

Annual Report and Accounts

2025-2026

Accessible learning for safer, more connected and more independent lives

The Difference We Make

We reach an estimated **41,200 children and young people** through our resources, at home, in schools, and in support groups. Behind that number is what matters most: the real change in the lives of people with Down's syndrome and learning disabilities, and the families who support them.

Creating Real-Life Change



Meet Angelica - name changed for anonymity

Angelica is 21 and lives in supported accommodation, away from her family. As an adult she has every right to drink, but with that new independence things had started to slip. Most days she was buying spirits, taking them back to her room and **drinking alone, often most of a bottle.** Staff were worried and couldn't find a way to reach her.

Her mum stepped in and found our Learning for Life resources on harmful substances. Working through them one to one, Angelica began to understand the real risks, and the difference between having a drink and drinking to harm herself.

Today, Angelica is in a **much safer place**. She no longer drinks alone in her room. She understands the risks, makes her own informed choices, and is protecting her future health.



Meet Ellie

Ellie is 16 and has Down's syndrome. She had no real sense of privacy: she would walk in the door and strip off, curtains open, **exposed to anyone passing by.** Her mum was understandably worried.

Through her local delivery partner, Down's Syndrome Cheshire, Ellie worked through our Growing Up and Keeping Safe series, learning about privacy, private activities and body parts. Now she takes herself off to the bathroom to get changed.

It sounds small. It isn't. Embedding this now means **Ellie is safer for life**, more able to recognise when something, or someone, isn't appropriate.

Young people cannot make informed choices about a world they have not been taught to understand.

Children and young people with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities too often miss out on accessible education about relationships, safety, health, communication and everyday life. The consequences can be serious: **increased risk of abuse and isolation, fewer opportunities and less control over their own lives.**

These outcomes are not inevitable. With the right teaching, young pec can understand more, recognise risk, communicate their choices and take greater control of their future.

Alexandra was repeatedly asked by a college peer to send naked photographs. She said no because she understood her rights, her worth and how to stay safe online. She had learned through Learn and Thrive's Online Safety resources. She now appears in the series herself, helping other young people learn the same skills.

Vision

Every young person with Down's syndrome or other learning disabilities has the power to dream big, make their own choices, and shape their own future.

Mission

We enable the families, schools, and professionals who support children and young people with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities to access high-quality, accessible tools and resources, so that everyone can live a more independent, connect, and safer life.

What we do

Learn and Thrive aims to foster a world where individuals with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities can flourish. Here are our two key projects that contribute to this mission.

Teach Me Too

This COVID-inspired initiative, backed by speech and language therapists along with specialist teachers, brings specialist teaching and therapy into the home or classroom. It focuses on instilling confidence in delivering specialised teaching support in the early years.

Learning for Life

Inspired by the unique challenges encountered by our community, Learning for Life is anchored in the Relationship and Sex Education curriculum. It equips individuals with the essential teaching and practical skills needed to grow up safer, happier, and actively engaged in their communities.

Actively supporting over 41,200 children and young people

Our Team

We are a small but agile team, driven by a passion for our community and making things better.


Johanna, CEO


Laura


Hannah


Craig

Trustee Board


Nikki, Chair


Kate, Treasurer


Andrea


Parul


Clair


Tracey


Maja

Our Team works day-to-day with regular support from our trustees - who are all volunteers. We are also fortunate that other volunteers contribute through pro-bono work to support specific elements of our charity's work, including marketing, sales, and fundraising. We are proud that many of our volunteers have a learning disability themselves.



Chair Report

This has been a landmark year for Learn and Thrive. Not because everything was easy, but because when it mattered, this organisation did what good organisations do. It adapted, it delivered, and it kept its eyes firmly on the people it exists to serve.

The wider context matters here. The charity sector is under significant pressure. Individual giving is falling, grant funding is more competitive than ever, and smaller organisations are disproportionately affected. Against that backdrop, the progress Learn and Thrive has made this year is not accidental. It is the result of deliberate, strategic leadership and a board and team willing to make difficult decisions early.

We saw the landscape shifting and we acted. The strategic decisions we made this year, around income diversification, programme structure, and long-term sustainability, were not comfortable ones. They were the right ones. The results reflect that.

At board level, our focus has been on building an organisation that is as resilient as it is ambitious. That means holding ourselves to clear measures of impact, making difficult calls when needed, and ensuring that our financial model never puts free access for families at risk. This year we made meaningful progress on all three.

Jo and the team have shown exceptional leadership through a period of significant change. What I have seen is an organisation that knows its values and refuses to compromise them. That is not something you can manufacture. It has to be earned.

The need for what we do is not going away. Neither are we.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to Learn and Thrive over the past year. Your support, commitment, and belief in our mission make everything we do possible. Together, we will continue to create opportunities for young people to learn, grow, and truly thrive.

Nikki Walker

Chair of Trustees



CEO Summary

This year, Learn and Thrive reached 41,200 children and young people. For every family, every community group, every charity running sessions with our resources, that access was completely free. That is what we are here for.

The story I'm most proud of is Alexandra's. She has Down's syndrome and autism. A boy from college asked her to send naked photos. Ten times. She said no, because she knew her rights and her worth. She had worked through our Online Safety resources. Now she stars in that very series, teaching other young people like her.

This year our team showed what values-led leadership actually looks like under pressure. We reviewed Teach Me Too, co-produced 80% of our projects, created and launched a new subscription model for education settings so families never pay, grew our delivery partnerships across the UK, and delivered our strongest financial year to date, a surplus of £17,729 on income of £201,045. None of that was inevitable. It happened because every person connected to this organisation kept their eyes on the community and refused to compromise.

We are mid-way through building something that has never existed before in this country. The work ahead includes consent, bereavement, sexual feelings, and online safety. Our community has waited long enough.

To our funders, partners, trustees, and volunteers: you made this year possible. To our community: we're still here, and we're not stopping.

Jo Aiyathurai

Chief Executive Officer






What We Delivered

This year we set out to grow our reach, deepen co-production, and put our funding model on a more sustainable footing. We did all three. Across every series we created and released this year, members of our community helped shape the content, from consultation when planning and writing, through to starring in the films themselves.

2763

active users in Teach Me Too

32% compared to 2024/5

4496

active users in Learning for Life

28% compared to 2024/5



Action	Result
Including members of our community in production of content	Partnered with Down's Syndrome Scotland, Down Right Excellent and Down Syndrome Cheshire. **100% of series released this year feature our community in a presenter or co-presenter role.**
Continue growing the Learning for Life project and user base	Three new series developed and released. 62% of our **total users are now registered in Learning for Life.**
Development of our partnership & subscription model	**Delivery partnerships** with non-profits and charities, providing our resources free of charge. **Education subscriptions** launched for settings, aligned with upcoming curriculum changes.



Existing content — New content

35h 56m | 7h 37m

+13%

Year in Review

Teach Me Too now has **2,763 users,** and is averaging 56 new users monthly. As we move forward with Learning for Life project as funding priority, we're undertaking a review of Teach Me Too and it's place in the education space. Created as a result of the pandemic, this project requires reconsideration so that we can make meaningful progress in a post-pandemic world. We are working hard to involve our current users and partners in this process, to get a range of input in this review.

Teach Me Too

We're reaching children across settings, with **65%** of our beneficiaries in mainstream settings, and **28%** in specialist, as well as those pre-school and in home school.

Since Teach Me Too was created in 2021, how it's accessed and where it is hosted have changed. When considering all historic usership, we are pleased to say that **5,491** members have accessed the project since it's inception.

> Being able to share this resource with the schools I suppport saved both me and them many hours of work. It's brilliant.
>
> **Vik Ralfs, Advisory Teacher**



*calculated by the average number of children supported by each user, 5.1, including historic members from our website teachmetoo.org.uk, now integrated into learnandthrive.org.uk.

Year in Review

As we come to the end of Stage One of our curriculum, we are excited to delve into the secondary RSE curriculum. Learning for Life continues to flourish and grow with the support and input from our community to enhance our offer. In the upcoming year, we are planning the creation of several new series, covering consent & decisions, bereavement, and sexual feelings. This project is praised by educators and parents alike, and is well accessed and used. **84 new members join this project monthly**, bringing our total membership to 4512.

Co-production of content remains a key strategic goal, **involving members of our community** in the filming of our new series. We're so proud that all our series released this year have involved co-production:

- Respectful Relationships
- How To... Healthy Eating
- Online Safety

> "The resources are clear, accessible, and flexible enough to meet the needs of students with a wide range of chronological and developmental ages."
>
> **Reece Morgan, Assistant Headteacher at Ormiston Queensmill Academy**

Across these series, community events, and youth panels, we have involved 30 young people with a range of learning disabilities. And many of these young people have been a part of several series and events!



*calculated by the average number of young people supported by each user, 6.1.

How We Create Change

The Need | Inequalities & disadvantages faced by our community throughout life

People with learning disabilities face significantly poorer outcomes in life—including early death, isolation, abuse, and a loss of autonomy—while the families and professionals around them are too often left without the guidance and tools needed to offer meaningful support.

Support groups and education settings require specialised, accessible content they can use with their students.

These failures are not inevitable; they reflect a system that continues to overlook their rights, voices, and potential.

The Work | Design and develop expert video lessons and learning resources

Teach Me Too — Early years skills, with speech and language focus

Learning for Life — Practical life skills ranging from social skills to personal safety

Other support services - advice and assistance

We support

Delivery Partners - Charities, youth groups, schools, and families

Children and young people with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities

The Impact

Short Term

Individuals with Down's syndrome / learning disabilities can access content made for and representative of themselves
Access to trusted, quality content unlike anything else
Education settings and support groups save time in planning sessions
Parents have access at home to help with consistent teaching

Medium Term

Individuals with learning disabilities learn more about the world around them.

