



**Harmeny
Education Trust**



ANNUAL REPORT

AUGUST 2025 – JULY 2026

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    @HarmenyEd

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.

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, aged 5-18, who have complex additional support needs as a result of early years trauma and adversity. Our beautiful estate is set in Balerno, in the hills above Edinburgh. Everything that we do is rooted in our vision, purpose and values.

OUR VALUES



Relationships

We believe in compassionate, nurturing relationships, for we know that they build trust, respect and understanding.



Community

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



Child-Centred

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



Learning

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

A message from our Chair of Trustees

Sarah Summers



Welcome to the Annual Report 2025/26. This is my first year as Chair of Trustees and I am delighted to have the opportunity and privilege to become more involved with the Harmeny staff, children and young people.

It is truly inspiring to witness the commitment, nurture and creativity provided to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse school community.

I must give a huge thanks to my predecessor, Jennifer Scott, who has continued to support Harmeny as a trustee and provided invaluable mentoring. We are delighted that we still have her skills, knowledge and experience on the board.

Gavin continues to drive, motivate and lead our dynamic staff team shaping practice through partnership working, input into key legislation and trialling new opportunities to support young people's development. He has established trusting links with our children and young people who remain the priority in our quest to improve their life opportunities.

We are very grateful to all the donors and funders who continue to help us develop our estate with our new bushcraft area and who have got behind our latest fundraising appeal to update our adventure playground and provide more all year round, age-appropriate play and social spaces for our young people.

Our commitment to providing education and care for older children has brought new challenges and opportunities for growth. Our staff have embraced additional training and support to expand their knowledge and understanding, adapting to what is, for some, a new area of practice. These efforts are delivering positive outcomes, and it has been rewarding to see our first S4 cohort achieve national qualifications, alongside the opening of a semi-independent annex for our oldest young person.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my fellow trustees who bring a wealth of experience from finance, law, education, social work, digital, architecture and fundraising to support and promote Harmeny interests.

Key to all this is a united desire and determination from trustees and staff across the organisation for all our children and young people to realise, develop and achieve their potential.



Gavin Calder and Sarah Summers presented Jennifer Scott with a gift to thank her for her time as Chair of the Board.

A message from our Chief Executive

Gavin Calder

Every year brings lots of highlights as Chief Executive at Harmeny and many of them are contained within this annual report which focuses on our progress against the five pillars of the Harmeny Strategic Plan 2025–2030.

This said, the word ‘highlight’ does not describe my most important single action of the last year.

In August, I attended every Harmeny-related session of Phase 9 of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry (SCAI). The evidence I gave related to the evolution of Harmeny Education Trust since 1995 and some past actions that we have identified as isolated examples of abuse.

I hope that I represented those who have gone before with honesty and integrity and I am committed to learning from the past and making sure that our children receive the care and love that they absolutely deserve.

It is a source of national shame that such an inquiry is necessary into the past treatment of young people in institutions which should have been safe spaces displaying care and compassion. As I said under oath, I am extremely sorry to all those people who have suffered from abuse within such institutions and will take full note of anything recommended by Lady Smith.

The work of the current staff at Harmeny is remarkable and I would like to thank and pay tribute to each and every one of them for all that they do. It is an honour to lead them.

I would also extend this gratitude to the trustees and Jennifer Scott in particular. She has chaired the board with aplomb and has been instrumental in guiding some

monumental change- all with the interests of the children and young people to the fore.

Sarah Summers is an excellent, highly knowledgeable appointment as chair. I am already enjoying working closely with her in her new capacity.

I hope you enjoy reading this report. If you would like to find out more about our work, please get in touch.



One last swing in our much-loved adventure playground before its replacement, along with Mandy Shiel, Head of Education, and Dr Scott Arthur MP, who visited this summer.



Our year in numbers

Harmeny has supported

44

young people this year: 36 on a residential basis, and 8 within our day service.

5

young people left Harmeny to return to a family setting.

