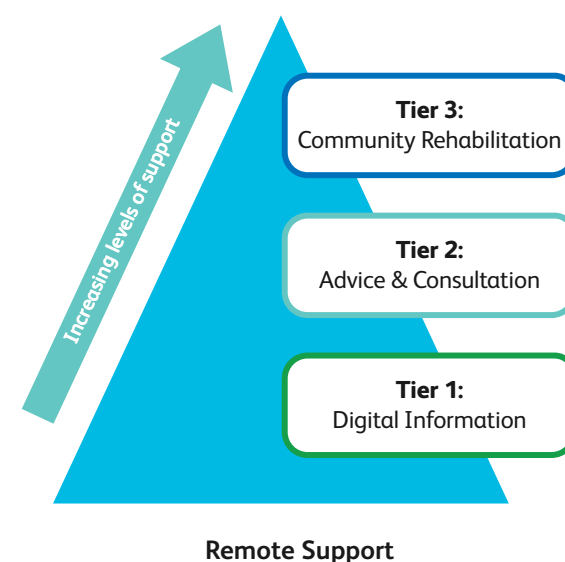
"It's unbelievable what he's gone through. I wouldn't have the strength for what he's done. I'm so proud of him. So proud." Claire



Community Rehabilitation Service

We have transformed the way in which we deliver community neurorehabilitation. The newly formed and innovative Community Rehabilitation Service offers online information and resources, as well as support to children, young people, and families through a nationwide Virtual (ABI) Acquired Brain Injury Team. The team support with virtual advice and consultation after a child has experienced a mild or moderate acquired brain injury. In addition, the team offers intensive, hands-on therapy service to children and young people living in South East England, in their home, school or community, or as an outpatient at The Children's Trust, alongside virtual hybrid packages of support for those further afield.

The new look Community Rehabilitation Service provides a range of support across a tiered model, with increasing levels of support based on the level of need and identified goals.



Remote support

Tier 1: Digital Information: Bumps Happen

Bumps Happen offers information and advice to support a child's recovery and return to activity following a concussion. The aim is to ensure that families can access information in a timely manner.

Bumps Happen is split into eight different modules. Each of these deliver information at different stages of the recovery journey, covering advice in the immediate aftermath of a head injury through to the days and weeks that follow.

The website is designed to be self-service, meaning users should be able to get the information they require without needing to interact with a clinician. The site also has a dedicated chat bot feature. Curated by a fictional head injury specialist, Zoe, the chat bot guides users to the information they require via a series of simple multiple-choice questions. If users still feel they need to speak with a member of our team, they can do so by submitting a short contact form.

Tier 2: Virtual Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) team

The Children's Trust's Virtual ABI Team provide a free, goal-directed, digital support service for children, young people and families living with acquired brain injury across the UK. Referrals are accepted from parents, families, and professionals. Support offered is directed by clinical need; families will be invited to join a virtual goal setting meeting where a plan is established to set meaningful participation-based goals. Specific advice, signposting and consultation can also be provided by one of our clinicians.

The service model promotes and encourages self-management of needs in the long term. However, it is anticipated families may need a number of intervention periods in the years that follow their child's initial injury, due to the lifelong developing nature of acquired brain injury.

The team offer coaching and guidance to young people, their families, and others in their network to help them work towards their goals.

It is recognised that some goals may be long term in nature and the team will therefore aim to identify short term goals that can be addressed within the service offer that may be a stepping stone towards achieving longer-term goals.

The clinicians also offer a long term register which provides support and follow-up to children with acquired brain injury at key educational transition points, in view of the possibility of emerging needs as a child gets older, and the changing expectations of school stages. Support is offered when a child enters reception age, secondary and post-16 education. The service works flexibly to support families to access a virtual service if digital support is required.

Tier 3: Community-based rehabilitation team

Our community rehabilitation team offers specialist assessment and goal-directed intensive rehabilitation for children and young people living with acquired brain injury and neurodisability in South East England. We have expanded our service to include physiotherapy and rehabilitation technician support and have seen a positive uptake of the service. The team successfully negotiated funding for children to receive a mixture of therapy packages including:

- intensive rehabilitation – MDT and single therapy discipline;
- inpatient to community transition packages;
- outpatient rehabilitation; and
- specialist assessments –MDT and single therapy discipline.

Whilst primarily focused on children in South East England, we are also able to offer virtual therapy support packages for children further afield. We anticipate these packages will be of greatest benefit to children leaving our in-patient rehabilitation service, supporting the embedding of strategies, and facilitating a successful return to community-based activity including education.

Rehabilitation is functional and context-based to address areas impacted by the child's brain injury, including (but not limited to) mobility, cognition, communication, emotional wellbeing and return to education. Intervention is holistic and focused on activities that are relevant and meaningful to the child and delivered in the most appropriate setting which may include the child's home, in school or in the community.



Back to school

Jack was ten years old when he contracted meningitis, which led to an acquired brain injury.

Jack had been unwell with a fever, earache, and intermittent headache for five days, when his symptoms worsened. His parents felt something was wrong and called 111, who advised that they take him to an Urgent Treatment Centre.

On arrival at the emergency department, Jack began to suffer from a stiff and painful neck and became extremely listless. Twenty-four hours later, Jack was diagnosed with a rare form of bacterial meningitis.

Charlotte, Jack's mum, tells us "If we had not taken Jack to A&E, and if the medical staff had not acted so quickly, it might have been too late. The damage and life-changing effects could have been so much worse, or indeed we could have lost Jack."

Living with a brain injury

After being discharged from hospital, Jack struggled with the effects of his brain injury. He experienced mental fatigue which had a negative impact on his education and wellbeing.

Jack was referred to The Children's Trust community rehabilitation team for support.

Charlotte says "The team stepped in when my family and I felt there was nowhere to turn for support."

A member of The Children's Trust Virtual ABI Team explained to the family that the fatigue was a symptom of Jack's acquired brain injury.

Charlotte says "On our first meeting with The Children's Trust Virtual ABI Team, Jack and I felt reassured that everything we were feeling and experiencing was to be expected. They explained very clearly what had happened to Jack's brain and the effect this was having on his day-to-day living."

The team were also able to signpost Jack's family to support within their community.

Charlotte tells us "The support officer enabled us to reach out to other services which have also supported us as a family. After that first meeting with the officer, it was like a door opened and we could seek appropriate help."

“They explained very clearly what had happened to Jack's brain and the effect this was having on his day-to-day living.

...

It alleviated Jack's anxiety as he knew he could approach someone when he needed time out.”

– Charlotte, Jack's mum

Back to school transition

Evidence shows that children and young people who have experienced brain injury or have a neurodisability can have difficulties with impulse control, regulating emotion and maintaining focus. All of which can create a downward spiral that is difficult to reverse.

The Children's Trust works to equip families and teachers with the necessary tools and skills for a child to have the best chance to thrive back in their school and home environment.

Charlotte says "Jack really couldn't manage the noise and busy classroom when he returned to school after his brain injury. It affected his relationships at school as he had very little resilience in dealing with conflict, differing opinions, and negotiating."

The community rehabilitation team worked with Jack's teachers to help them better support him in the classroom. For example, by only giving Jack one instruction at a time, and allowing him breaks outside of the classroom.

Charlotte tells us "It alleviated Jack's anxiety as he knew he could approach someone when he needed time out."

75%

Last year at The Children's Trust, three in four children successfully made a supported return to their previous educational setting or provision

Moving forward

Six months on from his illness, Jack's parents organise his school day and social life to manage his fatigue. Managing his diary is vital to ensure that he doesn't get overwhelmed and can still take part in his clubs and socialise with friends.

Charlotte says "I am not sure I can put into words what the support from The Children's Trust has meant to us, but to sum up, every time I have had contact with anyone from the team it has felt like a reassuring hug that you cannot see. I am not sure where we would be now without it."



The Children’s Trust School

Children and young people attending The Children’s Trust School receive holistic, specialist services across education, health, therapy, and care. The school uses a bespoke, tailored curriculum, known as the ImPACTS curriculum (Individualised, meaningful, Profile, Assessment, Curriculum, Target, Setting).

Stages of learning

The ImPACTS curriculum allows us to set ten personalised goals for the year under the categories of cognition; communication, language and literacy; environmental control technology; personal, social, wellbeing and health education (PSWEHB); and physical education (PE). These targets are reviewed on an annual basis to plot progress against pupils’ personalised learning journey. Therapeutic goals are also set by the therapy team in addition to the curriculum areas and quality of life.

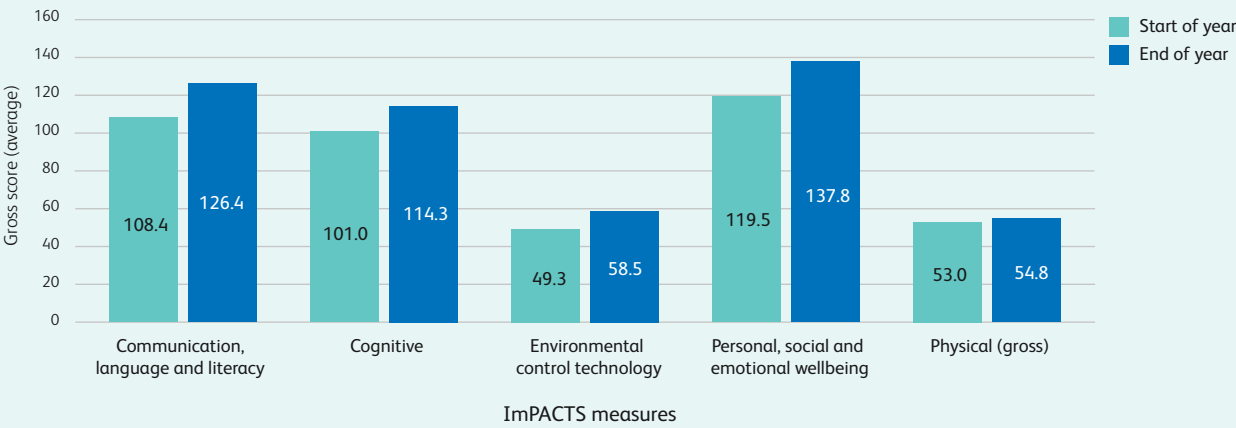
This enables the learning journey to be one of growth and achievement, enabling pupils to build knowledge and skills gradually, in small, achievable steps. It also helps pupils work successfully toward their personal Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHC Plan).

Impact of learning

School – ImPACTS curriculum progress – 2022/23 Academic Year

ImPACTS progress data illustrates incremental changes across all areas of the curriculum for all pupils attending The Children’s Trust School, with increasing changes in areas of communication, language and literacy, and environmental control technology.

2022/23 academic year – ImPACTS progress



ImPACTS measures	% change over 2022/23 academic year
Communication, language and literacy	+ 17%
Cognitive	+ 13%
Environmental control technology (ECT)	+ 19%
Personal, social and emotional wellbeing (PSEW)	+15%
Physical (Gross)	+ 3%



Finding her voice

“Olivia is a superstar. She holds her own and she's a strong and independent little lady. It's fabulous that she is now comfortable and confident enough to express herself. She is funny and cheeky, which I love.”

– Molly, Teacher

Olivia, aged seven, has made fantastic progress this year at The Children's Trust School.

Olivia has Rett syndrome, which is a neurodevelopmental disorder that can affect children's speech and mobility, leaving them unable to walk or communicate verbally.

Olivia joined The Children's Trust School in the nursery, aged five and is now thriving in the school primary class. She is a bright and engaged member of her class and has made real strides in learning ways to communicate, building her understanding of the world around her and developing relationships with her teachers and peers.

“In the last year Olivia's developing personality has really shone through. She is maturing into a little girl with interests and friendships, and it's just lovely to see.” Molly, Olivia's teacher

Making communication accessible

This past year Olivia has been working hard to develop her use of Eyegaze technology to communicate with those around her. Staff at The Children's Trust School have integrated the use of this device into lessons, therapy sessions and her daily routine.

With consistent use as well as modelling from the staff and her peers, Olivia began to understand how the Eyegaze works and is now making clear responses through the device.

“I consider every moment when Olivia makes an intentional choice or clear reply as a stand-out moment. It reassures me that she is there, she has her personality, she is trying to express herself. It is still a very long way to go but as we know, the journey of a thousand miles begins with a small step.” Julia, Olivia's mum

By communicating through her Eyegaze machine, Olivia can make choices, play games, and join in with group activities. She's become more cognitively aware of the actions of people around her, and has been able to express herself in response, developing relationships with her peers.

The Eyegaze machine is an eye tracking communication device which enables Olivia to generate speech by typing a message or selecting pre-programmed phrases.

Exploring interests

Students at The Children's Trust School have access to a range of activities that promote their intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development.

Olivia particularly enjoys cooking sessions, as she loves exploring the taste and texture of different ingredients. She also loves her weekly yoga and sound bath sessions, enjoying the freedom of movement outside of her wheelchair or walking frame.

Child-centred approach

In addition to her education, Olivia has access to a speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, and physiotherapist on a weekly basis at The Children's Trust School. With interventions such as access to assistive technology, weekly hydrotherapy sessions and blocks of rebound therapy, she has made great physical progress.

Like most children, Olivia responds particularly well to learning through play.

“It's nice that she doesn't feel like she's doing exercises. The sessions involve singing songs and playing games and she doesn't realise she's learning, she just thinks she is having a lovely time, so she's much more engaged.” Molly, Olivia's teacher

“Pupils flourish at this school. Their individuality is recognised and nurtured. One parent told us that this school opens up a whole new world for its pupils.”

– Ofsted, September 2023

How we generate income

Statutory income

Approximately 70% of the charity's income comes from annual and multi-year contracts including:

- Rolling, multi-year contracts for the residential and day school children who can be supported by us from the age of two to 19 years
- Our block contract with NHS England for the rehabilitation of children with the most complex needs following their brain injury.

The balance of our income for rehabilitation services comes from placements funded primarily by Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), foreign embassies or, in some cases, privately.

We also receive a grant from NHS England ('NHS England Children's Hospice Grant') in contribution to the operating costs of delivering palliative care services to children and young people. In 2023/24 we received £314k (2022/23 £307k). We also received a capital grant of £20k in 2023/24 (£21k in 2022/23) from the Department for Education in respect of The Children's Trust School.

Voluntary income

Your support makes our work helping children and young people with brain injury possible.

This year our fundraising and retail shops, accounted for 10% and 7% (2022/23: 13% and 8%) respectively of total income generated by the charity (total of 17%). We appreciate every gift no matter how large or small. We are so incredibly grateful to everyone who donates, volunteers, or runs fundraising activities on our behalf.

Fundraising and retail income enable us to continue providing services such as accommodation for parents so they can stay with their child, specially adapted equipment, soft play areas, homely bedrooms, and adapted vehicles so children can attend hospital appointments and access the outside world. We also rely on voluntary funding to provide our critical online information service and virtual UK-wide community service.

During 2023/24 across fundraising and retail shops, The Children's Trust supporters and shop customers generously donated a total of £5.8m in voluntary income (£6.2m in 2022/23) despite the financial pressures of a cost-of-living crisis.