- They can spot unsafe places and people.
- They know when and who to ask for help.
- They know which decisions are theirs to make.

Long Term

Individuals with learning disabilities have the skills to live more independent, connected, and safer lives.

- They can choose healthy friendships.
- They can choose to have romantic relationships.
- They can choose where they live, where they work, and what gives their life meaning.

We have supported 55,293 children and young people with our content over the last 5 years.
This content includes over 190 videos and 390 downloadable resources, made by experts and staff with lived and learned experience with the Down's syndrome and learning disabled community.*

Strategic 5 Year Plan

1. **Strengthen Partnerships:** Become a leading and trusted partner for charities, community groups and schools delivering RSE and life skills to children and young people (CYP) with SEND. To have delivery partnerships in all 8 regions** of the UK. By 2030, we will have 50 partners across the UK delivering our project.
2. **Complete Learning for Life:** Deliver a full set of skills based resources covering relationships and sex education, enabling young people to live more independent, connect, and safer lives.
3. **Build our community voice:** All projects are developed with co-production with our community

Parents and educators receive a comprehensive and representative set of resources available to support in a wide range of scenarios, informed by lived and learned experience.
Children and young people overcome challenges, build meaningful relationships, develop independence and confidence to live a full, rewarding life.
People with Down's syndrome and learning disabilities live safe and connected lives where their voices shape their future.

*Data corrected as of 2025 Annual Report. **Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland, North West England, North East England, South East England (including London), South West England, the Midlands.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding sits at the heart of everything we do, in two ways. It shapes how we run the charity, and it shapes what we teach. The community we serve is at disproportionate risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation, so keeping people safe is not a policy we keep in a drawer. It is the work itself.



Safeguarding through teaching

For the people we support, safeguarding is a skill that has to be taught, not assumed. Our Learning for Life resources help children and young people recognise unsafe situations, understand public and private, and know who to ask for help and when. We teach the concepts that keep people safe long before they need them.

Governance and oversight

We have a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and a safeguarding lead on our board of trustees, so oversight runs from the front line right up to governance. Our safeguarding policies are reviewed at least annually and aligned with current statutory guidance.

Safer recruitment

We carry out background checks, including current DBS checks, on everyone who works with us. Safer recruitment is built into how we bring people in, whether staff, volunteers or trustees.



Training

All staff, volunteers and trustees complete mandatory safeguarding training and keep it current, so everyone connected to Learn and Thrive can recognise a concern and knows exactly what to do with it.

Reporting and wider impact

We have clear, accessible reporting systems, and this year no safeguarding concerns were raised through them. Given that our contact with children and young people is digital and resource-based rather than face-to-face, that reflects a model built to keep risk low by design.

But the part we are proudest of reaches further than our own organisation. **By working alongside grassroots groups, we have helped strengthen their safeguarding too.** One of our delivery partners reviewed and improved their own safeguarding practice through working with us, including introducing a dedicated system to monitor and record concerns. When we raise the bar for ourselves, we help raise it across the sector.

Who We Reach

Our resources are free, with no eligibility criteria, so they reach the people who need them most. Families get trusted, specialist content to use at home, at their own pace, with no cost and no waiting. Delivery partners, charities, youth groups and local Down's syndrome organisations, get ready-made resources they can put straight to work.

5.7
learners supported by each user, on average

→

41,200
children and young people

Around three quarters of registrations come from education settings, support groups and professionals, each supporting multiple learners. That is how a growing membership reaches an estimated **41,200 children and young people.**

> P has developed the knowledge and confidence to navigate public spaces safely and know who to approach if he needed help. Being able to travel independently to visit a loved one opened up new opportunities, increased his sense of autonomy, and strengthened his confidence.
>
> **Esther Whittaker, Down's Syndrome Manchester**

We create resources **supporting the challenges our community face**:

- Understanding public and private
- Appropriate touch
- Healthy lifestyles
- Respectful & fulfilling friendships
- Emotional regulation
- Puberty and growing up
- Mental wellbeing
- Online safety

> I firmly believe the progress she is currently making is all thanks to the helpful resources we've found in the Learn and Thrive charity.
>
> **Emma, Parent (Teach Me Too)**

Our Reach

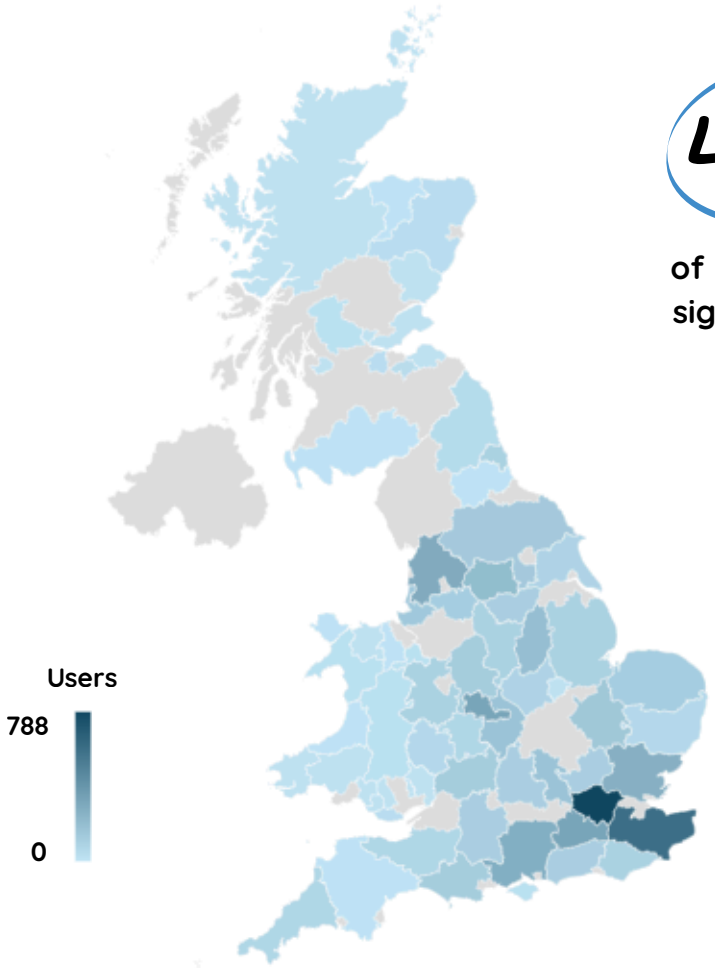
Now in our fourth year, we have been able to focus more efforts on reaching a larger number of users, and therefore children and young people as a result. Due to the development of more resources made for educators, **over 75% of sign ups are from education settings and support groups** who support an average of 5.7 learners each.

55,239

children and young people reached since our projects began

While we still see the legacy of our Southeast base, we have seen a larger number of people signing up to our projects outside of this area. Our partnership work has contributed strongly to this, where we have been partnering with other charities and non-profits, particularly seen in the **North West of England.** In this region, we are working with groups like Down's Syndrome Manchester, Down Syndorme Cheshire, and East Lancashire Down's Syndrome Support Group.

37% of new users find us through professional recommendation, our single biggest referral source. When professionals trust us enough to point families our way, that is the strongest endorsement we can have.



49%

of local offers signpost to us

Top 10 Counties - Members	
Greater London	788
Kent	580
Surrey	309
West Midlands	310
Lancashire	275
Essex	257
Hampshire	265
Cheshire	239
West Yorkshire	196
Buckinghamshire	156

Our Partnerships

Partnerships are at the heart of our charity. Working with experts, other charities, and education settings, we can expand the reach of our projects, receive feedback to improve, and create more content that is based on real-life challenges faced by our community. Here are a selection of our partners across our partnership streams.



Delivery Partners

Down's Syndrome Manchester | Down Syndrome Cheshire | 21 Plus

Charities and local groups using our project(s) in regular sessions with children / young people.

Education Partners & Subscribers

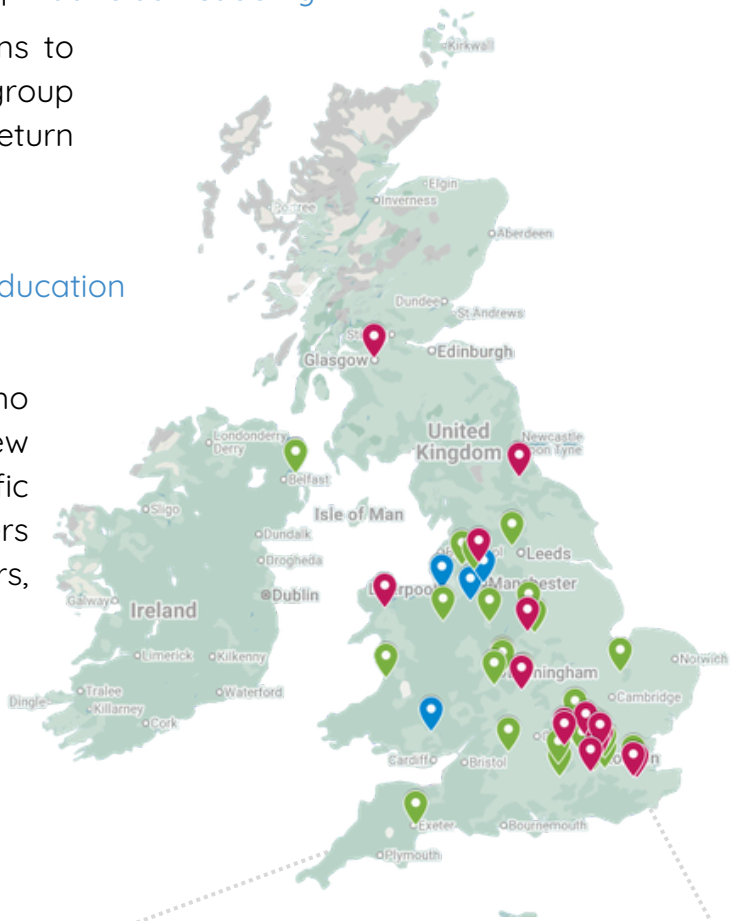
Brackenfield SEND School | Newfriars College | Bradfields Academy

Education settings can purchase subscriptions to access our projects. We work with a select group as partners, who receive a reduced rate in return for partnership work and feedback.

