

ANNUAL REPORT

September 2021- August 2022



Mustard Seed Autism Trust

Registered charity: 1148938

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Administration details

Mustard Seed Autism Trust - registered charity: 1148938

Address: 23 Ash Tree Close, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 0QP

Bank: HSBC 30 Princesmead, Farnborough, GU14 6YB

Website: www.mustardseedautism.co.uk

Email: office@mustardseedautism.co.uk

Telephone: 07980636413

Trustee Board

Mary Prior - Chair (from January 2021 - January 2023)

Natalie Walker - Treasurer

Elaine Ninnies

Kay Hudson (retired January 2023)

Shelley Reddall

Simon Martin

Morya Short

Caoimhe McManus (joined board and Chair from February 2023)

Staff

Francis Bland - Senior Occupational Therapist

Sarah Cements - Charity Co-ordinator/Specialist Teacher

Stacy Reilly - Family Support Worker

Nicola Wilson - Finance and Office Administrator

Financial Services

BOSS - Basingstoke Voluntary Action

Independent Examiner

John C Geering



Mustard Seed Autism Trust



@MustardAutism



Mustard Seed Autism Trust

Chair of Trustees

Mary Prior

In last year's Annual Report, I reflected on the challenges we faced during the pandemic and how we had not only survived the difficulties it caused, but learnt to adapt and change.

The past year has again seen many changes but of a very positive kind. We have continued the innovations we introduced last year and are still providing our weekly telephone support line and developing our online resources. Both are in high demand.

However our main problem was and still is, that we operate with a small staff team, supported by superb volunteers, to meet an overwhelming demand for our services. And this demand continues to grow. We have this year, increased our team to include an excellent office manager and cannot understand at all how we managed without her!



It is an exciting time to be a Mustard Seed Trustee. We have many plans and will see some significant changes to the charity in 2022-2023.

I so enjoy working with the Mustard Seed team. It is a great privilege. We know what we do to support children and families works. The feedback we are given from both parents and children is overwhelmingly positive.

If you look on our website, you will find lots of ways that you too can help us meet the tremendous need for our services.



A year in numbers



Occupational
Therapy
62 children

Funtastic Fun
Club
26 siblings

Chill Out Zone
25 children

Empowering
Parents Course
14 parents

Friendship
Zone
17 children

One-to-one
work
22 children

Play Therapy
6 children

A Place to
Be Me
3 young
people

Advice Line
149 families

Girl Power
7 girls

Ready Steady
Go
7 children

Supporting autistic children

We have enjoyed a full year of face to face work with children, including one to one work and courses for small groups. The longer term impact of the pandemic is still being experienced in the autism community, in particular with mental health. We have received unprecedented numbers of enquiries and requests for support. This year we opened our waiting list twice to new referrals. In September 2021 all 50 spaces were filled within two hours. In April we were ready to work with more families and publicised the opening date on our social media and website. We expected a strong response but were shocked at the number of emails and calls we received that morning. All the spaces were filled in the first two minutes, and anyone who emailed after 9.03am didn't get in.

The demand for Mustard Seed's service is very obvious. Our growth plan is focusing on how we can provide a service for more families in our community and we are working through the steps to achieve this.



Our Occupational Therapists worked directly with 62 children over the year, focusing on sensory motor issues, self care and daily routines.

We have attended PECs sessions and the Ready Steady Go group. The progress that my child has made in all areas of support provided by Mustard Seed has been staggering. Not only has the charity more than met my child's needs but they have also supported all of those around him to become skilled and confident in delivering the therapies.

The OT sessions with George were so insightful, her knowledge has been so helpful and the way she delivered the session with Z was brilliant and he was really engaged.

Our Chill Out Zone, Friendship Zone and Girl Power courses for small groups of autistic children continued to be popular and feedback from parents and children was very positive.

Supporting parents

We are a family support service and working with parents/carers is a key part of what we do. Over this year we have supported parents in a variety of ways:

- Training - through individual workshops and our 5 week Empowering Parents Course.
- Modelling and guiding - support to implement strategies and use resources.
- Resourcing - creating bespoke materials, loaning books and equipment.
- Advice Line - email and phone advice.