Our supporters raised £3.0m (£3.6m in 2022/23) by taking part in fundraising activities ranging from our squad of 39 runners taking on the London Marathon to a sponsored goat walk!

Our 14 retail shops raised £2.4m (£2.3m in 2022/23) and we celebrated achieving a record net profit surplus despite fewer shops (previously 16). We branched out to test new ways to increase income such as our 'pop up' wedding shop which generated £10,000.

We are thankful for the very generous contributions from donors, organisations, and volunteers who – through their gifts of money and time or by donating goods to our charity shops – make our work possible.

Our principal fundraising activities are focused across seven areas:

- 1 A chain of shops and online retail selling new and donated goods;
- 2 Soliciting gifts from trusts, foundations, and statutory partners;
- 3 The solicitation and stewardship of donations from supporters or entries to a lottery being paid either by direct debit or as cash gifts;
- 4 Leaving a legacy, supporters leaving a gift in their Will;
- 5 Running our own events and entering individuals into third party events and activities;
- 6 Building partnerships with businesses, schools, community groups and other organisations to support them in raising money on our behalf; and
- 7 Supporting individual members of the public to conduct their own fundraising activities on our behalf.

Significant donations from foundations

We are grateful to receive donations from public and private foundations. During the year, the Peter Harrison Foundation granted us £30,000 towards our music therapy programme which helps children and young people enjoy music whilst developing or regaining skills such as eating, talking, and walking.

Garfield Weston Foundation enabled our Community Rehabilitation Service to reach children and their families wherever they may be, with information about concussion through our Bumps Happen online information resource. Alongside this, our Virtual ABI Team were funded to provide targeted consultation via telehealth virtual platforms. With this funding we were able to harness the power of digital communication to work with families across the UK at home or at school to support them to enjoy everyday life once again.

A lasting legacy

The Children's Trust was founded on a legacy. Caring for children at Tadworth Court in Surrey began in 1927 when Peter Reid left a legacy of £20,000 to create a country branch of Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital. As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the charity we are today, we would not survive and grow without the thoughtfulness of those who leave gifts in their Wills. In 2023/24 we received £250,000 from generous supporters who left a lasting legacy so that we can continue to be there for the children who need us.

Supporter highlights

We are delighted to have been chosen by employees at Fidelity UK whose votes meant that The Children's Trust won a two-year fundraising partnership. We also thank Arun Estates employees who raised £80,000 enabling us to continue to support children with brain injury and neurodisability to live the best life possible.

National Doughnut Week

National Doughnut Week 2023 was a great success with Dunns Bakery raising a delicious £43,050 for The Children's Trust. The charity week was launched in 1992 by Christopher Freeman, co-owner of Dunns Bakery. It's a very special week which sees businesses, including independent bakeries, coffee shops and offices, take part and sell lots of delicious doughnuts to raise funds in aid of The Children's Trust. Since 2005 National Doughnut Week has raised an incredible £588,344 for us with this annual campaign for which we are incredibly thankful.



Inspiring others

Five years on from his own brain injury, Zac is now working to support young people who find themselves in the same position.



Zac was 16 years old when he suffered a ruptured Arteriovenous Malformation (AVM) in 2019. After spending six weeks in hospital, he was transferred to The Children's Trust for a residential rehabilitation placement.



During his placement, Zac was extremely motivated to regain the skills he had lost due to his brain injury. Whilst at The Children's Trust he worked hard in his therapy sessions, and after 16 weeks of intense therapy, including physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy, he was on the way to achieving his recovery goals.



Now aged 21, Zac is looking at a bright future. He has completed a T Level in Engineering at college, passed his driving test, and pursued his ambition of working in Formula One by completing work experience placements with the Red Bull Racing F1 team and Global Technologies Racing.

“It's the least I can do. The Children's Trust has enabled me to go on and live my life, so I wanted to give back.**”**
– Zac



Giving back

Zac now wants to give back to The Children's Trust and offer support to other young people who have experienced a brain injury.

“It's the least I can do. The Children's Trust has enabled me to go on and live my life, so I wanted to give back.” Zac

He recently spent time with young people currently receiving rehabilitation to motivate them and give them hope.

Zac tells us “The foundation for recovery is laid at The Children's Trust and continues when you go home. You have to persevere and have a positive mindset. I hope I have inspired them to keep going because I know that would have helped me when I was here.”

He has also taken on public speaking engagements to raise awareness of brain injury and the work of The Children's Trust, sharing his story in the hope it will inspire others to remain motivated to achieve their goals.

“I am where I am today as a result of the hard work and effort of all of the staff at The Children's Trust. I hope that my story will inspire other kids going through similar circumstances as I know how difficult the journey can be.**”**

– Zac

How we work



I volunteer to help others like me

After Danielle acquired a brain injury as a child, she received rehabilitation at The Children's Trust. Over a decade later, Danielle now gives back by volunteering her time in one of our charity shops.

I volunteer as a till assistant in The Children's Trust shop in Stoneleigh, Surrey, managing the till and engaging with customers.

A typical day includes lots of fun, laughter, and hard work, as I price and hang clothes, sort through donations, and sell raffle tickets alongside the rest of the team. The people I work with and the amazing managers at the shop, Sam and Vic, make sure we always have fun whilst we are working.

"Every day is special as we are meeting different people who come in to shop and donate. It's nice to feel valued and part of an amazing team."

Giving back

I volunteer to help other children with brain injury, having been a patient myself 14 years ago. I know exactly how important it is to raise these vital funds for children with brain injury.

"I came to The Children's Trust unable to talk, walk or eat, and thanks to the amazing team I was able to make a full recovery."

I am coming up to my fifth year of volunteering in The Children's Trust Stoneleigh shop and it has been such a wonderful experience. It's a wonderful feeling knowing you are helping children with brain injury to live the best life possible.

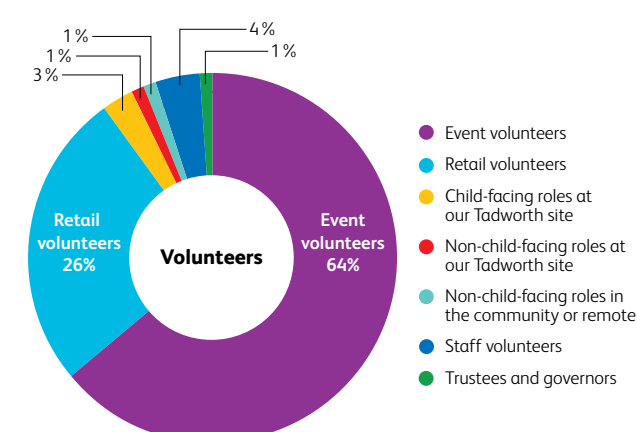
Our staff

We would like to thank all our staff for their hard work, patience, and commitment through what has been a very challenging year. At the completion of the organisational restructure, following a programme of voluntary and compulsory redundancies, we employ 481 staff on a full-time equivalent basis (2022/23: 530).

Volunteers

There are many ways individuals can volunteer to support our work and help us make a difference to the lives of children with brain injury and neurodisability, from one-time opportunities at events throughout the year to regular opportunities including driving and gardening or volunteering in one of our charity shops. We also provide opportunities for volunteers at our site in Tadworth. Through our volunteering programme we aim to provide volunteers with training and support at a level suitable to their role. On average, our retail and event volunteers give 12 hours per month, with a total of 3,960 hours given every month.

Summary of volunteer participation:



“ If I were to speak to someone thinking of volunteering, I would say 'do it!'.

”
– Danielle

Our culture and values

2023 and 2024 were times of significant organisational change for our staff and leadership as we restructured. Our culture and values are at the heart of everything we do and our organisational promises, developed in collaboration with our staff, volunteers, partners and children, young people and families, should always guide us in the way we work and deal with each other.

We worked hard during the restructure process to ensure that the decisions we made on staffing and services, were taken with our promises in mind. We did this by considering the children and services in our decision making. We consulted with our staff consultation group to ensure we were open and responsive, and that they had a say in the changes we made.

Finally, our staff pulse survey, held during the restructure process, gave staff a voice at a critical time, and directed our focus on how we continue to make this a promise-led organisation.



Our promises



Child first

- To put children and young people first, seeking their views and sharing decision-making with them.
- To contribute to our community, making it warm, positive and fun.
- To connect meaningfully with children and young people, enriching their lives.



Aim high

- To be curious and courageous, exploring new ideas.
- Think big, finding ways to add value and improve what we do.
- To focus on quality, act responsibly and use evidence to support our choice.



Care deeply

- To be friendly and show genuine compassion.
- To connect and collaborate effectively inside and outside of our charity.
- To recognise and encourage each other, taking time to celebrate successes.



Be open

- To speak up confidently and look for solutions.
- To listen to others, sharing and receiving feedback in a positive way.
- To invite different views, respecting everyone's roles and contributions.



Own it

- To take responsibility, owning what we do and delivering on our promises.
- To set ourselves high standards and use our expertise across the charity.
- To grow from mistakes, taking every opportunity to develop and improve.

Trustees' duty to promote the success of the charity – section 172 statement

Trustees have a duty to act in good faith to promote the success of the charity for the benefit of its stakeholders and in doing so are required by section 172 of the Companies Act 2006 to have regard for various specific factors including:

The likely consequences of any decision in the long-term

The trustees make all key decisions with reference to our central ambition; for all children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability to have the opportunity to live the best life possible.

Children and young people are invited to attend the Trustee Board for a special "spotlight" standing agenda item used to open each meeting. This invaluable engagement between trustees and beneficiaries enables the board to gauge the charity's impact on the lives of its beneficiaries and to seek the views of children and their parents or carers about the services they receive.

To ensure we can achieve our central ambition, especially this year, it has been essential for us to maintain a relentless focus on our financial recovery. This required us to consider the financial implications of all decisions, whilst carefully assessing the potential impact on the quality and safety of our services. With this in mind, we strengthened our approach to risk-based decision making with the introduction of a new risk management reporting tool, the outputs of which now form a key part of Board and Committee agendas. This has enabled greater visibility of the cross-organisational risk profile so that the short term and longer term impact of decisions can be more commonly understood.

The interests of the charity's employees

At the heart of our strategy lies our approach to our people – how we look after, motivate, and develop our employees and volunteers and create a sense of being part of something special.

The recovery we have achieved in 2023/24 could not have happened without our remarkable staff. Our most recent pulse survey in December 2023, showed that staff were more confident that the senior leadership team could successfully deliver the financial restructure. But we know we must continue to seek and act on feedback and ensure staff are happy, engaged and fully confident about the future.

We continue to offer a range of communication channels to ensure staff are kept up to date and can raise any concerns they may have. These channels include virtual all staff meetings, all staff emails, our Employee Voice channel, our weekly newsletter, and further updates on our intranet.

We know that organisational change can take time to implement effectively, and winning hearts and minds can take longer still. We would like to thank all colleagues for their continued commitment, professionalism, and resilience.

The need to foster the charity's relationships with suppliers, customers, and others

We recognise that the charity can only succeed if our relationships with referrers, funders, donors, and key suppliers continue to thrive.

We remain thankful to our loyal supporters and philanthropists who continue to show their generosity through funding our vital work or giving their valuable time and expertise. Their dedication to the charity means we can continue to be here for children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability.

“ We are proud of the difference our services make to our beneficiaries and are grateful to our funders for recognising our unique proposition and the value we bring. **”**

Our partnerships with local authorities and other funders are extremely important to us. We are appreciative of their support and commitment as we continue to ensure we fully recover the costs of the highly specialist services we provide for children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability. We are proud of the difference our services make to our beneficiaries and are grateful to our funders for recognising our unique proposition and the value we bring.

The impact of the charity's operations on the community and the environment

We are committed to minimising the environmental impact of our activities. For this to happen we need to make sure our practices are sustainable, from the top of our supply chain, through to our impact on our people, the environment, and the communities in which we operate. As part of this work, we have already begun our new business strategy, the charity's impact on the local community and wider environment will remain a key consideration.

The desirability of the charity maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct

We believe that maintaining a reputation for high standards of service delivery and business conduct is fundamental to the long-term success and viability of the charity. We keep this in mind in everything we do from recruitment and resourcing, the setting of policies and procedures, the choice of suppliers and partners we work with, the level of risk we are prepared to accept and the governance and monitoring arrangements we put in place.

In 2023/2024, two thirds of local health authorities across the UK referred children and young people to The Children's Trust

Between 2021 and 2023, 95 % of families who completed our 'Friends and Family test' would recommend The Children's Trust to friends, family and other parents who needed similar care or treatment. In 2023/2024, two thirds of local health authorities across the UK referred children and young people to The Children's Trust, and Ofsted rated our school "Outstanding" in September 2023. This highlights the confidence that families, healthcare professionals and regulators across the UK place in our ability to deliver high-quality care to those living with the most complex disabilities.

Despite the ongoing need for financial prudence, the board, senior leadership team and all staff are focussed on ensuring we deliver high-quality services to children, young people, and their families.

The need to act fairly between members of the charity

The organisation, being a charitable company limited by guarantee, does not have shareholders and its members are limited to the trustees, who are directors of the company. All trustees receive the same information about the strategy, operations and finances of the charity and have equal voices in all key decision-making.



2023/2024: progress against our strategic objectives

Here we look back at our 2022/23 strategic objectives and report on our progress towards achieving them.

1

Deliver high quality, safe and effective care

2

Maximise income

3

Reduce our cost base



Objective one: Deliver high quality, safe and effective care

Offer an integrated service model across education, health, therapy, and care aligned to regulatory frameworks, safeguarding, contractual and statutory obligations

Our collaborative approach, involving children, young people, families, and multidisciplinary clinicians, ensures that our services are tailored to meet the unique needs of each child.

We have introduced 24-hour senior nursing (B7) site-wide cover for clinical support.

We have implemented successful MDT meetings in rehabilitation and are piloting the introduction of MDT key worker meetings.

To enhance the patient pathway process from referral to discharge, we have introduced placement managers. These managers play a crucial role in coordinating patient care and acting as the central liaison for families throughout their journey with us.

We have continued to develop and implement our Electronic Patient Record (EPR) system, which is now fully rolled out within all clinical areas housing children in residential care. This project has had a significant positive impact across a number of areas. Most notably, we are now able to easily access information to both respond and report to multiple stakeholders in a timely manner whilst also possessing greater intelligence and data analytics to further inform clinical decision making and wider patient safety.

Co-design and co-produce our services with children, young people, and families

We continuously improve our neurorehabilitation services through person-centred goal setting and treatment planning. We have involved and engaged children and young people by gaining feedback on changes we have made to the rehabilitation plans, timings of sessions and group interventions.

“We have involved and engaged children and young people by gaining feedback on changes we have made to the rehabilitation plans, timings of sessions and group interventions.”

We also place great importance on the feedback we receive from a variety of sources, including friends, family, and relatives through channels such as “Have Your Say” and family evaluations.

As a result of this feedback, we have implemented several improvements, such as increasing the availability of weekend activities, individualised rehabilitation plans, personalised name badges for staff and enhancing the quality of food provided.

These changes have significantly enriched the experience of the children and families we support, reflecting our commitment to delivering high-quality, patient-centred care.

