

Charity registration number Charity No. NIC105291

**COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS
ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Charity number

Charity No. NIC105291

Principal address

Unit 6 North City Business Centre
2 Duncairn Gardens
Belfast
BT15 2GG

Auditor

Celine Corrigan
Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

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COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Trustees' report for the year ended 31st March 2023

The trustees of CRIS are pleased to present their annual report and the financial statements for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name: Community Relations In Schools

Charity Number: NIC105291

The charity is an unincorporated association as per the Constitution.

Principal Office: Unit 6, North City Business Centre, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT152GG

Registered Office: Unit 6, 2 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GG

Auditor: Corrigan CA Limited
24 Greystone Road
Antrim
BT41 2GG

Bankers: Ulster Bank Ltd. Unit 1 Westwood Centre, Kennedy Way, Belfast, BT11 9BQ

CRIS Trustees as of 31st March 2024:

Norman Richardson (Chair)

Patricia O'Neill (Vice Chair)

Lawrence Patterson (Treasurer)

Conor O'Neill (Secretary)

Aithne Kerrigan

Ben Craig

Objectives and activities

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable Objects

The purpose of CRIS is to actively contribute to the building of a shared and reconciled society in Northern Ireland by developing and delivering peace-building programmes and activities within and between schools and in their local communities.

CRIS also works in partnership with educational authorities, higher educational institutions, other statutory agencies, funding bodies and community organisations to bring about positive impacts at an individual, family, school community, and system level. CRIS works in cooperative arrangements that support reconciliation and promote equality and diversity through the building of relationships and trust across society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Public Benefit Statement

The trustees of CRIS confirm that they have complied with their duty as defined in the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 (as amended) and have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The public benefit requirement has continued to inform the activities of the charity during this reporting period.

In evaluating public benefit, the trustees are pleased that the work of CRIS has had multi-level positive impacts over this past year. Our programmes, training and other partnership initiatives have involved work with 71 school communities. Over three quarters of these schools are in areas of high deprivation and CRIS intentionally focuses its resources in these communities where the legacy of the conflict continues to make an impact.

Within the reporting period, through its programmes and activities, CRIS directly engaged 3840 distinct participants (pupils, parents, teachers, classroom assistants, principals, Boards of Governors). The total beneficiaries are 500 more than the previous year.

Indirectly many more children, young people and members of their whole school communities have benefited due to the programmes, capacity building, and relationship development initiatives undertaken to support diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding both within and between schools across all sectors and phases of education.

Wider benefits are identified such as organisational practice-based learning that is captured and disseminated supporting emerging policy and initiatives in education and Good Relations. For example, during Good Relations Week 2023, CRIS launched its report on trust with Coventry University. Policy makers and funding bodies showed keen interest in research findings. In February 2024, CRIS and Coventry University were invited to present the *Trust Indicator Framework* (TIF) and its suggested applications to a strategic partnership meeting with senior officials of The Executive Office (TEO) and Community Relations Council (NICRC).

Furthermore, a review of the government's *Together Building a United Community* (TBUC) strategy (2013-2023) has been initiated in this period and the *Trust Indicator Framework* (TIF) is under consideration to bring a new lens to how Good Relations is measured and the need to consider processes for trust building as a foundational principle and practice.

In the *Achievements and Performance* section of this report additional public benefit is detailed in the area of supporting systems change. CRIS has played an increasingly central role to improve regional contributions to peace and reconciliation by partnering with the Education Authority and their continued work to improve, refine and extend Shared Education across Northern Ireland.

Additionally, CRIS creates wider public benefit by sharing good news stories and case studies of impact that present alternative hopeful narratives, putting the voice of participants and schools to the fore, countering the dominant conflict orientated messaging regarding Northern Ireland. CRIS's work in communications highlights the unique role school communities play supporting an intergenerational framework for peace and reconciliation. It demonstrates innovative solutions that transcend structural and psychological divisions and has an international appeal given the transferability of Shared Education in other conflict/post-conflict contexts.

During this reporting period CRIS has increased its communications, with a core purpose to champion an alternative narrative that speaks to the aspirations of the 'silent majority' to live in a more shared and reconciled society.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Summary of the Main Activities

The core activities of CRIS are:

- Provision of training, consultancy and multi-disciplinary support across all school sectors to build capacity and confidence to work with Good/ Community Relations and to support best practice in sharing and collaborative working.
- Delivering school-based, inter-community pupil programmes that promote diversity, inclusion and peacebuilding and that engage with perceived sensitive and contentious issues in age and stage appropriate ways.
- Provision of opportunities to engage parents/carers in Good/Community Relations and peacebuilding work with and through schools and other networks on a single identity and an inter-community basis.
- Advocacy for the role that schools, and education can play in supporting an intergenerational framework for peacebuilding and a shared future.
- Dissemination of good practice, research findings and resources on Good/ Community Relations and school-based peacebuilding through a variety of means including social media, traditional communication, through the writing of articles, hosting events/ conferences, and providing inputs for third level education institutions, statutory bodies, and other organisations.
- Ongoing development of evaluation systems linked to our model of practice - *Good Relations and Collaborative Education* (GRACE).
- Continuing to develop the sustainability of the organisation and ensure governance systems are robust adopting a continual improvement approach across all areas of organisational development.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Year in Numbers

39 th Year	71	3094	212	534	£107,274	£340,737
Supporting School-based Peacebuilding	Schools	Pupils	Parents/ carers	Teachers/ principals	Unrestricted Reserves	Total Income

Programme Overview

The three core aims set out in the CRIS strategic plan (2021-2024):

- AIM 1: Catalysing Peace and Reconciliation
- AIM 2: Equipping and Inspiring the Education Sector
- AIM 3: Sustaining and Growing CRIS to achieve our mission

In its current strategy CRIS commits to investing its funded resources in seven localities across Northern Ireland. These include Newtownabbey & Glengormley, Antrim and Randalstown, and five additional localities aligned with The Executive Office's Urban Villages Initiative (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan; Colin/West Belfast, Eastside/ East Belfast; Sandy Row, Donegall Pass and the Markets areas/ South Belfast; and The Bogside, Fountain and Bishop Street in Derry/Londonderry). CRIS also has a regional remit linked to its capacity building initiatives with teachers (including trainee teachers) and school leaders and work with the Education Authority (EA) to support scaling work linked to Shared Education.

