

Community Relations In Schools (CRIS)

Northern Ireland · Charity number 105291

Details

Known as	CRIS
Status	Received
Registered	2018-05-01
Register	View on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland register

Contact

Address	Unit 6 North City Business Centre 2 Duncarin Gardens Belfast BT15 2gg BT15 2GG
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Activities

Purposes: The purpose of CRIS is to actively contribute to the building of a shared and reconciled society in Northern Ireland by supporting peace building programmes and activities through the medium of schools and their local communities.

What the charity does: The advancement of education, The advancement of citizenship or community development, The advancement of human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation or the promotion of religious or racial harmony or equality and diversity

How the charity works: Community development, Cross-border/cross-community, Education/training, Research/evaluation, Youth development

Who the charity helps: Adult training, Children (5-13 year olds), Ethnic minorities, Interface communities, Parents, Preschool (0-5 year olds), Women, Youth (14-25 year olds)

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£275,103	£285,327	£-15,536	5

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Norman Richardson		
Lawrence Patterson		
Mr Ben Craig		
Mr Conor O'Neill		
Mrs Aithne Kerrigan		
Mrs Patricia O'Neill		

Accounts

Charity registration number Charity No. NIC105291 (Northern Ireland)

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

N Richardson
L Patterson
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Charity number

NIC105291

Principal address

Unit 6 North City Business Centre
2 Duncairn Gardens
Belfast
BT15 2GG

Auditor

Amanda Harbinson
Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

CONTENTS

	Page
Trustees report	1 - 15
Statement of trustees responsibilities	16
Independent auditor's report	17 - 19
Statement of financial activities	20
Balance sheet	21
Notes to the financial statements	22 - 31

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Trustees' report for the year ended 31st March 2025

The trustees of CRIS are pleased to present their annual report and the financial statements for the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name:	Community Relations In Schools
Charity Number:	NIC105291
	The charity is an unincorporated association as per the Constitution.
Principal Office:	Unit 6, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GG
Registered Office:	Unit 6, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GG
Auditor:	Corrigan CA Limited 24 Greystone Road Antrim BT41 2QN
Bankers:	Ulster Bank Ltd. Unit 1 Westwood Centre, Kennedy Way, Belfast, BT11 9BQ

CRIS Trustees as of 31st March 2025:

Norman Richardson (Chair)

Patricia O'Neill (Vice Chair)

Lawrence Patterson (Treasurer)

Conor O'Neill (Secretary)

Aithne Kerrigan

Ben Craig

Objectives and activities

Charitable Objects

The purpose of CRIS is to actively contribute to the building of a shared, inclusive and reconciled society in Northern Ireland by developing and delivering peace-building programmes that promote diversity and inclusion within and between schools and their local communities.

CRIS also works in partnership with government departments, educational authorities, higher educational institutions, statutory agencies, funding bodies and community organisations to achieve positive and lasting impacts at an individual, family, school, community and system levels. Through collaboration, CRIS promotes reconciliation, equality and diversity by building meaningful relationships and trust across all sections of society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Public Benefit Statement

The Trustees of CRIS confirm compliance with their duties under the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) and have had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The public benefit requirement has continued to guide all organisational activities during this reporting period.

CRIS's work has delivered multi-level, measurable impact throughout the year. Across its programmes, training and partnership initiatives, CRIS engaged with 53 school communities, most located in areas of high socio-economic deprivation where the legacy of conflict remains most evident. The organisation intentionally prioritises these communities, focusing resources where peacebuilding and reconciliation can make the greatest difference.

During the year, CRIS directly engaged 1,695 participants including pupils, parents/carers, teachers, classroom assistants, principals and Board of Governor members, many of whom were involved in multiple sessions across programmes. Indirectly, many more individuals benefited through CRIS's wider efforts to promote diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding across schools. This included classroom assistants, trainee teachers, school communities and families who were positively affected through the improved school environments and practices supported by our programmes.

The charity also generates system level benefit, contributing practice-based learning that informs emerging policy and strategy in education and good relations. During Good Relations Week September 2024, CRIS launched its short film *Small Steady Steps*, demonstrating the impact of its *Buddy Up!* model in Urban Villages. The film and evaluation have provided policymakers and educators with tangible examples of effective peacebuilding practice now influencing regional initiatives.

In partnership with Coventry University and the Moving Forward Together (MFT) network, CRIS advanced research on the CRIS/Coventry Trust Indicator Framework (TIF), exploring how trust between schools supports collaboration, enhances teaching and learning and contributes to reconciliation. Funded through a Community Relations Council (NICRC) small grant and co-invested by the Education Authority (EA) (£5,000), this project has generated significant interest from stakeholders seeking deeper insight into trust-building across schools and communities.

CRIS continues to make a regional contribution to systems change, working with the EA to strengthen and extend shared education across Northern Ireland. Its expertise in building collaboration and inclusion positions CRIS as a key partner in advancing reconciliation through education.

The organisation also creates wider public benefit by amplifying stories of hope and progress that counter conflict-focused narratives. Through films, digital storytelling and publications, CRIS showcases the voices of participants and schools, highlighting the intergenerational nature of peacebuilding and the transferability of its model internationally.

Throughout the year, CRIS expanded its communications and outreach, producing multiple short films including a 40-year celebration testimonial video and the documentary *Small Steady Steps*, and contributing regularly to NICRC's monthly e-magazine. The 40th Anniversary Gala further strengthened CRIS's public profile and reinforced its message of shared, reconciled community aspirations.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Summary of the Main Activities

The core activities of CRIS are:

- Delivering training, consultancy and support across all school sectors to strengthen capacity in good relations and collaborative education.
- Providing school based, inter-community pupil programmes that promote diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding in age-appropriate and constructive ways.
- Creating opportunities for parents and carers to engage in peacebuilding through schools and community networks.
- Advocating for the role of education as a foundation for intergenerational peacebuilding and a shared future.
- Disseminating good practice and research through events, publications and contributions to higher education and statutory bodies.
- Developing evaluation systems linked to the *Good Relations and Collaborative Education (GRACE)* model to evidence impact.
- Strengthening organisational sustainability and governance, embedding continuous improvement across all areas of operation.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Year in Numbers

40 th Year	53	1182	109	404	£82,483	£272,598
Supporting School-based Peacebuilding	Schools	Pupils	Parents/carers	Teachers/principals	Unrestricted Reserves	Total Income

The CRIS Strategic Plan (2021–2025), which guided delivery across the organisation's three core aims, was extended by the Board of Directors for a further two years to March 2027. This decision reflected both the disruption and loss of operational time caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the continuing relevance of the strategy's aims and objectives. The extension ensures CRIS can fully consolidate and build upon progress in its three strategic areas:

1. **Catalysing Peace and Reconciliation**
2. **Equipping and Inspiring the Education Sector**
3. **Sustaining and Growing CRIS to achieve its mission**

Aligned Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and governance targets continue to guide programme delivery and organisational development under each of these aims.

Summary of Achievements - Key Performance Indicators:

- KPI 1: Total Children/Young People Engaged - 1182
- KPI 2: Total Parents/Carers Engaged - 109
- KPI 3: Total Teachers/Principals Engaged - 404
- KPI 4: Total Schools Engaged - 53
- KPI 5: Total New School Partnerships (Twinned schools) Developed - 2
- KPI 6: Total Locality Partnerships - 3 (includes 52 schools)
- KPI 7: Total Income - £272,598

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Programme Overview:

This strategy commits to investing its funded resources across seven localities in Northern Ireland:

ANBC Council Area:

- NEST (Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together) 21 schools located in Newtownabbey & Glengormley involved in educational collaboration coordinated by CRIS.
- MFT (Moving Forward Together) 21 schools located in Antrim and Randalstown. CRIS having now stepped out of a coordinating role and is a member of the Steering Committee.

Belfast City: CRIS runs a strategic peacebuilding programme focused on the Crumlin Road interface called *Everyday Peacebuilding in Ardoyne and Shankill*. The *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme is anchored to two Nursery Schools where Buddy Up! had its genesis and is now engaged in eight feeder primary schools in the locality.

Urban Villages localities. CRIS has continued to support Urban Village localities in their building sustainable good relations particularly linked to Shared education initiatives. These five localities include: Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan; Colin/West Belfast, Eastside/ East Belfast; Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets areas/ South Belfast; and The Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street – Derry/Londonderry.

Programme Innovations and Strategic Developments:

Expanded Teacher Training: Supporting student teacher development continues to be a key feature of CRIS's annual programme delivery, with ongoing requests for partnership from Stranmillis University College. In 2024–25, CRIS led five sessions within the *Leadership for Diversity and Mutual Understanding* module, which promotes best practice among educators in leadership for diversity, equality, inclusion and intercultural competence.

In June 2024, both Stranmillis and St Mary's University Colleges invited CRIS to redevelop and deliver their joint inter-college programme, *Professional Learning in a Changing Society (PLICS)*. The newly designed programme ran successfully between October and November 2024 for B.Ed Year 1 and Year 2 cohorts, engaging a total of 267 student teachers. The programme received highly positive feedback for its practical approach to embedding inclusive leadership principles in teacher education. CRIS looks forward to further developing its strategic partnership with Stranmillis and St Mary's University Colleges to advance shared goals in teacher education, diversity and inclusion.

New Curriculum Development: In early 2025, CRIS developed a much anticipated Foundation Stage curriculum titled *"You've Got a Friend in Me"*, creating a new entry-level programme for *Buddy Up!* aimed at Primary 1 pupils. This curriculum introduces early friendship building and empathy skills, forming the foundation for subsequent CRIS primary programmes.

Alongside this, work began on the redevelopment of the *Celebrating Diversity* programme, maintaining its core themes of friendship, identity, diversity and inclusion, while enhancing usability and consistency. The updated version will feature consolidated lesson plans, clear definitions and a user-friendly teacher guide ensuring that any educator or facilitator can confidently deliver the programme, thereby building capacity across the wider education system.

Preparing to Expand Service Delivery: CRIS continues to receive regular requests from schools to deliver specialist training on good relations themes. Where feasible within funded capacity, these opportunities are embraced to extend the organisation's reach and impact. During 2024–25, CRIS delivered identity, flags and symbols training to the entire Year 8 student body at Glengormley Integrated College and began planning for the annual Year 8 Flags and Symbols programme at Dungannon Integrated College (scheduled for April 2025).

CRIS was again invited by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council to contribute to its Duke of Edinburgh youth programme and to deliver workshops in the Bee Safe Programme (May 2025), which engages all primary schools in the ANBC locality.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

CRIS established a new partnership with Sandy Row and St James's Football Clubs, supporting club leaders to build good relations capacity and provide positive opportunities for young people living near interface areas who may be at risk of becoming involved in antisocial behaviour or unrest. CRIS prepared and submitted a successful T:BUC Summer Camps funding application on behalf of the clubs, securing support for a pilot project with 40 young people to begin in summer 2025.

To meet increasing demand, CRIS also began building a team of trained Associates through the *Next Generation Peacebuilders* initiative. This expanded team will play an integral role in supporting the rollout of the forthcoming ASPIRE Shared Education Programme.

Engaging the Business Community: CRIS completed its first successful year of structured engagement with the business community, introducing the organisation's mission and exploring opportunities for collaboration through social value partnerships and fundraising initiatives. A series of engagement meetings were held throughout the year, generating positive interest in aligning corporate social responsibility goals with CRIS's peacebuilding and education programmes. During the year, CRIS also accessed specialist training to enhance its capacity to act as a broker for social value procurement in public sector contracts, positioning the organisation for future partnership and sustainability opportunities. These efforts were strengthened through fundraising activities linked to the CRIS 40th Anniversary Gala Celebration (March 2025) and raised awareness of CRIS's long-term impact and helped build a growing network of corporate supporters. The gala event raised approximately £6,000 through raffle proceeds, donations and the charity auction. We are grateful for the generosity shown, which reflects the strong commitment to CRIS's mission and continued impact.



CRIS 40th Anniversary Gala at Titanic Belfast (Mar 2025)

The Trustees wish to record their sincere appreciation to the many local businesses that supported CRIS through donations of prizes for the raffle and auction and through in-house fundraising initiatives. CRIS also received generous donations including £225 from Window to the Womb and £620 from Exsto Gym, raised through a community spin-class fundraiser. CRIS was also grateful to Lancia Consult (Belfast) for being our key sponsor for the Gala. Each of these contributors was formally acknowledged at the Gala event and highlighted through CRIS's communications channels.

Delivery and Impact of Funded Programmes:

1. Everyday Peacebuilding Programme (North Belfast):

The *Everyday Peacebuilding Programme* is one of CRIS's long-term strategic initiatives, designed to strengthen good relations and social cohesion within families and communities in North Belfast. The programme builds on a network of eight schools located along the Crumlin Road interface, linked through the *Buddy Up!* framework and partnerships with Edenderry Nursery School and Holy Cross Nursery School.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Participating schools include Edenbrooke and Mercy Primary Schools, Holy Cross Boys' and Glenwood Primary Schools, and Wheatfield and Holy Cross Girls' Primary Schools. Planning is underway to expand the network in 2025–26 to include Ligoniel Primary School and St Vincent de Paul Primary School, with preparatory engagement completed during this reporting period. The annual work plan focused on three key areas: school engagement, parental engagement and community engagement.

Primary School Engagement: CRIS worked closely with principals, teachers, and parents/carers to consolidate participation across the school network:

- Conducted listening exercises and planning meetings with school partners.
- Hosted a Principal's Breakfast and planning event (Aug 2024).
- Delivered Good Relations Curriculum training for 18 teachers across two days (Sep 2024 and Feb 2025).
- Facilitated curriculum and planning meetings, a Governor and Community Information Evening (Feb 2025) to strengthen board and local support and parental engagement sessions with Ligoniel and St Vincent de Paul Primary Schools (Mar 2025) in preparation for their inclusion in the programme.
- Contributed to Good Relations Week and participated in meetings with Shared Education Coordinators to support partnership development and ensure alignment with EA priorities.

Pupil Programmes: CRIS coordinated *Buddy Up!* activities for Year 3 and Year 7 pupils across six schools, with pilot planning for the new P1 "You've Got a Friend in Me" programme.

CRIS delivered three *Celebrating Diversity* programmes (12 hours each) involving 150 pupils and 30 parents, including inter-school visits - with **82%** of pupils reporting: *"I had fun learning how children were different and how they were similar."*

CRIS delivered three *Knowing Me Knowing You* programmes (16 hours each) involving 150 pupils - with **78%** stating: *"I had a chance to think and talk about different groups of people who live in Northern Ireland - their culture, religion, and symbols."*

Parental Engagement: Following the redeployment of Damon Henry as programme lead in April 2024, CRIS conducted a review and consultation with staff and parents from long standing Buddy Up partners Holy Cross and Edenderry Nursery Schools. Surveys confirmed the high value placed on parental involvement: **78% of parents** wished to participate in future events, and **100% of teachers** agreed that parental engagement enhanced the *Buddy Up!* experience. Participants emphasised that -

- *"It's an amazing opportunity for people to come together who might not normally have this chance... making our society a better place to live."*
- *"The programme has a positive impact on everyone involved — children, parents, and staff alike."*

The 2025 programme was shaped by this feedback, introducing practical and dialogue-based activities that engaged 48 parents and renewed enthusiasm among nursery staff. Key highlights included school staff development day; parental engagement re-launch and a blend of facilitated workshops and creative joint art project and celebration event.



Parents at W5 workshop with CRIS (Jan 2025)

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Community Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement: CRIS continued to strengthen its partnerships with local organisations across Ardoyne and Shankill, ensuring closer alignment between educational initiatives and community-led good relations efforts. During the year, CRIS engaged with a broad network of community, voluntary and statutory partners including representatives from sport, housing, women's and youth sectors to promote collaboration and shared learning in support of inclusive education. The organisation also contributed to regional networks such as **RAISE (Raising Attainment in Education)**, the **North Belfast Partnership** and the **NICRC's Shared Learning Forum**, maintaining an active role in advancing good relations and community cohesion across North Belfast.

1. Growing GRACE Programme: Newtownabbey and Antrim & Randalstown

NEST (Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together): The NEST partnership, now comprising 21 schools, continues to grow as a model of educational collaboration in the Newtownabbey and Glengormley area. CRIS provides strategic facilitation, relationship-building support for principals and senior leaders and coordination of joint learning and development activities.

Shared Education Development: CRIS supported the creation and strengthening of new shared education partnerships, including St MacNissi's and Abbot's Cross Primary Schools and between St Mary's on the Hill and Carnmoney Primary Schools. These partnerships have enhanced cross-community engagement and built confidence among schools newly embarking on shared education.

Pupil Programmes: CRIS delivered targeted *Buddy Up!* programmes to support these new partnerships, including:

- Three 12-hour *Celebrating Diversity* programmes with P3 pupils and parents, and
- One *Knowing Me Knowing You* programme with P7 pupils.

Feedback from children reflected increased empathy and understanding of difference. One pupil shared, "*We learned about diversity and made a diversi-tree. Diversity means we're all different,*" while another said, "*Making new friends and building a stronger community between both schools was my favourite part.*"

Partnership Development and Capacity Building: CRIS facilitated one-to-one listening exercises with school leaders across the network to inform partnership planning and hosted three NEST partnership meetings during the year, attended by school leaders. Collaborative initiatives included two local football tournaments, involving over 160 pupils and 25 staff, fostering friendship through sport.

To strengthen governance and coordination, CRIS established a NEST Advisory Group representing all school sectors and launched an online Microsoft Teams platform to share resources and sustain communication across schools.

A Shared Learning Network workshop for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) brought together 20 participants from 18 schools to exchange good practice and explore good relations themes. New branding and visibility materials were also developed to strengthen NEST's public identity.



Training and Council Collaboration: CRIS delivered identity and diversity workshops to over 300 Year 8 pupils at Integrated College Glengormley, supporting pupils' transition to post-primary education in a diverse environment. CRIS also continued collaboration with Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, preparing to deliver good relations workshops for approximately 1,600 pupils as part of the Bee Safe Programme (May 2025).

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Moving Forward Together (MFT) Partnership (Antrim & Randalstown): CRIS continued to support the MFT partnership, acting as community partner and advisor to the coordination team and Chair. A key development this year was the launch of a joint research project with Coventry University, exploring how the CRIS/Coventry Trust Indicators operate in practice, specifically how increased trust between schools strengthens collaboration, enhances teaching and learning and contributes to reconciliation outcomes. The research project was supported through a NICRC small grant, with additional investment of £5,000 from the EA reflecting the high level of interest in its potential to inform good relations and shared education policy. The final report and recommendations will be completed and launched in the next financial year and CRIS anticipates significant interest across government departments in the findings and their wider applicability.

This research reinforces CRIS's strategic aim of catalysing peace and reconciliation through education, demonstrating how measurable trust and collaboration between schools can deliver meaningful social change and improved educational outcomes.

3. Final Evaluation & Wrap Up: Buddy Up! in Urban Villages

The Executive Office (TEO) Urban Villages-funded *Buddy Up!* programme formally concluded in March 2024, marking the completion of a five-year investment (2019–2024) in peacebuilding and education. To consolidate and celebrate its achievements, CRIS commissioned an independent evaluation by youth consultant Debs Erwin and hosted a celebration event at Belfast City Hall in September 2024, attended by over 100 representatives from schools, funders, community organisations, parents, and government departments, including the Deputy Lord Mayor of Belfast.



The evaluation, film and celebration event were funded by the TEO, with Belfast City Hall kindly sponsoring the venue in recognition of the programme's contribution to community cohesion and education. As part of this legacy work, CRIS produced a 20-minute documentary film titled '*Small Steady Steps*', which provided a powerful platform for dozens of contributions from children, parents and school staff. The film captures, in their own words, the transformative impact of *Buddy Up*, illustrating how small, consistent acts of friendship and understanding have helped to change attitudes, build relationships and strengthen reconciliation across communities.

Across the five-year period, the evaluation recorded significant reach and impact:

- **3,124 children** participated, developing cross-community friendships.
- **424 parents** engaged through intergenerational workshops promoting understanding and inclusion.
- **252 educators** benefited from professional learning and school-community collaboration.
- **Seven new educational partnerships** were established, creating pathways into Shared Education programmes.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Outcomes and Impact: The programme achieved consistently strong results across Outcomes-Based Accountability (OBA) measures:

- **100%** of schools reported that *Buddy Up!* supported cross-community engagement and provided a valuable shared learning experience.
- **89%** noted improved attitudes toward cultural diversity.
- **100%** of staff reported enhanced capacity and professional development in good relations work.
- **91%** of school leaders said *Buddy Up!* strengthened good relations within partnerships and **85%** noted wider community impact.

Qualitative Findings: The evaluation also highlighted the programme's deep personal and relational impact.

Children described *Buddy Up!* as “*fun and enjoyable*”, particularly valuing the team-building activities that helped them meet and understand peers from different backgrounds. Many demonstrated new awareness of cultural diversity and improved communication skills. Some noted initial hesitancy in meeting children from other schools, suggesting that longer engagement could further build confidence and connection - a useful insight for future programme design.

Educators praised *Buddy Up!* for creating safe, meaningful opportunities for cross-community encounter, helping to “*normalise*” interaction and difference. Teachers highlighted that the programme:

- Built confidence and competence in discussing identity and diversity.
- Catalysed seven sustainable school partnerships that continued beyond programme funding.
- Contributed directly to teachers' professional learning and strengthened Good Relations pedagogy.

Many described *Buddy Up!* as a valuable complement and often a precursor to Shared Education, noting its stronger good relations focus, flexibility and high engagement among pupils. Overall, the evaluation confirmed *Buddy Up!* as an exemplary model for embedding good relations, strengthening inter-school collaboration and supporting reconciliation outcomes across Belfast's Urban Villages. Its legacy continues to shape CRIS's ongoing work in shared education, community relations and peacebuilding practice.

BUILDING ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Governance and sustainability remain central to CRIS's strategic development. The organisation continues to invest in strong governance controls, risk management and succession planning, ensuring it is well positioned to face future challenges with confidence and stability. The Board has also maintained a programme of ongoing policy reviews to ensure all operational, financial, and safeguarding frameworks remain compliant and reflect best practice.

During the year, the Board conducted a comprehensive review of staff remuneration, terms, and conditions, introducing a 35-hour working week and a new salary structure to maintain competitiveness within the sector. This structure will be reviewed annually to ensure CRIS continues to attract, develop and retain high-calibre staff as it transitions towards a more diversified income model.

CRIS also advanced its communications and organisational identity, launching a refreshed brand and logo alongside its Theory of Change, reflecting both its heritage and future direction. This marks the beginning of a broader overhaul of CRIS's communications profile, including a full review of the communications and social media policy, enhancements to the organisation's online presence and strengthened internal systems such as the complaints procedure.

A new Funding Strategy, reviewed quarterly, now provides greater clarity around income sources, targets, and projections. Preparations are underway to expand consultancy and training services, supported by revised pricing structures and marketing materials aimed at schools engaged in shared education who can access funding to commission CRIS's expertise. This represents a significant growth area expected to generate substantial income in future years.

Reflecting the success of the 40th Anniversary Gala, the Board has also committed to hosting at least one community fundraising event annually, reinforcing CRIS's connection with supporters and enhancing long-term sustainability.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Financial Review

Summary of Funding Secured to Support Operations:

CRIS was fortunate to secure all necessary funds to deliver its workplan ambitions during the reporting period, ensuring the continued delivery of high quality peacebuilding and education programmes across Northern Ireland. A list of funding partners and their respective awards is provided in the financials section of this report.

This year represented a significant transition period for CRIS. It was the first year without core funding investment from TEO/Urban Villages that funding stream's inception as the Buddy Up Urban Village initiative reached its natural conclusion after five years. However, The Executive Office (TEO) provided a grant of £5,960 to support the production of CRIS's short film *Small Steady Steps* and to fund a celebration event at Belfast City Hall marking the achievements of the initiative and the impact of the Buddy Up programme across 40 schools in Urban Village localities. Despite this shift, CRIS successfully navigated the change, marking the beginning of a new phase of diversified income generation and financial independence. The organisation continued to strengthen its funding base through a mix of statutory, philanthropic and partnership-based income, guided by an updated Funding Strategy, reviewed quarterly to ensure clarity and accountability around income sources and targets.

CRIS maintains a strong reputation for the effective administration of grants, ensuring all funding is managed in full compliance with contract conditions. The organisation consistently achieves and often exceeds programme outcomes anticipated at the point of application. Feedback from funders continues to affirm that CRIS represents excellent value for money, demonstrating impact and accountability across all areas of delivery.

The charity remains committed to minimising governance and administrative costs, ensuring that the vast majority of income directly supports peacebuilding programmes within school communities across the seven localities in which CRIS operates. CRIS is also subject to regular financial and compliance audits by the NICRC and TEO and is highly regarded for its robust governance standards and transparent financial management.

During this reporting period, CRIS also submitted a new core funding application to the NICRC and is hopeful of a positive outcome that would secure multi-annual core funding to support the organisation's stability and long-term strategic delivery.

CRIS also secured new investment for its *Growing GRACE* programme through continued partnership with the Ardbarron Trust and extends its appreciation to Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council, which invested in CRIS via a single-supplier contract to support NEST partnership activities. These funds, extending into the next financial year, are structured as service agreements rather than traditional grants, reflecting their contractual and outcomes-based nature. CRIS values these flexible and forward-looking partnerships and aims to build on these relationships with like-minded investors to sustain and expand its programmes.

The Trustees wish to acknowledge the Irish Government's decision to extend *Strategic Partner Funding* for an additional year, pending the launch of its new Reconciliation Fund Strategy and the reopening of the call for Strategic Partners. This continued investment reflects the Irish Government's confidence in CRIS's reconciliation work and has been vital in maintaining programme stability during this transitional period.

CRIS ended the financial year in a stable financial position, with total income of £275,103 and expenditure of £285,327, reflecting a planned use of reserves to maintain programme delivery during a transitional funding period. Unrestricted reserves stood at £82,483 at year-end - a decrease of approximately £24,000 from the previous year, due to the need to utilise reserves to cover salary and operational costs pending receipt of new income streams. This figure represents 62% of the annual reserves target for the 2024-25 period.

The Board is satisfied that reserves remain at a prudent level, providing adequate cover for short term obligations while supporting continued investment in staff and programmes. With new income sources coming online and further diversification underway, CRIS anticipates growth in reserves over the coming year and a steady increase beyond that, ensuring financial resilience and sustainability for the organisation's long-term strategic objectives.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Financial Management:

CRIS operates under a comprehensive Financial Management Policy and Procedure Manual, reviewed and updated annually to ensure compliance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland), the Charity Commission's guidance on Internal Financial Controls for Charities, and the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).

Financial oversight is provided by the Finance and Personnel Subcommittee, which meets quarterly ahead of each Board meeting. Chaired by the Treasurer and including the Vice-Chair and one other Trustee, the subcommittee is attended by the CEO and Finance Manager, who prepare the relevant financial and HR reports requiring Board review or approval.

The subcommittee provides strategic guidance on all financial matters, ensuring effective internal controls, independent audit processes, and prudent financial management. Its key responsibilities include:

- Providing direction and assurance to the Board on fiscal responsibility, long-term financial planning, and strategy.
- Reviewing management accounts, budgets, and funding strategies to ensure solvency and sustainability.
- Recommending the annual budget for Board approval and overseeing the management of organisational assets and risk exposure.
- Advising the CEO on finance, HR and risk management matters.

The Treasurer, CEO, and Finance Manager meet monthly and more frequently as required to monitor financial performance and address emerging issues. The Chair also meets regularly with the CEO and participates in organisational development meetings, ensuring a strong link between governance oversight and the delivery of CRIS's charitable objectives.

Reserves Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for managing and maintaining appropriate financial reserves to support the stability and sustainability of CRIS. The policy aims to ensure that CRIS can meet its ongoing operational commitments, manage financial risks and invest in future projects in line with its charitable objectives.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all trustees, management, and finance staff responsible for the financial management of CRIS. It covers the identification, calculation, and review of reserves.

3. Policy Statement

CRIS is committed to maintaining a level of reserves that:

- Ensures financial stability and operational continuity.
- Allows for effective management of unforeseen financial risks or losses.
- Supports the strategic goals and future growth of the charity in accordance with the charity's purposes and objectives.

4. Definition of Reserves

Reserves are the portion of unrestricted funds that are freely available for general charitable purposes, excluding funds set aside for specific projects, restricted funds, and fixed assets (such as property and equipment).

5. Key Guidance and References

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) Reserves Guidance: Provides guidelines on setting, managing and reporting charity reserves (<https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/charity-essentials/managing-financial-difficulties/reserves/>)

The Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): Offers a framework for accounting and reporting practices for charities, including reserves management.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Reserves Procedures

1. Determining the Reserves Level

- **Assess Operational Needs:** Annually assess the charity's operating costs, including regular expenses such as salaries, rent, and overheads.
- **Risk Assessment:** Conduct a financial risk assessment to identify potential risks that may impact funding, income streams, or expenditures.
- **Set Target Reserves:** The target reserves level should be determined based on three to six months of operating costs and anticipated financial risks.

2. Monitoring and Managing Reserves

- **Quarterly Financial Reviews:** Financial staff should review the reserves levels quarterly (and more often as required) to ensure they align with target thresholds.
- **Annual Review by Trustees:** The reserves policy and target levels should be reviewed annually by the Board of trustees.
- **Reporting to Stakeholders:** Include the reserves policy and current reserves position in the annual financial statements, in line with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) and Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) requirements.

3. Utilising Reserves

- **Authorisation for Use:** Reserves can be drawn down in the event of an emergency or financial shortfall, but must be authorised by the board of trustees.
- **Replenishment of Reserves:** When reserves are utilised, the board must approve a plan to replenish reserves within an agreed timeframe.
- **Restricted and Designated Funds:** Distinguish between unrestricted reserves, designated funds, and restricted funds, ensuring restricted funds are used solely for their intended purposes.

4. Core Purposes for Using Reserves

The Board aims to hold unrestricted reserves to enable the organisation to maintain its activities in the event of:

- Gaps in funding
- Late payment of grants and fees
- Upgrades in IT systems and equipment as and when the need arises
- Gaps in opportunities to income generate through training and consultancy work
- Its redundancy liabilities and rental and other contracts
- Its match funding obligations set out in funding contracts where any percentage of staff salaries are not covered by another funder(s)

5. Procedures for Reporting and Compliance

- **Annual Reporting Requirements:** In accordance with the CCNI's guidance, CRIS will include a statement on reserves within the annual report.
- **Financial Statement Disclosure:** Provide a clear explanation in financial statements if reserves fall below or exceed the target range.

6. Review and Revision of Policy

- **Annual Policy Review:** The reserves policy should be reviewed annually by the Board of trustees.
- **Adjustment of Target Reserves:** Any adjustment to the reserves target level should be based on updated financial projections and risk assessments.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

7. Current Reserves Position:

As of 31 March 2025, CRIS held total reserves of £82,483, representing 62% of the organisation's target position of £134,000 for the 2024-25 year.

The Board has revised the reserves target for the forthcoming year (2025-26) to reflect six months of operating costs (138k) plus a redundancy provision (35k), setting a new target of £173,000. CRIS expects to achieve this level within the next two years, supported by the successful delivery of its resource diversification strategy.

This strategy focuses on expanding consultancy and contract work, developing corporate partnerships and strengthening traditional fundraising and donor engagement through events and campaigns. Substantial planning undertaken during this reporting period has positioned CRIS to pivot effectively toward this multi-stranded income generation model, enhancing financial resilience and long-term sustainability.

Risk Management:

The Board continues to prioritise effective risk management to ensure CRIS remains financially sustainable, well governed and focused on delivering public benefit. Trustees actively monitor key risks through a regularly updated Risk Register, with actions identified and reviewed according to their likelihood and potential impact.

Key risks and mitigations during the period included:

1. Political uncertainty and reliance on government grants

A new Funding and Resource Diversification Strategy has been implemented to broaden income sources through Trusts and Foundations, business partnerships, consultancy services and new fundraising activities.

2. Lack of a long-term fundraising plan

The new strategy addresses this by embedding multi-year planning. A full review will take place in 2025–26 to inform a new organisational fundraising and sustainability plan.

3. Loss of key staff and recruitment challenges

Competitive pay and conditions. A new 2024–2027 salary structure ensures fair and competitive pay with provision for inflationary increases when affordable. Enhanced professional development and the *Next Generation Peacebuilders* Programme support staff retention and the training of new Associates.

4. Organisational capacity and succession planning

A new Succession Planning Strategy is being developed to strengthen leadership continuity and delivery capacity. Additional recruitment of Associates is planned for May 2025 to support future growth.

5. Reputation and public communications

The Board recognises the potential for reputational risk arising from online activity and public commentary. In response, CRIS has reviewed and strengthened its Complaints and Communications Procedures, updated its social media policy, and implemented clearer escalation processes and staff responsibilities to ensure timely, proportionate and professional responses.

The Board remains committed to maintaining a proactive approach to risk, governance and sustainability, ensuring CRIS remains resilient and strategically positioned for the years ahead.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Type of governing document:

Community Relations in Schools is a community organisation governed by its constitution. It was adopted in April 1984 and last amended in October 2017 to ensure it was up to date using best practice guidelines as set out in suggested model documents on the Northern Ireland Charity Commission's website.

Trustee selection methods:

At the Annual General Meeting each year a Board is appointed to run CRIS for the next year. Each member of the Committee is elected for a period of three years. Retiring members are eligible for re-election. All nominees must indicate their willingness to stand and be proposed and seconded. A written agreement of the nominated persons in absentia must be presented.

Committee members may also be co-opted on the CRIS committee as potential new interested individuals are considered throughout the year. When considering the co-opting of trustees, the Board has regard to the requirement for any specialist skills needed.

We are fortunate to have an engaged and active Board with an array of skills. The Board strives to be as diverse and representative of educational stakeholders and society in general, as possible and has expertise spanning the community and voluntary, funding, corporate and statutory sectors. The goal to increase the CRIS Board to a maximum of 10 members has been delayed due to competing pressures within the year linked to the vacant position. Skill sets and expertise in the areas of human resources, finance and fundraising have been pinpointed to aid recruitment and welcome statements identified to increase our diversity.

Trustee Induction and Training:

New trustees receive an induction pack which provides information and guidelines on their task, responsibilities, and the policies and values of CRIS. The CEO and members of the Board meet with new trustees during the preliminary stages of their appointment to talk through the organisation in more detail, the history of its work, strategic positioning and discuss other areas of interest.

New trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity guidelines, the charity commission guidance on public benefit, the content of the constitution, the committee and decision-making process, the strategic and operational plan and the recent financial performance of the charity.

During the induction period they will meet the full staff team, other trustees and key partners. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. New trustees are invited to attend any mandatory meetings as set down by funders who support CRIS.

Statement of Board Members' Responsibilities:

Board members will prepare financial statements for each year that give a true and accurate view of the state of affairs and of the surplus or deficit of the organisation for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the committee members are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and practices in the Charity Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume the charity will continue in business.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Board members are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the organisation and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with current legislation.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Organisational Structure:

The Board meets four times per year and sub-groups meet to address any additional finance, personnel and policy matters as required. Finance and Personnel subcommittee meetings take place 1 - 2 weeks before the Board meetings to ensure sufficient time to update briefing packs and draft recommendations for Board discussion and decision making. The policy subcommittee operates on a more *ad hoc* basis. The Board employs a CEO who manages the day-to-day operations of the charity.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors:

So far as each of the Board members at the date of approval of these financial statements are aware: (a) there is no relevant information of which the charity auditors are unaware; and (b) they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

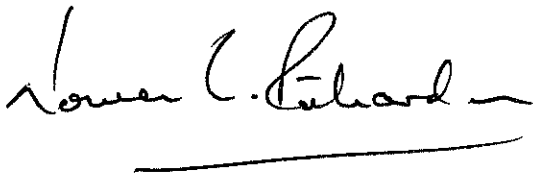
Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Trustees on Monday 8th December 2025 signed on their behalf.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

N Richardson

(Chairperson)

Dated: 8 December 2025



L. Patterson

(Treasurer)

Dated 8 December 2025



COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustee Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Community Relations In Schools (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts And Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Other matters which we are required to address

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared accounts in accordance with "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) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Amanda Harbinson

Mrs Amanda Harbinson (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Corrigan CA Limited

8 December 2025

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies		26	7,505	7,531	-	4,450	4,450
Charitable activities	4	26,905	224,245	251,150	31,849	304,438	336,287
Fundraising activities	3	16,422	-	16,422	-	-	-
Total income		<u>43,353</u>	<u>231,750</u>	<u>275,103</u>	<u>31,849</u>	<u>308,888</u>	<u>340,737</u>
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	5	71,216	214,111	285,327	21,094	287,052	308,146
Total expenditure		<u>71,216</u>	<u>214,111</u>	<u>285,327</u>	<u>21,094</u>	<u>287,052</u>	<u>308,146</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		<u>(27,863)</u>	<u>17,639</u>	<u>(10,224)</u>	<u>10,755</u>	<u>21,836</u>	<u>32,591</u>
Transfers between funds							
		3,072	(3,072)	-	14,616	(14,616)	-
Net movement in funds	6	<u>(24,791)</u>	<u>14,567</u>	<u>(10,224)</u>	<u>25,371</u>	<u>7,220</u>	<u>32,591</u>
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		107,274	7,220	114,494	81,903	-	81,903
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		<u>82,483</u>	<u>21,787</u>	<u>104,270</u>	<u>107,274</u>	<u>7,220</u>	<u>114,494</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	12		6		6
Tangible assets	11		1,949		3,421
			<u>1,955</u>		<u>3,427</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	13	26,051		86,855	
Cash at bank and in hand		91,800		35,116	
		<u>117,851</u>		<u>121,971</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(15,536)		(10,904)	
Net current assets			102,315		111,067
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>104,270</u>		<u>114,494</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability			<u>104,270</u>		<u>114,494</u>
Income Funds					
Restricted Funds	15	21,787		7,220	
Unrestricted Funds		82,483		107,274	
		<u>104,270</u>		<u>114,494</u>	

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 8 December 2025

L Patterson
Trustee



COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

1 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Accounting policies

Charity information

Community Relations In Schools is an unincorporated charity.