Thanks for the support received via the phone helpline. I made an appointment because my son was having some problems in his school which were making him extremely distressed and anxious. I was given a list of names of schools. In September he will now be starting at a specialist school which should take him through the rest of primary school and the whole of secondary school. It is a big relief for the whole family to know that he will now be in a setting where his needs as an autistic child will be understood and catered for.

Thanks to funding from Rushmoor Councillors and a grant from Rushmoor Community Lottery, we were able to establish our Advice Line as part of our overall service provision. Parents could book one hour calls which were followed up with email recommendations, signposting and resources.



Supporting siblings

My child thoroughly enjoys sibling club and it has been a lifeline for her over the years. To be in a place with others that understand what home life can be like sometimes is truly wonderful. A place where the siblings can be themselves and feel understood whilst having fun at the same time.



After 18 months of on-line sessions, we were able to resume face to face groups at Frimhurst Family House from September 2021. The excitement was huge (for the team as well as the children!). The children loved returning to Frimhurst, meeting friends and participating in all their favourite activities. We ran two groups on Saturday mornings - one for primary aged children and one for young teens. Thanks to funding from Surrey County Councillors we were able to develop focused well-being activities, known by the children as "relaxation time".



My daughter has made life long friends through sibling group and it has been incredibly important to her and continues to be. She loves the cooking and arts and crafts activities and the trip out at the end of the year too.



OT for Schools Service and Professional Training

As a form of income for the charity we deliver professional training and provide an OT for Schools Service. This year was our most profitable to date and we are keen to develop the service further. This model works really well for us - it provides a form of income that helps us to offer free support to families, as well as sharing great autism practice and support in the wider community.

This year 40 children received assessments/interventions, we completed 4 school contracts and delivered OT training to 6 schools.



Francis Bland,
Senior Occupational Therapist

The training helped the staff to understand why children may have certain behaviours and what strategies and equipment would help the children. Staff were able to use some of the ideas to suggest to parents at the consultations.

Both days of the course were useful. The staff particularly enjoyed day 2 where they got to try lots of different resources to understand how they made them feel and what effect they might have on the children. This would not have been as beneficial, however, without the theory section on day one to help staff understand behaviours.



Stories of Change

B is 7 years old and was referred by his parents over concerns about his sensory and emotional regulation. Parents were seeking support to help him manage transitions, especially for leaving the house and going to school. B was also presenting with some coordination difficulties, making some tasks challenging for him, such as: using knife and fork; riding a bike and scooter and participating in games with peers. He would quickly become disorganised and disregulated, which impacted his self esteem and confidence.

B worked with our Occupational Therapist, learning about strategies and approaches to help him feel more comfortable in his body. He responded really well and was able to work with the OT to create his own sensory programme for home.

The OT communicated with school around his needs in the classroom and made recommendations for changing the environment to suit his needs. She also provided the school with a targeted program to support his balance development.

Parents reported significant improvements:

- B is calmer and able to organise his own body better, especially when participating in team sports.
- Parents are more confident about managing his sensory needs and feel they now have appropriate and practical tools to use that work well.
- School is more aware of B's needs and are starting to implement effective strategies.
- B can now independently cut up his own food using specialist cutlery recommended by the OT.
- Transitions to school have greatly improved. The family now have strategies in place when going out. B is now able to access activities in the community with his family.
- Observed improvement in self esteem and emotional well-being.



Thank you for all your help over the past few weeks, it's been really brilliant to finally be able to get some clarity on what the issues are and how I can help B with these. Also I can't stress enough how reassuring it's been that someone else can see what I see in him.

Making a Difference



It can be so hard to open up to others for fear of judgement on your child, however from the initial meeting I was put at ease and felt listened to. The sessions have been great for Z, he built such an amazing bond with Stacy and I will be forever grateful for her in raising his self-esteem and giving him tools to make better choices and understanding himself a little better. She unlike so many others believed in him, saw him as an individual, a little boy struggling. We have noticed changes already.