Official & Referral Partners

Down's Syndrome Scotland | i-Vengers | Sex Education Company | Bodysense Education

Official Partners are are our experts who support us in creating content. We bring in new individuals and organisations with specific expertise for each series. Referral Partners share our work with their members or users, and across their own marketing.





Meeting the Challenge of Sustainable Funding

The fundraising landscape for small charities has rarely been tougher.

In 2025 the British public gave an estimated £14 billion, down from £15.4 billion the year before, the first fall in total giving since 2021. Participation has dropped from 69% of adults in 2016 to just 55% in 2025, around 600,000 fewer donors every year.[1] We haven't been immune. But this year, something important happened.

Our subscription model launched, and it worked. Schools and colleges now pay to access our content. That income, £16,808 in its first year against a budget of £1,000, isn't the point in itself. The point is what it makes possible. Every subscription sold funds free access for someone else. Families receive our full resources through a dedicated family code, at no cost. Delivery partners, community groups and non-profits access our content free. The subscription model is how we protect that.

This is proof of concept for a funding model that reflects our values: institutions that can pay, do. Families and other non-profit groups, never have to.

Grant and trust income remains the backbone of our work, and we're building a stronger pipeline of multi-year applications that reflect our growing track record. We're developing corporate partnerships with organisations that share our commitment to inclusion, and exploring targeted campaigns that connect supporters directly with specific projects.

Funder support remains essential, not despite our earned income, but because of what it enables alongside it. Grants and donations fund the content creation, the co-production, the curriculum development and the partnerships that subscriptions alone can't cover. Together, these income streams are how we build something that lasts.

Our aim is simple: that no child misses out because their family, school or community group can't afford to pay.

References: [1]Charities Aid Foundation, UK Giving Report 2026

Demonstrating Impact as an Infrastructure Charity

We made a deliberate choice about how to create change.
We could have set up our own groups across the UK, delivering sessions directly. Instead, we chose to work through the **trusted organisations already embedded in their communities,** equipping them with specialist resources and strengthening what they do.

That choice is strategic. Building parallel infrastructure would have cost more, reached fewer people, and duplicated work others already do well. Working through partners means our content reaches further, is delivered locally by people families already know and trust, and can be tailored to each community. It is the more **innovative model, and a more responsible use of public money.**

Our partnerships are maturing as a result. What began as sharing resources is growing into something deeper: joint funding bids, shared learning, and co-delivery with organisations like Down Syndrome Cheshire, Down Right Excellent and Down's Syndrome Scotland. Each relationship makes both organisations stronger, and the community is better served because of it.

Co-production keeps this work honest. This year, our community helped shape every series we created, with 100% featuring members of our community as presenters or co-presenters, and 80% co-produced from planning and scripting through to filming. We also strengthened our youth panels, so **young people themselves have a direct voice** in what we make.

This is how we hold ourselves accountable. Our impact is not only what we deliver, but what we make possible for others to deliver. By measuring reach through our partners, listening to the community that shapes our content, and investing in relationships rather than replication, we make sure our work stays relevant, responsive, and genuinely useful to the people it is for.

Thank You!

This year, your support helped us reach an estimated 41,200 children and young people, and kept every one of our resources completely free for the families and community groups who need them.

We are grateful to the trusts, foundations, companies and individuals who funded our work this year, together contributing £201,045 towards our projects and the core costs that keep them running. Some of you gave funding. Others gave pro bono expertise, office space, or hands-on help with fundraising. All of it mattered.

A particular thank you to the individual donors and families who gave what they could. In a year when giving across the UK fell, you chose to back a small charity doing specialist work. That choice keeps our content free, and keeps our promise that no child misses out because their family cannot afford to pay.
Without you, none of this happens.
Thank you.

£201,045
funding received

KEARNEY

The Baily Thomas Charitable Fund

Garfield Weston FOUNDATION

QCS Quality Compliance Systems AN RLDatix COMPANY

A&O SHEARMAN

KENT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

AG

CITY BRIDGE FOUNDATION

The Forrester Family Trust

The Whitehead Monckton Charitable Foundation

The Diana Edgson Wright Charitable Trust

TESCO Community Grants

GROUNDWORK

The EVESON Trust

Douglas Arter Foundation



Treasurer's Report

The financial year ending 31 March 2026 marks a significant improvement in Learn and Thrive's financial position. Following a planned deficit of £61,499 in 2024/25, the charity returned to surplus, recording net income of £17,729 for the year. Total income reached £201,045 against a budget of £156,850, representing an overperformance of £44,195. Total expenditure was £183,316, well within the budgeted £260,416, primarily because the LFL11 project series was not initiated during the year and will be carried forward into 2026/27.

Grant and trust income remained the largest single income stream, reaching £151,172 against a budget of £130,000. This growth reflects both the strength of our programme and the confidence funders are placing in our approach. Every pound received through this stream funds resources that are entirely free to access, ensuring that cost is never a barrier for the families and community groups who need them most.

Subscription and sales income significantly exceeded expectations, reaching £16,808 against a budget of £1,000. This reflects the early success of our paid resource model for education settings, which is designed to generate sustainable income that directly subsidises free access for families and our delivery partnerships with non-profit organisations. Whilst the absolute figures remain modest, this is an important proof of concept for our long-term financial model. Corporate donations totalled £6,200 against a budget of £5,500, and we were grateful to receive £19,352 in support from generous individual supporters, against a budget of £5,000. We are encouraged by growing interest in our work from individuals who share our values.

We ended the year with unrestricted reserves of £88,674 and restricted reserves of £53,485, giving total reserves of £142,159. Our reserves policy, adopted April 2025, sets a target range of £75,000 to £110,000 in free reserves, based on annual liabilities of £220,000. Our unrestricted reserves sit at the lower boundary of this range, a position we monitor carefully. As a small national charity whose income depends significantly on grants and trusts, maintaining adequate reserves is not simply a financial discipline; it is what allows us to keep our resources free and our commitments to delivery partners and families uninterrupted, even when funding is delayed or a grant does not come through. Securing income that strengthens our reserve position remains a strategic priority.

Looking ahead to 2026/27, our target income is £250,000. Our priorities are to scale the subscription model, secure at least two multi-year grant awards, and grow corporate partnership income. We remain committed to financial discipline whilst continuing to invest in the quality and reach of our programmes.

Kate Taylor

Treasurer

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our activities for the year.

Learn and Thrive exists to advance the education of children and young people with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities. We do this by creating specialist, accessible teaching resources, developed with expert input and with our community, and making them available through digital content and partnerships with the organisations, schools and families who support these children and young people.

Our work delivers clear public benefit in several ways.

For children and young people with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities, our resources build the knowledge and skills that help them grow up safer, more independent and more connected, from early years communication through to relationships, personal safety and life skills. These are children who too often go without education tailored to how they learn.

For the families, carers and professionals who support them, we provide trusted, specialist tools that are otherwise hard to find or expensive to access, reducing isolation and giving confidence to those doing the teaching.

For the wider sector, we strengthen the capacity of other charities, community groups and education settings to deliver high-quality support, avoiding duplication and making better use of limited resources across the field.

Access is central to how we deliver public benefit. Our resources are free to families and to non-profit delivery partners, with no eligibility criteria, so that cost is never a barrier for those who need them most. Where education settings pay to subscribe, that income directly subsidises free access for others. No private benefit arises beyond that which is incidental and necessary to carrying out our charitable purposes.

The trustees are satisfied that the charity's aims and activities are carried out for the public benefit, and that any benefit to individuals is a proper part of advancing our charitable objects.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The trustees review the principal risks facing the charity regularly and maintain systems and policies to manage them. The most significant risks, and how we are addressing them, are set out below.

Dependency on grant and trust income | Grant and trust funding remains our largest single income stream, at £151,172 this year. While this reflects strong funder confidence, a high reliance on any one source is a risk, particularly in a competitive funding environment where individual giving is falling nationally. We are actively managing this by diversifying our income: our subscription model for education settings generated £16,808 in its first year, and we are building a pipeline of multi-year grant applications and corporate partnerships to reduce reliance on short-term, single-source funding.

Reserves position | Our reserves policy, adopted in April 2025, sets a target range of £75,000 to £110,000 in free reserves. Our unrestricted reserves currently sit at £88,674, at the lower boundary of that range. The trustees monitor this closely. Rebuilding free reserves towards the middle of our target range is a strategic priority, and our return to surplus this year (net income of £17,729) is the first step in that process.

Transition to a sustainable income model | Our shift towards earned income through subscriptions is deliberate and going well, but it is still early. There is a risk that this income does not scale as quickly as planned. We are mitigating this by keeping the model modest in our financial planning, treating subscription income as a growing supplement to, not a replacement for, grant and donated income, and by continuing to invest in the grant pipeline alongside it.