2.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 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 2016).

The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value.

The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

2.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

2.4 Incoming resources

Income From Charitable Activities

Income from charitable activities is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Income from government or other grants, whether 'capital' or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has the entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Donations & Legacies

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Fundraising

Fundraising income is recognised on receipt.

2.5 Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure On Charitable Activities

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

The charity is below the charity audit threshold and therefore is exempt from reporting expenditure on an activity basis. The charity has opted to report by the nature rather than on an activity basis.

2.6 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Intangible assets acquired on business combinations are recognised separately from goodwill at the acquisition date where it is probable that the expected future economic benefits that are attributable to the asset will flow to the entity and the fair value of the asset can be measured reliably; the intangible asset arises from contractual or other legal rights; and the intangible asset is separable from the entity.

Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

Software	20% straight line
----------	-------------------

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

2.7 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures, fittings & equipment	20% straight line
--------------------------------	-------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

2.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

2.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

2.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

3 Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £
Fundraising events	16,422	-

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Service Delivery	26,905	31,849
Grants	224,245	304,438
	<u>251,150</u>	<u>336,287</u>
	<u><u>251,150</u></u>	<u><u>336,287</u></u>

	Total 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2025 £
Analysis by fund			
Unrestricted funds	-	26,905	26,905
Restricted funds	224,245	-	224,245
	<u>224,245</u>	<u>26,905</u>	<u>251,150</u>
	<u><u>224,245</u></u>	<u><u>26,905</u></u>	<u><u>251,150</u></u>

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Total 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Unrestricted funds	-	31,849	31,849
Restricted funds	304,438	-	304,438
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>17,556</u>	<u>336,287</u>
	<u><u>178,273</u></u>	<u><u>17,556</u></u>	<u><u>336,287</u></u>

Included in Grants Are:

	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council Good Relations Funding	2,000	-
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Core Funding	73,995	72,787
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Funding	12,546	9,501
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Reconciliation Fund - Strategic Partner Grant	83,024	84,310
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Reconciliation Fund - Project Fund	20,941	-
The Executive Office, Central good Relations Fund	15,779	-
Halifax Foundation	5,000	-
The Executive Office, Urban Villages Initiative	5,960	133,470
Community Foundation Northern Ireland	5,000	4,370
	<u>224,245</u>	<u>304,438</u>
	<u><u>224,245</u></u>	<u><u>304,438</u></u>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

4 Charitable activities

(Continued)

5 Charitable activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Staff costs	181,659	193,966
Staff Training	954	2,990
Depreciation and impairment	1,695	1,897
Resources	10,468	12,832
Travel	6,235	8,613
Subscriptions	1,539	1,863
Hospitality	15,971	7,066
Facilitation	24,855	30,561
Light & Heat	983	1,188
Telephone	485	475
Sundry	402	1,137
Raffle Prizes	2,505	-
Subcover	10,540	22,183
Accountancy	2,988	2,939
Professional Fees	5,141	1,556
Bank Charges	281	99
Rent	11,295	11,655
Insurance	3,591	3,164
Post, printing & Stationery	1,325	1,708
Computer Running expenses	36	18
Venues	2,359	2,192
Loss on disposal of Fixed Assets	2	-
Cleaning	18	44
	<u>285,327</u>	<u>308,146</u>

6 Net movement in funds

2025	2024
£	£

The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):

7 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

No trustee expenses have been incurred.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

8 Auditor's remuneration

The analysis of auditor's remuneration is as follows:

	2025	2024
	£	£
Auditor's Remuneration	2,988	2,706
Total audit fees	2,988	2,706

9 Employees

There were 5 employees during the year. Last year there were 6 employees.

Employment costs	2025	2024
	£	£
Wages and salaries	177,632	189,702
Other pension costs	4,027	4,263

No employees received employee benefits of more than £60,000.

10 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

11 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £
Cost	
At 1 April 2024	18,574
Additions	225
Disposals	(777)
At 31 March 2025	18,022
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2024	15,153
Depreciation charged in the year	1,695
Eliminated in respect of disposals	(775)
At 31 March 2025	16,073
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2025	1,949
At 31 March 2024	3,421

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

11 Tangible fixed assets (Continued)

12 Intangible fixed assets

Software
£

Cost

At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025

35,464

Amortisation and impairment

At 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025

35,458

Carrying amount

At 31 March 2025

6

At 31 March 2024

6

13 Debtors

2025

2024

Amounts falling due within one year:

£

£

Trade debtors

26,051

86,855

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

2025

2024

£

£

Trade creditors

11,575

5,656

Other creditors

1,236

2,691

Accruals and deferred income

2,725

2,557

15,536

10,904

15 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

At 1 April 2024 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
7,220	231,750	(214,111)	(3,072)	21,787

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

15 Restricted funds

(Continued)

Previous year:	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
	-	308,888	(287,052)	(14,616)	7,220

16 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	107,274	43,353	(71,216)	3,072	82,483

Previous year:	At 1 April 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	81,903	31,849	(21,094)	14,616	107,274

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total £
Fund balances at 31 March 2025 are represented by:			
Intangible fixed assets	-	6	6
Tangible assets	-	1,949	1,949
Current assets/(liabilities)	21,787	80,528	102,315
	21,787	82,483	104,270

18 Movement in Funds

Fund	At 01/04/23	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Transfers	At 31/03/24
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted	7,220	227,245	(209,606)	(3,072)	21,787
Unrestricted	107,274	45,353	(73,216)	3,072	82,483
	114,494	272,598	(282,822)	-	104,270

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

19 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2024 - none).

Accounts

Charity registration number Charity No. NIC105291

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Charity number

Charity No. NIC105291

Principal address

Unit 6 North City Business Centre
2 Duncairn Gardens
Belfast
BT15 2GG

Auditor

Celine Corrigan
Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

CONTENTS

	Page
Trustees report	1 - 16
Statement of trustees responsibilities	17
Independent auditor's report	
Statement of financial activities	21
Balance sheet	22
Notes to the financial statements	23 - 32

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Trustees' report for the year ended 31st March 2023

The trustees of CRIS are pleased to present their annual report and the financial statements for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name: Community Relations In Schools

Charity Number: NIC105291

The charity is an unincorporated association as per the Constitution.

Principal Office: Unit 6, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT152GG

Registered Office: Unit 6, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GG

Auditor: Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
BT41 2GG

Bankers: Ulster Bank Ltd. Unit 1 Westwood Centre, Kennedy Way, Belfast, BT11 9BQ

CRIS Trustees as of 31st March 2024:

Norman Richardson (Chair)

Patricia O'Neill (Vice Chair)

Lawrence Patterson (Treasurer)

Conor O'Neill (Secretary)

Aithne Kerrigan

Ben Craig

Objectives and activities

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable Objects

The purpose of CRIS is to actively contribute to the building of a shared and reconciled society in Northern Ireland by developing and delivering peace-building programmes and activities within and between schools and in their local communities.

CRIS also works in partnership with educational authorities, higher educational institutions, other statutory agencies, funding bodies and community organisations to bring about positive impacts at an individual, family, school community, and system level. CRIS works in cooperative arrangements that support reconciliation and promote equality and diversity through the building of relationships and trust across society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees of CRIS confirm that they have complied with their duty as defined in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) and have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The public benefit requirement has continued to inform the activities of the charity during this reporting period.

In evaluating public benefit, the trustees are pleased that the work of CRIS has had multi-level positive impacts over this past year. Our programmes, training and other partnership initiatives have involved work with 71 school communities. Over three quarters of these schools are in areas of high deprivation and CRIS intentionally focuses its resources in these communities where the legacy of the conflict continues to make an impact.

Within the reporting period, through its programmes and activities, CRIS directly engaged 3840 distinct participants (pupils, parents, teachers, classroom assistants, principals, Boards of Governors). The total beneficiaries are 500 more than the previous year.

Indirectly many more children, young people and members of their whole school communities have benefited due to the programmes, capacity building, and relationship development initiatives undertaken to support diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding both within and between schools across all sectors and phases of education.

Wider benefits are identified such as organisational practice-based learning that is captured and disseminated supporting emerging policy and initiatives in education and Good Relations. For example, during Good Relations Week 2023, CRIS launched its report on trust with Coventry University. Policy makers and funding bodies showed keen interest in research findings. In February 2024, CRIS and Coventry University were invited to present the *Trust Indicator Framework* (TIF) and its suggested applications to a strategic partnership meeting with senior officials of The Executive Office (TEO) and Community Relations Council (NICRC).

Furthermore, a review of the government's *Together Building a United Community* (TBUC) strategy (2013-2023) has been initiated in this period and the *Trust Indicator Framework* (TIF) is under consideration to bring a new lens to how Good Relations is measured and the need to consider processes for trust building as a foundational principle and practice.

In the *Achievements and Performance* section of this report additional public benefit is detailed in the area of supporting systems change. CRIS has played an increasingly central role to improve regional contributions to peace and reconciliation by partnering with the Education Authority and their continued work to improve, refine and extend Shared Education across Northern Ireland.

Additionally, CRIS creates wider public benefit by sharing good news stories and case studies of impact that present alternative hopeful narratives, putting the voice of participants and schools to the fore, countering the dominant conflict orientated messaging regarding Northern Ireland. CRIS's work in communications highlights the unique role school communities play supporting an intergenerational framework for peace and reconciliation. It demonstrates innovative solutions that transcend structural and psychological divisions and has an international appeal given the transferability of Shared Education in other conflict/post-conflict contexts.

During this reporting period CRIS has increased its communications, with a core purpose to champion an alternative narrative that speaks to the aspirations of the 'silent majority' to live in a more shared and reconciled society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Summary of the Main Activities

The core activities of CRIS are:

- Provision of training, consultancy and multi-disciplinary support across all school sectors to build capacity and confidence to work with Good/ Community Relations and to support best practice in sharing and collaborative working.
- Delivering school-based, inter-community pupil programmes that promote diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding and that engage with perceived sensitive and contentious issues in age and stage appropriate ways.
- Provision of opportunities to engage parents/carers in Good/Community Relations and peacebuilding work with and through schools and other networks on a single identity and an inter-community basis.
- Advocacy for the role that schools, and education can play in supporting an intergenerational framework for peacebuilding and a shared future.
- Dissemination of good practice, research findings and resources on Good/ Community Relations and school-based peacebuilding through a variety of means including social media, traditional communication, through the writing of articles, hosting events/ conferences, and providing inputs for third level education institutions, statutory bodies, and other organisations.
- Ongoing development of evaluation systems linked to our model of practice - *Good Relations and Collaborative Education* (GRACE).
- Continuing to develop the sustainability of the organisation and ensure governance systems are robust adopting a continual improvement approach across all areas of organisational development.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Year in Numbers

39 th Year	71	3094	212	534	£107,274	£340,737
Supporting School-based Peacebuilding	Schools	Pupils	Parents/ carers	Teachers/ principals	Unrestricted Reserves	Total Income

Programme Overview

The three core aims set out in the CRIS strategic plan (2021-2024):

- AIM 1: Catalysing Peace and Reconciliation
- AIM 2: Equipping and Inspiring the Education Sector
- AIM 3: Sustaining and Growing CRIS to achieve our mission

In its current strategy CRIS commits to investing its funded resources in seven localities across Northern Ireland. These include Newtownabbey & Glengormley, Antrim and Randalstown, and five additional localities aligned with The Executive Office's Urban Villages Initiative (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan; Colin/West Belfast, Eastside/ East Belfast; Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets areas/ South Belfast; and The Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street in Derry/Londonderry). CRIS also has a regional remit linked to its capacity building initiatives with teachers (including trainee teachers) and school leaders and work with the Education Authority (EA) to support scaling work linked to Shared Education.

CRIS also has a targeted programme located across the Crumlin Road interface called *Everyday Peacebuilding in Ardoyne and Shankill*. The *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme works with pupils, parents, teachers, and community stakeholders and is anchored to two Nursery Schools where the interschool buddy system was pioneered over twenty-five years ago. Everyday Peacebuilding is an intentional longer-term commitment and seeks to work with a capped number of ten schools so an enhanced programme offering and partnership has a greater possibility of transforming relationships and new norms of peace.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The rationale for CRIS's commitment across the seven localities is strategic in nature and has built new ways of working distinct to each initiative. In the Antrim and Newtownabbey council area, CRIS has built upon a long history of cross-sector collaboration in order to support the development of GRACE - Good Relations and Collaborative Education. Originally piloted by CRIS with the Antrim and Randalstown Schools Moving Forward Together partnership (MFT), GRACE has become a model of good practice and is viewed as ground-breaking by educational stakeholders. The success of MFT led to the deliberate decision by CRIS to further invest in this council area due to strong appetite and the existence of trusted networks. In 2019 the *Growing GRACE* programme was established and over the subsequent five years collaboration has formalised into the *Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together* (NEST) partnership involving 21 schools and other stakeholders.

With regard to CRIS's other strategic locality-based programmes, The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages initiative partnered with CRIS to support the Buddy Up! Project to be scaled in all Primary Schools across the five localities since 2019. Buddy Up! as a funded programme officially wound down in March 2024. In its final year, CRIS has provided enhanced capacity building support to schools and resources to enable them to continue to use the inter-school buddy system in their ongoing partnership work. Furthermore, during this period CRIS was successful in its funding proposal to the Executive Office to produce a short film to highlight the outcomes and multitude of impacts made possible by the investment over 5 years. A formal celebration event will be held in the following year to formally close the programme and signpost schools to additional support and funding opportunities.

Teacher Training

Supporting student teacher training is a regular feature of the programme year with requests from Stranmillis University College. This year CRIS led 5 sessions in the *Leadership for Diversity and Mutual Understanding* module which seeks to promote best practice among educators in building leadership in diversity, equality, inclusion, and inter-cultural competence.

Service Delivery

In recent years CRIS has lessened its service delivery work due to the level of funding received. In this reporting period CRIS provided specialised bespoke training to Dungannon Integrated College, and a Community Safety initiative run by Antrim Newtownabbey Council involving all Primary Schools across the Council. CRIS is re-developing its consultancy model and enhancing our workforce via recruitment and training of Associates. These activities will help prime CRIS to extend provision in future years.

Everyday Peacebuilding (North Belfast)

The workplan focused on three main areas: school engagement (work with pupils and school staff); parental engagement; and community engagement. The aim of school-based activities was to build upon the network of 8 schools situated on the Crumlin Road interface with links to each other and Buddy Up! through the Nursery school programme with Edenderry and Holy Cross Nursery Schools.

School Engagement Activities Included:

- Listening exercises with individual schools
- Networking and planning events for school leaders and staff
- Teacher training programme to aid delivery of pupil programmes and enhance capacity and confidence to work on curriculum topics.
- Staff training day with Holy Cross and Edenderry Nursery Schools to support planning for the restart of their Buddy Up programme after its suspension due to Covid.
- Pilot programme with Classroom Assistants linked to all schools.
- Planning, delivery and evaluation of P3 *Celebrating Diversity* (9 hour) programme to 3 school partnerships involving over 150 pupils.
- Planning, delivery and evaluation of P7 *Knowing Me, Knowing You* (18 hour) programme to 3 school partnerships involving over 150 pupils.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Parent and Community Engagement Activities Included:

- Four workshops with parents linked to the Nursery Schools (Apr- Jun 2023).
- Eight workshops and art project with parents (new school year Jan – Mar 2024)
- Support for community fun day at Stormont Park
- Another highlight of the year was the first-ever Buddy Up! Disco which was held at Girdwood Community Centre on Saturday 19th March. Children and parents of Everyday Peacebuilding Schools attending with approx. 100 participants (50 children + 50 adults). The event was deemed a success with positive feedback from parents and children indicating that it was viewed as a positive opportunity for buddies to meet outside of school. Interviews with participants were conducted to capture material for CRIS's new short film in development.
- Meetings were held with several community organisations and local churches to share more information about Buddy Up! and the Everyday Peacebuilding Programmes. Networking meetings will be a key feature of the programme moving forward as CRIS and schools are keen to develop a more joined up approach to support the aims of the project and the families it serves.

CRIS is delighted that the *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme has had such a successful two years. The ability to meet the majority of programme targets and objectives despite the unexpected departure of a newly appointed programme lead in September 2023 is testament to the agility of staff to reorganise resources and utilise a team of experienced Associates to support the ambitious workplan. Delivery during this period was also heavily supported by the Director of Programmes who stepped into the Coordinating role and the CEO who also supported planning and delivery.

During this period the Board was delighted to welcome Damon Henry on as project lead in April 2024 and anticipate some staffing stability going forward which will aid wider organisational targets and goals.

Growing GRACE: Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together (NEST) Partnership

NEST is a reconciliation initiative that works to build understanding, collaboration, and trust between school communities in Newtownabbey. CRIS coordinates, resources and helps schools to co-create their own action plans linked to commonly identified needs in their localities. NEST schools are committed to a shared vision and voice for collaboration and believe that this will create an educational ecosystem that benefits all 21 school communities. The partnership is in its fifth year and progress is accelerating. Key headlines from this reporting period include:

- As identified in GRACE Stage one, ongoing engagement with individual schools is a core aspect of the partnerships development and bespoke support offered by CRIS's Senior Practitioner.
- Four NEST partnership meetings for school Principals to plan activities and strategies to strengthen their network and visibility in the community
- Supporting New Shared Education activities (*Edmund Rice College & Integrated College Glengormley*). CRIS provided programmes, training and support for whole staff teams and Year 8 pupils focussing on themes relating to identity, community, conflict and flags and symbols.
- Sourcing funding for ongoing sustainability is an ongoing endeavour. CRIS was delighted to attract two investors, Ardbarron Trust and Clanmil and Connswater Housing Association.
- CRIS Facilitated three Shared Learning Networks for teachers involving over 50 staff.
- Staff training was provided for schools involving over 30 staff from St Mary's on the Hill PS, Carnmoney PS, and Ballyhenry PS and Gaelscoil Éanna who are hoping to engage in Shared Education for the first time.
- Primary School pupil programmes were delivered to school partnerships involving over 200 pupils and 20 staff.
- Controversial Issues training was delivered for 15 NEST teachers and principals.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Buddy Up! in Urban Villages

The Buddy Up! Programme workplan between April 2023 - March 2024 involved 637 pupils, 87 teachers and 69 parents across 5 Locations: North Belfast; West Belfast; East Belfast; South Belfast and Derry-Londonderry. Across these localities, CRIS ran Buddy Up! with 26 schools with each programme involving work with pupils, parental engagement and a two-day teacher training programme. Due to its final year CRIS has also been working on an exit strategy and aims to be able to support schools, particularly those involved in new Shared Education partnerships in the years ahead. CRIS was delighted to be awarded not only funding to support an external review of the project which has proven useful for organisational learning and programme development but also funds to create a short film to share the story of the many positive impacts across 34 schools in the project's lifetime. The film will be premiered during Good Relations week in September 2024. A new Ripples of Peace impact case study was written during this period featuring St Matthew's P.S. and Nettlefield P.S. and is available here: <https://www.crisni.org/post/ripples-of-peace-weaving-friendship-in-the-shadow-of-the-shipyard>

Feedback from Buddy Up! Evaluations:

CRIS developed a new survey to help measure the quality of relationships being developed between children involved in the programme. Indicators from the newly launched Trust Indicator Framework (TIF), research project between CRIS and Coventry were utilised and children were involved in a pre and post surveys. The data including 794 surveys across 26 schools, will prove invaluable in CRIS's drive to improve its programming for the future. This data will inform CRIS practice for years to come, and the learning taken from it will be disseminated to make a positive impact in the sector as a whole.

Some of the findings particularly noteworthy are detailed below.

Pre-programme surveys with P7 children found that:

- 54% of P3s said they felt worried or unsure when meeting people different from them
- 63% of P7s said they felt worried or unsure about meeting their buddy
- 69% of P7s said they felt worried about meeting people who are different from them
- 60% of P7s said that they were not comfortable talking openly about their beliefs

Post-programme surveys with P7 found that:

- 71% of P7s said they wanted to spend more time with their buddy
- 75% of P7s said they had fun learning how children were different and how they were similar
- 59% of P7s said they were more comfortable meeting children from the other school
- 95% of P7s said they had a chance to think and talk about the different groups of people who live in Northern Ireland

Teachers and Principals were also asked about their experiences with Buddy Up! This too yielded positive feedback finding:

- 100% believe that participating in Buddy Up! has been beneficial to their personal and professional development
- 91% agreed Buddy Up! contributed towards community cohesion and good relations
- 100% believe Buddy Up! has offered their class a positive experience of Shared Education

Sample of Qualitative Feedback from Teachers:

- *"A super initiative that allows our children to integrate with our neighbours. A very worthwhile programme".*
- *"It develops respect and understanding in children that they can apply through life".*
- *"It was a great way to build relationships between both children and staff. It was a lot of fun and got*

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

- *"Delivery of the sessions is great. Both Damon and Emily make the sessions fun for everyone. They answer all questions and make every child feel like their contribution matters".*
- *"The children looked forward to each session really buying into the idea behind it".*
- *"I really enjoyed working with Emma (partner teacher) and we have built up a great friendship!"*

Next Generation Peacebuilders Programme

As a response to the need to widen and diversify our own team of Associates and the widely recognised weakening of capacity in the sector, CRIS led another recruitment drive in this reporting year. We were successful in recruiting 16 new trainee Associates and engaged them in a process of immersive training that involves a variety of shadowing and co-facilitation opportunities with our different stakeholder participant groups. CRIS was fortunate to locate the funding to support this development initiative by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI).

By investing in upskilling and deepening the Good Relations reflective practice in our wider team of Associates, we hope to be in a position to respond to an anticipated increase in requests for consultancy work to aid our own sustainability and to contribute to the longer-term sustainability of the sector.

Inaugural GRACE Kitemark Award:

Another accomplishment of the period was the celebration of the inaugural GRACE *Good Relations and Collaborative Education Kitemark* award. The award was presented to Ligoniel P.S. and St Vincent de Paul P.S. who followed a specific set of guidelines/criteria developed by CRIS to demonstrate at classroom and school level there was an evidence-based record of inter-school collaboration. The award marks years of strong dedication to Shared Education and joint working across the two schools. The bulk of the activity and evidence gathering for the award was gathered by April-May 2023 and the official award was presented to the two schools in October at an award ceremony hosted by Belfast City Lord Mayor Ryan Murphy held at City Hall. CRIS hope to further develop the GRACE Kite Mark in the next year. This will help recognise sites of excellence, so that at a locality-level Good Relations and reconciliation can be embedded in school communities.



See CRC E-news that featured the story -
[Inaugural Peacebuilding GRACE Award for Primary Schools](#)
[Community Relations Council \(community-relations.org.uk\)](http://community-relations.org.uk)

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

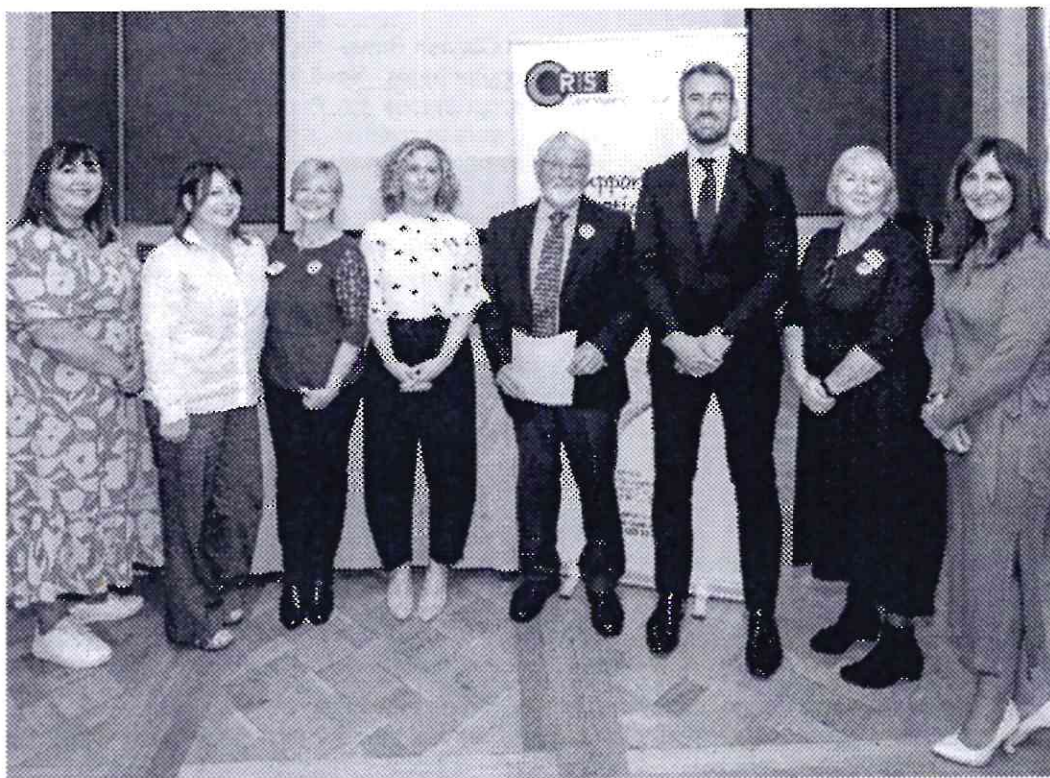
TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Research Project: Launch of the Trust Indicator Framework

CRIS was delighted to launch and begin the process of implementing our Trust Indicators Framework (TIF) to measure the development of trust in our peace and reconciliation activities. CRIS launched '*Trusting GRACE: The development of trust indicators from the Good Relations and Collaborative Education model of schools-based peacebuilding*' in

September 2023 during Good Relations week. The report was authored by Dr Emily Stanton (CRIS Director of Programmes) and Dr Charis Rice (Coventry University). The event received a high level of interest, particularly from across government departments and those responsible for Good Relations and Educational policy, statutory bodies, funders and attended by over 80 from a cross section of society including schools and community organisations.



The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) featured the launch event in the September 2023 E-news. See link:

[New Research Investigates the Role of Trust as Key Factor for Reconciliation
Community Relations in Schools
Community Relations Council \(\[community-relations.org.uk\]\(http://community-relations.org.uk\)\)](#)

A series of follow-on actions and meetings to discuss potential applicability beyond direct CRIS practice development soon commenced. For example, the Education Authority (EA) initiated discussions with the suggestion to pilot TIF into Shared Education partnerships; The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (CRC) also indicated interest as part of a wider review of evaluation of peace and reconciliation outcomes at policy level. CRIS was also invited to present the Trust Indicator Framework (TIF) to a joint meeting of NI Executive Office and the Community Relations Council. CRIS is excited at the enthusiasm by which this new research has been received and its foreseeable utility. We look forward to further developing our partnership with Coventry University and exploring how further examination of TIF in practice can support learning relevant, not only to Northern Ireland policy makers and practitioners but in other post-conflict and international contexts.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY

Development work identified in the strategic plan to aid governance and sustainability has continued to be a central theme. During this period CRIS was fortunate to secure a corporate partnership with *Lancia Consult (Belfast)* who worked with the CEO and Finance Manager, on a pro bono basis over several months, to support improvements in our data management systems and governance. The focus of our project has been to develop a knowledge transfer and management process, mapping out the mechanics of how we operate across multiple critical priorities and capture this knowledge in user-friendly systems culminating in the creation of an interactive *Knowledge Hub Handbook*. The process, carefully facilitated by Lancia colleagues has supported an increased understanding, refinement and improvement making of our own systems in areas such as financial management, risk management and HR processes to name but a few. This time, invested into governance control, risk mitigation and succession planning, allows the organisation to face future challenges with a new confidence.

During this time CRIS also continued to access consultancy support from Clayton Rowe (*Saben Group, Canada*) who has been working with the CEO and Director of Programmes on a regular basis. Several key elements were progressed during this period including the review of our two core programmes for Primary Schools work; consultation on branding and design of a new logo for CRIS; preparatory work to overhaul the CRIS website; and the redevelopment of our consultancy model including revised fee structure, process for designing projects and new templates for contracting with clients.

During this period two programme staff accessed externally provided professional development training, including a Diploma in Community Development and Oxford University Spring School in Data Analysis for Social Science. CRIS has committed itself to help ensure that staff are remunerated at a competitive level and are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop professionally. As the organisations transitions into a new diversified income model, we hope to enhance terms and conditions to ensure we reward and retain talent and attract high quality staff in future years.

Reputation, Profile and Communication:

Activity in this area has been developing at pace in recent years. CRIS's increasing role in influencing systems change include closer working relationships with the Department of Education (DENI) and Education Authority (EA). CRIS has had several strategic meetings with Senior Officials keen to utilise our practice-based expertise and evidence base. Project initiatives during this period include:

- Proposal to pilot Trust Indicator Framework in Mainstreamed Shared Education partnerships.
- CRIS approaches and resource guides to support 'Community Connections and parental engagement' included on EA's online Shared Education hub.
- Engagement with Deputy Secretary of Education linked to the Moving Forward Together partnership.
- Member of DENI's *Reducing Education Disadvantage* (RED) initiative to co-design systems and collaborative approaches for future roll out of this new initiative.
- Invitation to join EA's collaboration with the BBC's *Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland* series to support content for new teacher professional training (TPL) module on working with sensitive issues.
- CRIS CEO invited by Education Authority to provide an input at a seminar with Korean delegation.
- CRIS CEO presented on CRIS practice at Integrated Education Fund (IEF) GR Week event, 'Celebrating Diversity in Our Schools'.
- CRIS CEO part of panel on the Shared Island Dialogue Series (Irish Government).
- Good Relations Week 2023 Buddy Up Video. CRC's media company AS&G created a two-minute video on Buddy Up and profiled during GRW23.
- *Thinking Changes Project: CRIS supported the setup of a new project layering further opportunities into its current sites of work through its new link with Guth Gafa and their aim to bring philosophy education to areas particularly affected by legacy of conflict and the ongoing presence of paramilitarism.*

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Financial Review

Summary of Funding Secured to Support Operations:

CRIS was fortunate to secure all necessary funds to fulfil its workplan ambitions covering this period. Funding partners include:

- **The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages Initiative – 'Buddy Up'** project, supporting core and programme costs, for a sixth year with a grant totalling £133,470.
- **Strategic Partner funding, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Reconciliation Fund** - total grant £84,310.
- **The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) core funding scheme** – Year 2 of three-year contract, £72,787.
- **Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Scheme** - project funding in two separate grants totalling £9,501.
- **Community Foundation of Northern Ireland (CFNI)** - total grant £4,370 towards CRIS's Next generation Peacebuilders capacity building programme for new Associates.

CRIS has a sound reputation for administering grants in their entirety in line with funding contracts, and for achieving and often exceeding the programme outcomes anticipated at the point of application. Feedback across funders suggests CRIS represents good value for money. CRIS is committed to keeping the governance costs associated with running the charity at a minimum ensuring the vast majority of funds goes directly towards peacebuilding activities with school communities across the seven localities we operate in.

CRIS is audited by the Community Relations Council and by The Executive Office (TEO). The organisation is highly regarded for maintaining good standards in governance and financial compliance.

CRIS also secured new investors for its Growing GRACE programme, namely Ardbarron Trust and a Housing Association partnership with Clannmil and Connswater. The funds secured will span into the next financial year and are regarded as service agreements as opposed to funding due to the nature of contractable obligations. CRIS hope to build on these connections and flexible and generous investors in the future.

The total income for April 2023 – March 2024 was £340,737 covering almost 100% of all CRIS core operating costs and funds for project related activity.

The total expenditure April 2023 – March 2024 was £308,146, thereby leaving a net income of £32,591.

The total unrestricted reserves are £107,274 therefore CRIS has now achieved 80% of its target position - an increase of approx. £22,000.

Looking forward into 2024-2025, CRIS will be diversifying its income streams due to the Executive Office's Urban Villages funding for the Buddy Up programme drawing to a close. Over the last two years CRIS has been planning for this transition by re-developing its consultancy model, recruiting and training new Associates, and thinking through strategies to engage the business community and linkages with their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitments to support fundraising and other forms of partnership.

The expenditure totals across running costs budgets were close to the original estimates detailed in our funding plans. In the area of programme expenditure, the total spent on teacher substitute cover was £22,183 (124 substitute days), a significant increase from the prior year £12,670. There are two key reasons for this increase. The accounting period was twelve months as opposed to a 9-month audit year for 2022-23. Also, CRIS was successful in accessing additional funds for the NEST programme where teacher capacity building activities are central to the workplan.

Expenses on facilitation are high at just over £30,000, due to a newly appointed staff member 'Good Relations Practitioner' resigning after six months of being in post, therefore CRIS covered a lot of delivery using its bank of experienced Associates.

Expenditure on resources increased by approximately £7,000. This is due to CRIS accessing additional funds for its new film project, programme resources, and design for CRIS publications.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Financial Management:

CRIS has a Financial Management Policy and Procedure Manual which is updated annually and meets the requirements of the Charities Act for Northern Ireland, the Charity Commissions guidelines 'Internal Financial Controls for Charities' and 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)'.

CRIS has a Finance and Personnel Subcommittee who meet quarterly, approximately two weeks before the Board meeting. It is chaired by the Treasurer and includes the Vice Chair and another member. It is also attended by the CEO and Finance Manager who prepare financial papers and documents relating to HR matters that require Board input and decision making.

The sub-committee is responsible for reviewing and providing guidance on the organisation's financial matters. Specifically, the committee assures internal controls, independent audit, and financial analysis for the organisation.

To help the board fulfil its oversight function, the sub committee's key responsibilities relating to finance are as follows:

1. Provide direction to the Board for fiscal responsibility. Alongside this is the responsibility for future long-term planning and the development of strategies to back up the plan.
2. Ongoing review of the organisation's management accounts and funding strategy (including details of income and expenditure, balance sheet, and other matters related to its continued solvency and organisational sustainability).
3. Approve the annual budget and submit it to the Board for approval.
4. Oversee the maintenance of organisational-wide assets, including prudent management of risk exposure.
5. Provide guidance and support to CEO on all matters relating to finance, risk management and human resources.

The CEO & Finance Manager have monthly meetings with the Treasurer, and more often as required. The Chair also meets regularly with the CEO and joins team meetings that have an organisational development focus to ensure a joined-up approach between governance & delivery on charitable objectives.

The Finance Manager continues to make improvements to CRIS's financial systems to ensure an efficient and effective approach across the team. For example, over the last year the Finance Manager developed a new internal 'invoice tracker' system. The Finance Manager provided staff training and overseen a pilot period of 6 months with the main purpose to create a single system to track and manage invoices and budgets for programme expenditure. The improvements have been significant including – a user-friendly system with data easily transferable onto funder specific reporting systems; areas of responsibility tightened in sync with job descriptions relating to varying levels of administration and financial management; minimal errors in budgets and a more efficient process particularly in the final quarter of the financial year.

Reserves Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for managing and maintaining appropriate financial reserves to support the stability and sustainability of Community Relations in Schools (CRIS). The policy aims to ensure that CRIS can meet its ongoing operational commitments, manage financial risks, and invest in future projects in line with its charitable objectives.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all trustees, management, and finance staff responsible for the financial management of CRIS. It covers the identification, calculation, and review of reserves.

3. Policy Statement

CRIS is committed to maintaining a level of reserves that:

- Ensures financial stability and operational continuity.
- Allows for effective management of unforeseen financial risks or losses.
- Supports the strategic goals and future growth of the charity in accordance with the charity's purposes and

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4. Definition of Reserves

Reserves are the portion of unrestricted funds that are freely available for general charitable purposes, excluding funds set aside for specific projects, restricted funds, and fixed assets (such as property and equipment).

5. Key Guidance and References

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) Reserves Guidance: Provides guidelines on setting, managing, and reporting charity reserves (<https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/charity-essentials/managing-financial-difficulties/reserves/>)

The Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): Offers a framework for accounting and reporting practices for charities, including reserves management.

Reserves Procedures

1. Determining the Reserves Level

- **Assess Operational Needs:** Annually assess the charity's operating costs, including regular expenses such as salaries, rent, and overheads.
- **Risk Assessment:** Conduct a financial risk assessment to identify potential risks that may impact funding, income streams, or expenditures.
- **Set Target Reserves:** The target reserves level should be determined based on three to six months of operating costs and anticipated financial risks.

2. Monitoring and Managing Reserves

- **Quarterly Financial Reviews:** Financial staff should review the reserves levels quarterly (and more often as required) to ensure they align with target thresholds.
- **Annual Review by Trustees:** The reserves policy and target levels should be reviewed annually by the Board of trustees.
- **Reporting to Stakeholders:** Include the reserves policy and current reserves position in the annual financial statements, in line with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) and Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) requirements.

3. Utilising Reserves

- **Authorisation for Use:** Reserves can be drawn down in the event of an emergency or financial shortfall, but must be authorised by the board of trustees.
- **Replenishment of Reserves:** When reserves are utilised, the board must approve a plan to replenish reserves within an agreed timeframe.
- **Restricted and Designated Funds:** Distinguish between unrestricted reserves, designated funds, and restricted funds, ensuring restricted funds are used solely for their intended purposes.

