

# Laughter Land

## Company Limited by Guarantee

### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 March 2023

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The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

#### Reference and administrative details

<b>Registered charity name</b>	Laughter Land
<b>Charity registration number</b>	NIC104520
<b>Company registration number</b>	NI054445
<b>Principal office and registered office</b>	The Unit Black Park Road Toomebridge Co Antrim BT41 3SL

#### The trustees

Mrs Anna Marie McFerran	
Mrs Natasha McCullough	(Resigned 24/10/2023)
Ms Maria McCloskey (Vice-Chairperson)	(Resigned 24/10/2023)
Ms Amy-Beth Gervin (Secretary)	(Resigned 24/10/2023)
Ms Roisin Higgins (Chairperson)	
Ms Fiona Gilmore	
Ms Monica Keenan	
Mrs Aisling Murphy	(Appointed 25/10/2022)
Mrs Orla Diamond (Treasurer)	(Appointed 25/10/2022)
Mrs Victoria Young	(25/10/2022 to 24/10/2023)
Mrs Emma Nugent	(25/10/2022 to 01/04/2023)
Miss Aisling Diamond	(Resigned 24/10/2023)
Mrs Jessica McGeehan	(Resigned 24/10/2023)
Mrs Fiona O'Kane	(Appointed 24/10/2023)
Miss Justine Quinn	(Appointed 29/01/2024)

<b>Independent examiner</b>	S O'Neill & Company 14 Main Street Toomebridge Co. Antrim Northern Ireland BT41 3TQ
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# Laughter Land

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### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

#### Year ended 31 March 2023

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#### Structure, governance and management

##### Organisational Structure

Laughter Land was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the Company and is governed under its Articles of Association. It is a charitable company limited by guarantee and was incorporated on 24 March 2005.

Laughter Land's charity registration under The Charity Commission for NI was approved on 11 March 2016.

The charitable company is governed by the Board of Directors, and directors are required to attend at each AGM. There is a minimum of five directors on every Board. One third of the directors shall retire from office at the AGM. The directors to retire in every year shall be those who have been longest in office since their last election, but between persons who became Directors on the same day as those to retire shall be determined by lot. A retiring Director shall be eligible for re-election.

Directors may meet together for dispatch of business, adjourn and otherwise regulate meetings as they think fit and questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a majority of votes. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote. The quorum necessary for the transaction of business of the directors may be fixed by directors and unless so fixed at any other number shall be five directors.

New directors are briefed on their legal obligations under charity and company law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the committee and decision making process, key internal controls and procedures regarding funding applications, child registers, cash collection, review of wages and staffing, cheque signatories and recent performance of the Trust. They are free to discuss any issue with other directors.

Mrs Geraldine McCoy is appointed to supervise the day to day operations of the Company. There is no remuneration paid to any of the directors by the Trust in relation to this role.

#### RISK MANAGEMENT

The Directors have reviewed the key risks facing the charity and have established procedures to manage those risks.

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### Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report) *(continued)*

#### Year ended 31 March 2023

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#### Objectives and activities

The principal activity of the Company is to enhance the development and education of children aged 3-11 in Toomebridge and its environs without distinction of gender, disability, ethnic identity, nationality, religion or political affiliation by:

- providing the necessary facilities for the daily care, recreation and education of children aged from 3-11;
- advancing the education and training of persons involved in the provision of such care; and
- encouraging the study of the needs of such children and their families and promoting public interest in and recognition of the needs of such children and their families in the area of benefit.

#### The focus of our work

The main focus of our work continued to be the provision of pre-school and after school childcare to children in the local community.

How our activities deliver public benefit is to:

1. enable parents of pre-school children to access affordable, safe and secure childcare which provides high quality care and education and contributes to the development and well-being of children in the local community;
2. provide an after-school service to support working parents and provide an affordable, safe and secure environment after-school.

Those who use and benefited from our services

	2023	2022
Pre-school funded	20	26
Pre-school non-funded	14	14
After-school	–	60

The charitable company is registered and inspected by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland and are required to follow and implement the Curriculum Guidance for Pre-School Education. Early years inspectors last follow up inspection was January 2020 where it was concluded that the quality of education provided by the playgroup was very good.

In addition to our staff we also have an assigned social worker, Grainne O'Kane, who keeps us up to date on childcare issues.

We also employ the services of Ann Dixon an Independent Early Years Advisor who visits us up to 5 times per year providing staff training, advice on the curriculum, networking and help with other playgroup matters.

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##### **Achievements and performance**

Management have DENI funding allocation of 20 children and DENI have made a provisional allocation of 26 funded places for 2023/24.

Fundraising for the year 2022/23 included a Sponsored walk which helped to fund our playgroup annual school trip as well as cover essential costs including training. The children benefited from a sports day event which had funding from the Jubilee payment. Other fund raising during the year included a Halloween disco, a Saint Patrick's Day disco, a table quiz and a bake sale.

All staff have updated safeguarding training. The centre manager, Pat Downey, has worked towards retirement this year making way for the promotion and development of our forthcoming manager, Geraldine McCoy. We wish Pat all the best in her retirement and thank her for her years of service to the organisation. We wish Geraldine all the best in her new role. We thank our local community for their continued help in support. We hope to further develop special educational needs areas for our children in the forthcoming year, together with making improvements to our outdoor area.

##### **Financial review**

The surplus for the year was £600 (deficit 2022: £9,786) which has increased(2022: decreased) the total fund balance carried forward to £14,646 (2022: £14,046). The Statement of Financial Activities for the year is detailed on page 8.

##### **Reserves policy**

The management committee has examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks of the organisation. It has established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be between 2 and 3 months of expenditure. Expenditure for 2022-23 was £106,130 (2021-22 £115,404) therefore the target is £17,688 to £26,532 (2021-22 £19,234 to £28,851) in general funds. At the year end the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets are not within the target amount range. The management committee are aware of this and have received a number of grants in the 2024 financial year from different granting bodies.

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#### Plans for future periods

The Charity planned to continue the activities outlined above in the forthcoming years, subject to satisfactory funding arrangements.

At present the Management Committee are seeking a new site within the area to accommodate Laughter Land. In relation to this, it is hoped that this may be facilitated to the grounds of Anahorish Primary School with a submission being made to the Education Board for pre-approval. We are still awaiting a response from them regarding this. Other options are being considered.

We have also been fortunate in recruiting a vast number of new committee members this year with a large variety of skills. With the implementation of new social media platforms and fundraising plans to name but a few, the changes that are due to be implemented this forthcoming year, we are very enthusiastic for the future of Laughter Land.

#### Small company provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The trustees' annual report was approved on 28 March 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Mrs Roisin Higgins (Chairperson)  
Director