The exercises to manage anxiety and meltdowns have been used with success and he voluntarily uses the Lego Emotions Chart. Michelle was able to get a lot out of Y very quickly, which doesn't always happen. Also thank you for the social stories, we got through the first lost tooth and optician's appointment with no drama at all!



We have been provided with so much practical help and advice which is tailored and suited to our family. Mustard Seed is an incredibly safe space where we received guidance we really needed. Stacy went out of her way to build a rapport with my son and instantly connected and relaxed a child who can be extremely anxious. All strategies shown were backed up with resources we could use immediately making it all so accessible, relevant and worthwhile.



News in 2021-2022

New staff

In May we welcomed our first Office Administrator onto the team. Nicola Wilson is now the first point of contact for the charity and comes with a wealth of professional and personal experience.

Training

In the Spring we completed the National Autistic Society's Teen Life training course. We are now licensed to deliver the six week programme to parents. Staff have also attended training on Attachment Sensory Intervention, Interoception and Autism, and Advice First Aid. Staff, volunteers and trustees have all attended Safeguarding workshops.



Goodbye

In June we said goodbye to Jen Daplyn, our Financial and IT administrator, who has served the charity from the very beginning. We are very grateful to her for all her work helping us establish Mustard Seed and wish her well in her new ventures.

Volunteers

We have a new cohort of volunteers ready to complete our 10 week induction course in September. They will be joining our team of 4 family support worker volunteers and 8 sibling group volunteers. Building our team will enable us to support more local families next year.

Plans

We end this current year with many plans for 2022-2023 that will enable us to grow the charity further. These include a new logo, website and increased partnerships within our local community. We plan to move from being a Charitable Trust to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, which will give us the structure we need to expand our team and service.



Our wonderful new logo designed and donated by Brandtastic.

Our 10th year



Our local community did a brilliant job in helping us celebrate 10 years as a charity! They organised and supported some fantastic events, including:

- The Tim Shez Gig at Farnborough Football Club
- CMPP Twilight Runway Challenge
- Rushmoor Rotary Open Evening
- Marathon by Sam Morgan & Neil MacFarlane
- Rushmoor Rotary Santa Float
- Our VisuFund digital Xmas gift appeal
- Nuffield Gym quiz nights
- Bake sales by Insight Legal Ltd
- The Swan Pub quiz night



Cake seemed to feature in many fundraising events, including the Frimhurst Enterprises Cafe, Sandes Cafe, Heatherside Pop up cafe and other bake sales organised by our supporters!



Thanks also to an incredible little girl who wrote a book about her autistic sibling and donated the proceeds to Mustard Seed!

smile.amazon.co.uk

ebay
FOR CHARITY

Give as you Live®

Rushmoor
COMMUNITY
LOTTERY

Community fundraising included supporters signing up to Amazon Smile, Give As You Live and Ebay for Charity, Making a Difference Cards and purchasing Rushmoor Community lottery tickets.

Huge thanks to you all for your amazing support! We can support more families in the year ahead because of your generosity.

making a difference

Quietly supporting us in the background were our amazing regular donors, whose monthly gifts raised £10,359 over the year. Very grateful thanks to you all.



Our Funders

Grant funding makes up around 50% of our income. We are very grateful to the following partners for their generosity this year:

BBC Children In Need
St Elisabeth Foundation
Surrey County Councillors
Magdalen Hospital Trust
The Misselbrook Trust
Rushmoor Borough Council
Hampshire County Councillor Roz Chadd
Farnham Round Table
Rowan Bentall Charitable Trust
Hampshire CCG

The Kelsey Trust
Rushmoor Ward Councillors
The Mrs Smith and Mount Trust
Woodsford Trust
Ratcliffe Trust
Arnold Clarke Community Fund
The Wisley Foundation
Frimley CCG 10:100
Sunlife Canada
Comic Relief



We are also very grateful for donations from the following supporters:

- St Peter's Church in Frimley
- Hi Speed
- TK Maxx and Homesense Foundation - Community Fund
- Elite Sports Marketing Ltd
- Armstrong SE Ltd
- Wishing Well - Morrisons, Aldershot
- 360 Play Farnborough
- Sue Carter - Mayor donation
- Farnborough Quakers
- The Wednesday Group
- Claire Edge -Park Lane Jewellery
- Kerith Community Church
- The Green Team - National Citizenship Scheme



Charity Information

Objectives and Activities

Mustard Seed Autism Trust is a Charitable Trust, registered with the Charity Commission and governed by the Trust Deed, dated 13 July 2012.

