

# Autism Support Kilkeel

Northern Ireland · Charity number 102894

## Details

|            |                                                                              |
|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Known as   | ASK                                                                          |
| Status     | Received                                                                     |
| Registered | 2015-12-18                                                                   |
| Register   | <a href="#">View on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland register</a> |

## Contact

|         |                                                                                            |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Address | 204 Carrigenagh Road<br>Kilkeel<br>Newry<br>County Down<br>BT34 4qa<br>BT34 4QA            |
| Phone   | 07729075830                                                                                |
| Email   | <a href="mailto:autismsupportkilkeel@hotmail.co.uk">autismsupportkilkeel@hotmail.co.uk</a> |

## Activities

**Purposes:** a) Provide support and life enhancing services for people living with or suspected of having an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their families/carers in the Mourne area. This involves assisting them to achieve their maximum potential for community involvement, social inclusion and the opportunity to access employment and other facilities enjoyed by other non-Autistic members of the community. b) Raise awareness of autism and to educate the general public, relevant professionals and organisations in the private, voluntary and statutory sectors.

**What the charity does:** The advancement of education, The advancement of health or the saving of lives, The relief of those in need by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage

**How the charity works:** Advice/advocacy/information, Counselling/support, Cross-border/cross-community, Disability, Education/training, Sport/recreation, Volunteer development, Youth development

**Who the charity helps:** Adult training, Carers, Children (5-13 year olds), Community safety/crime prevention, Ethnic minorities, General public, Learning disabilities, Men, Mental health, Parents, Physical disabilities, Preschool (0-5 year olds), Sensory disabilities, Sexual orientation, Voluntary and community sector, Women, Youth (14-25 year olds)

## Finances

| Period end | Income  | Expenditure | Assets | Employees |
|------------|---------|-------------|--------|-----------|
| 2024-12-31 | £54,897 | £48,278     | £0     | 0         |

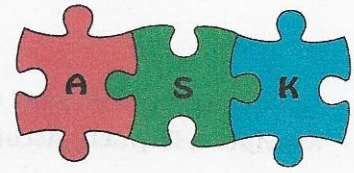
## Trustees

| Name                      | Role | Appointed |
|---------------------------|------|-----------|
| Ashleigh Campbell         |      |           |
| Mrs Aisling Smith         |      |           |
| Mrs Bernarde Shiels       |      |           |
| Mrs Ciara Franklin-Cullen |      |           |
| Mrs Clare Davis           |      |           |
| Mrs Elizabeth McKeever    |      |           |
| Mrs Joy Stevenson         |      |           |
| Mrs Megan Mcilveen        |      |           |
| Mrs Melissa Reavey        |      |           |
| Mrs Olive Donnan          |      |           |
| Mrs Susanne Mccusker      |      |           |
| Ms Alison Evans           |      |           |

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# Accounts

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**AUTISM SUPPORT  
KILKEEL**

## Statement of Accounts

For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

## Accounts for the year ended December 31<sup>st</sup> 2024

### Receipts & Payment Account

|                                    | Unrestricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Restricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Total<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Receipts</b>                    |                                       |                                     |                                |
| Donations                          | 10,340                                |                                     | 10,340                         |
| Grants                             | 10,420                                |                                     | 10,420                         |
| Fundraising Appeals                | 3,715                                 |                                     | 3,715                          |
| Parents Contribution to Activities | 8,454                                 |                                     | 8,454                          |
| Parents Contribution to Therapies  | 10,458                                |                                     | 10,458                         |
| Carlingford Twilight Cruise Refund | 498                                   |                                     | 498                            |
| HMRC VAT                           | 5,236                                 |                                     | 5,236                          |
| HMRC Gift Aid                      | 5,476                                 |                                     | 5,476                          |
| <b>Total Receipts</b>              | <b>54,597</b>                         |                                     | <b>54,597</b>                  |

|                                    |               |               |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Payments</b>                    |               |               |
| Admin & General                    | 2,327         | 2,327         |
| Donations                          | 1,149         | 1,149         |
| Cost of Charitable Activities      | 42,519        | 42,519        |
| Heat & Lighting                    | 897           | 897           |
| Bank Fees                          | 281           | 281           |
| Public Liability Insurance         | 157           | 157           |
| Public Events -Relaxed Screenings  | 600           | 600           |
| Infinity Corporate Discount Scheme | 348           | 348           |
| <b>Sub Total</b>                   | <b>48,278</b> | <b>48,278</b> |

### Assets and Investment Purchases

|                                 |               |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Sub Total</b>                | -             | -             |
| <b>Total Payments</b>           | <b>48,278</b> | <b>48,278</b> |
| <b>Cash funds this year end</b> | <b>58,148</b> | <b>58,148</b> |

### Statement of Assets and Liabilities

|                                     | Unrestricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Restricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Endowment<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Cash Assets</b>                  |                                       |                                     |                                    |
| First Trust Current Account         | 58,148                                |                                     | -                                  |
| <b>Total cash funds</b>             | <b>58,148</b>                         |                                     | -                                  |
| <b>Other Assets</b>                 |                                       |                                     |                                    |
| The Listening Program               | 920                                   |                                     |                                    |
| Sensory Equipment (Estimated value) | 1,000                                 |                                     |                                    |
| Weevenet Tracking Devices           | 623                                   |                                     |                                    |

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

## Notes to the Accounts

### Trustees' Expenses

No expenses were paid to any of the Trustees during the year except to reimburse them for purchases made on behalf of the group.

### Trustees' Indemnity Insurance

No charitable funds have been used to purchase insurance to indemnify the Trustees against the consequences of any neglect or default on their part.

### Accounting Policies

In accordance with Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011, the charity has prepared receipts and payments accounts and a statement of assets and liabilities, as gross income for the financial year ended December 2024 did not exceed £250,000.

Bank charges are recorded separately in the accounts and are not included under the Admin & General category.

All Income, including grants and investment income is recorded when received.

All Expenditure is recorded when paid.

### Independent Scrutiny

In the year ended December 2024 gross income did exceed £25,000 and therefore, in accordance with the sections 144 & 145 of the Charities Act 2011 an audit by an independent examination is required and a scrutiny requirement is imposed by the Group governing document.

### Cheques not cleared at bank as of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024

As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024, there were no cheques issued by the group which had not cleared the bank.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on October 21<sup>st</sup> 2025 and signed on their behalf.



Olive Donnan  
Chairperson

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

## Reference and Administrative Details

### Charity Name

Autism Support Kilkeel which is also known as ASK about Autism.

### Charity Number

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland, NIC102894

### Principal Address

204 Carrigenagh Road  
Kilkeel  
Co Down  
BT34 4QA

### Charity trustees as of December 31<sup>st</sup> 2024

|                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mrs Olive Donnan       | Chairperson             |
| Mrs Irene Mc Hugh      | Secretary               |
| Mrs Shauna McEntee     | Treasurer               |
| Mrs Clare Murney Davis | Deputy Chair            |
| Mrs Lorraine Fegan     | Public Relations Office |
| Mrs Elizabeth McKeever | Training Officer        |
| Pauline Kearney        | Events Co Ordinator     |
| Mary Campbell          |                         |
| Tara Collins           |                         |
| Sarah O'Hare           | Therapies Co Ordinator  |

### Advisors

|         |                                                                             |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Banking | First Trust Bank<br>30 Greencastle Street<br>Kilkeel<br>Co Down<br>BT34 4BH |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

### **Governing Document and Constitution**

The group is an unincorporated association and is governed by a constitution adopted January 2015 and last amended October 2024.

The group is run entirely by its members'. As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024, the group had a membership of 124.

### **Trustee Selection and Management**

The group is managed by an Executive Committee which consists of all the appointed trustees.

The Executive Committee meets typically once per month; in the year to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024 12 formal meeting took place. Attendance at these meeting, shown as meeting attended/meetings eligible to attend was as follows: O Donnan (12/12), C Davis (10/12), Irene Mc Hugh (12/12), S O'Hare (5/12), P Kearney (11/12), S McEntee (11/12), E McKeever (6/12), T Collins (4/12), M Campbell (6/12) and L Fegan (2/12).

At each meeting the Treasurer presents the latest accounts and these are reviewed against budgets and forecasts; spending is discussed and approved. Officers may authorise some spending, between meetings, within set limits but must ensure such spending is reported at the next meeting.

The meetings also offer a forum to review recent activities within our group and to plan forthcoming events. In addition, officers report on their areas of responsibility. *Further ad hoc meetings are called if required*, for example to plan and manage special events or projects.

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts are approved by the trustees and then presented to the members at the Annual General Meeting.

### **Objectives and Activities**

#### **Charitable Objects**

The object of the group as set out in our Constitution is to provide support for people living with or suspected of having an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families/carers in the Mourne area. This involves assisting them to achieve their maximum potential for community involvement, social inclusion and the opportunity to access employment and other facilities enjoyed by other non-Autistic members of the community.

The group aims to raise awareness of autism and to educate the general public, relevant professionals and organisations in the private, voluntary and statutory sectors.

#### **Public Benefit Statement**

The trustees of Autism Support Kilkeel confirm that they have complied with their duty under section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and that the public benefit requirement has informed the activities of the group in the year to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2024

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

In evaluating public benefit, the trustees' note that membership of the group is open to all who live with autism or suspected of have autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families/carers.

### Summary of main Activities

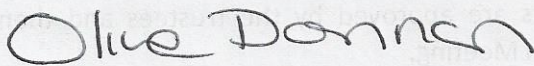
The core activities of the group are:

- Providing support to parents, siblings and children with Autism
- Offering therapies which have a positive impact on children with Autism
- Developing and maintaining the ASK Centre
- Offering support and advice to the public on matters related to Autism

Autism Support Kilkeel seeks to identify the most-needed services that reach the largest number of families and to demonstrate how these can be provided to a measurable standard of excellence. The charity aims to establish a model for the provision of services that can be delivered either as a direct activity of the charity or through the action of other organisations.

