

Literacy Volunteers
(Registered charity, number 1167357)
Financial statements
for the year ended 31 March 2020

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**Literacy Volunteers
Trustees' annual report
for the year ended 31 March 2020**

Full name Literacy Volunteers

Organisation type Charitable incorporated organisation

Registered charity number 1167357

Principal address Woodthorpe Grange, Woodthorpe Drive, Nottingham, NG5 4HA

Trustees

Julia Gunn, Chair

Bridget Riches

Christine Wroe, Vice Chair

Peter Furnell

Alan Merrett, Treasurer

Patricia Harman

Gaynor Preston

Angela Beere

Jonathon Cunliffe, until 06/01/20

Independent examiner

John O'Brien, employee of Community Accounting Plus, Units 1 & 2, North West, 41 Talbot Street, Nottingham, NG1 5GL

Governance and management

The charity is operated under the rules of the CIO – Association constitution registered 25 May 2016.

Trustee recruitment is mainly via interest from our volunteer feedback forms where we ask people to let us know if it is something they might like to consider and we follow this up. It is also via our newsletter, as we advertise there and this goes to all our members and schools. It is also sometimes by word of mouth and by approaching targeted individuals, especially if we feel we have a skills gap and there is a vacancy. We operate under the guidance of our constitution adopted on 25th May 2016 when we became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, and also in the spirit of our original constitution adopted in May 1996 when we came into existence as Literacy Volunteers in Nottinghamshire Schools.

Officers and Committee/Trustee members are proposed and elected from existing volunteers, member organisations and, from time to time, other people with an interest in our objectives.

Prospective Trustees must have an awareness of the organisation already and/or have a skill that they would like to use to support us or have one that we need. They would show an interest in the role and then they may have a chat with one of the team.

They attend an informal meeting to find out more about the role, usually with other people present who might also want to become a Trustee. They agree to sign up to the "7 Principles of Being a Good Trustee".

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They then attend a meeting of the Executive Committee after which point they may be invited to join the committee and they may or may not agree (both parties are under no obligation). At the AGM other members can be nominated and elected.

Objectives and activities

To advance the education of children, adults and families by helping those experiencing difficulties in acquiring literacy, communication and social skills.

Public benefit statement

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit, 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit

Literacy Volunteers aims to develop and promote speech, language, communication, confidence, self-esteem, literacy, strategies for learning in the home and a genuine interest in reading for pleasure. We seek to advance the education of children in particular by helping those experiencing difficulties in acquiring literacy skills. We do this in primary schools and early years settings and we use a number of evidence based programmes and projects. Firstly, we recruit, train, vet and support volunteers to be placed in primary schools to support the development of good reading habits. We also deliver our "Story Sharers" project in primary schools, where we send volunteers into schools with story sacks to read to and with children either individually or in groups. Finally, we also deliver our "Learning to Love Books" programme (our unique Story Telling, Songs and Rhymes sessions) in Libraries, Schools and Early Years settings including Nurseries and Children's Centres. In this year we were also funded by Small Steps Big Changes to run 18 story telling sessions with under 5's groups in two recycled story dens that the families had produced by working with a local recycling artist.

In this year, we have had over 195 volunteers helping approximately 800 children in weekly one to one sessions in over 127 schools in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire. The volunteers have supported children with their reading development, their communication skills and self-confidence and helped them discover a love of reading for pleasure. We have also trained 38 people as Story Sharers and we are working to place them in our participating schools in the City of Nottingham. We have also delivered 93 sessions of Learning to Love books to 153 families in Aspley, Bulwell, Hyson Green, St Ann's and The Dales.

The children benefit in terms of our effect in tackling the social disadvantage caused by poor literacy. Children are chosen for a variety of reasons e.g. they may be boys whose engagement with reading is poor; they may be withdrawn and uncommunicative; they may have English as a second language; they aren't coping in the classroom environment and perhaps aren't being read to at home. All of these reasons mean that they may be at risk of disengaging with education or not achieving, all of which would mean that their life chances would be affected. The children we work with show an improvement in their reading progress scores, but also in their confidence, concentration, communication, love of reading and self-esteem.