CRIS also has a targeted programme located across the Crumlin Road interface called *Everyday Peacebuilding in Ardoyne and Shankill*. The *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme works with pupils, parents, teachers, and community stakeholders and is anchored to two Nursery Schools where the interschool buddy system was pioneered over twenty-five years ago. *Everyday Peacebuilding* is an intentional longer-term commitment and seeks to work with a capped number of ten schools so an enhanced programme offering and partnership has a greater possibility of transforming relationships and new norms of peace.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The rationale for CRIS's commitment across the seven localities is strategic in nature and has built new ways of working distinct to each initiative. In the Antrim and Newtownabbey council area, CRIS has built upon a long history of cross-sector collaboration in order to support the development of GRACE - Good Relations and Collaborative Education. Originally piloted by CRIS with the Antrim and Randalstown Schools Moving Forward Together partnership (MFT), GRACE has become a model of good practice and is viewed as ground-breaking by educational stakeholders. The success of MFT led to the deliberate decision by CRIS to further invest in this council area due to strong appetite and the existence of trusted networks. In 2019 the *Growing GRACE* programme was established and over the subsequent five years collaboration has formalised into the *Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together* (NEST) partnership involving 21 schools and other stakeholders.

With regard to CRIS's other strategic locality-based programmes, The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages initiative partnered with CRIS to support the Buddy Up! Project to be scaled in all Primary Schools across the five localities since 2019. Buddy Up! as a funded programme officially wound down in March 2024. In its final year, CRIS has provided enhanced capacity building support to schools and resources to enable them to continue to use the inter-school buddy system in their ongoing partnership work. Furthermore, during this period CRIS was successful in its funding proposal to the Executive Office to produce a short film to highlight the outcomes and multitude of impacts made possible by the investment over 5 years. A formal celebration event will be held in the following year to formally close the programme and signpost schools to additional support and funding opportunities.

Teacher Training

Supporting student teacher training is a regular feature of the programme year with requests from Stranmillis University College. This year CRIS led 5 sessions in the *Leadership for Diversity and Mutual Understanding* module which seeks to promote best practice among educators in building leadership in diversity, equality, inclusion, and inter-cultural competence.

Service Delivery

In recent years CRIS has lessened its service delivery work due to the level of funding received. In this reporting period CRIS provided specialised bespoke training to Dungannon Integrated College, and a Community Safety initiative run by Antrim Newtownabbey Council involving all Primary Schools across the Council. CRIS is re-developing its consultancy model and enhancing our workforce via recruitment and training of Associates. These activities will help prime CRIS to extend provision in future years.

Everyday Peacebuilding (North Belfast)

The workplan focused on three main areas: school engagement (work with pupils and school staff); parental engagement; and community engagement. The aim of school-based activities was to build upon the network of 8 schools situated on the Crumlin Road interface with links to each other and Buddy Up! through the Nursery school programme with Edenderry and Holy Cross Nursery Schools.

School Engagement Activities Included:

- Listening exercises with individual schools
- Networking and planning events for school leaders and staff
- Teacher training programme to aid delivery of pupil programmes and enhance capacity and confidence to work on curriculum topics.
- Staff training day with Holy Cross and Edenderry Nursery Schools to support planning for the restart of their Buddy Up programme after its suspension due to Covid.
- Pilot programme with Classroom Assistants linked to all schools.
- Planning, delivery and evaluation of P3 *Celebrating Diversity* (9 hour) programme to 3 school partnerships involving over 150 pupils.
- Planning, delivery and evaluation of P7 *Knowing Me, Knowing You* (18 hour) programme to 3 school partnerships involving over 150 pupils.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Parent and Community Engagement Activities Included:

- Four workshops with parents linked to the Nursery Schools (Apr- Jun 2023).
- Eight workshops and art project with parents (new school year Jan – Mar 2024)
- Support for community fun day at Stormont Park
- Another highlight of the year was the first-ever Buddy Up! Disco which was held at Girdwood Community Centre on Saturday 19th March. Children and parents of Everyday Peacebuilding Schools attending with approx. 100 participants (50 children + 50 adults. The event was deemed a success with positive feedback from parents and children indicating that it was viewed as a positive opportunity for buddies to meet outside of school. Interviews with participants were conducted to capture material for CRIS's new short film in development.
- Meetings were held with several community organisations and local churches to share more information about Buddy Up! and the Everyday Peacebuilding Programmes. Networking meetings will be a key feature of the programme moving forward as CRIS and schools are keen to develop a more joined up approach to support the aims of the project and the families it serves.

CRIS is delighted that the *Everyday Peacebuilding* programme has had such a successful two years. The ability to meet the majority of programme targets and objectives despite the unexpected departure of a newly appointed programme lead in September 2023 is testament to the agility of staff to reorganise resources and utilise a team of experienced Associates to support the ambitious workplan. Delivery during this period was also heavily supported by the Director of Programmes who stepped into the Coordinating role and the CEO who also supported planning and delivery.

During this period the Board was delighted to welcome Damon Henry on as project lead in April 2024 and anticipate some staffing stability going forward which will aid wider organisational targets and goals.