Safeguarding | Because our work supports children and young people with learning disabilities, safeguarding is our most serious responsibility. The risk is inherent to our mission rather than to any specific failing. We manage it through a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and board-level safeguarding oversight, policies reviewed at least annually against current statutory guidance, mandatory training for all staff, volunteers and trustees, and safer recruitment including DBS checks. No safeguarding concerns were raised during the year.

Reliance on key people | As a small team, we are exposed to the risk of losing key staff or trustees who hold significant knowledge and relationships. We manage this through documented processes, a skilled and engaged board, and by building our delivery model around partnerships rather than concentrating capacity in a small number of individuals.

Trustees during the reporting period: April 2025 - March 2026

Name	Date Appointed	Date Stood Down	Role
Nicola Walker	05 July 2021		Chair
Kate Rosanna Taylor	22 September 2021		Treasurer
Andrea Melanie Wilson	05 July 2021		Trustee
Maja Trninic	12 March 2024		Trustee
Clair Smith	12 March 2024		Trustee
Parul Shah	30 April 2025		Trustee
Tracey Barber	11 February 2026		Trustee

The Key Management Personnel are the Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO):
Johanna Aiyathurai – CEO

Registered Office: 265 Maidstone Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 0HA

Independent Examiner: Stephen J Wren FCCA, Accountancy Matters (Kent) Limited, The Marlowe Innovation Centre, Marlowe Way, Ramsgate, Kent, CT12 6FA

Bank: CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA

The objects for which the Charity is established for the benefit of the public are to advance the education of children and young people with Down's syndrome and similar learning difficulties including but not limited to providing access to specialist teachers and therapists through digital content and other resources.

Governance and Structure:

Type of governing document
Foundation Registered 05 July 2021

How the charity is constituted
Foundation CIO

Trustee selection methods
Trustees are appointed by the existing Trustees

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Nicola Walker
Chair

29/09/2026

Kate Taylor
Treasurer

29/09/2026

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF

LEARN AND THRIVE

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2026 which are set out on the following pages.

Responsibilities and basis of report
As the charity's trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement
I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or

2 the accounts do not accord with those records; or

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

S J Wren

S J Wren FCCA
Accountancy Matters (Kent) Limited
Chartered Certified Accountants
The Marlowe Innovation Centre
Marlowe Way
Ramsgate
Kent
CT12 6FA

Date : 7/10/26

LEARN AND THRIVE

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 2026	Total funds 2025
		£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS					
Grants	3	74,775	76,397	151,172	64,850
Donations	4	16,944	10,145	27,089	40,802
Charitable activities :					
Subscriptions and resource sales		16,808	-	16,808	4,568
Fundraising income		5,748	-	5,748	149
Bank interest receivable		228	-	228	399
TOTAL RECEIPTS		114,503	86,542	201,045	110,768
PAYMENTS					
Cost of raising funds		30,873	3,041.00	33,914	32,104
Charitable activities		63,200	85,355	148,555	138,798
Fixed assets		847	-	847	2,096
TOTAL PAYMENTS	5	94,920	88,396	183,316	172,998
NET (PAYMENTS)/RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR BEFORE TRANSFERS		19,583	(1,854)	17,729	(62,230)
Transfers between funds	6	(6,109)	6,109	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR		13,474	4,255	17,729	(62,230)
Cash funds as at 1 April 2025		75,200	49,230	124,430	186,660
CASH FUNDS AS AT 31 MARCH 2026		88,674	53,485	142,159	124,430

LEARN AND THRIVE

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

AS AT 31 MARCH 2026

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 2026	Total funds 2025
	£	£	£	£
CASH FUNDS				
Cash at bank	88,674	53,485	142,159	124,430
ASSETS RETIANED FOR THE CHARITY'S OWN USE (at cost)				
Vida PC	748	-	748	748
Inspiron 15" laptop	749	-	749	749
Inspiron 14" laptop	599	-	599	599
Ultima WS PC	847	-	847	-
OTHER MONETARY ASSETS				
Trade debtors	2,594	-	2,594	-
LIABILITIES				
Accruals	1,140	-	1,140	720

Approved and signed for issue by the trustees on



Nikki Walker - Chair

29/09/2026



Kate Taylor - Treasurer

29/09/2026

1 Basis of preparing the accounts

These accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and in accordance with the Charity Commission Guidance CC16.

2 Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are grants, donations and other income received by the Charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes.

3 Grants

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2026 Total funds	2025 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Brian Murtagh Charitable Trust	-	19,970	19,970	10,000
City Bridge Foundation	20,400	10,000	30,400	10,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	30,000	-	30,000	15,000
Peter Harrison	-	-	-	2,000
WCIT Charity	-	-	-	10,000
The Lawson Trust	-	-	-	6,000
The Henry Smith Charity	-	-	-	5,000
Julia Rausing Trust - Youth Panel	-	-	-	5,000
Operations and Development	-			1,850
A & O Shearman	-	9,927	9,927	-
The Barbara Ward Foundation	7,000	-	7,000	-
The Eveson Trust	-	10,000	10,000	-
Tesco - Groundwork	1,000	1,500	2,500	-
Douglas Arter Foundation	500	-	500	-
The Diana Edgson Charitable Trust	1,000	-	1,000	-
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	875	-	875	-
Kent Community Foundation	4,000	5,000	9,000	-
Baily Thomas Charitable Trust	10,000	-	10,000	-
The Forrester Family Foundation	-	10,000	10,000	-
The Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation	-	10,000	10,000	-
	74,775	76,397	151,172	64,850

4 Donations

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2026 Total funds £	2025 Total funds £
Corporates	6,055	145	6,200	10,036
Individuals	9,352	10,000	19,352	27,164
Gift Aid	1,537	-	1,537	3,602
	16,944	10,145	27,089	40,802

5 Payments

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2026 Total funds £	2025 Total funds £
Costs of raising funds :				
Wages and salaries	24,994	-	24,994	22,160
Fundraising products	2,841	355	3,196	4,700
Card charges	983	-	983	1,043
Advertising and marketing	2,055	2,686	4,741	4,201
	30,873	3,041	33,914	32,104
Charitable activities				
Wages and salaries	23,929	57,475	81,404	73,793
Recruitment	(54)	-	(54)	977
Staff training	76	2,451	2,527	321
Travel	2,345	1,907	4,252	4,039
Computer running costs	276	-	276	84
Room hire	230	1,099	1,329	557
Expert costs	2,223	5,243	7,466	18,419
Filming costs	11,604	15,492	27,096	20,193
Support costs				
Wages and salaries	11,600	-	11,600	8,733
Payroll costs	-	360	360	381
Bank charges	45	15	60	60
Postage and stationery	385	294	679	465
Subscriptions	1,591	961	2,552	2,092
Insurance	485	-	485	545
General expenses	227	58	285	2,163
Governance costs				
Wages and salaries	7,518	-	7,518	4,476
Board and AGM meeting expenses	-	-	-	-
Independent Examiner's fee	720	-	720	1,500
	63,200	85,355	148,555	138,798
Fixed asset purchases				
PC's and laptops	847	-	847	2,096
Total expenditure	94,920	88,396	183,316	172,998

6 Movement in funds

	As at 1 04 2025 £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	As at 31 03 2026 £
Restricted funds:					
Operations and Development	5,513	10,000	(8,123)	-	7,390
Learning for Life series 7 and 8	(9,916)	10,000	(84)	-	-
Learning for Life series 9	8,646	20,012	(28,658)	-	-
Learning for Life series 10	-	40,030	(1,471)	-	38,559
Learning for Life core	19,987	1,500	(17,565)	-	3,922
General Teach Me Too programme	10,000	-	(13,434)	3,434	-
"How To" healthy eating series	10,000	-	(12,675)	2,675	-
Youth Panel	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
Core costs - Kent	-	5,000	(1,386)	-	3,614
Total restricted funds	49,230	86,542	(88,396)	6,109	53,485
Unrestricted general funds	75,200	114,503	(94,920)	(6,109)	88,674
Total funds	124,430	201,045	(183,316)	-	142,159

Restricted funds

Operations and Development

Funding received for specified core costs.

Learning for Life series 6

Funding received in the previous year for filming costs for Learning for Life 6 Respectful relationships series.

Learning for Life series 7 and 8

Funding received from City Bridge Foundation for the Development of Learning for Life series 7 Families and 8 Understanding health and prevent which were filmed together. Costs all incurred in 24/25, however the funding was received in instalments with the final one falling into 25/26 year.

Learning for Life series 9

Funding received in the year from A & O Shearman and The Eveson Trust for the development of Learning for Life series 9 Online safety.

Learning for Life series 10

Funding received from Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation, Brian Murtagh Charitable Trust and a personal donation for the development of Learning for Life series 10 Consent and Decision making series. All income received in 25/26 year, but majority of costs incurred in 26/27

Learning for Life core

Funding received for the General Learning for Life programme running costs (staff time, office costs, marketing) not tied to a specific series.

General Teach Me Too programme

Funding received in the previous year for the General Teach me too programme running costs (staff time, office costs, marketing) not tied to a specific series.

"How To" healthy eating series

Funding received in the previous year for the production costs for the 'How To' healthy eating series

Restricted funds - cont'd

Youth Panel

Funding received in the previous year for the Youth Panel engagement project: staff time, delivery partner meetings and expert facilitator fees, including travel costs.

Core costs - Kent

Funding received from the Brook Trust Fund via Kent Community Fund to cover core costs for Kent only.

Learn and Thrive



Learn and Thrive
Charity Number: 1195053
CIO Number: CEO25272
Year Ending March 31st 2026
www.learnandthrive.org.uk

Annual Report 2025/2026



Annual Report and Accounts

2025-2026

Accessible learning for safer, more connected and more independent lives

The Difference We Make

We reach an estimated **41,200 children and young people** through our resources, at home, in schools, and in support groups. Behind that number is what matters most: the real change in the lives of people with Down's syndrome and learning disabilities, and the families who support them.

