

HARMENY EDUCATION TRUST LIMITED

ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2019 - JULY 2020

Together



HARMENY SCHOOL

Grant Aided by the Scottish Government

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Harmeny Education Trust Limited is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status

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**Names of children have been changed to maintain confidentiality.
Photographs are not associated with stories and quotes used.**

Welcome from our Chair

Welcome to Harmeny's Annual Report for 2019-20, which covers the 16-month period, April 2019 to July 2020, due to our annual reporting moving to coincide with the academic year.

This period has been particularly challenging owing to external factors and the uncertainty that brings. We know that local authorities have had to make huge efficiencies in their spending, and that inevitably brings with it a risk to organisations such as ours. As a Board we continually assess and review risk. In 2019-20, this led to a very challenging situation where efficiencies were required to ensure that we could continue to offer the high quality service to our children at which Harmeny excels.

Our thanks go to the Senior Management Team (SMT) and staff for the way in which they continue to rise to the challenges thrown at them, and our admiration also for the children who show that they are able to grow their resilience in the safe and secure environment which Harmeny offers.

As Trustees we shared the usual celebrations with the children - sports day, the Christmas show and Burns lunch; and enjoyed sharing in these occasions, knowing they were helping to make important happy memories for the children. Then in March we were hit with a pandemic like nothing we had ever experienced in our lives. As usual, however, the Harmeny community rose to the challenge and, as always, the safety and wellbeing of the children were at the heart of any decisions and development of new models of working, which became the norm. Staff members were able to maximise the treasured estate which Harmeny offers and ensured that the children, within the confines of Covid restrictions, were still given an opportunity for outdoor learning, play and even camping trips.

Looking forward, we started to explore the possibility of extending Harmeny services to young people beyond S2. With the help of a project researcher this quickly became a reality, with detailed presentations and discussions at Board and sub-committee level. The Acorn Project was born and was accompanied by a challenging fundraising target to provide a building that will ensure the learning environment is the best it can be for the expanded service. As a Board we are excited to oversee a service development that ensures reduced moves and targeted services for our most vulnerable children and young people.

I would like to end with some thanks: to the Trustees who continue to devote their time and offer a diverse range of skills and knowledge to support the ongoing governance of Harmeny; to the many volunteers in different guises who offer their time; to the SMT and staff who never fail to inspire with their dedication and commitment to the challenges they face; and finally to the children, who provide us with the motivation to ensure our Harmeny community flourishes, succeeds and grows.



**Jennifer Scott, Chair
Board of Trustees**

From our Chief Executive



Neil Squires
Chief Executive

2019-20 brought formidable challenges to Harmeny, with the impact of austerity, significant national pay awards, local authority cuts and future loss of Scottish Government grant funding, requiring us to take stock and consider how best to respond strategically in order to ensure the continued growth and development of the organisation, against a complex external environment.

And just when we thought the world was complex enough, in March 2020 we were hit with a global crisis on a scale that none of us was prepared for. As in any crisis, however, Harmeny has responded to the Covid-19 pandemic with professionalism, courage and hard graft, with an inspiring whole team effort and some surprisingly positive outcomes. (Find out more on page 8.)

Throughout 2019, we continued to work on our response to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, following the Trust being named, alongside many other organisations, in September 2018. The timeline of the inquiry relates to young people who were in residential care from the 1930s up to December 2014. We have been highly supportive of the inquiry, fully cooperating through the thorough preparation of a formal response, which was submitted in September 2019. It is likely to take considerable time for the inquiry team to assess our response, along with those submitted by the other organisations named; however, we will continue to respond fully to any further requests, supporting the inquiry in achieving its aims.

There were many achievements throughout 2019-20. **Just some of our highlights are listed below.**

I cannot thank the staff enough for their extraordinary dedication during 2019-20. Their unquestioning commitment to the complex, yet remarkable, group of children and young people we work with, is humbling. Their passion to develop and reflect on their practice gives me great assurance that Harmeny continues to improve, grow and diversify, and to make a real difference to the lives of even more disadvantaged children and young people.