Integrate with – and provide access for – the children and young people to local healthcare systems as far as possible

We continue to engage with the NHS services and we are currently working on a previously agreed plan to integrate the children in residential care with the paediatric team at Epsom Hospital for accessing secondary care.

Children and young people who are admitted for neurorehabilitation remain under the care of their local NHS service during their inpatient admission.

Explore the further development of the multi-disciplinary clinical workforce and skill mix within nursing and care

Following the 2023 restructure, we made the strategic decision to upskill our clinical support assistants (CSAs) to take on shift leadership roles and medication administration. This ambitious project involved educating and training over 50 carers, demonstrating our commitment to enhancing our workforce's capabilities.

We introduced the role of Clinical Site Managers (CSMs), ensuring that we provide 24-hour senior nurse support, seven days a week. CSMs play a crucial role in addressing clinical and safeguarding concerns as well as undertaking a crucial family liaison role out of hours. They serve as a vital point of contact for families, providing reassurance and immediate intervention when necessary. This has enhanced our ability to respond promptly and effectively to any safeguarding issues, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children in our care at all times.

Expand the role of clinical education

Through comprehensive training programmes, detailed within a comprehensive learning and development plan, we ensure that our workforce training is continually aligned to the organisation's strategic direction, as well as responding to learning from incidents, complaints, and audits. We aim to continually improve the skills and confidence of our team, enhancing the quality of care we provide to our patients whilst remaining at the forefront of clinical best practice.

We have enhanced and further developed our Basic Life Support training to be more comprehensive and focused on the specific needs of The Children's Trust. With the creation of the senior clinical support assistants (CSA) role, we have undertaken a comprehensive review and implementation of our medication training for carers.

We have continued to develop our Experienced Nurse Programme, designed for band 5 and 6 nurses, comprising of five study days with a strong focus on leadership development.

Improve staff engagement, wellbeing, and morale by consulting on organisational change, providing channels for people to speak up and listen to and being seen to act on feedback

As part of our legal responsibilities during the significant organisational change we managed, we set up and trained an Employee Forum to review, interrogate and improve our restructure plans. In total 65 recommendations were made by staff and 36 were implemented to improve our proposals. This led to a small reduction in the number of roles made redundant and a small increase in the savings we achieved towards financial stability. This was a positive process in an otherwise difficult context.

Looking at wider staff engagement and sentiment, our December 2023 pulse survey showed improvements in four of the 11 statements compared to our June 2022 staff survey, and a decline in seven statements.

A significant improvement in sentiment towards the senior leadership team delivering the financial restructure was balanced by decreased confidence in management overall.

Other areas of focus identified for action planning were around staff experiencing discrimination at work and concerns around pay.

While the results do highlight challenges we must overcome, over 8 out of 10 of our staff (81.3%) responded positively that they feel that they can report concerns which is critical to ensuring an open, transparent, and constructive dialogue on making The Children's Trust a better place to work.



Objective two: Maximise income

Optimise cost recovery of our services

Delivering high quality, safe and effective services in a niche area of the health sector requires significant investment in a highly skilled workforce. We have made significant progress in managing and recovering our costs. Given the pressures on the resources of our public sector funders and the challenges of operating from our current estate, this will remain an area of focus and will be a key element in our strategic planning and analysis in 2024/25.

Develop and foster strong relationships across our professional networks in the UK and abroad to increase awareness of, and demand for, our unique services

In 2023/24, 28 out of 42 Integrated Care Boards referred patients to The Children's Trust. This widespread referral network highlights the confidence that healthcare professionals across the country place in our ability to deliver high-quality neurorehabilitation. There is a business development plan in place to strengthen our partnerships with external stakeholders, particularly referrers and commissioners.

We participate in national and regional academic conferences, offering dissemination of research, quality improvement projects, skills and expertise which builds the evidence base for high quality neurorehabilitation.

Ensure that we can meet the workforce demand for our services in order to ensure the provision of safe care

We initiated a drive for international recruitment to fill nursing and care roles. Over the first few months of 2023, we welcomed more than 40 international nurses and carers from countries across Africa and Asia. We have also successfully recruited overseas allied health professionals.

Leverage and grow our supporter base, invest in relationships, and develop new fundraising initiatives and other opportunities to grow voluntary income

We finished the year ahead of the original budget set at the start of the year. This is testament to the work the team have done to retain the trust and confidence of supporters by being open about the challenges we face and sharing the impact of our work for children, young people and families which has led to continuing support. The size of the supporter base has remained static in 2023/24; however, work is underway in 2024/25 on several initiatives to address the risk of a long-term decline in income.

Increase retail contribution with our portfolio of well-located and appointed charity shops and online channel

The Children's Trust supporters and shop customers generously donated a total of £2.4m (£2.3m in 2022/23) and we celebrated achieving a record net profit surplus despite a smaller chain of shops (now 14, previously 16). We branched out to test new ways to increase income such as our 'pop up' wedding shop which generated £10,000 of income.



Objective three: Reduce our cost base

Remain focused on minimising staff costs post restructure (including temporary agency workers and recruitment fees) and maintaining a leaner workforce

The total staff cost reduced from £25.5m in 2022/23 to £23.5m in 2023/24 as a consequence of the restructure. To ensure that the correct focus is maintained on staff costs - enhanced controls have been put in place and any increase in staffing establishment needs senior level sign off before proceeding.

Keep recruitment and agency fees down by ensuring The Children's Trust is not only a place that people want to come and work but somewhere they want to stay. Reduce attrition through investment in training, apprenticeships, and broader career development

Significant progress has been made with attrition falling from 36% in April 2023 to 20% by March 2024. This has meant a reduction in the total number of roles we have recruited to in this year.

Our recruitment efforts have focused on nursing and quality and therapy roles, both of which remain very competitive markets for the high-quality staff we need to support the children and young people.

Our training for internal recruits ensured that the nurses were well-prepared to pass their NMC Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), meeting the high standards required for clinical practice in the UK.

We currently have eight clinical support assistants (CSAs) undertaking their nursing apprenticeships with the Open University, spread across two cohorts. We have three members of staff undertaking therapy apprenticeships. These apprentices have benefited from external placements at prestigious

institutions such as Great Ormond Street Hospital, Ashford & St Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust, and various local community settings.

Offering this pathway into nursing for our talented senior CSAs has been excellent for both recruitment and retention.

We annually survey our staff's experience working at The Children's Trust and use their feedback to action plan ways to improve the experience of working at the organisation.

Continue to rationalise and consolidate our non-staff operating expenditure

Over the past year we have successfully implemented closer governance around non-staff operating expenditure resulting in an overall reduction. This has included reviews of existing vendor contracts, greater scrutiny of procurement processes and eliminating unnecessary spend.

Seek ways to use our site at Tadworth Court more efficiently

The review of the use of the Tadworth Court site has been covering two main areas: identify opportunities to maximise the use of the current site for current activities, and also to understand the longer-term options as part of the development of our 2025 strategy development.

Exercise robust financial governance and controls to ensure our recovery stays on track and that we meet the terms and conditions of our £5m commercial loan facility

As a result of the implementation of the recovery plan the charity has ensured it has met all necessary loan covenants as of 31 March 2024.

Quality visits and regulatory inspections

Our rehabilitation services and residential accommodation are registered with both Ofsted Care and the Care Quality Commission (CQC). This dual registration leads to increased governance and oversight, which is beneficial for our practice. The two inspections have different focuses, providing valuable insights for continuous improvement.

Ofsted Care inspection, September 2023 – 'Good rating'

- Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: Good rating.
- How well children and young people are helped and protected: Good rating.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers: Good rating.

“There is a healthy culture of staff self-reporting medication errors and concerns. When concerns are reported, managers work effectively in partnership with relevant external agencies and take effective remedial action to reduce the chance of any errors being repeated.”

Recommendations:

“The registered person should ensure that the use of CCTV or other monitoring equipment should have a written policy describing how this will support the safeguarding and well-being of those living and working in the home.”

“The registered person should be visible and accessible to staff and able to deliver their leadership and/or management responsibilities.”

CQC Inspection, February 2024

CQC no longer provide a rating for services or organisations that are defined as being a children's home and are dual registered with Ofsted. The last rated inspection in March 2020 led to an outstanding rating. A further unrated inspection took place in February 2024 which provided extensive positive feedback and identified specific areas for improvement.

“Children and young people receiving intensive rehabilitation at The Children's Trust were supported by excellent staff who were committed to supporting achievement and success,' adding, 'the progress children and young people made was evident.”

– CQC inspectors

Recommendations:

- Strengthening the detail of the description of one-to-one care and observations related to overnight care within care plans.
- Strengthening daily evaluations of the child or young person's care to include their voice, feelings and wishes.



Ofsted Education, September 2023 inspection

- The inspectors rated The Children's Trust School as 'outstanding'.
- Our school was rated outstanding across all areas that were assessed. Ofsted inspectors praised the dedication, skill and passion of our staff who are driven to ensure all children and young people with neurodisability and complex needs experience life in all its richness.
- The school excels at getting to know pupils' interests and talents, often finding innovative ways to nurture and develop these.
- We will continue to act on and learn from the findings from all our regulators as we strive to provide the best possible quality of care and education for children and young people.



“The needs of pupils are always the priority at The Children's Trust School. A caring, child-centred culture is tangible throughout the organisation from the work of trustees through to daily classroom interactions.”

“The school's curriculum is extremely effective. It provides an adaptable framework, which teachers combine with the information from pupils' (EHCP) Education, Health, and Care Plans to ensure that learning is highly purposeful and individualised.”

Looking ahead our key priorities 2024/25

It has been a vital year of learning for The Children's Trust as we build on our financial recovery and pave the way for a sustainable future.

In our Trustees' Report for 2022/23 we outlined our financial recovery plan with the key objectives of delivering safe and effective care; maximising income and reducing our cost base.

With leadership changes at trustee and senior management level substantially completed, we have continued to make significant progress in implementing the recovery plan and achieving financial stability.

Positively, the delivery of the recovery plan has meant that only £3.5m of the £5m loan facility from Charity Bank and Big Society Capital has been drawn down at the time of reporting. We are also very grateful that £0.75m of the £1.25m philanthropic loans has now been converted to a gift.

We believe that our recovery plan now paves the way towards a financially sustainable future for the charity, so that we can be here for children, young people, and their families in the long-term.

As we updated in last year's report, given the charity's financial position at that time, sustaining our ability to provide high quality and safe services to the many children, young people, and families we exist to serve, has been the key priority for the charity. We have achieved this by making difficult decisions on and re-focusing ongoing and planned projects and activities.

Over the course of the next 12 months, as we come to the end of the current strategic period, and build on our recovery plan, we will focus on the four objectives, outlined on page 43.

Objective one:

Enhance the safety and quality of our services for children and young people and their families

We will:

- Develop a consistent culture of continuous improvement and patient safety through the implementation of the PSIRF policy and plan, learning action plans and quality improvement;
- Continue to develop the clinical risk register and board assurance to inform patient safety risks, mitigations, and further strategic developments;
- Implement the Electronic Patient Record system within rehabilitation houses over the next year and ensure that the learning from the initial implementation is built into this further rollout.

Objective two:

Strengthen financial stability and sustainability

- Review and update policies and processes to improve financial governance and risk management.
- Undertake a strategic property review and options appraisal.
- Enhance the transparency of service financial performance including key financial drivers and overhead allocation.
- Improve financial reporting and working capital management through greater focus on risks and forecasting.
- Identify and implement process efficiencies.
- Develop new voluntary fundraising propositions.

Objective three:

Continue to develop an inclusive, transparent 'one team' culture at The Children's Trust

As part of a new employee engagement working group, supported by staff from across the organisation we commit to:

- Re-establish our 'Promise Planter' group to better embed our promises across existing and new members of staff, testing our progress in our next planned staff survey in June 2025;
- Implement key principles from the national Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, to give staff a clearer and more constructive way to raise concerns and to ensure they feel listened to;
- Review all of our, employee engagement channels and tools, responding to staff feedback and, in particular, improve staff sentiment around wellbeing through a dedicated working group, who will make recommendations directly to the senior leadership team on addressing current staff challenges. Progress will be measured via a baseline pulse survey in 2024 and the June 2025 staff survey.

Objective four:

Setting The Children's Trust up for the future

In 2024/25, we will focus on setting the charity up for its journey into the future. We are excited to engage in the development of our new, multi-year organisational strategy, which will enable us to remain relevant, excellent, and committed to continuous improvement.

Our sole purpose is to work so that children and young people with acquired brain injury and neurodisability can live their best life possible. Our new organisational strategy will live up to this.

We will:

- Engage children, young people, and their families in developing what we stand for as an organisation (e.g. our promises), what we do and how we do it;
- Activate the enormous amount of specialist expertise and insight across our diverse staff base and large number of volunteers, including our Board of Trustees and co-opted members to our Board Committees, to shape our new strategy;
- Carefully analyse our operating environment to understand what The Children's Trust needs to focus on to deliver the biggest impact for the people we serve;
- Seek external input from a variety of current and future stakeholders to challenge our thinking;
- Develop a solid operational plan before we start implementing our strategy.



Financial performance

Overview

The year 2023/24 was characterised by the delivery of our financial recovery plan which included:

- utilising the loans obtained from both Charity Bank/Big Society Capital and philanthropic donors to ensure ongoing liquidity,
- ensuring income from our contractual funders is at the appropriate level for the services provided,
- maintaining strong controls over expenditure.

The performance in the year 2023/24 against these aims was positive and has allowed the charity to maintain operations. Going forward, the underlying challenges of the business model remain and so the year 2024/25 will be focussed on the construction of a sustainable business model to take the charity forward.

The £5m loan facility from Charity Bank and Big Society Capital was secured at the end of the 2022/2023 year. Since the initial drawdown of £3.5m in February 2023 there have been no further drawdowns and the cash balance for the Charity at the end of the year was £2.2m (2022/23 £1.9m).

The focus on improving income was successful in the year, with the business development team securing fee increases through their negotiations with the respective commissioning bodies. Income from charitable activities increased by £6.4m to £27.4m in the year.

Fundraising income, including the charity's retail network, decreased from £5.9m to £5.5m in the year.

Through the year, the close focus on the cost base of the charity has remained, ensuring we continue to deliver a world-leading service in a safe and healthy environment within the confines of the recovery plan. Whilst the recovery plan gave rise to a reduction in charitable activity costs by £1.9m, the charity continues to invest in its staff, and they continue to deliver world-class care. Non-staff operating costs remain a challenge as there are significant fixed overheads related to our site and the facilities we offer the children we support. Ensuring optimal use of the Tadworth estate is a key area of focus for the future. Overall, the total costs of the charity decreased by £2m to £33m.

The charity has therefore finished the year with an operating surplus of £0.7m (2022/23 deficit of £(7.6m)). However, due to the decrease in value of the charity's property assets driven by the impact of higher interest rates on the property market, the overall position is a deficit of £(2.0m) (2022/23 deficit of £(3.8m)).

At the end of 2022/23, the charity had negative free reserves of £(1.7m) and by 31 March 2024 this has moved to a position of £1.2m. As the recovery plan continues to be delivered and the results of the strategic review are set out, it is anticipated that the charity will continue to replenish our free reserves. The financial performance for the year 2024/25 has been budgeted to deliver a modest net surplus (outside of the revaluation of fixed assets).