Creating Real-Life Change



Meet Angelica - name changed for anonymity

Angelica is 21 and lives in supported accommodation, away from her family. As an adult she has every right to drink, but with that new independence things had started to slip. Most days she was buying spirits, taking them back to her room and **drinking alone, often most of a bottle.** Staff were worried and couldn't find a way to reach her.

Her mum stepped in and found our Learning for Life resources on harmful substances. Working through them one to one, Angelica began to understand the real risks, and the difference between having a drink and drinking to harm herself.

Today, Angelica is in a **much safer place**. She no longer drinks alone in her room. She understands the risks, makes her own informed choices, and is protecting her future health.



Meet Ellie

Ellie is 16 and has Down's syndrome. She had no real sense of privacy: she would walk in the door and strip off, curtains open, **exposed to anyone passing by.** Her mum was understandably worried.

Through her local delivery partner, Down's Syndrome Cheshire, Ellie worked through our Growing Up and Keeping Safe series, learning about privacy, private activities and body parts. Now she takes herself off to the bathroom to get changed.

It sounds small. It isn't. Embedding this now means **Ellie is safer for life**, more able to recognise when something, or someone, isn't appropriate.

Young people cannot make informed choices about a world they have not been taught to understand.

Children and young people with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities too often miss out on accessible education about relationships, safety, health, communication and everyday life. The consequences can be serious: **increased risk of abuse and isolation, fewer opportunities and less control over their own lives.**

These outcomes are not inevitable. With the right teaching, young pec can understand more, recognise risk, communicate their choices and take greater control of their future.

Alexandra was repeatedly asked by a college peer to send naked photographs. She said no because she understood her rights, her worth and how to stay safe online. She had learned through Learn and Thrive's Online Safety resources. She now appears in the series herself, helping other young people learn the same skills.

Vision

Every young person with Down's syndrome or other learning disabilities has the power to dream big, make their own choices, and shape their own future.

Mission

We enable the families, schools, and professionals who support children and young people with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities to access high-quality, accessible tools and resources, so that everyone can live a more independent, connect, and safer life.

What we do

Learn and Thrive aims to foster a world where individuals with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities can flourish. Here are our two key projects that contribute to this mission.

Teach Me Too

This COVID-inspired initiative, backed by speech and language therapists along with specialist teachers, brings specialist teaching and therapy into the home or classroom. It focuses on instilling confidence in delivering specialised teaching support in the early years.

Learning for Life

Inspired by the unique challenges encountered by our community, Learning for Life is anchored in the Relationship and Sex Education curriculum. It equips individuals with the essential teaching and practical skills needed to grow up safer, happier, and actively engaged in their communities.

Actively supporting over 41,200 children and young people

Our Team

We are a small but agile team, driven by a passion for our community and making things better.


Johanna, CEO


Laura


Hannah


Craig

Trustee Board


Nikki, Chair


Kate, Treasurer


Andrea


Parul


Clair


Tracey


Maja

Our Team works day-to-day with regular support from our trustees - who are all volunteers. We are also fortunate that other volunteers contribute through pro-bono work to support specific elements of our charity's work, including marketing, sales, and fundraising. We are proud that many of our volunteers have a learning disability themselves.



Chair Report

This has been a landmark year for Learn and Thrive. Not because everything was easy, but because when it mattered, this organisation did what good organisations do. It adapted, it delivered, and it kept its eyes firmly on the people it exists to serve.

The wider context matters here. The charity sector is under significant pressure. Individual giving is falling, grant funding is more competitive than ever, and smaller organisations are disproportionately affected. Against that backdrop, the progress Learn and Thrive has made this year is not accidental. It is the result of deliberate, strategic leadership and a board and team willing to make difficult decisions early.

We saw the landscape shifting and we acted. The strategic decisions we made this year, around income diversification, programme structure, and long-term sustainability, were not comfortable ones. They were the right ones. The results reflect that.

At board level, our focus has been on building an organisation that is as resilient as it is ambitious. That means holding ourselves to clear measures of impact, making difficult calls when needed, and ensuring that our financial model never puts free access for families at risk. This year we made meaningful progress on all three.

Jo and the team have shown exceptional leadership through a period of significant change. What I have seen is an organisation that knows its values and refuses to compromise them. That is not something you can manufacture. It has to be earned.

The need for what we do is not going away. Neither are we.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to Learn and Thrive over the past year. Your support, commitment, and belief in our mission make everything we do possible. Together, we will continue to create opportunities for young people to learn, grow, and truly thrive.

Nikki Walker

Chair of Trustees



CEO Summary

This year, Learn and Thrive reached 41,200 children and young people. For every family, every community group, every charity running sessions with our resources, that access was completely free. That is what we are here for.

The story I'm most proud of is Alexandra's. She has Down's syndrome and autism. A boy from college asked her to send naked photos. Ten times. She said no, because she knew her rights and her worth. She had worked through our Online Safety resources. Now she stars in that very series, teaching other young people like her.

This year our team showed what values-led leadership actually looks like under pressure. We reviewed Teach Me Too, co-produced 80% of our projects, created and launched a new subscription model for education settings so families never pay, grew our delivery partnerships across the UK, and delivered our strongest financial year to date, a surplus of £17,729 on income of £201,045. None of that was inevitable. It happened because every person connected to this organisation kept their eyes on the community and refused to compromise.

We are mid-way through building something that has never existed before in this country. The work ahead includes consent, bereavement, sexual feelings, and online safety. Our community has waited long enough.

To our funders, partners, trustees, and volunteers: you made this year possible. To our community: we're still here, and we're not stopping.

Jo Aiyathurai

Chief Executive Officer






What We Delivered

This year we set out to grow our reach, deepen co-production, and put our funding model on a more sustainable footing. We did all three. Across every series we created and released this year, members of our community helped shape the content, from consultation when planning and writing, through to starring in the films themselves.

2763

active users in Teach Me Too

32% compared to 2024/5

4496

active users in Learning for Life

28% compared to 2024/5



Action	Result
Including members of our community in production of content	Partnered with Down's Syndrome Scotland, Down Right Excellent and Down Syndrome Cheshire. **100% of series released this year feature our community in a presenter or co-presenter role.**
Continue growing the Learning for Life project and user base	Three new series developed and released. 62% of our **total users are now registered in Learning for Life.**
Development of our partnership & subscription model	**Delivery partnerships** with non-profits and charities, providing our resources free of charge. **Education subscriptions** launched for settings, aligned with upcoming curriculum changes.



Existing content — New content

35h 56m | 7h 37m

+13%

Year in Review

Teach Me Too now has **2,763 users,** and is averaging 56 new users monthly. As we move forward with Learning for Life project as funding priority, we're undertaking a review of Teach Me Too and it's place in the education space. Created as a result of the pandemic, this project requires reconsideration so that we can make meaningful progress in a post-pandemic world. We are working hard to involve our current users and partners in this process, to get a range of input in this review.

Teach Me Too

We're reaching children across settings, with **65%** of our beneficiaries in mainstream settings, and **28%** in specialist, as well as those pre-school and in home school.

Since Teach Me Too was created in 2021, how it's accessed and where it is hosted have changed. When considering all historic usership, we are pleased to say that **5,491** members have accessed the project since it's inception.

> Being able to share this resource with the schools I suppport saved both me and them many hours of work. It's brilliant.
>
> **Vik Ralfs, Advisory Teacher**



*calculated by the average number of children supported by each user, 5.1, including historic members from our website teachmetoo.org.uk, now integrated into learnandthrive.org.uk.

Year in Review

As we come to the end of Stage One of our curriculum, we are excited to delve into the secondary RSE curriculum. Learning for Life continues to flourish and grow with the support and input from our community to enhance our offer. In the upcoming year, we are planning the creation of several new series, covering consent & decisions, bereavement, and sexual feelings. This project is praised by educators and parents alike, and is well accessed and used. **84 new members join this project monthly**, bringing our total membership to 4512.

Co-production of content remains a key strategic goal, **involving members of our community** in the filming of our new series. We're so proud that all our series released this year have involved co-production:

- Respectful Relationships
- How To... Healthy Eating
- Online Safety

> "The resources are clear, accessible, and flexible enough to meet the needs of students with a wide range of chronological and developmental ages."
>
> **Reece Morgan, Assistant Headteacher at Ormiston Queensmill Academy**

Across these series, community events, and youth panels, we have involved 30 young people with a range of learning disabilities. And many of these young people have been a part of several series and events!



*calculated by the average number of young people supported by each user, 6.1.

How We Create Change

The Need | Inequalities & disadvantages faced by our community throughout life

People with learning disabilities face significantly poorer outcomes in life—including early death, isolation, abuse, and a loss of autonomy—while the families and professionals around them are too often left without the guidance and tools needed to offer meaningful support.

Support groups and education settings require specialised, accessible content they can use with their students.

These failures are not inevitable; they reflect a system that continues to overlook their rights, voices, and potential.

The Work | Design and develop expert video lessons and learning resources

Teach Me Too — Early years skills, with speech and language focus

Learning for Life — Practical life skills ranging from social skills to personal safety

Other support services - advice and assistance

We support

Delivery Partners - Charities, youth groups, schools, and families

Children and young people with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities

The Impact

Short Term

Individuals with Down's syndrome / learning disabilities can access content made for and representative of themselves
Access to trusted, quality content unlike anything else
Education settings and support groups save time in planning sessions
Parents have access at home to help with consistent teaching

Medium Term

Individuals with learning disabilities learn more about the world around them.