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The families that attend our Story Telling Stay and Play sessions/courses want the best start for their children in terms of early literacy development. They may be families who live in disadvantaged parts of our City; they may have experienced the effects of inter-generational poverty and disadvantage; they may be suffering from the effects of disadvantage and poor aspiration; they may be from newly arrived communities and want to use the sessions to support their own confidence with the English language as well as that of their children. What we know is, that when families become engaged with their children's education, the whole family benefits. The families benefit in the following ways:-

- Families will have an improved understanding of their child's Early Literacy Development;
- Families will understand the positive outcomes associated with Early Literacy;
- Families will feel more confident in encouraging Early Literacy through Play and Storytelling;
- Families will have improved their own Story telling and Story making;
- Families will understand the importance of Early Words;
- Families will feel better able to talk to, engage with, sing to and have fun with their child;
- Families will establish and understand how to build positive early relationships and build the skills their child will need as they grow and start school;
- Families will know how to join the library and be able to choose and use the resources well;
- Families will become part of a group of children and parents who can and will, form informal support networks outside the sessions;
- Children will have fun and develop socially, emotionally, physically, imaginatively and creatively even before they start formal schooling;
- Children will become more school ready and households will become more "Word Rich".

All our families benefit because of this. In addition social isolation can be reduced, social capital is built and better outcomes for the whole family are achieved. Our volunteers are drawn from local communities. They are often (but not always) older people; can be retired and can be at risk of social exclusion. They benefit from inclusion in community life and from the intergenerational contact that can have a positive effect on social disadvantage. They can also be younger people, are often students and are seeking to develop skills to either enter or move on in the world of work.

As such our activities greatly benefit the public.

Summary of the main achievements during the period

We are very proud of these main achievements from those who took part in our evaluation for this period:

- 100% of the schools would recommend us to other schools;
- 99% of schools rated our volunteers' dedication as excellent;
- 98% of children improved in their confidence levels after working with one of our volunteers;
- 97% of schools rated our service as outstanding or good;

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- 97% of the children enjoyed working with their Literacy Volunteer;
- 94% of volunteers rated their experience with us as good;
- 94% of the children improved in their reading level;
- 92% of the children said they felt happier about reading;
- We have increased our income from subscriptions for volunteers in primary schools across the City and County from £44,033 in 2019 to £54,684 in 2020;
- From 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 we have trained 116 volunteers as Story Sharers and as One to One Reading Helpers in Primary schools;
- We have provided over 20,000 volunteer hours in Nottingham City and County Schools;
- We have had excellent support from many of our local City and County Councillors;
- We have worked with our Board to produce a business plan that will take us to 2023;
- Volunteer Network meetings - satisfaction with these meetings rose from 54% to 70%;
- We have developed our relationship with Small Steps Big Changes and Nottingham City Libraries and have delivered more exciting "Learning to Love Books" sessions across the City;
- We have continued our Annual Sponsored walk event and raised over £1,000 to support volunteers in schools;
- We worked with the incredible Katie Murray - founder of "The Love of Literacy" project and through the introduction of the Alphabeast characters found an amazing way to support reading development in the children we support;
- Funded by Small Steps Big Changes and also The Family and Community Team at Nottingham City Council and working with Nottingham City Libraries and The Book Trust - 126 families accessed our "Learning to Love Book" sessions in Bulwell, Hyson Green and St Ann's;
- Funded by The Co Operative Society and The Thomas Farr Charity (and again in partnership with Nottingham City Libraries and The Book Trust) 29 families took part in "Learning to Love Books" at The Dales Library.

Financial review

We have managed to create a small surplus this year by being able to reduce our reserves following the retirement of a longstanding member of staff; by holding off on recruitment; by holding a small restructure and by being able to deliver outcomes efficiently against grants and service level agreement awards. We had hoped to invest in a new website as our current one looks old fashioned and doesn't reflect our mission and values adequately anymore.

However, as the year drew to a close it was becoming clear that there would be a financial issue with regards to the outbreak of the Coronavirus. With the impact of social distancing, this may literally have a huge effect on the operation of our charity and its financial operations.

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The charity's policy on reserves

We need reserves for a number of reasons. Firstly, we need reserves to cover, in line with terms and conditions, the redundancy payments due to staff in the event of the closure of The Charity; to cover any subscriptions we would need to return to schools if we were unable to supply them with a volunteer and to cover the costs incurred in any closure period - likely to amount to a quarter's running costs. This is simply a good practice for any charity.