Our philosophy is to offer access to all regardless of personal circumstances, race, gender, ability, or faith. The group operates mainly in the Newry and Mourne Area however visitors from further afield are always welcome. The monthly meetings are open to all.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on October 21<sup>st</sup> 2025 and signed on their behalf

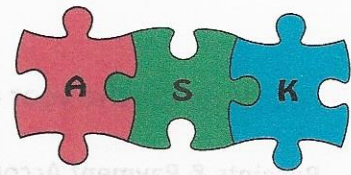


Olive Donnan  
Chairperson

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# Accounts

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## AUTISM SUPPORT KILKEEL

# Statement of Accounts

For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

## Accounts for the year ended December 31<sup>st</sup> 2023

### Receipts & Payment Account

|                                    | Unrestricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Restricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Total<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Receipts</b>                    |                                       |                                     |                                |
| Donations                          | 7,097                                 | -                                   | 7,097                          |
| Grants                             | 24,620                                |                                     | 24,620                         |
| Fundraising Appeals                | 5,611                                 | -                                   | 5,611                          |
| Parents Contribution to Activities | 9,877                                 | -                                   | 9,877                          |
| HMRC VAT                           | 3,610                                 |                                     | 3,610                          |
| HMRC Gift Aid                      | 3,818                                 |                                     | 3,818                          |
| <b>Total Receipts</b>              | <b>54,633</b>                         |                                     | <b>54,633</b>                  |

### Payments

|                               |               |   |               |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---|---------------|
| Admin & General               | 558           | - | 558           |
| Donations                     | 225           |   | 225           |
| Cost of Charitable Activities | 34,336        | - | 34,336        |
| Heat & Lighting               | 765           |   | 765           |
| Bank Fee                      | 302           | - | 302           |
| Equipment Purchased           | 687           |   | 687           |
| Public Events                 | 960           |   | 960           |
| Premises Expenses             | 60            |   | 60            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>              | <b>37,893</b> |   | <b>37,893</b> |

### Assets and Investment Purchases

|                       |               |   |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|---|---------------|
|                       | -             | - | -             |
| <b>Sub Total</b>      | <b>-</b>      |   | <b>-</b>      |
| <b>Total Payments</b> | <b>37,893</b> |   | <b>37,893</b> |

|                                 |               |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Cash funds this year end</b> | <b>51,830</b> | <b>51,830</b> |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|

### Statement of Assets and Liabilities

|                             | Unrestricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Restricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Endowment<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Cash Assets</b>          |                                       |                                     |                                    |
| First Trust Current Account | 51,830                                |                                     | -                                  |
| <b>Total cash funds</b>     | <b>51,830</b>                         |                                     | <b>-</b>                           |

### Other Assets

|                                     |       |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|-------|--|--|
| The Listening Program               | 920   |  |  |
| Sensory Equipment (Estimated value) | 1,000 |  |  |
| Weevenet Tracking Devices           | 623   |  |  |

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

## Notes to the Accounts

### Trustees' Expenses

No expenses were paid to any of the Trustees during the year except to reimburse them for purchases made on behalf of the group.

### Trustees' Indemnity Insurance

No charitable funds have been used to purchase insurance to indemnify the Trustees against the consequences of any neglect or default on their part.

### Accounting Policies

Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 permits a charity to prepare receipts and payments accounts and a statement of assets and liabilities where gross income in the financial year does not exceed £250,000, therefore receipts and payments accounts and a statement of assets and liabilities have been prepared and presented for the year ended December 2016.

Bank charges are included in the Admin & General Category

All Income, including grants and investment income is recorded when received.

All Expenditure is recorded when paid.

### Independent Scrutiny

In the year ended December 2023 gross income did exceed £25,000 and therefore, in accordance with the sections 144 & 145 of the Charities Act 2011 an audit by an independent examination is required and a scrutiny requirement is imposed by the Group governing document.

### Cheques not cleared at bank as of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023

As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023, there were no cheques issued by the group which had not cleared the bank.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2023 and signed on their behalf.



Olive Donnan  
Chairperson

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

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Co Down  
BT34 4QA

### Charity trustees as of December 31<sup>st</sup> 2023

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mrs Olive Donnan        | Chairperson             |
| Mrs Irene McHugh        | Secretary               |
| Mrs Shauna McEntee      | Treasurer               |
| Mrs Ashling Fitzmaurice | Deputy Chair            |
| Mrs Pam Hazley          | Public Relations Office |
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| Mrs Sarah O'Hare        | Therapies Co Ordinator  |

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The Executive Committee meets typically once per month; in the year to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023 10 formal meeting took place. Attendance at these meeting, shown as meeting attended/meetings eligible to attend was as follows: M Shiels (2/10), B Cousins (2/10), O Donnan (10/10), Irene Mc Hugh (9/10) P Hazley (5/10), Sarah O'Hare (5/10), P Kearney (8/10), C Spiers (1/10), Shauna McEntee (8/10) and A Fitzmaurice (2/10).

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The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts are approved by the trustees and then presented to the members at the Annual General Meeting.

### **Objectives and Activities**

#### **Charitable Objects**

The object of the group as set out in our Constitution is to provide support for people living with or suspected of having an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families/carers in the Newry & Mourne area. This involves assisting them to achieve their maximum potential for community involvement, social inclusion and the opportunity to access employment and other facilities enjoyed by other non-Autistic members of the community.

The group aims to raise awareness of autism and to educate the general public, relevant professionals and organisations in the private, voluntary and statutory sectors.

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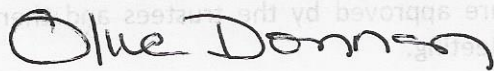
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Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2023 and signed on their behalf



Olive Donnan  
Chairperson

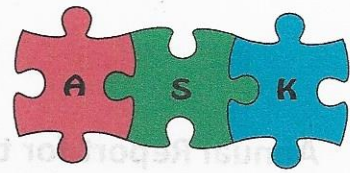
**Autism Support Kilkeel**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102894

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# Annual report

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**AUTISM SUPPORT  
KILKEEL**

# Annual Report

**For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

**Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894**

## **Annual Report for the year ended December 31<sup>st</sup> 2023**

Report of the trustees for the year ending 31 December 2023. The trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 December 2023. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: 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 (FRS 102) (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019).

### **Governance and internal control**

The trustees are responsible for selecting and recruiting suitable trustees to hold office at the Annual General Meeting. The number of trustees shall be not less than three but is not subject to any maximum.

A retiring trustee is eligible for re-election, and there is no limit on the number of times a trustee may be re-elected.

The minimum age for a trustee is 18 years, but there is no upper age limit imposed on trustees. The Trustees from among their number appoint a chairperson.

New trustees are inducted through a process of briefings by the Chairman and other members of the committee and they are provided with key information relating to the charity's governance and operation.

The board of trustees meets approximately 12 times. None of the trustees received remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity this financial year.

During this challenging Year, I would like to thank the trustees for their dedicated efforts in Governing the charity.

### **Monthly Meetings**

The monthly coffee mornings and evening meetings organized by our charity offer a valuable opportunity for parents to connect, share experiences, and access resources that can help them navigate parenthood. These gatherings not only foster a sense of belonging but also serve as a platform for disseminating important information and strategies for coping with the demands of raising children.

By maintaining regular contact, our charity ensures that parents have a consistent and reliable source of support, which can be incredibly beneficial for their well-being and the well-being of their families. It's through these consistent and caring initiatives that we as a charity can make a significant impact on individual lives and the well-being of the community as a whole.

## THERAPIES

### Swimming Buddies NI

The initiative to offer 1:1 water safety sessions with Swimming Buddies NI presented a valuable opportunity for our children aged 4 to 15 to learn essential swimming and safety skills. Swimming Buddies NI, known for their tailored approach, matches each child with a coach to ensure personalized attention, catering to the unique needs of each swimmer.

This program is particularly beneficial as it not only teaches children how to swim but also instils vital water safety knowledge and survival techniques, which are crucial skills for life. With experienced coaches who specialize in supporting neurodivergent children and those with additional support needs, the sessions are designed to be inclusive and adaptable.

The serene environment with dimmed lights provides a sensory-friendly atmosphere, conducive to learning. This week-long program, which ran from the 3rd to the 7th of July, was an excellent way for children to gain confidence in the water, learn important life-saving skills, and enjoy the camaraderie of swimming with peers.

***"Absolutely amazing week thank you so much to everyone involved 🧡 Callum had a brilliant time and learnt so much from Pauline who was fabulous with him and taught him lots of little tips and tricks and has given him so much more confidence and skill in his swimming 🏊🌊☀️"*** Dani

### Equine Therapy

Equine therapy programs have shown remarkable benefits in various developmental areas for children and adolescents. The sessions we conducted, starting on the 4th of May and the 13th of July, each spanning six weeks, have provided 30 children, aged between 4 to 17, with a unique opportunity to grow and learn.

Through interaction with horses, participants can develop emotional regulation, social skills, and a sense of responsibility. It's inspiring to hear about the success of such programs, which not only bring joy and learning to our children but also foster a deep connection between humans and animals. The positive impact of these experiences often resonates well beyond the therapy sessions, contributing to the participants' overall well-being and development.

***"Thank you so much to ASK for facilitating this. Joe has just loved his sessions. The difference in his sitting and core strength from week 1 and now is just brilliant. His understanding too - when I tell him we are going horse riding he goes to the horse ornament in my mum's hall and touches it 😊🥰"*** Elizabeth

### Music Therapy

The music therapy sessions conducted by Shane Harvey over the summer have been a resounding success! Spanning across July and August, these sessions included both one-on-one and group interactions, catering to a diverse age group of children from 4 to 15 years old.