- They can spot unsafe places and people.
- They know when and who to ask for help.
- They know which decisions are theirs to make.

Long Term

Individuals with learning disabilities have the skills to live more independent, connected, and safer lives.

- They can choose healthy friendships.
- They can choose to have romantic relationships.
- They can choose where they live, where they work, and what gives their life meaning.

We have supported 55,293 children and young people with our content over the last 5 years.
This content includes over 190 videos and 390 downloadable resources, made by experts and staff with lived and learned experience with the Down's syndrome and learning disabled community.*

Strategic 5 Year Plan

1. **Strengthen Partnerships:** Become a leading and trusted partner for charities, community groups and schools delivering RSE and life skills to children and young people (CYP) with SEND. To have delivery partnerships in all 8 regions** of the UK. By 2030, we will have 50 partners across the UK delivering our project.
2. **Complete Learning for Life:** Deliver a full set of skills based resources covering relationships and sex education, enabling young people to live more independent, connect, and safer lives.
3. **Build our community voice:** All projects are developed with co-production with our community

Parents and educators receive a comprehensive and representative set of resources available to support in a wide range of scenarios, informed by lived and learned experience.
Children and young people overcome challenges, build meaningful relationships, develop independence and confidence to live a full, rewarding life.
People with Down's syndrome and learning disabilities live safe and connected lives where their voices shape their future.

*Data corrected as of 2025 Annual Report. **Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland, North West England, North East England, South East England (including London), South West England, the Midlands.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding sits at the heart of everything we do, in two ways. It shapes how we run the charity, and it shapes what we teach. The community we serve is at disproportionate risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation, so keeping people safe is not a policy we keep in a drawer. It is the work itself.



Safeguarding through teaching

For the people we support, safeguarding is a skill that has to be taught, not assumed. Our Learning for Life resources help children and young people recognise unsafe situations, understand public and private, and know who to ask for help and when. We teach the concepts that keep people safe long before they need them.

Governance and oversight

We have a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and a safeguarding lead on our board of trustees, so oversight runs from the front line right up to governance. Our safeguarding policies are reviewed at least annually and aligned with current statutory guidance.

Safer recruitment

We carry out background checks, including current DBS checks, on everyone who works with us. Safer recruitment is built into how we bring people in, whether staff, volunteers or trustees.



Training

All staff, volunteers and trustees complete mandatory safeguarding training and keep it current, so everyone connected to Learn and Thrive can recognise a concern and knows exactly what to do with it.

Reporting and wider impact

We have clear, accessible reporting systems, and this year no safeguarding concerns were raised through them. Given that our contact with children and young people is digital and resource-based rather than face-to-face, that reflects a model built to keep risk low by design.

But the part we are proudest of reaches further than our own organisation. **By working alongside grassroots groups, we have helped strengthen their safeguarding too.** One of our delivery partners reviewed and improved their own safeguarding practice through working with us, including introducing a dedicated system to monitor and record concerns. When we raise the bar for ourselves, we help raise it across the sector.

Who We Reach

Our resources are free, with no eligibility criteria, so they reach the people who need them most. Families get trusted, specialist content to use at home, at their own pace, with no cost and no waiting. Delivery partners, charities, youth groups and local Down's syndrome organisations, get ready-made resources they can put straight to work.

5.7
learners supported by each user, on average

→

41,200
children and young people

Around three quarters of registrations come from education settings, support groups and professionals, each supporting multiple learners. That is how a growing membership reaches an estimated **41,200 children and young people.**

> P has developed the knowledge and confidence to navigate public spaces safely and know who to approach if he needed help. Being able to travel independently to visit a loved one opened up new opportunities, increased his sense of autonomy, and strengthened his confidence.
>
> **Esther Whittaker, Down's Syndrome Manchester**

We create resources **supporting the challenges our community face**:

- Understanding public and private
- Appropriate touch
- Healthy lifestyles
- Respectful & fulfilling friendships
- Emotional regulation
- Puberty and growing up
- Mental wellbeing
- Online safety

> I firmly believe the progress she is currently making is all thanks to the helpful resources we've found in the Learn and Thrive charity.
>
> **Emma, Parent (Teach Me Too)**

Our Reach

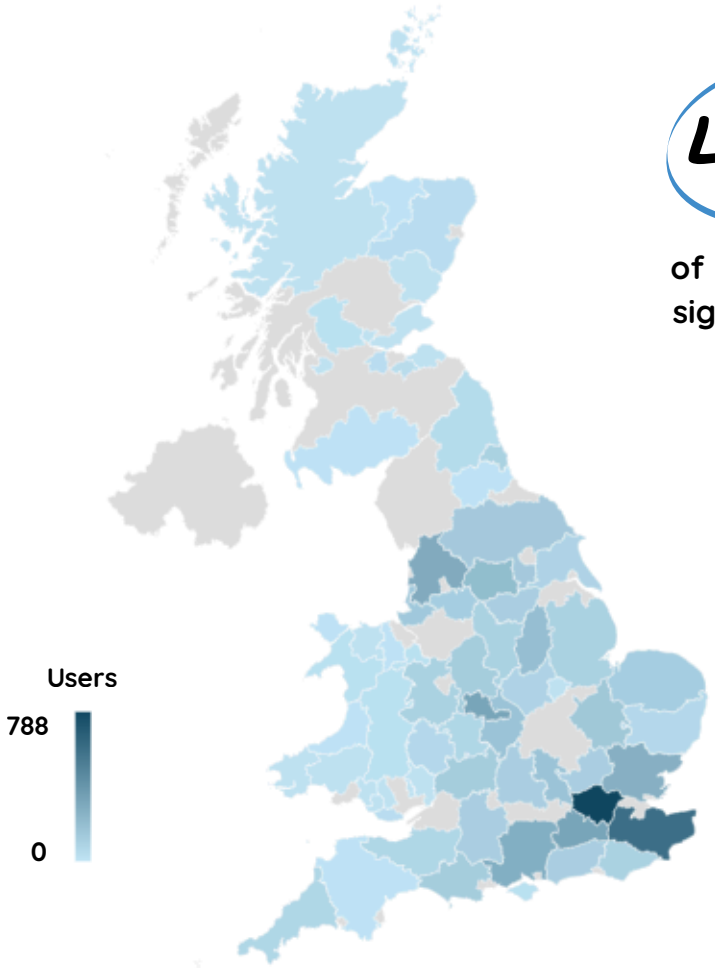
Now in our fourth year, we have been able to focus more efforts on reaching a larger number of users, and therefore children and young people as a result. Due to the development of more resources made for educators, **over 75% of sign ups are from education settings and support groups** who support an average of 5.7 learners each.

55,239

children and young people reached since our projects began

While we still see the legacy of our Southeast base, we have seen a larger number of people signing up to our projects outside of this area. Our partnership work has contributed strongly to this, where we have been partnering with other charities and non-profits, particularly seen in the **North West of England.** In this region, we are working with groups like Down's Syndrome Manchester, Down Syndorme Cheshire, and East Lancashire Down's Syndrome Support Group.

37% of new users find us through professional recommendation, our single biggest referral source. When professionals trust us enough to point families our way, that is the strongest endorsement we can have.



49%

of local offers signpost to us

Top 10 Counties - Members	
Greater London	788
Kent	580
Surrey	309
West Midlands	310
Lancashire	275
Essex	257
Hampshire	265
Cheshire	239
West Yorkshire	196
Buckinghamshire	156

Our Partnerships

Partnerships are at the heart of our charity. Working with experts, other charities, and education settings, we can expand the reach of our projects, receive feedback to improve, and create more content that is based on real-life challenges faced by our community. Here are a selection of our partners across our partnership streams.



Delivery Partners

Down's Syndrome Manchester | Down Syndrome Cheshire | 21 Plus

Charities and local groups using our project(s) in regular sessions with children / young people.

Education Partners & Subscribers

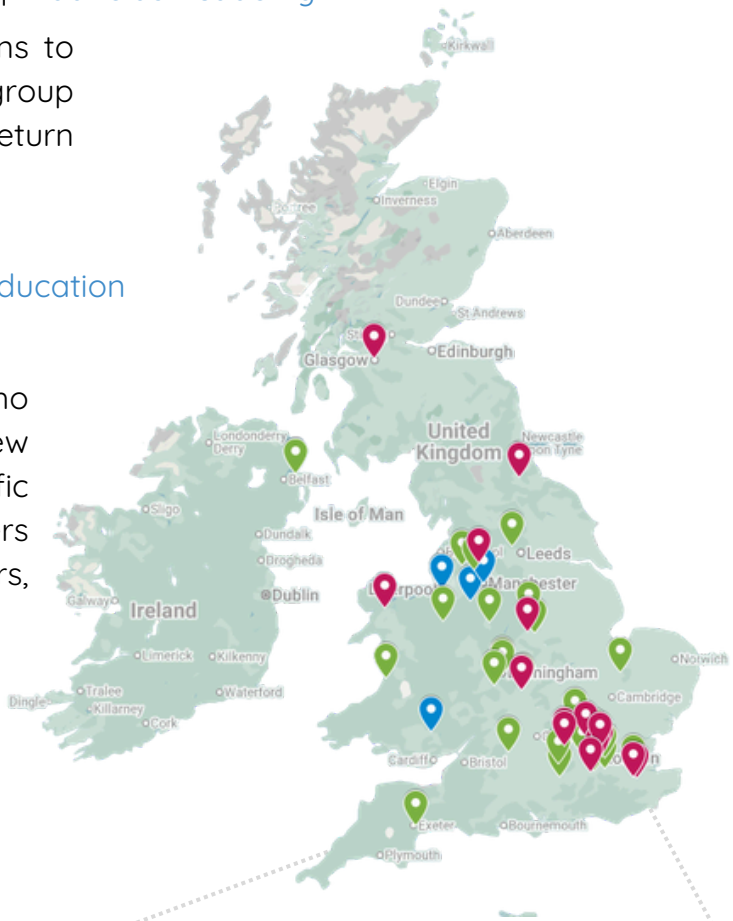
Brackenfield SEND School | Newfriars College | Bradfields Academy

Education settings can purchase subscriptions to access our projects. We work with a select group as partners, who receive a reduced rate in return for partnership work and feedback.