4. Core Purposes for Using Reserves

The Board aims to hold unrestricted reserves to enable the organisation to maintain its activities in the event of:

- Gaps in funding
- Late payment of grants and fees
- Upgrades in IT systems and equipment as and when the need arises
- Gaps in opportunities to income generate through training and consultancy work
- Its redundancy liabilities and rental and other contracts
- Its match funding obligations set out in funding contracts where any percentage of staff salaries are not covered by another funder(s)

5. Procedures for Reporting and Compliance

- **Annual Reporting Requirements:** In accordance with the CCNI's guidance, CRIS will include a statement on reserves within the annual report.
- **Financial Statement Disclosure:** Provide a clear explanation in financial statements if reserves fall below or exceed the target range.

6. Review and Revision of Policy

- **Annual Policy Review:** The reserves policy should be reviewed annually by the Board of trustees.
- **Adjustment of Target Reserves:** Any adjustment to the reserves target level should be based on updated

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7. Current Reserves Position:

As of the end of March 2024, the total reserves are £107,274.

By the end of this reporting period CRIS has achieved 80% of its target position, an increase of approx. £22,000.

The Board has revised its reserves target for this period calculating six months running costs (£106,000) and a further £28,000 for redundancies should this be necessary in the future, leaving the target amount of £130,000.

Over the course of the next year CRIS expects to meet its target reserves figure. Meeting this target will rely on successful implementation of the resource diversification strategy, which centres around a return to consultancy work, developing corporate partnerships and other forms of traditional fundraising through events and attracting donors. Substantial planning has taken place during this year to enable a successful pivot towards this new multi stranded income generation strategy.

As CRIS moves into its 40th year a large-scale celebration and fundraising event will be planned to mark the special anniversary year.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Risk Management:

The main concerns of the Board going forward are to ensure:

- That the public benefit enabled through CRIS activities is continued
- That core and programme funding can continue to be secured and increased to retain staff and ensure stability and growth
- To continue to implement appropriate salary reviews
- To action a transitional resource diversification strategy in 2024-2025 to help grow the level of reserves and meet our target
- To focus on organisational sustainability, and succession planning

The board members recognise their duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance and mitigations.

Within the section of this report titled, '*Organisational Development and Sustainability*' details have been shared relating to risk management, governance improvements and longer-term sustainability.

Within our current risk registry, we have prioritised organisational risks and the action steps we will take in which to mitigate them, with significant progress made against each risk in this reporting period. We have prioritised these starting with greatest likelihood and impact and detailed tasks that have been completed and continue to be in progress moving into the new financial year.

RISK 1: Political uncertainty in Northern Ireland and overreliance on government grants

MITIGATIONS: New funding strategy developed, with a diversification of funding partners detailed including Trusts and Foundations across Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and England. Strategy also includes relationship development with NI Shared Housing Associations, business community, return to consultancy work, and more traditional fundraising activities.

RISK 2: Lack of long-term fundraising plan

MITIGATIONS: Activities detailed above also support this risk. As CRIS successfully transition into a new multi stranded funding and income generation model in 2024-2025, a review of progress, opportunities and barriers will be conducted. A longer-term fundraising plan will be consulted upon and developed linked to a new organisational strategy planning for period 2026 – 2029.

RISK 3: Impact of cost-of-living crisis

MITIGATIONS: Exploring new salary structure to take effect 2024 – 2025; agreement to award inflationary raise when deemed affordable without adding risk to financial status, considering the conclusion of Urban Villages funding tenure with CRIS in this reporting year.

RISK 4: Loss of key staff and challenges in attracting new staff

MITIGATIONS: Activities detailed above also support this risk. Board has agreed that CRIS need to hold competitive advantage to both retain and attract new talent. Research of the terms and conditions across the sector will inform this goal in creation of a new competitive salary structure; staff development opportunities have been re-prioritised in line with CRIS study leave policy and will be afforded equitably across the team; investment in Next Generation Peacebuilders programme including recruitment and training programme to widen our team of Associates

RISK 5: Ineffective knowledge management systems

MITIGATIONS: Partnership with Lancia Consult (Belfast) has transformed the likelihood of this risk occurring. CRIS has a new *Interactive Knowledge hub Handbook* detailing process maps across seventeen critical areas relating to governance systems, management, administration and finance. Ongoing work to transfer all CRIS files onto a share point system will take place in the 2024-25 year so that interactive capabilities are achieved.

CRIS will continue to implement its new risk management process and continues to act on its governance responsibilities to ensure CRIS has plans in place to mitigate risks and put plans in place to support sustainability.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Type of governing document:

Community Relations in Schools is a community organisation governed by its constitution. It was adopted in April 1984 and last amended in October 2017 to ensure it was up to date using best practice guidelines as set out in suggested model documents on the Northern Ireland Charity Commission's website.

Trustees who have served during the year are as follows:

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Trustee selection methods:

At the Annual General Meeting each year a Board is appointed to run CRIS for the next year. Each member of the Committee is elected for a period of three years. Retiring members are eligible for re-election. All nominees must indicate their willingness to stand and be proposed and seconded. A written agreement of the nominated persons in absentia must be presented.

Committee members may also be co-opted on the CRIS committee as potential new interested individuals are considered throughout the year. When considering the co-opting of trustees, the Board has regard to the requirement for any specialist skills needed.

We are fortunate to have an engaged and active Board with an array of skills. The Board strives to be as diverse and representative of educational stakeholders and society in general, as possible and has expertise spanning the community and voluntary, funding, corporate and statutory sectors. CRIS plans to increase the Board to a maximum of 10 members, with priority areas identified for recruitment in the disciplines of human resources, finance, and fundraising and areas for welcome statements identified to increase our diversity.

Trustee Induction and Training:

New trustees receive an induction pack which provides information and guidelines on their task, responsibilities, and the policies and ethos. The CEO and members of the Board meet with new trustees during the preliminary stages of their appointment to talk through the organisation in more detail, the history of its work, strategic positioning, and discuss other areas of interest.

New trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity guidelines, the charity commission guidance on public benefit, the content of the constitution, the committee and decision-making process, the strategic and operational plan, and the recent financial performance of the charity.

During the induction period they will meet the full staff team, other trustees and key partners. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. New trustees are invited to attend any mandatory meetings as set down by funders who support CRIS.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Organisational Structure:

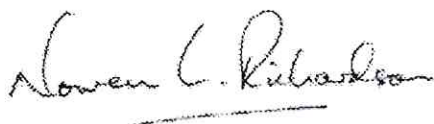
The Board meets four times per year and sub-groups meet to address any additional finance, personnel and policy matters as required. Finance and Personnel subcommittee meetings take place two weeks before the Board meetings to ensure sufficient time to update briefing packs and draft recommendations for Board discussion and decision making. The policy subcommittee operates on a more *ad hoc* basis.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors:

So far as each of the Board members at the date of approval of these financial statements are aware: (a) there is no relevant information of which the charity auditors are unaware; and (b) they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Trustees on Wednesday 22nd January 2025 and signed on their behalf.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



N Richardson
(Chairperson)
Dated: 22 January 2025



L. Patterson
(Treasurer)
Dated.....

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustee Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Community Relations In Schools (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts And Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

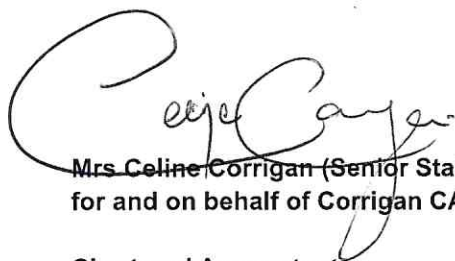
TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Other matters which we are required to address

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared accounts in accordance with "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) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Mrs Celine Corrigan (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Corrigan CA Limited

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

20 January 2025

24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies		-	4,450	4,450	-	-	-
Charitable activities	3	31,849	304,438	336,287	17,556	178,273	195,829
Total income		31,849	308,888	340,737	17,556	178,273	195,829
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	4	21,094	287,052	308,146	2,161	254,954	257,115
Total expenditure		21,094	287,052	308,146	2,161	254,954	257,115
Net income/(expenditure)		10,755	21,836	32,591	15,395	(76,681)	(61,286)
Transfers between funds		14,616	(14,616)	-	23,106	(23,106)	-
Net movement in funds	5	25,371	7,220	32,591	38,501	(99,787)	(61,286)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		81,903	-	81,903	43,402	99,787	143,189
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		107,274	7,220	114,494	81,903	-	81,903

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

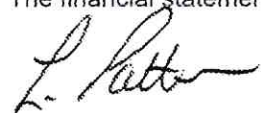
COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

		2024		2023	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	11		6		6
Tangible assets	10		3,421		5,102
			<u>3,427</u>		<u>5,108</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	12	86,855		32,358	
Cash at bank and in hand		35,116		50,085	
		<u>121,971</u>		<u>82,443</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(10,904)		(5,648)	
Net current assets			<u>111,067</u>		<u>76,795</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>
			<u><u>114,494</u></u>		<u><u>81,903</u></u>
Income Funds					
Restricted Funds	14		7,220		-
Unrestricted Funds			107,274		81,903
			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 22 January 2025



L Patterson
Trustee

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

1 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Accounting policies

Charity information

Community Relations In Schools is an unincorporated charity.

2.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 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 2016).

The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value.

The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

2.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

2.4 Incoming resources

Income From Charitable Activities

Income from charitable activities is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Income from government or other grants, whether 'capital' or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has the entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Donations & Legacies

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

2.5 Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure On Charitable Activities

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

The charity is below the charity audit threshold and therefore is exempt from reporting expenditure on an activity basis. The charity has opted to report by the nature rather than on an activity basis.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

2.6 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Intangible assets acquired on business combinations are recognised separately from goodwill at the acquisition date where it is probable that the expected future economic benefits that are attributable to the asset will flow to the entity and the fair value of the asset can be measured reliably; the intangible asset arises from contractual or other legal rights; and the intangible asset is separable from the entity.

Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

Software	20% straight line
----------	-------------------

2.7 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures, fittings & equipment	20% straight line
--------------------------------	-------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

2.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

2.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

2.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

3 Charitable activities

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Donations	4,450	-
Service Delivery	31,849	17,556
Grants	304,438	178,273
	<u>340,737</u>	<u>195,829</u>

	Total 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Analysis by fund			
Unrestricted funds	-	31,849	31,849
Restricted funds	308,888	-	308,888
	<u>308,888</u>	<u>31,849</u>	<u>340,737</u>

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Unrestricted funds	-	17,556	17,556
Restricted funds	178,273	-	178,273
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>17,556</u>	<u>195,829</u>

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Included in Grants Are:		
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Core Funding	72,787	39,997
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Funding	9,501	1,567
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Reconciliation Fund	84,310	-
The Executive Office, Urban Villages Initiative	133,470	136,709
Community Foundation Northern Ireland	4,370	-
	<u>304,438</u>	<u>178,273</u>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4 Charitable activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs	193,966	152,861
Staff Training	2,990	105
Depreciation and impairment	1,897	1,776
Programme Costs	-	193
Resources	12,832	5,979
Travel	8,613	9,655
Subscriptions	1,863	-
Hospitality	7,066	6,100
Facilitation	30,561	34,244
Light & Heat	1,188	967
Telephone	475	338
Sundry	1,137	1,570
Advertising	-	935
Subcover	22,183	12,670
Accountancy	2,939	2,700
Professional Fees	1,556	7,394
Bank Charges	99	174
Rent	11,655	10,314
Insurance	3,164	3,002
Post, printing & Stationery	1,708	1,169
Computer Running expenses	18	720
Venues	2,192	2,895
Loss on disposal of Fixed Assets	-	(517)
Cleaning	44	1,871
	<u>308,146</u>	<u>257,115</u>

5 Net movement in funds

	2024 £	2023 £
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	<u>1,897</u>	<u>1,776</u>

6 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.
No trustee expenses have been incurred.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7 Auditor's remuneration

The analysis of auditor's remuneration is as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Auditor's Remuneration	2,706	2,646
Total audit fees	2,706	2,646

8 Employees

There were 6 employees during the year.

Employment costs	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	189,702	149,580
Other pension costs	4,263	3,281

No employees received employee benefits of more than £60,000.

9 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023	18,358
Additions	216
At 31 March 2024	18,574
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2023	13,256
Depreciation charged in the year	1,897
At 31 March 2024	15,153
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	3,421
At 31 March 2023	5,102

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

11 Intangible fixed assets

	Software £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	35,464
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	35,458
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	6
At 31 March 2023	6

12 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	86,855	32,358

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	5,656	2,093
Other creditors	2,691	612
Accruals and deferred income	2,557	2,943
	10,904	5,648

14 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
	-	308,888	(287,052)	(14,616)	7,220
Previous Period:					
	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
	99,787	178,273	(254,954)	(23,106)	-

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

15 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
General funds	81,903	31,849	(21,094)	14,616	107,274
Previous Period:	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
General funds	43,402	17,556	(2,161)	23,106	81,903

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:			
Intangible fixed assets	-	6	6
Tangible assets	-	3,421	3,421
Current assets/(liabilities)	7,220	103,847	111,067
	7,220	107,274	114,494

17 Movement in Funds

Fund	At 01/04/23 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	At 31/03/24 £
Restricted	-	308,888	(287,052)	(14,616)	7,220
Unrestricted	81,903	31,849	(21,094)	14,616	107,274
	81,903	340,737	(308,146)	-	114,494

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

18 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - none).

Annual report

Charity registration number Charity No. NIC105291

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Charity number

Charity No. NIC105291

Principal address

Unit 6 North City Business Centre
2 Duncairn Gardens
Belfast
BT15 2GG

Auditor

Celine Corrigan
Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

CONTENTS

	Page
Trustees report	1 - 16
Statement of trustees responsibilities	17
Independent auditor's report	
Statement of financial activities	21
Balance sheet	22
Notes to the financial statements	23 - 32

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Trustees' report for the year ended 31st March 2023

The trustees of CRIS are pleased to present their annual report and the financial statements for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name: Community Relations In Schools

Charity Number: NIC105291

The charity is an unincorporated association as per the Constitution.

Principal Office: Unit 6, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT152GG

Registered Office: Unit 6, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GG

Auditor: Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
BT41 2GG

Bankers: Ulster Bank Ltd. Unit 1 Westwood Centre, Kennedy Way, Belfast, BT11 9BQ

CRIS Trustees as of 31st March 2024:

Norman Richardson (Chair)

Patricia O'Neill (Vice Chair)

Lawrence Patterson (Treasurer)

Conor O'Neill (Secretary)

Aithne Kerrigan

Ben Craig

Objectives and activities

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable Objects

The purpose of CRIS is to actively contribute to the building of a shared and reconciled society in Northern Ireland by developing and delivering peace-building programmes and activities within and between schools and in their local communities.

CRIS also works in partnership with educational authorities, higher educational institutions, other statutory agencies, funding bodies and community organisations to bring about positive impacts at an individual, family, school community, and system level. CRIS works in cooperative arrangements that support reconciliation and promote equality and diversity through the building of relationships and trust across society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees of CRIS confirm that they have complied with their duty as defined in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) and have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The public benefit requirement has continued to inform the activities of the charity during this reporting period.

In evaluating public benefit, the trustees are pleased that the work of CRIS has had multi-level positive impacts over this past year. Our programmes, training and other partnership initiatives have involved work with 71 school communities. Over three quarters of these schools are in areas of high deprivation and CRIS intentionally focuses its resources in these communities where the legacy of the conflict continues to make an impact.

Within the reporting period, through its programmes and activities, CRIS directly engaged 3840 distinct participants (pupils, parents, teachers, classroom assistants, principals, Boards of Governors). The total beneficiaries are 500 more than the previous year.

Indirectly many more children, young people and members of their whole school communities have benefited due to the programmes, capacity building, and relationship development initiatives undertaken to support diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding both within and between schools across all sectors and phases of education.

Wider benefits are identified such as organisational practice-based learning that is captured and disseminated supporting emerging policy and initiatives in education and Good Relations. For example, during Good Relations Week 2023, CRIS launched its report on trust with Coventry University. Policy makers and funding bodies showed keen interest in research findings. In February 2024, CRIS and Coventry University were invited to present the *Trust Indicator Framework* (TIF) and its suggested applications to a strategic partnership meeting with senior officials of The Executive Office (TEO) and Community Relations Council (NICRC).

Furthermore, a review of the government's *Together Building a United Community* (TBUC) strategy (2013-2023) has been initiated in this period and the *Trust Indicator Framework* (TIF) is under consideration to bring a new lens to how Good Relations is measured and the need to consider processes for trust building as a foundational principle and practice.

In the *Achievements and Performance* section of this report additional public benefit is detailed in the area of supporting systems change. CRIS has played an increasingly central role to improve regional contributions to peace and reconciliation by partnering with the Education Authority and their continued work to improve, refine and extend Shared Education across Northern Ireland.

Additionally, CRIS creates wider public benefit by sharing good news stories and case studies of impact that present alternative hopeful narratives, putting the voice of participants and schools to the fore, countering the dominant conflict orientated messaging regarding Northern Ireland. CRIS's work in communications highlights the unique role school communities play supporting an intergenerational framework for peace and reconciliation. It demonstrates innovative solutions that transcend structural and psychological divisions and has an international appeal given the transferability of Shared Education in other conflict/post-conflict contexts.

During this reporting period CRIS has increased its communications, with a core purpose to champion an alternative narrative that speaks to the aspirations of the 'silent majority' to live in a more shared and reconciled society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Summary of the Main Activities

The core activities of CRIS are:

- Provision of training, consultancy and multi-disciplinary support across all school sectors to build capacity and confidence to work with Good/ Community Relations and to support best practice in sharing and collaborative working.
- Delivering school-based, inter-community pupil programmes that promote diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding and that engage with perceived sensitive and contentious issues in age and stage appropriate ways.
- Provision of opportunities to engage parents/carers in Good/Community Relations and peacebuilding work with and through schools and other networks on a single identity and an inter-community basis.
- Advocacy for the role that schools, and education can play in supporting an intergenerational framework for peacebuilding and a shared future.
- Dissemination of good practice, research findings and resources on Good/ Community Relations and school-based peacebuilding through a variety of means including social media, traditional communication, through the writing of articles, hosting events/ conferences, and providing inputs for third level education institutions, statutory bodies, and other organisations.
- Ongoing development of evaluation systems linked to our model of practice - *Good Relations and Collaborative Education* (GRACE).
- Continuing to develop the sustainability of the organisation and ensure governance systems are robust adopting a continual improvement approach across all areas of organisational development.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Year in Numbers

39 th Year	71	3094	212	534	£107,274	£340,737
Supporting School-based Peacebuilding	Schools	Pupils	Parents/ carers	Teachers/ principals	Unrestricted Reserves	Total Income

Programme Overview

The three core aims set out in the CRIS strategic plan (2021-2024):

- AIM 1: Catalysing Peace and Reconciliation
- AIM 2: Equipping and Inspiring the Education Sector
- AIM 3: Sustaining and Growing CRIS to achieve our mission

In its current strategy CRIS commits to investing its funded resources in seven localities across Northern Ireland. These include Newtownabbey & Glengormley, Antrim and Randalstown, and five additional localities aligned with The Executive Office's Urban Villages Initiative (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan; Colin/West Belfast, Eastside/ East Belfast; Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets areas/ South Belfast; and The Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street in Derry/Londonderry). CRIS also has a regional remit linked to its capacity building initiatives with teachers (including trainee teachers) and school leaders and work with the Education Authority (EA) to support scaling work linked to Shared Education.

CRIS also has a targeted programme located across the Crumlin Road interface called *Everyday Peacebuilding in Ardoyne and Shankill*. The *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme works with pupils, parents, teachers, and community stakeholders and is anchored to two Nursery Schools where the interschool buddy system was pioneered over twenty-five years ago. Everyday Peacebuilding is an intentional longer-term commitment and seeks to work with a capped number of ten schools so an enhanced programme offering and partnership has a greater possibility of transforming relationships and new norms of peace.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The rationale for CRIS's commitment across the seven localities is strategic in nature and has built new ways of working distinct to each initiative. In the Antrim and Newtownabbey council area, CRIS has built upon a long history of cross-sector collaboration in order to support the development of GRACE - Good Relations and Collaborative Education. Originally piloted by CRIS with the Antrim and Randalstown Schools Moving Forward Together partnership (MFT), GRACE has become a model of good practice and is viewed as ground-breaking by educational stakeholders. The success of MFT led to the deliberate decision by CRIS to further invest in this council area due to strong appetite and the existence of trusted networks. In 2019 the *Growing GRACE* programme was established and over the subsequent five years collaboration has formalised into the *Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together* (NEST) partnership involving 21 schools and other stakeholders.

With regard to CRIS's other strategic locality-based programmes, The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages initiative partnered with CRIS to support the Buddy Up! Project to be scaled in all Primary Schools across the five localities since 2019. Buddy Up! as a funded programme officially wound down in March 2024. In its final year, CRIS has provided enhanced capacity building support to schools and resources to enable them to continue to use the inter-school buddy system in their ongoing partnership work. Furthermore, during this period CRIS was successful in its funding proposal to the Executive Office to produce a short film to highlight the outcomes and multitude of impacts made possible by the investment over 5 years. A formal celebration event will be held in the following year to formally close the programme and signpost schools to additional support and funding opportunities.

Teacher Training

Supporting student teacher training is a regular feature of the programme year with requests from Stranmillis University College. This year CRIS led 5 sessions in the *Leadership for Diversity and Mutual Understanding* module which seeks to promote best practice among educators in building leadership in diversity, equality, inclusion, and inter-cultural competence.

Service Delivery

In recent years CRIS has lessened its service delivery work due to the level of funding received. In this reporting period CRIS provided specialised bespoke training to Dungannon Integrated College, and a Community Safety initiative run by Antrim Newtownabbey Council involving all Primary Schools across the Council. CRIS is re-developing its consultancy model and enhancing our workforce via recruitment and training of Associates. These activities will help prime CRIS to extend provision in future years.

Everyday Peacebuilding (North Belfast)

The workplan focused on three main areas: school engagement (work with pupils and school staff); parental engagement; and community engagement. The aim of school-based activities was to build upon the network of 8 schools situated on the Crumlin Road interface with links to each other and Buddy Up! through the Nursery school programme with Edenderry and Holy Cross Nursery Schools.

School Engagement Activities Included:

- Listening exercises with individual schools
- Networking and planning events for school leaders and staff
- Teacher training programme to aid delivery of pupil programmes and enhance capacity and confidence to work on curriculum topics.
- Staff training day with Holy Cross and Edenderry Nursery Schools to support planning for the restart of their Buddy Up programme after its suspension due to Covid.
- Pilot programme with Classroom Assistants linked to all schools.
- Planning, delivery and evaluation of P3 *Celebrating Diversity* (9 hour) programme to 3 school partnerships involving over 150 pupils.
- Planning, delivery and evaluation of P7 *Knowing Me, Knowing You* (18 hour) programme to 3 school partnerships involving over 150 pupils.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Parent and Community Engagement Activities Included:

- Four workshops with parents linked to the Nursery Schools (Apr- Jun 2023).
- Eight workshops and art project with parents (new school year Jan – Mar 2024)
- Support for community fun day at Stormont Park
- Another highlight of the year was the first-ever Buddy Up! Disco which was held at Girdwood Community Centre on Saturday 19th March. Children and parents of Everyday Peacebuilding Schools attending with approx. 100 participants (50 children + 50 adults). The event was deemed a success with positive feedback from parents and children indicating that it was viewed as a positive opportunity for buddies to meet outside of school. Interviews with participants were conducted to capture material for CRIS's new short film in development.
- Meetings were held with several community organisations and local churches to share more information about Buddy Up! and the Everyday Peacebuilding Programmes. Networking meetings will be a key feature of the programme moving forward as CRIS and schools are keen to develop a more joined up approach to support the aims of the project and the families it serves.

CRIS is delighted that the *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme has had such a successful two years. The ability to meet the majority of programme targets and objectives despite the unexpected departure of a newly appointed programme lead in September 2023 is testament to the agility of staff to reorganise resources and utilise a team of experienced Associates to support the ambitious workplan. Delivery during this period was also heavily supported by the Director of Programmes who stepped into the Coordinating role and the CEO who also supported planning and delivery.

During this period the Board was delighted to welcome Damon Henry on as project lead in April 2024 and anticipate some staffing stability going forward which will aid wider organisational targets and goals.

Growing GRACE: Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together (NEST) Partnership

NEST is a reconciliation initiative that works to build understanding, collaboration, and trust between school communities in Newtownabbey. CRIS coordinates, resources and helps schools to co-create their own action plans linked to commonly identified needs in their localities. NEST schools are committed to a shared vision and voice for collaboration and believe that this will create an educational ecosystem that benefits all 21 school communities. The partnership is in its fifth year and progress is accelerating. Key headlines from this reporting period include:

- As identified in GRACE Stage one, ongoing engagement with individual schools is a core aspect of the partnerships development and bespoke support offered by CRIS's Senior Practitioner.
- Four NEST partnership meetings for school Principals to plan activities and strategies to strengthen their network and visibility in the community
- Supporting New Shared Education activities (*Edmund Rice College & Integrated College Glengormley*). CRIS provided programmes, training and support for whole staff teams and Year 8 pupils focussing on themes relating to identity, community, conflict and flags and symbols.
- Sourcing funding for ongoing sustainability is an ongoing endeavour. CRIS was delighted to attract two investors, Ardbarron Trust and Clanmil and Connswater Housing Association.
- CRIS Facilitated three Shared Learning Networks for teachers involving over 50 staff.
- Staff training was provided for schools involving over 30 staff from St Mary's on the Hill PS, Carnmoney PS, and Ballyhenry PS and Gaelscoil Éanna who are hoping to engage in Shared Education for the first time.
- Primary School pupil programmes were delivered to school partnerships involving over 200 pupils and 20 staff.
- Controversial Issues training was delivered for 15 NEST teachers and principals.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Buddy Up! in Urban Villages

The Buddy Up! Programme workplan between April 2023 - March 2024 involved 637 pupils, 87 teachers and 69 parents across 5 Locations: North Belfast; West Belfast; East Belfast; South Belfast and Derry-Londonderry. Across these localities, CRIS ran Buddy Up! with 26 schools with each programme involving work with pupils, parental engagement and a two-day teacher training programme. Due to its final year CRIS has also been working on an exit strategy and aims to be able to support schools, particularly those involved in new Shared Education partnerships in the years ahead. CRIS was delighted to be awarded not only funding to support an external review of the project which has proven useful for organisational learning and programme development but also funds to create a short film to share the story of the many positive impacts across 34 schools in the project's lifetime. The film will be premiered during Good Relations week in September 2024. A new Ripples of Peace impact case study was written during this period featuring St Matthew's P.S. and Nettlefield P.S. and is available here: <https://www.crisni.org/post/ripples-of-peace-weaving-friendship-in-the-shadow-of-the-shipyard>

Feedback from Buddy Up! Evaluations:

CRIS developed a new survey to help measure the quality of relationships being developed between children involved in the programme. Indicators from the newly launched Trust Indicator Framework (TIF), research project between CRIS and Coventry were utilised and children were involved in a pre and post surveys. The data including 794 surveys across 26 schools, will prove invaluable in CRIS's drive to improve its programming for the future. This data will inform CRIS practice for years to come, and the learning taken from it will be disseminated to make a positive impact in the sector as a whole.

Some of the findings particularly noteworthy are detailed below.

Pre-programme surveys with P7 children found that:

- 54% of P3s said they felt worried or unsure when meeting people different from them
- 63% of P7s said they felt worried or unsure about meeting their buddy
- 69% of P7s said they felt worried about meeting people who are different from them
- 60% of P7s said that they were not comfortable talking openly about their beliefs

Post-programme surveys with P7 found that:

- 71% of P7s said they wanted to spend more time with their buddy
- 75% of P7s said they had fun learning how children were different and how they were similar
- 59% of P7s said they were more comfortable meeting children from the other school
- 95% of P7s said they had a chance to think and talk about the different groups of people who live in Northern Ireland

Teachers and Principals were also asked about their experiences with Buddy Up! This too yielded positive feedback finding:

- 100% believe that participating in Buddy Up! has been beneficial to their personal and professional development
- 91% agreed Buddy Up! contributed towards community cohesion and good relations
- 100% believe Buddy Up! has offered their class a positive experience of Shared Education

Sample of Qualitative Feedback from Teachers:

- *"A super initiative that allows our children to integrate with our neighbours. A very worthwhile programme".*
- *"It develops respect and understanding in children that they can apply through life".*
- *"It was a great way to build relationships between both children and staff. It was a lot of fun and got*

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

- *"Delivery of the sessions is great. Both Damon and Emily make the sessions fun for everyone. They answer all questions and make every child feel like their contribution matters".*
- *"The children looked forward to each session really buying into the idea behind it".*
- *"I really enjoyed working with Emma (partner teacher) and we have built up a great friendship!"*

Next Generation Peacebuilders Programme

As a response to the need to widen and diversify our own team of Associates and the widely recognised weakening of capacity in the sector, CRIS led another recruitment drive in this reporting year. We were successful in recruiting 16 new trainee Associates and engaged them in a process of immersive training that involves a variety of shadowing and co-facilitation opportunities with our different stakeholder participant groups. CRIS was fortunate to locate the funding to support this development initiative by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI).

By investing in upskilling and deepening the Good Relations reflective practice in our wider team of Associates, we hope to be in a position to respond to an anticipated increase in requests for consultancy work to aid our own sustainability and to contribute to the longer-term sustainability of the sector.

Inaugural GRACE Kitemark Award:

Another accomplishment of the period was the celebration of the inaugural GRACE *Good Relations and Collaborative Education Kitemark* award. The award was presented to Ligoniel P.S. and St Vincent de Paul P.S. who followed a specific set of guidelines/criteria developed by CRIS to demonstrate at classroom and school level there was an evidence-based record of inter-school collaboration. The award marks years of strong dedication to Shared Education and joint working across the two schools. The bulk of the activity and evidence gathering for the award was gathered by April-May 2023 and the official award was presented to the two schools in October at an award ceremony hosted by Belfast City Lord Mayor Ryan Murphy held at City Hall. CRIS hope to further develop the GRACE Kite Mark in the next year. This will help recognise sites of excellence, so that at a locality-level Good Relations and reconciliation can be embedded in school communities.



See CRC E-news that featured the story -
[Inaugural Peacebuilding GRACE Award for Primary Schools](#)
[Community Relations Council \(community-relations.org.uk\)](http://community-relations.org.uk)

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

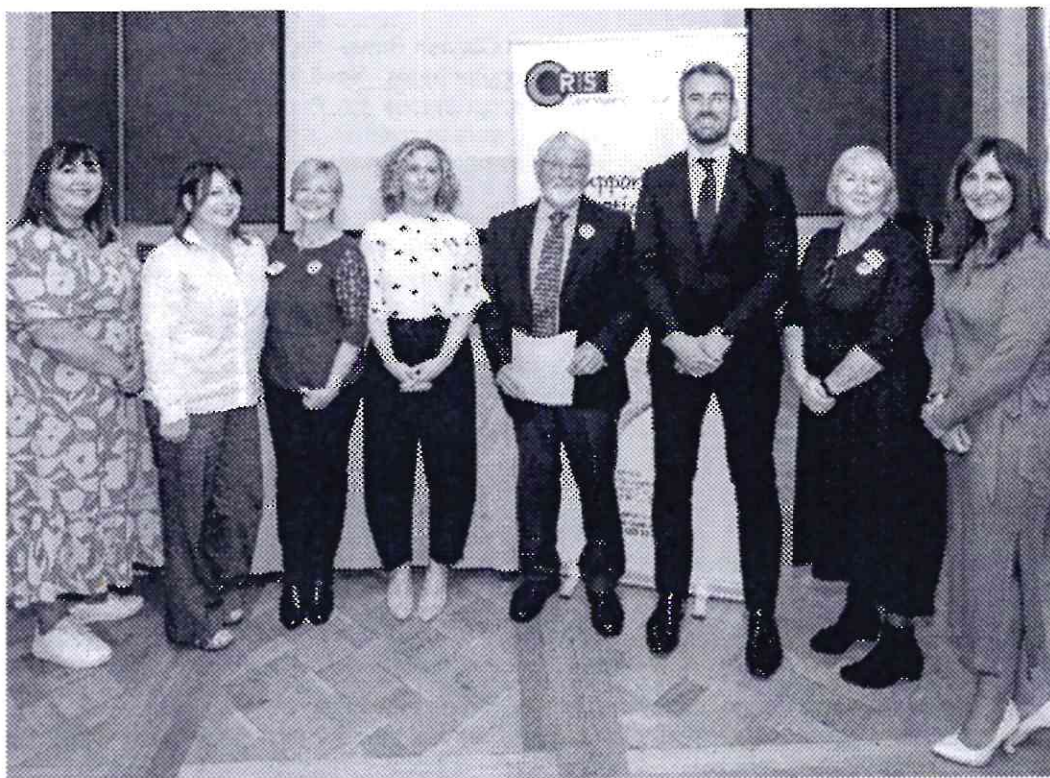
TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Research Project: Launch of the Trust Indicator Framework

CRIS was delighted to launch and begin the process of implementing our Trust Indicators Framework (TIF) to measure the development of trust in our peace and reconciliation activities. CRIS launched '*Trusting GRACE: The development of trust indicators from the Good Relations and Collaborative Education model of schools-based peacebuilding*' in

September 2023 during Good Relations week. The report was authored by Dr Emily Stanton (CRIS Director of Programmes) and Dr Charis Rice (Coventry University). The event received a high level of interest, particularly from across government departments and those responsible for Good Relations and Educational policy, statutory bodies, funders and attended by over 80 from a cross section of society including schools and community organisations.



The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) featured the launch event in the September 2023 E-news. See link:

[New Research Investigates the Role of Trust as Key Factor for Reconciliation
Community Relations in Schools
Community Relations Council \(\[community-relations.org.uk\]\(http://community-relations.org.uk\)\)](#)

A series of follow-on actions and meetings to discuss potential applicability beyond direct CRIS practice development soon commenced. For example, the Education Authority (EA) initiated discussions with the suggestion to pilot TIF into Shared Education partnerships; The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (CRC) also indicated interest as part of a wider review of evaluation of peace and reconciliation outcomes at policy level. CRIS was also invited to present the Trust Indicator Framework (TIF) to a joint meeting of NI Executive Office and the Community Relations Council. CRIS is excited at the enthusiasm by which this new research has been received and its foreseeable utility. We look forward to further developing our partnership with Coventry University and exploring how further examination of TIF in practice can support learning relevant, not only to Northern Ireland policy makers and practitioners but in other post-conflict and international contexts.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY

Development work identified in the strategic plan to aid governance and sustainability has continued to be a central theme. During this period CRIS was fortunate to secure a corporate partnership with *Lancia Consult (Belfast)* who worked with the CEO and Finance Manager, on a pro bono basis over several months, to support improvements in our data management systems and governance. The focus of our project has been to develop a knowledge transfer and management process, mapping out the mechanics of how we operate across multiple critical priorities and capture this knowledge in user-friendly systems culminating in the creation of an interactive *Knowledge Hub Handbook*. The process, carefully facilitated by Lancia colleagues has supported an increased understanding, refinement and improvement making of our own systems in areas such as financial management, risk management and HR processes to name but a few. This time, invested into governance control, risk mitigation and succession planning, allows the organisation to face future challenges with a new confidence.

During this time CRIS also continued to access consultancy support from Clayton Rowe (*Saben Group, Canada*) who has been working with the CEO and Director of Programmes on a regular basis. Several key elements were progressed during this period including the review of our two core programmes for Primary Schools work; consultation on branding and design of a new logo for CRIS; preparatory work to overhaul the CRIS website; and the redevelopment of our consultancy model including revised fee structure, process for designing projects and new templates for contracting with clients.

During this period two programme staff accessed externally provided professional development training, including a Diploma in Community Development and Oxford University Spring School in Data Analysis for Social Science. CRIS has committed itself to help ensure that staff are remunerated at a competitive level and are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop professionally. As the organisations transitions into a new diversified income model, we hope to enhance terms and conditions to ensure we reward and retain talent and attract high quality staff in future years.

Reputation, Profile and Communication:

Activity in this area has been developing at pace in recent years. CRIS's increasing role in influencing systems change include closer working relationships with the Department of Education (DENI) and Education Authority (EA). CRIS has had several strategic meetings with Senior Officials keen to utilise our practice-based expertise and evidence base. Project initiatives during this period include:

- Proposal to pilot Trust Indicator Framework in Mainstreamed Shared Education partnerships.
- CRIS approaches and resource guides to support 'Community Connections and parental engagement' included on EA's online Shared Education hub.
- Engagement with Deputy Secretary of Education linked to the Moving Forward Together partnership.
- Member of DENI's *Reducing Education Disadvantage* (RED) initiative to co-design systems and collaborative approaches for future roll out of this new initiative.
- Invitation to join EA's collaboration with the BBC's *Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland* series to support content for new teacher professional training (TPL) module on working with sensitive issues.
- CRIS CEO invited by Education Authority to provide an input at a seminar with Korean delegation.
- CRIS CEO presented on CRIS practice at Integrated Education Fund (IEF) GR Week event, 'Celebrating Diversity in Our Schools'.
- CRIS CEO part of panel on the Shared Island Dialogue Series (Irish Government).
- Good Relations Week 2023 Buddy Up Video. CRC's media company AS&G created a two-minute video on Buddy Up and profiled during GRW23.
- *Thinking Changes Project*: CRIS supported the setup of a new project layering further opportunities into its current sites of work through its new link with Guth Gafa and their aim to bring philosophy education to areas particularly affected by legacy of conflict and the ongoing presence of paramilitarism.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Financial Review

Summary of Funding Secured to Support Operations:

CRIS was fortunate to secure all necessary funds to fulfil its workplan ambitions covering this period. Funding partners include:

- **The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages Initiative – 'Buddy Up'** project, supporting core and programme costs, for a sixth year with a grant totalling £133,470.
- **Strategic Partner funding, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Reconciliation Fund** - total grant £84,310.
- **The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) core funding scheme** – Year 2 of three-year contract, £72,787.
- **Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Scheme** - project funding in two separate grants totalling £9,501.
- **Community Foundation of Northern Ireland (CFNI)** - total grant £4,370 towards CRIS's Next generation Peacebuilders capacity building programme for new Associates.