Growing GRACE: Newtownabbey Empowering Schools Together (NEST) Partnership

NEST is a reconciliation initiative that works to build understanding, collaboration, and trust between school communities in Newtownabbey. CRIS coordinates, resources and helps schools to co-create their own action plans linked to commonly identified needs in their localities. NEST schools are committed to a shared vision and voice for collaboration and believe that this will create an educational ecosystem that benefits all 21 school communities. The partnership is in its fifth year and progress is accelerating. Key headlines from this reporting period include:

- As identified in GRACE Stage one, ongoing engagement with individual schools is a core aspect of the partnerships development and bespoke support offered by CRIS's Senior Practitioner.
- Four NEST partnership meetings for school Principals to plan activities and strategies to strengthen their network and visibility in the community
- Supporting New Shared Education activities (*Edmund Rice College & Integrated College Glengormley*). CRIS provided programmes, training and support for whole staff teams and Year 8 pupils focussing on themes relating to identity, community, conflict and flags and symbols.
- Sourcing funding for ongoing sustainability is an ongoing endeavour. CRIS was delighted to attract two investors, Ardbarron Trust and Clanmil and Connswater Housing Association.
- CRIS Facilitated three Shared Learning Networks for teachers involving over 50 staff.
- Staff training was provided for schools involving over 30 staff from St Mary's on the Hill PS, Carnmoney PS, and Ballyhenry PS and Gaelscoil Éanna who are hoping to engage in Shared Education for the first time.
- Primary School pupil programmes were delivered to school partnerships involving over 200 pupils and 20 staff.
- Controversial Issues training was delivered for 15 NEST teachers and principals.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Buddy Up! in Urban Villages

The Buddy Up! Programme workplan between April 2023 - March 2024 involved 637 pupils, 87 teachers and 69 parents across 5 Locations: North Belfast; West Belfast; East Belfast; South Belfast and Derry-Londonderry. Across these localities, CRIS ran Buddy Up! with 26 schools with each programme involving work with pupils, parental engagement and a two-day teacher training programme. Due to its final year CRIS has also been working on an exit strategy and aims to be able to support schools, particularly those involved in new Shared Education partnerships in the years ahead. CRIS was delighted to be awarded not only funding to support an external review of the project which has proven useful for organisational learning and programme development but also funds to create a short film to share the story of the many positive impacts across 34 schools in the project's lifetime. The film will be premiered during Good Relations week in September 2024. A new Ripples of Peace impact case study was written during this period featuring St Matthew's P.S. and Nettlefield P.S. and is available here: <https://www.crisni.org/post/ripples-of-peace-weaving-friendship-in-the-shadow-of-the-shipyard>

Feedback from Buddy Up! Evaluations:

CRIS developed a new survey to help measure the quality of relationships being developed between children involved in the programme. Indicators from the newly launched Trust Indicator Framework (TIF), research project between CRIS and Coventry were utilised and children were involved in a pre and post surveys. The data including 794 surveys across 26 schools, will prove invaluable in CRIS's drive to improve its programming for the future. This data will inform CRIS practice for years to come, and the learning taken from it will be disseminated to make a positive impact in the sector as a whole.

Some of the findings particularly noteworthy are detailed below.

Pre-programme surveys with P7 children found that:

- 54% of P3s said they felt worried or unsure when meeting people different from them
- 63% of P7s said they felt worried or unsure about meeting their buddy
- 69% of P7s said they felt worried about meeting people who are different from them
- 60% of P7s said that they were not comfortable talking openly about their beliefs

Post-programme surveys with P7 found that:

- 71% of P7s said they wanted to spend more time with their buddy
- 75% of P7s said they had fun leaning how children were different and how they were similar
- 59% of P7s said they were more comfortable meeting children from the other school
- 95% of P7s said they had a chance to think and talk about the different groups of people who live in Northern Ireland

Teachers and Principals were also asked about their experiences with Buddy Up! This too yielded positive feedback finding:

- 100% believe that participating in Buddy Up! has been beneficial to their personal and professional development
- 91% agreed Buddy Up! contributed towards community cohesion and good relations
- 100% believe Buddy Up! has offered their class a positive experience of Shared Education

Sample of Qualitative Feedback from Teachers:

- *"A super initiative that allows our children to integrate with our neighbours. A very worthwhile programme".*
- *"It develops respect and understanding in children that they can apply through life".*
- *"It was a great way to build relationships between both children and staff. It was a lot of fun and got*

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

- *"Delivery of the sessions is great. Both Damon and Emily make the sessions fun for everyone. They answer all questions and make every child feel like their contribution matters".*
- *"The children looked forward to each session really buying into the idea behind it".*
- *"I really enjoyed working with Emma (partner teacher) and we have built up a great friendship!"*

Next Generation Peacebuilders Programme

As a response to the need to widen and diversify our own team of Associates and the widely recognised weakening of capacity in the sector, CRIS led another recruitment drive in this reporting year. We were successful in recruiting 16 new trainee Associates and engaged them in a process of immersive training that involves a variety of shadowing and co-facilitation opportunities with our different stakeholder participant groups. CRIS was fortunate to locate the funding to support this development initiative by the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland (CFNI).

By investing in upskilling and deepening the Good Relations reflective practice in our wider team of Associates, we hope to be in a position to respond to an anticipated increase in requests for consultancy work to aid our own sustainability and to contribute to the longer-term sustainability of the sector.

Inaugural GRACE Kitemark Award:

Another accomplishment of the period was the celebration of the inaugural GRACE *Good Relations and Collaborative Education Kitemark* award. The award was presented to Ligoniel P.S. and St Vincent de Paul P.S. who followed a specific set of guidelines/criteria developed by CRIS to demonstrate at classroom and school level there was an evidence-based record of inter-school collaboration. The award marks years of strong dedication to Shared Education and joint working across the two schools. The bulk of the activity and evidence gathering for the award was gathered by April-May 2023 and the official award was presented to the two schools in October at an award ceremony hosted by Belfast City Lord Mayor Ryan Murphy held at City Hall. CRIS hope to further develop the GRACE Kite Mark in the next year. This will help recognise sites of excellence, so that at a locality-level Good Relations and reconciliation can be embedded in school communities.