Official & Referral Partners

Down's Syndrome Scotland | i-Vengers | Sex Education Company | Bodysense Education

Official Partners are are our experts who support us in creating content. We bring in new individuals and organisations with specific expertise for each series. Referral Partners share our work with their members or users, and across their own marketing.





Meeting the Challenge of Sustainable Funding

The fundraising landscape for small charities has rarely been tougher.

In 2025 the British public gave an estimated £14 billion, down from £15.4 billion the year before, the first fall in total giving since 2021. Participation has dropped from 69% of adults in 2016 to just 55% in 2025, around 600,000 fewer donors every year.[1] We haven't been immune. But this year, something important happened.

Our subscription model launched, and it worked. Schools and colleges now pay to access our content. That income, £16,808 in its first year against a budget of £1,000, isn't the point in itself. The point is what it makes possible. Every subscription sold funds free access for someone else. Families receive our full resources through a dedicated family code, at no cost. Delivery partners, community groups and non-profits access our content free. The subscription model is how we protect that.

This is proof of concept for a funding model that reflects our values: institutions that can pay, do. Families and other non-profit groups, never have to.

Grant and trust income remains the backbone of our work, and we're building a stronger pipeline of multi-year applications that reflect our growing track record. We're developing corporate partnerships with organisations that share our commitment to inclusion, and exploring targeted campaigns that connect supporters directly with specific projects.

Funder support remains essential, not despite our earned income, but because of what it enables alongside it. Grants and donations fund the content creation, the co-production, the curriculum development and the partnerships that subscriptions alone can't cover. Together, these income streams are how we build something that lasts.

Our aim is simple: that no child misses out because their family, school or community group can't afford to pay.

References: [1]Charities Aid Foundation, UK Giving Report 2026

Demonstrating Impact as an Infrastructure Charity

We made a deliberate choice about how to create change.
We could have set up our own groups across the UK, delivering sessions directly. Instead, we chose to work through the **trusted organisations already embedded in their communities,** equipping them with specialist resources and strengthening what they do.

That choice is strategic. Building parallel infrastructure would have cost more, reached fewer people, and duplicated work others already do well. Working through partners means our content reaches further, is delivered locally by people families already know and trust, and can be tailored to each community. It is the more **innovative model, and a more responsible use of public money.**

Our partnerships are maturing as a result. What began as sharing resources is growing into something deeper: joint funding bids, shared learning, and co-delivery with organisations like Down Syndrome Cheshire, Down Right Excellent and Down's Syndrome Scotland. Each relationship makes both organisations stronger, and the community is better served because of it.

Co-production keeps this work honest. This year, our community helped shape every series we created, with 100% featuring members of our community as presenters or co-presenters, and 80% co-produced from planning and scripting through to filming. We also strengthened our youth panels, so **young people themselves have a direct voice** in what we make.

This is how we hold ourselves accountable. Our impact is not only what we deliver, but what we make possible for others to deliver. By measuring reach through our partners, listening to the community that shapes our content, and investing in relationships rather than replication, we make sure our work stays relevant, responsive, and genuinely useful to the people it is for.

Thank You!

This year, your support helped us reach an estimated 41,200 children and young people, and kept every one of our resources completely free for the families and community groups who need them.

We are grateful to the trusts, foundations, companies and individuals who funded our work this year, together contributing £201,045 towards our projects and the core costs that keep them running. Some of you gave funding. Others gave pro bono expertise, office space, or hands-on help with fundraising. All of it mattered.

A particular thank you to the individual donors and families who gave what they could. In a year when giving across the UK fell, you chose to back a small charity doing specialist work. That choice keeps our content free, and keeps our promise that no child misses out because their family cannot afford to pay.
Without you, none of this happens.
Thank you.

£201,045
funding received

KEARNEY

The Baily Thomas Charitable Fund

Garfield Weston FOUNDATION

QCS Quality Compliance Systems AN RLDatix COMPANY

A&O SHEARMAN

KENT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

AG

CITY BRIDGE FOUNDATION

The Forrester Family Trust

The Whitehead Monckton Charitable Foundation

The Diana Edgson Wright Charitable Trust

TESCO Community Grants

GROUNDWORK

The EVESON Trust

Douglas Arter Foundation



Treasurer's Report

The financial year ending 31 March 2026 marks a significant improvement in Learn and Thrive's financial position. Following a planned deficit of £61,499 in 2024/25, the charity returned to surplus, recording net income of £17,729 for the year. Total income reached £201,045 against a budget of £156,850, representing an overperformance of £44,195. Total expenditure was £183,316, well within the budgeted £260,416, primarily because the LFL11 project series was not initiated during the year and will be carried forward into 2026/27.

Grant and trust income remained the largest single income stream, reaching £151,172 against a budget of £130,000. This growth reflects both the strength of our programme and the confidence funders are placing in our approach. Every pound received through this stream funds resources that are entirely free to access, ensuring that cost is never a barrier for the families and community groups who need them most.

Subscription and sales income significantly exceeded expectations, reaching £16,808 against a budget of £1,000. This reflects the early success of our paid resource model for education settings, which is designed to generate sustainable income that directly subsidises free access for families and our delivery partnerships with non-profit organisations. Whilst the absolute figures remain modest, this is an important proof of concept for our long-term financial model. Corporate donations totalled £6,200 against a budget of £5,500, and we were grateful to receive £19,352 in support from generous individual supporters, against a budget of £5,000. We are encouraged by growing interest in our work from individuals who share our values.

We ended the year with unrestricted reserves of £88,674 and restricted reserves of £53,485, giving total reserves of £142,159. Our reserves policy, adopted April 2025, sets a target range of £75,000 to £110,000 in free reserves, based on annual liabilities of £220,000. Our unrestricted reserves sit at the lower boundary of this range, a position we monitor carefully. As a small national charity whose income depends significantly on grants and trusts, maintaining adequate reserves is not simply a financial discipline; it is what allows us to keep our resources free and our commitments to delivery partners and families uninterrupted, even when funding is delayed or a grant does not come through. Securing income that strengthens our reserve position remains a strategic priority.

Looking ahead to 2026/27, our target income is £250,000. Our priorities are to scale the subscription model, secure at least two multi-year grant awards, and grow corporate partnership income. We remain committed to financial discipline whilst continuing to invest in the quality and reach of our programmes.

Kate Taylor

Treasurer

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our activities for the year.

Learn and Thrive exists to advance the education of children and young people with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities. We do this by creating specialist, accessible teaching resources, developed with expert input and with our community, and making them available through digital content and partnerships with the organisations, schools and families who support these children and young people.

Our work delivers clear public benefit in several ways.

For children and young people with Down's syndrome and other learning disabilities, our resources build the knowledge and skills that help them grow up safer, more independent and more connected, from early years communication through to relationships, personal safety and life skills. These are children who too often go without education tailored to how they learn.

For the families, carers and professionals who support them, we provide trusted, specialist tools that are otherwise hard to find or expensive to access, reducing isolation and giving confidence to those doing the teaching.

For the wider sector, we strengthen the capacity of other charities, community groups and education settings to deliver high-quality support, avoiding duplication and making better use of limited resources across the field.

Access is central to how we deliver public benefit. Our resources are free to families and to non-profit delivery partners, with no eligibility criteria, so that cost is never a barrier for those who need them most. Where education settings pay to subscribe, that income directly subsidises free access for others. No private benefit arises beyond that which is incidental and necessary to carrying out our charitable purposes.

The trustees are satisfied that the charity's aims and activities are carried out for the public benefit, and that any benefit to individuals is a proper part of advancing our charitable objects.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The trustees review the principal risks facing the charity regularly and maintain systems and policies to manage them. The most significant risks, and how we are addressing them, are set out below.

Dependency on grant and trust income | Grant and trust funding remains our largest single income stream, at £151,172 this year. While this reflects strong funder confidence, a high reliance on any one source is a risk, particularly in a competitive funding environment where individual giving is falling nationally. We are actively managing this by diversifying our income: our subscription model for education settings generated £16,808 in its first year, and we are building a pipeline of multi-year grant applications and corporate partnerships to reduce reliance on short-term, single-source funding.

Reserves position | Our reserves policy, adopted in April 2025, sets a target range of £75,000 to £110,000 in free reserves. Our unrestricted reserves currently sit at £88,674, at the lower boundary of that range. The trustees monitor this closely. Rebuilding free reserves towards the middle of our target range is a strategic priority, and our return to surplus this year (net income of £17,729) is the first step in that process.

Transition to a sustainable income model | Our shift towards earned income through subscriptions is deliberate and going well, but it is still early. There is a risk that this income does not scale as quickly as planned. We are mitigating this by keeping the model modest in our financial planning, treating subscription income as a growing supplement to, not a replacement for, grant and donated income, and by continuing to invest in the grant pipeline alongside it.

Safeguarding | Because our work supports children and young people with learning disabilities, safeguarding is our most serious responsibility. The risk is inherent to our mission rather than to any specific failing. We manage it through a named Designated Safeguarding Lead and board-level safeguarding oversight, policies reviewed at least annually against current statutory guidance, mandatory training for all staff, volunteers and trustees, and safer recruitment including DBS checks. No safeguarding concerns were raised during the year.