2019-20 snapshots

Delivered **creative and engaging learning programmes** for all our residential and day pupils throughout the pandemic, using outdoor learning and technology to ensure children and young people's learning was not disrupted and they continued to learn and achieve.

Explored the **development of continuing care and learning services**, which will allow us to work with young people up to the age of 18.

Expanded our **therapies team** and further developed our therapeutic practice framework - 'The Harmeny Way'.

Progressed the **design of a brand new Learning Hub** in the grounds of the school, which will provide a fantastic space to deliver secondary and vocational education programmes.

Secured **significant funds** towards our £1.95m fundraising appeal, which will enable us, hopefully, to start building the Learning Hub in the summer of 2021.

Developed a **new three-year strategic plan**, which includes a response to the key findings of the Independent Care Review.



About Harmeny



Harmeny Education Trust is a charity with children and young people at its heart. We provide care, education and therapeutic support to children and young people who have complex additional support needs as a result of early years trauma and adversity. We currently offer this for up to 24 residential and 6 day children aged 5-14 within our beautiful estate in Balerno in the hills above Edinburgh; and have plans to develop continuing care and learning services for young people aged 15-18. Everything we do is rooted in Our Vision, Purpose and Values.

Our Vision

For children and young people to have the love, encouragement and nourishment they need to grow and reach their potential.

Our Purpose

To provide therapeutic care and education which helps children and young people overcome trauma and adversity, discover the joy of learning, and lead happy, fulfilling lives.

Our Values

We believe that children and young people are at the heart, as they come first in all that we do.

We believe in compassionate, nurturing relationships, for we know that caring, respectful relationships build resilience, trust and understanding.

We believe that learning is a passport to life, because we have seen that creative and engaging learning has the power to transform lives.

We believe in helping each other to thrive, for we are a community which is welcoming, supportive and celebrates difference, enabling everyone to flourish.

“A year ago, reading was a real battle for Luke. He would avoid reading to an adult, often becoming disruptive, angry or defensive. Now he is motivated and his confidence has really grown, he is more willing to read to a trusted adult and to write short sentences independently. He has already made it to Peak 9 of Fast Phonics and is readily taking on greater challenges. Luke is beginning to realise that the problem doesn’t lie with him but with the learning he has missed; that there are things he can’t do yet but will be able to do soon. So proud of him!” **Nikki Hepburn, Senior Teacher**

“We are all looking forward to supporting Amber in the next stage of her journey through life. We appreciate all the support and care she has experienced at Harmeny. This secure base has helped her arrive at this stage in her life with optimism”. **Social Work Team Manager**



Covid-19: A Year Like No Other

Responding to the demands of the Covid-19 pandemic required colossal effort and goodwill from the whole Harmeny community. As a critical service, we were required to continue providing care and education, throughout periods of lockdown and restriction, to both residential and day pupils. Our staff fulfilled 'key worker' roles. Thanks to the extraordinary resourcefulness of our staff and the support of the wider community, we managed the crisis well, with the children all remaining safe and healthy. On top of a host of hygiene measures and supporting a number of staff to shield or work from home, our approach included the following:

Education staff were deployed to our four residential cottages, working closely with care staff to deliver a blended learning programme, comprising core subjects each morning then health and wellbeing in the afternoon.

Day pupils were supported to learn at home through bespoke learning packs, virtual lessons and regular outreach.

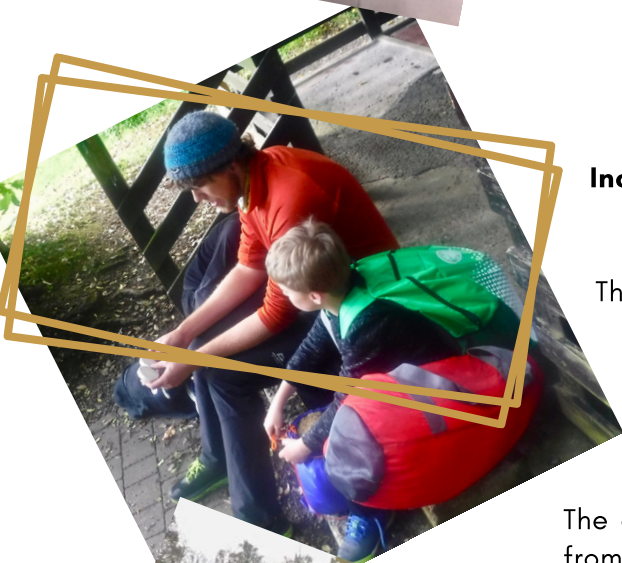
Increased use of technology allowed regular contact with parents and carers, virtual weekly assembly meetings, online learning resources, and creative arts projects.