51%

of our young people have spent over four years at Harmeny, helping reduce transitions and build consistent relationships.

377

individual therapy sessions were offered at Harmeny.

23

national qualifications achieved by our first cohort of S4 students.

25

staff within our care team were supported with their SVQ and HNC qualifications.

17

local authorities worked with us this year.

Turning our vision into action

In 2025 we launched an ambitious five-year strategy aimed at taking us into the next decade with a clear vision. In keeping with the Promise we remain dedicated to our purpose of providing the highest quality of therapeutic care and education, while minimising transitions for our young people. This means making sure that we are constantly innovating to meet the needs of older young people while making sure that our younger children still receive all the help that they require to overcome trauma and adversity and discover the joy of learning.

**Unique
therapeutic
approach**

We continue to improve the lives of our children and young people through The Harmeny Way.

**Sector-leading
practice**

We raise the standards of care and education across the sector.

**People &
culture**

We support all colleagues to reach their full potential.

**Infrastructure
& environment**

We provide a safe, sustainable, and therapeutic environment.

**Fit for
the future**

We are nimble and responsive to the external environment in which we operate.

For full details on our strategy please visit harmeny.org.uk/our-key-information.

Celebrating 30 years and looking ahead

We looked back nostalgically as we celebrated the first 30 years of Harmeny Education Trust just before Christmas, but this year also saw us make strides towards meeting our long-term strategic priorities (outlined above). In many ways this has been a year of preparation and discovery during which we have worked with the young people as well as myriad stakeholders to plan for Harmeny's future, but there have also been many achievements. This annual report highlights some of this key work in relation to each of our five strategic priorities.



Marking our 30th anniversary on 21 December 2025.

Feeling safe, loved and understood

Priority 1: Unique Therapeutic Approach

We continue to embed our therapeutic framework, the Harmeny Way, in all that we do; placing children and young people at the centre of our decision-making and expanding the opportunities and spaces available to them to help to equip them for life beyond Harmeny.

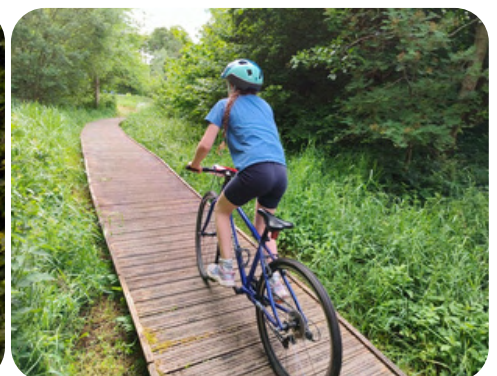
Celebrating community, strengthening connections

A strong sense of community helps children and young people to feel connected, supported and part of something lasting. Among this year's highlights were events that brought together young people, families, carers, former pupils, colleagues, volunteers and friends, alongside opportunities to contribute to life in Balerno.

The Edinburgh Schools Mountain Bike Championship returned to Harmeny for its second year, welcoming a record turnout of more than 160 pupils from across the city – more than double the attendance of the previous year. A former pupil worked alongside our team and the Edinburgh Road Club to develop new elements on our course to challenge riders. Families, teachers and volunteers all cheered on the participants on the day.

Much-loved occasions, including our Christmas Show and Sports Day, gave the Harmeny community opportunities to reconnect, celebrate achievements and enjoy time together.

Beyond our estate, we joined the Balerno Children's Gala once again with our own float. Three young people also helped to refurbish Balerno's telephone-box mini library; developing and installing bespoke shelving with support from our volunteer woodwork instructor.



Building skills through adventure

Outdoor learning is an important part of both the daily school curriculum and children and young people's leisure time. Activities such as mountain biking, paddling and camping provide opportunities to build confidence, develop new skills and create lasting memories with friends.

The school summer break brought some particularly memorable adventures. During a bike camp, young people volunteered at Auchingarrich Wildlife Park in exchange for a free camping pitch, helping to tidy animal enclosures and paint a fence. After cooking and camping together, they visited Comrie Croft to develop their mountain biking skills on its trails and skills track.