Reserves

As at March 2024, reserves totalled £17.9m (2023: £19.9m), of which £0.06m (2023: £0.3m) relates to expendable Restricted Funds and £1.76m (2023: £1.76m) is the Fixed Asset Restricted Fund which reflects the balance on the Department of Health grant made in 1995 in relation to the Grade 1 listed property known as Tadworth Court.

£67k (2023: £57k) relates to Endowment Funds following the Charity Commission's approval to reallocate the Gardiner Endowment Fund as general unrestricted. Of the remaining balance, £16.2m (2023: £19.4m) has been designated to represent that element of the reserves which is represented by fixed assets (excluding the amount in the Fixed Asset Restricted Fund) and is therefore not available as working capital. The balance of £1.2m is Unrestricted Funds which trustees believe is a more transparent presentation of the charity's reserves.

The financial challenges referred to above had reduced the reserves to an unacceptably low level with no 'free reserves' but the charity's delivery of the recovery plan has allowed free reserves to grow to £1.2m (2023: £nil). In previous years, the trustees reviewed reserves at the year end and allocated amounts to reflect the strategic requirements of the charity. This policy was suspended in the 2021/22 Trustees Report and Accounts when the financial crisis emerged in summer 2022. The current focus is on maintaining the unrestricted funds and minimum cash balance required in the Charity Bank and Big Society Capital loan agreement.

In 2024/25 the trustees will be developing a new reserves policy which takes account of the financial risks facing the charity, the level of reserves deemed prudent as a contingency and the period over which this can be achieved. Current forecasts show the organisation achieving a modest net surplus for 2024/25. The new reserves policy will balance the need to build up funds for stability and future developments against the plan to pay down the recovery loan as soon as possible.

Going concern

Background

In accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102), the trustees have assessed the charity's ability to continue as a going concern to assure themselves in preparing the annual accounts on this basis. The assessment has taken into account all available information about the future for at least, but not limited to, 12 months from the date of signing of the accounts.

In 2022/23 the charity entered into a recovery plan to deliver financial improvements whilst maintaining the provision of high-quality care. This plan continued through 2023/24 and the new strategic focus will be centered on delivering safe, effective and high quality services and learning from serious incidents, as well as addressing matters such as the challenging funding environment, and the negotiation of fee increases. There are demonstrable improvements in the charity's finances and the level of uncertainty around the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern has reduced.

Operational Performance and Position

Moving on from 2022/23 the key risks were the ability to deliver the recovery plan, to meet the loan covenants and to deal with any unexpected shocks due to low reserves. During 2023/24 we have been able to address these risks: the impact of the recovery plan has been shown in the improvement in operational performance; in 2023/24, the charity is reporting an operating surplus of £0.7m, compared to deficits of £(7.6m) in 2022/23 and £(3.8m) in 2021/22. All covenants have been met and in addition the Free Reserve position has improved with a deficit of £(1.7m) turning into a positive £1.2m. This improvement continues in the year 2024/25 where the charity is budgeting a modest net surplus in the year with the first quarter forecast projecting in line with budget.

Cash Flow Analysis

As a result of the restructuring plan, cash generation has improved through increased fees and reduced staffing costs. The referral pipeline for the charity's core services remains positive and the generous support of donors and volunteers is unwavering. In terms of liquidity, the current ratio has continued to improve (23/24: 1.81, 22/23: 1.39), which has been driven by an increase in both cash and debtors. The increase in debtors was due to delays in the settlement of invoices by certain commissioners towards the end of 2023/24, subsequently the position has improved in 2024/25 through increased dialogue with these counterparties.

£1.5m of the Charity Bank/ Big Society Capital loan is available to draw down until February 2025, and the charity is pleased to

state that it has met all financial covenants for 2023/24 and expects to maintain compliance in 2024/25 and 2025/26 when the first repayment of the loan is due.

2025/26 Projections

Looking ahead to 2025/26 the charity is forecasting a net surplus of £0.5m. This is dependent on obtaining the necessary fee increases on the charity's core services in line with this year and continuing to manage the overall cost base accordingly, which is emphasised when looking at the associated sensitivity analysis.

External Factors

The charity continues to operate in a challenging environment, with counterparties such as Local Authorities and the NHS who face their own funding challenges. Significant internal analysis has been undertaken about the impact of solvency issues for Local Authorities and this indicates that there is very low risk that any existing debts will become irrecoverable or that the level of referrals of children and young people will be reduced as a consequence.

The wider economy is also showing signs of improvement, especially with the levels of inflation reducing from what was seen in 2022/23 and interest rates starting to fall. The general inflation assumption used in the 2024/25 budget was of 4% and so there is a strong expectation of being able to manage costs within the budget, and this is being seen in the first months of the financial year.

Management Plans

Through the second half of 2023/24 the charity put in place a number of new permanent appointments to strengthen and stabilise both the board of trustees and also the senior leadership team. These included a new chair, chief executive, director of fundraising and communications, and finance director. Along with these appointments, there is a renewed focus on the strategy of The Children's Trust, especially in improving financial sustainability. This strategy work will continue through 2024/25.

Conclusion

The charity has made a significant improvement in its financial position in the year 2023/24, making it better equipped to handle future uncertainties. These factors have allowed the charity to conclude that there are no material uncertainties which may give rise to significant doubt that the charity is a going concern compared to the prior year and provide a better expectation about its future. Maintaining financial discipline and strategic planning will be crucial for continued stability and growth. Having reviewed these factors the charity is satisfied that it has sufficient resources to continue and is therefore a going concern and the accounts have been prepared on that basis.

Investment Policy

The investment policy sees our reserves invested with the aim of at least maintaining the value or purchasing power in real terms. A total return target has been set at CPI + 3.5% p.a. net of fees. There is no specific income target, but we seek to achieve a balanced return between income and capital growth. The time horizon is seen as long-term, more than five years. This policy will be reviewed in 2024/25 given the change in the charity's financial circumstances and the significant reduction in funds invested.

In the year to 31 March 2024 our investment assets rose by 10.7% (9.8% after charges). This compares well with the average charity return from the ARC Steady Growth Universe of 9.4%. The return can be split into capital and income with 7.7% being capital and 3% being income. Over the period we received £53k in income and there were no withdrawals.

Over the last three years our fund has gained 10.6% which was just behind the average return from the ARC Steady Growth Universe of 11.5%. In the last year, a bias to overseas equities and in particular to US equities has helped returns as markets have been excited by the large strides made in artificial intelligence. However, not having a sufficiently high exposure to US technology stocks meant that, whilst we did well compared to the average charity, we were marginally behind our benchmark return. During the year, the charity invested £1m in a money market product to take advantage of the higher interest rates.




The Investment Committee did not meet in the year 2023/24. The charity has monitored performance and maintained regular contact with representatives from Investec.

In the year Investec Wealth & Investment was purchased by Rathbones Group plc who will continue to provide investment services to the charity.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The following sets out the board's assessment of the charity's principal risks at the time of writing, alongside the control measures and mitigations in place to manage them to within an acceptable level.

Key:

 Risk is decreasing  Risk is increasing  Risk is static

Safe, effective, and quality services

We provide services to children and young people with brain injury and neurodisability in the UK and operate in a highly regulated environment, overseen by CQC, Ofsted Care, Ofsted Education and Charity Commission. Delivering high quality and safe services is our primary objective. A failure to maintain high standards of care and to comply with statutory requirements could compromise the health and safety of the children and young people leading to serious patient safety incidents, regulatory enforcement action, negative publicity and a decline in referrals to our services.

The most recent, full Ofsted social care inspection in September 2023 rated our children's home "Good". A further Ofsted inspection of our education provision, also in September 2023, rated The Children's Trust School "Outstanding".

Learnings from serious incidents, as well as inspections and visits by relevant regulators, highlighted where we can improve governance and practice of the services we provide. One particular risk area highlighted concerns overnight monitoring and observations. During the year we have undertaken a comprehensive review of our policies, processes and care plans and delivered additional training and communications to staff on this subject to improve quality standards.

Control measures and mitigations:

- We constantly review and update our policies, procedures, training, and competency-based assessments to ensure that compliance with all applicable regulations and with our own quality standards is fully embedded;
- We undertake spot checks and audits to monitor compliance with policies and procedures with regular oversight at the Clinical Governance & Safeguarding Committee.

Financial sustainability and control

We have successfully executed our financial recovery plan in 2023/24 moving from a reported operating deficit in 2022/23 of (£7.6m) to an operating surplus (before revaluation of property assets) of £0.7m for 2023/24. It is also significant that only £3.5m of the £5m loan facility, entered with Charity Bank in February 2023, has been drawn down. At the time of writing, there is no anticipated requirement to draw down the remaining balance, although that option remains should we require it.

Key external risks which prevail include; financially stressed Local Authorities (our funders); public sector pay pressure which at the time of writing has seen the government accept the recommendations from the pay review bodies for doctors and other NHS staff. The health and social care job market could become more challenging, impacting our ability to staff beds, and simultaneously increasing our recruitment and retention costs. The squeeze on public sector finances may make it more challenging for our funders to meet the costs of providing our services particularly if recently announced national pay awards are not fully funded. Cash flow pressures for some of our UK funders and delays in the settlement of international debt could lead to delays in cash collection for The Children's Trust.

Changes in the national commissioning landscape from April 2025 will see funding for specialised services (that are currently commissioned directly by NHS England) delegated to local Integrated Care Boards. We are working closely with colleagues at NHS England to consider the implications of this for the children and young people we support, for our referrers and for our funding model from 2025 onwards.

Finally, the recent financial crisis weakened the charity's balance sheet, and it will take time to rebuild financial resilience to mitigate the risk of financial shocks. A key objective of our future strategy will be to deliver sustainable growth in income whilst containing costs.

Control measures and mitigations:

- Clear budget accountability and responsibility across the senior and operational leadership teams;
- Restrictions on capital expenditure;
- Formal governance and sign-off for any unbudgeted expenditure;
- Weekly monitoring of referrals activity across all core services, including a review of nursing, care, and therapy establishments to ensure we can meet demand in a timely manner;
- Commercial negotiations to secure uplifts in fees to cover general inflation, staff pay increases and increases in complexity of care needs;
- Weekly monitoring of trade debtors and relationship-driven engagement with UK commissioners;



- Active management of international debt position;
- Monthly financial performance review and quarterly reforecast with budget holders with oversight from Finance, Fundraising & General Purposes Committee;
- Monthly monitoring of compliance with financial covenants under the Charity Bank loan agreement.

Workforce management

Recruiting and retaining good quality staff in healthcare, education, and support roles, remains a consistent challenge, with low unemployment, high wage inflation and ongoing systemic problems. This leads to the numbers of new professionals entering the workforce each year being significantly below the demand from employers. Whilst we believe that the processes we have in place to attract and retain sufficient, skilled staff are robust, there remains a risk of reduced operational capacity leading to closed beds if we can't maintain our minimum staffing levels. This can impact the timeliness with which we can admit and support children and young people and creates a risk of loss of income when beds are closed for a period of time.

Control measures and mitigations:

- Regular management meetings to monitor establishment and anticipate workforce shortages in a timely manner;
- Processes in place to manage and minimise attrition including learnings from exit interviews and staff pulse surveys;
- Policies to monitor and manage sickness absence;
- International recruitment strategy;
- Proactive recruitment marketing strategy.

Serious Incidents

We were deeply saddened by the deaths of three children in our care in 2023 and would like to extend our sincere condolences to the children's families and carers. We are determined to understand any lessons we can draw from these sad child deaths. We are working together with all relevant authorities to enhance our delivery of high quality, safe and effective care and learning for the children and young people in our care.

At the time of writing, the coroner's inquest into a child death in September 2023 has concluded and there is a second inquest scheduled for April 2025 into another child death.

We are committed to investigating the circumstances of these and any other patient safety incidents with rigour, compassion, professional curiosity, and genuine openness to learning and improvement. The quality and transparency of the investigations we undertake and strength of our commitment to learning, which may be scrutinised in a coroner's court and in the media, are key to maintaining the confidence of the families we support, our commissioners and regulators and to safeguarding the charity's reputation.

Control measures and mitigations:

- We will ensure that the families of children and young people at the centre of serious patient safety incidents are invited to participate in investigations, are kept informed of progress and have an opportunity to discuss findings and recommendations with a representative of the charity at the investigation's conclusion;
- We have policies and protocols in place to ensure we meet all statutory requirements in the event of a child death;
- We are committed to implementing the new Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF). The key objective of PSIRF is to embed patient safety incident responses within a wider system of improvement, enabling a significant cultural shift towards systematic patient safety management;
- We ensure that we have sound clinical governance processes in place to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of safety actions in delivering improvements in response to learning;
- We have policies and procedures in place to guide the effective commissioning, review and quality assurance of all serious patient safety investigations with oversight from the Clinical Governance and Safeguarding Committee;

Cyber security

The level of cyber threat facing organisations globally is increasing including the threat of politically-motivated and state-sponsored attacks. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's Cyber Security Breaches Survey in 2024 reported that 66% of charities with income exceeding £500,000 had identified a cyber-attack in the past 12 months and 83% of charities reported phishing attacks. There is therefore a risk of a major cyber-attack impacting the charity either directly or indirectly, leading to loss of confidentiality, integrity or availability of critical personal, financial and business data and subsequently major business disruption.

Control measures and mitigations:

- We have a number of information security and data protection policies in place, overseen by our Information Governance Committee;
- This year we have undertaken a "cyber risk deep dive" review, overseen by the Finance, Fundraising & General Purposes Committee and have also commissioned some pro-bono consultancy to benchmark our security posture against the National Cyber Security Centre's Cyber Essentials;
- In recent years we have made a significant investment in strengthening our security measures and cyber defences, proportionate to the level of risk we face. Such measures include anti-virus and malware detection software, multi-factor authentication across our corporate network and systems, regular vulnerability scanning and penetration testing, system back-ups and disaster recovery plans, due diligence on IT suppliers and data processors;
- We have an outsource arrangement in place with a specialist firm for 24/7 security incident and event management services;

- Mandatory, annual information governance training which covers cyber security and social engineering is in place for all staff and trustees. This is supplemented by monthly bite-sized, online training and simulated phishing emails to test awareness and understanding across the workforce;
- We have comprehensive cyber insurance cover in place.

Major incidents and business continuity

The financial crisis forced us to examine the organisation's preparedness for a sudden, forced closure of the charity and identified some gaps in our planning. Following a major power outage across our site in September 2023, significant weaknesses in operational resilience were also identified. Major disruption to our services could impact patient safety if appropriate mitigations plans are not in place.

Control measures and mitigations:

- We have a major incident plan and playbook and business continuity plan in place covering high-level recovery and continuity strategies. We will be reviewing, updating and testing these again in 2024/25;

- In 2023/24 we have made significant investment in strengthening operational resilience, in particular with regards to power where we now have multi-layered back-up systems and regular rhythm of testing;
- More recently we have been formally engaging with external colleagues at NHS England South East and working towards more joined-up planning with all key external partners on major incident response and business continuity. This work will continue throughout 2024/25.