There were many **opportunities to play outdoors**, with our Outdoor Learning Team creating a new Forest School area with the children within the grounds.

Inspired by Captain Sir Tom Moore, the **children participated in fundraising events**, raising money towards charities of their choice.

The atmosphere within our unique campus was rather special, with children and young people greatly benefiting from the lower number of transitions, consistent groups of staff around them, and increased opportunities to play.

We are determined to take the learning from the pandemic into the future, and are all too aware that the demand for our services could increase due to the impact of the virus on those living on the margins.



“During lockdown, each day of the week had a similar pattern; made up of the rhythms, routines, expectations and predictable responses that our children needed to flourish – whether in the classroom or at home – and with understanding, love and care at the centre of everything we did.” **Fiona Jenkins, Teacher**

“The children coped remarkably well, and the adults worked hard to provide stability, fun and reassurance during this difficult time. The children enjoyed taking part in many different activities such as den building, biking, walks in the woods, playing outside, pamper nights, BBQs, campfires, water fights, movie nights and having a splashing time in our new paddling pool.” **Steph Bestford, Residential Team Manager**



"I like working hard, I want to get a good job when I'm older." **Lewis, aged 12**



Our Children & Young People

We are extremely proud of our children and young people's achievements in 2019-20. During this period:

44 children and young people (36 residential and 8 day pupils) were **supported across our services**, referred by 19 local authorities.

6 children and young people **moved back to the community to family based care**, and 9 were supported with a move to a secondary residential placement.

In the ten years up to 2020, 58% of children placed at the school **returned to live at home or in the community** and attend day schooling, with 42% moving on to a secondary residential setting, reflecting the increasingly complex nature of children and young people referred.

8 children and young people were **supported to transition** to, and sustain placements within, local primary or secondary schools, whilst remaining at Harmeny on a residential only basis.

Despite the challenges of Covid, all our children made **significant progress in literacy and numeracy** and, with our new 'B Squared' assessment system, we will now be able to track termly progress against Curriculum for Excellence levels.

Inspections

Our most recent care and education inspections highlighted continued excellent quality care and support, a strong relational approach, innovative practice in relation to assessment and planning, reflective and supportive staff supervision that ensures wellbeing as a strength of the school, and a very caring ethos, placing children at the heart of everything we do. We continued to be accountable to the Care Inspectorate during Covid, with regular virtual meetings with our Inspector.

Children's Rights and Participation

We continue to enshrine Children's Rights across Harmeny, encouraging rights awareness and participation both internally and externally. A Children's Champions Group was formed and we have supported our children to have greater participation in their reviews. Some children have also participated in the recruitment of the staff team around them. Their views were captured for both the UN Consultation on Children's Rights in August 2019 and the 1000 Voices Campaign, which was part of the Independent Care Review. The First Minister visited the school in October 2019, followed by a group of children being invited to the Scottish Parliament and a meeting with the First Minister in her private office.

"It was great meeting Nicola Sturgeon and I wore her shoes twice!" **Zoe, aged 11**



"Don't forget, when I first started I said I didn't do writing or reading and now I'm super confident. You can do it!"

Charlie (9) to Patrick (8)



Curriculum and therapies

We further developed our curriculum through a number of literacy and numeracy initiatives, a review of our outdoor learning programme, the delivery of dynamic expressive arts projects and increased play opportunities.

We enhanced our therapies team, now comprising speech and language, music and play therapy, as well as psychology and psychotherapy. Therapists are made available on a consultancy basis, and have played a key role in significantly reducing the number of physical interventions.