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Charity No: NIC102894

The structure of the program, with its careful balance between individual attention and group dynamics, allowed for a tailored approach that met the unique needs of each participant. The overwhelmingly positive feedback is a testament to the power of music as a therapeutic tool, fostering not only emotional and social development but also bringing joy and a sense of community to all involved

***"Ezra was a little nervous at the beginning, not knowing what to expect. He really enjoyed the group session, fun & lots of big smiles 😊 Shane has a lovely gentle way with the children! Look forward to the next few weeks 🙌🎸🎵 Thanks for this opportunity! ❤️"***  
Joy

***"Shane was totally amazing the interaction and attention he was able to get from Aron brought tears to my eyes this is a very talented gifted passionate fella whom we are very lucky to get to ASK 💙🙌"*** Pauline

### **Physiotherapy**

Due to the lack of services, especially Occupational Therapy, and the success of our Pilot scheme last year we conducted six weeks of physiotherapy with Ashleigh Campbell from the 17<sup>th</sup> January to the 21<sup>st</sup> February. These sessions were primarily for the children within our group who struggle to master higher level motor skills such as ball skills, skipping, and riding a bike, as these skills impact the child's overall participation in peer and community activities, which subsequently affect their overall development.

Six of our children took part in one-to-one, one hour physiotherapy sessions, ranging in age from 4 years to 6 years. A parent or Guardian was required to participate in sessions and a home exercise program (3x15 mins per week at home) was provided to maximise the benefits of Physiotherapy intervention in between the sessions This therapy was heavily subsidised by the group.

### **Positive Psychology Youth Program**

The positive psychology youth program, facilitated by Ashling Kearney from Coach Approach, is a commendable initiative that ran for six weeks, focusing on the well-being and development of our young siblings. Such programs are pivotal in fostering resilience, self-efficacy, and a growth mindset, which are essential for the holistic development of our siblings. The full funding of this program underscores the value we placed on investing in the mental and emotional health of our young siblings, ensuring they have the resources and support to thrive in various aspects of life

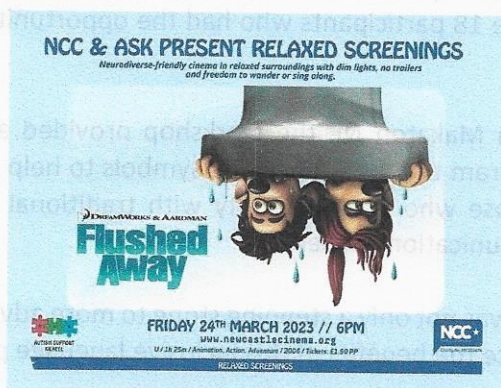
The sessions ran for six weeks, starting on the 7<sup>th</sup> March. Ashling from Coach Approach facilitated the sessions and focused on topics such as Stress & Anxiety, Self Esteem & self-Image, and the impact of social media. Our positive psychology youth program was made up of 6 teenage girls and 2 boys, ranging in age from 13-18.

## NCC Relaxed Screenings

Our relaxed screenings are a wonderful initiative that provide an inclusive cinema experience for young people with additional needs. By working in collaboration with Newcastle Community Cinema (NCC) we can offer these screenings at a reduced ticket price of £1.50, making it more accessible for families and caregivers to enjoy films in a comfortable environment.

Our relaxed screenings are typically held in a sensory-friendly setting, where the lights are dimmed, the volume is lowered, and audience members are free to move around, making noise, or take breaks if needed. This thoughtful approach not only respects the sensory preferences of individuals but also fosters a sense of community and belonging, as attendees can share the experience without the stress of traditional cinema etiquette.

Our first screening of 2023 was of the movie "Flushed Away" on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March at 6pm. We had 33 families in attendance.



At special times of the years i.e., Easter and Christmas we like to turn the screenings into grander events and hold red carpet screenings, with the Easter Bunny giving out Easter Eggs and Father Christmas giving out selection Boxes.

## FITNESS FOR ALL

In November we implemented a pilot "Fitness for All" scheme specifically tailored for teenagers with additional needs within our group. This program had a significant positive impact on their physical and mental well-being.

Over the course of six weeks, participants experienced a variety of benefits, including improved motor skills, enhanced social interaction, and increased self-esteem. We gathered feedback from the participants and their caregivers to refine the program and to ensure it met the unique needs of each individual.

The success of our pilot scheme would serve as a model for similar programs, potentially leading to wider implementation and benefiting a larger community.

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Charity No: NIC102894

## PITTER PATTER CHITTER CHATTER WALKS

Initiating our 'Pitter Patter Chitter Walks' in May was a wonderful way to encourage members to engage in light exercise while fostering social connections. These low-impact walks were designed to be accessible to all members, providing an opportunity for everyone to benefit from gentle physical activity.

The walks also offered a platform for members to converse and connect with one another, promoting a sense of community and well-being. Such initiatives are important as they contribute to both the physical and social health of participants, creating a supportive and active environment.

## Workshops

The Makaton taster workshop held on Thursday, 23rd March, was an engaging and informative session for the 18 participants who had the opportunity to delve into the world of Makaton.

Facilitated by Carrie from Makaton NI, the workshop provided a general introduction to Makaton, a language program that uses signs and symbols to help people communicate. It's particularly useful for those who have difficulty with traditional spoken language due to disabilities or other communication barriers.

This introductory session was not only a stepping stone to more advanced Makaton levels but also a chance to experience the benefits of this inclusive language program firsthand.



Participants learnt basic signs and symbols that could be used in everyday communication, receive their certificates, helpful handouts, and gained insights into further Makaton training opportunities.

We facilitated a free Zoom workshop on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April with Clare Canale of Red Robin Therapy giving participants an excellent opportunity to learn more about sensory processing basics and how they can influence our children's daily experiences. Whether you are a parent, educator, or healthcare professional, gaining insight into sensory processing can be incredibly beneficial.

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Charity No: NIC102894

This workshop covered the basics of sensory processing, the different types of sensory issues, and practical strategies to help our support our children with sensory processing challenges. Engaging in such educational sessions can enhance one's ability to effectively support those with sensory processing needs in various settings.

## **Group Events**

During the year we held various events for our children with additional needs, siblings, parents and grandparents.

On Friday the 6<sup>th</sup> January we kicked off the year with a FREE Bounce Party in Infinity Adventure Park. The evening was a great success, we had 30 parents and 37 children in attendance.

Our evening in Infinity Adventure Park was so successful we ran it again in February with over 40 children in attendance. The event was fully funded.

On Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup> February and Thursday the 2<sup>nd</sup> March we organised a mindfulness and spa day event for our mums, facilitated by Ashling Kearney from Coach Approach in the Slieve Donard Hotel, combining the calming practice of mindfulness with the luxurious experience of a spa morning.

Participants learnt how to integrate mindfulness into their daily lives, leading to improved well-being and stress management. It's was a much-needed opportunity for our Mums to pause, engage in self-reflection, and enjoy a much-deserved break from their daily routines

When there is a child with special needs in the family, siblings often get less attention. To assist the parents in our group to spend special time with their siblings we held our Siblings Only event at Formula Karting in Newry on the 7<sup>th</sup> April. In total we had 12 parents and 19 siblings race the night away.

We ran numerous events over the Easter Holiday comprising of a Trampoline Party in Infinity Adventure Park on the 11<sup>th</sup> April, a relaxed screening of "Peter Rabbit 2" at Newcastle Community Centre on the 13<sup>th</sup> April.

Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> April brought a fun packed day at the Gamekeepers Lodge Equestrian & Activity Centre. 17 of our siblings enjoyed a morning of paint balling and 30 of our children with additional needs enjoyed a trek through the Mourne Mountains.

During the summer months we considered the needs of our teenager with additional needs, especially those who find large crowds overwhelming. On Monday the 29<sup>th</sup> of May and Tuesday, the 1<sup>st</sup> August we organised a small group of our teenagers to attend the Craigavon ski and Golf Centre to participate in snow tubing, providing them with a quieter and less crowded experience. It was essential to us to choose a venue that understood our requirements and offered a controlled environment.

Our night of Burger & Bowls on the 10<sup>th</sup> June at Sheepsbridge Bowling, offered our dad's an excellent opportunity to meet up with other people and socialize, which had positive impact on their physical well-being and playing in teams provided them with an opportunity to mix with other dads in similar situations, socialize, and helped to reduce stress and depression.

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**Charity No: NIC102894**

This event was fully funded and transport was also provided.

***"That's so much for organising. Micky has a great time and was lovely to meet the other dad's 😊". Emma***

***"It was a fantastic night thanks so much for organising!!! But you're going to have to get me better bowlers for the next one it was too easy!!! "Michael***

The "Ladies Who Lunch" event on the 24th of June was a wonderful opportunity to provide a well-deserved treat for the mums in our group. Such events offer a chance for relaxation, socialization, and mutual support among mums who share similar experiences and challenges.

It was an opportunity to enjoy a pleasant atmosphere, with a delightful meal, where our dedicated caregivers could unwind and connect with others who understand their unique journey. Additionally, these gatherings can serve as a platform for sharing resources, advice, and encouragement, further strengthening the community's support network.

Our free BBQ event for parents held on the 29<sup>th</sup> June was a wonderful way to offer a relaxing environment for connection and camaraderie. Such events not only provide a casual setting for parents to unwind but also foster a sense of community and support among individuals who share similar experiences and challenges.