The objectives of the charity are:

“To promote and protect the physical and mental health of people with autism and related conditions and their families and carers through the provision of support, therapeutic intervention, education and practical advice in such ways as the Trustees may from time to time think fit.”

In planning the charity’s activities, the Trustees follow the guidance of the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Structure, Governance and Management

Trustee Board

The Charity is governed by the board of Trustees, which currently has seven members. The board meets at least six times a year and organises sub-committees when required. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and only receive payments for the reimbursement of expenses incurred on behalf of the charity. Details of trustee expenses are disclosed in the financial review. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests and in accordance with the charity’s policy, withdraw from decisions where a conflict of interest arises.

New trustees may be nominated by a current member of the board, appointed by a resolution of the Trustees at a board meeting where quorum is met, and recorded in the minutes. New Trustees are provided with a full induction, training and the information needed to fulfill their role, including Charity Commission guidance, the Trust Deed, all policies and procedures, business plans, financial reports and accounts. We invite trustees with lived experience of autism and members of local community with the skills and experience necessary for the role.

Staff and Volunteers

The Charity Co-ordinator and Senior Occupational Therapist are employed full-time by the Trustees to manage the day to day operations of the charity. We also employ a part-time Family Support Worker and part-time Office and Financial Administrator. We contract additional therapists on a daily basis, when funding permits. We have been supported by 12 volunteers this year, helping with our work with autistic children and the sibling support groups.

Policies and Procedures

Mustard Seed has the following policies and procedures:

Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults, Financial Controls, Conflicts of Interest, Equal Opportunities, Physical Contact, Risk Assessment, Lone-Working & Health & Safety, Critical Incident, Recruitment & Selection for Trustees, Staff and Volunteers, Monitoring & Evaluation procedures, Staff Supervision & Continuing Professional Development, Discipline & Grievance Procedures, Comments & Complaints, User Involvement, Gifts & Hospitality, GDPR, Environmental policy, Whistle-blowing policy, Online Safety, Cyber Security Policy.

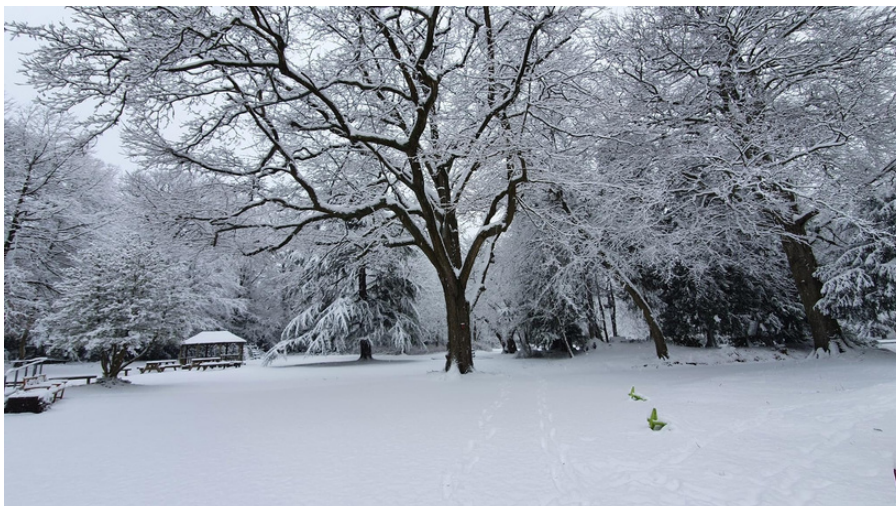
The protection and safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is of utmost importance to the charity, and all trustees, staff and volunteers are DBS and reference checked before joining the organisation. DBS checks are then carried out every three years and everyone in the charity attends annual safeguarding training.