Following the conclusion of a Systemic Practice Pilot, we began rolling out this effective approach to working with families across the whole organisation.

The lasting power of Lego

Speech and Language Therapist Tom Costelloe introduced Lego groups at Harmony, with children building some incredible creations, such as a pizzeria, a Tyrannosaurus Rex, a tarantula, a holiday camp and a snow mobile.

Lego groups provide a chance for children and young people to practise their skills working as a team, listen to one another and solve problems together. The engineer has the instruction manual; the supplier finds the pieces the engineer asks for; and the builder listens to the engineer to know what to do with the Lego pieces. All the creations the children have made are even more impressive when you know that the builder is not able to see the instructions!

Expressive arts

During lockdown, thanks to the power of the internet and Facetime, our children worked with Simon Bishopp and Katja Frimberger of Little Animation Studio, to make an animated film. The children created a storyboard, wrote and edited a script, produced drawings for characters, scenery and props, recorded voice overs, animated the characters and added in sound effects. The result was the fantastic film, 'The Mice and the Bakers', which tells the heart-warming story of a donkey, two kittens and two mice all helping each other out when things get tough. The film was exhibited at the Glasgow Gallery of Modern Art and can be viewed on our website and social media channels. It has even been watched by school children in Australia!



"It seems kindness is like a boomerang - it always returns."

The Mice and the Bakers

Meanwhile, two Harmeny pupils were awarded Special Merits in the 2020 National Galleries of Scotland Art Competition for Schools and Families. They were inspired by the theme 'Amazing Nature'.



"Through these brilliant opportunities, they get a vital chance to shine, build self-belief and experience success."

Teacher

Our People & Other Resources

Our staff are our greatest resource and through their specialist skills, knowledge and commitment, provide the very best services possible. At the present time, we have:

140 staff working for Harmeny across care, education and support services.

43 volunteers contributing to the work of the Trust in the areas of education support, outdoor learning, gardening, a reading with dogs scheme, delivery of STEM subjects, writing and designing our newsletters, governance, estates development, project management and fundraising.

"I was fortunate to be an external consultant to Harmeny for several years, and jumped at the chance to join as their Head of HR and Organisational Development and contribute to Harmeny's amazing work. The dedication of the entire staff team shines through on a daily basis, and that has been particularly true during this last year. It is a fantastic place to work." **Sean McCahill, Head of HR and Organisational Development**



Learning and development

During 2019-20 we provided placements for **12 students** in the fields of social work, nursing, outdoor education and social care.

126 staff training courses were delivered across classroom, e-learning or online settings.

Support Services Staff worked very hard to develop the organisation's infrastructure and enable continuous growth. We implemented the recommendations from a comprehensive review of our Information Communications Technology (ICT), including developing an in-house ICT team, alongside use of specialist contractors, investment in a new Server, and a rolling programme of hardware replacement.

SQA Centre

Our Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Centre continued to deliver SVQ and HNC awards to Harneny staff and external candidates; to work with the independent private school sector; and to receive very positive systems verification inspections by the SQA. The centre team also developed an enhanced programme of Learning and Development (L&D) for Harneny staff, gained approval to deliver the Professional Development Award in Supervision, and obtained funding from the Workforce Development Fund to access a range of Health and Safety and Leadership and Management training.

However, following market research and an options appraisal, the decision was made by the Trustees to wind down the SQA Centre by December 2020. This will allow us to focus on the internal delivery of L&D and to continue providing Harneny staff with sector leading development opportunities. All remaining SQA candidates continued to receive a high quality service in order to complete their qualifications through the Centre.

"We all grow, we all learn, we all reflect and work together."
Staff Member



Inspiring visitors



It's impossible to overstate the value for our children of visits from people like Mark Beaumont, the record-breaking, long distance cyclist, who wanted to help raise awareness of Harmeny's work. Mark spent two hours with the children, chatting to them about his adventures on his 18,000 cycle journey around the world.