July saw a month filled with fun activities, on the 1<sup>st</sup> our Teenager enjoyed a night of Lazer Tag, food and bowling. Our younger members enjoyed a morning of sensory play at Cheeky Monkeys on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. On the 7<sup>th</sup> the whole family could enjoy an evening of bouncing at the Infinity Adventure Park. On 8<sup>th</sup> we held our Sensory Saturday Newry Street Unite, this event was facilitated by Gail from "The Big White Coach" who specialises in sensor experiences, creative activities and messy play to support a healthier wellbeing and learning opportunities. Because of the complex needs of the children the large group was divided into smaller groups depending on the individual needs of each child.

On August the 6<sup>th</sup> we held a Pet and Play day for the whole family in Fort Evergreen, the 10<sup>th</sup> was our Teddy Bears picnic with Wee Bugs and Beasties, where our children had the opportunity to build their own teddy bear! Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup> was our relaxed screening of Luca.

On Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup> August we held a twilight cruise with Carlingford Lough Cruises providing our parents with a relaxing experience enabling them to enjoy the beautiful twilight skies whilst catching the fireworks across the Lough from Warrenpoint.

The serene waters of the bay, coupled with the beautiful backdrop of the Mourne Mountains and the Cooley Peninsula, provided a perfect setting for our evening of tranquillity and companionship. The cruise offered much-needed respite and a chance to connect with others sharing similar experiences.

Many children with autism love to jump and bounce. It's a particularly enjoyable repetitive behaviour that can provide both soothing and stimulating sensory input. Over the summer months we provided our younger children with complex needs the opportunity to schedule a free hour on a Bouncy Castle in our ASK Sensory Garden. This was to allow individual families

who may not be able to attend group events due to their child's sensory needs to avail of an activity.

We had scheduled 4 days in July, offering 12 slots on each day but the 21<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> were cancelled due to heavy rain. The 4 days in August went ahead as planned.

This event was hugely popular with both kids and adults alike with families using the bouncy castle to make family memory's and provide sensory stimulation for their children.

***Thank you ASK! Took about 50mins for brogan to go on the bouncy castle but we got there in the end. So, he had a great time with his brother and mummy had a great time to***

  Stephanie

Our Halloween party at Infinity Adventure Park scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> November was **cancelled** due to heavy flooding in the Newry, Mourne and Down area.

In November we had the amazing opportunity to work Phillip from Flickernet. We ran a Woodland Coding event where each of the participants received a small circuit board call a Micro: Bit Each child learnt how to program their Micro: Bit as a communicator with five individual words of their choosing. The children were then able to the Micro: Bits home.

Our Christmas celebrations began a little early on the 26<sup>th</sup> November with a Christmas experience at Mount Panther Farm Park. Over 77 children and 69 adults attended this event. Our members received a photo with Santa, Hot cocoa and cookies and participated in various Christmas crafts.

***"Thanks for organising this...it was a truly magical experience. Joey was in awe!"***  Diane

***"Honestly one of the best Santa experiences we've been to. Such a great way to start of the Christmas season. Thanks again so much for organising it really was amazing!!"***     
Lauren

Our Christmas celebrations continue with an amazing night in the Kilmorey Arms Hotel on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> December for our parents, Christmas dinner followed with entertainment by "The Mad Hatters". 32 parents attended the event and paid full price for their tickets as the consensus was that funds should be kept for therapies and events for the children.

Our Christmas celebrations concluded with a relaxed screening of "Dr Seuss The Grinch" on Sunday the 17<sup>th</sup> December, followed with a visit from Santa Clause, and a fantastic Christmas party in Infinity Adventure Park which was enjoyed by 62 of our children accompanied by 48 parents on 29<sup>th</sup> December. This was a fully funded party at no cost to the families. A buffet tea was provided along with tea and coffee. Everyone had a fantastic time and went home tired but happy!

#### **ASK ANNUAL FAMILY FUN DAY**

On Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup> August we held our annual Family Fun Day at the Ballyvea Hub from 12 noon to 2pm. It was a great success with over 69 families in attendance. The funday was fully funded.

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Charity No: NIC102894

Entertainment provided on the day was 2 large bouncy castles, a Fire Engine, Balloon Modelling, Wee Bugs and Beasties, Exploris on Tour, the big White Coach and Alex Alexander of DJ Entertainment was our DJ for the day. Food provided on the day by Kevin McCulla's Chipvan.

All SEN children and their siblings got to enjoy a Kids meal and Ice cream cone. These were accessed via tokens given out on entry. A raffle was held on the day with prizes donated by local businesses, the money raised from the raffle help to fund this fantastic memorable day.

### Autism Support Kilkeel Centre

In the year to December 31st, 2023, due to the increase in therapies provided, the return of our monthly parent's meetings, providing workshops and running our Positive Psychology Youth Program the centre has been heavily utilised.

The centre has been well maintained by the usual volunteers. Thanks to our members involved in this activity.

### Centre Improvement Feasibility Study

We got our Sensory Garden completed and it was wonderful to see so many of our families make great use of this in the year 2023.

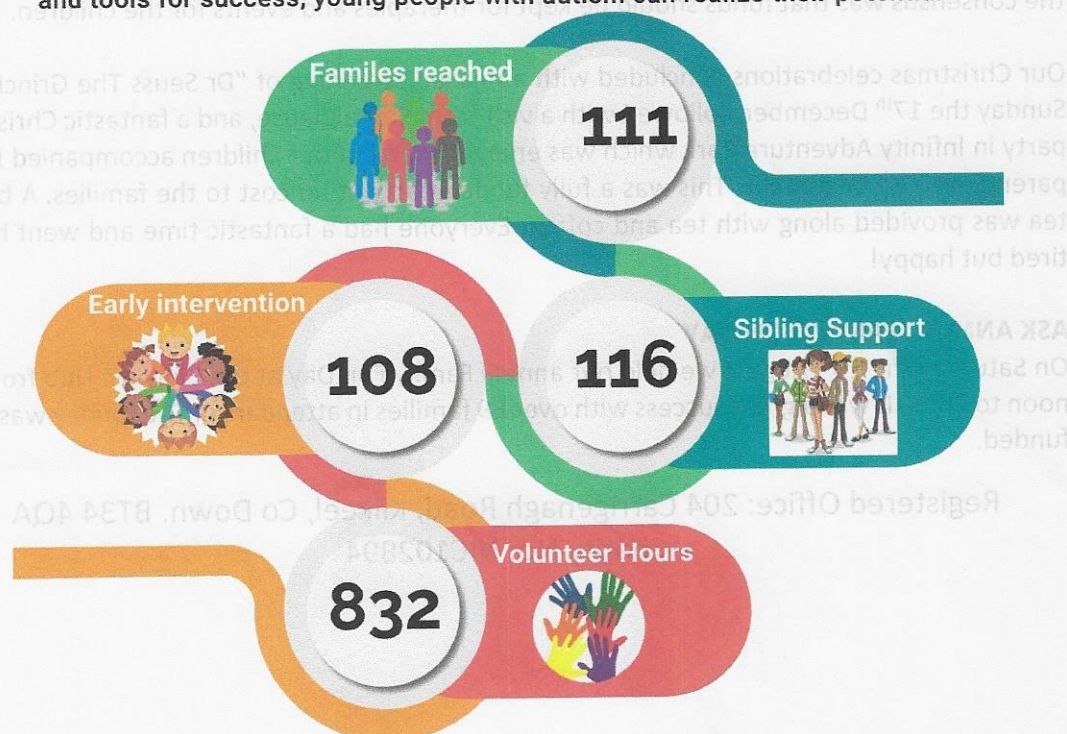
### Membership

On December 31st, 2023 membership of the private group was 123; the group has accepted 22 new families, from Kilkeel, Rostrevor, Warrenpoint, Hilltown, Ballymartin, Kilcoo Newcastle, in the past year, and we extend a very warm welcome to them. Membership of our public group reached the amazing figure of 854 members.



## IMPACT REPORT 2023

Growth and change do not happen overnight but with the right support, care and tools for success, young people with autism can realize their potential



In 2023, our charity has played a pivotal role in supporting families, particularly through interventions for children with additional needs.

Autism Support Kilkeel (ASK) is a community-driven charity that offers a range of support services and therapies to individuals with autism and their families. With a focus on enhancing the quality of life, ASK provides access to various therapies that cater to the needs of individuals on the autism spectrum.

These may include equine therapy, occupational therapy, music therapy, and sensory integration therapy, all aimed at supporting social inclusion and the potential for employment and access to other facilities.

Additionally, ASK organizes fully inclusive events, creating opportunities for social engagement and community participation. Our commitment to raising awareness and supporting families is evident through our active presence and the resources we offer to the community.

## **Financial Review**

### **Financial Performance**

Financial Performance in the year to December 2023 has resulted in a surplus of expenditure over income of £15,739.78

### **Income**

Income receipts for the year totalled £54,6434.25. The year to December 31st, 2023 included a Power NI Heating Grant of £600, Screwfix Direct Grant of £5,000, Jessie Fund Grant of £1,500, Tesco Blue Token Scheme of £1,000, Asda Foundation Grant of £1,000, AIB Grant of £2,500, John Moore Foundation Grant of £3,000, TechSoup Grant of £400 and the Big Lottery Grant of £9,620. Amazon donations of £89.94, and the reminder income was made up of members of the community running fundraisers for the charity.

The group's income is generally healthy but we are concerned about a shortfall in cash donations in the future as more people turned to contactless payment amid fears over the use of cash during the pandemic.

Fundraising Income for the year to December 2023 was £5,610.91 compared to £2,475.52 to the same date last year. The committee recognises that due to the global pandemic it has been a challenging external environment for fundraising. Over the past year we have had to review our strategies, invest in new approaches and respond to changes in data protection legislation.