CRIS has a sound reputation for administering grants in their entirety in line with funding contracts, and for achieving and often exceeding the programme outcomes anticipated at the point of application. Feedback across funders suggests CRIS represents good value for money. CRIS is committed to keeping the governance costs associated with running the charity at a minimum ensuring the vast majority of funds goes directly towards peacebuilding activities with school communities across the seven localities we operate in.

CRIS is audited by the Community Relations Council and by The Executive Office (TEO). The organisation is highly regarded for maintaining good standards in governance and financial compliance.

CRIS also secured new investors for its Growing GRACE programme, namely Ardbarron Trust and a Housing Association partnership with Clannmil and Connswater. The funds secured will span into the next financial year and are regarded as service agreements as opposed to funding due to the nature of contractable obligations. CRIS hope to build on these connections and flexible and generous investors in the future.

The total income for April 2023 – March 2024 was £340,737 covering almost 100% of all CRIS core operating costs and funds for project related activity.

The total expenditure April 2023 – March 2024 was £308,146, thereby leaving a net income of £32,591.

The total unrestricted reserves are £107,274 therefore CRIS has now achieved 80% of its target position - an increase of approx. £22,000.

Looking forward into 2024-2025, CRIS will be diversifying its income streams due to the Executive Office's Urban Villages funding for the Buddy Up programme drawing to a close. Over the last two years CRIS has been planning for this transition by re-developing its consultancy model, recruiting and training new Associates, and thinking through strategies to engage the business community and linkages with their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitments to support fundraising and other forms of partnership.

The expenditure totals across running costs budgets were close to the original estimates detailed in our funding plans. In the area of programme expenditure, the total spent on teacher substitute cover was £22,183 (124 substitute days), a significant increase from the prior year £12,670. There are two key reasons for this increase. The accounting period was twelve months as opposed to a 9-month audit year for 2022-23. Also, CRIS was successful in accessing additional funds for the NEST programme where teacher capacity building activities are central to the workplan.

Expenses on facilitation are high at just over £30,000, due to a newly appointed staff member 'Good Relations Practitioner' resigning after six months of being in post, therefore CRIS covered a lot of delivery using its bank of experienced Associates.

Expenditure on resources increased by approximately £7,000. This is due to CRIS accessing additional funds for its new film project, programme resources, and design for CRIS publications.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Financial Management:

CRIS has a Financial Management Policy and Procedure Manual which is updated annually and meets the requirements of the Charities Act for Northern Ireland, the Charity Commissions guidelines 'Internal Financial Controls for Charities' and 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)'.

CRIS has a Finance and Personnel Subcommittee who meet quarterly, approximately two weeks before the Board meeting. It is chaired by the Treasurer and includes the Vice Chair and another member. It is also attended by the CEO and Finance Manager who prepare financial papers and documents relating to HR matters that require Board input and decision making.

The sub-committee is responsible for reviewing and providing guidance on the organisation's financial matters. Specifically, the committee assures internal controls, independent audit, and financial analysis for the organisation.

To help the board fulfil its oversight function, the sub committee's key responsibilities relating to finance are as follows:

1. Provide direction to the Board for fiscal responsibility. Alongside this is the responsibility for future long-term planning and the development of strategies to back up the plan.
2. Ongoing review of the organisation's management accounts and funding strategy (including details of income and expenditure, balance sheet, and other matters related to its continued solvency and organisational sustainability).
3. Approve the annual budget and submit it to the Board for approval.
4. Oversee the maintenance of organisational-wide assets, including prudent management of risk exposure.
5. Provide guidance and support to CEO on all matters relating to finance, risk management and human resources.

The CEO & Finance Manager have monthly meetings with the Treasurer, and more often as required. The Chair also meets regularly with the CEO and joins team meetings that have an organisational development focus to ensure a joined-up approach between governance & delivery on charitable objectives.

The Finance Manager continues to make improvements to CRIS's financial systems to ensure an efficient and effective approach across the team. For example, over the last year the Finance Manager developed a new internal 'invoice tracker' system. The Finance Manager provided staff training and overseen a pilot period of 6 months with the main purpose to create a single system to track and manage invoices and budgets for programme expenditure. The improvements have been significant including – a user-friendly system with data easily transferable onto funder specific reporting systems; areas of responsibility tightened in sync with job descriptions relating to varying levels of administration and financial management; minimal errors in budgets and a more efficient process particularly in the final quarter of the financial year.

Reserves Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for managing and maintaining appropriate financial reserves to support the stability and sustainability of Community Relations in Schools (CRIS). The policy aims to ensure that CRIS can meet its ongoing operational commitments, manage financial risks, and invest in future projects in line with its charitable objectives.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all trustees, management, and finance staff responsible for the financial management of CRIS. It covers the identification, calculation, and review of reserves.

3. Policy Statement

CRIS is committed to maintaining a level of reserves that:

- Ensures financial stability and operational continuity.
- Allows for effective management of unforeseen financial risks or losses.
- Supports the strategic goals and future growth of the charity in accordance with the charity's purposes and

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4. Definition of Reserves

Reserves are the portion of unrestricted funds that are freely available for general charitable purposes, excluding funds set aside for specific projects, restricted funds, and fixed assets (such as property and equipment).

5. Key Guidance and References

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) Reserves Guidance: Provides guidelines on setting, managing, and reporting charity reserves (<https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/charity-essentials/managing-financial-difficulties/reserves/>)

The Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): Offers a framework for accounting and reporting practices for charities, including reserves management.

Reserves Procedures

1. Determining the Reserves Level

- **Assess Operational Needs:** Annually assess the charity's operating costs, including regular expenses such as salaries, rent, and overheads.
- **Risk Assessment:** Conduct a financial risk assessment to identify potential risks that may impact funding, income streams, or expenditures.
- **Set Target Reserves:** The target reserves level should be determined based on three to six months of operating costs and anticipated financial risks.

2. Monitoring and Managing Reserves

- **Quarterly Financial Reviews:** Financial staff should review the reserves levels quarterly (and more often as required) to ensure they align with target thresholds.
- **Annual Review by Trustees:** The reserves policy and target levels should be reviewed annually by the Board of trustees.
- **Reporting to Stakeholders:** Include the reserves policy and current reserves position in the annual financial statements, in line with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) and Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) requirements.

3. Utilising Reserves

- **Authorisation for Use:** Reserves can be drawn down in the event of an emergency or financial shortfall, but must be authorised by the board of trustees.
- **Replenishment of Reserves:** When reserves are utilised, the board must approve a plan to replenish reserves within an agreed timeframe.
- **Restricted and Designated Funds:** Distinguish between unrestricted reserves, designated funds, and restricted funds, ensuring restricted funds are used solely for their intended purposes.

4. Core Purposes for Using Reserves

The Board aims to hold unrestricted reserves to enable the organisation to maintain its activities in the event of:

- Gaps in funding
- Late payment of grants and fees
- Upgrades in IT systems and equipment as and when the need arises
- Gaps in opportunities to income generate through training and consultancy work
- Its redundancy liabilities and rental and other contracts
- Its match funding obligations set out in funding contracts where any percentage of staff salaries are not covered by another funder(s)

5. Procedures for Reporting and Compliance

- **Annual Reporting Requirements:** In accordance with the CCNI's guidance, CRIS will include a statement on reserves within the annual report.
- **Financial Statement Disclosure:** Provide a clear explanation in financial statements if reserves fall below or exceed the target range.

6. Review and Revision of Policy

- **Annual Policy Review:** The reserves policy should be reviewed annually by the Board of trustees.
- **Adjustment of Target Reserves:** Any adjustment to the reserves target level should be based on updated

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7. Current Reserves Position:

As of the end of March 2024, the total reserves are £107,274.

By the end of this reporting period CRIS has achieved 80% of its target position, an increase of approx. £22,000.

The Board has revised its reserves target for this period calculating six months running costs (£106,000) and a further £28,000 for redundancies should this be necessary in the future, leaving the target amount of £130,000.

Over the course of the next year CRIS expects to meet its target reserves figure. Meeting this target will rely on successful implementation of the resource diversification strategy, which centres around a return to consultancy work, developing corporate partnerships and other forms of traditional fundraising through events and attracting donors. Substantial planning has taken place during this year to enable a successful pivot towards this new multi stranded income generation strategy.

As CRIS moves into its 40th year a large-scale celebration and fundraising event will be planned to mark the special anniversary year.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Risk Management:

The main concerns of the Board going forward are to ensure:

- That the public benefit enabled through CRIS activities is continued
- That core and programme funding can continue to be secured and increased to retain staff and ensure stability and growth
- To continue to implement appropriate salary reviews
- To action a transitional resource diversification strategy in 2024-2025 to help grow the level of reserves and meet our target
- To focus on organisational sustainability, and succession planning

The board members recognise their duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance and mitigations.

Within the section of this report titled, '*Organisational Development and Sustainability*' details have been shared relating to risk management, governance improvements and longer-term sustainability.

Within our current risk registry, we have prioritised organisational risks and the action steps we will take in which to mitigate them, with significant progress made against each risk in this reporting period. We have prioritised these starting with greatest likelihood and impact and detailed tasks that have been completed and continue to be in progress moving into the new financial year.

RISK 1: Political uncertainty in Northern Ireland and overreliance on government grants

MITIGATIONS: New funding strategy developed, with a diversification of funding partners detailed including Trusts and Foundations across Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and England. Strategy also includes relationship development with NI Shared Housing Associations, business community, return to consultancy work, and more traditional fundraising activities.

RISK 2: Lack of long-term fundraising plan

MITIGATIONS: Activities detailed above also support this risk. As CRIS successfully transition into a new multi stranded funding and income generation model in 2024-2025, a review of progress, opportunities and barriers will be conducted. A longer-term fundraising plan will be consulted upon and developed linked to a new organisational strategy planning for period 2026 – 2029.

RISK 3: Impact of cost-of-living crisis

MITIGATIONS: Exploring new salary structure to take effect 2024 – 2025; agreement to award inflationary raise when deemed affordable without adding risk to financial status, considering the conclusion of Urban Villages funding tenure with CRIS in this reporting year.

RISK 4: Loss of key staff and challenges in attracting new staff

MITIGATIONS: Activities detailed above also support this risk. Board has agreed that CRIS need to hold competitive advantage to both retain and attract new talent. Research of the terms and conditions across the sector will inform this goal in creation of a new competitive salary structure; staff development opportunities have been re-prioritised in line with CRIS study leave policy and will be afforded equitably across the team; investment in Next Generation Peacebuilders programme including recruitment and training programme to widen our team of Associates

RISK 5: Ineffective knowledge management systems

MITIGATIONS: Partnership with Lancia Consult (Belfast) has transformed the likelihood of this risk occurring. CRIS has a new *Interactive Knowledge hub Handbook* detailing process maps across seventeen critical areas relating to governance systems, management, administration and finance. Ongoing work to transfer all CRIS files onto a share point system will take place in the 2024-25 year so that interactive capabilities are achieved.

CRIS will continue to implement its new risk management process and continues to act on its governance responsibilities to ensure CRIS has plans in place to mitigate risks and put plans in place to support sustainability.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Type of governing document:

Community Relations in Schools is a community organisation governed by its constitution. It was adopted in April 1984 and last amended in October 2017 to ensure it was up to date using best practice guidelines as set out in suggested model documents on the Northern Ireland Charity Commission's website.

Trustees who have served during the year are as follows:

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Trustee selection methods:

At the Annual General Meeting each year a Board is appointed to run CRIS for the next year. Each member of the Committee is elected for a period of three years. Retiring members are eligible for re-election. All nominees must indicate their willingness to stand and be proposed and seconded. A written agreement of the nominated persons in absentia must be presented.

Committee members may also be co-opted on the CRIS committee as potential new interested individuals are considered throughout the year. When considering the co-opting of trustees, the Board has regard to the requirement for any specialist skills needed.

We are fortunate to have an engaged and active Board with an array of skills. The Board strives to be as diverse and representative of educational stakeholders and society in general, as possible and has expertise spanning the community and voluntary, funding, corporate and statutory sectors. CRIS plans to increase the Board to a maximum of 10 members, with priority areas identified for recruitment in the disciplines of human resources, finance, and fundraising and areas for welcome statements identified to increase our diversity.

Trustee Induction and Training:

New trustees receive an induction pack which provides information and guidelines on their task, responsibilities, and the policies and ethos. The CEO and members of the Board meet with new trustees during the preliminary stages of their appointment to talk through the organisation in more detail, the history of its work, strategic positioning, and discuss other areas of interest.

New trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity guidelines, the charity commission guidance on public benefit, the content of the constitution, the committee and decision-making process, the strategic and operational plan, and the recent financial performance of the charity.

During the induction period they will meet the full staff team, other trustees and key partners. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. New trustees are invited to attend any mandatory meetings as set down by funders who support CRIS.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Organisational Structure:

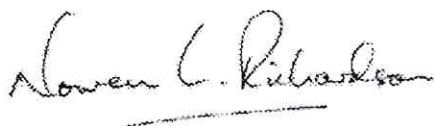
The Board meets four times per year and sub-groups meet to address any additional finance, personnel and policy matters as required. Finance and Personnel subcommittee meetings take place two weeks before the Board meetings to ensure sufficient time to update briefing packs and draft recommendations for Board discussion and decision making. The policy subcommittee operates on a more *ad hoc* basis.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors:

So far as each of the Board members at the date of approval of these financial statements are aware: (a) there is no relevant information of which the charity auditors are unaware; and (b) they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Trustees on Wednesday 22nd January 2025 and signed on their behalf.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



N Richardson
(Chairperson)
Dated: 22 January 2025



L. Patterson
(Treasurer)
Dated.....

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustee Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Community Relations In Schools (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts And Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

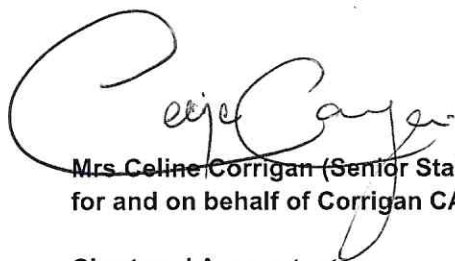
TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Other matters which we are required to address

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared accounts in accordance with "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) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Mrs Celine Corrigan (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Corrigan CA Limited

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

20 January 2025

24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies		-	4,450	4,450	-	-	-
Charitable activities	3	31,849	304,438	336,287	17,556	178,273	195,829
Total income		31,849	308,888	340,737	17,556	178,273	195,829
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	4	21,094	287,052	308,146	2,161	254,954	257,115
Total expenditure		21,094	287,052	308,146	2,161	254,954	257,115
Net income/(expenditure)		10,755	21,836	32,591	15,395	(76,681)	(61,286)
Transfers between funds		14,616	(14,616)	-	23,106	(23,106)	-
Net movement in funds	5	25,371	7,220	32,591	38,501	(99,787)	(61,286)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		81,903	-	81,903	43,402	99,787	143,189
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		107,274	7,220	114,494	81,903	-	81,903

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

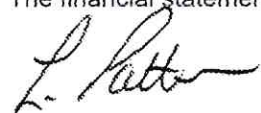
COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

		2024		2023	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	11		6		6
Tangible assets	10		3,421		5,102
			<u>3,427</u>		<u>5,108</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	12	86,855		32,358	
Cash at bank and in hand		35,116		50,085	
		<u>121,971</u>		<u>82,443</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(10,904)		(5,648)	
Net current assets			<u>111,067</u>		<u>76,795</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>
			<u><u>114,494</u></u>		<u><u>81,903</u></u>
Income Funds					
Restricted Funds	14		7,220		-
Unrestricted Funds			107,274		81,903
			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 22 January 2025



L Patterson
Trustee

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

1 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Accounting policies

Charity information

Community Relations In Schools is an unincorporated charity.

2.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 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 2016).

The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value.

The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

2.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

2.4 Incoming resources

Income From Charitable Activities

Income from charitable activities is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Income from government or other grants, whether 'capital' or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has the entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Donations & Legacies

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

2.5 Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure On Charitable Activities

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

The charity is below the charity audit threshold and therefore is exempt from reporting expenditure on an activity basis. The charity has opted to report by the nature rather than on an activity basis.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

2.6 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Intangible assets acquired on business combinations are recognised separately from goodwill at the acquisition date where it is probable that the expected future economic benefits that are attributable to the asset will flow to the entity and the fair value of the asset can be measured reliably; the intangible asset arises from contractual or other legal rights; and the intangible asset is separable from the entity.

Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

Software	20% straight line
----------	-------------------

2.7 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures, fittings & equipment	20% straight line
--------------------------------	-------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

2.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

2.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

2.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

3 Charitable activities

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Donations	4,450	-
Service Delivery	31,849	17,556
Grants	304,438	178,273
	<u>340,737</u>	<u>195,829</u>

	Total 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Analysis by fund			
Unrestricted funds	-	31,849	31,849
Restricted funds	308,888	-	308,888
	<u>308,888</u>	<u>31,849</u>	<u>340,737</u>

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Unrestricted funds	-	17,556	17,556
Restricted funds	178,273	-	178,273
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>17,556</u>	<u>195,829</u>

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Included in Grants Are:		
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Core Funding	72,787	39,997
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Funding	9,501	1,567
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Reconciliation Fund	84,310	-
The Executive Office, Urban Villages Initiative	133,470	136,709
Community Foundation Northern Ireland	4,370	-
	<u>304,438</u>	<u>178,273</u>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4 Charitable activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs	193,966	152,861
Staff Training	2,990	105
Depreciation and impairment	1,897	1,776
Programme Costs	-	193
Resources	12,832	5,979
Travel	8,613	9,655
Subscriptions	1,863	-
Hospitality	7,066	6,100
Facilitation	30,561	34,244
Light & Heat	1,188	967
Telephone	475	338
Sundry	1,137	1,570
Advertising	-	935
Subcover	22,183	12,670
Accountancy	2,939	2,700
Professional Fees	1,556	7,394
Bank Charges	99	174
Rent	11,655	10,314
Insurance	3,164	3,002
Post, printing & Stationery	1,708	1,169
Computer Running expenses	18	720
Venues	2,192	2,895
Loss on disposal of Fixed Assets	-	(517)
Cleaning	44	1,871
	<u>308,146</u>	<u>257,115</u>

5 Net movement in funds

	2024 £	2023 £
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	<u>1,897</u>	<u>1,776</u>

6 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.
No trustee expenses have been incurred.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7 Auditor's remuneration

The analysis of auditor's remuneration is as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Auditor's Remuneration	2,706	2,646
Total audit fees	2,706	2,646

8 Employees

There were 6 employees during the year.

Employment costs	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	189,702	149,580
Other pension costs	4,263	3,281

No employees received employee benefits of more than £60,000.

9 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023	18,358
Additions	216
At 31 March 2024	18,574
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2023	13,256
Depreciation charged in the year	1,897
At 31 March 2024	15,153
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	3,421
At 31 March 2023	5,102

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

11 Intangible fixed assets

	Software £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	35,464
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	35,458
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	6
At 31 March 2023	6

12 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	86,855	32,358

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	5,656	2,093
Other creditors	2,691	612
Accruals and deferred income	2,557	2,943
	10,904	5,648

14 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
	-	308,888	(287,052)	(14,616)	7,220
Previous Period:					
	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
	99,787	178,273	(254,954)	(23,106)	-

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

15 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
General funds	81,903	31,849	(21,094)	14,616	107,274
Previous Period:	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
General funds	43,402	17,556	(2,161)	23,106	81,903

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:			
Intangible fixed assets	-	6	6
Tangible assets	-	3,421	3,421
Current assets/(liabilities)	7,220	103,847	111,067
	7,220	107,274	114,494

17 Movement in Funds

Fund	At 01/04/23 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	At 31/03/24 £
Restricted	-	308,888	(287,052)	(14,616)	7,220
Unrestricted	81,903	31,849	(21,094)	14,616	107,274
	81,903	340,737	(308,146)	-	114,494

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

18 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - none).

Community Relations In Schools (CRIS)

Northern Ireland - Charity number 105291

Annual return

Charity registration number Charity No. NIC105291

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Charity number

Charity No. NIC105291

Principal address

Unit 6 North City Business Centre
2 Duncairn Gardens
Belfast
BT15 2GG

Auditor

Celine Corrigan
Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

CONTENTS

	Page
Trustees report	1 - 16
Statement of trustees responsibilities	17
Independent auditor's report	
Statement of financial activities	21
Balance sheet	22
Notes to the financial statements	23 - 32

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Trustees' report for the year ended 31st March 2023

The trustees of CRIS are pleased to present their annual report and the financial statements for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name: Community Relations In Schools

Charity Number: NIC105291

The charity is an unincorporated association as per the Constitution.

Principal Office: Unit 6, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT152GG

Registered Office: Unit 6, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GG

Auditor: Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
BT41 2GG

Bankers: Ulster Bank Ltd. Unit 1 Westwood Centre, Kennedy Way, Belfast, BT11 9BQ

CRIS Trustees as of 31st March 2024:

Norman Richardson (Chair)

Patricia O'Neill (Vice Chair)

Lawrence Patterson (Treasurer)

Conor O'Neill (Secretary)

Aithne Kerrigan

Ben Craig

Objectives and activities

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable Objects

The purpose of CRIS is to actively contribute to the building of a shared and reconciled society in Northern Ireland by developing and delivering peace-building programmes and activities within and between schools and in their local communities.

CRIS also works in partnership with educational authorities, higher educational institutions, other statutory agencies, funding bodies and community organisations to bring about positive impacts at an individual, family, school community, and system level. CRIS works in cooperative arrangements that support reconciliation and promote equality and diversity through the building of relationships and trust across society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees of CRIS confirm that they have complied with their duty as defined in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) and have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The public benefit requirement has continued to inform the activities of the charity during this reporting period.

In evaluating public benefit, the trustees are pleased that the work of CRIS has had multi-level positive impacts over this past year. Our programmes, training and other partnership initiatives have involved work with 71 school communities. Over three quarters of these schools are in areas of high deprivation and CRIS intentionally focuses its resources in these communities where the legacy of the conflict continues to make an impact.

Within the reporting period, through its programmes and activities, CRIS directly engaged 3840 distinct participants (pupils, parents, teachers, classroom assistants, principals, Boards of Governors). The total beneficiaries are 500 more than the previous year.

Indirectly many more children, young people and members of their whole school communities have benefited due to the programmes, capacity building, and relationship development initiatives undertaken to support diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding both within and between schools across all sectors and phases of education.

Wider benefits are identified such as organisational practice-based learning that is captured and disseminated supporting emerging policy and initiatives in education and Good Relations. For example, during Good Relations Week 2023, CRIS launched its report on trust with Coventry University. Policy makers and funding bodies showed keen interest in research findings. In February 2024, CRIS and Coventry University were invited to present the *Trust Indicator Framework* (TIF) and its suggested applications to a strategic partnership meeting with senior officials of The Executive Office (TEO) and Community Relations Council (NICRC).

Furthermore, a review of the government's *Together Building a United Community* (TBUC) strategy (2013-2023) has been initiated in this period and the *Trust Indicator Framework* (TIF) is under consideration to bring a new lens to how Good Relations is measured and the need to consider processes for trust building as a foundational principle and practice.

In the *Achievements and Performance* section of this report additional public benefit is detailed in the area of supporting systems change. CRIS has played an increasingly central role to improve regional contributions to peace and reconciliation by partnering with the Education Authority and their continued work to improve, refine and extend Shared Education across Northern Ireland.

Additionally, CRIS creates wider public benefit by sharing good news stories and case studies of impact that present alternative hopeful narratives, putting the voice of participants and schools to the fore, countering the dominant conflict orientated messaging regarding Northern Ireland. CRIS's work in communications highlights the unique role school communities play supporting an intergenerational framework for peace and reconciliation. It demonstrates innovative solutions that transcend structural and psychological divisions and has an international appeal given the transferability of Shared Education in other conflict/post-conflict contexts.

During this reporting period CRIS has increased its communications, with a core purpose to champion an alternative narrative that speaks to the aspirations of the 'silent majority' to live in a more shared and reconciled society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Summary of the Main Activities

The core activities of CRIS are:

- Provision of training, consultancy and multi-disciplinary support across all school sectors to build capacity and confidence to work with Good/ Community Relations and to support best practice in sharing and collaborative working.
- Delivering school-based, inter-community pupil programmes that promote diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding and that engage with perceived sensitive and contentious issues in age and stage appropriate ways.
- Provision of opportunities to engage parents/carers in Good/Community Relations and peacebuilding work with and through schools and other networks on a single identity and an inter-community basis.
- Advocacy for the role that schools, and education can play in supporting an intergenerational framework for peacebuilding and a shared future.
- Dissemination of good practice, research findings and resources on Good/ Community Relations and school-based peacebuilding through a variety of means including social media, traditional communication, through the writing of articles, hosting events/ conferences, and providing inputs for third level education institutions, statutory bodies, and other organisations.
- Ongoing development of evaluation systems linked to our model of practice - *Good Relations and Collaborative Education* (GRACE).
- Continuing to develop the sustainability of the organisation and ensure governance systems are robust adopting a continual improvement approach across all areas of organisational development.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Year in Numbers

39 th Year	71	3094	212	534	£107,274	£340,737
Supporting School-based Peacebuilding	Schools	Pupils	Parents/ carers	Teachers/ principals	Unrestricted Reserves	Total Income

Programme Overview

The three core aims set out in the CRIS strategic plan (2021-2024):

- AIM 1: Catalysing Peace and Reconciliation
- AIM 2: Equipping and Inspiring the Education Sector
- AIM 3: Sustaining and Growing CRIS to achieve our mission

In its current strategy CRIS commits to investing its funded resources in seven localities across Northern Ireland. These include Newtownabbey & Glengormley, Antrim and Randalstown, and five additional localities aligned with The Executive Office's Urban Villages Initiative (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan; Colin/West Belfast, Eastside/ East Belfast; Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets areas/ South Belfast; and The Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street in Derry/Londonderry). CRIS also has a regional remit linked to its capacity building initiatives with teachers (including trainee teachers) and school leaders and work with the Education Authority (EA) to support scaling work linked to Shared Education.

CRIS also has a targeted programme located across the Crumlin Road interface called *Everyday Peacebuilding in Ardoyne and Shankill*. The *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme works with pupils, parents, teachers, and community stakeholders and is anchored to two Nursery Schools where the interschool buddy system was pioneered over twenty-five years ago. Everyday Peacebuilding is an intentional longer-term commitment and seeks to work with a capped number of ten schools so an enhanced programme offering and partnership has a greater possibility of transforming relationships and new norms of peace.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The rationale for CRIS's commitment across the seven localities is strategic in nature and has built new ways of working distinct to each initiative. In the Antrim and Newtownabbey council area, CRIS has built upon a long history of cross-sector collaboration in order to support the development of GRACE - Good Relations and Collaborative Education. Originally piloted by CRIS with the Antrim and Randalstown Schools Moving Forward Together partnership (MFT), GRACE has become a model of good practice and is viewed as ground-breaking by educational stakeholders. The success of MFT led to the deliberate decision by CRIS to further invest in this council area due to strong appetite and the existence of trusted networks. In 2019 the *Growing GRACE* programme was established and over the subsequent five years collaboration has formalised into the *Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together* (NEST) partnership involving 21 schools and other stakeholders.

With regard to CRIS's other strategic locality-based programmes, The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages initiative partnered with CRIS to support the Buddy Up! Project to be scaled in all Primary Schools across the five localities since 2019. Buddy Up! as a funded programme officially wound down in March 2024. In its final year, CRIS has provided enhanced capacity building support to schools and resources to enable them to continue to use the inter-school buddy system in their ongoing partnership work. Furthermore, during this period CRIS was successful in its funding proposal to the Executive Office to produce a short film to highlight the outcomes and multitude of impacts made possible by the investment over 5 years. A formal celebration event will be held in the following year to formally close the programme and signpost schools to additional support and funding opportunities.

Teacher Training

Supporting student teacher training is a regular feature of the programme year with requests from Stranmillis University College. This year CRIS led 5 sessions in the *Leadership for Diversity and Mutual Understanding* module which seeks to promote best practice among educators in building leadership in diversity, equality, inclusion, and inter-cultural competence.

Service Delivery

In recent years CRIS has lessened its service delivery work due to the level of funding received. In this reporting period CRIS provided specialised bespoke training to Dungannon Integrated College, and a Community Safety initiative run by Antrim Newtownabbey Council involving all Primary Schools across the Council. CRIS is re-developing its consultancy model and enhancing our workforce via recruitment and training of Associates. These activities will help prime CRIS to extend provision in future years.

Everyday Peacebuilding (North Belfast)

The workplan focused on three main areas: school engagement (work with pupils and school staff); parental engagement; and community engagement. The aim of school-based activities was to build upon the network of 8 schools situated on the Crumlin Road interface with links to each other and Buddy Up! through the Nursery school programme with Edenderry and Holy Cross Nursery Schools.

School Engagement Activities Included:

- Listening exercises with individual schools
- Networking and planning events for school leaders and staff
- Teacher training programme to aid delivery of pupil programmes and enhance capacity and confidence to work on curriculum topics.
- Staff training day with Holy Cross and Edenderry Nursery Schools to support planning for the restart of their Buddy Up programme after its suspension due to Covid.
- Pilot programme with Classroom Assistants linked to all schools.
- Planning, delivery and evaluation of P3 *Celebrating Diversity* (9 hour) programme to 3 school partnerships involving over 150 pupils.
- Planning, delivery and evaluation of P7 *Knowing Me, Knowing You* (18 hour) programme to 3 school partnerships involving over 150 pupils.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Parent and Community Engagement Activities Included:

- Four workshops with parents linked to the Nursery Schools (Apr- Jun 2023).
- Eight workshops and art project with parents (new school year Jan – Mar 2024)
- Support for community fun day at Stormont Park
- Another highlight of the year was the first-ever Buddy Up! Disco which was held at Girdwood Community Centre on Saturday 19th March. Children and parents of Everyday Peacebuilding Schools attending with approx. 100 participants (50 children + 50 adults). The event was deemed a success with positive feedback from parents and children indicating that it was viewed as a positive opportunity for buddies to meet outside of school. Interviews with participants were conducted to capture material for CRIS's new short film in development.
- Meetings were held with several community organisations and local churches to share more information about Buddy Up! and the Everyday Peacebuilding Programmes. Networking meetings will be a key feature of the programme moving forward as CRIS and schools are keen to develop a more joined up approach to support the aims of the project and the families it serves.

CRIS is delighted that the *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme has had such a successful two years. The ability to meet the majority of programme targets and objectives despite the unexpected departure of a newly appointed programme lead in September 2023 is testament to the agility of staff to reorganise resources and utilise a team of experienced Associates to support the ambitious workplan. Delivery during this period was also heavily supported by the Director of Programmes who stepped into the Coordinating role and the CEO who also supported planning and delivery.

During this period the Board was delighted to welcome Damon Henry on as project lead in April 2024 and anticipate some staffing stability going forward which will aid wider organisational targets and goals.

Growing GRACE: Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together (NEST) Partnership

NEST is a reconciliation initiative that works to build understanding, collaboration, and trust between school communities in Newtownabbey. CRIS coordinates, resources and helps schools to co-create their own action plans linked to commonly identified needs in their localities. NEST schools are committed to a shared vision and voice for collaboration and believe that this will create an educational ecosystem that benefits all 21 school communities. The partnership is in its fifth year and progress is accelerating. Key headlines from this reporting period include:

- As identified in GRACE Stage one, ongoing engagement with individual schools is a core aspect of the partnerships development and bespoke support offered by CRIS's Senior Practitioner.
- Four NEST partnership meetings for school Principals to plan activities and strategies to strengthen their network and visibility in the community
- Supporting New Shared Education activities (*Edmund Rice College & Integrated College Glengormley*). CRIS provided programmes, training and support for whole staff teams and Year 8 pupils focussing on themes relating to identity, community, conflict and flags and symbols.
- Sourcing funding for ongoing sustainability is an ongoing endeavour. CRIS was delighted to attract two investors, Ardbarron Trust and Clanmil and Connswater Housing Association.
- CRIS Facilitated three Shared Learning Networks for teachers involving over 50 staff.
- Staff training was provided for schools involving over 30 staff from St Mary's on the Hill PS, Carnmoney PS, and Ballyhenry PS and Gaelscoil Éanna who are hoping to engage in Shared Education for the first time.
- Primary School pupil programmes were delivered to school partnerships involving over 200 pupils and 20 staff.
- Controversial Issues training was delivered for 15 NEST teachers and principals.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Buddy Up! in Urban Villages

The Buddy Up! Programme workplan between April 2023 - March 2024 involved 637 pupils, 87 teachers and 69 parents across 5 Locations: North Belfast; West Belfast; East Belfast; South Belfast and Derry-Londonderry. Across these localities, CRIS ran Buddy Up! with 26 schools with each programme involving work with pupils, parental engagement and a two-day teacher training programme. Due to its final year CRIS has also been working on an exit strategy and aims to be able to support schools, particularly those involved in new Shared Education partnerships in the years ahead. CRIS was delighted to be awarded not only funding to support an external review of the project which has proven useful for organisational learning and programme development but also funds to create a short film to share the story of the many positive impacts across 34 schools in the project's lifetime. The film will be premiered during Good Relations week in September 2024. A new Ripples of Peace impact case study was written during this period featuring St Matthew's P.S. and Nettlefield P.S. and is available here: <https://www.crisni.org/post/ripples-of-peace-weaving-friendship-in-the-shadow-of-the-shipyard>

Feedback from Buddy Up! Evaluations:

CRIS developed a new survey to help measure the quality of relationships being developed between children involved in the programme. Indicators from the newly launched Trust Indicator Framework (TIF), research project between CRIS and Coventry were utilised and children were involved in a pre and post surveys. The data including 794 surveys across 26 schools, will prove invaluable in CRIS's drive to improve its programming for the future. This data will inform CRIS practice for years to come, and the learning taken from it will be disseminated to make a positive impact in the sector as a whole.

Some of the findings particularly noteworthy are detailed below.

Pre-programme surveys with P7 children found that:

- 54% of P3s said they felt worried or unsure when meeting people different from them
- 63% of P7s said they felt worried or unsure about meeting their buddy
- 69% of P7s said they felt worried about meeting people who are different from them
- 60% of P7s said that they were not comfortable talking openly about their beliefs

Post-programme surveys with P7 found that:

- 71% of P7s said they wanted to spend more time with their buddy
- 75% of P7s said they had fun learning how children were different and how they were similar
- 59% of P7s said they were more comfortable meeting children from the other school
- 95% of P7s said they had a chance to think and talk about the different groups of people who live in Northern Ireland

Teachers and Principals were also asked about their experiences with Buddy Up! This too yielded positive feedback finding:

- 100% believe that participating in Buddy Up! has been beneficial to their personal and professional development
- 91% agreed Buddy Up! contributed towards community cohesion and good relations
- 100% believe Buddy Up! has offered their class a positive experience of Shared Education

Sample of Qualitative Feedback from Teachers:

- *"A super initiative that allows our children to integrate with our neighbours. A very worthwhile programme".*
- *"It develops respect and understanding in children that they can apply through life".*
- *"It was a great way to build relationships between both children and staff. It was a lot of fun and got*

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

- *"Delivery of the sessions is great. Both Damon and Emily make the sessions fun for everyone. They answer all questions and make every child feel like their contribution matters".*
- *"The children looked forward to each session really buying into the idea behind it".*
- *"I really enjoyed working with Emma (partner teacher) and we have built up a great friendship!"*

Next Generation Peacebuilders Programme

As a response to the need to widen and diversify our own team of Associates and the widely recognised weakening of capacity in the sector, CRIS led another recruitment drive in this reporting year. We were successful in recruiting 16 new trainee Associates and engaged them in a process of immersive training that involves a variety of shadowing and co-facilitation opportunities with our different stakeholder participant groups. CRIS was fortunate to locate the funding to support this development initiative by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI).

By investing in upskilling and deepening the Good Relations reflective practice in our wider team of Associates, we hope to be in a position to respond to an anticipated increase in requests for consultancy work to aid our own sustainability and to contribute to the longer-term sustainability of the sector.

Inaugural GRACE Kitemark Award:

Another accomplishment of the period was the celebration of the inaugural GRACE *Good Relations and Collaborative Education Kitemark* award. The award was presented to Ligoniel P.S. and St Vincent de Paul P.S. who followed a specific set of guidelines/criteria developed by CRIS to demonstrate at classroom and school level there was an evidence-based record of inter-school collaboration. The award marks years of strong dedication to Shared Education and joint working across the two schools. The bulk of the activity and evidence gathering for the award was gathered by April-May 2023 and the official award was presented to the two schools in October at an award ceremony hosted by Belfast City Lord Mayor Ryan Murphy held at City Hall. CRIS hope to further develop the GRACE Kite Mark in the next year. This will help recognise sites of excellence, so that at a locality-level Good Relations and reconciliation can be embedded in school communities.