Equally inspiring was Alan Sinclair - one of a four-man team who succeeded in making the gruelling climb to Everest base camp to raise funds for our Learning for Life Appeal. He shared his adventures with the children. Even more exciting - Alan took their letters for the Yeti and brought back a promise from the Lama of Dingboche Monastery that he'd try to deliver them!

"It was amazing to see first-hand the extraordinary work of Harmeny caring for children from difficult backgrounds. I really enjoyed chatting with the children about my adventures. It was a real insight into the commitment of the team that keeps the school going.

Mark Beaumont, record-breaking cyclist



Our Developments

Despite the challenges of Covid, we made good progress with our ambitious Strategic Plan, particularly in relation to the following:

Therapeutic Framework – The Harmeny Way

Following significant research and consultation, we agreed the key strands of our therapeutic practice framework – The Harmeny Way – which will describe the evidenced-based approaches we use to work with children and young people who have experienced early years trauma and adversity. The framework is strengths-based and trauma-informed, and will be accompanied by an underpinning training programme. Over the coming year, we will develop a Harmeny Way Intranet and pilot the framework internally.

Continuing Care and Learning – Acorn Project

Through transitional funding from the Scottish Government, we engaged a project researcher to work alongside a steering group to explore the possibility of extending our services for young people beyond the age of 14. We received positive feedback from local authorities consulted and the Board agreed to commit to the development of continuing care and learning services, which will be known collectively as 'Acorn'.

The new services, which very much complement the findings of the Independent Care Review, will commence in August 2022 and comprise:



Continuing care for up to five young people aged 15-18, already placed at Harmeny on a residential basis, who will either attend a local mainstream school or receive their secondary education within the Harmeny campus.

A **new secondary education service** for young people up to the age of 18, which will include working with an additional 12 young people from Edinburgh, who are living with disadvantage and adversity and disengaging from mainstream education.

Creating time and space - plans for our new Learning Hub continue

We appointed Loader Monteith as the preferred architect to design a purpose-built Learning Hub in the grounds of the school, in order that we can provide an enhanced skills-based curriculum, including for those young people aged 15+.

Loader Monteith consulted with staff and young people on the purpose and requirements of the newbuild, which will comprise two secondary classrooms; art, woodwork and vocational workshop spaces; therapeutic rooms; and a base for our outdoor learning team and equipment.



Our Fundraising Appeal

From April 2019 to July 2020 great progress was made with our **Learning for Life Appeal** and towards our £1.95m target to fund our new Learning Hub.