Donation income has remained mainly the same; incoming donations totalled £7097.51 compared to £7,674.26 last year.

Other income was generated through parents' contributions for events and therapies provided by the group which totalled £9,878.35.

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA

Charity No: NIC102894

There are so many people that have helped us raise money, donated or sponsored us to name individually but as a group we are extremely thankful and grateful for all their support, as someone once said ***"it takes a village to raise a child"*** this is never truer than when you have a child with special needs.

### **Expenditure**

Expenditure for the year totalled £38,894.47 an increase on the previous year £23,865.01. This was mainly due to bespoke therapies for the children with complex needs and events provided.

During 2023 we found ourselves in the privileged position to be able to give back to our community. We were able to donate to two local causes. Giving back is about contributing what you can and making a positive impact on the lives of others. Together, we can create a more compassionate and thriving society.

Administrative & General was lower for the year to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023 (£1,625.84) than the year December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 (£2,063.73). This expenditure is due to bank fees for our Current account and Annual Fees on our Credit card account. Committee expenses of Access NI checks and uniforms provided. Stationary. ASK Lanyards. ASK business cards and ASK thank you cards.

ASK Centre development expenditure for the year to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023 was £60 compared to £93.99 in the previous year.

Fundraising Expenditure was £883.74 at the date of this report. This is a decrease on December 2022 figure of £1,300. This decrease is due to local companies providing complementary spot prizes and vouchers.

It is fair to say that 2023 was again a difficult year for our group we were very worried about having to reduce our services and one of our biggest fears was managing limited funds whilst providing what we hope is life enhancing opportunities for the families identified. Our aim is continuing the outreach to more families in 2024

Managing charity funds effectively is becoming increasingly important as membership grows. For membership retention and growth, strategies that enhance the membership experience and engage donors can be beneficial. It's also helpful to develop a community of dedicated members and use membership dues to raise funds, as members can assist with organizational tasks, planning, fundraising, referrals, and network building.

It's vital we stay informed about the latest regulations and best practices for financial management in the charitable sector to alleviate concerns about managing funds with an increasing membership base.

### **Stock**

As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, the group held a stock of Sensory Equipment valued at £1,000, Go Talk Devices at £537.20 and Weenet Tracking Devices with a value of £623.

### **Gifts and support of Kind**

In assessing the finances and assets of the group it must be noted that the chairperson gave a great deal of support in kind. Many purchases are made and the payment never claimed back: for example, printing, stationery and postage costs, have all been paid for by the chairperson but the cost not claimed despite such a claim being perfectly legitimate.

Members give generously of their time; with the many hours given to preparing and delivering talks, days out, residential breaks, and managing the group, without this its growth and success could not be achieved.

The chairperson wishes to place on record their recognition of and gratitude for all these contributions.

### **Funds materially in Deficit**

As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, the group had no funds in material deficit

### **Financial Management and Reserves Policies**

The group has a Financial Management Policy which meets the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the Charity Commission guidelines "Internal Financial Controls for Charities" and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)

The general Fund is unrestricted and is used for the day –to-day operation of the group.

The group operates with an unrestricted reserve at a level set by the trustees; currently this is £30,000 which equated to approximately 12 months running costs. The reserve is held to allow the Group to offset fluctuations in income receipts and to provide for contingencies.

Reserves are held without any exposure to the stock market.

As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023, the General Fund had a balance £51,830.29 (compared to £36,090.51 at the same time last year).

While the current unrestricted fund level is above the reserve, we feel it is prudent in the current economic climate; maintaining a substantial reserve will better allow the group to meet the funding challenges which the wider economic situation may impose. We also note that securing external funding is becoming increasingly difficult as sponsor and grant making bodies are forced to address their own funding issues.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and signed on their behalf.



Olive Donnan  
Chairperson

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

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# Annual return

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## FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2023 TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2023

### RECEIPTS

|                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Donations                       | 7,097.51         |
| Grants                          | 24,620.00        |
| HMRC Gift Aid                   | 3,817.91         |
| HMRC VAT                        | 3,610.57         |
| Outings, Activities & Therapies | 9,877.35         |
| Fundraising Events              | 5,610.91         |
|                                 | <b>54,634.25</b> |

### PAYMENTS

|                      |                  |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Outings & Activities | 21,674.53        |
| Therapies            | 13,661.90        |
| Public Events        | 960.00           |
| Premises Expenses    | 60.00            |
| Equipment Purchases  | 687.20           |
| Heating              | 600.50           |
| Electric             | 164.93           |
| Bank Fees            | 302.62           |
| Admin Expenses       | 557.79           |
| Donations            | 225.00           |
|                      | <b>38,894.47</b> |

|                                  |           |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Profit of Receipts over payments | 15,739.78 |
|----------------------------------|-----------|

### ACCUMULATED FUND

|                                              |           |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2023   | 36,090.51 |
| Profit for the year                          | 15,739.78 |
| Balance as at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2023 | 51,830.29 |

### REPRESENTED BY

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Bank Current Account | 51,830.29 |
|----------------------|-----------|

In my opinion, from the records and books I received, the above Financial Statement gives a true and fair view of the state of Autism Support Kilkeel's financial position for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023.

Independent Financial Advisor: Stewart Cunningham

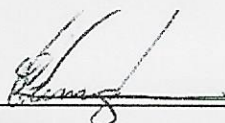
Relevant professional qualification or body: Financial Adviser DipFPS CEMAP

Address: 4 Kilkeel Rd, Annalong, Co Down BT34 4TH

Date:

14<sup>th</sup> April 2023

Signature:



Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

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# Accounts

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# Accounts for the year ended December 31<sup>st</sup> 2020

## Receipts & Payment Account

|                                    | Unrestricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Restricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Total<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Receipts</b>                    |                                       |                                     |                                |
| Donations                          | 7674                                  | -                                   | 7674                           |
| Grants                             | 11000                                 | 2,400                               | 13400                          |
| Fundraising Appeals                | 3575                                  | -                                   | 3575                           |
| Parents Contribution to Activities | 3626                                  | -                                   | 3626                           |
| Therapist Refund – Sarah Safe Swim | 270                                   | -                                   | 270                            |
| HMRC Gift Aid                      | -                                     | -                                   | -                              |
| <b>Total Receipts</b>              | <b>26,145</b>                         | <b>2,400</b>                        | <b>28,545</b>                  |

|                               |               |   |               |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---|---------------|
| <b>Payments</b>               |               |   |               |
| Admin & General               | 2063          | - | 2063          |
| Donations                     | 1100          | - | 1100          |
| Cost of Charitable Activities | 19305         | - | 19305         |
| Heat & Lighting               | 129           | - | 129           |
| Covid -19 Food Vouchers       | 72            | - | 72            |
| Christmas Raffle Prizes       | 1100          | - | 1100          |
| Premises Expenses             | 94            | - | 94            |
| <b>Sub Total</b>              | <b>23,863</b> |   | <b>23,863</b> |

## Assets and Investment Purchases

|                       |               |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Sub Total</b>      |               |               |
| <b>Total Payments</b> | <b>23,863</b> | <b>23,863</b> |

|                                 |               |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Cash funds this year end</b> | <b>36,090</b> | <b>36,090</b> |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|

## Statement of Assets and Liabilities

|                                     | Unrestricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Restricted<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ | Endowment<br>Funds<br>To nearest £ |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Cash Assets</b>                  |                                       |                                     |                                    |
| First Trust Current Account         | 33,690                                | 2,400                               | -                                  |
| <b>Total cash funds</b>             | <b>36,090</b>                         |                                     |                                    |
| <b>Other Assets</b>                 |                                       |                                     |                                    |
| The Listening Program               | 920                                   |                                     |                                    |
| Sensory Equipment (Estimated value) | 500                                   |                                     |                                    |
| Weeenet Tracking Devices            | 623                                   |                                     |                                    |

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

## Notes to the Accounts

### Trustees' Expenses

No expenses were paid to any of the Trustees during the year except to reimburse them for purchases made on behalf of the group.

### Trustees' Indemnity Insurance

No charitable funds have been used to purchase insurance to indemnify the Trustees against the consequences of any neglect or default on their part.

### Accounting Policies

Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 permits a charity to prepare receipts and payments accounts and a statement of assets and liabilities where gross income in the financial year does not exceed £250,000, therefore receipts and payments accounts and a statement of assets and liabilities have been prepared and presented for the year ended December 2016.

Bank charges are included in the Admin & General Category

All Income, including grants and investment income is recorded when received.

All Expenditure is recorded when paid.

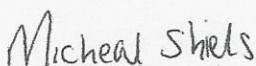
### Independent Scrutiny

In the year ended December 2022 gross income did exceed £25,000 and therefore, in accordance with the sections 144 & 145 of the Charities Act 2011 an audit by an independent examination is required and a scrutiny requirement is imposed by the Group governing document.

### Cheques not cleared at bank as of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022

As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022, there were one cheque issued by the group which had not cleared the bank. Cheque No 500254 to Infinity Adventure Park for £580

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2022 and signed on their behalf.



Mr Michael Shiels  
Chairman

## Reference and Administrative Details

### Charity Name

Autism Support Kilkeel which is also known as ASK about Autism.