See CRC E-news that featured the story -
[Inaugural Peacebuilding GRACE Award for Primary Schools](#)
[Community Relations Council \(community-relations.org.uk\)](http://community-relations.org.uk)

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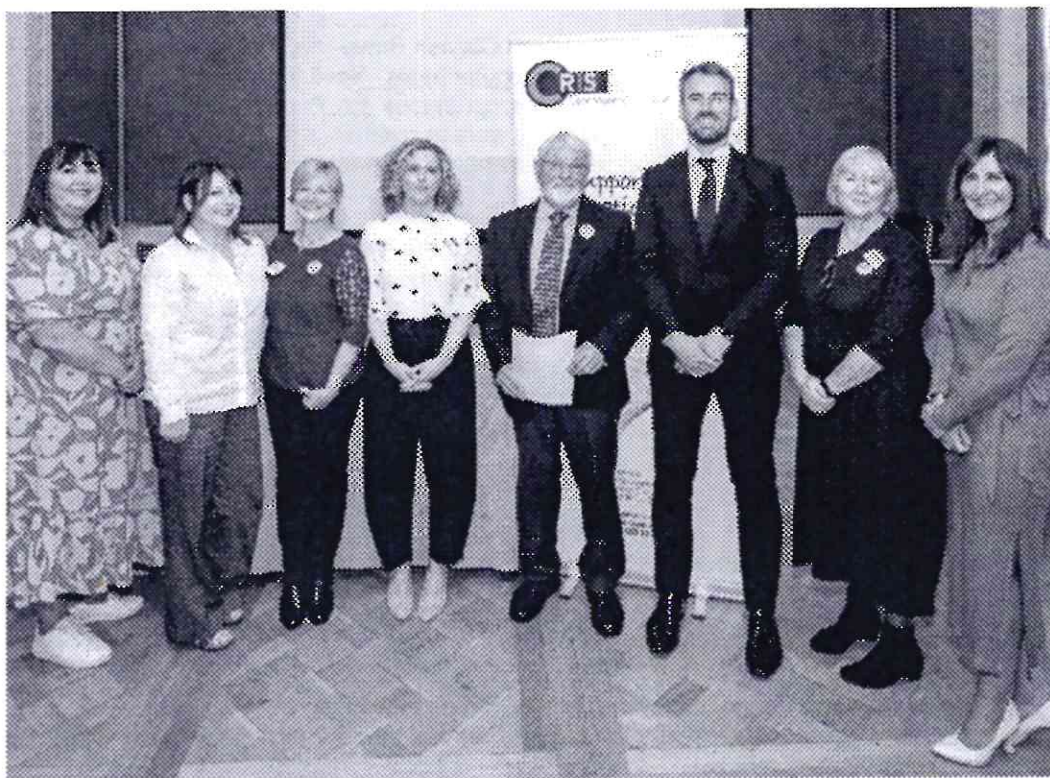
TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Research Project: Launch of the Trust Indicator Framework

CRIS was delighted to launch and begin the process of implementing our Trust Indicators Framework (TIF) to measure the development of trust in our peace and reconciliation activities. CRIS launched '*Trusting GRACE: The development of trust indicators from the Good Relations and Collaborative Education model of schools-based peacebuilding*' in

September 2023 during Good Relations week. The report was authored by Dr Emily Stanton (CRIS Director of Programmes) and Dr Charis Rice (Coventry University). The event received a high level of interest, particularly from across government departments and those responsible for Good Relations and Educational policy, statutory bodies, funders and attended by over 80 from a cross section of society including schools and community organisations.



The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) featured the launch event in the September 2023 E-news. See link:

[New Research Investigates the Role of Trust as Key Factor for Reconciliation
Community Relations in Schools
Community Relations Council \(\[community-relations.org.uk\]\(http://community-relations.org.uk\)\)](#)

A series of follow-on actions and meetings to discuss potential applicability beyond direct CRIS practice development soon commenced. For example, the Education Authority (EA) initiated discussions with the suggestion to pilot TIF into Shared Education partnerships; The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (CRC) also indicated interest as part of a wider review of evaluation of peace and reconciliation outcomes at policy level. CRIS was also invited to present the Trust Indicator Framework (TIF) to a joint meeting of NI Executive Office and the Community Relations Council. CRIS is excited at the enthusiasm by which this new research has been received and its foreseeable utility. We look forward to further developing our partnership with Coventry University and exploring how further examination of TIF in practice can support learning relevant, not only to Northern Ireland policy makers and practitioners but in other post-conflict and international contexts.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY

Development work identified in the strategic plan to aid governance and sustainability has continued to be a central theme. During this period CRIS was fortunate to secure a corporate partnership with *Lancia Consult (Belfast)* who worked with the CEO and Finance Manager, on a pro bono basis over several months, to support improvements in our data management systems and governance. The focus of our project has been to develop a knowledge transfer and management process, mapping out the mechanics of how we operate across multiple critical priorities and capture this knowledge in user-friendly systems culminating in the creation of an interactive *Knowledge Hub Handbook*. The process, carefully facilitated by Lancia colleagues has supported an increased understanding, refinement and improvement making of our own systems in areas such as financial management, risk management and HR processes to name but a few. This time, invested into governance control, risk mitigation and succession planning, allows the organisation to face future challenges with a new confidence.

During this time CRIS also continued to access consultancy support from Clayton Rowe (*Saben Group, Canada*) who has been working with the CEO and Director of Programmes on a regular basis. Several key elements were progressed during this period including the review of our two core programmes for Primary Schools work; consultation on branding and design of a new logo for CRIS; preparatory work to overhaul the CRIS website; and the redevelopment of our consultancy model including revised fee structure, process for designing projects and new templates for contracting with clients.

During this period two programme staff accessed externally provided professional development training, including a Diploma in Community Development and Oxford University Spring School in Data Analysis for Social Science. CRIS has committed itself to help ensure that staff are remunerated at a competitive level and are provided with appropriate opportunities to develop professionally. As the organisations transitions into a new diversified income model, we hope to enhance terms and conditions to ensure we reward and retain talent and attract high quality staff in future years.