Another overnight camp saw our young people paddle along the River Lochay into Loch Tay and camp on an island. They played in the loch, toasted marshmallows around the fire and searched for signs of beavers before paddling back the following morning.

These holidays brought young people and adults from across different cottages together, strengthening skills, confidence and relationships through shared adventure.



A year-round space for bushcraft



This summer marked the opening of Harmeny's new bushcraft area, funded by our brave Harmeny Heroes who climbed the iconic Kelpies last year.

Featuring an all-weather canopy and fire pit, the bushcraft area provides a welcoming setting for outdoor learning throughout the year. Surrounded by gardens and woodland, children and young people have learnt the art of building fires, prepared food outdoors and worked together in the natural environment around them. Our first camp brought together siblings currently staying at Harmeny, providing an opportunity to build bonds and create memories together.

A new space for independent living

A significant step forward in our support for older young people has been the opening of Harmeny's semi-independent living annex. This homely, self-contained space sits next to our older young persons cottage, offering greater independence alongside the reassurance of familiar support nearby.

Its first resident received the keys shortly before Christmas and took responsibility for organising the move and making the space their own. While attending college, they are managing their home and daily routines with increasing independence, while choosing to maintain close relationships with adults and peers in the neighbouring cottage.

The learning from developing this space and the feedback from its resident continues to inform how we further develop our support and living spaces for older young people and prepare them for independent living.



Helping others to feel at home

One of our young people has drawn on her own experience of arriving at Harmeny to write and design a story for children who are joining our community.

Reflecting on how life has changed during her time with us, she wrote and designed the book with support from Harmeny adults. Her warm and reassuring story is a thoughtful example of a young person using her voice and experiences to help others feel safe, understood and welcomed. A pen name protects the author's privacy.



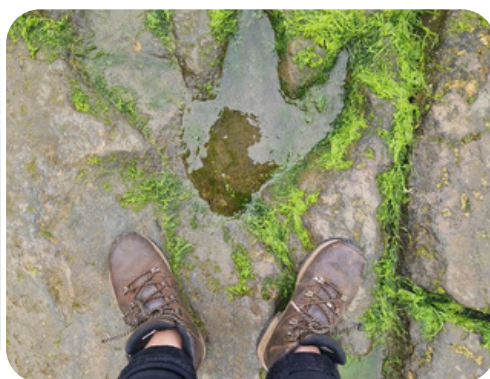
A leadership journey with Columba 1400

We were delighted to work with Columba 1400 this year to access their highly regarded Young People's Leadership Academy for our Secondary pupils. This values-based programme aims to support young people to explore their identity, strengths and values, and to build leadership skills that support their education and wider life.

Eight students took part in the Academy, which began with workshops at Harmeny exploring Awareness, Focus, Creativity, Integrity, Perseverance and Service. The group then travelled to the Isle of Skye for a four-night residential experience. Through individual and team challenges, games and reflective activities, the students stepped outside their comfort zones, strengthened relationships and considered the positive contribution that they could make within the Harmeny community. On their final evening, each participant designed an image representing their experience for a commemorative mug, which provides a lasting reminder of their time on Skye.

The programme continues until the end of 2026, with Columba 1400 staff returning to Harmeny to help students to plan and deliver a community project. This final phase will give them the opportunity to put the Columban Values into practice and create positive, lasting change within Harmeny.

We are very grateful to RS Macdonald Charitable Trust and the Ray Fernie Foundation for helping to fund this opportunity for our young people.



“This place helped me learn exactly what values are and what mine are.”

Young person

“I feel as though I have more control over myself and what I do.”

Young person

Bringing Harmeny's approach to life

In September 2025 we released four short films to help to illustrate our services and practice. Together, they introduce Harmeny, life and learning here, the support that we provide through important transitions, and the therapeutic approach that guides our work.