See CRC E-news that featured the story -
[Inaugural Peacebuilding GRACE Award for Primary Schools](#)
[Community Relations Council \(community-relations.org.uk\)](http://community-relations.org.uk)

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

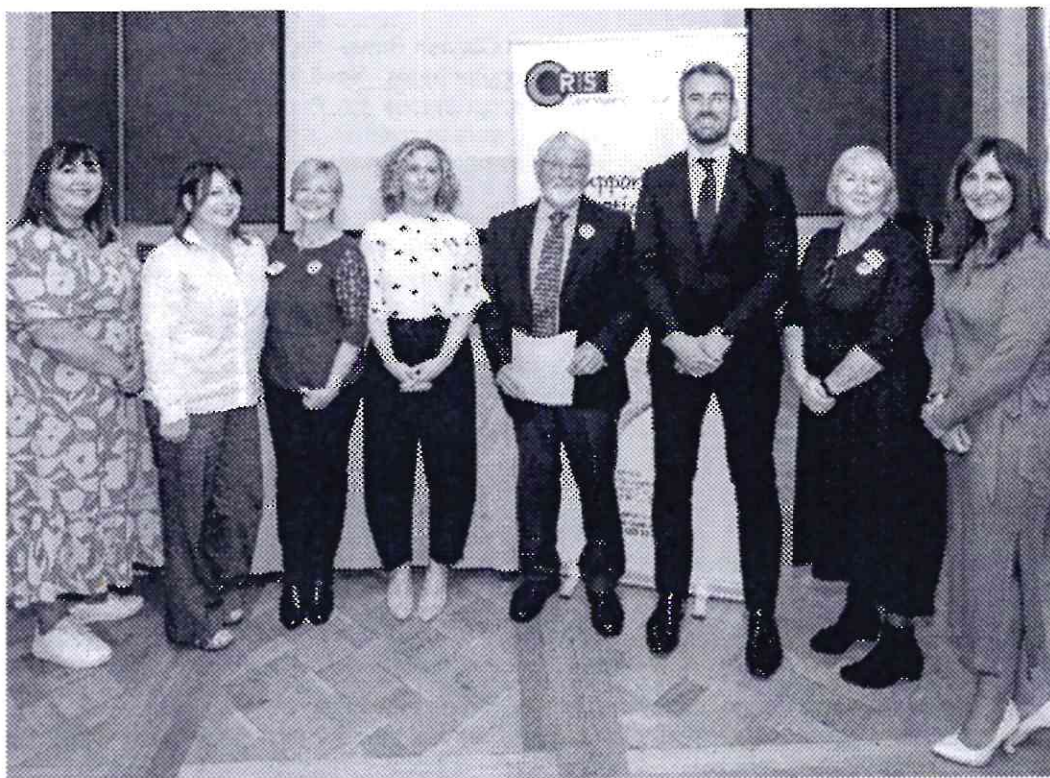
TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Research Project: Launch of the Trust Indicator Framework

CRIS was delighted to launch and begin the process of implementing our Trust Indicators Framework (TIF) to measure the development of trust in our peace and reconciliation activities. CRIS launched '*Trusting GRACE: The development of trust indicators from the Good Relations and Collaborative Education model of schools-based peacebuilding*' in

September 2023 during Good Relations week. The report was authored by Dr Emily Stanton (CRIS Director of Programmes) and Dr Charis Rice (Coventry University). The event received a high level of interest, particularly from across government departments and those responsible for Good Relations and Educational policy, statutory bodies, funders and attended by over 80 from a cross section of society including schools and community organisations.



The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) featured the launch event in the September 2023 E-news. See link:

[New Research Investigates the Role of Trust as Key Factor for Reconciliation
Community Relations in Schools
Community Relations Council \(\[community-relations.org.uk\]\(http://community-relations.org.uk\)\)](#)

A series of follow-on actions and meetings to discuss potential applicability beyond direct CRIS practice development soon commenced. For example, the Education Authority (EA) initiated discussions with the suggestion to pilot TIF into Shared Education partnerships; The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (CRC) also indicated interest as part of a wider review of evaluation of peace and reconciliation outcomes at policy level. CRIS was also invited to present the Trust Indicator Framework (TIF) to a joint meeting of NI Executive Office and the Community Relations Council. CRIS is excited at the enthusiasm by which this new research has been received and its foreseeable utility. We look forward to further developing our partnership with Coventry University and exploring how further examination of TIF in practice can support learning relevant, not only to Northern Ireland policy makers and practitioners but in other post-conflict and international contexts.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY

Development work identified in the strategic plan to aid governance and sustainability has continued to be a central theme. During this period CRIS was fortunate to secure a corporate partnership with *Lancia Consult (Belfast)* who worked with the CEO and Finance Manager, on a pro bono basis over several months, to support improvements in our data management systems and governance. The focus of our project has been to develop a knowledge transfer and management process, mapping out the mechanics of how we operate across multiple critical priorities and capture this knowledge in user-friendly systems culminating in the creation of an interactive *Knowledge Hub Handbook*. The process, carefully facilitated by Lancia colleagues has supported an increased understanding, refinement and improvement making of our own systems in areas such as financial management, risk management and HR processes to name but a few. This time, invested into governance control, risk mitigation and succession planning, allows the organisation to face future challenges with a new confidence.

During this time CRIS also continued to access consultancy support from Clayton Rowe (*Saben Group, Canada*) who has been working with the CEO and Director of Programmes on a regular basis. Several key elements were progressed during this period including the review of our two core programmes for Primary Schools work; consultation on branding and design of a new logo for CRIS; preparatory work to overhaul the CRIS website; and the redevelopment of our consultancy model including revised fee structure, process for designing projects and new templates for contracting with clients.

During this period two programme staff accessed externally provided professional development training, including a Diploma in Community Development and Oxford University Spring School in Data Analysis for Social Science. CRIS has committed itself to help ensure that staff are remunerated at a competitive level and are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop professionally. As the organisations transitions into a new diversified income model, we hope to enhance terms and conditions to ensure we reward and retain talent and attract high quality staff in future years.

Reputation, Profile and Communication:

Activity in this area has been developing at pace in recent years. CRIS's increasing role in influencing systems change include closer working relationships with the Department of Education (DENI) and Education Authority (EA). CRIS has had several strategic meetings with Senior Officials keen to utilise our practice-based expertise and evidence base. Project initiatives during this period include:

- Proposal to pilot Trust Indicator Framework in Mainstreamed Shared Education partnerships.
- CRIS approaches and resource guides to support 'Community Connections and parental engagement' included on EA's online Shared Education hub.
- Engagement with Deputy Secretary of Education linked to the Moving Forward Together partnership.
- Member of DENI's *Reducing Education Disadvantage* (RED) initiative to co-design systems and collaborative approaches for future roll out of this new initiative.
- Invitation to join EA's collaboration with the BBC's *Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland* series to support content for new teacher professional training (TPL) module on working with sensitive issues.
- CRIS CEO invited by Education Authority to provide an input at a seminar with Korean delegation.
- CRIS CEO presented on CRIS practice at Integrated Education Fund (IEF) GR Week event, 'Celebrating Diversity in Our Schools'.
- CRIS CEO part of panel on the Shared Island Dialogue Series (Irish Government).
- Good Relations Week 2023 Buddy Up Video. CRC's media company AS&G created a two-minute video on Buddy Up and profiled during GRW23.
- *Thinking Changes Project: CRIS supported the setup of a new project layering further opportunities into its current sites of work through its new link with Guth Gafa and their aim to bring philosophy education to areas particularly affected by legacy of conflict and the ongoing presence of paramilitarism.*

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Financial Review

Summary of Funding Secured to Support Operations:

CRIS was fortunate to secure all necessary funds to fulfil its workplan ambitions covering this period. Funding partners include:

- **The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages Initiative – 'Buddy Up'** project, supporting core and programme costs, for a sixth year with a grant totalling £133,470.
- **Strategic Partner funding, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Reconciliation Fund** - total grant £84,310.
- **The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) core funding scheme** – Year 2 of three-year contract, £72,787.
- **Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Scheme** - project funding in two separate grants totalling £9,501.
- **Community Foundation of Northern Ireland (CFNI)** - total grant £4,370 towards CRIS's Next generation Peacebuilders capacity building programme for new Associates.

CRIS has a sound reputation for administering grants in their entirety in line with funding contracts, and for achieving and often exceeding the programme outcomes anticipated at the point of application. Feedback across funders suggests CRIS represents good value for money. CRIS is committed to keeping the governance costs associated with running the charity at a minimum ensuring the vast majority of funds goes directly towards peacebuilding activities with school communities across the seven localities we operate in.

CRIS is audited by the Community Relations Council and by The Executive Office (TEO). The organisation is highly regarded for maintaining good standards in governance and financial compliance.

CRIS also secured new investors for its Growing GRACE programme, namely Ardbarron Trust and a Housing Association partnership with Clanmil and Connswater. The funds secured will span into the next financial year and are regarded as service agreements as opposed to funding due to the nature of contractable obligations. CRIS hope to build on these connections and flexible and generous investors in the future.

The total income for April 2023 – March 2024 was £340,737 covering almost 100% of all CRIS core operating costs and funds for project related activity.

The total expenditure April 2023 – March 2024 was £308,146, thereby leaving a net income of £32,591.

The total unrestricted reserves are £107,274 therefore CRIS has now achieved 80% of its target position - an increase of approx. £22,000.

Looking forward into 2024-2025, CRIS will be diversifying its income streams due to the Executive Office's Urban Villages funding for the Buddy Up programme drawing to a close. Over the last two years CRIS has been planning for this transition by re-developing its consultancy model, recruiting and training new Associates, and thinking through strategies to engage the business community and linkages with their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitments to support fundraising and other forms of partnership.

The expenditure totals across running costs budgets were close to the original estimates detailed in our funding plans. In the area of programme expenditure, the total spent on teacher substitute cover was £22,183 (124 substitute days), a significant increase from the prior year £12,670. There are two key reasons for this increase. The accounting period was twelve months as opposed to a 9-month audit year for 2022-23. Also, CRIS was successful in accessing additional funds for the NEST programme where teacher capacity building activities are central to the workplan.

Expenses on facilitation are high at just over £30,000, due to a newly appointed staff member 'Good Relations Practitioner' resigning after six months of being in post, therefore CRIS covered a lot of delivery using its bank of experienced Associates.

Expenditure on resources increased by approximately £7,000. This is due to CRIS accessing additional funds for its new film project, programme resources, and design for CRIS publications.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Financial Management:

CRIS has a Financial Management Policy and Procedure Manual which is updated annually and meets the requirements of the Charities Act for Northern Ireland, the Charity Commissions guidelines 'Internal Financial Controls for Charities' and 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)'.

CRIS has a Finance and Personnel Subcommittee who meet quarterly, approximately two weeks before the Board meeting. It is chaired by the Treasurer and includes the Vice Chair and another member. It is also attended by the CEO and Finance Manager who prepare financial papers and documents relating to HR matters that require Board input and decision making.

The sub-committee is responsible for reviewing and providing guidance on the organisation's financial matters. Specifically, the committee assures internal controls, independent audit, and financial analysis for the organisation.

To help the board fulfil its oversight function, the sub committee's key responsibilities relating to finance are as follows:

1. Provide direction to the Board for fiscal responsibility. Alongside this is the responsibility for future long-term planning and the development of strategies to back up the plan.
2. Ongoing review of the organisation's management accounts and funding strategy (including details of income and expenditure, balance sheet, and other matters related to its continued solvency and organisational sustainability).
3. Approve the annual budget and submit it to the Board for approval.
4. Oversee the maintenance of organisational-wide assets, including prudent management of risk exposure.
5. Provide guidance and support to CEO on all matters relating to finance, risk management and human resources.

The CEO & Finance Manager have monthly meetings with the Treasurer, and more often as required. The Chair also meets regularly with the CEO and joins team meetings that have an organisational development focus to ensure a joined-up approach between governance & delivery on charitable objectives.

The Finance Manager continues to make improvements to CRIS's financial systems to ensure an efficient and effective approach across the team. For example, over the last year the Finance Manager developed a new internal 'invoice tracker' system. The Finance Manager provided staff training and overseen a pilot period of 6 months with the main purpose to create a single system to track and manage invoices and budgets for programme expenditure. The improvements have been significant including – a user-friendly system with data easily transferable onto funder specific reporting systems; areas of responsibility tightened in sync with job descriptions relating to varying levels of administration and financial management; minimal errors in budgets and a more efficient process particularly in the final quarter of the financial year.

Reserves Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for managing and maintaining appropriate financial reserves to support the stability and sustainability of Community Relations in Schools (CRIS). The policy aims to ensure that CRIS can meet its ongoing operational commitments, manage financial risks, and invest in future projects in line with its charitable objectives.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all trustees, management, and finance staff responsible for the financial management of CRIS. It covers the identification, calculation, and review of reserves.

3. Policy Statement

CRIS is committed to maintaining a level of reserves that:

- Ensures financial stability and operational continuity.
- Allows for effective management of unforeseen financial risks or losses.
- Supports the strategic goals and future growth of the charity in accordance with the charity's purposes and

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4. Definition of Reserves

Reserves are the portion of unrestricted funds that are freely available for general charitable purposes, excluding funds set aside for specific projects, restricted funds, and fixed assets (such as property and equipment).

5. Key Guidance and References

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) Reserves Guidance: Provides guidelines on setting, managing, and reporting charity reserves (<https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/charity-essentials/managing-financial-difficulties/reserves/>)

The Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): Offers a framework for accounting and reporting practices for charities, including reserves management.

Reserves Procedures

1. Determining the Reserves Level

- **Assess Operational Needs:** Annually assess the charity's operating costs, including regular expenses such as salaries, rent, and overheads.
- **Risk Assessment:** Conduct a financial risk assessment to identify potential risks that may impact funding, income streams, or expenditures.
- **Set Target Reserves:** The target reserves level should be determined based on three to six months of operating costs and anticipated financial risks.

2. Monitoring and Managing Reserves

- **Quarterly Financial Reviews:** Financial staff should review the reserves levels quarterly (and more often as required) to ensure they align with target thresholds.
- **Annual Review by Trustees:** The reserves policy and target levels should be reviewed annually by the Board of trustees.
- **Reporting to Stakeholders:** Include the reserves policy and current reserves position in the annual financial statements, in line with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) and Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) requirements.

3. Utilising Reserves

- **Authorisation for Use:** Reserves can be drawn down in the event of an emergency or financial shortfall, but must be authorised by the board of trustees.
- **Replenishment of Reserves:** When reserves are utilised, the board must approve a plan to replenish reserves within an agreed timeframe.
- **Restricted and Designated Funds:** Distinguish between unrestricted reserves, designated funds, and restricted funds, ensuring restricted funds are used solely for their intended purposes.

4. Core Purposes for Using Reserves

The Board aims to hold unrestricted reserves to enable the organisation to maintain its activities in the event of:

- Gaps in funding
- Late payment of grants and fees
- Upgrades in IT systems and equipment as and when the need arises
- Gaps in opportunities to income generate through training and consultancy work
- Its redundancy liabilities and rental and other contracts
- Its match funding obligations set out in funding contracts where any percentage of staff salaries are not covered by another funder(s)

5. Procedures for Reporting and Compliance

- **Annual Reporting Requirements:** In accordance with the CCNI's guidance, CRIS will include a statement on reserves within the annual report.
- **Financial Statement Disclosure:** Provide a clear explanation in financial statements if reserves fall below or exceed the target range.

6. Review and Revision of Policy

- **Annual Policy Review:** The reserves policy should be reviewed annually by the Board of trustees.
- **Adjustment of Target Reserves:** Any adjustment to the reserves target level should be based on updated

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7. Current Reserves Position:

As of the end of March 2024, the total reserves are £107,274.

By the end of this reporting period CRIS has achieved 80% of its target position, an increase of approx. £22,000.

The Board has revised its reserves target for this period calculating six months running costs (£106,000) and a further £28,000 for redundancies should this be necessary in the future, leaving the target amount of £130,000.

Over the course of the next year CRIS expects to meet its target reserves figure. Meeting this target will rely on successful implementation of the resource diversification strategy, which centres around a return to consultancy work, developing corporate partnerships and other forms of traditional fundraising through events and attracting donors. Substantial planning has taken place during this year to enable a successful pivot towards this new multi stranded income generation strategy.

As CRIS moves into its 40th year a large-scale celebration and fundraising event will be planned to mark the special anniversary year.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Risk Management:

The main concerns of the Board going forward are to ensure:

- That the public benefit enabled through CRIS activities is continued
- That core and programme funding can continue to be secured and increased to retain staff and ensure stability and growth
- To continue to implement appropriate salary reviews
- To action a transitional resource diversification strategy in 2024-2025 to help grow the level of reserves and meet our target
- To focus on organisational sustainability, and succession planning

The board members recognise their duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance and mitigations.

Within the section of this report titled, '*Organisational Development and Sustainability*' details have been shared relating to risk management, governance improvements and longer-term sustainability.

Within our current risk registry, we have prioritised organisational risks and the action steps we will take in which to mitigate them, with significant progress made against each risk in this reporting period. We have prioritised these starting with greatest likelihood and impact and detailed tasks that have been completed and continue to be in progress moving into the new financial year.

RISK 1: Political uncertainty in Northern Ireland and overreliance on government grants

MITIGATIONS: New funding strategy developed, with a diversification of funding partners detailed including Trusts and Foundations across Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and England. Strategy also includes relationship development with NI Shared Housing Associations, business community, return to consultancy work, and more traditional fundraising activities.

RISK 2: Lack of long-term fundraising plan

MITIGATIONS: Activities detailed above also support this risk. As CRIS successfully transition into a new multi stranded funding and income generation model in 2024-2025, a review of progress, opportunities and barriers will be conducted. A longer-term fundraising plan will be consulted upon and developed linked to a new organisational strategy planning for period 2026 – 2029.

RISK 3: Impact of cost-of-living crisis

MITIGATIONS: Exploring new salary structure to take effect 2024 – 2025; agreement to award inflationary raise when deemed affordable without adding risk to financial status, considering the conclusion of Urban Villages funding tenure with CRIS in this reporting year.

RISK 4: Loss of key staff and challenges in attracting new staff

MITIGATIONS: Activities detailed above also support this risk. Board has agreed that CRIS need to hold competitive advantage to both retain and attract new talent. Research of the terms and conditions across the sector will inform this goal in creation of a new competitive salary structure; staff development opportunities have been re-prioritised in line with CRIS study leave policy and will be afforded equitably across the team; investment in Next Generation Peacebuilders programme including recruitment and training programme to widen our team of Associates

RISK 5: Ineffective knowledge management systems

MITIGATIONS: Partnership with Lancia Consult (Belfast) has transformed the likelihood of this risk occurring. CRIS has a new *Interactive Knowledge hub Handbook* detailing process maps across seventeen critical areas relating to governance systems, management, administration and finance. Ongoing work to transfer all CRIS files onto a share point system will take place in the 2024-25 year so that interactive capabilities are achieved.

CRIS will continue to implement its new risk management process and continues to act on its governance responsibilities to ensure CRIS has plans in place to mitigate risks and put plans in place to support sustainability.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Type of governing document:

Community Relations in Schools is a community organisation governed by its constitution. It was adopted in April 1984 and last amended in October 2017 to ensure it was up to date using best practice guidelines as set out in suggested model documents on the Northern Ireland Charity Commission's website.

Trustees who have served during the year are as follows:

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Trustee selection methods:

At the Annual General Meeting each year a Board is appointed to run CRIS for the next year. Each member of the Committee is elected for a period of three years. Retiring members are eligible for re-election. All nominees must indicate their willingness to stand and be proposed and seconded. A written agreement of the nominated persons in absentia must be presented.

Committee members may also be co-opted on the CRIS committee as potential new interested individuals are considered throughout the year. When considering the co-opting of trustees, the Board has regard to the requirement for any specialist skills needed.

We are fortunate to have an engaged and active Board with an array of skills. The Board strives to be as diverse and representative of educational stakeholders and society in general, as possible and has expertise spanning the community and voluntary, funding, corporate and statutory sectors. CRIS plans to increase the Board to a maximum of 10 members, with priority areas identified for recruitment in the disciplines of human resources, finance, and fundraising and areas for welcome statements identified to increase our diversity.

Trustee Induction and Training:

New trustees receive an induction pack which provides information and guidelines on their task, responsibilities, and the policies and ethos. The CEO and members of the Board meet with new trustees during the preliminary stages of their appointment to talk through the organisation in more detail, the history of its work, strategic positioning, and discuss other areas of interest.

New trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity guidelines, the charity commission guidance on public benefit, the content of the constitution, the committee and decision-making process, the strategic and operational plan, and the recent financial performance of the charity.

During the induction period they will meet the full staff team, other trustees and key partners. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. New trustees are invited to attend any mandatory meetings as set down by funders who support CRIS.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Organisational Structure:

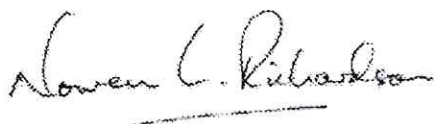
The Board meets four times per year and sub-groups meet to address any additional finance, personnel and policy matters as required. Finance and Personnel subcommittee meetings take place two weeks before the Board meetings to ensure sufficient time to update briefing packs and draft recommendations for Board discussion and decision making. The policy subcommittee operates on a more *adhoc* basis.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors:

So far as each of the Board members at the date of approval of these financial statements are aware: (a) there is no relevant information of which the charity auditors are unaware; and (b) they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Trustees on Wednesday 22nd January 2025 and signed on their behalf.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



N Richardson
(Chairperson)
Dated: 22 January 2025



L. Patterson
(Treasurer)
Dated.....

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustee Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Community Relations In Schools (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts And Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

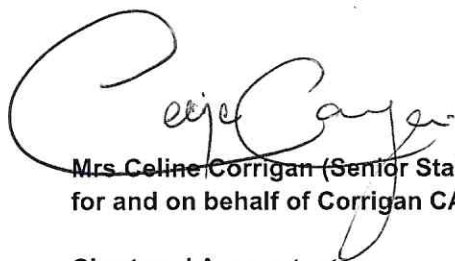
TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Other matters which we are required to address

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared accounts in accordance with "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) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Mrs Celine Corrigan (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Corrigan CA Limited

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

20 January 2025

24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies		-	4,450	4,450	-	-	-
Charitable activities	3	31,849	304,438	336,287	17,556	178,273	195,829
Total income		31,849	308,888	340,737	17,556	178,273	195,829
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	4	21,094	287,052	308,146	2,161	254,954	257,115
Total expenditure		21,094	287,052	308,146	2,161	254,954	257,115
Net income/(expenditure)		10,755	21,836	32,591	15,395	(76,681)	(61,286)
Transfers between funds		14,616	(14,616)	-	23,106	(23,106)	-
Net movement in funds	5	25,371	7,220	32,591	38,501	(99,787)	(61,286)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		81,903	-	81,903	43,402	99,787	143,189
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		107,274	7,220	114,494	81,903	-	81,903

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

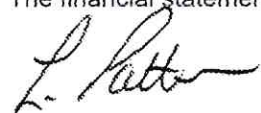
COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

		2024		2023	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	11		6		6
Tangible assets	10		3,421		5,102
			<u>3,427</u>		<u>5,108</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	12	86,855		32,358	
Cash at bank and in hand		35,116		50,085	
		<u>121,971</u>		<u>82,443</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(10,904)		(5,648)	
Net current assets			<u>111,067</u>		<u>76,795</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>
			<u><u>114,494</u></u>		<u><u>81,903</u></u>
Income Funds					
Restricted Funds	14		7,220		-
Unrestricted Funds			107,274		81,903
			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 22 January 2025



L Patterson
Trustee

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

1 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Accounting policies

Charity information

Community Relations In Schools is an unincorporated charity.

2.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 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 2016).

The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value.

The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

2.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

2.4 Incoming resources

Income From Charitable Activities

Income from charitable activities is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Income from government or other grants, whether 'capital' or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has the entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Donations & Legacies

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

2.5 Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure On Charitable Activities

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

The charity is below the charity audit threshold and therefore is exempt from reporting expenditure on an activity basis. The charity has opted to report by the nature rather than on an activity basis.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

2.6 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Intangible assets acquired on business combinations are recognised separately from goodwill at the acquisition date where it is probable that the expected future economic benefits that are attributable to the asset will flow to the entity and the fair value of the asset can be measured reliably; the intangible asset arises from contractual or other legal rights; and the intangible asset is separable from the entity.

Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

Software	20% straight line
----------	-------------------

2.7 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures, fittings & equipment	20% straight line
--------------------------------	-------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

2.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

2.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

2.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

3 Charitable activities

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Donations	4,450	-
Service Delivery	31,849	17,556
Grants	304,438	178,273
	<u>340,737</u>	<u>195,829</u>

	Total 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Analysis by fund			
Unrestricted funds	-	31,849	31,849
Restricted funds	308,888	-	308,888
	<u>308,888</u>	<u>31,849</u>	<u>340,737</u>

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Unrestricted funds	-	17,556	17,556
Restricted funds	178,273	-	178,273
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>17,556</u>	<u>195,829</u>

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Included in Grants Are:		
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Core Funding	72,787	39,997
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Funding	9,501	1,567
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Reconciliation Fund	84,310	-
The Executive Office, Urban Villages Initiative	133,470	136,709
Community Foundation Northern Ireland	4,370	-
	<u>304,438</u>	<u>178,273</u>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4 Charitable activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Staff costs	193,966	152,861
Staff Training	2,990	105
Depreciation and impairment	1,897	1,776
Programme Costs	-	193
Resources	12,832	5,979
Travel	8,613	9,655
Subscriptions	1,863	-
Hospitality	7,066	6,100
Facilitation	30,561	34,244
Light & Heat	1,188	967
Telephone	475	338
Sundry	1,137	1,570
Advertising	-	935
Subcover	22,183	12,670
Accountancy	2,939	2,700
Professional Fees	1,556	7,394
Bank Charges	99	174
Rent	11,655	10,314
Insurance	3,164	3,002
Post, printing & Stationery	1,708	1,169
Computer Running expenses	18	720
Venues	2,192	2,895
Loss on disposal of Fixed Assets	-	(517)
Cleaning	44	1,871
	<u>308,146</u>	<u>257,115</u>

5 Net movement in funds

	2024 £	2023 £
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	<u>1,897</u>	<u>1,776</u>

6 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.
No trustee expenses have been incurred.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7 Auditor's remuneration

The analysis of auditor's remuneration is as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Auditor's Remuneration	2,706	2,646
Total audit fees	2,706	2,646

8 Employees

There were 6 employees during the year.

Employment costs	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	189,702	149,580
Other pension costs	4,263	3,281

No employees received employee benefits of more than £60,000.

9 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023	18,358
Additions	216
At 31 March 2024	18,574
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2023	13,256
Depreciation charged in the year	1,897
At 31 March 2024	15,153
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	3,421
At 31 March 2023	5,102

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

11 Intangible fixed assets

	Software £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	35,464
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	35,458
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	6
At 31 March 2023	6

12 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	86,855	32,358

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	5,656	2,093
Other creditors	2,691	612
Accruals and deferred income	2,557	2,943
	10,904	5,648

14 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
	-	308,888	(287,052)	(14,616)	7,220
Previous Period:					
	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
	99,787	178,273	(254,954)	(23,106)	-

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

15 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
General funds	81,903	31,849	(21,094)	14,616	107,274
Previous Period:	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
General funds	43,402	17,556	(2,161)	23,106	81,903

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:			
Intangible fixed assets	-	6	6
Tangible assets	-	3,421	3,421
Current assets/(liabilities)	7,220	103,847	111,067
	7,220	107,274	114,494

17 Movement in Funds

Fund	At 01/04/23 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	At 31/03/24 £
Restricted	-	308,888	(287,052)	(14,616)	7,220
Unrestricted	81,903	31,849	(21,094)	14,616	107,274
	81,903	340,737	(308,146)	-	114,494

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

18 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - none).

Accounts

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Charity number

Charity No. NIC105291

Principal address

Unit 6 North City Business Centre
2 Duncairn Gardens
Belfast
BT15 2GG

Auditor

Celine Corrigan
Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

CONTENTS

	Page
Trustees report	1 - 16
Statement of trustees responsibilities	17
Independent auditor's report	18 - 20
Statement of financial activities	21
Balance sheet	22
Notes to the financial statements	23 - 31

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Trustees' report for the year ended 31st March 2023

The trustees of CRIS are pleased to present their annual report and the financial statements for the period 1st July 2022 – 31st March 2023.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name:	Community Relations In Schools
Charity Number:	NIC105291
	The charity is an unincorporated association as per the Constitution.
Principal Office:	Unit 6, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT152GG
Registered Office:	Unit 6, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GG
Auditor:	Corrigan CA Limited 24 Greystone Road Antrim BT41 2GG
Bankers:	Ulster Bank Ltd., 183 Kingsway, Dunmurry, Belfast, BT17 9AH

CRIS Trustees as of 31st March 2023:

Norman Richardson (Chair)
Patricia O'Neill (Vice Chair)
Lawrence Patterson (Treasurer)
Conor O'Neill (Secretary)
Stephen Graham
Aithne Kerrigan
Ben Craig

Objectives and activities OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable Objects

The purpose of CRIS is to actively contribute to the building of a shared and reconciled society in Northern Ireland by developing and delivering peace-building programmes and activities within and between schools and in their local communities.

CRIS also works in partnership with educational authorities, higher educational institutions, other statutory agencies, funding bodies and community organisations to bring about positive impacts at an individual, family, school community, and system level. CRIS works in cooperative arrangements that support reconciliation and promote equality and diversity through the building of relationships and trust across society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees of CRIS confirm that they have complied with their duty as defined in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) and have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The public benefit requirement has continued to inform the activities of the charity during this reporting period.

In evaluating public benefit, the trustees are pleased that the work of CRIS has had multi-level positive impacts over this past year. Our programmes, training and other partnership initiatives have involved work with 77 school communities. Over three quarters of these schools are in areas of high deprivation and CRIS intentionally focuses its resources in these communities where the legacy of the conflict continues to make an impact.

Within the reporting period, across nine months, CRIS has directly engaged 3357 distinct participants (pupils, parents, teachers, principals). Indirectly many more children, young people and members of their whole school communities have benefited due to the programmes, capacity building, and relationship development initiatives undertaken to support diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding both within and between schools across all sectors and phases of education.

Wider benefits are identified such as organisational practice-based learning that is captured and disseminated supporting emerging policy and initiatives in the area of education and Good Relations. For example, CRIS was part of the *stakeholder reference group for the mainstreaming of Shared Education* and a new strategy was launched in September 2022 by the Education Authority for Northern Ireland.

It is also anticipated that CRIS's research partnership with Coventry University's *Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations* that investigated the development of trust in our practice, will also be of significant interest to a range of government departments and funding bodies due to its findings in an area that is largely untapped and unexplored. A review of the government's *Together Building a United Community (TBUC)* strategy (2013-2023) has been initiated in this period and the Trust Indicator Framework (TIF) - the key outcome of the research project - is of interest to policy makers charged with creating new peacebuilding strategy. In addition, with the new developments in Shared Education and growing momentum towards the concept and practice of collaboration as a key driver for change at a root and branch level, new inroads have emerged for CRIS's evidence-based practice to influence and contribute to new thinking and systems of improvement that move away from silo-based working - a legacy of our post conflict context. CRIS looks forward to launching this new research in the next reporting year as part of Good Relations Week (September 2023) at Parliament Buildings Stormont.

Wider public benefit is also achieved by sharing good news stories and case studies of impact that present alternative hopeful narratives, putting the voice of participants and schools to the fore, countering the dominant conflict orientated messaging regarding Northern Ireland.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Summary of the Main Activities

The core activities of CRIS are:

- Provision of training, consultancy and multi-disciplinary support across all school sectors to build capacity and confidence to work with Good/ Community Relations and to support best practice in sharing and collaborative working.
- Delivering school-based, inter-community pupil programmes that promote diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding and that engage with perceived sensitive and contentious issues in age and stage appropriate ways.
- Provision of opportunities to engage parents/carers in Good/Community Relations and peacebuilding work with and through schools and other networks on a single identity and an inter-community basis.
- Advocacy for the role that schools, and education can play in supporting an intergenerational framework for peacebuilding and a shared future.
- Dissemination of good practice, research findings and resources on Good/ Community Relations and school-based peacebuilding through a variety of means including social media, traditional communication, through the writing of articles, hosting events/ conferences, and providing inputs for third level education institutions, statutory bodies, and other organisations.
- Continuation of ongoing development, refining and evaluation practices of CRIS's signature model of practice - *Good Relations and Collaborative Education (GRACE)*.
- Continuing to develop the sustainability of the organisation and ensure governance systems are robust adopting a continual improvement approach across all areas of organisational development.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Year in Numbers

39 th Year	77	3027	115	215	£81,903	£195,829
Supporting School-based Peacebuilding	Schools	Pupils	Parents/ carers	Teachers/ principals	Unrestricted Reserves	Total Income

The figures above cover a 9-month reporting period. They do not include the number of meetings and ongoing engagements with other key partners, organisations, agencies and individuals who support the development and delivery of the work of CRIS. These include, Local Council Good Relations Officers, Officials from The Executive Office (TEO), the Department of Education (DENI), Education Authority (EA), Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and close liaison with funders and other supporters of CRIS. Figures do not include inputs provided for University groups or quarterly meetings as member of the Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum (NIABF).

New System for Operational Plan Reporting:

The three core aims set out in the new CRIS strategic plan (2021-2024) are as follows:

- AIM 1: Catalysing Peace and Reconciliation
- AIM 2: Equipping and Inspiring the Education Sector
- AIM 3: Sustaining and Growing CRIS to achieve our mission

As part of the operational planning development linked to the new strategy CRIS drafted a set of Key Performance Indicators and agreed targets. A further set of programmatic and organisational governance/ development targets were also set out for each of the three aims and sub aims.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Summary of Achievements - Key Performance Indicators:

KPI	Description	Target	Outcome
1	Total Children/ Young People Engaged	1530	3027
2	Total Parents/ Carers Engaged	100	115
3	Total Teachers/ Principals Engaged	200	215
4	Total Schools Engaged	73	77
5	Total New School Partnerships (Twinned schools) Developed	2	2
6	Total Locality Partnerships	3	3

It is important to highlight that all programme targets were exceeded in 3 quarters, July 2022 – March 2023. A decision was taken at the last AGM (Oct 2022) to transition away from the academic year towards the standard financial year. Therefore, this current reporting year spans across nine months.

Programmatic Overview:

As mentioned in previous Trustee Reports and identified in the CRIS strategy (2021 - 2024), the organisation has committed to investing its resources in seven localities across Northern Ireland. Five of these are in current Urban Villages locations (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysullan; Colindale West Belfast, Eastside/ East Belfast; Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets areas/ South Belfast; and The Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street – D/ Londonderry). The Executive Office's (EO) Urban Villages Initiative has partnered with CRIS to support the Buddy Up! Project to be scaled in all Primary Schools across the five localities since 2019. It is anticipated that funded programme initiatives will be wound down by March 2024 with the potential for a smaller scale 'Enhancing Community Capacity' fund to be set up to continue to provide support to these areas whilst new shared space capital builds are ongoing, and anticipated to complete in 2026. CRIS has made a strategic commitment to continue working with these areas beyond this timeframe providing it has resources to do so.

CRIS also work in Newtownabbey and Antrim/ Randalstown. Programming here involves work to support the development of locality based multi sector collaborations such as the *Moving Forward Together* (MFT) partnership, formalised in 2014, and the newer *Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together* (NEST) partnership which has also grown to 20 schools.

CRIS has a regional remit and within this reporting period has developed a closer relationship and partnership working with the Department of Education (DENI) and Education Authority (EA).

Additionally supporting student teacher training is a regular feature of the programme year with requests by Stranmillis University College. This year CRIS led several sessions in the *Leadership for Diversity and Mutual Understanding* module; the undergraduate teacher training programme, *Professional Learning in a Changing Society* (PLICS) that operates in both Stranmillis and St Mary's College; and the PGCE course, as well as with international students.

In the past year, CRIS (represented by Dr Emily Stanton) was asked to join the Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report Advisory Committee. This involved reviewing draft chapters of the report and meeting with the team to provide feedback to lead author Professor Ann Marie Gray of Ulster University.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Return to Traditional Delivery:

The period July 2022 to March 2023 is notable as being the first year since 2019 that pupil programming resumed to traditional forms of delivery. It is difficult to describe the toll that the two years of adaptation had taken - though it had been necessary to ensure that programme integrity was retained, including the development of a suite of digital education resources and moving to online delivery for contact work with schools. It is a testimony to our staff that they were able to rise to the challenge and innovate during this most difficult time. However, given the return to contact and traditional delivery the demand for programmes spiked as schools were keen to rebuild the momentum lost as a result of the pandemic.

Despite being two programme staff down for the majority of the year, due to challenges in recruitment, the outputs and outcomes were substantial over this period. CRIS management felt it was essential to find alternative ways to meet the interest from the schools and utilise the funds for the workplan ambitions set after substantial planning periods with schools, and being successful in accessing the programme funds package necessary for delivery across a range of funders. This accomplishment was achieved due to efforts of the Buddy Up Coordinator; a pivot towards increased use of Associates, (that also involving investing in a further recruitment process and training programme to widen our Associate team); and the CRIS management stepping in to support programme delivery across a range of areas. The efforts to rescue the operational workplan naturally had impacts on the level of organisational development work that was feasible during this time. However, it is important to highlight that significant progress was made across a range of strategic initiatives that will be detailed later in this report.

Everyday Peacebuilding (North Belfast):

The Everyday Peacebuilding programme was formally launched during this reporting year and was supported through project funding from the Irish Government's Reconciliation Fund and a successful outcome to the Strategic Partner scheme (Feb 2022).