The trustees confirm that in approving the Trustees' Report they are also confirming the strategic report in their capacity as Directors of the charitable company.

On behalf of the board



Steve Flanagan
Chair of Trustees



Environmental, social and governance

The Environmental, Social and Governance section of this annual report outlines the charity’s commitment to sustainable and responsible practices. In a rapidly evolving regulatory landscape, we recognise the critical importance of managing our environmental impact. This section outlines our achievements in energy efficiency over the year 2023/24.

Streamlined energy and carbon report (SECR) Summary

Streamlined energy and carbon report (SECR)

Start date for SECR period: 1 April 2023

End date for SECR period: 31 March 2024

Methodology

All the SECR data requirements for unquoted ‘large’ companies have been met and the energy consumption and emissions are reported below. This includes UK consumption of electricity, gas and transport fuels where the organisation is responsible for the fuels.

The methodology used to calculate emissions is the GHG Reporting Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard (2022). UK Government greenhouse gas emissions conversion factors for 2022 have been applied.

Scope 2 emissions from purchased electricity have been calculated using the location-based approach only.

Third party verification				
No third party data verification of the emissions data has been carried out				
Reported emissions (and carbon offsets)				tonnes CO2e
	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21
Total gross emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3)	395.3	422.3	429.4	396.8
Total direct and indirect emissions (scope 1 and 2)	382.5	413.3	422.1	389.0
Total direct (scope 1) emissions	181.9	193.2	172.7	139.1
Direct emissions (scope 1) stationary combustion	131.0	137.6	149.6	119.8
Direct emissions (scope 1) mobile combustion	50.9	55.6	23.1	19.3
Direct emissions (scope 1) from transport mobile combustion	50.9	55.6	23.1	19.3
Direct emissions (scope 1) from other mobile combustion	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Direct emissions (scope 1) from agricultural sources	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total indirect emissions (scope 2)	200.5	220.1	249.4	250.0
Indirect emissions (scope 2) from electricity	200.5	220.1	249.4	250.0
Total other indirect emissions (scope 3)	12.8	9.0	7.3	7.7
Other indirect (scope 3) emissions from business travel	12.8	9.0	7.3	7.7
Other indirect (scope 3) emissions from business travel where company is responsible for purchasing fuel	12.8	9.0	7.3	7.7
Energy consumption				kWh
Total energy consumption used to calculate emissions	1,954,528	2,071,267	2,034,841	1,831,198
Energy consumption, combustion of gas	655,072	668,162	736,910	651,561
Energy consumption, electricity	1,031,077	1,132,085	1,168,418	1,065,586
Energy consumption, combustion of transport fuel	268,379	271,020	129,513	114,051
Energy consumption, other	0	0	0	0
Intensity ratio				tCO2e/FTE
Intensity ratio	0.027	0.029	0.030	0.6
The reported emissions intensity ratio is the total gross emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3) per Square Meter of Total floor area.				
Intensity ratio based solely on mandatory data	True			

Energy efficiency action report

- 1
- The Trust enjoyed another year without disruption as the pandemic becomes a distant memory. However, the Trust continues to adopt hybrid and flexible working where practicable.
- 2
- The Estates Strategy Programme (ESP) remained in place throughout the year. Lighting replacement continued with a number of units replaced for LED’s and will continue going forward. White goods with better energy ratings replaced failed units in the year. Heat timings were reduced to three buildings in 2023 along with the temperature setting with positive effects. We are also replacing all the gas hobs to induction within houses and onsite accommodation as part of refurbishments and lifecycle replacement.
- 3
- Willow remained closed throughout the year however, consideration is being given to Willow’s use in future years. Part of this assessment will include how the building can operate in the most economical way possible with available funding.
- 4
- Rose Cottage and Purley retail store were closed just prior to this period which has had a positive effect on reducing gas and electricity consumption.
- 5
- New projects and developments undertake a sustainability impact assessment (SIA), by use of an Environmental Impact Assessment tool, which requests contractors and the project manager to consider environmental impacts of their project and whether the organisation can redesign, mitigate or accept this impact.
- 6
- Electricity usage as seen a significant drop over the year of 101,008 kWh. This is attributed to the closure of two buildings and the continued replacement of old light fittings.
- 7
- Gas has seen a reduction of 33,090 kWh’s used compared to 2022/2023 largely attributed to the closure of Rose Cottage closure.
- 8
- Owned fleet has seen a reduction of 19,273 miles in against 2022/ 2023 however Grey fleet has increased by 26,344 in the same period. The increase in grey fleet is due to Retail activities which represents 92 % of the grey fleet miles used in the period of 2023/ 2024 (24,277 miles). This increase has had a negative impact on scope 3 reporting against 2022/ 2023 figures. Planned operational changes in Retail moving into 2024/ 2025 are expected to reduce this impact.

Notes to the energy efficiency action report

- The intensity ratio is reflective of the total floor area of our estate. This has been amended to reflect the closure of Purley.
- As noted scope 3 emissions have increase against last year however both scope 1 & 2 have seen a decrease which has resulted in a overall reduction of energy consumption equivalent to 112.7 tonnes CO2e.
- The data from this report is understood to be accurate at the time of writing.

Structure and management

The Children’s Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated, and registered in the UK and governed in accordance with its Articles of Association.

The charity’s organisational and governance structure is designed to support the effective management and oversight of its three key income generating activities, being:

- Residential neurorehabilitation and disability services at Tadworth Court, including a children’s home for pupils at The Children’s Trust School;
- The Children’s Trust School; and
- Fundraising and Retail.

The Children’s Trust Board of Trustees						
Remuneration Committee	Clinical Governance and Safeguarding Committee	Educational Governance Committee	Finance, Fundraising and General Purposes Committee	Audit and Risk Committee	Investment Committee	Appointments Committee

Senior Leadership Team						
Directorates						
Chief Executive	Medical Director & Consultant in Paediatric Neurodisability	Director of Nursing & Quality	Director of Therapies & Education	Director of Finance	Director of Fundraising & Communications	Director of Resources

Board of Trustees

The Children’s Trust is governed by the Board of Trustees (“the board”) who are also the charity’s directors under company law. The board ordinarily meets six times a year, with the chief executive and other members of the senior leadership team in attendance. Each meeting follows a core set of agenda items, allowing trustees to hear from and challenge management on business performance and outlook and to have oversight of governance, risk, and compliance matters. In addition, a rolling board agenda builds in strategic checkpoints, governance reviews, risk deep dives and operational spotlights at key points throughout the year.

Our trustees may serve in total for a period of nine years with the option to stand for re-election annually thereafter, for a maximum of three further 12-month terms. When recruiting and appointing trustees, we look for individuals who can provide leadership and expertise across our key services and disciplines of nursing, care, education, therapy, and fundraising and who can support and bring effective challenges to the senior leadership team on business strategy, finance, operations, governance, risk, and regulatory compliance. Each trustee is assigned as a lead for a particular business area or professional discipline. Like many charities, we recognise the importance of board diversity and are committed more broadly to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion from ‘board to floor.’ All trustees follow a dedicated induction programme and complete mandatory refresher training across key areas of risk and compliance, such as safeguarding, health and safety, infection prevention control and information governance annually. We set high standards of professional conduct and integrity for our trustees and conflicts of interest are regularly reviewed.

During 2023/24, there were four new trustee appointments, including a new chair of trustees and in May 2024 we welcomed two further trustees to our board (see page 84 for more details). We are also actively exploring opportunities to appoint co-opted, non-voting members to our board committees to further increase the breadth and depth of knowledge and skills at our key governance meetings.

The trustees have the benefit of a qualifying third-party indemnity provision as defined by section 234 Companies Act 2006. The charity purchased and maintained throughout the year directors’ and officers’ liability insurance in respect of itself and its trustees.

Board committees

Given the breadth of sectors we operate across, the board delegates some of its key functions and responsibilities to a number of specialist committees as follows.

Clinical Governance and Safeguarding Committee

This committee provides structured and systematic oversight of the organisation’s clinical governance, risk management and safeguarding policies and procedures. It holds management to account for compliance with key regulations and statutory guidance, including the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014; Care Quality Commission (Registration) Regulations 2009; and The Care Standards Act 2000, and provides assurance to the board over the same. The committee met six times in 2023/24.

Educational Governance Committee

This committee has delegated authority to act as the de facto ‘governing body’ of The Children’s Trust School. The scope and objectives of the committee are informed by UK legislation and statutory guidance from Department for Education. The committee’s role is to hold the school leadership team to account for the educational performance, internal organisation and management and control of the school, including the performance management of staff. The committee met four times in 2023/24.

Finance, Fundraising and General Purposes Committee

The primary purpose of this committee is to support the board in ensuring the charity manages its finances, income, human resources, estates, facilities, and IT responsibly and ethically in pursuit of its charitable purposes, and that its fundraising practices are compliant, efficient, and effective. The committee met five times in 2023/24

Audit and Risk Committee

The primary purpose of the committee is to provide assurance to the board on the adequacy of risk management, internal control and governance arrangements and that public and charitable funds are used efficiently and effectively.

The Audit and Risk Committee is responsible for the appointment of the external auditor, for the ongoing relationship and liaison with the auditor and for monitoring management’s responsiveness to both internal and external audit findings and recommendations. The committee met three times in 2023/24.

Investment Committee

The primary purpose of the committee is to establish and monitor the charity’s investment and reserves policies. The committee did not meet in 2023/24 given the lower level of funds remaining in the portfolio. However, a meeting was held in May 2024, post-year end to review the performance of the portfolio. The frequency of future meetings is under review.

Appointments Committee

The committee’s primary purpose is to review board composition and approve new trustee, honorary officer, and senior leadership team appointments. The committee meets once per annum or when necessary for new appointments.

Remuneration Committee

The primary purpose of the remuneration committee is to determine employment and remuneration policies and to approve the annual pay review. The committee met twice in 2023/24.



Equity, diversity, and inclusion

At The Children's Trust we recognise how important it is to have leadership that reflects the children, young people, and families who we support. We also recognise that staff coming from a range of backgrounds and bringing different experiences will help us to better understand the needs of those we support, and how we can best represent their interests.

We particularly welcome applications from people living with disabilities, individuals from diverse ethnic backgrounds and those from other under-represented groups. We adopt an inclusive approach to training and career development and make workplace adjustments where staff acquire or develop disabilities during their employment with us.

The Children's Trust is committed to achieving equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) across all levels of the organisation. Our EDI strategy says:

We will be an organisation that has a diverse mix of people and perspectives, and we will celebrate diverse lived experience. Diversity is powerful. We want to both increase the diversity within our workforce at all levels and showcase the diversity we have. We know this will both enhance the culture of the organisation and improve the services we provide. To do this we need to strengthen our data set and adapt how we recruit.

Progress to date:

- Work is underway to review our recruitment strategies and processes, including alignment with the NHS International Recruitment Toolkit;
- We are currently developing EDI training for hiring managers, with a view to rolling out late June 2025;
- We have made our application and interview process more accessible by ensuring that candidates have access to alternative application methods where necessary;
- When engaging with agencies as part of our due diligence and compliance we ask them to supply copies of the EDI, Safeguarding, Disciplinary and Complaints policies to ensure they align with our organisational values;
- We ask questions in exit interviews relating to EDI, and analyse and act on feedback;
- We undertake monthly new starter surveys, the responses to which are shared with key stakeholders;
- The monthly "Spark" group has been restarted. This is a self-led affinity group with the aim of driving EDI as an agenda across the organisation;
- We support internal applications for apprenticeships that support the business needs of the organisation, currently the focus is on fundraising, nursing and therapy.

Fundraising practices

As a member of the Fundraising Regulator scheme, The Children's Trust operates in accordance with the Code of Fundraising Practice and is an organisational member of the Chartered Institute of Fundraising. We participate in consultations regarding any changes to the code, as appropriate.

Fundraising programmes are compliant with the Institute and our own Vulnerable Person's Policy, and the key tenets of the policy are incorporated in our training programmes. The charity also operates a whistleblowing policy and a complaints policy and process. It is also registered with the Gambling Commission for the purposes of running a lottery, conducting a supporter raffle and to hold draws at local events.

The charity's Supporter Promise is available on our website and outlines our commitment to work to the high standards. This confirms our commitment to abiding by the Fundraising Preference Service and the Mail and Telephone Preference Services and to comply with all relevant laws and standards.

During 2023/24, we engaged one commercial participator; Sterling, who are the external lottery manager for The Children's Trust lottery. We monitor their compliance and there were no incidents to report in 2023/24.

We worked with our telemarketing partner DTV Optimise who called current and past supporters to ask them to increase their gift value or set up a new regular gift or lottery play to help us hit our vital fundraising targets and meet our increasing needs. Every call they made was recorded, which enabled us to monitor these calls every week – no concerns were raised during 2023/24 (2022/23 = none).

We take a robust approach to handling donor complaints and welcome feedback from supporters and the public. During the financial year 2023/24, 100% of complaints were investigated (2022/23 = 100%).

Fundraising complaints

Complaints in relation to fundraising activity (those in relation to retail operations):

- 2023/24: 10 (retail 9)
- 2022/23: 22 (retail 14)

There were no instances where a complaint was required to be referred to the Fundraising Regulator, Ofcom, the Information Commissioner's Office, or any other regulatory body.



Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are also directors of The Children's Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the charity's Statement of recommended practice (SORP);
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the organisation will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The trustees also confirm that, in the case of each of the persons who were directors at the time of reporting and as far as each trustee was aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware, and that they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

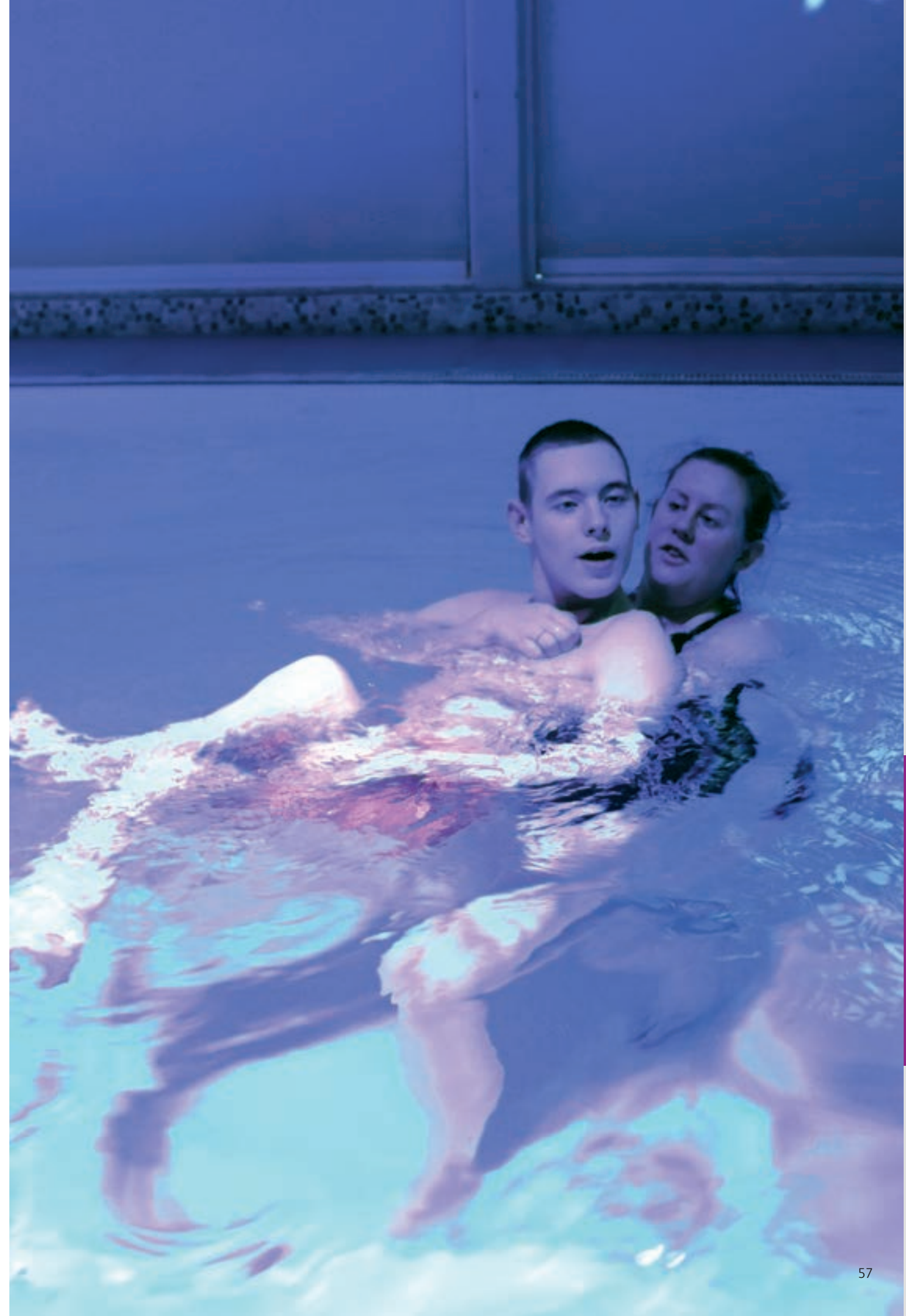
In accordance with Sch 7.1A of Companies Act 2006, the directors point out that they have chosen to disclose information required under Sch 7.11(1) of Companies Act 2006, within Section 172 statement in the Strategic Report (pages 34 – 35).

On behalf of the board



Steve Flanagan
Chair of Trustees

9 October 2024



Independent auditor's report

Independent auditor's report to the members of The Children's Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Children's Trust (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities incorporating the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the Annual Report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report, which includes the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report included within the Trustees Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Directors' Report or the Strategic Report included within the Trustees' Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' responsibilities set out on page 56, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The objectives of our audit are to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding compliance with laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, to perform audit procedures to help identify instances of non-compliance with other laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements, and to respond appropriately to identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations identified during the audit.

In relation to fraud, the objectives of our audit are to identify and assess the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud, to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud through designing and implementing appropriate responses and to respond appropriately to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit.

However, it is the primary responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations and for the prevention and detection of fraud.

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud, the audit engagement team:

- obtained an understanding of the nature of the sector, including the legal and regulatory framework that the charitable company operates in and how the charitable company is complying with the legal and regulatory framework;
- inquired of management, and those charged with governance, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, including any known actual, suspected or alleged instances of fraud;
- discussed matters about non-compliance with laws and regulations and how fraud might occur including assessment of how and where the financial statements may be susceptible to fraud.

As a result of these procedures we consider the most significant laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the financial statements are FRS 102, Charities SORP (FRS 102), Companies Act 2006, Charities Act 2011, the charitable company's governing document, tax legislation and Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016. We performed audit procedures to detect non-compliances which may have a material impact on the financial statements which included reviewing the financial statements including the Trustees' Report, remaining alert to new or unusual transactions which may not be in accordance with the governing documents, inspecting correspondence with local tax authorities and evaluating advice received from internal/external advisors.

The most significant laws and regulations that have an indirect impact on the financial statements are those in relation to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019, the Code of Fundraising Practice, the Children and Families Act 2014, the UK General Data Protection Regulations, the Care Act 2014 and the Care Quality Commission regulations. We performed audit procedures to inquire of management and those charged with governance whether the charitable company is in compliance with these law and regulations and inspected correspondence with regulatory authorities.

The audit engagement team identified the risk of management override of controls as the area where the financial statements were most susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. Audit procedures performed included but were not limited to testing manual journal entries and other adjustments, evaluating the business rationale in relation to significant, unusual transactions and transactions entered into outside the normal course of business, challenging judgments and estimates.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

H Catchpool

Hannah Catchpool
(Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of RSM UK AUDIT LLP, Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants
25 Farringdon Street
London
EC4A 4AB

8th November 2024

Financial statements

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted General Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	2024 Total Funds	2023 Total Funds
Income and endowments from:						
Charitable activities	2	27,396	-	-	27,396	21,023
Donations and legacies	3	2,282	354	-	2,636	3,117
Government grants	3a	-	334	-	334	328
Other trading activities						
– Events		293	-	-	293	328
– Charity shops		2,410	-	-	2,410	2,336
– Lottery		112	-	-	112	125
	4	2,815	-	-	2,815	2,789
Investment income	5	80	-	-	80	101
Other income	6	352	-	-	352	586
Total income		32,925	688	-	33,613	27,944
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds						
– Costs of donations and legacies		1,320	-	-	1,320	1,630
– Events		340	-	-	340	522
– Charity shops		2,129	-	-	2,129	2,354
– Lottery		71	-	-	71	52
Total cost of raising funds	8	3,860	-	-	3,860	4,558
Charitable activities	7	27,470	957	-	28,427	30,341
Loss on the disposal of fixed assets		128	-	-	128	-
Impairment		783	-	-	783	172
Total expenditure	8	32,241	957	-	33,198	35,071
Net unrealised gain/(loss) on investments	15	139	-	10	149	(459)
Net income/(expenditure)		823	(269)	10	564	(7,586)
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
(loss)/gain on revaluation on fixed assets	14	(2,518)	-	-	(2,518)	3,854
Net movement in funds		(1,695)	(269)	10	(1,954)	(3,732)
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		17,732	2,082	56	19,870	23,602
Total funds carried forward		16,037	1,813	66	17,916	19,870

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2023 £'000
Fixed assets					
Intangible fixed assets	14a	418		1,925	
Tangible fixed assets	14	13,237		15,504	
Tadworth Court	14	2,967		3,756	
			16,622		21,185
Investments	15		2,109		1,924
			18,731		23,109
Current assets					
Stocks		92		278	
Debtors	16	4,245		1,883	
Cash at bank and in hand		2,216		1,865	
		6,553		4,026	
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year					
Creditors	17	(3,618)		(2,890)	
		(3,618)		(2,890)	
Net current assets			2,935		1,136
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year					
Charity Bank Loan			(3,750)		(4,375)
Net assets			17,916		19,870
The funds of the Charity					
Unrestricted funds:					
– General funds			1,172		(1,695)
– Revaluation reserve			1,308		3,842
– Designated			13,557		15,585
			16,037		17,732
Restricted funds			55		324
Fixed Asset Restricted Fund			1,758		1,758
Endowment funds			66		56
Total funds	21		17,916		19,870

The financial statements on pages 62 to 82 were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 9 October 2024.

Company Number: 1757875

Steve Flanagan

Chair of Trustees

Fiona Sheridan

Chair of Fundraising, Finance and General Purposes

Cash flow statement

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period before gains/(losses) on revaluation		564	(7,586)
Cash flows from operating activities			
– Investment income	5	(53)	(101)
– Depreciation	14	1,130	1,702
– Amortisation	14	654	290
– Impairment	14	783	172
– (Gain)/loss in investment in market value	15	(132)	476
– Decrease in stocks		185	30
– (Increase)/decrease in debtors		(2,362)	1,590
– Increase/(decrease) in creditors		353	(4,106)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities		1,122	(7,533)
Cash flows from investing activities			
– Investment income received		53	101
– Investment income reinvested	15	(53)	(101)
– Capital expenditure	14	(649)	(601)
– Sale of investments	15	-	4,700
Net cash used in/provided by investing activities		(649)	4,099
Cash flows from financing activities			
– Inflow from Loan		-	4,750
– Loan converted to donation		(250)	
Net cash flow from financing activities		(250)	4,750
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		223	1,316
– Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,865	549
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		2,088	1,865
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents			
– Cash at bank and in hand		2,216	1,865
Total cash and cash equivalents		2,216	1,865

i. Reconciliation of net debt	At start of year	Cash Flows	Cash Flows	At end of year
Cash	1,865	223	-	2,088
Overdraft facility repayable on demand	-	-	-	-
Net cash and cash equivalents	1,865	223	-	2,088
Loans falling due within one year	(375)	-	(375)	(750)
Loans falling due after more than one year	(4,375)	250	375	(3,750)
Net debt	(4,750)	250	-	(4,500)

The accompanying accounting policies and notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

Notes to the financial statements – for the year ended 31 March 2024

1. Accounting policies

The Children's Trust is a Charitable Company limited by guarantee. The address of the Trust's principal place of business is given on the last page of this report. The nature of the Charity's operations is set out in the Trustees' Report.

1.1 Basis of accounting

These financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis, under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of investments being measured at fair value through income and expenditure within the Statement of Financial Activities unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note. In Dec 22 Savills carried out an independent revaluation of the Land, Tadworth Court and Freehold & Land asset categories, with the accounting policy moving to a revaluation from the historical cost model.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). The Charitable Company is a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102. The Charity also prepared its financial statements in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (The FRS 102 Charities SORP) and the Companies Act 2006.

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

The Charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity.

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below.

1.2 Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

In the year 2022/23 the Charity entered into a recovery plan based on delivering fundamental changes to the service delivery model. This was supported by a £5m loan facility over 25 years provided by Charity Bank and Big Society Capital, and the generous support of philanthropic donors.

During the year 2023/24 the initial delivery of the recovery plan has been successful, the negotiations with commissioning bodies and growth in delivery has seen charitable income rising by £6.4m. The restructuring of the organisational structure has seen FTE reduce by 49 and staff costs reducing by £2.0m whilst maintaining high quality service as evidenced by consistently positive reviews by the regulatory bodies. This has turned a £(7.1m) operating deficit to a £0.5m operating surplus.

The net result of 2023/24 was a deficit of £(2.0m) which is driven by the revaluation of the Tadworth estate, not by the underlying business model. In 2022/23 the accounting policy for valuing land and buildings was moved to the revaluation model to ensure that these assets are shown at a more accurate market value in the accounts. As a consequence of

this the annual results will be impacted by external moves to the property market, this can be seen in 2023/24 as the overall Tadworth estate has seen a reduction in value of £2.5m, mainly due to the impact of increasing interest rates through the year.

For 2024/25 the Charity has a new Chair of Trustees and Chief Executive who are undertaking a review of the longer-term strategy, so for the coming year the recovery plan is still being implemented. For this the budget for the year 2024/25 was prudently constructed and the Charity is expecting to generate a small surplus.

Consideration has been made of the challenging economic environment, including from a funding and cost base perspective, however, modeling the expected results for 2025/26 shows a continued financial performance building on the successful implementation of the recovery plan and the ongoing financial support, the Board is satisfied that the charity is a going concern and therefore prepared the accounts on a going concern basis.

1.3 Income

All income is accounted for in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Collections made by third parties on behalf of the charity are accounted for when received.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

For legacy income, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executors that a distribution will be made. Receipt of a legacy is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution.

Funds received for capital projects are accounted for as restricted income. The treatment of the assets provided depends upon the restrictions imposed by the grant and if the fixed asset acquisition discharges the restriction then the asset will be held in unrestricted funds. A corresponding transfer of the associated restricted income will be made to the unrestricted fund.

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item.

On receipt, donated services/goods are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services of equivalent economic benefit on the open market.

Notes to the financial statements – for the year ended 31 March 2024

1.4 Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been listed under headings that aggregate all the costs related to that activity. Liabilities are recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Costs of raising funds include the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries.

Support costs, including governance costs, are those costs that, whilst necessary to deliver an activity, do not themselves produce or constitute the output of the charitable activity. Where support costs cannot be directly attributed they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of the resources. The basis of allocation has been explained in note 9 to the accounts.

Any irrecoverable VAT is included as part of the cost to which it relates.

1.5 Fund accounting

General unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the charitable objectives of the charity.

Designated funds are set aside by the Trustees out of unrestricted general funds for specific future purposes.

Restricted funds are funds subject to specific restrictions imposed by donors or by the purpose of the appeal.

Endowment funds are funds where the assets must be held by the charity, principally in the form of investments.

Income from endowments is included in income, either restricted or unrestricted, in accordance with the terms of the endowment.

Any capital gains or losses arising on the investments are allocated to the related fund. Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in note 21.

1.6 Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are capitalised and stated at cost or valuation less depreciation.

During 22-23 the accounting policy for Tadworth Court, Freehold Land and Freehold and leasehold buildings valuation moved from a cost to a revaluation model.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets by equal annual instalments over their expected useful lives as follows:

Freehold land	Not depreciated
Tadworth Court	Not depreciated
Freehold and leasehold property	4 %
Plant and office furniture and equipment	20 %
Residential houses furniture and equipment	20 %
Computer equipment	33 %
Motor vehicles	25 %
Motor vehicles – vans	14 %
Motor vehicles – minibuses	13 %

At the end of each reporting period, the residual values and useful lives of assets are reviewed and adjusted if necessary. In addition, if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value may not be recoverable then the carrying values of tangible fixed assets are reviewed for impairment.

Assets in the course of construction are carried at cost less any identified impairment loss. Depreciation commences when the properties are ready for their intended use.

Intangible fixed assets

Intangible assets (costing more than £1,000) are initially recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses. Assets in the course of construction are carried at cost less any identified impairment loss. Amortisation is calculated to write off the cost of intangible fixed assets by equal annual instalments over the expected useful lives as follows:

Computer software	33 %
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1.7 Tadworth Court

This balance represents the freehold of Tadworth Court, it houses our pharmacy, catering, meeting and administrative facilities. The asset is stated at its market value and is revalued on a regular basis. The Trustees ensure that the building is carefully maintained and is fit for purpose. Any significant expenditure which is required to preserve or prevent deterioration is capitalised when it is incurred.

1.8 Investment

Quoted investments are included at market value (bid/selling price). Investments in subsidiaries are stated at cost. Realised and unrealised gains and losses are shown in the appropriate section of the SOFA.

1.9 Stock

Stock is stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value; stocks are not normally held for resale. Shop stocks are held for

resale whilst medical stock refers to items that are purchased in advance of use and are carried forward in stock at the year end, prior to use the following year.

1.10 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Income is accrued in relation to fees due but not invoiced as at year end. Other Debtors includes funds due from Gift Aid, the lottery and legacies where no invoice will be raised. Bad Debt Provision is provided for by applying a percentage based on the Finance Director’s assessment of the likelihood of recovery.

1.11 Pension costs

Some clinical and teaching employees are covered by the provisions of the NHS Pension Scheme or Teachers’ Pension Scheme (TPS). Other staff are able to join the charity’s defined contribution pension scheme. The employer contributions are included within resources expended and represent the amount of contribution payable to the schemes in respect of the accounting period.