About Harmeny

Discover Harmeny's purpose, services and values, and how we support children and young people to grow and thrive.

Scan this QR code to watch the video.



“ I think Harmeny's a really good place to live when you're like young. And going into your teenage years you can get some more support as you're growing up. ”

Young person

Living and Learning at Harmeny

Explore how care, education and everyday experiences come together to create a supportive place to live and learn.

Scan this QR code to watch the video.



“ My favourite thing about Harmeny is definitely my best friends. ”

Young person



Supporting Transitions

See how we provide care, stability and belonging from a young person's arrival at Harmeny through to moving on, while maintaining connections through Here4U.

Scan this QR code to watch the video.



“ [The staff] they're here because they want to, they want to look after us and help us get a better life. And I feel like that's really good. ”

Young person



Our Approach

Learn about the experience, relationships and shared principles that shape our therapeutic care, education and support.

Scan this QR code to watch the video.



“ Our relationships with our young people are key to everything that we do, that relational care. ”

Gavin Calder, Harmeny's CEO



You can find all these and other videos about our work on our YouTube channel: youtube.com/@harmenyed

Attainment and engagement

Attainment at secondary level continues to grow as we supported our first cohort of S4 young people in their journey to achieve their National Qualifications. Seven subjects were offered at NVQ level 3 and 4 for S4 students, with 23 qualifications achieved by four students. One of these students also achieved their Gold ASDAN award (with a Bronze ASDAN also being achieved by a S2 student). Building on their part-time college courses accessed in their S4 year, three young people have now secured college placements for their S5 year in 2026/27; two full-time and one part-time.



We continued to explore potential paths into college for our S2 and S3 cohorts, working with Edinburgh College, West Lothian College and Hub for Success. As a result, three students will be accessing a school/college partnership course for their S4 year in 2026/27.

We'd like to thank Leonardo, The Bridges Project and Listen Lanarkshire for providing three excellent work experiences for our young people too.

93%

School attendance
rate for both
residential and day
service young people

75%

of Harmeny's
residential young
people have accessed
CAMHS services

Mental health support

We continue to work closely with the Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to help children to access specialist mental health and neurodevelopmental support. In the last year, 27 children were supported by CAMHS, including several young people who left Harmeny during 2025/26.

This included consultations with the team around the child, assessments, referrals and ongoing interventions such as diagnosis, medication, therapy or support from an allocated CAMHS worker.

Specialist therapeutic support

Young people at Harmeny can have one-to-one access to four psychological therapies: art, music, psychology, and speech and language as required. We offer a completely child-led therapeutic model with no limits on how many sessions a child will be offered.

This year 26 children have been supported by our therapists and 377 individual therapy sessions were offered; 130 speech and language, 33 psychology, 100 art and 114 music. 62% of children attended more than 90% of the sessions offered to them.

We also provide therapeutic life story work, a model developed by Richard Rose, to support young people to understand their past, make sense of who they are and express their feelings in a safe space.

Two consultant Child and Adolescent Psychotherapists offer confidential reflective spaces for our staff on an individual or group basis. This might be a one-to-one discussion to reflect on the personal impact of working with children who have experienced trauma, or supporting a team to think about how best to work together to support the dynamics within a class or cottage.

59%

of Harmeny's young
people have accessed
specialist therapy
sessions



After school art club

Our Art Therapist and Creative Arts Teacher began an after school art club, giving an opportunity for children to explore their creativity together outside of the school setting. Young people had access to a range of materials to explore a variety of techniques, such as marbling and clay making.

One project was focused around what a "safe space" may look like for each child through creating little clay creatures, and designing an environment for those creatures using containers.

Achieving positive outcomes through PLAR

Since 2025 we have been supporting our children's journeys using an Outcomes Framework developed mainly from the age-specific methodologies of Daniel and Wassell. The Outcomes Framework is mapped to SHANARRI, with the addition of two domains that are at the heart of what we do:

- **Health and wellbeing:** taking into account the physical, emotional and mental health needs of our children.
- **Transitions:** acknowledging that any size of change in a child's life can be fundamental to their life experiences and views of themselves.

