



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 01/04/2019 Period start date To 31/03/2020 Period end date

Charity name: The Laughter Specialists

Charity registration number: 1132987

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	<p>The objectives of the trust are:</p> <p>To relieve sickness, preserve and protect health by providing specially trained entertainers known as Laughter Specialists for sick children in hospitals, and those with special needs in schools, residential homes and similar institutions. Laughter Specialists also visit adults with special needs.</p> <p>To advance the education of the public in the benefits of laughter as an aid to good health.</p> <p>To achieve these objectives the trust provides specialist entertainers/performers to visit sick children and those with special needs bringing interactive play, laughter and fun.</p>
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	<p>Activities of Laughter Specialists for the public benefit:</p> <p>The Trust funds professional entertainers/performers to be Laughter Specialists (often known as 'clown doctors') who use their skills to bring fun and laughter to sick children in hospital and to children with special needs in schools and other similar institutions.</p> <p>The Laughter Specialists use magic, songs, music, puppets and improvisation bringing therapeutic interactive play, laughter and fun. Their aim is to improve the lives of the children in the hospitals & parents, carers and siblings. They visit Addenbrookes Hospital Cambridge, Broomfield Hospital Chelmsford, Colchester Hospital, Princess Alexandra Hospital Harlow.</p> <p>Special Schools include</p> <p>Columbus school & college Chelmsford Edith Borthwick School Essex, Granta school Linton Cambs, Grove Cottage Nursery Bishops</p>

		<p>Stortford, Grove House School Brentwood, Harlow Fields school Harlow, Meldreth Manor School Herts</p> <p>Evidence their work is needed: To ensure their work is needed and beneficial they seek and receive:</p> <p>1) Ongoing feedback from relatives, staff and the children, through feedback forms, letters and consultation with Hospital staff. Especially over the last 4 years at Broomfield Hospital as regular visitors and other hospitals where we have made initial visits.</p> <p>2) General Research into Humour in hospital and connected topics carried out by journalists and researchers.</p> <p>3) Gathering more feedback and impact measurement from our visits to Special Schools and listening to what the schools want from us</p> <p>We are widening our network, looking at better ways of marketing our services. We are analysing our revenue streams and looking at developing our funding further for example through broader corporate support.</p> <p>We have developed stronger links with other organisations and value the establishments working with us who recognise the impact we are having.</p>
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The Trustees have had regard to the guidance

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	<p>One of the two founders Annie Aris who is Chief Operating Officer effectively administers the day to day running of the charity.</p> <p>The trustees and additional volunteers/supporters of the charity help with setting up, promoting and running events.</p> <p>The trustees are intrinsically involved in the financial aspects of the charity both day to day as well as strategically - through maintaining charity accounts and scrutiny.</p>
Other		

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	<p>Activities and achievements of The Laughter Specialists Charitable Trust for the year April 1st 2019 to March 31st 2020</p> <p>This year the income from grants, donations, fundraising events and fees is continuing to rise - Laughter Specialists visit on a regular basis:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Addenbrookes Hospital Cambridge, funded by the Addenbrookes Charitable Trust - 3/4 times a month. 2) Broomfield Hospital, Chelmsford, mostly funded by BBC Children in Need – 3 times a month. 3) Edith Borthwick School, Bocking, Essex. Once a month during term time. 4) Granta special needs school, Linton, Cambs Funding from various sources. Every 2 weeks in term time when funding permits. 5) We also visit Grove Cottage (mencap), Bishops Stortford. 6) We visit Harlow Fields school Harlow every week through various sources of funding – this has been working extremely well, with our work being recognised for its additional educational benefits – acting as a valuable model that can be rolled out to other Special schools 7) We now visit Columbus School & College Chelmsford through general funding. We've built up a great rapport and understanding of the children's needs bringing them fun & laughter, helping them to interact with each other and express themselves. 8) Additionally, we now visit Princess Alexandra Hospital Harlow on a monthly basis <p>The Laughter Specialists spend significant time with children at Addenbrookes hospital. Working closely with the play specialist and clinic teams as requested.</p> <p>The benefits of these visits have led to a reduction in stress and boredom for the children and their parents at these clinics.</p> <p>The Laughter Specialists have increased the time spent in the specialist burns unit at Broomfield hospital.</p> <p>At Granta School and Edith Borthwick special schools the Laughter Specialists have been able to continue their visits working with children of mixed abilities.</p> <p>At both Columbus school & College, The Laughter Specialists are working with children from the age of 5 -19 years with great success.</p>

		<p>Training Project: Funding had been secured for developing trainee Laughter Specialists. A programme of training visits is continuing. Gathering and analysing the feedback for our visits to enable us to measure the impact more accurately of our work.</p>
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	
Other		

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	<p>There is an Unrestricted funds balance of £16,769 and a restricted funds balance of £14,568 at the end of the financial year.</p>
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	<p>The trustees aim is to have funds in reserve to cover six months indirect fixed costs. These costs include administration fees, fundraising fees, insurance, office supplies, computer costs, accountancy costs etc</p> <p>Direct funds for our charitable activities (funding Laughter Specialist visits) are mostly restricted funds for projects and received in advance, though now some restricted funds are paid partially up front and then the remaining funds paid when the project is complete.</p> <p>At present the trustees don't consider it necessary to have a reserve fund to cover these costs as the number of visits and</p>

		<p>timing of the visits is very flexible, though this may be reconsiders if our funding becomes split between beginning and end of project.</p> <p>In terms of a reserve fund it is more important in the trustees opinion to have a reserve fund to cover the other costs of running the charity without which we cannot support the Laughter Specialist visits.</p>
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	The trustees consider that the charity should have sufficient reserves in unrestricted funds to cover fundraising, admin and other fixed support costs of between £10,000 to £15,000 not exceeding £15,000.
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	
Other		

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed , royal charter)	Para 1.25	Trust Deed
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association , CIO)	Para 1.25	Trust
Trustee selection methods including details of any	Para 1.25	Appointed by existing trustees

constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees		
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	The Laughter Specialists Charitable Trust
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1132987
Charity's principal address	17 Crawley Hobbs Close Saffron Walden Essex CB11 4GD

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	George Howard	Chairman		
2	Edward Rudd	Treasurer		
3	Clare Thompson			
4	Karen Sheairs	Secretary		
5	Madeleine Gardner	Finance officer		
6				
7				
8				
9				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

[illegible]

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

[illegible]

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Patrick Jacobs and Annie Aris (founders and Laughter Specialists acting as Chief Operational Officers),

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

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Other optional information

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Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Ed Rudd	Karen Sheairs
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Treasurer	Chairman (Acting)
Date	25 th January 2021	



Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees of	The Laughter Specialists		
Accounts for the year to	31 March 2020	Charity no	1132987
Set out on pages			

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: N.S. Caton Date: 8/12/2020

Name: N.S. Caton

Relevant qualification: FCA, CTA

Address: Mill Scott Chartered Accountants
Mill End, Mill Lane, Clavering
Saffron Walden, CB11 4RP