Based in North Belfast across the Crumlin Road interface, the initiative evolved over twenty-four years of support that CRIS has provided to Edenderry and Holy Cross Nursery Schools involving parental engagement, training for staff, funding support, partnership coordination, and advocacy. For many years the ambition has been to support the local feeder Primary Schools (who at this stage had varying levels of partnership work) to come on board and work with CRIS and the Nurseries as a new network. For many years parents exiting the Nursery School's Buddy Up programme had strong desires to see the buddy system and CRIS work span into the Primary schools their children would be attending and to create pathways to continue parental engagement across the interfaces. CRIS was delighted to formalise this new network in this reporting period. This initiative would also begin the foundational steps to develop a multisector collaboration and start operations at all stages of the GRACE model across the eight schools including the two Nurseries, together with Holy Cross Boys' P.S. and Glenwood P.S.; Holy Cross Girls' P.S. and Wheathfield P.S., and Mercy P.S. and Edenbrooke P.S.

CRIS received funds via its strategic partnership with the Irish Government to hire a full-time staff member to take up the mantle of the *Everyday Peacebuilding* project. Initially the post was challenging to fill. Upon the third unsuccessful recruitment exercise CRIS made alternative plans and recruited a team of experienced Associates to support the launch of the programme and new workplan. Some key features of this involved all Primary School partnerships receiving the *Celebrating Diversity* programme at P3 and *Knowing Me Knowing You* at P7, spanning 10 – 15 hours of direct engagement respectively, and with interschool pupil buddying embedded. Additionally in support of these four separate school twinings, parental engagement events were hosted such as a *Parents Reunion* event to celebrate the historic work between families with the Nursery Schools and CRIS. This uplifting event took place in October 2022 and was well attended with parents/carers and friends of the work returning to celebrate the restart, and share their memories spanning more than twenty years. This was heartening for CRIS staff and the Nurseries who viewed this event as a litmus test to garner interest in rebuilding this peacebuilding initiative in a new context and with a wider remit. The clear support and motivation to be involved was also evident with attendance at the *Everyday Peacebuilding Family Fun Day* (October 2022) – another new initiative that CRIS was trialling with over 180 attending. CRIS hopes to retain these signature events in the calendar of activities going forward. In November 2022 the then Taoiseach Micheál Martin visited the project and met with a delegation of principals, teachers and parents from across the eight North Belfast schools. See the link for an article written by CRIS outlining the series of events that launched this programme after 3 years of stagnation due to the pandemic.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

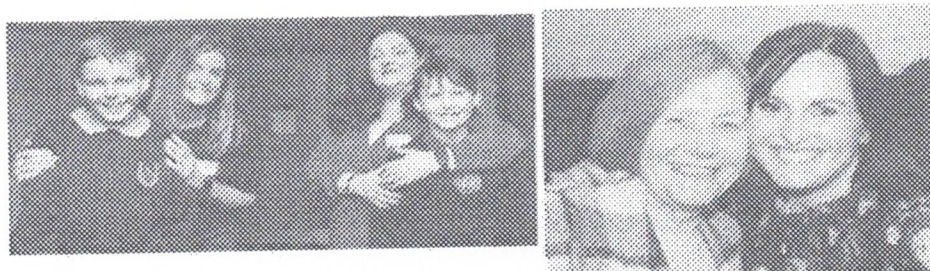
Everyday Peacebuilding: The greatest hope exists in places many would least expect to find it!
Community Relations Council (community-relations.org.uk)



Finally in February 2022 CRIS was successful in recruiting a new staff member taking up the post as Good Relations Practitioner for Everyday Peacebuilding.

With the new post filled a new engagement with Nursery School parents began with sessions running in February and March 2023. As part of this re-engagement activity and to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of both Buddy Up! and the Good Friday Agreement, a showcase event was held at Movie House Cinema at York Gate Belfast, compered by local artist Nuala McKeever and with input from parents, teachers and children involved in Buddy Up! over years. CRIS accessed additional funds from the Executive Office's Urban Villages Initiative to fund the creation of a new film that was designed inhouse. It featured footage across the two decades demonstrating the substantial peacebuilding impacts. It also acted as an advocacy tool to those attending the event with influence across Government Departments. The 'Be Inspired' film put forth a call to action for the implementation of the interschool buddy system into all Nursery and Primary School Shared Education partnerships as per commitment laid out in the *Together Building a United Community* (TBUC) strategy. To support this, CRIS also launched a digital education resource to support schools to achieve this objective. The *Be Inspired* film and *Interschool Buddy System Resource* are located on the resources tab of the CRIS website and are free to access.

The event was covered by Local TV station Northern Visions TV (NVTV) who filmed the event and made a special 30-minutes news feature on their *In Focus* broadcast, during the anniversary of the referendum result, on 22nd May 2023. See link: <https://vimeo.com/827205173>



COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Buddy Up! and the Urban Village (TEO) Initiative:

CRIS has been working in partnership with The Executive Office (TEO) Urban Villages Initiative since early 2018 to advance the roll out of the Buddy system as identified in government peace strategy, 'Together Building a United Community' (TBUC).

From July 2022 the Buddy Up! programme was able to plan for a return to in-person delivery. The newly hired Buddy Up! Coordinator (June 2022) met the ambitious workplan demands and delivered fourteen pupil programmes (culminating in nearly 200 hours contact time across all programmes). The Buddy Up Coordinator was augmented by a team of Associates and other programme staff.

Feedback From Pupils:

A survey was conducted with 424 Key Stage 1 (P3) and Key Stage 2 (P7) students linked to Buddy Up! school delivery between September 2022 - March 2023 and headline results reflected that of:

Key Stage 1 Pupils:

- 70% 'felt like my Buddy is my friend'
- 70% agreed 'I want to spend more time with my Buddy'
- 77% reported 'I feel like my buddy cares about me and I care about my Buddy'

Key Stage 2 Pupils:

- 80% agreed they 'enjoyed the Buddy Up! programmes and these helped me work as part of a team'
- 75% had a chance to 'think and talk about different groups of people, their cultures, religions and symbols'
- 55% reported they 'feel more comfortable meeting children from the other school'

Feedback from Teachers:

When teachers were asked how participating in Buddy Up! had helped strengthen approaches to Good Relations within their schools, they reflected:

- 'Buddy Up programme offers vital exposure for our children to other communities to break down sectarianism and bias before it is a chance to root. Buddy Up! has given our children an experience they will always remember'.
- 'A fantastic and worthwhile programme. This was the most enjoyable programme I've been part of'.
- 'A fun way to learn about the identities in our community and how we are similar and different'.
- 'A great programme that enables young people from different backgrounds to meet, explore and develop their social skills by understanding everyone's different'.
- 'An enjoyable experience that helps facilitate inter school cooperation'.
- 'A great experience, from teacher workshop, classroom workshops to share workshops with our Buddy Up! School'.
- 'A fun (and low stress for teachers) way of building relationships with other schools'.
- 'Buddy Up programme allows children from all communities to learn together and share their likes and dislikes. Connecting kids from all over'.

GRACE Kitemark:

As part of 2022-23 Urban Villages funding package, CRIS committed to piloting a new initiative to develop a GRACE Kite Mark award for schools who would demonstrate best practice in whole school community approaches to peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Ligoniel P.S. and St Vincent de Paul P.S. were invited to pilot this initiative with CRIS. The school partnership worked through a series of initiatives submitting corresponding evidence linked to pupil programmes, teacher training, and wider community engagement under the leadership of its Shared Education coordinators.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The partnership had a chance to share their experiences of working together in an engagement hosted by CRIS with Lord Caine (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Northern Ireland Office) in February 2023.

With the partnership poised to be awarded the inaugural GRACE bronze level award, it is our hope that this pilot is scaled widely and schools are supported to become centres of excellence in Good Relations and collaborative education.

Growing Good Relations and Collaborative Education (GRACE):

Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together (NEST) Partnership Development

The NEST (Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together) collaborative network sits under the Growing GRACE programme area which seeks to support place-based school collaboration with cross phase and cross sector networks. With Good Relations as its centre, the network identifies collective issues and shared priorities to address together.

All NEST activities are led by the *Senior Practitioner for Growing GRACE* and time is also supported from the *Director of Programmes* and a *Senior Associate* who supports school and partnership meetings and trainings. A key milestone in this year was the communication and design process CRIS facilitated to create a name and logo for the partnership. Programme activities include work with senior leadership across the sectors; coordination of Shared Learning Networks (SLN), and pupil programmes that directly link to the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PD&MU) curriculum and that have the interschool buddying model embedded. Furthermore, each school has access to support on a targeted basis aimed at strengthening and embedding Good Relations within their school, Shared Education Partnership, and their communities. This allows each school to benefit from single school and system level support from CRIS. Some other key activities in this reporting period include:

- Individual NEST member support and provision with eleven one-to-one 'listening' exercises involving school Principals and senior leadership to identify salient community needs, common concerns, and nurture relationships with CRIS as a trust conduit between schools.
- Six scoping exercises carried out with individual local schools who were not yet engaged in the network. Three new schools joined the partnership because of these processes - Cammonee Primary, Ashgrove Nursery and St MacNissi's Primary.
- Two Shared Learning Networks were held on the themes of Early Years/ Foundation stage education in October and again in March.
- In NEST pupil-based activities, 206 children were involved in seven Good Relations programmes in both Maintained and Controlled schools with P3 and P7 children exploring themes of identity, community, culture, diversity, empathy, conflict, flags, symbols and emblems.
- NEST Board of Governors evening with the aim to raise awareness and cascade partnership working in the community at a leadership level across schools.
- Guidance and support provided to schools seeking to start new Shared Education partnerships. For example, with St Mary's on the Hill Primary and Cammonee Primary.
- Providing bespoke advice and training to staff in Hillcroft Special School on handling controversial issues.
- Facilitation of training to a group of 100 teaching and support staff at Integrated College Glengormley.
- Individual support to Ballyhenry Primary School as it seeks to transition to integrated status.
- Support and attendance at a variety of other school and community events including the facilitation of Good Relations workshops over six days to approx. 1600 young people as part of the Policing and Community Safety (PCSP) 'Be Safe' initiative.

Growing GRACE - Antrim and Randalstown Schools Moving Forward Together (MFT) Partnership:

While CRIS's role has intentionally changed in recent years moving away from direct Coordination as MFT becomes an increasingly independent multi sector collaboration, it remains clear that it is viewed as an important founding partner in retaining the reconciliation aims by which MFT was founded in 2014.

MFT is widely viewed as an advanced example of best practice and has been keenly observed by the Education Authority for several years. As such MFT has been able to access significant resources and substitute cover for teachers through Shared Education to support further developments in its innovations as a test case

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

from which to derive learnings, including that of the role that local Councils can play in actively supporting school partnerships. This is an area of growing interest as the need heightens both in economic and social terms for schools to collaborate with each other across the separated/ segregated education system in Northern Ireland. It is another area in which CRIS has demonstrated early pioneering practice and has gained notable recognition for its role in the evolution of MFT.

This year, CRIS has continued to have several roles in the MFT partnership by supporting capacity building, providing mentoring to position holders (MFT Chair and Coordinator), and being an active community partner and funding conduit. This year support included operationalising of the 'Togetherness' strand of the new strategy and attending partnership and steering group meetings. During this period CRIS has supported the planning process to re-establish MFT's Shared Learning Networks (SLN's) after they halted due to Covid-19. Shared Learning Networks focussed on Literacy, Numeracy, Early Years and Special Educational Needs. CRIS also facilitated the first 'Shared Education' SLN in April 22 and was hosted in the Antrim Board Centre, attended by 16 Shared Education Coordinators.

CRIS also supported the planning and practicalities for the MFT Board of Governors evening - an opportunity to build greater awareness and create more feed in from local community members across the 20 partner schools.

Research Partnership with Coventry University's, Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations:

The ongoing investment CRIS has made with the help of the CRC's *Community Relations and Cultural Diversity* funding and the Executive Offices (TEO) *Urban Village Initiative* has seen the research partnership with Coventry University (Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations) move closer to the final stages. The research investigates how the GRACE model of practice supports trust-building across stakeholders.

The period July 22 - March 23 was a particularly important phase which included both the coding and analysis of the qualitative components of the research. This allowed both CRIS (represented by Dr Emily Stanton) and Coventry (Dr Charis Rice) to participate in interpretation and identification of key themes. Following this the team was able to provide a presentation of initial findings at the *European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA)* conference held in Aarhus, Denmark. This allowed the team to field questions which further enhanced the development of the Trust Indicators Framework. The final stage of research development involved working to consolidate all aspects of the Indicators Framework into 10 clear areas linked to existing literature and the inductive research. A draft research report was completed. This allowed CRIS to begin to plan for the next stages of dissemination and implementation into our systems for monitoring, evaluation and learning.

Conclusion:

Given the truncated reporting period (due to the shift to a March year end reporting time frame) CRIS can be especially encouraged by the breadth and depth of what has been achieved. Across all areas of programme (particularly in the context of a continuing political vacuum and austere financial climate), the CRIS programme team has been exceptionally productive, overachieving in participation targets as the Key Performance Indicators have demonstrated. Programme staff use their talents to serve the charity above and beyond what is required, and school stakeholders readily express their gratitude for CRIS's support and how the charity's mission makes a demonstrable impact on children and adults alike.

The research on trust and reconciliation that is being undertaken is in many respects ground-breaking for policy making for Good Relations and Education. CRIS can feel assured that what is learned can significantly impact our own practice, and hopefully beyond.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK TO SUPPORT CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Developmental work identified in the strategic plan to aid governance and sustainability has continued to be a central theme and updates are provided below. During this time CRIS continued to access consultancy support from Clayton Rowe (Saben Group, Canada) who has been working with the CEO and Director of Programmes on a regular basis. Several key elements were progressed during this period including submitting an application to the National Lottery's *Dormant Accounts NI* funding scheme to support a range of activities to strengthen organisational capacity and sustainability.

Resource Development Strategy:

Three further strategy documents were progressed to support wider thinking and preparation for positive change including:

- **Draft Theory of Change/ Logic Model:** To measure impact against mission.
- **Feasibility Study for Service Delivery:** To conduct a review of CRIS fee structure and assess income generation targets for a new strategy cycle 2024 - 2027.
- **Long Term Vision/ Community Assessment for N. Belfast Locality Development:** This will involve development of a brief to attract new partners into collaborative arrangements across statutory, community/ voluntary and business sectors.
- **Programme Costing Model:** Further progress to refine financial analysis across three programme areas to determine the cost per participant. Information will support a donor appeal pilot in the forthcoming year.

Staff Capacity and Succession Planning:

This period was fraught with some challenges regarding recruitment, like many organisations in the sector CRIS found it increasingly difficult to attract talent – a increasingly familiar feature of the sector post pandemic. CRIS management focused significant energies to find alternative ways to address immediate issues and put strategies in place to ameliorate capacity concerns in the medium to longer term. Whilst a fourth recruitment exercise was actioned to find a suitably skilled candidate for the new *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme CRIS led the following:

- Gathered a new team of highly skilled Senior Associates to lead the bulk of the workplan. In addition, the CEO and Director of Programmes provided project management and stepped into delivery where necessary.
- Ran a recruitment exercise to widen the team of Associates. This was a successful venture, attracting six new Associates with plans in place to ensure the wider team are effectively inducted, supported and motivated.
- Initiated plans to develop a robust professional development strategy across the team and to strengthen CRIS ethos as a learning organisation.
- Started conversations for a timely and responsible succession plan for long-term sustainability.
- All staff gained updated certificates in safeguarding children and young People and plan in place to review safeguarding policy.
- Staff participated in inhouse training to support the return to traditional office use and norms including sessions on organisational ethos and culture, data protection and health and safety.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Reputation, Profile and Communication:

Activity in this area has been developing at pace in recent years. Most notably key activities in this period include:

- CRIS CEO honoured with OBE for services to peace education and community reconciliation.
- CRIS represented by CEO at Late Queen's funeral service in London Sep 2022.
- Political engagements with the Irish Government's former Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Lord Caine of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO)
- Attendance at Hume Foundation event.
- CRIS profiled as exemplar project on Community Relations Council E-news.
- Communication strategy developed for Urban Villages initiative and Buddy Up project.
- Job description developed, and funding applied for new *Fundraising and Communication Manager*
- Research report completed exploring trust in CRIS practice.
- Launch event of Buddy System educational e-media resource
- New film, 'Be Inspired – celebrating 25 years of peace and friendship', developed highlighting impact of Buddy Up project aligned to anniversary of Good Friday Agreement
- Second edition of Ripples of Peace impact case study initiated.

CRIS is well primed to focus energies on its change management and organisational development ambitions to strengthen and grow the organisation in the years to follow and is keen to invest more time in this area over the course of the final year of 2021-2024 strategy. The key governance priorities going forward are:

- Registering CRIS as a Limited Company and follow-on administrative tasks.
- Conduct a HR policy review and create new staff handbook.
- Review the salary structure and implement a resource diversification strategy.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Financial Review

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Summary of Funding Secured to Support Operations:

CRIS was fortunate in securing all necessary funds to support its workplan ambitions covering this period. Funding partners include:

- **The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages Initiative – 'Buddy Up'** project, supporting core and programme costs, for a fifth year (Apr 22 – Mar 23) with a grant totalling £136,709.
- **Project Funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Reconciliation (DFAT) Fund**, for the 'Ripples of Peace' project which began in Jul 2021 and was extended into this audit year to utilise underspend arising in programming costs.
- **Strategic Partner funding awarded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) Reconciliation Fund** announced in Feb 22 providing a three-year contract for staff and running costs (Apr 22 – Mar 25). Please note that Year 1 Strategic Partner funds (£99,039) are not represented on the list of funders due to being included as a Debtor in last year's accounts for year ending June 2022.
- **The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) core funding scheme**, with a new three-year contract securing almost £80,000 per annum, supporting staff and running costs, up to March 2025. Please note that due to the payment cycle and CRIS's previous financial year (Jul 21 – Jun 22), 50% of this grant was included in last year's accounts.
- **The Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council's (ANBC)**, single supplier contract supporting £15,000 of programme costs in Antrim and Newtownabbey. (Apr 22 – Mar 23).
- **Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Scheme**, project funding (£3134 was awarded with 50% of grant received in last financial year), to support the restart of the parental engagement work in North Belfast through the *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme.

CRIS has a sound reputation for administering grants in their entirety in line with funding contracts, and for achieving and often exceeding the programme outcomes anticipated at the point of application. Feedback across funders suggests CRIS represents good value for money. CRIS is committed to keeping the governance costs associated with running the charity at a minimum ensuring the vast majority of funds goes directly towards peacebuilding activities with school communities across the seven localities we operate in.

In February 2020 CRIS was awarded the highest-level rating, 'robust' in an audit of our governance and finance arrangements, led by the Executive Office (TEO). This certificate spans three years until January 2023. CRIS is also audited each year by the Community Relations Council, and TEO and maintain good standards in governance and financial compliance.

The total income for July 2022 – March 2023 was £195,829 covering almost 100% of all CRIS core operating costs and funds for project related activity.

Moving forward for the year 2023 – 2024, CRIS will also achieve a similar outcome with almost all core and programme costs being secured before the end of this reporting period.

The total expenditure for July 2022 – March 2023 was £257,562. This figure exceeds that of the total income due to funds received from the *Reconciliation Fund – Strategic Partner scheme* (Irish Government) totalling £99,039. In addition, 50% of the core funding grant from the *Community Relations Council* is included in the previous year's accounts. The spend on these grants spans April 2022 – March 2023.

Fees for CRIS consultancy work totalled £17,556 over the nine-month period. These funds contribute to the CRIS reserves with a portion used for expenditure not covered by grants, such as the cost of painting the CRIS office, hospitality, flights, and bank charges.

The unrestricted funds balance for March 2023 is £81,903. This is 63% of the reserves target of £130,000 for operating costs for six months. CRIS projects that by the end of the next reporting year March 2024, reserves will reach 75% of the target.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Due to the alternative staffing arrangements for programme delivery, CRIS's expenditure for facilitation via use of its Associates totalled £34,244.

Substitute cover costs to release 72 teachers and principals to attend training and other events such as partnership meetings totalled £12,200.

Expenditure related to travel more than doubled in this period totalling £9,655. This is mainly due a return to in-person delivery for pupil programming.

CRIS achieved full spend on all grants that follow the standard financial year (Apr 22' – Mar 23').

Financial Management and Reserves Policy:

CRIS has a Financial Management Policy and Procedure Manual which is updated annually and meets the requirements of the Charities Act for Northern Ireland, the Charity Commissions guidelines 'Internal Financial Controls for Charities' and 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)'.

The Trustees have agreed a reserves policy minimum of 3 months to maximum 6 months operating costs. This is in addition to the pot of funds it needs to hold should payment of redundancies be necessary in the future. A revised target of £130,000 is set to the upper limit of six-month period and reflects the increased number of post, increases in rent, and heat and light. The redundancy pot necessary is £21,458 as of end March 2023.

CRIS is putting further plans in place, to achieve at least 5 months reserves by March 2024. At the moment CRIS have just over 4 months running costs and reserves to cover redundancies. Moving forward CRIS aim to substantially increase its unrestricted reserves and be less reliant on government grants. The Board aims to hold unrestricted reserves to enable the organisation to meet -

- Its redundancy liabilities and rental and other contracts
- Its match funding obligations set out in funding contracts where any percentage of staff salaries are not covered by another funder(s)
- and to maintain its activities in the event of: -
 - gaps in funding
 - late payment of grants and fees
 - Upgrades in IT systems and equipment as and when the need arises
 - Gaps in opportunities to income generate through training and consultancy work

The main concerns of the Board going forward are to ensure:

- That the public benefit enabled through CRIS activities is continued
- That core and programme funding can continue to be secured to retain staff and ensure stability and growth
- To develop a resource diversification strategy to help grow the level of reserves and meet our target

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Risk Management:

The board members recognise their duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance and mitigations.

Within the section of this report titled, '*Organisational Development Work to Support Change Management and Sustainability*' details have been shared relating to financial risk, strategies for resource diversification, and longer-term sustainability.

Within our current risk registry, we have prioritised organisational risks and the action steps we will take in which to mitigate them. We have prioritised these starting with greatest likelihood and impact.

1. Political uncertainty in Northern Ireland and overreliance on government grants
2. Lack of long-term fundraising plan
3. Impact of cost-of-living crisis
4. Loss of key staff and challenges in attracting new staff
5. Ineffective knowledge management systems
6. Uncertainty of long-term Covid-19 impact.

One of the improvement areas identified in the strategic plan is to overhaul our risk management systems. Over the forthcoming year CRIS will be guided through this utilising Board members expertise in the area. An enhanced risk management process will be piloted and investigate all CRIS operations and governance controls to ensure best practice.

In order to meet the challenges of change the CRIS Board met more frequently within their individual offices of Chair, Treasurer, and Vice Chair. The hands on and active support of all members continues to ensure that CRIS is well managed, upholds good practice in all areas of its governance responsibilities and with a commitment to continual improvement.

From a review of the strategic initiatives identified across the three-year plan and survey of the landscape in terms of organisational capacity going forward the CRIS Board and management are confident that all goals will be met by the end of the strategy timeframe, with confident strides towards greater organisational resilience and financial health.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Type of governing document:

Community Relations in Schools is a community organisation governed by its constitution adopted in April 1984 and last amended in October 2017 to ensure it was up to date using best practice guidelines as set out in suggested model documents on the Charity Commission's website.

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Trustee selection methods:

At the Annual General Meeting each year a Board is appointed to run CRIS for the next year. Each member of the Committee is elected for a period of three years. Retiring members are eligible for re-election. All nominees must indicate their willingness to stand and be proposed and seconded. A written agreement of the nominated persons in absentia must be presented.

Committee members may also be co-opted on the CRIS committee as potential new interested individuals are considered throughout the year. When considering the co-opting of trustees, the Board has regard to the requirement for any specialist skills needed.

We are fortunate to have an engaged and active Board with an array of skills. The Board strives to be as diverse and representative of educational stakeholders and society in general, as possible and has expertise spanning the community and voluntary, funding, corporate and statutory sectors. CRIS plans to increase the Board to a maximum of 10 members, with priority areas identified for recruitment in the disciplines of human resources, finance, and fundraising and areas for welcome statements identified to increase our diversity.

Trustee Induction and Training:

New trustees receive an induction pack which provides information and guidelines on their task, responsibilities, and the policies and ethos. The CEO and members of the Board meet with new trustees during the preliminary stages of their appointment to talk through the organisation in more detail, the history of its work, strategic positioning, and discuss other areas of interest.

New trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity guidelines, the charity commission guidance on public benefit, the content of the constitution, the committee and decision-making process, the strategic and operational plan, and the recent financial performance of the charity.

During the induction period they will meet the full staff team, other trustees and key partners. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. New trustees are invited to attend any mandatory meetings as set down by funders who support CRIS.

Organisational Structure:

The Board meets at least four times per year and sub-groups meet to address any additional finance, personnel and programmatic matters as required. The Board employs a CEO who manages the day-to-day operations of the charity.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors:

So far as each of the Board members at the date of approval of these financial statements are aware: (a) there is no relevant information of which the charity auditors are unaware; and (b) they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Trustees on Wednesday 29th November 2023 and signed on their behalf.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

N Richardson

(Chairperson)

Dated: 29 November 2023


29/11/2023

L. Patterson

(Treasurer)

Dated.....



COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustee Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Community Relations in Schools (the 'charity') for the Period ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the Period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts And Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

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

Other matters which we are required to address

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared accounts in accordance with "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) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Amanda Harbinson

Mrs Amanda Harbinson (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Corrigan CA Limited

29 November 2023

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

Corrigan CA Limited is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies		-	-	-	166	-	166
Charitable activities	3	17,556	178,273	195,829	20,200	334,492	354,692
Total income		<u>17,556</u>	<u>178,273</u>	<u>195,829</u>	<u>20,366</u>	<u>334,492</u>	<u>354,858</u>
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	4	2,161	254,954	257,115	26,713	270,206	296,919
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		<u>15,395</u>	<u>(76,681)</u>	<u>(61,286)</u>	<u>(6,347)</u>	<u>64,286</u>	<u>57,939</u>
Gross transfers between funds		23,106	(23,106)	-	1,715	(1,715)	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the Period/							
Net movement in funds		<u>38,501</u>	<u>(99,787)</u>	<u>(61,286)</u>	<u>(4,632)</u>	<u>62,571</u>	<u>57,939</u>
Fund balances at 1 July 2022		43,402	99,787	143,189	48,034	37,216	85,250
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		<u>81,903</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>81,903</u>	<u>43,402</u>	<u>99,787</u>	<u>143,189</u>

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

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

1 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Accounting policies

Charity information

Community Relations In Schools is an unincorporated charity.

2.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 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 2016).

The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value.

The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

2.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

2.4 Incoming resources

Income From Charitable Activities

Income from charitable activities is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Income from government or other grants, whether 'capital' or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has the entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Donations & Legacies

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

2.5 Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure On Charitable Activities

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

The charity is below the charity audit threshold and therefore is exempt from reporting expenditure on an activity basis. The charity has opted to report by the nature rather than on an activity basis.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

2.6 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Intangible assets acquired on business combinations are recognised separately from goodwill at the acquisition date where it is probable that the expected future economic benefits that are attributable to the asset will flow to the entity and the fair value of the asset can be measured reliably; the intangible asset arises from contractual or other legal rights; and the intangible asset is separable from the entity.

Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

Software	20% straight line
----------	-------------------

2.7 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures, fittings & equipment	20% straight line
--------------------------------	-------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

2.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

2.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

2.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

3 Charitable activities

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Donations	-	186
Service Delivery	17,556	20,200
Grants	178,273	334,492
	<u>195,829</u>	<u>354,858</u>

	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Analysis by fund			
Unrestricted funds	-	17,556	17,556
Restricted funds	178,273	-	178,273
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>17,556</u>	<u>195,829</u>

For the Period ended 30 June 2022

	Total 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Unrestricted funds	-	20,366	20,366
Restricted funds	334,492	-	334,492
	<u>334,492</u>	<u>20,366</u>	<u>354,858</u>

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Included in Grants Are:		
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Core Funding	39,997	84,462
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Funding	1,567	4,807
Department of Foreign Affairs: Reconciliation Funds - Strategic Partner Grant	-	83,859
Department of Foreign Affairs: Reconciliation Funds - Ripples of Peace Project		50,110
The Executive Office, Urban Villages Initiative	136,709	71,551
The Executive Office, Good Relations Fund		44,510
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>339,299</u>

Reconciliation Fund/Strategic Partner grant Year 1 (£83,859) was included in the previous accounts covering Jul 21-Jun 22.
Community Relations Council Core Funding grant reflects 50% of total annual award (£79,994) due to £39,997 received in previous year, Jul 21-Jun 22.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

4 Charitable activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs	152,862	178,700
Staff Training	105	1,370
Depreciation and impairment	1,776	1,781
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	(517)	519
Resources	5,979	12,348
Travel	9,655	4,110
Subscriptions	956	1,175
Hospitality	6,100	5,274
Facilitation	34,244	42,207
Light & Heat	967	700
Telephone	338	426
Sundry	2,232	1,909
Advertising	935	550
Subcover	12,200	15,470
Accountancy	2,700	4,707
Professional Fees	7,394	990
Bank Charges	174	177
Rent	10,314	12,474
Insurance	2,046	2,610
Post, printing & Stationery	1,169	3,154
Computer Running expenses	720	-
Venues	2,895	2,768
Residentials	-	3,500
Repairs	1,871	-
	<u>257,115</u>	<u>296,919</u>

5 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the Period.
No trustee expenses have been incurred.

6 Auditor's remuneration

The analysis of auditor's remuneration is as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Auditor's Remuneration	2,646	2,520
	<u>2,646</u>	<u>2,520</u>
Total audit fees	<u>2,646</u>	<u>2,520</u>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

7 Employees

There were 8 employees during the Period.

Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	149,580	174,880
Other pension costs	3,281	3,820
	<u>152,861</u>	<u>178,700</u>

No employees received employee benefits of more than £60,000.

8 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

9 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £
Cost	
At 1 July 2022	18,506
Additions	1,612
Disposals	240
	<u>18,358</u>
At 31 March 2023	
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 July 2022	11,757
Depreciation charged in the Period	1,776
Eliminated in respect of disposals	(277)
	<u>13,256</u>
At 31 March 2023	
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	<u>5,102</u>
	<u>4,748</u>
At 30 June 2022	

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

10 Intangible fixed assets

	Software £
Cost	
At 1 July 2022 and 31 March 2023	35,464
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 July 2022 and 31 March 2023	35,458
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	6
At 30 June 2022	6

11 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	32,358	140,319

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	2,093	100
Other creditors	612	2,597
Accruals and deferred income	2,943	5,668
	5,648	8,365

13 Movement in Funds

Fund	At 01/07/22 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	At 31/03/23 £
Restricted	99,787	178,273	254,954	(23,106)	-
Unrestricted	43,402	17,556	2,608	23,106	81,456
	143,189	195,829	257,562	-	81,456

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

14 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the Period (2022 - none).

Annual report

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Charity number

Charity No. NIC105291

Principal address

Unit 6 North City Business Centre
2 Duncairn Gardens
Belfast
BT15 2GG

Auditor

Celine Corrigan
Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

CONTENTS

	Page
Trustees report	1 - 16
Statement of trustees responsibilities	17
Independent auditor's report	18 - 20
Statement of financial activities	21
Balance sheet	22
Notes to the financial statements	23 - 31

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Trustees' report for the year ended 31st March 2023

The trustees of CRIS are pleased to present their annual report and the financial statements for the period 1st July 2022 – 31st March 2023.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name:	Community Relations In Schools
Charity Number:	NIC105291
	The charity is an unincorporated association as per the Constitution.
Principal Office:	Unit 6, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT152GG
Registered Office:	Unit 6, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GG
Auditor:	Corrigan CA Limited 24 Greystone Road Antrim BT41 2GG
Bankers:	Ulster Bank Ltd., 183 Kingsway, Dunmurry, Belfast, BT17 9AH

CRIS Trustees as of 31st March 2023:

Norman Richardson (Chair)
Patricia O'Neill (Vice Chair)
Lawrence Patterson (Treasurer)
Conor O'Neill (Secretary)
Stephen Graham
Aithne Kerrigan
Ben Craig

Objectives and activities OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable Objects

The purpose of CRIS is to actively contribute to the building of a shared and reconciled society in Northern Ireland by developing and delivering peace-building programmes and activities within and between schools and in their local communities.

CRIS also works in partnership with educational authorities, higher educational institutions, other statutory agencies, funding bodies and community organisations to bring about positive impacts at an individual, family, school community, and system level. CRIS works in cooperative arrangements that support reconciliation and promote equality and diversity through the building of relationships and trust across society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees of CRIS confirm that they have complied with their duty as defined in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) and have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The public benefit requirement has continued to inform the activities of the charity during this reporting period.

In evaluating public benefit, the trustees are pleased that the work of CRIS has had multi-level positive impacts over this past year. Our programmes, training and other partnership initiatives have involved work with 77 school communities. Over three quarters of these schools are in areas of high deprivation and CRIS intentionally focuses its resources in these communities where the legacy of the conflict continues to make an impact.

Within the reporting period, across nine months, CRIS has directly engaged 3357 distinct participants (pupils, parents, teachers, principals). Indirectly many more children, young people and members of their whole school communities have benefited due to the programmes, capacity building, and relationship development initiatives undertaken to support diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding both within and between schools across all sectors and phases of education.

Wider benefits are identified such as organisational practice-based learning that is captured and disseminated supporting emerging policy and initiatives in the area of education and Good Relations. For example, CRIS was part of the *stakeholder reference group for the mainstreaming of Shared Education* and a new strategy was launched in September 2022 by the Education Authority for Northern Ireland.

It is also anticipated that CRIS's research partnership with Coventry University's *Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations* that investigated the development of trust in our practice, will also be of significant interest to a range of government departments and funding bodies due to its findings in an area that is largely untapped and unexplored. A review of the government's *Together Building a United Community (TBUC)* strategy (2013-2023) has been initiated in this period and the Trust Indicator Framework (TIF) - the key outcome of the research project - is of interest to policy makers charged with creating new peacebuilding strategy. In addition, with the new developments in Shared Education and growing momentum towards the concept and practice of collaboration as a key driver for change at a root and branch level, new inroads have emerged for CRIS's evidence-based practice to influence and contribute to new thinking and systems of improvement that move away from silo-based working - a legacy of our post conflict context. CRIS looks forward to launching this new research in the next reporting year as part of Good Relations Week (September 2023) at Parliament Buildings Stormont.

Wider public benefit is also achieved by sharing good news stories and case studies of impact that present alternative hopeful narratives, putting the voice of participants and schools to the fore, countering the dominant conflict orientated messaging regarding Northern Ireland.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Summary of the Main Activities

The core activities of CRIS are:

- Provision of training, consultancy and multi-disciplinary support across all school sectors to build capacity and confidence to work with Good/ Community Relations and to support best practice in sharing and collaborative working.
- Delivering school-based, inter-community pupil programmes that promote diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding and that engage with perceived sensitive and contentious issues in age and stage appropriate ways.
- Provision of opportunities to engage parents/carers in Good/Community Relations and peacebuilding work with and through schools and other networks on a single identity and an inter-community basis.
- Advocacy for the role that schools, and education can play in supporting an intergenerational framework for peacebuilding and a shared future.
- Dissemination of good practice, research findings and resources on Good/ Community Relations and school-based peacebuilding through a variety of means including social media, traditional communication, through the writing of articles, hosting events/ conferences, and providing inputs for third level education institutions, statutory bodies, and other organisations.
- Continuation of ongoing development, refining and evaluation practices of CRIS's signature model of practice - *Good Relations and Collaborative Education (GRACE)*.
- Continuing to develop the sustainability of the organisation and ensure governance systems are robust adopting a continual improvement approach across all areas of organisational development.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Year in Numbers

39 th Year	77	3027	115	215	£81,903	£195,829
Supporting School-based Peacebuilding	Schools	Pupils	Parents/ carers	Teachers/ principals	Unrestricted Reserves	Total Income

The figures above cover a 9-month reporting period. They do not include the number of meetings and ongoing engagements with other key partners, organisations, agencies and individuals who support the development and delivery of the work of CRIS. These include, Local Council Good Relations Officers, Officials from The Executive Office (TEO), the Department of Education (DENI), Education Authority (EA), Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and close liaison with funders and other supporters of CRIS. Figures do not include inputs provided for University groups or quarterly meetings as member of the Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum (NIABF).

New System for Operational Plan Reporting:

The three core aims set out in the new CRIS strategic plan (2021-2024) are as follows:

- AIM 1: Catalysing Peace and Reconciliation
- AIM 2: Equipping and Inspiring the Education Sector
- AIM 3: Sustaining and Growing CRIS to achieve our mission

As part of the operational planning development linked to the new strategy CRIS drafted a set of Key Performance Indicators and agreed targets. A further set of programmatic and organisational governance/ development targets were also set out for each of the three aims and sub aims.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Summary of Achievements - Key Performance Indicators:

KPI	Description	Target	Outcome
1	Total Children/ Young People Engaged	1530	3027
2	Total Parents/ Carers Engaged	100	115
3	Total Teachers/ Principals Engaged	200	215
4	Total Schools Engaged	73	77
5	Total New School Partnerships (Twinned schools) Developed	2	2
6	Total Locality Partnerships	3	3

It is important to highlight that all programme targets were exceeded in 3 quarters, July 2022 – March 2023. A decision was taken at the last AGM (Oct 2022) to transition away from the academic year towards the standard financial year. Therefore, this current reporting year spans across nine months.