Related Parties

Our families are signposted to us by Paediatric Consultants at Frimley Park Hospital, local schools, Children's Services, Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), health professionals and via word of mouth. We work alongside health, social care and education to promote the health and well-being of autistic children and their families.

Frimhurst Community

Frimhurst Family House is owned by the charity ATD Fourth World. We have been hiring rooms at Frimhurst since 2014 and benefit from shared office space and storage for our equipment. We enjoy being part of the Frimhurst Community alongside ATD and Frimhurst Enterprises, and seek to support each other whenever there is the opportunity. Venue hire at Frimhurst Family House enables Mustard Seed to provide a range of one-to-one and group projects that support the whole family. During this year payments of £6,948 were made to ATD Fourth World for venue hire.



Financial Management

The financial management of the charity is overseen by the Treasurer who reports to the Trustee board on a monthly basis. The Treasurer is supported by our Office and Finance Administrator, Nicola Wilson, and accountancy services are provided by BOSS Partners. Our Financial Controls policy was reviewed in October 2022. The charity prepares its accounts on a receipts and payments basis.

Reserves Policy and Reserves

The charity's Reserves policy (included within the Financial Controls policy) is that:

The minimum level of reserves within the unrestricted fund will be the equivalent of six months operating costs, calculated and reviewed annually, or at such times where significant changes in regular expenditure occur.

At 31st August 2022 unrestricted funds totaled £73,516

£52,000 is held as per the reserves policy, which leaves £21,516 as free reserves.

Risk Management

The Trustees have identified two key areas of risk for the charity:

- Staff capacity - heavy reliance on a very small staff team
- Venue - as the charity grows, we will require more space than Frimhurst can offer us

These areas are regularly discussed and monitored at board meetings and with staff.

Trustee Expenses

All of the trustees have given their time voluntarily. Trustees are reimbursed for expenses incurred on behalf of the charity. One trustee was reimbursed for expenses totaling £267.56

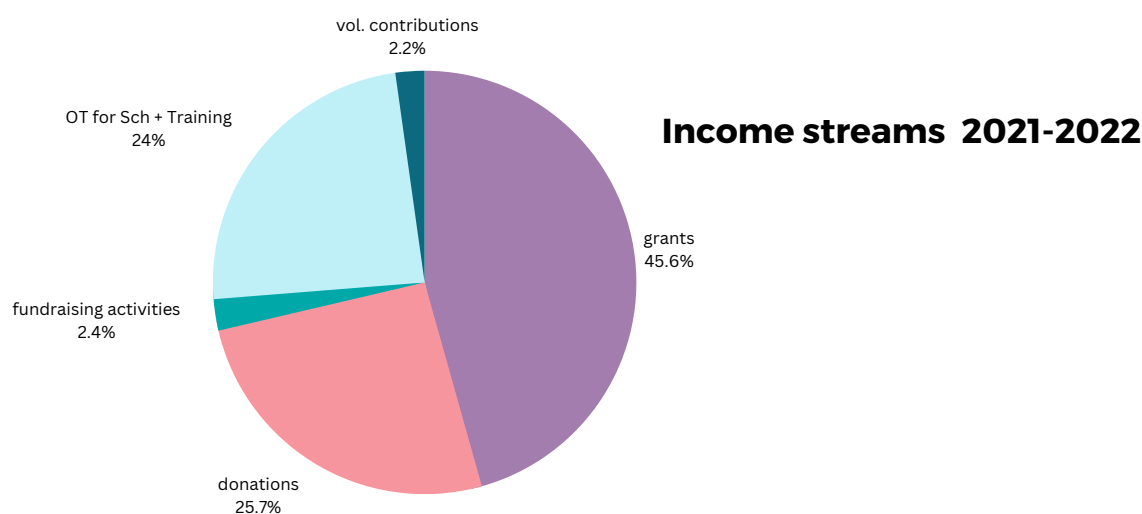
Financial Review

Overview

FY20/21 delivered a budgeted loss of £2119 due to the pandemic restrictions. We anticipated that ongoing disruptions and slow recovery would see our income streams remain static and budgeted for a loss of £15,331

Income for FY21/22 was significantly higher than anticipated due in part to a substantial rise in our OT for Schools work and training. This increase coupled with less than budgeted expenditure has left us with a gain of £14,492.

