

Registered as a charity by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland: NIC 103667
Financial year – 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Gran Tots Play Group

Trustees Annual Report 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

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Section 1

Who we are:

Information requested by the Charity Commissioner for Northern Ireland

Charity name: Gran Tots Play Group

Charity registration number: NIC 103667

Address: 15d Main Street
Swatragh
Maghera
BT46 5QB

Trustees and Committee members:

Chairperson Nuala O’Kane

Assistant Chair Vacant

Secretary Mary Bradley

Assistant Secretary Ursula Conway

Treasurer Roisin McFlynn

Assistant Treasurer Kate O’Kane

Trustee Briege Church

Trustee Brigid Kearney

Trustee Tracey McCullough

Child Protection Officer Clare Cassidy

Assistant Child Protection Officer Anne O’Kane

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Governing document:

Constitution

Facebook:

Gran Tots Play Group

Email:

grantotsplaygrp@btconnect.com

Telephone:

028 7940 1759

What we do:

Aims and objectives

The aim of the group is to enhance the development and education of children under statutory school age by encouraging parent(s)/guardian(s) to understand and provide for the needs of their children by:

- Offering appropriate play facilities, with the right of parents/carers to take responsibility for and to become involved in the activities of the group, ensuring that the group offers opportunities for all children, regardless of perceived ability, religion, culture, race or means;
- Encouraging the study of the needs of such children and their families and promoting public interest in and recognition of such needs of such children and their families in local areas;
- Instigating and adhering to and furthering the aims of Early Years.

Outputs and outcomes

We provide access to excellent pre-school education to every child whose parent(s)/guardian(s) choose to send their child to the play group.

All children are welcomed into and supported throughout their time with us in a modern, purpose-built facility, which is fully compliant with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

The children enjoy quality education through structured play and interaction with other children in a safe, secure and supervised environment, which includes one to one partnering by appropriately qualified staff when mandated by the Education Authority.

Children benefit from access to excellent indoor and outdoor play and learning opportunities and we provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with relevant learning materials to become involved with and share in their child's educational experience outside the play group.

We treat every child equally with dignity, patience and respect and believe that every child leaves our care with a first-class pre-school education, positive life-long memories, enhanced confidence and self-esteem, and strengthened interpersonal skills, which will help them as they transition into primary or other education.

Section 2

Public benefit:

Information requested by the Charity Commissioner for Northern Ireland

In preparing this Annual Trustee Report, the Trustees confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's Public Benefit requirement statutory guidance.

The direct benefits which flow from enhancing the development and education of children under statutory school age include improved educational benefits and reduced stress and anxiety amongst children attending primary school for the first time. These benefits are evidenced through feedback from parents and primary school teachers and regular independent evaluation of key stage 1 performance at the local primary schools.

No harm arises from the charity's purpose.

The charity's beneficiaries are children under statutory school age from the Playgroup's catchment area.

The only private benefit flowing from this purpose is that the Playgroup staff receive a salary. This is incidental and necessary because the Playgroup requires staff to function and deliver its benefit. It is not practical to have volunteer staff.

Why we're important

The play group has provided pre-school education to children from the locality for more than thirty years.

Over that time, it has developed from its origins in a small community hall staffed by volunteers to a well-run, professional facility, which operates from a modern, purpose-built building staffed by qualified and experienced staff who bring familiarity and continuity to parent(s)/guardian(s) as each of their children avail of the service provided.

As a longstanding community facility, the play group is open to all regardless of perceived ability, religion, culture, race or means. This inclusiveness provides the children with positive self-esteem and an appropriate sense of equality, community and capacity to play and interact with others.

In short, our children are well prepared for life post-pre-school. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are fully informed about and, where possible, fully included in every aspect of their child's pre-school education. We present no barriers and are open to all.

The difference we make

Every child has the right to quality and accessible pre-school education.

We support this. We also support the right of every parent/guardian to be fully informed about and participate in their child's pre-school education both while in our care and while at home or elsewhere.

We have years of experience in recognising, supporting, encouraging and teaching children of all perceived abilities. Our care and support help parent(s)/guardian(s) to achieve their aspirations for their children. We work with parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide every child with appropriate support and assistance to enable them to be the best that they can be.

We believe that we are second to none in what we do.

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Section 3

See attached Accounts

Section 4

Charitable activities:

Fundraising

The play group receives most of its funding from the Education Authority (EA) . Total EA funding during the year ended 31 March 2025 amounted to £76635

In addition, the play group secured a range of other grants, which are detailed in the Receipts and Payments included in Section 3 of this Report.

During the year, the play group raised essential funds through several fundraising events, which included Christmas and Easter raffles. Every fundraising event and every donation received made a massive difference to the financial viability of the play group. In total, fundraising/donations for the year amounted to £4810

Beneficiaries

During the year to 31 March 2025, the play group welcomed 50 children into its facility.

The play group continued its second session in the afternoon for younger Pre Pre children. This session was again successful, and the Committee will consider its retention in future years depending upon application numbers.

Section 5

A word of thanks:

The Trustees, on behalf of the staff and everyone associated with the play group wish to thank every parent/guardian who entrusted their child to the play group. We understand that your children's well-being is paramount, and we are privileged to be asked to contribute to their development.

We also wish to thank everyone who supported the play group, either financially or in any other way. Without your support, the play group would struggle to exist, yet alone provide the children with the pre-school education that we should expect every child to receive.

We look forward to your continued support.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees on 15th December 2024:

Chairperson

Nuala O'Kane