

**Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the  
Deaf and the Blind**

**Financial Statements**

**31 July 2022**

Finegan Gibson Ltd  
Chartered accountants & statutory auditor  
Causeway Tower  
9 James Street South  
Belfast  
BT2 8DN

# Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind

## Financial Statements

Year ended 31 July 2022

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# Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind

## Trustees' Annual Report

Year ended 31 July 2022

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The trustees present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 July 2022.

### Reference and administrative details

<b>Registered charity name</b>	Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind
<b>Charity registration number</b>	102764
<b>Principal office</b>	Jordanstown School 85 Jordanstown Road Newtownabbey

### The trustees

Fr P Devlin  
Mrs D Byrne  
Mr J Carberry  
Mrs J Dixon  
Mr P Johnston (Resigned 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022)  
Rev G Jordan  
Mrs M Matthews  
Mrs C Magowan  
Ms R A Dempsey  
Mr M Carson  
Mr C Cahalane (Resigned 21<sup>st</sup> February 2023)  
Dr C Carbery  
Mr C McGrady (Resigned 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023)

<b>Auditor</b>	Finegan Gibson Ltd Chartered accountants & statutory auditor Causeway Tower 9 James Street South Belfast BT2 8DN
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<b>Bankers</b>	Ulster Bank 2 Farmley Road Glengormley Antrim BT36 7QU  Danske Bank PO Box 183 Donegall Square West Belfast BT1 6JS
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<b>Solicitors</b>	Johns Elliot 40 Linenhall Street Belfast BT2 8BA
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# Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind

## Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

Year ended 31 July 2022

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### Structure, governance and management

The Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind is a corporate body under the Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act 1885.

The Board of Trustees are responsible for the strategic management of the charity. The Board of Trustees and names of principal advisers are set out at the Trustees Report.

The Board appoints all new trustees based on selection criteria, which ensures that collectively it maintains a broad range of relevant skills and experience.

The trustees have the overall responsibility for the system of internal control for the charity, which includes ensuring that there are reasonable practices in place for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. However, such a system can provide only reasonable, but not absolute, assurance against errors and fraud.

Significant risks are highlighted for consideration and monitoring by the Board. All major risks to which the charity is exposed, which have been identified by these procedures, are continually reviewed.

Systems have been implemented to mitigate these risks and are continually developed or enhanced.

Risk assessment is carried out regularly.

### Objectives and activities

The primary objective of the charity is to promote the education of the deaf and the blind. This is done by providing financial support to a school based in Jordanstown which teaches children with sensory loss both at primary and post-primary level. The Society owns the land and buildings at Jordanstown School. The Society also organises a Sensory Learning Support service (which is funded by the Department of Education) for young adults who do not attend the school. The Society in general and the Board of Trustees are mindful that the Society is a charity and that the Trustees have particular responsibilities as Trustees of a charity. This includes having regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland in relation to public benefit. The Board of Trustees of the Society met nine times during the year.

Meetings were dominated by funding issues in relation to the development of the school and the funding of specific projects / areas of work within the school. There was also a strong focus on the implementation of a Strategic Plan for the Society including the recruitment of a Chief Executive who would take forward the further development of the strategic plan under the direction of the Board of Trustees.

A Finance Subcommittee, comprising of five Trustees, met before each Board Meeting to review the finances including the investments of the Society. At the following Board Meeting a full report of such review was given. As and when needed the Finance Subcommittee sought professional advice.

# Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind

## Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

Year ended 31 July 2022

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### Achievements and performance

The Society as owner of the school buildings at Jordanstown continues to liaise with the School Board to ensure that not only are the buildings fit for purpose but are maintained to the highest standard of repair and condition for the use of the pupils, teachers and staff of Jordanstown School. Insofar as ongoing costs are not recoverable from the Education Authority, such costs are met by the Society.

The Trustees, having regard to CCNI's public benefit requirements, continue to work closely with the Board of Governors with the shared aim of ensuring that Jordanstown School continues to be a centre of excellence delivering specialist educational support to meet the unique needs of children and young people with sensory loss. With this in mind the Society has continued to provide the additional funding needed by the School to enable it to maintain its high standards.

In the year to 31 July 2022, the Society funded a range of projects within the school including:

- Sign Language Assistants for the support of deaf pupils throughout the school
- A full-time teacher of Business Studies
- A full-time teacher with responsibility for Curriculum, Careers and Transition
- Purchasing conferencing equipment to support the increased use and accessibility of remote access and communication.
- The running costs of a 7-seater car for use in such ventures as attendance of pupils at courses in other schools and colleges to enhance learning opportunities
- The provision of habilitation support for visually impaired pupils by Guide Dogs UK
- The costs associated with the provision of accredited BSL qualifications for teaching and support staff.