Reputation, Profile and Communication:

Activity in this area has been developing at pace in recent years. CRIS's increasing role in influencing systems change include closer working relationships with the Department of Education (DENI) and Education Authority (EA). CRIS has had several strategic meetings with Senior Officials keen to utilise our practice-based expertise and evidence base. Project initiatives during this period include:

- Proposal to pilot Trust Indicator Framework in Mainstreamed Shared Education partnerships.
- CRIS approaches and resource guides to support 'Community Connections and parental engagement' included on EA's online Shared Education hub.
- Engagement with Deputy Secretary of Education linked to the Moving Forward Together partnership.
- Member of DENI's *Reducing Education Disadvantage (RED)* initiative to co-design systems and collaborative approaches for future roll out of this new initiative.
- Invitation to join EA's collaboration with the BBC's *Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland* series to support content for new teacher professional training (TPL) module on working with sensitive issues.
- CRIS CEO invited by Education Authority to provide an input at a seminar with Korean delegation.
- CRIS CEO presented on CRIS practice at Integrated Education Fund (IEF) GR Week event, 'Celebrating Diversity in Our Schools'.
- CRIS CEO part of panel on the Shared Island Dialogue Series (Irish Government).
- Good Relations Week 2023 Buddy Up Video. CRC's media company AS&G created a two-minute video on Buddy Up and profiled during GRW23.
- *Thinking Changes Project: CRIS supported the setup of a new project layering further opportunities into its current sites of work through its new link with Guth Gafa and their aim to bring philosophy education to areas particularly affected by legacy of conflict and the ongoing presence of paramilitarism.*

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TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Financial Review

Summary of Funding Secured to Support Operations:

CRIS was fortunate to secure all necessary funds to fulfil its workplan ambitions covering this period. Funding partners include:

- **The Executive Office's (TEO) Urban Villages Initiative – 'Buddy Up'** project, supporting core and programme costs, for a sixth year with a grant totalling £133,470.
- **Strategic Partner funding, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Reconciliation Fund** - total grant £84,310.
- **The Northern Ireland Community Relations Council (NICRC) core funding scheme** – Year 2 of three-year contract, £72,787.
- **Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Scheme** - project funding in two separate grants totalling £9,501.
- **Community Foundation of Northern Ireland (CFNI)** - total grant £4,370 towards CRIS's Next generation Peacebuilders capacity building programme for new Associates.

CRIS has a sound reputation for administering grants in their entirety in line with funding contracts, and for achieving and often exceeding the programme outcomes anticipated at the point of application. Feedback across funders suggests CRIS represents good value for money. CRIS is committed to keeping the governance costs associated with running the charity at a minimum ensuring the vast majority of funds goes directly towards peacebuilding activities with school communities across the seven localities we operate in.

CRIS is audited by the Community Relations Council and by The Executive Office (TEO). The organisation is highly regarded for maintaining good standards in governance and financial compliance.

CRIS also secured new investors for its Growing GRACE programme, namely Ardbarron Trust and a Housing Association partnership with Clanmil and Connswater. The funds secured will span into the next financial year and are regarded as service agreements as opposed to funding due to the nature of contractable obligations. CRIS hope to build on these connections and flexible and generous investors in the future.

The total income for April 2023 – March 2024 was £340,737 covering almost 100% of all CRIS core operating costs and funds for project related activity.

The total expenditure April 2023 – March 2024 was £308,146, thereby leaving a net income of £32,591.

The total unrestricted reserves are £107,274 therefore CRIS has now achieved 80% of its target position - an increase of approx. £22,000.

Looking forward into 2024-2025, CRIS will be diversifying its income streams due to the Executive Office's Urban Villages funding for the Buddy Up programme drawing to a close. Over the last two years CRIS has been planning for this transition by re-developing its consultancy model, recruiting and training new Associates, and thinking through strategies to engage the business community and linkages with their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitments to support fundraising and other forms of partnership.

The expenditure totals across running costs budgets were close to the original estimates detailed in our funding plans. In the area of programme expenditure, the total spent on teacher substitute cover was £22,183 (124 substitute days), a significant increase from the prior year £12,670. There are two key reasons for this increase. The accounting period was twelve months as opposed to a 9-month audit year for 2022-23. Also, CRIS was successful in accessing additional funds for the NEST programme where teacher capacity building activities are central to the workplan.

Expenses on facilitation are high at just over £30,000, due to a newly appointed staff member 'Good Relations Practitioner' resigning after six months of being in post, therefore CRIS covered a lot of delivery using its bank of experienced Associates.

Expenditure on resources increased by approximately £7,000. This is due to CRIS accessing additional funds for its new film project, programme resources, and design for CRIS publications.

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TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Financial Management:

CRIS has a Financial Management Policy and Procedure Manual which is updated annually and meets the requirements of the Charities Act for Northern Ireland, the Charity Commissions guidelines 'Internal Financial Controls for Charities' and 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Revised 2005)'.

CRIS has a Finance and Personnel Subcommittee who meet quarterly, approximately two weeks before the Board meeting. It is chaired by the Treasurer and includes the Vice Chair and another member. It is also attended by the CEO and Finance Manager who prepare financial papers and documents relating to HR matters that require Board input and decision making.

The sub-committee is responsible for reviewing and providing guidance on the organisation's financial matters. Specifically, the committee assures internal controls, independent audit, and financial analysis for the organisation.

To help the board fulfil its oversight function, the sub committee's key responsibilities relating to finance are as follows:

1. Provide direction to the Board for fiscal responsibility. Alongside this is the responsibility for future long-term planning and the development of strategies to back up the plan.
2. Ongoing review of the organisation's management accounts and funding strategy (including details of income and expenditure, balance sheet, and other matters related to its continued solvency and organisational sustainability).
3. Approve the annual budget and submit it to the Board for approval.
4. Oversee the maintenance of organisational-wide assets, including prudent management of risk exposure.
5. Provide guidance and support to CEO on all matters relating to finance, risk management and human resources.

