

Ballyclare Family Focus

**240 Rashee Rd
Ballyclare
BT39 3JQ**

AGM Annual Report - June 2023 – December 2024

Ballyclare Family Focus, founded in 2003, is a Non-incorporated Christian Charity no 104737 registered with the NI Charity Commission.

TRUSTEES AND GOVERNANCE

In the setting of our objectives and planning, careful consideration has been given to the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit to insure that all activities help achieve the charity's purposes and provide benefit to the beneficiaries.

Ballyclare Family Focus (BFF) is constituted as a Voluntary Community Organization and a Registered Christian Charity as set out in our Governing Document. The Board of Management met bi-monthly and minutes have been recorded. The Board of Management consists of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and two committee members. The new Board of Management consists of a Director, Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and three board members.

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE

Our vision is a harmonious and vibrant community which values the individual and family life: people feel accepted, confident and secure, engage productively in community life and have hope for the future.

We aim to be instrumental in providing effective early intervention Family Support Work for the town and rural communities of Ballyclare.

Outcomes

The outcomes for beneficiaries include:

1. Advancing education and providing educational courses and training for developing individual capabilities and life-skills.
2. Social and recreational groups.
3. Improvement of mental and emotional health and well-being and promotion of healthy lifestyles.
4. Networking with and signposting to other family support agencies, building partnerships to collaborate and broaden our services.
5. Encouraging the improvement of living conditions and safe and stable home environments for children, young people, individuals and families.

The main activities in BFF

BFF operates community outreach programmes and a preschool as a non-profit social enterprise.

1. Counselling and Active Listening Service and 'Pot of Gold' child bereavement care
2. Little Blossoms Preschool run by salaried staff.
3. Recreational and social gatherings for parents & children
4. Educational Courses - parenting courses.

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS in 2023-24

Counselling & Active Listening Service Provision was available all year

Little Blossoms Pre-preschool	September 2023 - June 2024
Parent gatherings	Termly
Pot of Gold	September – Dec 2024
Family Support Hub	Monthly
Locality Planning Group	Monthly

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT 2023 - 24

Directors: Marion McCallion

Chairperson: Marion McCallion (Vice)

Secretary: Allison Campbell

Treasurer: Rachel Knowles

Committee: Eamon Mullan, Jennifer Morrison, Rachel Howe

BOARD MEETINGS

The AGM 2022-23 celebrated Ballyclare Family Focus 20th Anniversary on Tuesday 28th November at 7pm.

This year BFF welcomed Jennifer Morrison and Rachel Howe onto the Board of Management. Both Sinead Davies and Jennifer Morrison needed to step back from Board commitments but the addition of Rachel Howe was a strengthening factor.

Board meetings were held bi-monthly by zoom on 23rd Jan, 26th March, 9th April, 11th June, 3rd September, and 15th October.

The Board of Management focused on the action plan drawn up from the Strategy Review completed in June 2023 and presented by Alison Keenan from Eos Consultants in September 2023.

The Strategy Review has set out recommendations and targets for the next 5 years. In this first year, attention has been given to capacity building of our organization, preschool relocation and BFF management issues.

Governance Training Session for BFF Board Members was carried out by NICVA on 18th April 2024.

Minutes of all board meetings are available on request.

Acquisition of a Solicitor

BFF has acquired the services of solicitors Reid & Black of Ballyclare

BFF CENTRE MANAGEMENT

BFF Centre Manager: Adelyn Carr

Little Blossoms Pre – preschool Settings Manager: Jennifer Thompson

All BFF management and administration is done by Adelyn Carr. Little Blossoms management is done by Jennifer Thompson and supported by Adelyn.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial Management Team comprises of our Finance Manager Brian Glencross, Adelyn Carr, Marion McCallion, Jennifer Thompson and Anna Harper.

A Financial Advisory and Planning Group meet on occasion to address a number of financial issues. Members of this group included Brian Glencross, Robert Lamont and Eamon Mullan. We are thankful for each ones input.

Brian Glencross, from Bridon Business Services, manages the financial business of BFF and Little Blossoms Pre-preschool. Bookkeeping was managed by the Centre manager Adelyn Carr and volunteer Jessica Montgomery. Bank account signatories are Adelyn Carr, Marion McCallion and Anna Harper.

Salary payments:

Brian Glencross operates our payroll and we extend many thanks to both Brian and Anna Harper, who together with Jennifer Thompson, our settings manager, manage our preschool staff salary payments

Staff pension scheme

This year BFF has set up a pension scheme with NEST in order to provide staff pensions. Brian Glencross will manage the pension scheme.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

BFF has two business bank accounts with Danske Bank. One is for the business of Little Blossoms Pre-preschool and the other is for the business of BFF.