The original Boarding Department building continues to thrive as a nursery for pre-school children on week day mornings and an after-school club during week day afternoons. The nursery is independently operated by Sense, The National Deafblind and Rubella Association, a registered charity. The after-school club is operated by Sense under a Joint Venture agreement led by Jordanstown School with support from the Bright Start scheme. This ensures full use of School buildings and provides a very valuable service for children with an auditory or visual impairment and increases the reach of the Society in terms of the number and profile of beneficiaries.

The Trustees continue to review and update their policies and procedures. The central register of interests was maintained and the data register updated regularly.

The Board of Trustees continues to review their plans and projects in line with their mission statement - 'The Ulster Society will continuously strive to empower people with sensory loss to achieve their unique potential and optimise their independence through the provision of excellent education and other supports in partnership with other quality service providers.'

# Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind

## Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

### Year ended 31 July 2022

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#### Financial review

The net income/expenditure and movement on funds for the year after charging all expenses amounted to a loss of £662,862 (2021: £1,906,874). There is a recognition that this is a reflection of the financial markets, however careful consideration should be given as to how best to manage our investment portfolio moving forward.

Income is received in the form of dividends from a portfolio of investments managed by Brewin Dolphin, Investec and also shares managed by the Department for Communities as part of the Northern Ireland Central Investment Fund for Charities. Bank deposit interest also forms part of the annual income for the charity.

Summary of the main income streams;

Dividend income £235,027 (2021: 235,858)  
Bank deposit interest £2,606 (2021: £2,078)  
Sensory Learning Support income £23,280 (2021: £11,730)  
Education Authority £121,464 (2021: £101,852)

Summary of the main items of expenditure;

Brewin Dolphin management fee £39,101 (2021: £39,429)  
Investec management fee £7,042 (2021: £6,646)  
Charitable Activities - Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind £377,849 (2021: £386,689)  
Support Costs - Administration £63,583 (2021: £81,358)  
Governance - Audit Fees £6,738 (2021: £7,072)  
Bank interest and charges £184 (2021: £63)  
Depreciation £169,329 (2021: £176,712)  
Losses on listed investments -£560,292 (2021: £0)

#### **Reserves Policy**

Reserves are the part of a charity's unrestricted funds that are freely available to spend on any of the charity's purposes. This definition excludes restricted income funds and endowment funds, although holding such funds influences our reserves policy. Our General Reserves also exclude tangible fixed assets such as land, buildings and other assets held for the Society's use. It also excludes amounts designated for essential future spending. The Society has various types of funds for which it is responsible, and which are separately held to meet the charitable objectives of the Society.

The Trustees retain surplus reserves in order to be able to respond in a timely fashion to the changing needs of the School, given the limited resources made available from the Education Authority. In addition to their existing commitments, the Trustees may be required to fund additional teachers, support staff or equipment. The reserves policy is reviewed annually by the Trustees to ensure it meets the current requirements and circumstances of the charity.

# Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind

## Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

Year ended 31 July 2022

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### Plans for future periods

In line with good governance The Society has in place a strategic plan, which is operationalised on an annual basis. The work of The Society is determined based upon the agreed plans and identified need in line with the organisation's constitution.

Work continues on implementing, reviewing and updating these plans and The Society plans to appoint a Chief Executive to take forward future development based upon this framework and under the direction of the Board of Trustees. There will be a specific focus on extending the reach of The Society beyond Jordanstown School and its pupils both in terms of age and geographical basis.

The Society, in the pursuit of its aim of providing excellent education and other supports for people with a sensory loss, considers it important to build relationships with other entities having similar aims for the purpose of sharing ideas and experiences.

It is vital that the Society and the School maintain a close working relationship to ensure that The Society remains responsive to the needs of beneficiaries. The processes to secure this will be kept under continual review.

The Society considers it important to ensure that it has a high profile in the local community and will use all endeavours to secure this by means of hosting appropriate events where possible.

The Society will provide funds, insofar as these are not available from any other source, to enable the teaching staff to acquire the requisite qualifications to enable such teachers to provide education to the highest standard for those pupils who have a sensory loss.

### Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

# Ulster Society for Promoting the Education of the Deaf and the Blind

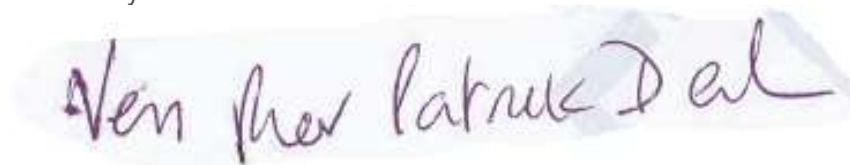
## Trustees' Annual Report *(continued)*

### Year ended 31 July 2022

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

The trustees' annual report was approved on 9 May 2023 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Fr P Devlin", is written on a light blue, slightly textured rectangular background. The signature is cursive and fluid.

Fr P Devlin  
Trustee