Income



Our fundraising strategy continued to focus on securing income from a range of sources, including grants, donations, fundraising events, voluntary contributions and through provision of training and Occupational Therapy to local schools. We exceeded our targets for income in the following areas:

- Donations
- Grants
- Fundraising events
- Provision of training and OT for Schools

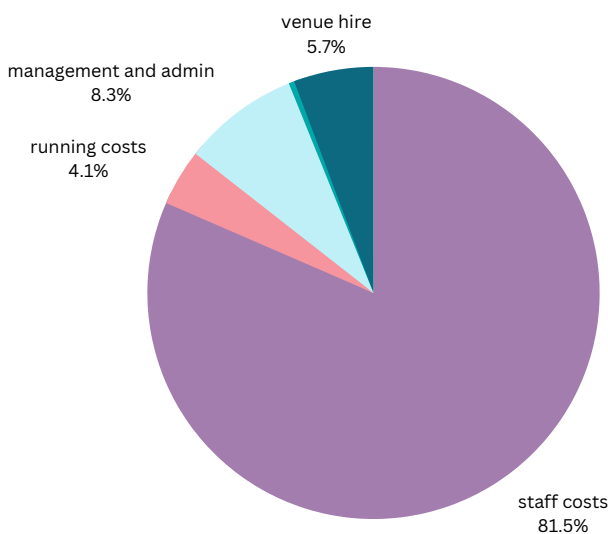
We received less in voluntary contributions from families than budgeted, but this is our smallest stream of income and we remain committed to delivering a free service to families. This was the most significant area to be impacted by the cost of living crisis this year. Donations (from regular and one-off donors) were not affected.

Budgeted income - £109,009

Actual income - £132,133

This higher than anticipated income was a result of a successful year in securing grant funding; greater opportunities for our OT for Schools work and training as schools began to return to normality after the pandemic; and a rise in donations due to our 10th year celebrations, our partnership with Insight Legal Ltd and increased social media presence.

Expenditure



Expenditure areas 2021-2022

Our expenditure was overall less than budgeted despite increases in areas which reflect changes and opportunities that occurred this year:

- Transition from Rock Salt accountancy to BOSS and in-house finance administration
- Teen Life training for two members of staff
- Expansion of Sibling Support Group

Budgeted expenditure - £124,340

Actual expenditure - £117,641

We finished the year in a strong financial position which will enable us to keep on track with our 3 year Growth Plan.