### Charity Number

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland, NIC102894

### Principal Address

204 Carrigenagh Road  
Kilkeel  
Co Down  
BT34 4QA

### Charity trustees as of December 31<sup>st</sup> 2022

|                         |                            |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Mr Michael Shiels       | Chairman                   |
| Mrs Bernie Cousins      | Secretary                  |
| Mrs Olive Donnan        | Treasurer                  |
| Mrs Ashling Fitzmaurice | Deputy Chair               |
| Mrs Pam Hazley          | Fundraising/Events Officer |
| Mrs Irene McHugh        | Public Relations Officer   |
| Miss Pauline Kearney    | Events Officer             |
| Mrs Sarah O'Hare        | BCPP Program Co-Ordinator  |
| Joan Regan              |                            |
| Miss Cathy Spier        | Therapies Co-ordinator     |

### Advisors

|         |                                                                             |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Banking | First Trust Bank<br>30 Greencastle Street<br>Kilkeel<br>Co Down<br>BT34 4BH |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA

Charity No: NIC102894

### **Governing Document and Constitution**

The group is an unincorporated association and is governed by a constitution adopted January 2015 and last amended October 2015.

The group is run entirely by its members'. As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022, the group had a membership of 101.

### **Trustee Selection and Management**

The group is managed by an Executive Committee which consists of all the appointed trustees.

The Executive Committee meets typically once per month; in the year to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 7 formal meeting took place. Attendance at these meeting, shown as meeting attended/meetings eligible to attend was as follows: M Shiels (5/7), B Cousins (5/7), O Donnan (7/7), Irene Mc Hugh (7/7) P Hazley (5/7), Sarah O'Hare (5/7), P Kearney (7/7), C Spiers (3/7, J Regan (3/7) and A Fitzmaurice (5/7).

At each meeting the Treasurer presents the latest accounts and these are reviewed against budgets and forecasts; spending is discussed and approved. Officers may authorise some spending, between meetings, within set limits but must ensure such spending is reported at the next meeting.

The meetings also offer a forum to review recent activities within our group and to plan forthcoming events. In addition, officers report on their areas of responsibility. *Further ad hoc meetings are called if required*, for example to plan and manage special events or projects.

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts are approved by the trustees and then presented to the members at the Annual General Meeting.

### **Objectives and Activities**

#### **Charitable Objects**

The object of the group as set out in our Constitution is to provide support for people living with or suspected of having an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families/carers in the Newry & Mourne area. This involves assisting them to achieve their maximum potential for community involvement, social inclusion and the opportunity to access employment and other facilities enjoyed by other non-Autistic members of the community.

The group aims to raise awareness of autism and to educate the general public, relevant professionals and organisations in the private, voluntary and statutory sectors.

### **Public Benefit Statement**

The trustees of Autism Support Kilkeel confirm that they have complied with their duty under section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and that the public benefit requirement has informed the activities of the group in the year to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2022

In evaluating public benefit, the trustees' note that membership of the group is open to all who live with autism or suspected of have autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families/carers.

### **Summary of main Activities**

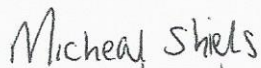
The core activities of the group are:

- Providing support to parents, siblings and children with Autism
- Offering therapies which have a positive impact on children with Autism
- Developing and maintaining the ASK Centre
- Offering support and advice to the public on matters related to Autism

Autism Support Kilkeel seeks to identify the most-needed services that reach the largest number of families and to demonstrate how these can be provided to a measurable standard of excellence. The charity aims to establish a model for the provision of services that can be delivered either as a direct activity of the charity or through the action of other organisations.

Our philosophy is to offer access to all regardless of personal circumstances, race, gender, ability, or faith. The group operates mainly in the Newry and Mourne Area however visitors from further afield are always welcome. The monthly meetings are open to all.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2022 and signed on their behalf



Mr Michael Shiels  
Chairman

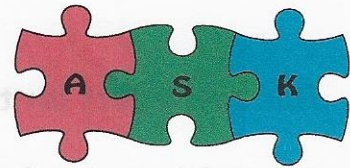
**Autism Support Kilkeel**

Northern Ireland - Charity number 102894

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# Annual report

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## AUTISM SUPPORT KILKEEL

# Annual Report & Statement of Accounts

**For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022**

**Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA**

**Charity No: NIC102894**

## **Annual Report for the year ended December 31<sup>st</sup> 2022**

Report of the trustees for the year ending 31 December 2022. The trustees are pleased to present their annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 December 2022. The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: 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 (FRS 102) (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2019).

### **Governance and internal control**

The trustees are responsible for selecting and recruiting suitable trustees to hold office at the Annual General Meeting. The number of trustees shall be not less than three but is not subject to any maximum.

A retiring trustee is eligible for re-election, and there is no limit on the number of times a trustee may be re-elected.

The minimum age for a trustee is 18 years, but there is no upper age limit imposed on trustees. The Trustees from among their number appoint a chairperson.

New trustees are inducted through a process of briefings by the Chairman and other members of the committee and they are provided with key information relating to the charity's governance and operation.

The board of trustees meets approximately 12 times. None of the trustees received remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity this financial year.

### **Monthly Meetings**

Despite lockdown being lifted, we continued to be impacted significantly by changing COVID guidelines and need to review our risk assessment regularly. Despite challenges, we continued delivering all of our services and developed some new ways of supporting those most adversely impacted by the pandemic. We remain mindful however that it is not over and we could be forced to scale activities back at any time.

The group's monthly meeting on the last Thursday of the month is a core activity which contributes greatly to the success enjoyed by the group and it was fantastic to be able to reinstate it on Thursday the 24<sup>th</sup> February, our first face to face meeting since covid. As many families had to adjust to the change in everyday life during the pandemic, we subsequently saw rise in usage of our Facebook support group. Which was available to parents 24/7 and offered visuals, social stories and emotional support to our parents.

During this challenging Year, I would like to thank the trustees for their dedicated efforts in Governing the charity.

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

## THERAPIES

### Swimming Therapy

We had the opportunity of offering 17 children ages 3 to 15 therapy via swim throughout April to June 2022 with Sarah Swim Safe in Tollymore private pool.

The 1 to 1 session were beneficial to all for different reasons, some children overcame their fear of water while putting their trust in Sarah, others had fun splashing and enjoying the interaction while building confidence and many of our children go on other the sessions swimming unaided. Drowning is the lead cause of death for children with Autism consecutively 2016 -2023 so offering this therapy and the opportunity for children to learn the basics was paramount for ASK.

We ran the programme a few years previous for a smaller group and following its success had even more children/ teens participate in 2022. The 30 min session weekly over a course of 4 or 6 weeks only required a small contribution from families to secure a place for each child.

*"Callum loved swim, Sarah is lovely and has a great way with kids, she is caring and encouraging" Dani*

*"Loved it" Pauline*

*"Lily loved swim, she had a big smile and giggles. Would love to book more sessions even for the swim safety aspect, it's hard to find someone so brilliant to work with our kids." Ashling*

### Music Therapy

We had an overwhelming response to our Music Therapy Summer Scheme. Music Therapy is a great way for children to develop their social, emotional and communication skills. Music Therapy would be one of the most popular therapies at Autism Support Kilkeel and Shane Harvey the therapist is brilliant with the children.

Our first program for 2022 ran from Monday the 4<sup>th</sup> July until Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> July. We had 10 children and the breakdown was 5 one to one sessions, and 1 group session with 5 children. The ages of children who attended ranged from 3 years to 12 years of age. We had amazing feedback from parents.

*"Shane was totally amazing, the interaction and attention he was able to get from Aron brought tears to my eyes. This is a very talented, gifted & passionate therapist whom we are very lucky to avail through ASK." P Kearney*

*Michael loved his music therapy sessions with Shane! He looked forward to them every week! Says he is going back next year! Shane was so thoughtful & kind and each week learned a new song for Michael at his request including "Shotgun" and "Hakuna matata". The joy on his face when Shane sang these made my day. C McDowell*

Our second program ran from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> August until Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup> August. We had 6 children with more complex needs attend in August so each session was on a one-to-one basis we had no group session. The ages of children who attended ranged from 5 years to 12 years of age. Once again amazing feedback from the parents.

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA

Charity No: NIC102894

*"Ezra was a little nervous at the beginning, not knowing what to expect. He really enjoyed the group session, fun & lots of smiles. Shane has a lovely gentle way with the children! Looking forward to the next few weeks. Thanks for this opportunity" J Stevenson*

*"Darragh absolutely loved being back at Music Therapy. He takes part in the group sessions which has really helped him develop his social skills and being able to turn take in group activities. Shane is excellent in what he does I can't sing is praises loudly enough and my favourite part of the music therapy is the report we get at the end. It always brings a smile to my face and a tear to my eye." S O'Hare*

### **Physiotherapy**

Due to the lack of services, especially Occupational Therapy, we approached a local physiotherapist to run a pilot scheme of a six-week block of physiotherapy for the children within our group who struggle to master higher level motor skills such as ball skills, skipping, and riding a bike, as these skills impact the child's overall participation in peer and community activities, which subsequently affect their overall development.

We ran our pilot scheme from 14<sup>th</sup> November until the 19<sup>th</sup> December in which 8 children took part in one-to-one, one hour physiotherapy sessions, ranging in age from 4 years to 6 years. A parent or Guardian was required to participate in sessions and a home exercise program (3x15 mins per week at home) was provided to maximise the benefits of Physiotherapy intervention in between the sessions This therapy was heavily subsidised by the group. Cost to parents was £5 per session.

### **Mental Health Hub**

ASK in partnership with Regenerate ran a Mental health hub for the teenage siblings in the group. The sessions ran from Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup> April to Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup> May. Victoria from Regenerate facilitated the sessions and focused on topics such as Stress & Anxiety, Self Esteem & self-Image, and the impact of social media. Our Teenage hub was made up of 9 teenage girls and 2 boys, ranging in age from 13-18. The Mental Health hub was fully funded.

### **BCPP Siblings Group**

Our BCPP health program was funded by Community Development Health Network in Newry and our pharmacy partnership was with Paul O'Hare from Mayobridge Pharmacy. Our 'Siblings group' consisted of a group of 10 children aged between 11-17 who have a brother or sister with an additional need.

