

Friends of Mitchell House
ANNUAL REPORT AND STATEMENT OF
ACCOUNTS
2022-2023

ANNUAL REPORT 31 March 2023

Friends of Mitchell House are pleased to submit their accounts for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Background

Friends of Mitchell House was incorporated by the Department of Social Development on 7 February 2006 under Section 10 of the Charities Act (NI) 1964; and were registered with the Charities Commission (NI) on 2 October 2015

Location

Friends of Mitchell House can be contacted c/o Mitchell House School, Marmont House, Marmont Drive, Belfast, BT4 2GT.

Purpose of the charity

Friends of Mitchell House organise a range of fundraising events such as: sponsored walks and a Christmas fair. We own a minibus, this is used to transport pupils to other schools to take exam courses, to sporting events and to work experience placements. We respond to requests from school staff and pupils for specialist equipment, additional equipment and toys. We help fund the school summer scheme, formal and residential trips.

Beneficiaries

The beneficiaries of Friends of Mitchell House are the pupils of Mitchell House School and their families.

Trustees

The trustees of Friends of Mitchell House during 2022/23 and at the date the report was approved were: Mary McCartney; Miriam Donnan (Treasurer); Cathy Walker; Carol McKay; Mary Glass; Jonny Collins (Chair); Kellyanne Dorman (Secretary); Valerie Meadows.

Management Structure

Meetings are held when deemed necessary and minutes taken. The meetings are chaired by Jonny Collins; attendees include the treasurer, the secretary, trustees, staff from Mitchell House School and parents of the children who attend the school. Staff and children are encouraged to bring forward ideas for expenditure on items that will enhance the pupils care and development. The accounts are prepared at close of the financial year, independently reviewed and presented to the Committee for approval.

Activities in 2022/23

The direct benefits which flow from the work of Friends include pupils using specialised therapeutic equipment, having access to special play areas and toys and receiving specialist therapy. For the last 8 years we have employed the services of a music therapist to assist with the development of the children in the care of Mitchell House School. We consider this a key aspect of our fund raising as music therapy is a well-established clinical, evidence-based profession in which highly skilled practitioners use music interventions to address and achieve non-musical goals within a therapeutic relationship. It aims to address the physical, emotional cognitive and social needs of the pupils.

Through its activities Friends of Mitchell House raises money for the benefit of pupils of Mitchell House School, a clear aim of Friends is to assist in enhancing the pupils' school experience and help them reach their potential. Any private beneficiaries e.g. the employment of a music therapist, the use of accommodation for a residential, are incidental private benefits but essential to ensure the benefit is provided to the beneficiaries i.e. the pupils of Mitchell House School.

The trustees are satisfied that none of the activities they engage in give rise to any harm.

Accounts 2022/23

During 2021/22 we raised £5,256 from donations.

In addition, £2,724.50 was raised from the Christmas fair. We raised £2,394.66 from our Sponsored Walk and £158.61 from Amazon Smile.

Our biggest expenditure, however, in 2022/23 was the purchase of materials £4,078.36, many of which was for the revamp of the sensory garden which was funded by a grant of £3,085.41 from Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. We spent £1971.03 on the Summer Scheme allowing pupils to attend for one week during the summer.

Our opening bank balance was £141,633.22 and closing balance £144,950.70; there was £1,763.13 of unreconciled cheques.

We own a minibus which was donated to us and whose book value is £5,000.

Public Benefit Statement

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year the trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to ensure that the activities have helped to achieve the charity's purposes and provide a benefit to the beneficiaries.

Jonny Collins

Chair of Friends of Mitchell House