The CEO & Finance Manager have monthly meetings with the Treasurer, and more often as required. The Chair also meets regularly with the CEO and joins team meetings that have an organisational development focus to ensure a joined-up approach between governance & delivery on charitable objectives.

The Finance Manager continues to make improvements to CRIS's financial systems to ensure an efficient and effective approach across the team. For example, over the last year the Finance Manager developed a new internal 'invoice tracker' system. The Finance Manager provided staff training and overseen a pilot period of 6 months with the main purpose to create a single system to track and manage invoices and budgets for programme expenditure. The improvements have been significant including – a user-friendly system with data easily transferable onto funder specific reporting systems; areas of responsibility tightened in sync with job descriptions relating to varying levels of administration and financial management; minimal errors in budgets and a more efficient process particularly in the final quarter of the financial year.

Reserves Policy and Procedures

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for managing and maintaining appropriate financial reserves to support the stability and sustainability of Community Relations in Schools (CRIS). The policy aims to ensure that CRIS can meet its ongoing operational commitments, manage financial risks, and invest in future projects in line with its charitable objectives.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all trustees, management, and finance staff responsible for the financial management of CRIS. It covers the identification, calculation, and review of reserves.

3. Policy Statement

CRIS is committed to maintaining a level of reserves that:

- Ensures financial stability and operational continuity.
- Allows for effective management of unforeseen financial risks or losses.
- Supports the strategic goals and future growth of the charity in accordance with the charity's purposes and

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4. Definition of Reserves

Reserves are the portion of unrestricted funds that are freely available for general charitable purposes, excluding funds set aside for specific projects, restricted funds, and fixed assets (such as property and equipment).

5. Key Guidance and References

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) Reserves Guidance: Provides guidelines on setting, managing, and reporting charity reserves (<https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/charity-essentials/managing-financial-difficulties/reserves/>)

The Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP): Offers a framework for accounting and reporting practices for charities, including reserves management.

Reserves Procedures

1. Determining the Reserves Level

- Assess Operational Needs: Annually assess the charity's operating costs, including regular expenses such as salaries, rent, and overheads.
- Risk Assessment: Conduct a financial risk assessment to identify potential risks that may impact funding, income streams, or expenditures.
- Set Target Reserves: The target reserves level should be determined based on three to six months of operating costs and anticipated financial risks.

2. Monitoring and Managing Reserves

- Quarterly Financial Reviews: Financial staff should review the reserves levels quarterly (and more often as required) to ensure they align with target thresholds.
- Annual Review by Trustees: The reserves policy and target levels should be reviewed annually by the Board of trustees.
- Reporting to Stakeholders: Include the reserves policy and current reserves position in the annual financial statements, in line with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) and Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) requirements.

3. Utilising Reserves

- Authorisation for Use: Reserves can be drawn down in the event of an emergency or financial shortfall, but must be authorised by the board of trustees.
- Replenishment of Reserves: When reserves are utilised, the board must approve a plan to replenish reserves within an agreed timeframe.
- Restricted and Designated Funds: Distinguish between unrestricted reserves, designated funds, and restricted funds, ensuring restricted funds are used solely for their intended purposes.

4. Core Purposes for Using Reserves

The Board aims to hold unrestricted reserves to enable the organisation to maintain its activities in the event of:

- Gaps in funding
- Late payment of grants and fees
- Upgrades in IT systems and equipment as and when the need arises
- Gaps in opportunities to income generate through training and consultancy work
- Its redundancy liabilities and rental and other contracts
- Its match funding obligations set out in funding contracts where any percentage of staff salaries are not covered by another funder(s)

5. Procedures for Reporting and Compliance

- Annual Reporting Requirements: In accordance with the CCNI's guidance, CRIS will include a statement on reserves within the annual report.
- Financial Statement Disclosure: Provide a clear explanation in financial statements if reserves fall below or exceed the target range.

6. Review and Revision of Policy

- Annual Policy Review: The reserves policy should be reviewed annually by the Board of trustees.
- Adjustment of Target Reserves: Any adjustment to the reserves target level should be based on updated

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7. Current Reserves Position:

As of the end of March 2024, the total reserves are £107,274.

By the end of this reporting period CRIS has achieved 80% of its target position, an increase of approx. £22,000.

The Board has revised its reserves target for this period calculating six months running costs (£106,000) and a further £28,000 for redundancies should this be necessary in the future, leaving the target amount of £130,000.

Over the course of the next year CRIS expects to meet its target reserves figure. Meeting this target will rely on successful implementation of the resource diversification strategy, which centres around a return to consultancy work, developing corporate partnerships and other forms of traditional fundraising through events and attracting donors. Substantial planning has taken place during this year to enable a successful pivot towards this new multi stranded income generation strategy.

As CRIS moves into its 40th year a large-scale celebration and fundraising event will be planned to mark the special anniversary year.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Risk Management:

The main concerns of the Board going forward are to ensure:

- That the public benefit enabled through CRIS activities is continued
- That core and programme funding can continue to be secured and increased to retain staff and ensure stability and growth
- To continue to implement appropriate salary reviews
- To action a transitional resource diversification strategy in 2024-2025 to help grow the level of reserves and meet our target
- To focus on organisational sustainability, and succession planning

The board members recognise their duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance and mitigations.

Within the section of this report titled, '*Organisational Development and Sustainability*' details have been shared relating to risk management, governance improvements and longer-term sustainability.

Within our current risk registry, we have prioritised organisational risks and the action steps we will take in which to mitigate them, with significant progress made against each risk in this reporting period. We have prioritised these starting with greatest likelihood and impact and detailed tasks that have been completed and continue to be in progress moving into the new financial year.

RISK 1: Political uncertainty in Northern Ireland and overreliance on government grants

MITIGATIONS: New funding strategy developed, with a diversification of funding partners detailed including Trusts and Foundations across Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and England. Strategy also includes relationship development with NI Shared Housing Associations, business community, return to consultancy work, and more traditional fundraising activities.