Each week the siblings worked with Paul to deliver an interactive program covering topics such as childhood illnesses like Asthma, Type1 diabetes, skin conditions etc. We hoped that each child will not only gain more knowledge from the program but also gain self-worth as they all have a caring role at home, and we felt it important to reiterate throughout this project that they are not alone

On the 24<sup>th</sup> August 2022 we hosted a celebration day & night at the YMCA Greenhill in Newcastle. This was to celebrate the end of our successful Building the Community Pharmacy Partnership Program. We offered a day of activities and a swim slot followed by

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

an overnight stay to the families who took part in our program. Nine families joined us consisting of 12 adults and 17 children.

We started the day off with a meet and greet and a tour of our accommodations followed by an afternoon of activities and swimming in the on-site pool. In the evening we all came together for dinner and campfire craic! Although it was a busy day everyone had the opportunity to chill out and chat about life and things, we all have in common. We had brilliant feedback from our trip!

*"Great day boys had a ball and so did I, thanks Autism Support Kilkeel "*

*"Thanks to everyone for giving all the kids the great opportunity and the day away! I'm still buzzing after doing that archery! M loved the pool and the archery! He keeps saying mummy I want to do more things with ASK!"*

## **COOK IT**

Starting on 26<sup>th</sup> October we ran a 4 week Cook It programme each Wednesday evening, 7pm to 8.30pm with Jims Youth Centre. Cook it! is a nutrition programme that has been developed for use in local communities in Northern Ireland. It can be used with a wide range of groups included young people. 11 of our young people took part in this fun interactive and hands on program. Where they learned cooking skills, established healthy eating habits, all while making friends.

## **Relaxed Screenings**

In April committee members met with volunteers from Newcastle Community Cinema (NCC) to discuss the possibility of running a pilot scheme to bring a relaxed screening once a month to the local community. The meeting was a great success and the outcome was that Autism Support Kilkeel would pay the license fee of approx. £120 each month and reduce the cost of a ticket to £1.50pp The NCC was given permission to use the charity logo on any promotional items and we agreed we would fund the pilot scheme for six months and then meet to review.

Working in collaboration with Newcastle Community Cinema (NCC) we brought a relaxed screening once a month, normally the last Thursday or Friday of the month, for people with neuro-diverse conditions and their family so they could enjoy a movie in a relaxed and welcoming environment with dimmed lights, no trailers and freedom to wander about or sing along. People can also take in their own food and drinks. Our first screening was of the movie "Mary Poppins" on the 2 June at 6pm. We had 57 families in attendance.

The relaxed screenings are very popular within the wider community and we regularly had up to 95 young people and their families. At special times of the years i.e., Easter and Christmas we like to turn the screenings into grander events and hold red carpet screenings, with the Easter Bunny giving out Easter Eggs and Father Christmas giving out selection Boxes.

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA

Charity No: NIC102894

## Workshops

On Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> October we had the opportunity to offer a workshop with Mr Quinn of Nicholas Quinn Solicitors. 21 participants had the opportunity to take part in a question-and-answer session in areas of Education/Special Education and Health Care needs for children. Often parents are oblivious to the available services and legal rights in both Education and Health Care for their child. Mr Quinn was able to provide comprehensive advice and assistance in these areas to our families.

*"Many thanks for a very informative evening!" -Kelly Walsh*

*"Really enjoyed this session" -Sinead McGrath*

On the 7<sup>th</sup> November we had the opportunity to offer a workshop with SENAC. Fiona O'Donnell gave information and advice on getting help and support in school for children with learning difficulties and special educational needs (SEN). This workshop was online via Zoom so everyone in the group had the opportunity to take part in the workshop and many of the participants found this helped them better navigate the statutory SEN system here in Northern Ireland

## Group Events

During the Easter Holiday we held various events for our children with additional needs, siblings, parents and grandparents.

On Thursday the 14<sup>th</sup> April in partnership with Newcastle Community Cinema we held our very first relaxed screening, Encanto. The evening was a great success, we had 19 parents and 32 children in attendance. This event was fully funded.

On Wednesday the 20<sup>th</sup> April we held our Easter Party in Cocos Indoor Adventure Playpark from 10am – 12 noon. The venue was closed for our private function and food was provided. This event was fully funded. We had 23 adults and 37 children.

As we all know exercise can help us deal with stress. Just like a good workout can help an adult deal with stress, a fun morning in soft play can help alleviate the stress and anxiety that often trouble our children especially during school holidays when they are out of their normal routines.

When there is a child with special needs in the family, siblings often get less attention. To assist the fathers in our group to spend special time with their siblings we held our first Father/Sibling event at Formula Karting in Newry on Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup> April. In total we had 18 Fathers and 16 siblings race the night away. This event was fully funded.

*"What a fantastic night thank you all from me, Levi had a ball" D Hanna*

*"Thank you from me and the boys. They had the best time" M Berger*

Friday the 22<sup>nd</sup> April brought a fun packed day at the Gamekeepers Lodge Equestrian & Activity Centre. 19 of our siblings enjoyed a morning of paint balling and 22 of our children with additional needs enjoyed a trek through the Mourne Mountains. Both of these events were fully funded.

Our April events were brought to a close with a Tropic Skincare Pamper morning with Tropic Skincare ambassador Lisa Feenan on Thursday the 28<sup>th</sup> April from 10.30am -12.30pm. Over 20 of our autism mums experienced a well-deserved pampering, which included a facial and free goodies bag. This event was fully funded.

Local Zumba instructors offered our group a complimentary night of Zumba. We were delighted to accept and on Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> May we headed to Annalong Community Centre, where we were invited to join in on one of their weekly Zumba sessions and it did not disappoint. We all had a good laugh and giggle and was a fantastic way to release some stress! It was a great night's craic and the feedback was very good.

*"Definitely what I needed today thank you for organising "*

*"I really had so much fun it was just brilliant thank you"*

*"So much fun"*

The group spend a fantastic evening at "We are Vertigo". The World's largest indoor inflatable activity course on Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup> May. Kids with autism often have difficulty with body awareness and understanding where they are in relation to space. Because of this, they can appear clumsy, loud, or overly cautious. That why at Autism Support Kilkeel we like to provide activities that encourage climbing, jumping, pushing, pulling and carrying. Providing multiple opportunities in all of these areas can help our children develop better body and spatial awareness. The group funded 50% of the entrance fee to our members.

On Thursday the 9<sup>th</sup> of June as part of our BCPP health program we invited the mums who took part to a lovely pamper morning at the ASK house. Massage therapist Sharon Graham gave all the mums a lovely shoulder & head massage while they chatted and enjoyed tea and cake! It was a lovely relaxing morning for our mums. We are wonderful feedback from all the Mums.

*"Thank you, Sharon it was a lovely morning, "*

*"Thanks again Sharon I'm so relaxed".*

On Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup> of June we had a Father's Day special open day at Mountpanter Farm Park. Every dad or male guardian received a free cup of coffee. 37 adults and 42 children enjoyed a morning of meeting animals from all over the globe ranging from Guinea Pigs to Scaly Snakes and Lizards. It was a completely sensory experience as the children were allowed to handle each of the animals. Entrance Fee to the farm was offered to the members of the group at a 50% discount.

*"Was a fantastic day, thank you so much" L Cunningham*

*"Thank you so much, it was a fabulous morning we loved it" K Walsh*

On Friday the 15<sup>th</sup> of July we held our first visit of the year to an old favourite of the children's, Infinity Adventure Park for Rebound Therapy. Rebound therapy has many benefits, from fostering calm, aiding in sensory imbalances, increasing body awareness, or releasing dopamine—because jumping on a trampoline is fun! In total 33 children with additional needs and their siblings/parents/carers attended this event. This therapy was heavily subsidised and the cost to members for this event only £5 per person.

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA

Charity No: NIC102894

On Friday the 5<sup>th</sup> August 18 of our children with additional needs spent a morning at Cranfield beach on a 45-minute Alpaca Adventure Trail. They were able to experience up close a family of Alpacas in a relaxed setting and feed and walk them. The group provided 75% funding towards the cost of this event.

Our trip to Infinity Adventure Park in July was so successful we decided to run another evening on the 12<sup>th</sup> August. Over 44 kids with additional needs attended the with their siblings. Parents, carers. The venue was once again closed for our private function and food was provided. The event was again heavily funded and the cost to members remained the same at £5 per person.

On Thursday the 18<sup>th</sup> of August we held our first Sensory Session at Newry Street Unite. The event was facilitated by Gail from "The Big White Coach" who specialises in sensor experiences, creative activities and messy play to support a healthier wellbeing and learning opportunities. The event was attended by 29 of our children who have more complex needs, the ages ranged from 4 years to 14 years. Because of the complex needs of the children the large group was divided into smaller groups depending on the individual needs of each child.

Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 12 of our families heading to sticky Fingers in Newry to experience the MAGIC of this place for kids, absolutely bursting with creativity and imagination. Sticky Fingers provide every child with the space to explore, investigate and experiment, the space to play, to be a child. 16 of our children were transformed to a magic place for 2 hours. Adult members of the group paid the full price but the children received 50% discount towards their entrance fee.

We had the opportunity to offer a bouncy castle at the ASK Sensory Garden over the summer. Many children with autism love to jump and bounce. It's a particularly enjoyable repetitive behaviour that can provide both soothing and stimulating sensory input.

In total we offered 6 days over the July and August period. We were able to offer 12 slots on each day. This was to allow individual families who may not be able to attend group events due to their child's sensory needs to avail of the activity.

This event was hugely popular with both kids and adults alike with 55 families using the bouncy castle to make family memory's and provide sensory stimulation for their children.