Programmatic Overview:

As mentioned in previous Trustee Reports and identified in the CRIS strategy (2021 - 2024), the organisation has committed to investing its resources in seven localities across Northern Ireland. Five of these are in current Urban Villages locations (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysullan; Colindale/West Belfast, Eastside/ East Belfast; Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets areas/ South Belfast; and The Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street – D/ Londonderry). The Executive Office's (EO) Urban Villages Initiative has partnered with CRIS to support the Buddy Up! Project to be scaled in all Primary Schools across the five localities since 2019. It is anticipated that funded programme initiatives will be wound down by March 2024 with the potential for a smaller scale 'Enhancing Community Capacity' fund to be set up to continue to provide support to these areas whilst new shared space capital builds are ongoing, and anticipated to complete in 2026. CRIS has made a strategic commitment to continue working with these areas beyond this timeframe providing it has resources to do so.

CRIS also work in Newtownabbey and Antrim/ Randalstown. Programming here involves work to support the development of locality based multi sector collaborations such as the *Moving Forward Together* (MFT) partnership, formalised in 2014, and the newer *Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together* (NEST) partnership which has also grown to 20 schools.

CRIS has a regional remit and within this reporting period has developed a closer relationship and partnership working with the Department of Education (DENI) and Education Authority (EA).

Additionally supporting student teacher training is a regular feature of the programme year with requests by Stranmillis University College. This year CRIS led several sessions in the *Leadership for Diversity and Mutual Understanding* module; the undergraduate teacher training programme, *Professional Learning in a Changing Society* (PLICS) that operates in both Stranmillis and St Mary's College; and the PGCE course, as well as with international students.

In the past year, CRIS (represented by Dr Emily Stanton) was asked to join the Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report Advisory Committee. This involved reviewing draft chapters of the report and meeting with the team to provide feedback to lead author Professor Ann Marie Gray of Ulster University.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Return to Traditional Delivery:

The period July 2022 to March 2023 is notable as being the first year since 2019 that pupil programming resumed to traditional forms of delivery. It is difficult to describe the toll that the two years of adaptation had taken - though it had been necessary to ensure that programme integrity was retained, including the development of a suite of digital education resources and moving to online delivery for contact work with schools. It is a testimony to our staff that they were able to rise to the challenge and innovate during this most difficult time. However, given the return to contact and traditional delivery the demand for programmes spiked as schools were keen to rebuild the momentum lost as a result of the pandemic.

Despite being two programme staff down for the majority of the year, due to challenges in recruitment, the outputs and outcomes were substantial over this period. CRIS management felt it was essential to find alternative ways to meet the interest from the schools and utilise the funds for the workplan ambitions set after substantial planning periods with schools, and being successful in accessing the programme funds package necessary for delivery across a range of funders. This accomplishment was achieved due to efforts of the Buddy Up Coordinator; a pivot towards increased use of Associates, (that also involving investing in a further recruitment process and training programme to widen our Associate team); and the CRIS management stepping in to support programme delivery across a range of areas. The efforts to rescue the operational workplan naturally had impacts on the level of organisational development work that was feasible during this time. However, it is important to highlight that significant progress was made across a range of strategic initiatives that will be detailed later in this report.

Everyday Peacebuilding (North Belfast):

The Everyday Peacebuilding programme was formally launched during this reporting year and was supported through project funding from the Irish Government's Reconciliation Fund and a successful outcome to the Strategic Partner scheme (Feb 2022).

Based in North Belfast across the Crumlin Road interface, the initiative evolved over twenty-four years of support that CRIS has provided to Edenderry and Holy Cross Nursery Schools involving parental engagement, training for staff, funding support, partnership coordination, and advocacy. For many years the ambition has been to support the local feeder Primary Schools (who at this stage had varying levels of partnership work) to come on board and work with CRIS and the Nurseries as a new network. For many years parents exiting the Nursery School's Buddy Up programme had strong desires to see the buddy system and CRIS work span into the Primary schools their children would be attending and to create pathways to continue parental engagement across the interfaces. CRIS was delighted to formalise this new network in this reporting period. This initiative would also begin the foundational steps to develop a multisector collaboration and start operations at all stages of the GRACE model across the eight schools including the two Nurseries, together with Holy Cross Boys' P.S. and Glenwood P.S.; Holy Cross Girls' P.S. and Wheathfield P.S., and Mercy P.S. and Edenbrooke P.S.

CRIS received funds via its strategic partnership with the Irish Government to hire a full-time staff member to take up the mantle of the *Everyday Peacebuilding* project. Initially the post was challenging to fill. Upon the third unsuccessful recruitment exercise CRIS made alternative plans and recruited a team of experienced Associates to support the launch of the programme and new workplan. Some key features of this involved all Primary School partnerships receiving the *Celebrating Diversity* programme at P3 and *Knowing Me Knowing You* at P7, spanning 10 – 15 hours of direct engagement respectively, and with interschool pupil buddying embedded. Additionally in support of these four separate school twinings, parental engagement events were hosted such as a *Parents Reunion* event to celebrate the historic work between families with the Nursery Schools and CRIS. This uplifting event took place in October 2022 and was well attended with parents/carers and friends of the work returning to celebrate the restart, and share their memories spanning more than twenty years. This was heartening for CRIS staff and the Nurseries who viewed this event as a litmus test to garner interest in rebuilding this peacebuilding initiative in a new context and with a wider remit. The clear support and motivation to be involved was also evident with attendance at the *Everyday Peacebuilding Family Fun Day* (October 2022) – another new initiative that CRIS was trialling with over 180 attending. CRIS hopes to retain these signature events in the calendar of activities going forward. In November 2022 the then Taoiseach Micheál Martin visited the project and met with a delegation of principals, teachers and parents from across the eight North Belfast schools. See the link for an article written by CRIS outlining the series of events that launched this programme after 3 years of stagnation due to the pandemic.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

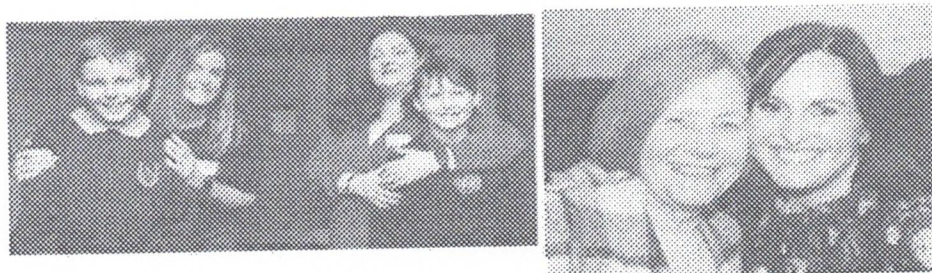
Everyday Peacebuilding: The greatest hope exists in places many would least expect to find it!
Community Relations Council (community-relations.org.uk)



Finally in February 2022 CRIS was successful in recruiting a new staff member taking up the post as Good Relations Practitioner for Everyday Peacebuilding.

With the new post filled a new engagement with Nursery School parents began with sessions running in February and March 2023. As part of this re-engagement activity and to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of both Buddy Up! and the Good Friday Agreement, a showcase event was held at Movie House Cinema at York Gate Belfast, compered by local artist Nuala McKeever and with input from parents, teachers and children involved in Buddy Up! over years. CRIS accessed additional funds from the Executive Office's Urban Villages Initiative to fund the creation of a new film that was designed inhouse. It featured footage across the two decades demonstrating the substantial peacebuilding impacts. It also acted as an advocacy tool to those attending the event with influence across Government Departments. The 'Be Inspired' film put forth a call to action for the implementation of the interschool buddy system into all Nursery and Primary School Shared Education partnerships as per commitment laid out in the *Together Building a United Community* (TBUC) strategy. To support this, CRIS also launched a digital education resource to support schools to achieve this objective. The *Be Inspired* film and *Interschool Buddy System Resource* are located on the resources tab of the CRIS website and are free to access.

The event was covered by Local TV station Northern Visions TV (NVTv) who filmed the event and made a special 30-minutes news feature on their *In Focus* broadcast, during the anniversary of the referendum result, on 22nd May 2023. See link: <https://vimeo.com/827205173>



COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Buddy Up! and the Urban Village (TEO) Initiative:

CRIS has been working in partnership with The Executive Office (TEO) Urban Villages Initiative since early 2018 to advance the roll out of the Buddy system as identified in government peace strategy, 'Together Building a United Community' (TBUC).

From July 2022 the Buddy Up! programme was able to plan for a return to in-person delivery. The newly hired Buddy Up! Coordinator (June 2022) met the ambitious workplan demands and delivered fourteen pupil programmes (culminating in nearly 200 hours contact time across all programmes). The Buddy Up Coordinator was augmented by a team of Associates and other programme staff.

Feedback From Pupils:

A survey was conducted with 424 Key Stage 1 (P3) and Key Stage 2 (P7) students linked to Buddy Up! school delivery between September 2022 - March 2023 and headline results reflected that of:

Key Stage 1 Pupils:

- 70% 'felt like my Buddy is my friend'
- 70% agreed 'I want to spend more time with my Buddy'
- 77% reported 'I feel like my buddy cares about me and I care about my Buddy'

Key Stage 2 Pupils:

- 80% agreed they 'enjoyed the Buddy Up! programmes and these helped me work as part of a team'
- 75% had a chance to 'think and talk about different groups of people, their cultures, religions and symbols'
- 55% reported they 'feel more comfortable meeting children from the other school'

Feedback from Teachers:

When teachers were asked how participating in Buddy Up! had helped strengthen approaches to Good Relations within their schools, they reflected:

- 'Buddy Up programme offers vital exposure for our children to other communities to break down sectarianism and bias before it is a chance to root. Buddy Up! has given our children an experience they will always remember'.
- 'A fantastic and worthwhile programme. This was the most enjoyable programme I've been part of'.
- 'A fun way to learn about the identities in our community and how we are similar and different'.
- 'A great programme that enables young people from different backgrounds to meet, explore and develop their social skills by understanding everyone's different'.
- 'An enjoyable experience that helps facilitate inter school cooperation'.
- 'A great experience, from teacher workshop, classroom workshops to share workshops with our Buddy Up! School'.
- 'A fun (and low stress for teachers) way of building relationships with other schools'.
- 'Buddy Up programme allows children from all communities to learn together and share their likes and dislikes. Connecting kids from all over'.

GRACE Kitemark:

As part of 2022-23 Urban Villages funding package, CRIS committed to piloting a new initiative to develop a GRACE Kite Mark award for schools who would demonstrate best practice in whole school community approaches to peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Ligoniel P.S. and St Vincent de Paul P.S. were invited to pilot this initiative with CRIS. The school partnership worked through a series of initiatives submitting corresponding evidence linked to pupil programmes, teacher training, and wider community engagement under the leadership of its Shared Education coordinators.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The partnership had a chance to share their experiences of working together in an engagement hosted by CRIS with Lord Caine (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Northern Ireland Office) in February 2023.

With the partnership poised to be awarded the inaugural GRACE bronze level award, it is our hope that this pilot is scaled widely and schools are supported to become centres of excellence in Good Relations and collaborative education.

Growing Good Relations and Collaborative Education (GRACE):

Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together (NEST) Partnership Development

The NEST (Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together) collaborative network sits under the Growing GRACE programme area which seeks to support place-based school collaboration with cross phase and cross sector networks. With Good Relations as its centre, the network identifies collective issues and shared priorities to address together.

All NEST activities are led by the *Senior Practitioner for Growing GRACE* and time is also supported from the *Director of Programmes* and a *Senior Associate* who supports school and partnership meetings and trainings. A key milestone in this year was the communication and design process CRIS facilitated to create a name and logo for the partnership. Programme activities include work with senior leadership across the sectors; coordination of Shared Learning Networks (SLN), and pupil programmes that directly link to the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PD&MU) curriculum and that have the interschool buddying model embedded. Furthermore, each school has access to support on a targeted basis aimed at strengthening and embedding Good Relations within their school, Shared Education Partnership, and their communities. This allows each school to benefit from single school and system level support from CRIS. Some other key activities in this reporting period include:

- Individual NEST member support and provision with eleven one-to-one 'listening' exercises involving school Principals and senior leadership to identify salient community needs, common concerns, and nurture relationships with CRIS as a trust conduit between schools.
- Six scoping exercises carried out with individual local schools who were not yet engaged in the network. Three new schools joined the partnership because of these processes - Cammonee Primary, Ashgrove Nursery and St MacNissi's Primary.
- Two Shared Learning Networks were held on the themes of Early Years/ Foundation stage education in October and again in March.
- In NEST pupil-based activities, 206 children were involved in seven Good Relations programmes in both Maintained and Controlled schools with P3 and P7 children exploring themes of identity, community, culture, diversity, empathy, conflict, flags, symbols and emblems.
- NEST Board of Governors evening with the aim to raise awareness and cascade partnership working in the community at a leadership level across schools.
- Guidance and support provided to schools seeking to start new Shared Education partnerships. For example, with St Mary's on the Hill Primary and Cammonee Primary.
- Providing bespoke advice and training to staff in Hillcroft Special School on handling controversial issues.
- Facilitation of training to a group of 100 teaching and support staff at Integrated College Glengormley.
- Individual support to Ballyhenry Primary School as it seeks to transition to integrated status.
- Support and attendance at a variety of other school and community events including the facilitation of Good Relations workshops over six days to approx. 1600 young people as part of the Policing and Community Safety (PCSP) 'Be Safe' initiative.

Growing GRACE - Antrim and Randalstown Schools Moving Forward Together (MFT) Partnership:

While CRIS's role has intentionally changed in recent years moving away from direct Coordination as MFT becomes an increasingly independent multi sector collaboration, it remains clear that it is viewed as an important founding partner in retaining the reconciliation aims by which MFT was founded in 2014.

MFT is widely viewed as an advanced example of best practice and has been keenly observed by the Education Authority for several years. As such MFT has been able to access significant resources and substitute cover for teachers through Shared Education to support further developments in its innovations as a test case

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

from which to derive learnings, including that of the role that local Councils can play in actively supporting school partnerships. This is an area of growing interest as the need heightens both in economic and social terms for schools to collaborate with each other across the separated/ segregated education system in Northern Ireland. It is another area in which CRIS has demonstrated early pioneering practice and has gained notable recognition for its role in the evolution of MFT.

This year, CRIS has continued to have several roles in the MFT partnership by supporting capacity building, providing mentoring to position holders (MFT Chair and Coordinator), and being an active community partner and funding conduit. This year support included operationalising of the 'Togetherness' strand of the new strategy and attending partnership and steering group meetings. During this period CRIS has supported the planning process to re-establish MFT's Shared Learning Networks (SLN's) after they halted due to Covid-19. Shared Learning Networks focussed on Literacy, Numeracy, Early Years and Special Educational Needs. CRIS also facilitated the first 'Shared Education' SLN in April 22 and was hosted in the Antrim Board Centre, attended by 16 Shared Education Coordinators.

CRIS also supported the planning and practicalities for the MFT Board of Governors evening - an opportunity to build greater awareness and create more feed in from local community members across the 20 partner schools.

Research Partnership with Coventry University's, Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations:

The ongoing investment CRIS has made with the help of the CRC's *Community Relations and Cultural Diversity* funding and the Executive Offices (TEO) *Urban Village Initiative* has seen the research partnership with Coventry University (Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations) move closer to the final stages. The research investigates how the GRACE model of practice supports trust-building across stakeholders.

The period July 22 - March 23 was a particularly important phase which included both the coding and analysis of the qualitative components of the research. This allowed both CRIS (represented by Dr Emily Stanton) and Coventry (Dr Charis Rice) to participate in interpretation and identification of key themes. Following this the team was able to provide a presentation of initial findings at the *European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA)* conference held in Aarhus, Denmark. This allowed the team to field questions which further enhanced the development of the Trust Indicators Framework. The final stage of research development involved working to consolidate all aspects of the Indicators Framework into 10 clear areas linked to existing literature and the inductive research. A draft research report was completed. This allowed CRIS to begin to plan for the next stages of dissemination and implementation into our systems for monitoring, evaluation and learning.

Conclusion:

Given the truncated reporting period (due to the shift to a March year end reporting time frame) CRIS can be especially encouraged by the breadth and depth of what has been achieved. Across all areas of programme (particularly in the context of a continuing political vacuum and austere financial climate), the CRIS programme team has been exceptionally productive, overachieving in participation targets as the Key Performance Indicators have demonstrated. Programme staff use their talents to serve the charity above and beyond what is required, and school stakeholders readily express their gratitude for CRIS's support and how the charity's mission makes a demonstrable impact on children and adults alike.

The research on trust and reconciliation that is being undertaken is in many respects ground-breaking for policy making for Good Relations and Education. CRIS can feel assured that what is learned can significantly impact our own practice, and hopefully beyond.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK TO SUPPORT CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Developmental work identified in the strategic plan to aid governance and sustainability has continued to be a central theme and updates are provided below. During this time CRIS continued to access consultancy support from Clayton Rowe (Saben Group, Canada) who has been working with the CEO and Director of Programmes on a regular basis. Several key elements were progressed during this period including submitting an application to the National Lottery's *Dormant Accounts NI* funding scheme to support a range of activities to strengthen organisational capacity and sustainability.

Resource Development Strategy:

Three further strategy documents were progressed to support wider thinking and preparation for positive change including:

- **Draft Theory of Change/ Logic Model:** To measure impact against mission.
- **Feasibility Study for Service Delivery:** To conduct a review of CRIS fee structure and assess income generation targets for a new strategy cycle 2024 - 2027.
- **Long Term Vision/ Community Assessment for N. Belfast Locality Development:** This will involve development of a brief to attract new partners into collaborative arrangements across statutory, community/ voluntary and business sectors.
- **Programme Costing Model:** Further progress to refine financial analysis across three programme areas to determine the cost per participant. Information will support a donor appeal pilot in the forthcoming year.

Staff Capacity and Succession Planning:

This period was fraught with some challenges regarding recruitment, like many organisations in the sector CRIS found it increasingly difficult to attract talent – a increasingly familiar feature of the sector post pandemic. CRIS management focused significant energies to find alternative ways to address immediate issues and put strategies in place to ameliorate capacity concerns in the medium to longer term. Whilst a fourth recruitment exercise was actioned to find a suitably skilled candidate for the new *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme CRIS led the following:

- Gathered a new team of highly skilled Senior Associates to lead the bulk of the workplan. In addition, the CEO and Director of Programmes provided project management and stepped into delivery where necessary.
- Ran a recruitment exercise to widen the team of Associates. This was a successful venture, attracting six new Associates with plans in place to ensure the wider team are effectively inducted, supported and motivated.
- Initiated plans to develop a robust professional development strategy across the team and to strengthen CRIS ethos as a learning organisation.
- Started conversations for a timely and responsible succession plan for long-term sustainability.
- All staff gained updated certificates in safeguarding children and young People and plan in place to review safeguarding policy.
- Staff participated in inhouse training to support the return to traditional office use and norms including sessions on organisational ethos and culture, data protection and health and safety.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Reputation, Profile and Communication:

Activity in this area has been developing at pace in recent years. Most notably key activities in this period include:

- CRIS CEO honoured with OBE for services to peace education and community reconciliation.
- CRIS represented by CEO at Late Queen's funeral service in London Sep 2022.
- Political engagements with the Irish Government's former Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Lord Caine of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO)
- Attendance at Hume Foundation event.
- CRIS profiled as exemplar project on Community Relations Council E-news.
- Communication strategy developed for Urban Villages initiative and Buddy Up project.
- Job description developed, and funding applied for new *Fundraising and Communication Manager*
- Research report completed exploring trust in CRIS practice.
- Launch event of Buddy System educational e-media resource
- New film, 'Be Inspired – celebrating 25 years of peace and friendship', developed highlighting impact of Buddy Up project aligned to anniversary of Good Friday Agreement
- Second edition of Ripples of Peace impact case study initiated.

CRIS is well primed to focus energies on its change management and organisational development ambitions to strengthen and grow the organisation in the years to follow and is keen to invest more time in this area over the course of the final year of 2021-2024 strategy. The key governance priorities going forward are:

- Registering CRIS as a Limited Company and follow-on administrative tasks.
- Conduct a HR policy review and create new staff handbook.
- Review the salary structure and implement a resource diversification strategy.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Financial Review

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Summary of Funding Secured to Support Operations:

CRIS was fortunate in securing all necessary funds to support its workplan ambitions covering this period. Funding partners include:

- **The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages Initiative – 'Buddy Up'** project, supporting core and programme costs, for a fifth year (Apr 22 – Mar 23) with a grant totalling £136,709.
- **Project Funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Reconciliation (DFAT) Fund**, for the 'Ripples of Peace' project which began in Jul 2021 and was extended into this audit year to utilise underspend arising in programming costs.
- **Strategic Partner funding awarded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) Reconciliation Fund** announced in Feb 22 providing a three-year contract for staff and running costs (Apr 22 – Mar 25). Please note that Year 1 Strategic Partner funds (£99,039) are not represented on the list of funders due to being included as a Debtor in last year's accounts for year ending June 2022.
- **The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) core funding scheme**, with a new three-year contract securing almost £80,000 per annum, supporting staff and running costs, up to March 2025. Please note that due to the payment cycle and CRIS's previous financial year (Jul 21 – Jun 22), 50% of this grant was included in last year's accounts.
- **The Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council's (ANBC)**, single supplier contract supporting £15,000 of programme costs in Antrim and Newtownabbey. (Apr 22 – Mar 23).
- **Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Scheme**, project funding (£3134 was awarded with 50% of grant received in last financial year), to support the restart of the parental engagement work in North Belfast through the *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme.

CRIS has a sound reputation for administering grants in their entirety in line with funding contracts, and for achieving and often exceeding the programme outcomes anticipated at the point of application. Feedback across funders suggests CRIS represents good value for money. CRIS is committed to keeping the governance costs associated with running the charity at a minimum ensuring the vast majority of funds goes directly towards peacebuilding activities with school communities across the seven localities we operate in.

In February 2020 CRIS was awarded the highest-level rating, 'robust' in an audit of our governance and finance arrangements, led by the Executive Office (TEO). This certificate spans three years until January 2023. CRIS is also audited each year by the Community Relations Council, and TEO and maintain good standards in governance and financial compliance.

The total income for July 2022 – March 2023 was £195,829 covering almost 100% of all CRIS core operating costs and funds for project related activity.

Moving forward for the year 2023 – 2024, CRIS will also achieve a similar outcome with almost all core and programme costs being secured before the end of this reporting period.

The total expenditure for July 2022 – March 2023 was £257,562. This figure exceeds that of the total income due to funds received from the *Reconciliation Fund – Strategic Partner scheme* (Irish Government) totalling £99,039. In addition, 50% of the core funding grant from the *Community Relations Council* is included in the previous year's accounts. The spend on these grants spans April 2022 – March 2023.

Fees for CRIS consultancy work totalled £17,556 over the nine-month period. These funds contribute to the CRIS reserves with a portion used for expenditure not covered by grants, such as the cost of painting the CRIS office, hospitality, flights, and bank charges.

The unrestricted funds balance for March 2023 is £81,903. This is 63% of the reserves target of £130,000 for operating costs for six months. CRIS projects that by the end of the next reporting year March 2024, reserves will reach 75% of the target.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Due to the alternative staffing arrangements for programme delivery, CRIS's expenditure for facilitation via use of its Associates totalled £34,244.

Substitute cover costs to release 72 teachers and principals to attend training and other events such as partnership meetings totalled £12,200.

Expenditure related to travel more than doubled in this period totalling £9,655. This is mainly due a return to in-person delivery for pupil programming.

CRIS achieved full spend on all grants that follow the standard financial year (Apr 22' – Mar 23').

Financial Management and Reserves Policy:

CRIS has a Financial Management Policy and Procedure Manual which is updated annually and meets the requirements of the Charities Act for Northern Ireland, the Charity Commissions guidelines 'Internal Financial Controls for Charities' and 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)'.

The Trustees have agreed a reserves policy minimum of 3 months to maximum 6 months operating costs. This is in addition to the pot of funds it needs to hold should payment of redundancies be necessary in the future. A revised target of £130,000 is set to the upper limit of six-month period and reflects the increased number of post, increases in rent, and heat and light. The redundancy pot necessary is £21,458 as of end March 2023.

CRIS is putting further plans in place, to achieve at least 5 months reserves by March 2024. At the moment CRIS have just over 4 months running costs and reserves to cover redundancies. Moving forward CRIS aim to substantially increase its unrestricted reserves and be less reliant on government grants. The Board aims to hold unrestricted reserves to enable the organisation to meet -

- Its redundancy liabilities and rental and other contracts
- Its match funding obligations set out in funding contracts where any percentage of staff salaries are not covered by another funder(s)
- and to maintain its activities in the event of: -
 - gaps in funding
 - late payment of grants and fees
 - Upgrades in IT systems and equipment as and when the need arises
 - Gaps in opportunities to income generate through training and consultancy work

The main concerns of the Board going forward are to ensure:

- That the public benefit enabled through CRIS activities is continued
- That core and programme funding can continue to be secured to retain staff and ensure stability and growth
- To develop a resource diversification strategy to help grow the level of reserves and meet our target

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Risk Management:

The board members recognise their duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance and mitigations.

Within the section of this report titled, 'Organisational Development Work to Support Change Management and Sustainability' details have been shared relating to financial risk, strategies for resource diversification, and longer-term sustainability.

Within our current risk registry, we have prioritised organisational risks and the action steps we will take in which to mitigate them. We have prioritised these starting with greatest likelihood and impact.

1. Political uncertainty in Northern Ireland and overreliance on government grants
2. Lack of long-term fundraising plan
3. Impact of cost-of-living crisis
4. Loss of key staff and challenges in attracting new staff
5. Ineffective knowledge management systems
6. Uncertainty of long-term Covid-19 impact.

One of the improvement areas identified in the strategic plan is to overhaul our risk management systems. Over the forthcoming year CRIS will be guided through this utilising Board members expertise in the area. An enhanced risk management process will be piloted and investigate all CRIS operations and governance controls to ensure best practice.

In order to meet the challenges of change the CRIS Board met more frequently within their individual offices of Chair, Treasurer, and Vice Chair. The hands on and active support of all members continues to ensure that CRIS is well managed, upholds good practice in all areas of its governance responsibilities and with a commitment to continual improvement.

From a review of the strategic initiatives identified across the three-year plan and survey of the landscape in terms of organisational capacity going forward the CRIS Board and management are confident that all goals will be met by the end of the strategy timeframe, with confident strides towards greater organisational resilience and financial health.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Type of governing document:

Community Relations in Schools is a community organisation governed by its constitution adopted in April 1984 and last amended in October 2017 to ensure it was up to date using best practice guidelines as set out in suggested model documents on the Charity Commission's website.

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Trustee selection methods:

At the Annual General Meeting each year a Board is appointed to run CRIS for the next year. Each member of the Committee is elected for a period of three years. Retiring members are eligible for re-election. All nominees must indicate their willingness to stand and be proposed and seconded. A written agreement of the nominated persons in absentia must be presented.

Committee members may also be co-opted on the CRIS committee as potential new interested individuals are considered throughout the year. When considering the co-opting of trustees, the Board has regard to the requirement for any specialist skills needed.

We are fortunate to have an engaged and active Board with an array of skills. The Board strives to be as diverse and representative of educational stakeholders and society in general, as possible and has expertise spanning the community and voluntary, funding, corporate and statutory sectors. CRIS plans to increase the Board to a maximum of 10 members, with priority areas identified for recruitment in the disciplines of human resources, finance, and fundraising and areas for welcome statements identified to increase our diversity.

Trustee Induction and Training:

New trustees receive an induction pack which provides information and guidelines on their task, responsibilities, and the policies and ethos. The CEO and members of the Board meet with new trustees during the preliminary stages of their appointment to talk through the organisation in more detail, the history of its work, strategic positioning, and discuss other areas of interest.

New trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity guidelines, the charity commission guidance on public benefit, the content of the constitution, the committee and decision-making process, the strategic and operational plan, and the recent financial performance of the charity.

During the induction period they will meet the full staff team, other trustees and key partners. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. New trustees are invited to attend any mandatory meetings as set down by funders who support CRIS.

Organisational Structure:

The Board meets at least four times per year and sub-groups meet to address any additional finance, personnel and programmatic matters as required. The Board employs a CEO who manages the day-to-day operations of the charity.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors:

So far as each of the Board members at the date of approval of these financial statements are aware: (a) there is no relevant information of which the charity auditors are unaware; and (b) they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Trustees on Wednesday 29th November 2023 and signed on their behalf.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

N Richardson

(Chairperson)

Dated: 29 November 2023


29/11/2023

L. Patterson

(Treasurer)

Dated.....



COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustee Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Community Relations in Schools (the 'charity') for the Period ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the Period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees' report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

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

Other matters which we are required to address

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared accounts in accordance with "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) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Amanda Harbinson

Mrs Amanda Harbinson (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Corrigan CA Limited

29 November 2023

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

Corrigan CA Limited is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies		-	-	-	166	-	166
Charitable activities	3	17,556	178,273	195,829	20,200	334,492	354,692
Total income		<u>17,556</u>	<u>178,273</u>	<u>195,829</u>	<u>20,366</u>	<u>334,492</u>	<u>354,858</u>
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	4	2,161	254,954	257,115	26,713	270,206	296,919
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		<u>15,395</u>	<u>(76,681)</u>	<u>(61,286)</u>	<u>(6,347)</u>	<u>64,286</u>	<u>57,939</u>
Gross transfers between funds		23,106	(23,106)	-	1,715	(1,715)	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the Period/							
Net movement in funds		<u>38,501</u>	<u>(99,787)</u>	<u>(61,286)</u>	<u>(4,632)</u>	<u>62,571</u>	<u>57,939</u>
Fund balances at 1 July 2022		43,402	99,787	143,189	48,034	37,216	85,250
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		<u>81,903</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>81,903</u>	<u>43,402</u>	<u>99,787</u>	<u>143,189</u>

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

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	10		6		6
Tangible assets	9		5,102		4,748
			<u>5,108</u>		<u>4,754</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	11	32,358		140,319	
Cash at bank and in hand		50,065		6,481	
		<u>82,443</u>		<u>146,800</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(5,648)		(8,365)	
Net current assets			<u>76,795</u>		<u>138,435</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>81,903</u>		<u>143,189</u>
Income funds					
Restricted funds					99,787
Unrestricted funds			81,903		43,402
			<u>81,903</u>		<u>143,189</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 29 November 2023

L Patterson
Trustee




COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

1 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Accounting policies

Charity information

Community Relations In Schools is an unincorporated charity.

2.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 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 2016).

The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value.

The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

2.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

2.4 Incoming resources

Income From Charitable Activities

Income from charitable activities is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Income from government or other grants, whether 'capital' or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has the entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Donations & Legacies

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

2.5 Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure On Charitable Activities

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

The charity is below the charity audit threshold and therefore is exempt from reporting expenditure on an activity basis. The charity has opted to report by the nature rather than on an activity basis.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

2.6 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Intangible assets acquired on business combinations are recognised separately from goodwill at the acquisition date where it is probable that the expected future economic benefits that are attributable to the asset will flow to the entity and the fair value of the asset can be measured reliably; the intangible asset arises from contractual or other legal rights; and the intangible asset is separable from the entity.

Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

Software	20% straight line
----------	-------------------

2.7 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures, fittings & equipment	20% straight line
--------------------------------	-------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

2.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

2.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

2.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

3 Charitable activities

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Donations	-	186
Service Delivery	17,556	20,200
Grants	178,273	334,492
	<u>195,829</u>	<u>354,858</u>

	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Analysis by fund			
Unrestricted funds	-	17,556	17,556
Restricted funds	178,273	-	178,273
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>17,556</u>	<u>195,829</u>

For the Period ended 30 June 2022

	Total 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Unrestricted funds	-	20,366	20,366
Restricted funds	334,492	-	334,492
	<u>334,492</u>	<u>20,366</u>	<u>354,858</u>

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Included in Grants Are:		
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Core Funding	39,997	84,462
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Funding	1,567	4,807
Department of Foreign Affairs: Reconciliation Funds - Strategic Partner Grant	-	83,859
Department of Foreign Affairs: Reconciliation Funds - Ripples of Peace Project		50,110
The Executive Office, Urban Villages Initiative	136,709	71,551
The Executive Office, Good Relations Fund		44,510
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>339,299</u>

Reconciliation Fund/Strategic Partner grant Year 1 (£83,859) was included in the previous accounts covering Jul 21-Jun 22.
Community Relations Council Core Funding grant reflects 50% of total annual award (£79,994) due to £39,997 received in previous year, Jul 21-Jun 22.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

4 Charitable activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs	152,862	178,700
Staff Training	105	1,370
Depreciation and impairment	1,776	1,781
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	(517)	519
Resources	5,979	12,348
Travel	9,655	4,110
Subscriptions	956	1,175
Hospitality	6,100	5,274
Facilitation	34,244	42,207
Light & Heat	967	700
Telephone	338	426
Sundry	2,232	1,909
Advertising	935	550
Subcover	12,200	15,470
Accountancy	2,700	4,707
Professional Fees	7,394	990
Bank Charges	174	177
Rent	10,314	12,474
Insurance	2,046	2,610
Post, printing & Stationery	1,169	3,154
Computer Running expenses	720	-
Venues	2,895	2,768
Residentials	-	3,500
Repairs	1,871	-
	<u>257,115</u>	<u>296,919</u>

5 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the Period.
No trustee expenses have been incurred.

6 Auditor's remuneration

The analysis of auditor's remuneration is as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Auditor's Remuneration	2,646	2,520
	<u>2,646</u>	<u>2,520</u>
Total audit fees	<u>2,646</u>	<u>2,520</u>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

7 Employees

There were 8 employees during the Period.

Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	149,580	174,880
Other pension costs	3,281	3,820
	<u>152,861</u>	<u>178,700</u>

No employees received employee benefits of more than £60,000.

8 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

9 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £
Cost	
At 1 July 2022	18,506
Additions	1,612
Disposals	240
	<u>18,358</u>
At 31 March 2023	
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 July 2022	11,757
Depreciation charged in the Period	1,776
Eliminated in respect of disposals	(277)
	<u>13,256</u>
At 31 March 2023	
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	<u>5,102</u>
	<u>4,748</u>
At 30 June 2022	

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

10 Intangible fixed assets

	Software £
Cost	
At 1 July 2022 and 31 March 2023	35,464
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 July 2022 and 31 March 2023	35,458
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	6
At 30 June 2022	6

11 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	32,358	140,319

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	2,093	100
Other creditors	612	2,597
Accruals and deferred income	2,943	5,668
	5,648	8,365

13 Movement in Funds

Fund	At 01/07/22 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	At 31/03/23 £
Restricted	99,787	178,273	254,954	(23,106)	-
Unrestricted	43,402	17,556	2,608	23,106	81,456
	143,189	195,829	257,562	-	81,456

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

14 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the Period (2022 - none).

Community Relations In Schools (CRIS)

Northern Ireland - Charity number 105291

Annual return

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Charity number

Charity No. NIC105291

Principal address

Unit 6 North City Business Centre
2 Duncairn Gardens
Belfast
BT15 2GG

Auditor

Celine Corrigan
Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

CONTENTS

	Page
Trustees report	1 - 16
Statement of trustees responsibilities	17
Independent auditor's report	18 - 20
Statement of financial activities	21
Balance sheet	22
Notes to the financial statements	23 - 31

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Trustees' report for the year ended 31st March 2023

The trustees of CRIS are pleased to present their annual report and the financial statements for the period 1st July 2022 – 31st March 2023.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name:	Community Relations In Schools
Charity Number:	NIC105291
	The charity is an unincorporated association as per the Constitution.
Principal Office:	Unit 6, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT152GG
Registered Office:	Unit 6, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GG
Auditor:	Corrigan CA Limited 24 Greystone Road Antrim BT41 2GG
Bankers:	Ulster Bank Ltd., 183 Kingsway, Dunmurry, Belfast, BT17 9AH

CRIS Trustees as of 31st March 2023:

Norman Richardson (Chair)
Patricia O'Neill (Vice Chair)
Lawrence Patterson (Treasurer)
Conor O'Neill (Secretary)
Stephen Graham
Aithne Kerrigan
Ben Craig

Objectives and activities OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable Objects

The purpose of CRIS is to actively contribute to the building of a shared and reconciled society in Northern Ireland by developing and delivering peace-building programmes and activities within and between schools and in their local communities.

CRIS also works in partnership with educational authorities, higher educational institutions, other statutory agencies, funding bodies and community organisations to bring about positive impacts at an individual, family, school community, and system level. CRIS works in cooperative arrangements that support reconciliation and promote equality and diversity through the building of relationships and trust across society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees of CRIS confirm that they have complied with their duty as defined in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) and have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The public benefit requirement has continued to inform the activities of the charity during this reporting period.

In evaluating public benefit, the trustees are pleased that the work of CRIS has had multi-level positive impacts over this past year. Our programmes, training and other partnership initiatives have involved work with 77 school communities. Over three quarters of these schools are in areas of high deprivation and CRIS intentionally focuses its resources in these communities where the legacy of the conflict continues to make an impact.

Within the reporting period, across nine months, CRIS has directly engaged 3357 distinct participants (pupils, parents, teachers, principals). Indirectly many more children, young people and members of their whole school communities have benefited due to the programmes, capacity building, and relationship development initiatives undertaken to support diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding both within and between schools across all sectors and phases of education.

Wider benefits are identified such as organisational practice-based learning that is captured and disseminated supporting emerging policy and initiatives in the area of education and Good Relations. For example, CRIS was part of the *stakeholder reference group for the mainstreaming of Shared Education* and a new strategy was launched in September 2022 by the Education Authority for Northern Ireland.