We aim to achieve positive outcomes through an approach developed specifically for young people in residential care called PLAR (Play, Learn, Attach, Relax). This approach was developed by our Head of Therapeutic Services, and Forensic Psychologist, Dr Nicola Wylie, whereby personalised opportunities to Play, Learn, Attach and Relax are offered daily to the children by the adults around them.

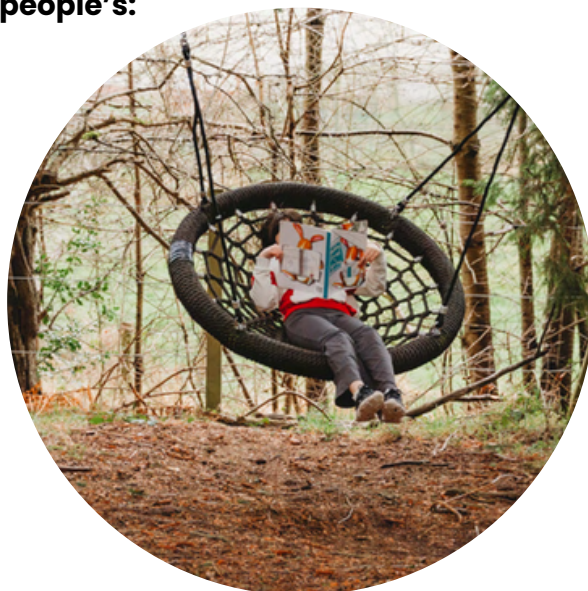


This work has now enabled us to record and track the outcomes over 12 months for 26 of our young people. Analysis of this information has shown that PLAR has led to a significant increase in all our outcome measures over this period.

Statistically significant growth was made in young people's:

- **ability to manage change**
- **physical/emotional wellbeing**
- **social skills and capacity to navigate group dynamics**
- **sense of feeling secure, safe and attached.**

The 832 individual observations across 208 outcomes made within this timeframe have also provided the team with a wealth of information to inform our bespoke support for each child. These observations have highlighted what worked well and areas where the PLAR approach can be adapted to best support young people to reach their individualised goals.



Sharing practice and shaping change

Priority 2: Sector-leading practice

We are strengthening partnerships, sharing our experience and learning from others to improve practice within Harmony and across the wider sector. Through research and collaboration we are also helping to trial new models, shape policy and build support for young people across Scotland.

Recognising the strengths of our educational practice

In October of 2025 we had a visit from His Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools, who looked in detail at the educational journey that our young people are on.

They highlighted the following strengths:

- Staff creating calm and responsive learning environments, with classrooms purposely arranged to enhance positive learning experiences.
- Staff using their knowledge and training to build strong relationships, using sensitive approaches exceptionally well.
- Senior Leaders really knowing the young people's interests, therefore making strong progress in establishing the senior phase for our oldest learners.
- A real focus on celebrating success while providing a wide range of existing experiences, leading to growing confidence and the development of important life skills.

As a learning establishment we are already working hard on areas for improvement identified in our tracking and monitoring systems, and also on making sure that we continue to raise our expectations of what the young people can achieve.

Visit harmony.org.uk/our-key-information to read the full report.

“ [Staff] are highly dedicated to ensuring that children and young people are fully included and involved in school and in the community. [They] are aware of the additional support needs of each learner and provide high levels of support to make sure that most children and young people engage in daily learning and planned activities. ”

HMIE Inspectors summarised findings, 2025



Bringing BUSS to Harmeny

We were proud to work with the team from BUSS to be the first residential service to trial the Building Underdeveloped Sensorimotor Systems (BUSS) model for 13 of our children. BUSS is a model designed by Specialist Occupational Therapist and Play Therapist Sarah Lloyd. It is for children who have experienced developmental trauma and brings together an understanding of how a baby and young child's sense of themselves on a bodily level develops through experiences of being touched, held, and of moving, all within the context of nurturing relationships.