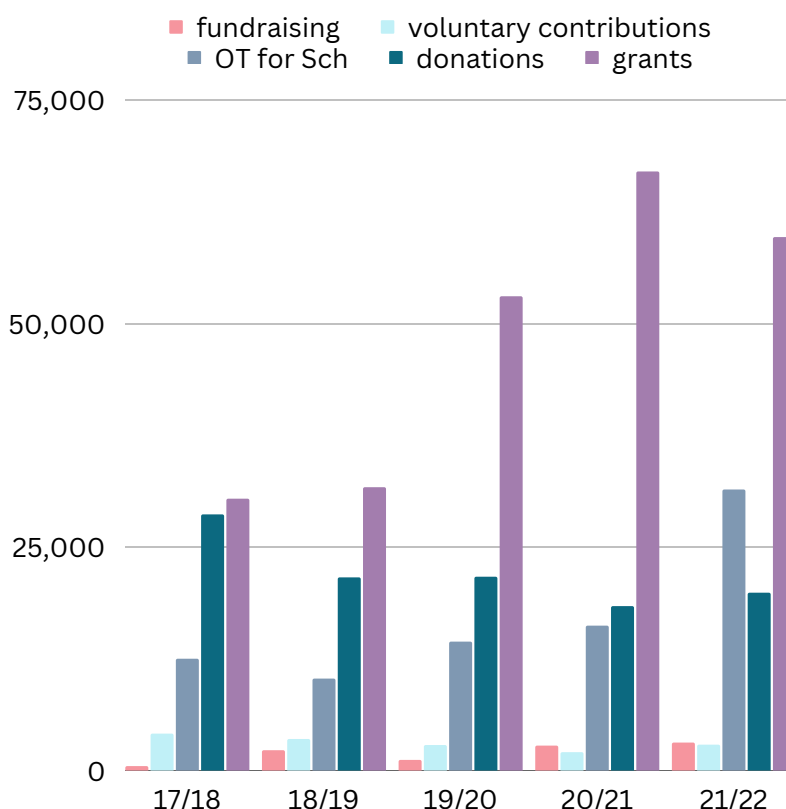
Charity development

Income and expenditure over past 5 years.



Our fundraising strategy will continue to focus on grants and our OT for Schools service as our key areas of income. Donations (regular and individual) will be a target to develop over the next few years. This year we have benefited as Charity of the Year for Insight Legal Ltd and we will work on establishing new corporate partnerships as a further income stream.

Income streams over past 5 years



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MUSTARD SEED AUTISM TRUST RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD FROM 01/09/2020 TO 31/08/2021

	UNRESTRICTED FUNDS TO THE NEAREST £	RESTRICTED FUNDS TO THE NEAREST £	TOTAL FUNDS TO THE NEAREST £	LAST YEAR TO THE NEAREST £
RECEIPTS				
Donations	31,380	0	31,380	18,381
Legacies	130	0	130	847
Gift Aid	3,347	0	3,347	2,975
Grants Received	1,000	58,617	59,617	66,957
Family Support -Voluntary Contributions	2,896	0	2,896	2,057
Fundraising Events	3,117	0	3,117	2,791
OT for Schools Service & Professional Courses	31,591	0	31,591	16,198
Bank Interest	54	0	54	11
TOTAL RECEIPTS	73,516	58,617	132,133	110,217
PAYMENTS				
Staff	52,406	42,876	95,282	94,806
Insurance	1956	371	2,327	1,999
Venue Hire	1,346	3,596	4,941	3,536
Training & Affiliation	943	1004	1,947	847
Resources & Equipment	1126	1686	2,812	2,695
Administration & Governance	9,879	403	10,281	8,222
Fundraising & Publicity	50	0	50	232
TOTAL PAYMENTS	67,705	49,936	117,641	112,337
NET OF RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS)	5,811	8,681	14,492	-2,120
Transfer between funds	-	-	-	-
Cash funds last year end	100,174	18,287	118,461	104,692
CASH FUNDS THIS YEAR END	105,985	26,968	132,953	118,461

MUSTARD SEED AUTISM TRUST STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT THE END OF THE PERIOD

CATEGORIES	DETAILS	UNRESTRICTED FUNDS TO THE NEAREST £	RESTRICTED FUNDS TO THE NEAREST £	TOTAL FUNDS TO THE NEAREST £
Cash funds	Cash at bank	105,985	26,968	132,953
Assets retained for the charity's own use	DETAILS	FUND TO WHICH ASSET BELONGS		
	Computer Equipment	IT		
	Therapeutic Equipment	Resources and Equipment		

Trustee Declaration

The Trustees declare they have approved the annual report and financial statements for the year end August 2022.

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees:

Mary Prior

Chair of Trustees 

Date: 3rd May 2023

Natalie Walker

Treasurer 

Date:

03/05/2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Report to the Trustees of

Mustard Seed Autism Trust

On accounts for the year

31 August 2022

Charity Number

1148938

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 14S(S)(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 Charity 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:



Date: 23 May, 2023.

J C Geering

Fellow of the Institute of Financial Accountants

11 Glen Road, Fleet, Hampshire GU51 3QS