

Little Acorns Playgroup
Trustees Annual Report

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2023.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Company No.

Charity No. NI101552

Principal Office

20A Derrymore Road
Gawleys Gate
Craigavon
Co. Armagh
BT67 0BW

Registered Office

20A Derrymore Road
Gawleys Gate
Craigavon
Co. Armagh
BT67 0BW

Directors and Trustees

The Directors of the charitable company are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law.
The following Directors and Trustees served during the year:

L. Devereux
A. Doone
D. Doone
S. Larkin
C. McCrory

Company Secretary

P. Haire

Key Management Personnel

Chairperson	Loretta Deverux
Secretary	Phillip Haire
Treasurer	Aoibheann Doone

Accountants

Byrne McCann & Co. Ltd.
67 Edward Street
Lurgan
Co. Armagh
BT66 6DD

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Bankers

First Trust Bank
4 Market Street
Lurgan
Co. Armagh
BT66 6AQ

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The purpose of the charity is to provide a safe and stimulating environment to learn through play for all children (the beneficiaries) in our rural area. We provide activities both planned and unplanned based on our ethos of 'Learning through Play' set out in the curricular guidance for preschool education. The charity has a close relationship with the local primary school enabling us to ease the transition from preschool to primary school with minimum impact for the child.

Little Acorns was established to provide quality Early Years education & personal development for preschool children aged between 2 years 10 months and 4 years 11 months for the Gawley's Gate and neighbouring areas, in an inclusive & diverse environment. We strive to ensure that the individual needs and abilities of the child are recognised and developed. We offer a safe and stimulating environment for all children, regardless of race, religion or gender.

The trustees confirm that they have had due regard to guidance produced by the Charity Commission's benefit requirement statutory guidance.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Little Acorns Playgroup and Afterschool have continued to face tough times within the sector. The setting has not returned to normal since the Covid-19 pandemic, with parents not availing of our once very popular breakfast club and afterschool. This was previously a huge revenue generator for the setting and the drop in numbers is currently being looked at, with new ideas emerging on how to boost numbers. In September 2023 we began to host various "afterschool clubs" which mirrored clubs which ran in the neighbouring school. This saw a huge increase in numbers and increased money being brought into the setting. The mobile that the playgroup currently resides in is old and requires almost continuous maintenance to keep it safe for purpose. The costs of this are very high and eat away at any fund raising gains we have achieved. With the development of the new school neighbouring Little Acorns, it is not the right time to consider a new building - but this decision may need revisited sooner by the new committee that will sit in 24/25. The setting also invested heavily in new furniture both inside and outside to further develop the setting and keep it in line with best practice. These developments are there for the benefit of all the children within the setting especially those who may have additional needs. One last thing to note is that there has also been a steady decline in voluntary parent donations, which is likely due to the increased cost of living crisis. There has been a tremendous amount of work put in from September 2023 with a large turnover of Committee members, bringing in new and exciting ideas and talents to the setting and I am hopeful that the accounts will reflect better in the next report.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

This has been a particularly disappointing year for the charity with the widespread negative effects of Covid-19 and the Cost of Living Crisis continuing to erode potential sources of funds.

Little Acorns operates a reserves policy to ensure sufficient funds are ring fenced to cover any winding up costs and has sufficient reserves in place to cover the requirements of this policy at this point.

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The results do suggest a certain amount of uncertainty at year end but an analysis of figures in 23/24 to date appear to show that the results in 2024 will be improved.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The type of governing document is by constitution and is constituted by unincorporated association.

Trustees are nominated and voted onto committee, by those attending. Those who are nominated need to be seconded to become a committee member. Office bearers must have held a vice role where possible before taking an office bearing role.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The above report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime as set out in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

Signed on behalf of the board

A. Doone
Trustee
25 June 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Doone', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.