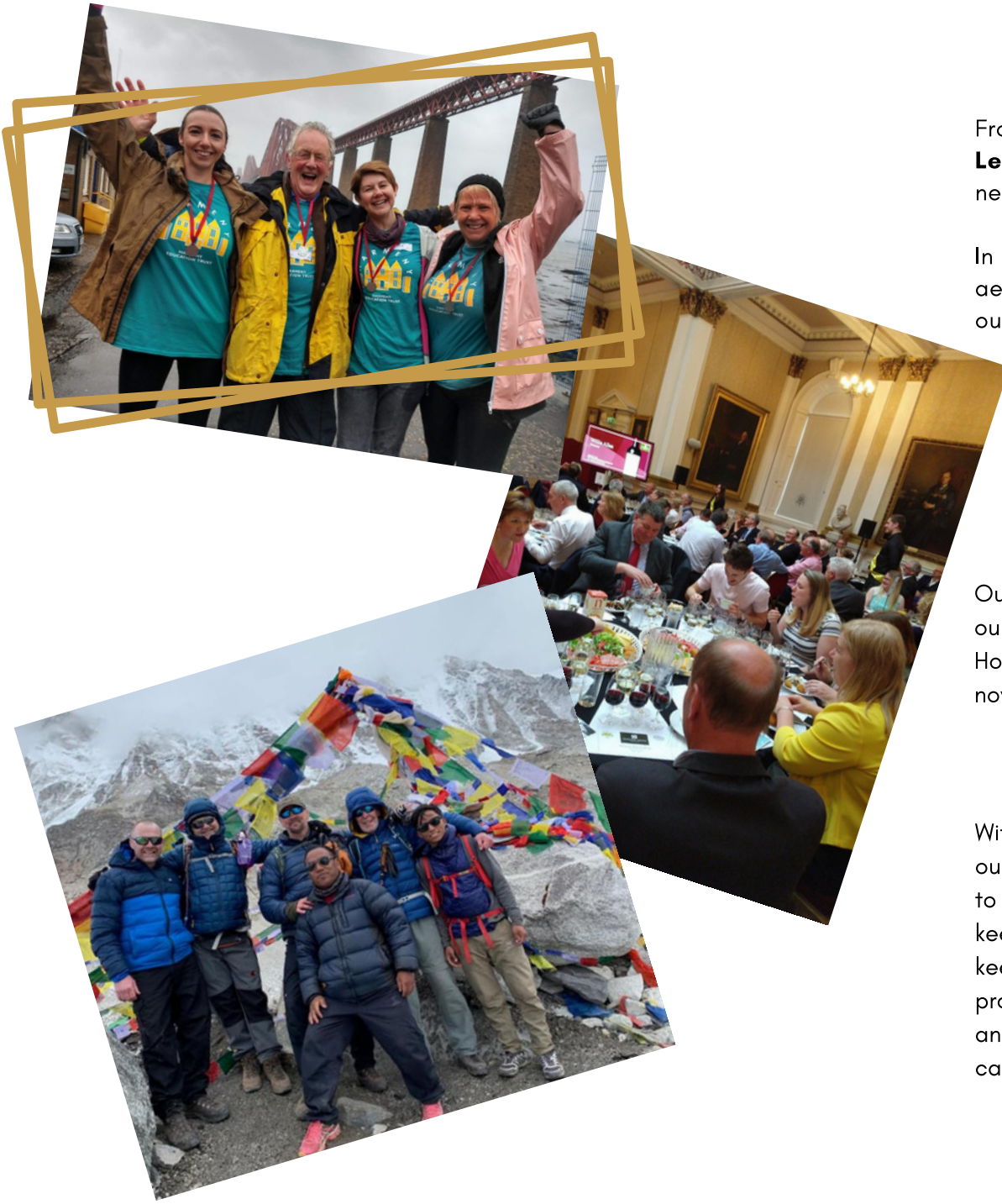
In April 2019 we were proud to become the charity partner of aerospace engineering company Leonardo, and in June 2019 we held our hugely successful Harmeny Wine Challenge, raising over £40,000.

Thanks to the efforts of our supporters and charity partners
we raised £956,782 towards our new Learning Hub
 by July 2020

Our Appeal plans were significantly affected by the pandemic, with all our planned events and activities from March 2020 being cancelled. However, after a temporary pause, our fundraising for the Appeal has now resumed.

Coronavirus Appeal

With the new challenges brought by Covid, and the resulting impact on our finances, the fundraising team refocused their efforts on raising funds to minimise the impact of the pandemic on our children's progress and keep our community safe. **Over £40,000** was raised by July 2020 to help keep our children connected through technology; fund PPE for staff; provide additional therapeutic and practical activities to reduce anxiety; and create new spaces within our estate such as our Forest School and camping area.



Community support

We have also received **over £14,000** in donations from local groups, Edinburgh Airport Community Fund, and Turner & Townsend to support our wider work and make improvements to our estate.

Images (clockwise): One of three Go-karts donated by Rotary Club of Corstorphine; Leonardo staff's Christmas jumper fundraiser to make the children's Christmas really special; Community garden improvements by Leonardo volunteers; Turner & Townsend replacing walkways and improving access for our staff and children.



231 volunteers from **9** organisations gave **1,155** hours via our Corporate Volunteering programme

Special thanks to

- The Gloag Foundation
- Walker Group
- Leonardo
- The RS Macdonald Charitable Trust
- The Ryvoan Trust
- Mazars Charitable Trust
- Westerwood Properties
- The Baily Thomas Charitable Fund
- Edinburgh Airport Community Fund
- Turner & Townsend
- Corstorphine Rotary Club
- Currie and Balerno District Round Table

Plus all our supporters who abseiled, cycled, ran, walked and swam to help raise these vital funds.