RISK 2: Lack of long-term fundraising plan

MITIGATIONS: Activities detailed above also support this risk. As CRIS successfully transition into a new multi stranded funding and income generation model in 2024-2025, a review of progress, opportunities and barriers will be conducted. A longer-term fundraising plan will be consulted upon and developed linked to a new organisational strategy planning for period 2026 – 2029.

RISK 3: Impact of cost-of-living crisis

MITIGATIONS: Exploring new salary structure to take effect 2024 – 2025; agreement to award inflationary raise when deemed affordable without adding risk to financial status, considering the conclusion of Urban Villages funding tenure with CRIS in this reporting year.

RISK 4: Loss of key staff and challenges in attracting new staff

MITIGATIONS: Activities detailed above also support this risk. Board has agreed that CRIS need to hold competitive advantage to both retain and attract new talent. Research of the terms and conditions across the sector will inform this goal in creation of a new competitive salary structure; staff development opportunities have been re-prioritised in line with CRIS study leave policy and will be afforded equitably across the team; investment in Next Generation Peacebuilders programme including recruitment and training programme to widen our team of Associates

RISK 5: Ineffective knowledge management systems

MITIGATIONS: Partnership with Lancia Consult (Belfast) has transformed the likelihood of this risk occurring. CRIS has a new *Interactive Knowledge hub Handbook* detailing process maps across seventeen critical areas relating to governance systems, management, administration and finance. Ongoing work to transfer all CRIS files onto a share point system will take place in the 2024-25 year so that interactive capabilities are achieved.

CRIS will continue to implement its new risk management process and continues to act on its governance responsibilities to ensure CRIS has plans in place to mitigate risks and put plans in place to support sustainability.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Type of governing document:

Community Relations in Schools is a community organisation governed by its constitution. It was adopted in April 1984 and last amended in October 2017 to ensure it was up to date using best practice guidelines as set out in suggested model documents on the Northern Ireland Charity Commission's website.

Trustees who have served during the year are as follows:

N Richardson
L Patterson
Mr S Graham
P O'Neill
A Kerrigan
C O'Neill
B Craig

Trustee selection methods:

At the Annual General Meeting each year a Board is appointed to run CRIS for the next year. Each member of the Committee is elected for a period of three years. Retiring members are eligible for re-election. All nominees must indicate their willingness to stand and be proposed and seconded. A written agreement of the nominated persons in absentia must be presented.

Committee members may also be co-opted on the CRIS committee as potential new interested individuals are considered throughout the year. When considering the co-opting of trustees, the Board has regard to the requirement for any specialist skills needed.

We are fortunate to have an engaged and active Board with an array of skills. The Board strives to be as diverse and representative of educational stakeholders and society in general, as possible and has expertise spanning the community and voluntary, funding, corporate and statutory sectors. CRIS plans to increase the Board to a maximum of 10 members, with priority areas identified for recruitment in the disciplines of human resources, finance, and fundraising and areas for welcome statements identified to increase our diversity.

Trustee Induction and Training:

New trustees receive an induction pack which provides information and guidelines on their task, responsibilities, and the policies and ethos. The CEO and members of the Board meet with new trustees during the preliminary stages of their appointment to talk through the organisation in more detail, the history of its work, strategic positioning, and discuss other areas of interest.

New trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity guidelines, the charity commission guidance on public benefit, the content of the constitution, the committee and decision-making process, the strategic and operational plan, and the recent financial performance of the charity.

During the induction period they will meet the full staff team, other trustees and key partners. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where these will facilitate the undertaking of their role. New trustees are invited to attend any mandatory meetings as set down by funders who support CRIS.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Organisational Structure:


The Board meets four times per year and sub-groups meet to address any additional finance, personnel and policy matters as required. Finance and Personnel subcommittee meetings take place two weeks before the Board meetings to ensure sufficient time to update briefing packs and draft recommendations for Board discussion and decision making. The policy subcommittee operates on a more *ad hoc* basis.

Statement of disclosure of information to auditors:

So far as each of the Board members at the date of approval of these financial statements are aware: (a) there is no relevant information of which the charity auditors are unaware; and (b) they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Approved and adopted by a meeting of the Trustees on Wednesday 22nd January 2025 and signed on their behalf.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.



N Richardson
(Chairperson)
Dated: 22 January 2025



L. Patterson
(Treasurer)
Dated.....

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustee Report and the accounts 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 trustees to prepare accounts for each financial 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 year.

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP);
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Community Relations In Schools (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the directors' report included within the trustees report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts And Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the trustees report; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the accounts is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

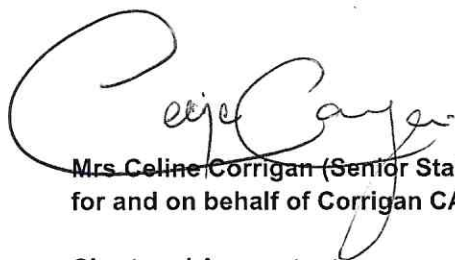
TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Other matters which we are required to address

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared accounts in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the accounts to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Mrs Celine Corrigan (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Corrigan CA Limited

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

20 January 2025

24 Greystone Road
Antrim
N Ireland
BT41 2QN

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies		-	4,450	4,450	-	-	-
Charitable activities	3	31,849	304,438	336,287	17,556	178,273	195,829
Total income		31,849	308,888	340,737	17,556	178,273	195,829
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	4	21,094	287,052	308,146	2,161	254,954	257,115
Total expenditure		21,094	287,052	308,146	2,161	254,954	257,115
Net income/(expenditure)		10,755	21,836	32,591	15,395	(76,681)	(61,286)
Transfers between funds		14,616	(14,616)	-	23,106	(23,106)	-
Net movement in funds	5	25,371	7,220	32,591	38,501	(99,787)	(61,286)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		81,903	-	81,903	43,402	99,787	143,189
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		107,274	7,220	114,494	81,903	-	81,903

