

MILL STRAND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

The Trustees present their annual report together with financial statements of the Charity for the 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

Objectives and Activities

a. Public Benefits

The principal activity of the charity is to promote play based learning environments for all children in their pre-school year and out of school care without distinction of age, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic identity, political or religious opinion, by associating the statutory authorities, community and voluntary organisations in a common effort to advance education, and in particular:

- To advance the education of children by the provision of safe and satisfying group play, with the right of parents/carers to take responsibility for and to become involved in the activities of the group; and to promote the preservation of health of the children; and
- To support the values and principles of Early Years. The direct benefits which flow from the purpose include the advancement of education for children in the area of benefit in a pre-school context and also through out of school care for children in a safe and structured environment that promotes educational advancement, health and wellbeing. This includes, enhanced knowledge and understanding for children. Preparation to attend primary school. The opportunity to participate in activities after school, such as sports, crafts and languages that do not form part of the usual school curriculum.

Mill Strand Children's Centre provides this benefit in the context of an integrated environment that promotes harmony, equality and diversity. The Early Years values set out in Mill Strand Children's Centre Constitution are:

- Early childhood in its own right, as well as being the foundation for later life;
- Play as the primary vehicle to promote the development of young children;
- A culture of listening to children;
- Parents/carers as first educators;
- Inclusion through diversity and respect for others

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- Support education and development opportunities for families;
- Quality and innovation in early years care and education; and
- The professionalism and commitment of all staff and volunteers working with young children.

Achievements and Performance

a. Review of activities

Afterschool Activities

MSCC provides a range of afterschool activities, with each club catering for 16-20 children. Sessions are for children from Year 1 to Primary 7 with the offering of at least 5-6 different clubs each half-term. It is important that our programme includes a wide range of diversity programmes to ensure it meets the needs and skills of all our children, thus making us as fully inclusive as possible. The staff endeavour to organise afterschool activities that children may not be able to avail of in their home time. From traditional sports such as football, volleyball, hockey, GAA sports, skateboarding and tag rugby to other unique sports such as surfing, traditional arts & craft workshops, drama, fun with drums and yoga; all children get to avail of clubs they are interested in. Each term provides the children tasters for 4-6 weeks of a different kind of activity that they would not necessarily have access to.

Afterschool Care

We are now running 2 clubs side by side within The Nursery building for children from Primary 1 - Primary 7. Social services reregistered our setting during the summer and increased our numbers to 24 children per session per room.

Under the umbrella of Mill Strand Children's Centre, the After Schools Club provides 48 afterschool places per session based in an Early Years setting following all guidance set from Early Years and the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. The service is available term time from 2pm to 6pm every day. Here children can avail of many activities, such as arts and crafts, story time, homework time, outside play etc. During Easter, half-term breaks and the summer months after school care is available from 8.30am – 6pm Monday to Friday for up to 24 children. Some of the activities that take place are trips to the beach with sandcastle building competitions, outside play time, gardening in the sensory garden etc. It continues to be very popular with the children and parents and we currently have a waiting list. We have 11 members of children's centre staff.

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b. Financial Review

In the year to 31 March 2024 total receipts increased to £123,302 (2023: £110,465). The Trustees adopted a change in accounting method in 2019 from an accruals basis to a receipts and payments basis of accounting so fees due at the year end not received have been excluded from the 2024 figures.

Total payments for the year amounted to £107,997, (2023: £104,342) and the resultant surplus was £15,305 (2023: £6,123).

Charity reserves should provide the organisation with financial stability and the means for it to meet its charitable objectives for the foreseeable future. The trustees are confident that the unrestricted funds, together with expected future incomes, will be sufficient to meet the working capital requirements for the forthcoming year.

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

The principle object of the charity is to promote play based learning environments for all children in their pre-school year and out of school care without distinction of age, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic identity, political or religious opinion, by associating the statutory authorities, community and voluntary organisations in a common effort to advance education.

b. Method of appointment or election of trustees

The management of the charity is the responsibility of the trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the trust deed. New trustees are appointed when appropriate. Suitable candidates are considered on the basis of their skills, experience and sympathy with the aims of the charity. New trustees will be agreed at a board meeting before being invited to join.

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Plans for future periods

Mill Strand Children's Centre plans to continue to grow and provide after school activities and out of school care. We hope that funding will be sought to build the Children's Centre's own building for the future to enable us to grow, accept more children as we always have a running waiting list and to have our own space.

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This report was approved by trustees, on ~~XX~~ January 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Mr Callum Hannigan

Trustee.