We were also very grateful to receive grants from

The Scottish Government Pupil Equity Fund, targeted towards improving children’s attainment and achievement in literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing.

The Scottish Government Learning Directorate, towards the cost of a Project Researcher and Workforce Development, thus supporting the transition to a new commissioning model.



Our Finances

Financial summary for April 2019-March 2020

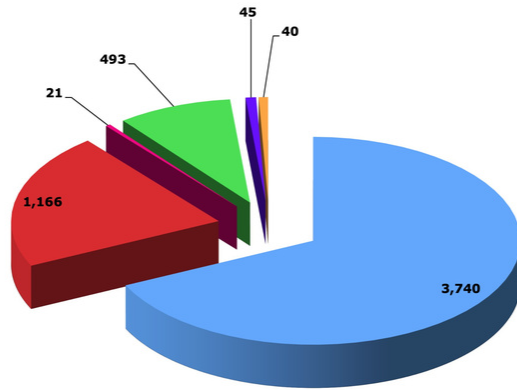
2019-20 was a challenging year for the Trust financially. Along with a slightly reduced rate of referrals, the unexpected national pay awards for the three-year period 2018-2021 had a significant impact on our staffing costs and contributed to a deficit position at year end. Consequently, a number of staffing efficiencies were required in 2020-21, although not relating to posts involving direct work with children and young people. As of July 2020, the efficiencies, together with improved pupil numbers, will result in a healthier financial position for the year ending March 2021.

A snapshot of the financials for 2019-20 is illustrated below. **A full copy of the audited accounts is available on request.**



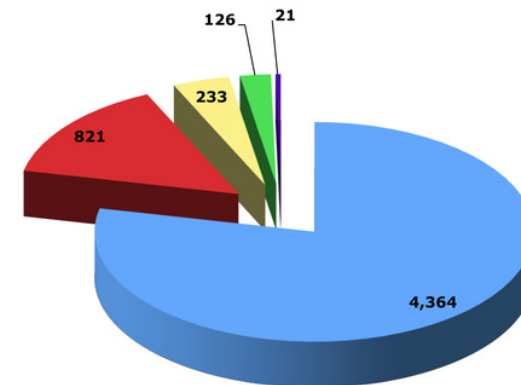
Income Sources in 2019-20
£'000

- Fees from Local Authorities
- Scottish Government Grants
- Investment Income
- Voluntary Income
- Learning and Development
- Misc Income



Expenditure in 2019-20
£'000

- Salaries
- Overheads
- Support Costs
- Cost of generating voluntary income
- Governance



Our Strategic Plan

The Promise

The Independent Care Review, which commenced in February 2017 and culminated in the publication of 'The Promise' in February 2020, was a review like no other, involving engagement with over 5,500 people, half of whom were care experienced children and young people, adults who had lived in care, and families.

The Promise calls for radical change in relation to the current care system over a ten year period, and is built on five foundations: **Voice, Family, Care, People** and **Scaffolding**. Harmeny's Vision, Purpose and Values reflect the Promise's ambition for 'all children to grow up loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential', and we are highly committed to playing our part in supporting this vital work.

The Plan (August 2020 - July 2023)

Our new strategic plan priorities highlight our commitment to the five foundations of The Promise:

VOICE To listen to the views of children in relation to the provision of their care and learning, as well as the development of our current and future services.

FAMILY To extend our reach, through creating a skills-based secondary day service for young people living with adversity, and exploring the development of community support services.

CARE To expand our core services, through developing continuing care and learning services for young people aged 15+ already placed at Harmeny (Acorn Project).

PEOPLE To further develop the skills and enhance the wellbeing of our highly dedicated staff, through excellent training, supervision and support systems.

SCAFFOLDING To increase the organisation's profile and influence by establishing a therapeutic practice model (The Harmeny Way), with increased marketing, communications and fundraising.





"Building positive relationships is where we start.

We know the likes and dislikes of each child and can generally 'find a way in'. The idea is to understand and engage every child."

Teacher

Togetherness