*"Thank you so much for arranging the bouncy castle for the ask garden. Rosie absolutely loved it!" - Libby Nicholas Flanagan*

We celebrated Halloween in 2022 with a fabulous bus trip to Crumlin Road Gaol, Pumpkin Patch and Halloween Extravaganza on Sunday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October. 38 Adults and 37 children enjoyed the spooky Jail tour, Petting Farm, walking round the Pumpkin patch, riding the Pumpkin Puffer Train and the amazing live interactive Halloween Musical. Entrance fee to this event was offered to members with a 50% discount and transport was provided for free.

Halloween celebrations continued with an amazing Halloween party held in Infinity Adventure Park on Friday the 4<sup>th</sup> November. 35 Adults and 53 children enjoyed an hour of rebound therapy and party food. This event was gifted to us by the owners of Infinity Adventure Park as a contribution to our Christmas fundraiser.

Our Christmas celebrations began with a Christmas Party night for our parents in the Kilmorey Arms Hotel on Saturday the 10<sup>th</sup> December. 31 parents attended the event and paid full price for their tickets as the consensus was that funds should be kept for therapies and events for the children.

Our Christmas celebration continued with a fantastic Christmas night of play, sensory activities and games which was enjoyed by 20 of our children accompanied by parents at Global Adventure Play, Ballynahinch on 15<sup>th</sup> December. This was a fully funded party at no cost to the families. A buffet tea was provided along with tea and coffee and the night ended with a surprise visit from Santa in his magical Lapland cottage with a special gift for each child. Everyone had a fantastic time and went home tired but happy after enjoying the swinging obstacles, ball pools, multiple slides and a quiet area with sensory toys, lighting and soothing sounds.

#### **ASK FAMILY FUN DAY**

On Saturday the 27<sup>th</sup> August we held our first ever Family Fun Day at Kitty's Road Community Centre from 12 noon to 3pm. It was a great success with over 40 families in attendance. 65 Adults and 78 Children, 43 with additionally needs. The funday was fully funded.

Entertainment provided on the day was 2 large bouncy castles, a Fire Engine, Balloon Modelling, Wee Bugs and Beasties and Alex Alexander of DJ Entertainment was our DJ for the day. Food provided on the day by Kevin McCulla's Chipvan and Malones Ice Cream

All SEN children and their siblings got to enjoy a Kids meal and Ice cream cone. These were accessed via tokens given out on entry. A raffle was held on the day with prizes donated by local businesses, the money raised from the raffle help to fund this fantastic memorable day.

#### **Autism Support Kilkeel Centre**

In the year to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022, due to the increase in therapies provided, the return of our monthly parent's meetings and providing a Mental health Hub the centre has been heavily utilised.

The centre has been well maintained by the usual volunteers. Thanks to our members involved in this activity.

#### **Centre Improvement Feasibility Study**

We got our Sensory Garden completed and it was wonderful to see so many of our families make great use of this in the year 2022.

#### **Membership**

On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 membership of the private group was 101; the group has accepted 27 new families, from Kilkeel, Rostrevor, Warrenpoint, Hilltown, Ballymartin, Kilcoo Newcastle, in the past year, and we extend a very warm welcome to them. Membership of our public group reached the amazing figure of 758 members.

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA

Charity No: NIC102894

## Financial Review

### Financial Performance

Financial Performance in the year to December 2022 has resulted in a surplus of expenditure over income of £4,681.41

#### Income

Income receipts for the year totalled £28,546.42. The year to December 31st, 2022 included an Awards for all grant of £10,000, Brighter Community Grant (NIE) of £1,000 and the CHDN NI final payment of £2,400, this was the reminder from a £12,000 grant awarded in 2021 to run our BCPP program. Amazon donations of £98.03, and the reminder income was made of members of the community running fundraisers for the charity.

The group's income is generally healthy but we are concerned about a shortfall in cash donations in the future as more people turned to contactless payment amid fears over the use of cash during the pandemic.

Fundraising Income for the year to December 2022 was £2475.52 compared to Nil to the same date last year. The committee recognises that due to the global pandemic it has been a challenging external environment for fundraising. Over the past year we have had to review our strategies, invest in new approaches and respond to changes in data protection legislation.

Donation income has greatly increased; incoming donations totalled £7674.26 compared to £1019.92 last year. The increase is mainly due to donations from 2 local businesses, Gavin Recovery and SEK Ltd and to the fundraising efforts of individual members of the group.

Other income was generated through parents' contributions for events and therapies provided by the group which totalled £3,626.64.

There are so many people that have helped us raise money, donated or sponsored us to name individually but as a group we are extremely thankful and grateful for all their support, as someone once said **"it takes a village to raise a child"** this is never truer than when you have a child with special needs.

#### Expenditure

Expenditure for the year totalled £23,865.01 an increase on the previous year (£6,412.59). This was mainly due to the reinstating of therapies and programs normally provided which had been previously been cancelled due to Covid.

During 2022 we found ourselves in the privileged position to be able to give back to our community. We were able to donate to several local causes. Mourne Community First Responders £300, Regenerate £150, Newry Hospice £150 and Rathore Special School £500. Giving back is about contributing what you can and making a positive impact on the lives of others. Together, we can create a more compassionate and thriving society.

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

Administrative & General was higher for the year to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 (£2063.73) than the year December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021 (£70.50). This expenditure is due to bank fees for our Current account and Annual Fees on our Credit card account. Committee expenses of Access NI checks and uniforms provided. ASK Lanyards & Banner and ASK thank you cards. Stationary.

ASK Centre development expenditure for the year to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 was £93.99 compared to nil in the previous year.

Fundraising Expenditure was £1300 at the date of this report. This is a 100% increase on December 2021. This increase is due to our Ask Christmas Raffle where the group provided the top five prizes. £500 Heating oil. £300 Pillo Hotel Voucher, £200 Asda Voucher, £200 Smyths Voucher and £100 Butchers Voucher.

It is fair to say that 2022 was again a difficult year for our group we were very worried about having to reduce our services and one our biggest fears was managing social distance whilst returning to providing what we hope is life enhancing opportunities for the families identified. Our aim is continuing the outreach to more families in 2023

#### **Stock**

As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022, the group held a stock of Sensory Equipment valued at £500, and Weeenet Tracking Devices with a value of £623.

#### **Gifts and support of Kind**

In assessing the finances and assets of the group it must be noted that the treasurer gave a great deal of support in kind. Many purchases are made and the payment never claimed back: for example, printing, stationery and postage costs, have all been paid for by the treasurer but the cost not claimed despite such a claim being perfectly legitimate.

Members give generously of their time; with the many hours given to preparing and delivering talks, days out, residential breaks, and managing the group, without this its growth and success could not be achieved.

The chairperson wishes to place on record their recognition of and gratitude for all these contributions.

#### **Funds materially in Deficit**

As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022, the group had no funds in material deficit

#### **Financial Management and Reserves Policies**

The group has a Financial Management Policy which meets the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the Charity Commission guidelines" Internal Financial Controls for Charities" and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)

The general Fund is unrestricted and is used for the day –to-day operation of the group.

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894

The group operates with an unrestricted reserve at a level set by the trustees; currently this is £4500 which equated to approximately 12 months running costs. The reserve is held to allow the Group to offset fluctuations in income receipts and to provide for contingencies.

Reserves are held without any exposure to the stock market.

As of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022, the General Fund had a balance £36,090.51 (compared to £30,829.10 at the same time last year).

While the current unrestricted fund level is above the reserve, we feel it is prudent in the current economic climate; maintaining a substantial reserve will better allow the group to meet the funding challenges which the wider economic situation may impose. We also note that securing external funding is becoming increasingly difficult as sponsor and grant making bodies are forced to address their own funding issues.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Executive Committee on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and signed on their behalf.

Michael Shiels

Michael Shiels  
Chairman

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# Annual return

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AUTISM SUPPORT  
KILKEEL

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY 2021 TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2022

### RECEIPTS

|                                  |                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Donations                        | 7,674.26                |
| Grants                           | 13,400.00               |
| Outings, Activities & Therapies  | 3,626.64                |
| Fundraising                      | 3,575.52                |
| Therapy Refund – Sarah Safe Swim | 270.00                  |
|                                  | <b><u>28,546.42</u></b> |

### PAYMENTS

|                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Outings, Activities               | 16,653.38               |
| Therapies                         | 2,651.90                |
| Covid Food Vouchers               | 72.50                   |
| Fundraising expenses              | 1,100.00                |
| Bank Fee                          | 127.66                  |
| Premises Expenses                 | 93.99                   |
| Heating & Lighting                | 129.81                  |
| Admin Expenses                    | 1,936.07                |
| Donations                         | 1,100.00                |
|                                   | <b><u>23,865.31</u></b> |
| Surplus of Receipts over payments | <b>4,681.41</b>         |

### ACCUMULATED FUND

|                                              |            |
|----------------------------------------------|------------|
| Balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> January, 2021  | £30,829.10 |
| Surplus for the year                         | 4,681.41   |
| Balance as at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2022 | £35,510.51 |

### REPRESENTED BY

|                                                       |                |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Bank Current Account                                  | £36,090.51     |
| <b>Difference Cheque 500254 not cashed at yearend</b> | <b>£580.00</b> |

In my opinion, from the records and books I received, the above Financial Statement gives a true and fair view of the state of Autism Support Kilkeel's financial position for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022.

**Independent Financial Advisor:** Stewart Cunningham

**Relevant professional qualification or body:** Financial Adviser DipFPS CEMAP

**Address:** 4 Kilkeel Rd, Annalong, Co Down BT34 4TH

Date:

10.10.23

Signature:

Registered Office: 204 Carrigenagh Road, Kilkeel, Co Down. BT34 4QA  
Charity No: NIC102894