It is also anticipated that CRIS's research partnership with Coventry University's *Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations* that investigated the development of trust in our practice, will also be of significant interest to a range of government departments and funding bodies due to its findings in an area that is largely untapped and unexplored. A review of the government's *Together Building a United Community (TBUC)* strategy (2013-2023) has been initiated in this period and the Trust Indicator Framework (TIF) - the key outcome of the research project - is of interest to policy makers charged with creating new peacebuilding strategy. In addition, with the new developments in Shared Education and growing momentum towards the concept and practice of collaboration as a key driver for change at a root and branch level, new inroads have emerged for CRIS's evidence-based practice to influence and contribute to new thinking and systems of improvement that move away from silo-based working - a legacy of our post conflict context. CRIS looks forward to launching this new research in the next reporting year as part of Good Relations Week (September 2023) at Parliament Buildings Stormont.

Wider public benefit is also achieved by sharing good news stories and case studies of impact that present alternative hopeful narratives, putting the voice of participants and schools to the fore, countering the dominant conflict orientated messaging regarding Northern Ireland.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Summary of the Main Activities

The core activities of CRIS are:

- Provision of training, consultancy and multi-disciplinary support across all school sectors to build capacity and confidence to work with Good/ Community Relations and to support best practice in sharing and collaborative working.
- Delivering school-based, inter-community pupil programmes that promote diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding and that engage with perceived sensitive and contentious issues in age and stage appropriate ways.
- Provision of opportunities to engage parents/carers in Good/Community Relations and peacebuilding work with and through schools and other networks on a single identity and an inter-community basis.
- Advocacy for the role that schools, and education can play in supporting an intergenerational framework for peacebuilding and a shared future.
- Dissemination of good practice, research findings and resources on Good/ Community Relations and school-based peacebuilding through a variety of means including social media, traditional communication, through the writing of articles, hosting events/ conferences, and providing inputs for third level education institutions, statutory bodies, and other organisations.
- Continuation of ongoing development, refining and evaluation practices of CRIS's signature model of practice - *Good Relations and Collaborative Education (GRACE)*.
- Continuing to develop the sustainability of the organisation and ensure governance systems are robust adopting a continual improvement approach across all areas of organisational development.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Year in Numbers

39 th Year	77	3027	115	215	£81,903	£195,829
Supporting School-based Peacebuilding	Schools	Pupils	Parents/ carers	Teachers/ principals	Unrestricted Reserves	Total Income

The figures above cover a 9-month reporting period. They do not include the number of meetings and ongoing engagements with other key partners, organisations, agencies and individuals who support the development and delivery of the work of CRIS. These include, Local Council Good Relations Officers, Officials from The Executive Office (TEO), the Department of Education (DENI), Education Authority (EA), Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and close liaison with funders and other supporters of CRIS. Figures do not include inputs provided for University groups or quarterly meetings as member of the Northern Ireland Anti Bullying Forum (NIABF).

New System for Operational Plan Reporting:

The three core aims set out in the new CRIS strategic plan (2021-2024) are as follows:

- AIM 1: Catalysing Peace and Reconciliation
- AIM 2: Equipping and Inspiring the Education Sector
- AIM 3: Sustaining and Growing CRIS to achieve our mission

As part of the operational planning development linked to the new strategy CRIS drafted a set of Key Performance Indicators and agreed targets. A further set of programmatic and organisational governance/ development targets were also set out for each of the three aims and sub aims.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Summary of Achievements - Key Performance Indicators:

KPI	Description	Target	Outcome
1	Total Children/ Young People Engaged	1530	3027
2	Total Parents/ Carers Engaged	100	115
3	Total Teachers/ Principals Engaged	200	215
4	Total Schools Engaged	73	77
5	Total New School Partnerships (Twinned schools) Developed	2	2
6	Total Locality Partnerships	3	3

It is important to highlight that all programme targets were exceeded in 3 quarters, July 2022 – March 2023. A decision was taken at the last AGM (Oct 2022) to transition away from the academic year towards the standard financial year. Therefore, this current reporting year spans across nine months.

Programmatic Overview:

As mentioned in previous Trustee Reports and identified in the CRIS strategy (2021 - 2024), the organisation has committed to investing its resources in seven localities across Northern Ireland. Five of these are in current Urban Villages locations (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysullan; Colindale/West Belfast, Eastside/ East Belfast; Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets areas/ South Belfast; and The Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street – D/ Londonderry). The Executive Office's (EO) Urban Villages Initiative has partnered with CRIS to support the Buddy Up! Project to be scaled in all Primary Schools across the five localities since 2019. It is anticipated that funded programme initiatives will be wound down by March 2024 with the potential for a smaller scale 'Enhancing Community Capacity' fund to be set up to continue to provide support to these areas whilst new shared space capital builds are ongoing, and anticipated to complete in 2026. CRIS has made a strategic commitment to continue working with these areas beyond this timeframe providing it has resources to do so.

CRIS also work in Newtownabbey and Antrim/ Randalstown. Programming here involves work to support the development of locality based multi sector collaborations such as the *Moving Forward Together* (MFT) partnership, formalised in 2014, and the newer *Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together* (NEST) partnership which has also grown to 20 schools.

CRIS has a regional remit and within this reporting period has developed a closer relationship and partnership working with the Department of Education (DENI) and Education Authority (EA).

Additionally supporting student teacher training is a regular feature of the programme year with requests by Stranmillis University College. This year CRIS led several sessions in the *Leadership for Diversity and Mutual Understanding* module; the undergraduate teacher training programme, *Professional Learning in a Changing Society* (PLICS) that operates in both Stranmillis and St Mary's College; and the PGCE course, as well as with international students.

In the past year, CRIS (represented by Dr Emily Stanton) was asked to join the Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report Advisory Committee. This involved reviewing draft chapters of the report and meeting with the team to provide feedback to lead author Professor Ann Marie Gray of Ulster University.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Return to Traditional Delivery:

The period July 2022 to March 2023 is notable as being the first year since 2019 that pupil programming resumed to traditional forms of delivery. It is difficult to describe the toll that the two years of adaptation had taken - though it had been necessary to ensure that programme integrity was retained, including the development of a suite of digital education resources and moving to online delivery for contact work with schools. It is a testimony to our staff that they were able to rise to the challenge and innovate during this most difficult time. However, given the return to contact and traditional delivery the demand for programmes spiked as schools were keen to rebuild the momentum lost as a result of the pandemic.

Despite being two programme staff down for the majority of the year, due to challenges in recruitment, the outputs and outcomes were substantial over this period. CRIS management felt it was essential to find alternative ways to meet the interest from the schools and utilise the funds for the workplan ambitions set after substantial planning periods with schools, and being successful in accessing the programme funds package necessary for delivery across a range of funders. This accomplishment was achieved due to efforts of the Buddy Up Coordinator; a pivot towards increased use of Associates, (that also involving investing in a further recruitment process and training programme to widen our Associate team); and the CRIS management stepping in to support programme delivery across a range of areas. The efforts to rescue the operational workplan naturally had impacts on the level of organisational development work that was feasible during this time. However, it is important to highlight that significant progress was made across a range of strategic initiatives that will be detailed later in this report.

Everyday Peacebuilding (North Belfast):

The Everyday Peacebuilding programme was formally launched during this reporting year and was supported through project funding from the Irish Government's Reconciliation Fund and a successful outcome to the Strategic Partner scheme (Feb 2022).

Based in North Belfast across the Crumlin Road interface, the initiative evolved over twenty-four years of support that CRIS has provided to Edenderry and Holy Cross Nursery Schools involving parental engagement, training for staff, funding support, partnership coordination, and advocacy. For many years the ambition has been to support the local feeder Primary Schools (who at this stage had varying levels of partnership work) to come on board and work with CRIS and the Nurseries as a new network. For many years parents exiting the Nursery School's Buddy Up programme had strong desires to see the buddy system and CRIS work span into the Primary schools their children would be attending and to create pathways to continue parental engagement across the interfaces. CRIS was delighted to formalise this new network in this reporting period. This initiative would also begin the foundational steps to develop a multisector collaboration and start operations at all stages of the GRACE model across the eight schools including the two Nurseries, together with Holy Cross Boys' P.S. and Glenwood P.S.; Holy Cross Girls' P.S. and Wheathfield P.S., and Mercy P.S. and Edenbrooke P.S.

CRIS received funds via its strategic partnership with the Irish Government to hire a full-time staff member to take up the mantle of the *Everyday Peacebuilding* project. Initially the post was challenging to fill. Upon the third unsuccessful recruitment exercise CRIS made alternative plans and recruited a team of experienced Associates to support the launch of the programme and new workplan. Some key features of this involved all Primary School partnerships receiving the *Celebrating Diversity* programme at P3 and *Knowing Me Knowing You* at P7, spanning 10 – 15 hours of direct engagement respectively, and with interschool pupil buddying embedded. Additionally in support of these four separate school twinings, parental engagement events were hosted such as a *Parents Reunion* event to celebrate the historic work between families with the Nursery Schools and CRIS. This uplifting event took place in October 2022 and was well attended with parents/carers and friends of the work returning to celebrate the restart, and share their memories spanning more than twenty years. This was heartening for CRIS staff and the Nurseries who viewed this event as a litmus test to garner interest in rebuilding this peacebuilding initiative in a new context and with a wider remit. The clear support and motivation to be involved was also evident with attendance at the *Everyday Peacebuilding Family Fun Day* (October 2022) – another new initiative that CRIS was trialling with over 180 attending. CRIS hopes to retain these signature events in the calendar of activities going forward. In November 2022 the then Taoiseach Micheál Martin visited the project and met with a delegation of principals, teachers and parents from across the eight North Belfast schools. See the link for an article written by CRIS outlining the series of events that launched this programme after 3 years of stagnation due to the pandemic.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

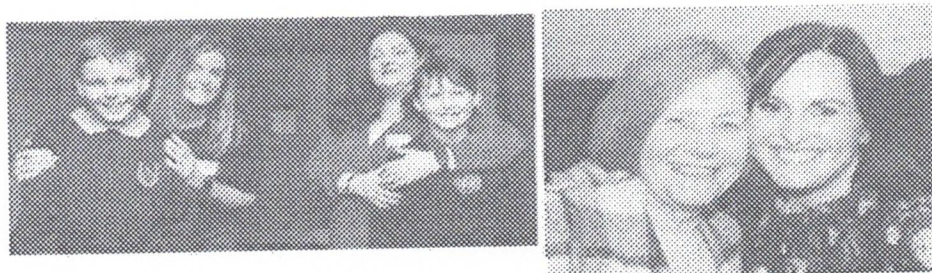
Everyday Peacebuilding: The greatest hope exists in places many would least expect to find it!
Community Relations Council (community-relations.org.uk)



Finally in February 2022 CRIS was successful in recruiting a new staff member taking up the post as Good Relations Practitioner for Everyday Peacebuilding.

With the new post filled a new engagement with Nursery School parents began with sessions running in February and March 2023. As part of this re-engagement activity and to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of both Buddy Up! and the Good Friday Agreement, a showcase event was held at Movie House Cinema at York Gate Belfast, compered by local artist Nuala McKeever and with input from parents, teachers and children involved in Buddy Up! over years. CRIS accessed additional funds from the Executive Office's Urban Villages Initiative to fund the creation of a new film that was designed inhouse. It featured footage across the two decades demonstrating the substantial peacebuilding impacts. It also acted as an advocacy tool to those attending the event with influence across Government Departments. The 'Be Inspired' film put forth a call to action for the implementation of the interschool buddy system into all Nursery and Primary School Shared Education partnerships as per commitment laid out in the *Together Building a United Community* (TBUC) strategy. To support this, CRIS also launched a digital education resource to support schools to achieve this objective. The *Be Inspired* film and *Interschool Buddy System Resource* are located on the resources tab of the CRIS website and are free to access.

The event was covered by Local TV station Northern Visions TV (NVTv) who filmed the event and made a special 30-minutes news feature on their *In Focus* broadcast, during the anniversary of the referendum result, on 22nd May 2023. See link: <https://vimeo.com/827205173>



COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Buddy Up! and the Urban Village (TEO) Initiative:

CRIS has been working in partnership with The Executive Office (TEO) Urban Villages Initiative since early 2018 to advance the roll out of the Buddy system as identified in government peace strategy, 'Together Building a United Community' (TBUC).

From July 2022 the Buddy Up! programme was able to plan for a return to in-person delivery. The newly hired Buddy Up! Coordinator (June 2022) met the ambitious workplan demands and delivered fourteen pupil programmes (culminating in nearly 200 hours contact time across all programmes). The Buddy Up Coordinator was augmented by a team of Associates and other programme staff.

Feedback From Pupils:

A survey was conducted with 424 Key Stage 1 (P3) and Key Stage 2 (P7) students linked to Buddy Up! school delivery between September 2022 - March 2023 and headline results reflected that of:

Key Stage 1 Pupils:

- 70% 'felt like my Buddy is my friend'
- 70% agreed 'I want to spend more time with my Buddy'
- 77% reported 'I feel like my buddy cares about me and I care about my Buddy'

Key Stage 2 Pupils:

- 80% agreed they 'enjoyed the Buddy Up! programmes and these helped me work as part of a team'
- 75% had a chance to 'think and talk about different groups of people, their cultures, religions and symbols'
- 55% reported they 'feel more comfortable meeting children from the other school'

Feedback from Teachers:

When teachers were asked how participating in Buddy Up! had helped strengthen approaches to Good Relations within their schools, they reflected:

- 'Buddy Up programme offers vital exposure for our children to other communities to break down sectarianism and bias before it is a chance to root. Buddy Up! has given our children an experience they will always remember'.
- 'A fantastic and worthwhile programme. This was the most enjoyable programme I've been part of'.
- 'A fun way to learn about the identities in our community and how we are similar and different'.
- 'A great programme that enables young people from different backgrounds to meet, explore and develop their social skills by understanding everyone's different'.
- 'An enjoyable experience that helps facilitate inter school cooperation'.
- 'A great experience, from teacher workshop, classroom workshops to share workshops with our Buddy Up! School'.
- 'A fun (and low stress for teachers) way of building relationships with other schools'.
- 'Buddy Up programme allows children from all communities to learn together and share their likes and dislikes. Connecting kids from all over'.

GRACE Kitemark:

As part of 2022-23 Urban Villages funding package, CRIS committed to piloting a new initiative to develop a GRACE Kite Mark award for schools who would demonstrate best practice in whole school community approaches to peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Ligoniel P.S. and St Vincent de Paul P.S. were invited to pilot this initiative with CRIS. The school partnership worked through a series of initiatives submitting corresponding evidence linked to pupil programmes, teacher training, and wider community engagement under the leadership of its Shared Education coordinators.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The partnership had a chance to share their experiences of working together in an engagement hosted by CRIS with Lord Caine (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Northern Ireland Office) in February 2023.

With the partnership poised to be awarded the inaugural GRACE bronze level award, it is our hope that this pilot is scaled widely and schools are supported to become centres of excellence in Good Relations and collaborative education.

Growing Good Relations and Collaborative Education (GRACE):

Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together (NEST) Partnership Development

The NEST (Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together) collaborative network sits under the Growing GRACE programme area which seeks to support place-based school collaboration with cross phase and cross sector networks. With Good Relations as its centre, the network identifies collective issues and shared priorities to address together.

All NEST activities are led by the *Senior Practitioner for Growing GRACE* and time is also supported from the *Director of Programmes* and a *Senior Associate* who supports school and partnership meetings and trainings. A key milestone in this year was the communication and design process CRIS facilitated to create a name and logo for the partnership. Programme activities include work with senior leadership across the sectors; coordination of Shared Learning Networks (SLN), and pupil programmes that directly link to the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PD&MU) curriculum and that have the interschool buddying model embedded. Furthermore, each school has access to support on a targeted basis aimed at strengthening and embedding Good Relations within their school, Shared Education Partnership, and their communities. This allows each school to benefit from single school and system level support from CRIS. Some other key activities in this reporting period include:

- Individual NEST member support and provision with eleven one-to-one 'listening' exercises involving school Principals and senior leadership to identify salient community needs, common concerns, and nurture relationships with CRIS as a trust conduit between schools.
- Six scoping exercises carried out with individual local schools who were not yet engaged in the network. Three new schools joined the partnership because of these processes - Cammonee Primary, Ashgrove Nursery and St MacNissi's Primary.
- Two Shared Learning Networks were held on the themes of Early Years/ Foundation stage education in October and again in March.
- In NEST pupil-based activities, 206 children were involved in seven Good Relations programmes in both Maintained and Controlled schools with P3 and P7 children exploring themes of identity, community, culture, diversity, empathy, conflict, flags, symbols and emblems.
- NEST Board of Governors evening with the aim to raise awareness and cascade partnership working in the community at a leadership level across schools.
- Guidance and support provided to schools seeking to start new Shared Education partnerships. For example, with St Mary's on the Hill Primary and Cammonee Primary.
- Providing bespoke advice and training to staff in Hillcroft Special School on handling controversial issues.
- Facilitation of training to a group of 100 teaching and support staff at Integrated College Glengormley.
- Individual support to Ballyhenry Primary School as it seeks to transition to integrated status.
- Support and attendance at a variety of other school and community events including the facilitation of Good Relations workshops over six days to approx. 1600 young people as part of the Policing and Community Safety (PCSP) 'Be Safe' initiative.

Growing GRACE - Antrim and Randalstown Schools Moving Forward Together (MFT) Partnership:

While CRIS's role has intentionally changed in recent years moving away from direct Coordination as MFT becomes an increasingly independent multi sector collaboration, it remains clear that it is viewed as an important founding partner in retaining the reconciliation aims by which MFT was founded in 2014.

MFT is widely viewed as an advanced example of best practice and has been keenly observed by the Education Authority for several years. As such MFT has been able to access significant resources and substitute cover for teachers through Shared Education to support further developments in its innovations as a test case

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

from which to derive learnings, including that of the role that local Councils can play in actively supporting school partnerships. This is an area of growing interest as the need heightens both in economic and social terms for schools to collaborate with each other across the separated/ segregated education system in Northern Ireland. It is another area in which CRIS has demonstrated early pioneering practice and has gained notable recognition for its role in the evolution of MFT.

This year, CRIS has continued to have several roles in the MFT partnership by supporting capacity building, providing mentoring to position holders (MFT Chair and Coordinator), and being an active community partner and funding conduit. This year support included operationalising of the 'Togetherness' strand of the new strategy and attending partnership and steering group meetings. During this period CRIS has supported the planning process to re-establish MFT's Shared Learning Networks (SLN's) after they halted due to Covid-19. Shared Learning Networks focussed on Literacy, Numeracy, Early Years and Special Educational Needs. CRIS also facilitated the first 'Shared Education' SLN in April 22 and was hosted in the Antrim Board Centre, attended by 16 Shared Education Coordinators.

CRIS also supported the planning and practicalities for the MFT Board of Governors evening - an opportunity to build greater awareness and create more feed in from local community members across the 20 partner schools.

Research Partnership with Coventry University's, Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations:

The ongoing investment CRIS has made with the help of the CRC's *Community Relations and Cultural Diversity* funding and the Executive Offices (TEO) *Urban Village Initiative* has seen the research partnership with Coventry University (Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations) move closer to the final stages. The research investigates how the GRACE model of practice supports trust-building across stakeholders.

The period July 22 - March 23 was a particularly important phase which included both the coding and analysis of the qualitative components of the research. This allowed both CRIS (represented by Dr Emily Stanton) and Coventry (Dr Charis Rice) to participate in interpretation and identification of key themes. Following this the team was able to provide a presentation of initial findings at the *European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA)* conference held in Aarhus, Denmark. This allowed the team to field questions which further enhanced the development of the Trust Indicators Framework. The final stage of research development involved working to consolidate all aspects of the Indicators Framework into 10 clear areas linked to existing literature and the inductive research. A draft research report was completed. This allowed CRIS to begin to plan for the next stages of dissemination and implementation into our systems for monitoring, evaluation and learning.

Conclusion:

Given the truncated reporting period (due to the shift to a March year end reporting time frame) CRIS can be especially encouraged by the breadth and depth of what has been achieved. Across all areas of programme (particularly in the context of a continuing political vacuum and austere financial climate), the CRIS programme team has been exceptionally productive, overachieving in participation targets as the Key Performance Indicators have demonstrated. Programme staff use their talents to serve the charity above and beyond what is required, and school stakeholders readily express their gratitude for CRIS's support and how the charity's mission makes a demonstrable impact on children and adults alike.

The research on trust and reconciliation that is being undertaken is in many respects ground-breaking for policy making for Good Relations and Education. CRIS can feel assured that what is learned can significantly impact our own practice, and hopefully beyond.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK TO SUPPORT CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Developmental work identified in the strategic plan to aid governance and sustainability has continued to be a central theme and updates are provided below. During this time CRIS continued to access consultancy support from Clayton Rowe (Saben Group, Canada) who has been working with the CEO and Director of Programmes on a regular basis. Several key elements were progressed during this period including submitting an application to the National Lottery's *Dormant Accounts NI* funding scheme to support a range of activities to strengthen organisational capacity and sustainability.

Resource Development Strategy:

Three further strategy documents were progressed to support wider thinking and preparation for positive change including:

- **Draft Theory of Change/ Logic Model:** To measure impact against mission.
- **Feasibility Study for Service Delivery:** To conduct a review of CRIS fee structure and assess income generation targets for a new strategy cycle 2024 - 2027.
- **Long Term Vision/ Community Assessment for N. Belfast Locality Development:** This will involve development of a brief to attract new partners into collaborative arrangements across statutory, community/ voluntary and business sectors.
- **Programme Costing Model:** Further progress to refine financial analysis across three programme areas to determine the cost per participant. Information will support a donor appeal pilot in the forthcoming year.

Staff Capacity and Succession Planning:

This period was fraught with some challenges regarding recruitment, like many organisations in the sector CRIS found it increasingly difficult to attract talent – a increasingly familiar feature of the sector post pandemic. CRIS management focused significant energies to find alternative ways to address immediate issues and put strategies in place to ameliorate capacity concerns in the medium to longer term. Whilst a fourth recruitment exercise was actioned to find a suitably skilled candidate for the new *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme CRIS led the following:

- Gathered a new team of highly skilled Senior Associates to lead the bulk of the workplan. In addition, the CEO and Director of Programmes provided project management and stepped into delivery where necessary.
- Ran a recruitment exercise to widen the team of Associates. This was a successful venture, attracting six new Associates with plans in place to ensure the wider team are effectively inducted, supported and motivated.
- Initiated plans to develop a robust professional development strategy across the team and to strengthen CRIS ethos as a learning organisation.
- Started conversations for a timely and responsible succession plan for long-term sustainability.
- All staff gained updated certificates in safeguarding children and young People and plan in place to review safeguarding policy.
- Staff participated in inhouse training to support the return to traditional office use and norms including sessions on organisational ethos and culture, data protection and health and safety.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Reputation, Profile and Communication:

Activity in this area has been developing at pace in recent years. Most notably key activities in this period include:

- CRIS CEO honoured with OBE for services to peace education and community reconciliation.
- CRIS represented by CEO at Late Queen's funeral service in London Sep 2022.
- Political engagements with the Irish Government's former Taoiseach Micheál Martin and Lord Caine of the Northern Ireland Office (NIO)
- Attendance at Hume Foundation event.
- CRIS profiled as exemplar project on Community Relations Council E-news.
- Communication strategy developed for Urban Villages initiative and Buddy Up project.
- Job description developed, and funding applied for new *Fundraising and Communication Manager*
- Research report completed exploring trust in CRIS practice.
- Launch event of Buddy System educational e-media resource
- New film, 'Be Inspired – celebrating 25 years of peace and friendship', developed highlighting impact of Buddy Up project aligned to anniversary of Good Friday Agreement
- Second edition of Ripples of Peace impact case study initiated.

CRIS is well primed to focus energies on its change management and organisational development ambitions to strengthen and grow the organisation in the years to follow and is keen to invest more time in this area over the course of the final year of 2021-2024 strategy. The key governance priorities going forward are:

- Registering CRIS as a Limited Company and follow-on administrative tasks.
- Conduct a HR policy review and create new staff handbook.
- Review the salary structure and implement a resource diversification strategy.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Financial Review

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Summary of Funding Secured to Support Operations:

CRIS was fortunate in securing all necessary funds to support its workplan ambitions covering this period. Funding partners include:

- **The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages Initiative – 'Buddy Up'** project, supporting core and programme costs, for a fifth year (Apr 22 – Mar 23) with a grant totalling £136,709.
- **Project Funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Reconciliation (DFAT) Fund**, for the 'Ripples of Peace' project which began in Jul 2021 and was extended into this audit year to utilise underspend arising in programming costs.
- **Strategic Partner funding awarded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (DFAT) Reconciliation Fund** announced in Feb 22 providing a three-year contract for staff and running costs (Apr 22 – Mar 25). Please note that Year 1 Strategic Partner funds (£99,039) are not represented on the list of funders due to being included as a Debtor in last year's accounts for year ending June 2022.
- **The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) core funding scheme**, with a new three-year contract securing almost £80,000 per annum, supporting staff and running costs, up to March 2025. Please note that due to the payment cycle and CRIS's previous financial year (Jul 21 – Jun 22), 50% of this grant was included in last year's accounts.
- **The Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council's (ANBC)**, single supplier contract supporting £15,000 of programme costs in Antrim and Newtownabbey. (Apr 22 – Mar 23).
- **Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Scheme**, project funding (£3134 was awarded with 50% of grant received in last financial year), to support the restart of the parental engagement work in North Belfast through the *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme.

CRIS has a sound reputation for administering grants in their entirety in line with funding contracts, and for achieving and often exceeding the programme outcomes anticipated at the point of application. Feedback across funders suggests CRIS represents good value for money. CRIS is committed to keeping the governance costs associated with running the charity at a minimum ensuring the vast majority of funds goes directly towards peacebuilding activities with school communities across the seven localities we operate in.

In February 2020 CRIS was awarded the highest-level rating, 'robust' in an audit of our governance and finance arrangements, led by the Executive Office (TEO). This certificate spans three years until January 2023. CRIS is also audited each year by the Community Relations Council, and TEO and maintain good standards in governance and financial compliance.

The total income for July 2022 – March 2023 was £195,829 covering almost 100% of all CRIS core operating costs and funds for project related activity.

Moving forward for the year 2023 – 2024, CRIS will also achieve a similar outcome with almost all core and programme costs being secured before the end of this reporting period.

The total expenditure for July 2022 – March 2023 was £257,562. This figure exceeds that of the total income due to funds received from the *Reconciliation Fund – Strategic Partner scheme* (Irish Government) totalling £99,039. In addition, 50% of the core funding grant from the *Community Relations Council* is included in the previous year's accounts. The spend on these grants spans April 2022 – March 2023.

Fees for CRIS consultancy work totalled £17,556 over the nine-month period. These funds contribute to the CRIS reserves with a portion used for expenditure not covered by grants, such as the cost of painting the CRIS office, hospitality, flights, and bank charges.

The unrestricted funds balance for March 2023 is £81,903. This is 63% of the reserves target of £130,000 for operating costs for six months. CRIS projects that by the end of the next reporting year March 2024, reserves will reach 75% of the target.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Due to the alternative staffing arrangements for programme delivery, CRIS's expenditure for facilitation via use of its Associates totalled £34,244.

Substitute cover costs to release 72 teachers and principals to attend training and other events such as partnership meetings totalled £12,200.

Expenditure related to travel more than doubled in this period totalling £9,655. This is mainly due a return to in-person delivery for pupil programming.

CRIS achieved full spend on all grants that follow the standard financial year (Apr 22' – Mar 23').

Financial Management and Reserves Policy:

CRIS has a Financial Management Policy and Procedure Manual which is updated annually and meets the requirements of the Charities Act for Northern Ireland, the Charity Commissions guidelines 'Internal Financial Controls for Charities' and 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)'.

The Trustees have agreed a reserves policy minimum of 3 months to maximum 6 months operating costs. This is in addition to the pot of funds it needs to hold should payment of redundancies be necessary in the future. A revised target of £130,000 is set to the upper limit of six-month period and reflects the increased number of post, increases in rent, and heat and light. The redundancy pot necessary is £21,458 as of end March 2023.

CRIS is putting further plans in place, to achieve at least 5 months reserves by March 2024. At the moment CRIS have just over 4 months running costs and reserves to cover redundancies. Moving forward CRIS aim to substantially increase its unrestricted reserves and be less reliant on government grants. The Board aims to hold unrestricted reserves to enable the organisation to meet -

- Its redundancy liabilities and rental and other contracts
- Its match funding obligations set out in funding contracts where any percentage of staff salaries are not covered by another funder(s)
- and to maintain its activities in the event of: -
 - gaps in funding
 - late payment of grants and fees
 - Upgrades in IT systems and equipment as and when the need arises
 - Gaps in opportunities to income generate through training and consultancy work

The main concerns of the Board going forward are to ensure:

- That the public benefit enabled through CRIS activities is continued
- That core and programme funding can continue to be secured to retain staff and ensure stability and growth
- To develop a resource diversification strategy to help grow the level of reserves and meet our target

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Risk Management:

The board members recognise their duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance and mitigations.

Within the section of this report titled, '*Organisational Development Work to Support Change Management and Sustainability*' details have been shared relating to financial risk, strategies for resource diversification, and longer-term sustainability.

Within our current risk registry, we have prioritised organisational risks and the action steps we will take in which to mitigate them. We have prioritised these starting with greatest likelihood and impact.

1. Political uncertainty in Northern Ireland and overreliance on government grants
2. Lack of long-term fundraising plan
3. Impact of cost-of-living crisis
4. Loss of key staff and challenges in attracting new staff
5. Ineffective knowledge management systems
6. Uncertainty of long-term Covid-19 impact.

One of the improvement areas identified in the strategic plan is to overhaul our risk management systems. Over the forthcoming year CRIS will be guided through this utilising Board members expertise in the area. An enhanced risk management process will be piloted and investigate all CRIS operations and governance controls to ensure best practice.

In order to meet the challenges of change the CRIS Board met more frequently within their individual offices of Chair, Treasurer, and Vice Chair. The hands on and active support of all members continues to ensure that CRIS is well managed, upholds good practice in all areas of its governance responsibilities and with a commitment to continual improvement.

From a review of the strategic initiatives identified across the three-year plan and survey of the landscape in terms of organisational capacity going forward the CRIS Board and management are confident that all goals will be met by the end of the strategy timeframe, with confident strides towards greater organisational resilience and financial health.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Type of governing document:

Community Relations in Schools is a community organisation governed by its constitution adopted in April 1984 and last amended in October 2017 to ensure it was up to date using best practice guidelines as set out in suggested model documents on the Charity Commission's website.

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Trustee selection methods:

At the Annual General Meeting each year a Board is appointed to run CRIS for the next year. Each member of the Committee is elected for a period of three years. Retiring members are eligible for re-election. All nominees must indicate their willingness to stand and be proposed and seconded. A written agreement of the nominated persons in absentia must be presented.

Committee members may also be co-opted on the CRIS committee as potential new interested individuals are considered throughout the year. When considering the co-opting of trustees, the Board has regard to the requirement for any specialist skills needed.

We are fortunate to have an engaged and active Board with an array of skills. The Board strives to be as diverse and representative of educational stakeholders and society in general, as possible and has expertise spanning the community and voluntary, funding, corporate and statutory sectors. CRIS plans to increase the Board to a maximum of 10 members, with priority areas identified for recruitment in the disciplines of human resources, finance, and fundraising and areas for welcome statements identified to increase our diversity.

Trustee Induction and Training:

New trustees receive an induction pack which provides information and guidelines on their task, responsibilities, and the policies and ethos. The CEO and members of the Board meet with new trustees during the preliminary stages of their appointment to talk through the organisation in more detail, the history of its work, strategic positioning, and discuss other areas of interest.

New trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity guidelines, the charity commission guidance on public benefit, the content of the constitution, the committee and decision-making process, the strategic and operational plan, and the recent financial performance of the charity.

During the induction period they will meet the full staff team, other trustees and key partners. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. New trustees are invited to attend any mandatory meetings as set down by funders who support CRIS.

Organisational Structure:

The Board meets at least four times per year and sub-groups meet to address any additional finance, personnel and programmatic matters as required. The Board employs a CEO who manages the day-to-day operations of the charity.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors:

So far as each of the Board members at the date of approval of these financial statements are aware: (a) there is no relevant information of which the charity auditors are unaware; and (b) they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Trustees on Wednesday 29th November 2023 and signed on their behalf.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

N Richardson

(Chairperson)

Dated: 29 November 2023


29/11/2023

L. Patterson

(Treasurer)

Dated.....



COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustee Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Northern Ireland requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Community Relations in Schools (the 'charity') for the Period ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the Period then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts And Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

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

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

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

Other matters which we are required to address

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared accounts in accordance with "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) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Amanda Harbinson

Mrs Amanda Harbinson (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Corrigan CA Limited

29 November 2023

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

Corrigan CA Limited is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies		-	-	-	166	-	166
Charitable activities	3	17,556	178,273	195,829	20,200	334,492	354,692
Total income		17,556	178,273	195,829	20,366	334,492	354,858
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	4	2,161	254,954	257,115	26,713	270,206	296,919
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		15,395	(76,681)	(61,286)	(6,347)	64,286	57,939
Gross transfers between funds		23,106	(23,106)	-	1,715	(1,715)	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the Period/		38,501	(99,787)	(61,286)	(4,632)	62,571	57,939
Net movement in funds		38,501	(99,787)	(61,286)	(4,632)	62,571	57,939
Fund balances at 1 July 2022		43,402	99,787	143,189	48,034	37,216	85,250
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		81,903	-	81,903	43,402	99,787	143,189

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

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

1 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Accounting policies

Charity information

Community Relations In Schools is an unincorporated charity.

2.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 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 2016).

The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

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

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value.

The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

2.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

2.4 Incoming resources

Income From Charitable Activities

Income from charitable activities is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Income from government or other grants, whether 'capital' or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has the entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Donations & Legacies

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

2.5 Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure On Charitable Activities

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

The charity is below the charity audit threshold and therefore is exempt from reporting expenditure on an activity basis. The charity has opted to report by the nature rather than on an activity basis.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

2.6 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Intangible assets acquired on business combinations are recognised separately from goodwill at the acquisition date where it is probable that the expected future economic benefits that are attributable to the asset will flow to the entity and the fair value of the asset can be measured reliably; the intangible asset arises from contractual or other legal rights; and the intangible asset is separable from the entity.

Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

Software	20% straight line
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2.7 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures, fittings & equipment	20% straight line
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The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

2.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

2.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

2.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

3 Charitable activities

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Donations	-	186
Service Delivery	17,556	20,200
Grants	178,273	334,492
	<u>195,829</u>	<u>354,858</u>

	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Analysis by fund			
Unrestricted funds	-	17,556	17,556
Restricted funds	178,273	-	178,273
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>17,556</u>	<u>195,829</u>

	Total 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Unrestricted funds	-	20,366	20,366
Restricted funds	334,492	-	334,492
	<u>334,492</u>	<u>20,366</u>	<u>354,858</u>

	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Included in Grants Are:		
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Core Funding	39,997	84,462
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Funding	1,567	4,807
Department of Foreign Affairs: Reconciliation Funds - Strategic Partner Grant	-	83,859
Department of Foreign Affairs: Reconciliation Funds - Ripples of Peace Project		50,110
The Executive Office, Urban Villages Initiative	136,709	71,551
The Executive Office, Good Relations Fund		44,510
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>339,299</u>

Reconciliation Fund/Strategic Partner grant Year 1 (£83,859) was included in the previous accounts covering Jul 21-Jun 22.
Community Relations Council Core Funding grant reflects 50% of total annual award (£79,994) due to £39,997 received in previous year, Jul 21-Jun 22.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

4 Charitable activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs	152,862	178,700
Staff Training	105	1,370
Depreciation and impairment	1,776	1,781
Loss on Disposal of Fixed Assets	(517)	519
Resources	5,979	12,348
Travel	9,655	4,110
Subscriptions	956	1,175
Hospitality	6,100	5,274
Facilitation	34,244	42,207
Light & Heat	967	700
Telephone	338	426
Sundry	2,232	1,909
Advertising	935	550
Subcover	12,200	15,470
Accountancy	2,700	4,707
Professional Fees	7,394	990
Bank Charges	174	177
Rent	10,314	12,474
Insurance	2,046	2,610
Post, printing & Stationery	1,169	3,154
Computer Running expenses	720	-
Venues	2,895	2,768
Residentials	-	3,500
Repairs	1,871	-
	<u>257,115</u>	<u>296,919</u>

5 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the Period.
No trustee expenses have been incurred.

6 Auditor's remuneration

The analysis of auditor's remuneration is as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Auditor's Remuneration	2,646	2,520
	<u>2,646</u>	<u>2,520</u>
Total audit fees	<u>2,646</u>	<u>2,520</u>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

7 Employees

There were 8 employees during the Period.

Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	149,580	174,880
Other pension costs	3,281	3,820
	<u>152,861</u>	<u>178,700</u>

No employees received employee benefits of more than £60,000.

8 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

9 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £
Cost	
At 1 July 2022	18,506
Additions	1,612
Disposals	240
	<u>18,358</u>
At 31 March 2023	
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 July 2022	11,757
Depreciation charged in the Period	1,776
Eliminated in respect of disposals	(277)
	<u>13,256</u>
At 31 March 2023	
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	<u>5,102</u>
	<u>4,748</u>
At 30 June 2022	

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

10 Intangible fixed assets

	Software £
Cost	
At 1 July 2022 and 31 March 2023	35,464
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 July 2022 and 31 March 2023	35,458
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2023	6
At 30 June 2022	6

11 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	32,358	140,319

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	2,093	100
Other creditors	612	2,597
Accruals and deferred income	2,943	5,668
	5,648	8,365

13 Movement in Funds

Fund	At 01/07/22 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	At 31/03/23 £
Restricted	99,787	178,273	254,954	(23,106)	-
Unrestricted	43,402	17,556	2,608	23,106	81,456
	143,189	195,829	257,562	-	81,456

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

14 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the Period (2022 - none).