The TPS is an unfunded scheme. Contributions to the TPS are calculated so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees’ working lives with the Charity in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary on the basis of valuations using a projected unit method. The TPS is a multiemployer scheme but sufficient information is not available to use defined benefit accounting and therefore it is accounted for as a defined contribution scheme, with the amount charged to the statement of comprehensive income being the contributions payable in the year. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments.

1.12 Operating lease payments

Total payments under operating leases are charged to the SOFA on a straight line basis over the lease term.

1.13 Consolidation

The Children’s Trust Trading Company Limited did not trade during the year. This company has not been consolidated as in the opinion of the directors it is not material to the group’s results. Thus the information within these financial statements is presented as an individual undertaking.

1.14 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

In preparing the financial statements it is necessary to make certain judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts recognised in the financial statements. The valuation of Tadworth Court as at 30 March 2024 was obtained from an external surveyor.

1.15 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand and deposits held at call with banks.

1.16 Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably.

Creditors are recognised at their settlement amount. Accruals are made for late invoices and any others we are aware of incurring that relate to the period. Other creditor balances include March payroll pension liabilities due in the following month and Children’s Funds (their pocket money). Deferred income is mainly Set Up fees – the amounts we hold for each child for specific equipment, etc. plus fundraising income for events in the following financial year. Social Security and other taxation is the March payroll deductions and employer contribution due to be paid in the following month. Loans includes any donor loan repayment instalments due in the next 12 months.

1.17 Financial instruments

The charity has applied the provisions of Section 11 ‘Basic Financial Instruments’ of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments. Financial instruments are recognised in the company’s balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

With the exceptions of prepayments, deferred income, social security and other taxation liabilities, all other debtor and creditor balances are considered to be basic financial instruments under FRS 102. See notes 16 and 17 for the debtor and creditor notes.

The long-term loan received from Charity Bank and Big Society Capital bearing a market rate of interest which meets the qualifying criteria set out in section 11 of FRS 102. It is recognised at its transaction value, being the principal amount advanced.

1.18 Employee benefits

The cost of short-term benefits, such as accrued holiday are recognised as a liability and an expense.

1.19 Taxation

The Company is a registered charity and as such its income and gains falling within Sections 471 to 489 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 are exempt from corporation tax to the extent that they are applied to its charitable objectives.

Notes to the financial statements – for the year ended 31 March 2024

2. Income from Charitable activities

	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Endowment £'000	2024 Total £'000
Care and rehabilitation services	14,013	-	-	14,013
The Children's Trust School	13,276	-	-	13,276
Community services	107	-	-	107
Total charitable activities	27,396	-	-	27,396
	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Endowment £'000	2023 Total £'000
Care and rehabilitation services	10,180	-	-	10,180
The Children's Trust School	10,780	-	-	10,780
Community services	63	-	-	63
Total charitable activities	21,023	-	-	21,023

3. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	2024 Total £'000	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	2023 Total £'000
Donations and covenants	2,032	354	2,386	2,462	231	2,693
Legacies	250	-	250	424	-	424
Total donations and legacies	2,282	354	2,636	2,886	231	3,117

3a. Income from Government grants

	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	2024 Total £'000	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	2023 Total £'000
NHS England Palliative Care	-	314	314	-	307	307
DFE Capital Grant	-	20	20	-	21	21
Total Government grants	-	334	334	-	328	328

Charity shop gift aid is included in donations.

There are no unfulfilled conditions which would require the repayments of any grants.

4. Other trading activities

	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	2024 Total £'000	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	2023 Total £'000
Events	293	-	293	328	-	328
Charity shops	2,410	-	2,410	2,336	-	2,336
Lottery	112	-	112	125	-	125
Total other trading activities	2,815	-	2,815	2,789	-	2,789

5. Investment income

	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	2024 Total £'000	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	2023 Total £'000
Dividends and interest: UK	39	-	39	76	3	79
Dividends and interest: foreign	14	-	14	22	-	22
Bank interest	27	-	27	-	-	-
Total investment income	80	-	80	98	3	101

6. Other income

	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	2024 Total £'000	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	2023 Total £'000
Lettings - both staff and parents	126	-	126	126	-	126
Catering	113	-	113	106	-	106
Nursery	72	-	72	186	-	186
Other income	41	-	41	168	-	168
Total other income	352	-	352	586	-	586

7. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Endowment £'000	2024 Total £'000
Charitable activities	27,470	957	-	28,427
Total expenditure	27,470	957	-	28,427
	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Endowment £'000	2023 Total £'000
Charitable activities	28,673	1,668	-	30,341
Total expenditure	28,673	1,668	-	30,341

Notes to the financial statements – for the year ended 31 March 2024

8. Expenditure on:

2024				
	Direct costs £'000	Support costs £'000 (Note 9)	Governance costs £'000 (Note 9a)	2024 Total £'000
Charitable activities				
Care and rehabilitation services	9,121	4,558	160	13,839
The Children's Trust School	9,184	4,588	161	13,933
Community services	432	215	8	655
	18,737	9,361	329	28,427
Raising funds				
Costs of generating donations and legacies	870	435	15	1,320
Events	224	112	4	340
Charity shops	1,404	700	25	2,129
Lottery	47	23	1	71
	2,545	1,270	45	3,860
Total expenditure	21,282	10,631	374	32,287

In 22/23 £443k was spent on one off recovery plan costs (23/24 Nil).

2023				
	Direct costs £'000	Support costs £'000	Governance costs £'000	2023 Total £'000
Charitable activities				
Care and rehabilitation services	9,163	5,071	276	14,510
The Children's Trust School	9,516	5,269	225	15,010
Community services	513	290	18	821
	19,192	10,630	519	30,341
Raising funds				
Costs of generating donations and legacies	1,033	574	23	1,630
Events	327	182	13	522
Charity shops	1,536	777	41	2,354
Lottery	25	14	13	52
	2,921	1,547	90	4,558
Total expenditure	22,113	12,177	609	34,899

Expenditure on raising funds is unrestricted in both years, charitable activities includes £957k restricted fund expenditure (22/23 £1,668k).

9. Allocation of support costs

2024						
	Care and rehabilitation services £'000	School £'000	Community £'000	Fundraising £'000	Retail £'000	2024 Total £'000
Communications	148	149	7	18	23	345
Facilities	1,673	1,686	79	209	257	3,904
Human resources	600	604	28	75	92	1,399
Finance	470	472	22	59	72	1,095
IT	581	585	28	73	89	1,356
Chief Executive's Office	151	152	7	19	23	352
Risk (insurance)	170	171	8	21	26	396
Depreciation: Other	765	769	36	96	118	1,784
Total support costs allocated (note 8)	4,558	4,588	215	570	700	10,631

2023						
	Care and rehabilitation services £'000	School £'000	Community £'000	Fundraising £'000	Retail £'000	2023 Total £'000
Marketing	115	119	6	17	19	276
Communications	158	164	9	24	26	381
Facilities	1,313	1,364	74	200	220	3,171
Human resources	798	828	45	121	134	1,926
Finance	492	511	28	74	82	1,187
IT	665	691	37	101	112	1,606
Chief Executive's Office	107	111	6	16	18	258
Strategy Team	175	182	10	26	29	422
Risk (insurance)	168	175	9	25	28	405
Depreciation: Tadworth	428	447	29	68	-	972
Depreciation: Other	420	436	24	63	70	1,013
Provisions	232	241	13	35	39	560
Total support costs allocated (note 8)	5,071	5,269	290	770	777	12,177

Notes to the financial statements – for the year ended 31 March 2024

Basis of allocation

Support costs are recharged relative to the proportions of direct costs.

Risk (insurance) costs relate to insurance. All other Risk and Governance costs are shown in Note 9a.

9a. Allocation of governance costs

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Risk and governance	270	465
External audit	102	144
Total	372	609

10. Net income/(expenditure) for the year

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
This is stated after charging:		
Depreciation	1,784	1,987
Impairment	783	172
Payments under operating leases:		
Retail properties	334	375
Equipment	70	54
Auditor remuneration (exclusive of VAT):		
Audit of the financial statements 21-22	-	78
Audit of the financial statements 22-23	30	66
Audit of the financial statements 23-24	72	-

11. Gift Aid

For the year ended 31 March 2024, the charity received Gift Aid payments of £421k (2023: £371k).

12. Staff remuneration and pensions

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Salaries	19,377	21,018
Social security costs	1,993	2,099
Pension costs	1,306	1,401
Temporary staff costs	630	463
Agency staff costs	150	475
Total	23,456	25,456

The year end head count was 623 staff (2023: 651 staff). This figure includes permanent, fixed term and active bank workers and the average monthly number of full-time employees during the year were as follows:

12a. Average monthly number of full-time employees during the year

	2024 FTEs	2023 FTEs
Charitable activities	340	345
Fundraising	20	25
Shops	26	27
Support	92	129
Governance	3	4
Total	481	530

Key management personnel include the Trustees, Chief Executive, Interim Chief Executive and the senior leadership team. The total employee benefits of the charity's key management personnel were £976k (2023: £1,076k). (Trustees = £nil). This comprises gross pay, employer pension contributions and Employer's National Insurance.

The total number of employees whose emoluments for the year (not including national insurance or pension contributions) exceeded £60,000 was as follows:

	clinical	executive	2024 total	clinical	executive	2023 total
£60,001-£70,000	1	12	13	-	8	8
£70,001-£80,000	3	3	6	5	3	8
£80,001-£90,000	4	2	6	1	1	2
£90,001-£100,000	1	1	2	1	1	2
£120,001 - £130,000	-	-	-	-	1	1
£130,001 - £140,000	-	1	1	-	-	-
£180,001 - £190,000	-	-	-	1	-	1
£210,001 - £220,000	1	-	1	-	-	-
Total	10	19	29	8	14	22

The Chief Executive's emoluments fall into the £130,001-£140,000 band (22/23 The Interim Chief Executive's emoluments fell into the £130,001 - £140,000 category on a full year basis).

During the year the charity made payments to no staff (2023: 8 staff) in respect of redundancy and termination (2023: £90k) and 23 staff totalling 189k (2023: 21 staff totalling 54k) as part of an organisational restructure. £9k in relation to redundancy payments was included in creditors at the balance sheet date (2023: £216k).

Notes to the financial statements – for the year ended 31 March 2024

Pensions

The charity has contributed to both defined benefit and defined contribution schemes during the year. Defined benefit schemes are accounted for as if they were defined contribution schemes if required by FRS 102 Section 28 (“Employee Benefits”). The total cost to the charity for the year ended 31 March in respect of pension contributions, which have been allocated between resources expended categories in proportion to staff costs and charged to the Statement of Financial Activities as appropriate, is as follows:

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
TCT Group Pension Plan	777	861	480	517
Teachers’ Pension Scheme	122	129	10	11
NHS Pension Scheme	405	411	70	74
	1,304	1,401	560	602

The Children’s Trust Group Pension Plan

Aviva pension is a group personal pension, the workplace pension scheme is a Smart Scheme. Smart Scheme is a method where you are automatically entered into a salary exchange arrangement or if you earn below a certain amount you are in a non salary exchange basis, in this case contributions will be deducted net of basic rate tax.

The scheme is also used to comply with auto-enrolment requirements, which came into effect from 1 November 2013.

Teachers’ Pension Scheme

The Teachers’ Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers’ Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. The TPS is an unfunded scheme and members contribute on a ‘pay as you go’ basis – these contributions, along with those made by employers, are credited to Access.

Valuation of the Teachers’ Pension Scheme

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to ensure scheme costs are recognised and managed appropriately and the review specifies the level of future contributions.

Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2020. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 27 October 2023, with the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, applying a notional investment return based on 1.7 % above the rate of CPI. The key elements of the valuation outcome are:

- employer contribution rates set at 28.68 % of pensionable pay (including a 0.08 % administration levy). This is an increase of 5 % in employer contributions and the cost control result is such that no change in member benefits is needed.

- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £262,000 million and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222,200 million, giving a notional past service deficit of £39,800 million.

The result of this valuation will be implemented from 1 April 2024. The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2028.

The pension costs paid to TPS in the year amounted to £122k (2023: £129k).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers’ Pensions website.

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The charity is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the plan. Accordingly, the charity has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 and has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme.

National Health Service Pension Scheme

The NHS operates an unfunded defined benefit scheme for the nursing sector, in which the charity participates. The charity is granted permission by the Secretary of State to be able to contribute to the cost of the scheme as a “Directed Employer” (an employer that can continue to have non NHS employed staff as members of the NHS pension scheme).

The cost represents the contributions advised by the NHS Pensions Agency. The charity is not liable for past service costs beyond these contributions. Employer contributions remained at 20.6 % in 2024 and in 2023.

13. Trustee emoluments and reimbursed expenses

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Trustees’ expenses	-	-

Trustees are encouraged to claim expenses to avoid this being a barrier to new Trustees. If Trustees don’t wish to claim expenses, then they can make a donation of a similar amount. Gift Aid can then be claimed on such a donation.

The charity purchased insurance costing £9,968 (2023: £6,652) included in support costs to protect it from loss arising from neglect or default of the Trustees and to indemnify the Trustees against the consequences of neglect or default on their part.

14. Fixed assets

	Tadworth Court £'000	Freehold land £'000	Freehold & leasehold buildings £'000	Plant, furniture & equipment £'000	Motor vehicles £'000	Assets under construction £'000	Total £'000
Cost							
At 1 April 2023	5,136	2,950	25,562	5,959	433	1,420	41,460
Revaluation	(789)	(80)	(1,649)	-	-	-	(2,518)
Additions	-	-	9	194	37	380	620
Disposals	-	-	-	(112)	(69)	-	(181)
Transfers	-	-	329	87	-	(416)	-
At 31 March 2024	4,347	2,870	24,251	6,128	401	1,384	39,381
Depreciation and Impairment							
At 1 April 2023	1,380	-	14,436	4,742	378	1,264	22,200
Impairment	-	-	4	-	-	-	4
Charge for the year	-	-	577	511	42	-	1,130
Disposals	-	-	-	(88)	(69)	-	(157)
At 31 March 2024	1,380	-	15,017	5,165	351	1,264	23,177
Net book value at 31 March 2024	2,967	2,870	9,234	963	50	120	16,204
Net book value at 31 March 2023	3,756	2,950	11,126	1,217	55	156	19,260

Tadworth Court is a Grade 1 listed mansion building. It houses our pharmacy, catering, meeting and administrative facilities.

Parts of the building and grounds are open to the public on several days in the year.

Department of Health grants in respect of the Grade 1 listed building are secured by way of a legal charge over the freehold property. (See Note 21 in respect of restricted funds).

During 2023/24 an independent professional revaluation of the land and buildings at Tadworth Court was carried out by Savills on the basis of an open market valuation as at 31st March 2024. The valuations were as follows Land £2,870,800 Tadworth Court and Freehold Land & Buildings £9,234,000. Under the historical cost model the carry amounts would have been Land £753,000 Tadworth Court £2,116,000 and Freehold Land & Buildings £10,055,000.