This year, the Trustees have designated the sum of £20,000 as a reserve to cover our liabilities regarding staff redundancy payments should closure become necessary.

They also feel it is prudent to hold the sum of one term's salary expenditure and a small amount of running costs to finance general expenditure during a closure period.

Finally, we need to allocate an amount each term which should be paid back to schools in the event of closure, however, this amount decreases as the year progresses.

The total reserves have therefore been adjusted to £53,000.

Secondly, we have concluded that we cannot pass on the full costs of recruiting and training volunteers to the schools we support. The evidence we have shows that, although schools will tolerate some small increases in the subscriptions they pay, school budgets will not cover the charge we would have to make if we applied full cost recovery (even though the service is highly rated). As such we have, for the last twenty years fundraised to keep these costs as low as we possibly can. The Trustees also feel that some limited reserves are needed because fundraising is a challenge and these reserves are needed to cover potential shortfalls in our fundraising targets. The Trustees will always strike a balance between trying to retain some level of reserves in case we can't make our fundraising target and the need to reinvest in services that will have an effect on the issue we seek to support i.e. the promotion of reading for pleasure and the benefit this has in raising literacy levels in children. All children in our area of benefit should leave primary school reading well for their age!

Finally it is important to note that the Trustees review their reserves annually (following a review of the Charity's position and the external environment) in order to account for changes in either area.

Financial risks

We always face the risk of being unable to secure our target for fundraising and donations. We also run a risk in terms of losing volunteers which we cannot immediately replace, meaning that subscriptions may have to be returned to a school.

We have shown success in developing a service that can be commissioned in the form of our Early Years Sessions but this needs to be championed and carries with it on going salary liabilities should commissioners cease to purchase the service. We have worked successfully with Nottingham's Small Steps Big Changes Programme

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to develop this service and they have been very supportive with this project, but we face a risk if no one wants to commission what we do when funding from the Small Steps Programme ceases.

We also note that it is becoming much more difficult to ask Trusts and Charities for simple donations as many prefer to give funds for projects and pieces of work.

The three year pledge of funds from The Jessie Spencer Trust and the annual pledge of funds from The Sir John Eastwood Foundation have been invaluable but The Jessie Spencer donation of £5,000 per year ends in September 2021.

Our Local Improvement Scheme grant from Nottingham County Council is also due to end in June 2021.

We would like to thank the following people and organisations for their support and or donations:-

The Better Start -Small Steps Big Changes Programme, Nottingham City Library Service, The Book Trust, The Bookcase in Lowdham.

From Nottinghamshire County Council:-

Councillor/s Errol Henry, Jim Creamer, Nicki Brooks, Kate Foale, Vaughan Hopewell, Martin Wright, Richard Jackson, John Clarke, Muriel Weisz and Mike Quigley.

From Nottingham City Council:-

The Family and Community Learning Team.

Also:-

The Thomas Farr Charity

The Jones 1986 Trust

The Jessie Spencer Trust

The Sir John Eastwood Foundation

The Whitaker charitable Trust

The HSBC Bank – Arnold Branch

The Charles Littlewood Hill Trust

The Co Op Community Fund

The National Lottery Community Fund Awards for All

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed _____ Date _____
Julia Gunn, Trustee

**Independent examiner's report to the trustees of
Literacy Volunteers
for the year ended 31 March 2020**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Literacy Volunteers (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed _____ Date _____

John O'Brien MSc, FCCA, FCIE

Employee of Community Accounting Plus

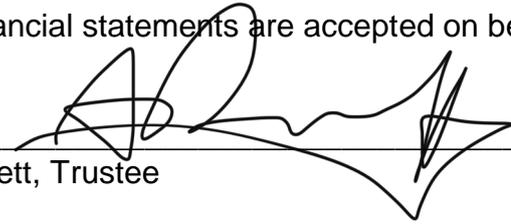
**Literacy Volunteers
Receipts & payments account
for the year ended 31 March 2020**