Reliance on key people | As a small team, we are exposed to the risk of losing key staff or trustees who hold significant knowledge and relationships. We manage this through documented processes, a skilled and engaged board, and by building our delivery model around partnerships rather than concentrating capacity in a small number of individuals.

Trustees during the reporting period: April 2025 - March 2026

Name	Date Appointed	Date Stood Down	Role
Nicola Walker	05 July 2021		Chair
Kate Rosanna Taylor	22 September 2021		Treasurer
Andrea Melanie Wilson	05 July 2021		Trustee
Maja Trninic	12 March 2024		Trustee
Clair Smith	12 March 2024		Trustee
Parul Shah	30 April 2025		Trustee
Tracey Barber	11 February 2026		Trustee

The Key Management Personnel are the Trustees and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO):
Johanna Aiyathurai – CEO

Registered Office: 265 Maidstone Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 0HA

Independent Examiner: Stephen J Wren FCCA, Accountancy Matters (Kent) Limited, The Marlowe Innovation Centre, Marlowe Way, Ramsgate, Kent, CT12 6FA

Bank: CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA

The objects for which the Charity is established for the benefit of the public are to advance the education of children and young people with Down's syndrome and similar learning difficulties including but not limited to providing access to specialist teachers and therapists through digital content and other resources.

Governance and Structure:

Type of governing document
Foundation Registered 05 July 2021

How the charity is constituted
Foundation CIO

Trustee selection methods
Trustees are appointed by the existing Trustees

Signed on behalf of the Trustees:

Nicola Walker
Chair

29/09/2026

Kate Taylor
Treasurer

29/09/2026

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF

LEARN AND THRIVE

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2026 which are set out on the following pages.

Responsibilities and basis of report
As the charity's trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement
I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or

2 the accounts do not accord with those records; or

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

S J Wren

S J Wren FCCA
Accountancy Matters (Kent) Limited
Chartered Certified Accountants
The Marlowe Innovation Centre
Marlowe Way
Ramsgate
Kent
CT12 6FA

Date : 7/10/26

LEARN AND THRIVE

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 2026	Total funds 2025
		£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS					
Grants	3	74,775	76,397	151,172	64,850
Donations	4	16,944	10,145	27,089	40,802
Charitable activities :					
Subscriptions and resource sales		16,808	-	16,808	4,568
Fundraising income		5,748	-	5,748	149
Bank interest receivable		228	-	228	399
TOTAL RECEIPTS		114,503	86,542	201,045	110,768
PAYMENTS					
Cost of raising funds		30,873	3,041.00	33,914	32,104
Charitable activities		63,200	85,355	148,555	138,798
Fixed assets		847	-	847	2,096
TOTAL PAYMENTS	5	94,920	88,396	183,316	172,998
NET (PAYMENTS)/RECEIPTS FOR THE YEAR BEFORE TRANSFERS		19,583	(1,854)	17,729	(62,230)
Transfers between funds	6	(6,109)	6,109	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR		13,474	4,255	17,729	(62,230)
Cash funds as at 1 April 2025		75,200	49,230	124,430	186,660
CASH FUNDS AS AT 31 MARCH 2026		88,674	53,485	142,159	124,430

LEARN AND THRIVE

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

AS AT 31 MARCH 2026

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 2026	Total funds 2025
	£	£	£	£
CASH FUNDS				
Cash at bank	88,674	53,485	142,159	124,430
ASSETS RETIANED FOR THE CHARITY'S OWN USE (at cost)				
Vida PC	748	-	748	748
Inspiron 15" laptop	749	-	749	749
Inspiron 14" laptop	599	-	599	599
Ultima WS PC	847	-	847	-
OTHER MONETARY ASSETS				
Trade debtors	2,594	-	2,594	-
LIABILITIES				
Accruals	1,140	-	1,140	720

Approved and signed for issue by the trustees on



Nikki Walker - Chair

29/09/2026



Kate Taylor - Treasurer

29/09/2026

1 Basis of preparing the accounts

These accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis and in accordance with the Charity Commission Guidance CC16.

2 Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are grants, donations and other income received by the Charity without further specified purpose and are available as general funds.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the Charity for particular purposes.

3 Grants

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2026 Total funds	2025 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Brian Murtagh Charitable Trust	-	19,970	19,970	10,000
City Bridge Foundation	20,400	10,000	30,400	10,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	30,000	-	30,000	15,000
Peter Harrison	-	-	-	2,000
WCIT Charity	-	-	-	10,000
The Lawson Trust	-	-	-	6,000
The Henry Smith Charity	-	-	-	5,000
Julia Rausing Trust - Youth Panel	-	-	-	5,000
Operations and Development	-			1,850
A & O Shearman	-	9,927	9,927	-
The Barbara Ward Foundation	7,000	-	7,000	-
The Eveson Trust	-	10,000	10,000	-
Tesco - Groundwork	1,000	1,500	2,500	-
Douglas Arter Foundation	500	-	500	-
The Diana Edgson Charitable Trust	1,000	-	1,000	-
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Trust	875	-	875	-
Kent Community Foundation	4,000	5,000	9,000	-
Baily Thomas Charitable Trust	10,000	-	10,000	-
The Forrester Family Foundation	-	10,000	10,000	-
The Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation	-	10,000	10,000	-
	74,775	76,397	151,172	64,850

4 Donations

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2026 Total funds £	2025 Total funds £
Corporates	6,055	145	6,200	10,036
Individuals	9,352	10,000	19,352	27,164
Gift Aid	1,537	-	1,537	3,602
	16,944	10,145	27,089	40,802

5 Payments

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2026 Total funds £	2025 Total funds £
Costs of raising funds :				
Wages and salaries	24,994	-	24,994	22,160
Fundraising products	2,841	355	3,196	4,700
Card charges	983	-	983	1,043
Advertising and marketing	2,055	2,686	4,741	4,201
	30,873	3,041	33,914	32,104
Charitable activities				
Wages and salaries	23,929	57,475	81,404	73,793
Recruitment	(54)	-	(54)	977
Staff training	76	2,451	2,527	321
Travel	2,345	1,907	4,252	4,039
Computer running costs	276	-	276	84
Room hire	230	1,099	1,329	557
Expert costs	2,223	5,243	7,466	18,419
Filming costs	11,604	15,492	27,096	20,193
Support costs				
Wages and salaries	11,600	-	11,600	8,733
Payroll costs	-	360	360	381
Bank charges	45	15	60	60
Postage and stationery	385	294	679	465
Subscriptions	1,591	961	2,552	2,092
Insurance	485	-	485	545
General expenses	227	58	285	2,163
Governance costs				
Wages and salaries	7,518	-	7,518	4,476
Board and AGM meeting expenses	-	-	-	-
Independent Examiner's fee	720	-	720	1,500
	63,200	85,355	148,555	138,798
Fixed asset purchases				
PC's and laptops	847	-	847	2,096
Total expenditure	94,920	88,396	183,316	172,998

6 Movement in funds

	As at 1 04 2025 £	Receipts £	Payments £	Transfers £	As at 31 03 2026 £
Restricted funds:					
Operations and Development	5,513	10,000	(8,123)	-	7,390
Learning for Life series 7 and 8	(9,916)	10,000	(84)	-	-
Learning for Life series 9	8,646	20,012	(28,658)	-	-
Learning for Life series 10	-	40,030	(1,471)	-	38,559
Learning for Life core	19,987	1,500	(17,565)	-	3,922
General Teach Me Too programme	10,000	-	(13,434)	3,434	-
"How To" healthy eating series	10,000	-	(12,675)	2,675	-
Youth Panel	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
Core costs - Kent	-	5,000	(1,386)	-	3,614
Total restricted funds	49,230	86,542	(88,396)	6,109	53,485
Unrestricted general funds	75,200	114,503	(94,920)	(6,109)	88,674
Total funds	124,430	201,045	(183,316)	-	142,159

Restricted funds

Operations and Development

Funding received for specified core costs.

Learning for Life series 6

Funding received in the previous year for filming costs for Learning for Life 6 Respectful relationships series.

Learning for Life series 7 and 8

Funding received from City Bridge Foundation for the Development of Learning for Life series 7 Families and 8 Understanding health and prevent which were filmed together. Costs all incurred in 24/25, however the funding was received in instalments with the final one falling into 25/26 year.

Learning for Life series 9

Funding received in the year from A & O Shearman and The Eveson Trust for the development of Learning for Life series 9 Online safety.

Learning for Life series 10

Funding received from Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation, Brian Murtagh Charitable Trust and a personal donation for the development of Learning for Life series 10 Consent and Decision making series. All income received in 25/26 year, but majority of costs incurred in 26/27

Learning for Life core

Funding received for the General Learning for Life programme running costs (staff time, office costs, marketing) not tied to a specific series.

General Teach Me Too programme

Funding received in the previous year for the General Teach me too programme running costs (staff time, office costs, marketing) not tied to a specific series.

"How To" healthy eating series

Funding received in the previous year for the production costs for the 'How To' healthy eating series

Restricted funds - cont'd

Youth Panel

Funding received in the previous year for the Youth Panel engagement project: staff time, delivery partner meetings and expert facilitator fees, including travel costs.

Core costs - Kent

Funding received from the Brook Trust Fund via Kent Community Fund to cover core costs for Kent only.

Learn and Thrive



Learn and Thrive
Charity Number: 1195053
CIO Number: CEO25272
Year Ending March 31st 2026
www.learnandthrive.org.uk

Annual Report 2025/2026