Notes to the financial statements – for the year ended 31 March 2024

14a. Intangible fixed assets

		Assets	
	Computer software £'000	Assets under construction £'000	Total £'000
Cost			
At 1 April 2023	3,168	6	3,174
Additions	29	-	29
Disposals	(107)		(107)
	3,090	6	3,096
Amortisation and impairment			
At 1 April 2023	1,249	-	1,249
Charge for year	654	-	654
Impairment	773	6	779
Disposals	(4)	-	(4)
	2,672	6	2,678
Net book value at 31 March 2024	418	-	418
Net book value at 31 March 2023	1,919	6	1,925

An impairment review on intangible assets was carried out during 23/24. It was found that the carrying amount for the ECR (Electronic Clinical Record) system was less than its fair value and was impaired accordingly.

15. Investments

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Market value at 1 April 2023	1,924	6,999
Cash transferred	-	(4,700)
Increase / (Decrease) in market value	149	(459)
Dividends and Interest	53	101
Fees/charges	(17)	(17)
Market value at 31 March 2024	2,109	1,924
Historical cost as at 31 March	1,899	1,814

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Fixed investments	247	313
Listed equities	1,525	1,260
Property	64	113
Alternatives	161	187
Cash	112	51
Total	2,109	1,924

£75k received originally from the Victoria Convalescent Fund is currently invested through Investec. The market value at 31 March 2024 was £67k (2023: £57k).

At 31 March 2024 the charity held 100% of the issued share capital of The Children's Trust Trading Company Limited, an unquoted investment, the cost of which is £2 (2023: £2). The registered office of the subsidiary is Tadworth Court, Tadworth, Surrey, KT20 5RU. The Childrens Trust Trading Company has been dormant as of April 2022.

16. Debtors

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Trade debtors	3,398	1,187
Other debtors	-	404
Prepayments and accrued income	847	292
Total	4,245	1,883

17a. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Trade creditors	1,202	424
Accruals	769	1,076
Other creditors	213	294
Deferred income	228	242
Social security and other taxation	456	479
Loan	750	375
Total	3,618	2,890

Analysis of deferred income

Income is deferred where it relates to future events or services for which monies had been received prior to the year end. During the year £242k was released to income and £228k was deferred.

17b. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Loan	3,750	4,375
Amount payable:		
in more than one but not more than two years	256	625
in more than 2 years but less than five years	187	320
in five years or more	3,307	3,430
Total	3,750	4,375

During 22/23 The Childrens Trust entered into an agreement with Charity Bank (£4m) and Big Society Capital (£1m) to have access to a loan facility totalling £5m. Under the terms of the loan agreement the loan facility should be fully drawn down within 1 year of the signature date. As at the date of signing these accounts £3.5m has been drawn down and the facility to draw down the remaining balance has been extended for another year.

In 23/24 £250k of the Major Donor 1a £1m loan was converted to a donation leaving a £750k loan balance. At time of writing in 24/25 a further £500k of the remaining balance has been converted to a donation.

Notes to the financial statements – for the year ended 31 March 2024

Lender	Amount £'000	Drawn down £'000	Interest rate	Agreement date	Drawdown date	Term
Charity Bank	4,000	2,800	base plus 3.25 %	17/02/2023	27/02/2023	25 years, first 3 years interest only
Big Society Capital	1,000	700	base plus 3.25 %	17/02/2023	27/02/2023	25 years, first 3 years interest only
Major Donor 1 a	250	250	interest free	05/09/2022	07/09/2022	September 2025
Major Donor 1 b	500	500	interest free	24/11/2022	25/11/2022	Converted to donation 2024/25
Nednil Limited	100	100	interest free	30/08/2022	30/08/2022	September 2024
Ashill Land Limited	150	150	interest free	12/12/2022	12/12/2022	December 2024
	6,000	4,500				

Post year-end, an agreement was signed with major donor 1b to convert £500k of one of the loans into a donation.

18. Financial and capital commitments and contingent liabilities

At 31 March 2024 the Trust had total commitments under non cancellable leases/agreements as follows:

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Leasehold buildings - up to 1 year	254	167
Leasehold buildings - between 1 and 5 years	546	346
Leasehold buildings - more than 5 years	-	-
Other - up to 1 year	70	51
Other - between 1 and 5 years	81	131
Total	951	695

At 31 March 2024, capital commitments authorised and contracted for (net of payments to date on account) amounted to £53k (2023: £98k).

19. Government grants

The following government grants were received:

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
NHS England Children's Palliative Care grant	314	307
DFE Capital Grant	20	21
Total	334	328

There are no unfulfilled conditions which would require the repayments of any grants.

20. Related party transactions

In the year there were £3k of donations from six Trustees (2023: nil). There were no other related party transactions.

21. Capital and reserves

As at 31 March 2024:

	At 1 April 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains/ (losses) £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2024 £'000
a. Movement on funds						
Unrestricted general funds:						
Undesignated funds:						
– Undesignated	(1,695)	32,925	(32,113)	11	2,044	1,172
	(1,695)	32,925	(32,113)	11	2,044	1,172
Designated funds:						
– Designated fund - tangible fixed assets reserve	19,427	-	-	(2,518)	(2,044)	14,865
	19,427	-	-	(2,518)	(2,044)	14,865
Total unrestricted	17,732	32,925	(32,113)	(2,507)	-	16,037
Restricted funds:						
– Restricted fund - project funds	324	354	(623)	-	-	55
– Restricted fund - grants	-	334	(334)	-	-	-
	324	688	(957)	-	-	55
Fixed Asset Restricted fund						
– Restricted fund - Department of Health grant	1,758	-	-	-	-	1,758
	1,758	-	-	-	-	1,758
Endowment funds:						
– Victoria Convalescent Fund	56	-	-	10	-	66
	56	-	-	10	-	66
Total funds	19,870	33,613	(33,070)	(2,497)	-	17,916

Transfers reflect the movements on the reserves split between Fixed Assets and other assets.

Notes to the financial statements – for the year ended 31 March 2024

Previous year (31 March 2023):

	At 1 April 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains/(losses) £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2023 £'000
Unrestricted general funds:						
Undesignated funds:						
– Undesignated	2,582	27,382	(33,403)	(444)	2,188	(1,695)
	2,582	27,382	(33,403)	(444)	2,188	(1,695)
Designated funds:						
– Tangible fixed assets reserve	17,093	-	-	3,854	(1,520)	19,427
	17,093	-	-	3,854	(1,520)	19,427
Total unrestricted	19,675	27,382	(33,403)	3,410	668	17,732
Restricted funds:						
– Development and operational	1,370	538	(1,584)	-	-	324
– Grants	21	21	(42)	-	-	-
	1,391	559	(1,626)	-	-	324
Fixed Asset Restricted fund						
– Department of Health	1,800	-	(42)	-	-	1,758
Endowment funds:						
– Gardiner Fund	668	-	-	-	(668)	-
– Victoria Convalescent Fund	68	3	-	(15)	-	56
	736	3	-	(15)	(668)	56
Total funds	23,602	27,944	(35,071)	3,395	-	19,870

Transfers include £668k Gardiner fund moving to unrestricted and the remaining balance reducing the value of the fixed assets at the end of the year.

Designated funds

The fixed asset reserve, but not including the Department of Health (DoH) restricted fund represents the charity's investment in fixed assets.

Restricted funds

These are set out subsequently.

Endowment funds

The Gardiner Fund is an endowed special trust, established as an appeal fund in 1983. During the year the Gardiner fund was transferred from endowment with Charity Commission approval.

The Victoria Convalescent Fund is a permanent endowment and represents a gift of capital to the charity, the income from which is restricted and is used to fund care for children for whom no statutory funding is available.

As at 31 March 2024:

b. Analysis of restricted funds	At 31 March 2023 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfers £'000	At 31 March 2024 £'000
Project Funds					
Community	169	17	183	-	3
Maple House non-staff budget relief	2	-	2	-	-
Mulberry / Camelia House non-staff budget relief	25	-	8	-	17
Chestnut House non-staff budget relief	3	-	3	-	-
Hawthorn House non-staff budget relief	13	-	4	-	9
General Equipment for children and young people's	38	6	44	-	-
Play Services	69	45	114	-	-
Ophthalmology equipment	4	-	-	-	4
Rose Garden	1	-	1	-	-
Music Services	-	156	134	-	22
Hoists & Beds	-	37	37	-	-
Classrooms	-	-	-	-	-
Transport	-	93	93	-	-
Sub total	324	354	623	-	55
Grants					
NHS England Palliative Care	-	314	314	-	-
DFE Capital Grant	-	20	20	-	-
Sub total	-	334	334	-	-
Fixed Asset restricted					
Department of Health	1,758	-	-	-	1,758
Total	2,082	688	957	-	1,813

Project Funds represent restricted donations received for the development of the existing site as well as to provide funding for equipment and outings for the children, depending on the bequest granted by the donor.

Houses represents funds that are restricted donations for each individual house within the organisation and are used for outings for children, leisure activities and other items, depending on the bequest granted by the donor. Play and Music Service is restricted funds dedicated to the delivery of the specific service.

The Department of Health made grants in 1995 to the charity in relation to the Grade 1 listed property known as Tadworth Court. These grants, totalling £2.85m, are only repayable under certain circumstances which, in the opinion of the Trustees, are unlikely to arise. Of the total grants, £750k was applied to the transfer of the freehold of the site and £2.1m was applied to repairs to the building. The grants are secured by a legal charge over the freehold property.

Notes to the financial statements – for the year ended 31 March 2024

c. Analysis of net assets between funds

2024				
	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Endowment £'000	March 2024 £'000
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:				
Fixed assets	14,864	1,758	-	16,622
Investments	2,042	-	67	2,109
Current assets	6,498	55	-	6,553
Current liabilities	(3,618)	-	-	(3,618)
Long term liabilities	(3,750)	-	-	(3,750)
Total funds	16,036	1,813	67	17,916

2023				
	Unrestricted £'000	Restricted £'000	Endowment £'000	March 2022 £'000
Previous year (31 March 2023):				
Fixed assets	19,427	1,758	-	21,185
Investments	1,868	-	56	1,924
Current assets	3,705	321	-	4,026
Current liabilities	(2,765)	-	-	(2,765)
Long term liabilities	(4,500)	-	-	(4,500)
Total funds	17,735	2,079	56	19,870

22. Financial instruments

	2024 £'000	2023 £'000
Financial instruments measured at fair value are as follows:		
Financial assets		
– Investec Investment	2,109	1,924

23. Post Balance Sheet Events

On 2 May 2024 one of the donors who gave the charity an interest free loan (itemised in note 17b as Major Donor 1b) signalled his intention to convert the first 4 loan repayments (due 1 June, 1 September, 1 December 2024 and 1 March 2025 totalling £500k) into a donation. The Charity accepted this generous offer in May 2024.

Further information

Reference and administrative details

Trustees

The following individuals were directors of the company during the reporting period:

- Duncan Ingram**
Chair of Trustees
Remuneration Committee (Chair)
Appointments Committee (Chair)
Resigned 28 September 2023
- Steve Flanagan**
Chair of Trustees
Appointed 14 July 2023 and as Chair 28 September 2023
- Fiona Sheridan**
Vice Chair of Trustees
Finance, Fundraising and General Purposes (Chair)
Audit and Risk Committee
Investment and Remuneration Committees
- Timothy Davies**
Finance, Fundraising and General Purposes Committee
Audit and Risk Committee
Investment Committee
Educational Governance Committee
- Denise Matthams**
Clinical Governance and Safeguarding Committee (Chair)
Educational Governance Remuneration Committee
- Toby Mullins**
Educational Governance Committee (Chair from 29 July 2023)
- Nigel Scott**
Finance, Fundraising and General Purposes Committee
Audit and Risk Committee (Chair)
Investment Committee (Chair)

- Sam Thomson**
Finance, Fundraising and General Purposes Committee
Resigned 28 September 2023
- Anne Walker**
Clinical Governance and Safeguarding Committee
Finance, Fundraising and General Purposes Committee
Audit and Risk Committee
Resigned 14 July 2023
- Marian Ridley**
Clinical Governance and Safeguarding Committee
Appointed 16 June 2023
- Rory Litherland**
Finance, Fundraising and General Purposes Committee
Remuneration Committee
Appointed 14 July 2023
- Christine Brookes**
Whistleblowing Champion and EDI Steering Group
Appointed 14 July 2023
Resigned 29th July 2024

Trustee appointments post year-end

- Helen Hewitt**
Appointed 31 May 2024
- Helen Farmer**
Appointed 31 May 2024

Senior Leadership Team

The following individuals were members of the Senior Leadership Team during the reporting period:

- Mike Thiedke**
Chief Executive
Appointed 13 November 2023
- Michael Maddick**
Director of Resources
- Sian Thomas**
Director of Nursing and Quality
Appointed 18 September 2023
Resigned 5 July 2024
- Claire Champion**
Interim Director of Nursing and Quality
Resigned 29 September 2023
- Liz George**
Director of Income Generation and Communications
Resigned 5 April 2023
- Shelia Lutchanah and Katie Roberts**
Interim Director of Fundraising and Communications
Resigned 31 January 2024 and 5 January 2024
- Michelle Martin**
Director of Fundraising and Communications
Appointed 2 January 2024
- Elizabeth Sell**
Interim Director of Finance
Resigned 4 January 2024
- Steve Harris**
Finance Director
Appointed 2 January 2024
- Dr Vijay Palanivel**
Medical Director and Senior Consultant in Paediatric Neurodisability
- Nicola Smith**
Director of Strategy and Transformation
Resigned 30 April 2023
- Melanie Burrough**
Director of Therapies and Education
- Olivia Rowntree**
Company Secretary, Head of Audit, Risk & Governance
Appointed 14 May 2024
- Bethan Eaton-Haskins**
Interim Director of Nursing and Quality
Appointed 30 July 2024

SLT appointments post year-end

Company Secretary

Olivia Rowntree

Registered Office

The Children’s Trust, Tadworth Court
Tadworth, Surrey, KT20 5RU

Advisors

Co-opted committee members

In August 2024 we appointed the following individuals as co-opted committee members (independent advisers to the Trustee Board’s sub-committees).

Helen Cook | Ashley Head | Bidisha Lahoti

Bankers

Lloyds Bank, 4th Floor, 125 London, Wall London, EC2Y 5AS
Charity Bank Limited, 82 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1BE

Auditor

RSM UK Audit LLP, 25 Farringdon, Street London, EC4A 4AB

Solicitors

Mills & Reeve, Botanic House, 100 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB2 1PH
RPC LLP, Bridgewater House, Counterslip, Bristol BS1 6BX

Investment Managers

Investec Wealth & Investment, 30 Gresham Street, London EC2V 7QP



The Children's Trust
Tadworth Court
Tadworth
Surrey
KT20 5RU

01737 365000
enquiries@thechildrenstrust.org.uk
thechildrenstrust.org.uk

Charity registration number: 288018
Company registration number: 1757875

Registered with



The Children's Trust is registered with the Fundraising Regulator, inspected and rated an 'Good Provider' by Ofsted Care (for residential houses).
The Children's Trust School is rated a 'Outstanding Provider' by Ofsted Education. TCT_2000 10/24.