18/09/18- 31/03/19			2020
Total Funds £		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £
	Note		Total Funds £
Receipts			
101574	Opening transfer	-	-
18004	Grants & donations	2 36616	48398
1650	Fees	-	-
1305	Fundraising	3961	-
5850	Subscriptions	54684	-
1	Sundry receipts	-	-
128384	Total receipts	95261	48398
Payments			
266	Activities & materials	-	12300
663	Advertising	391	28
114	DBS fees	82	30
-	Equipment, repairs & renewals	17	-
-	Independent examination fee	660	-
-	Insurance	837	100
521	Payroll service	994	-
2252	Professional fees & artists	494	7300
122	Publications & subscriptions	358	-
41744	Salaries, NI & pension	62748	18280
433	Stationery & office supplies	842	272
-	Sundry payments	155	-
170	Telephone, internet & postage	313	-
825	Training & support	3165	52
3876	Travel & subsistence	7006	110
2668	Volunteer resources	880	-
53654	Total payments	78942	38472
74730	Net receipts/(payments)	16319	9926
-	Cash funds at start of this period	70438	4292
-	Transfers between funds	(170)	170
74730	Cash funds at end of this period	86587	14388

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Statement of assets and liabilities
at 31 March 2020

2019			2020
£	Cash assets	Note	£
74722	Bank accounts		100916
8	Cash in hand		59
<u>74730</u>			<u>100975</u>
Other monetary assets			
117	Debtors - Subscriptions		-
-	Prepayment - Insurance		78
<u>117</u>			<u>78</u>
Assets retained for the charity's own use			
	General equipment.		
Liabilities			
(2210)	Creditors	3	(2828)
<u>(2210)</u>			<u>(2828)</u>

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

Signed  _____
 Alan Merrett, Trustee

Dated 6/11/20

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Notes to the accounts
for the year ended 31 March 2020

1. Receipts & payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts contain a summary of money received and money spent during the period and a list of assets and liabilities at the end of the period. Usually, cash received and cash spent will include transactions through bank accounts and cash in hand.

2. Grants & donations

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	Total £
National Lottery Community Fund	-	9747	9747
Small Steps Big Changes	-	27723	27723
Co-op Community Fund	-	3091	3091
Nottingham City Council	-	5837	5837
The Thomas Farr Charity	-	2000	2000
The Jones 1986 Trust	7000	-	7000
Nottinghamshire County Council	17500	-	17500
The Jessie Spencer Trust	5000	-	5000
Forman Hardy Charitable Trust	500	-	500
The Charles Littlewood Hill Trust	2000	-	2000
Sir John Eastwood Foundation	1000	-	1000
Whitaker Charitable Trust	1000	-	1000
HSBC	930	-	930
Sundry grants & donations	1686	-	1686
	36616	48398	85014

3. Creditors

	£
Independent examination fee	678
Salaries, NI & pension (HMRC)	1846
Salaries, NI & pension (pension)	304
	<u>2828</u>

4. Trustees' remuneration

During this period, a total of £104 was reimbursed to 1 trustee for travel expenses incurred.

5. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in this period.

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6. Funds analysis

	Opening balance	Receipts (Payments)		Transfers	Closing balance
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds					
SSBC	223	-	(223)	-	-
SSBC Story Dens	2713	-	(2713)	-	-
Learning to Love Books (SSBC2)	1356	10731	(12257)	170	-
Learning to Love Books (SSBC3)	-	16992	(9795)	-	7197
Family & Community Learning	-	5837	(5325)	-	512
Sneinton Stay & Play	-	5091	(2496)	-	2595
Story Sharers	-	9747	(5663)	-	4084
	4292	48398	(38472)	170	14388
Unrestricted funds					
General fund	70438	95261	(78942)	(170)	86587
	70438	95261	(78942)	(170)	86587

The transfer from the General fund to the Learning to Love Books (SSBC2) fund is to cover the deficit on this activity.

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

SSBC – storytelling sessions in SSBC wards in the city (Arboretum, St Ann’s, Bulwell, Aspley).

SSBC Story Dens – creating story dens to encourage reading for pleasure among families in libraries and children centres.

Learning to Love Books (SSBC2 & SSBC3), Family & Community Learning, and Sneinton Stay & Play – to run our Story Telling Stay and Play courses called “Learning to Love Books and Reading”.

Story Sharers - we recruit and train volunteers who go into schools and early year’s settings to read stories, poems and fiction and promote the love of books and reading to children individually or in groups.

7. Glossary of terms

Creditors: These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid during the accounting period.

Debtors: These are amounts owed to the charity, but not received in the accounting period.

Prepayments: These are services that the charity has paid for in advance, but not used during the accounting period.

Restricted funds: These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.