Brian Glencross from Bridon Business Services is our Financial Manager who draws up all our monthly accounts, wages reports and our end of year income and expenditure accounts. Our Auditor is Geoff McGookin.

The end of year income and expenditure accounts reflect a **surplus of £810** in the BFF Account and a **deficit of £2,463** in the Little Blossoms Account. This brings our total deficit to **£1,626**.

INCOME

Funding

BFF is financially dependent on income from funding and donations. Funding Bodies that supported BFF this year include ANB Council grants and Pathways Fund.

Antrim and Newtownabbey Council provided a 3-year grant award of £20,640.00 which provides £6880 per year from April 2023-31 March 2026 to contribute to premises and activity costs.

Failed applications were made to Halifax Invest 40 grant and the Lottery Fund 2024-25

In January 2024 BFF registered with the Stewardship Funding Body

On this funding portal supporters can quickly and easily set up regular or one-off giving online. Automatic monthly payments direct to our bank account include all gifts which have cleared into our Stewardship account.

Marion McCallion is a registered user on the Partner Account of Ballyclare Family Focus.

Preschool fees income

Little Blossoms Preschool has kept fees at an affordable cost with child places subsidised by The Pathways Fund which is a DE Early Years' Education Fund.

Fundraising

Donations came from Penny Tuppence Fundraising Charity' Pennypots' and we extend our grateful thanks and appreciation to Andy McCallion. We were blessed to receive a number of anonymous donations.

Insurance Costs With the amended figures due to increased preschool numbers and inflation rates our insurance premium has gone up from 911.25 to £1147.95

Rent increment- from October 2023 rent has increased to £700 pm for both BFF (£460) & Little Blossoms preschool (£240)

Outstanding Loans

We have three outstanding loans and wish to extend our grateful thanks to our kind donors.

VOLUNTEERING

We could not have managed nor achieved this year without the SIGNIFICANT help from our VALUED and dedicated volunteers. Volunteer team includes members of the Board of Management, parents and people from community. 10 Volunteers helped with activities including administration, fundraising, publicity, project coordination, planning, management, and running our various community outreach projects. Volunteer training was accessed by means of webinars.

Belfast Bible College Placement BFF partnered with BBC to host a student from Belfast Bible College on weekly ministry placement. Isabell Hamill helped with our BFF administration, Pot of Gold registrations and counselling referrals.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECTS

Family Support Network Hubs and Locality Planning Group

Adelyn Carr from BFF attends the monthly Action for Children 'Family Support Hubs' and the Northern Trust 'Locality Planning Group'. Monthly meetings are either face to face or online. Through the Family Support Hub we receive our child and teen referrals for our Pot of Gold group. Teens are seen at our Active listening one to one sessions and some are referred on to the Ray of Light Course with Mary Gault.

NICVA Membership and Early Years Membership was renewed.

Pot of Gold 2023- Adelyn Carr, Marion McCallion, Isabel Hamill, Pam Winter, Jean Downey facilitated this 12-week course attended by 10 children. Which ran from September 2023 – Jan 2024

Pot of Gold 2024 - Adelyn Carr, Marion McCallion and Deborah Halligan facilitated this 12-week course. 12 children applicants but only attended by 5 children.

This year BFF partnered with Growing Through to manage and administrate the referrals and registration of children for the Pot of Gold course, Adelyn from BFF attended the Newtownabbey Family Support Hub and Mary Gault attended the Carrickfergus Family Support Hub

BFF COUNSELLING SERVICE

Active Listening & mentoring:

One to one active listening sessions were attended by a number of adults and children in need of support attended with their parents. Parent support as also provided through our active listening service

Adelyn Carr and Marion McCallion held sessions for 12 adult clients this year. Adelyn mentored 5 young adults.

Telephone Sessions were also carried out with a number of clients and Isabel Hamill helped with these telephone appointments.

Little Blossoms Pre-preschool for 2-3 year olds is a private non-for-profit social enterprise which is run by salaried staff.

Jennifer Thompson, the Preschool Settings Manager, efficiently ran the preschool operations with a team of 8 staff comprising: Tasha Loughlin, Kathy Black, Lesley-Ann Witherspoon, Jenny Taylor, Irene Boyd, Sarah-Jayne Hunter and Jaki Wright. Irene Boyd, Sarah-Jayne Hunter and Jaki Wright received redundancy payments. Deborah Halligan joined the staff team through a Jobstart Scheme in September 2024.

We acknowledge the vital contribution they have made in establishing high standards and quality early learning experiences for the children who attended this year.

Premises relocation

In order to meet the Planning Permission and Building Control requirements BFF has decided to relocate the preschool to the New Heart Church facility in the new year. Over the year we have carried out building control work in order to renovate and prepare the facility for a move in January 2025.