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

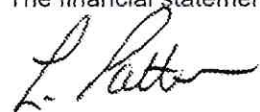
COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

		2024		2023	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Intangible assets	11		6		6
Tangible assets	10		3,421		5,102
			<u>3,427</u>		<u>5,108</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	12	86,855		32,358	
Cash at bank and in hand		35,116		50,085	
		<u>121,971</u>		<u>82,443</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(10,904)</u>		<u>(5,648)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>111,067</u>		<u>76,795</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>
			<u><u>114,494</u></u>		<u><u>81,903</u></u>
Income Funds					
Restricted Funds	14		7,220		-
Unrestricted Funds			107,274		81,903
			<u>114,494</u>		<u>81,903</u>
			<u><u>114,494</u></u>		<u><u>81,903</u></u>

The financial statements were approved by the trustees on 22 January 2025



L Patterson
Trustee

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

1 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

2 Accounting policies

Charity information

Community Relations In Schools is an unincorporated charity.

2.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016).

The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The accounts have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value.

The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

2.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

2.4 Incoming resources

Income From Charitable Activities

Income from charitable activities is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Income from government or other grants, whether 'capital' or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has the entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Donations & Legacies

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

2.5 Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure On Charitable Activities

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

The charity is below the charity audit threshold and therefore is exempt from reporting expenditure on an activity basis. The charity has opted to report by the nature rather than on an activity basis.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

2.6 Intangible fixed assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets acquired separately from a business are recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Intangible assets acquired on business combinations are recognised separately from goodwill at the acquisition date where it is probable that the expected future economic benefits that are attributable to the asset will flow to the entity and the fair value of the asset can be measured reliably; the intangible asset arises from contractual or other legal rights; and the intangible asset is separable from the entity.

Amortisation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following basis:

Software	20% straight line
----------	-------------------

2.7 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Fixtures, fittings & equipment	20% straight line
--------------------------------	-------------------

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

2.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

2.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

2.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

2 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

2.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

3 Charitable activities

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Donations	4,450	-
Service Delivery	31,849	17,556
Grants	304,438	178,273
	<u>340,737</u>	<u>195,829</u>

	Total 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Analysis by fund			
Unrestricted funds	-	31,849	31,849
Restricted funds	308,888	-	308,888
	<u>308,888</u>	<u>31,849</u>	<u>340,737</u>

	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Unrestricted funds	-	17,556	17,556
Restricted funds	178,273	-	178,273
	<u>178,273</u>	<u>17,556</u>	<u>195,829</u>

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Included in Grants Are:		
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Core Funding	72,787	39,997
Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Community Relations and Cultural Diversity Funding	9,501	1,567
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Reconciliation Fund	84,310	-
The Executive Office, Urban Villages Initiative	133,470	136,709
Community Foundation Northern Ireland	4,370	-
	<u>304,438</u>	<u>178,273</u>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4 Charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Staff costs	193,966	152,861
Staff Training	2,990	105
Depreciation and impairment	1,897	1,776
Programme Costs	-	193
Resources	12,832	5,979
Travel	8,613	9,655
Subscriptions	1,863	-
Hospitality	7,066	6,100
Facilitation	30,561	34,244
Light & Heat	1,188	967
Telephone	475	338
Sundry	1,137	1,570
Advertising	-	935
Subcover	22,183	12,670
Accountancy	2,939	2,700
Professional Fees	1,556	7,394
Bank Charges	99	174
Rent	11,655	10,314
Insurance	3,164	3,002
Post, printing & Stationery	1,708	1,169
Computer Running expenses	18	720
Venues	2,192	2,895
Loss on disposal of Fixed Assets	-	(517)
Cleaning	44	1,871
	<u>308,146</u>	<u>257,115</u>

5 Net movement in funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
The net movement in funds is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Depreciation of owned tangible fixed assets	<u>1,897</u>	<u>1,776</u>

6 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.
No trustee expenses have been incurred.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7 Auditor's remuneration

The analysis of auditor's remuneration is as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Auditor's Remuneration	2,706	2,646
Total audit fees	<u>2,706</u>	<u>2,646</u>

8 Employees

There were 6 employees during the year.

Employment costs	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	189,702	149,580
Other pension costs	4,263	3,281
	<u>189,702</u>	<u>149,580</u>

No employees received employee benefits of more than £60,000.

9 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings & equipment £
Cost	
At 1 April 2023	18,358
Additions	216
At 31 March 2024	<u>18,574</u>
Depreciation and impairment	
At 1 April 2023	13,256
Depreciation charged in the year	1,897
At 31 March 2024	<u>15,153</u>
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	<u>3,421</u>
At 31 March 2023	<u>5,102</u>

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

11 Intangible fixed assets	Software
	£
Cost	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	35,464
Amortisation and impairment	
At 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024	35,458
Carrying amount	
At 31 March 2024	6
At 31 March 2023	6

12 Debtors	2024	2023
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	86,855	32,358

13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	5,656	2,093
Other creditors	2,691	612
Accruals and deferred income	2,557	2,943

14 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
	-	308,888	(287,052)	(14,616)	7,220
Previous Period:	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
	99,787	178,273	(254,954)	(23,106)	-

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

15 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
General funds	81,903	31,849	(21,094)	14,616	107,274
Previous Period:	At 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
General funds	43,402	17,556	(2,161)	23,106	81,903

16 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Restricted £	Unrestricted £	Total £
Fund balances at 31 March 2024 are represented by:			
Intangible fixed assets	-	6	6
Tangible assets	-	3,421	3,421
Current assets/(liabilities)	7,220	103,847	111,067
	7,220	107,274	114,494

17 Movement in Funds

Fund	At 01/04/23 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers £	At 31/03/24 £
Restricted	-	308,888	(287,052)	(14,616)	7,220
Unrestricted	81,903	31,849	(21,094)	14,616	107,274
	81,903	340,737	(308,146)	-	114,494

COMMUNITY RELATIONS IN SCHOOLS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

18 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2023 - none).