Sitting alongside a neurodevelopmental understanding of the impact of trauma on the developing brain, attachment theory, child development theory and drawing on sensory integration theory; the model focuses on the development of foundation sensorimotor systems. It helps children to regulate their emotions and bodies, relate to adults, and develop reason. This is really promising for what we do at Harmeny and aligns with our model of Play, Learn, Attach, Relax (PLAR). See page 16 for more info.



Sarah Lloyd demonstrating some of the exercises used in BUSS.

The BUSS team provided online and in-person training to help our young people and team to understand, from an Occupational Therapy lens, strength and stability, coordination, movement, and control. Each child was assessed by the BUSS team and given a series of individualised exercises to complete daily with support from our adults. Weekly consultations were offered to help adapt and develop the skills that we were building with our children.

After three months the BUSS team returned to reassess and give further direct support to our teams. A further assessment at six months showed improvements in all areas for all children, with the biggest improvements in core strength and stability.

A total of 27 goals were achieved:

- **11 for the core strength and stability**
- **2 for gravitational security**
- **7 for oral motor strength**
- **7 for making sense of the environment**

The children said it was 'fun' and worked hard with adults across our care and education teams to develop and progress through their goals. We are now working with BUSS to share our experience across the sector.

Supporting young people across Scotland

This year has seen us develop much closer relations with our colleagues at each of Scotland's other grant-aided special schools (GASS).

Currently making a difference to young lives in 28 of Scotland's 32 local authorities, the GASS schools are working hard to make sure that our collective voice is heard, and that our expertise is available as a national resource for the benefit of as many of Scotland's young people with additional support needs as possible.

Our collective reach is illustrated on the map, with the areas currently served by the GASS schools highlighted in orange.



A collective voice in shaping legislation

In March we welcomed the passing of two significant pieces of legislation to protect and support young people. *The Children (Care, Care Experience and Services Planning)(Scotland) Bill* strengthened the voice of care experienced young people and adults. In addition, *The Restraint and Seclusion in Schools (Scotland) Bill* addressed the significant gap in legal protections for children when they are subject to restraint or seclusion in school.

In October 2025 Gavin Calder, our CEO, gave evidence on behalf of Scottish Council of Independent Schools (of which Harmeny is a member) to the Scottish Parliament's Education, Children and Young People committee as it considered the proposed restraint and seclusion bill.

Supporting our former pupils

Our sector-leading transitions and keeping in touch service, Here4U, continues to offer vital support, guidance and a lasting connection to our former pupils.

While Here4U primarily supports former pupils under the age of 26, we are always delighted to welcome individuals of all ages back to our campus.

This last year the Here4U Project Officer conducted extensive research into the development of our services for older young people, consulting with former pupils to help shape potential accommodation options, including stepping stones into independent living. The Project Officer also visited five other organisations to learn more about their models and their successes and challenges. This research is now shaping our plans within our five-year strategy.

We would like to thank the Ryvoan Trust and the Ray Fernie Foundation for funding this important service.

“When I walk through the [Harmeny] gates it feels like I'm home.”

Former pupil

FORMER PUPIL?

We'd love to hear from you at
Here4U@harmeny.org.uk



Sean McCahill and Anna Ziebigicka during their talk at The Gathering.

Sharing our learning at The Gathering

In February our Head of HR and our Learning and Development Manager shared our practice with sector peers at SCVO's The Gathering. Their session reflected upon the development of our Staff Engagement Group (SEG), new ways of promoting employee voice, and the importance of in-person discussions in understanding what matters to our workforce. They also described the transformation of Learning and Development into a strategic value-add partner across Harmeny, and explored wellbeing beyond health, including job satisfaction, psychological safety and career progression.

By speaking openly about challenges, learning and future priorities, they demonstrated how this work has contributed to reduced staff turnover and a more stable workforce for our children and young people.

People who make Harmony possible

Priority 3: People and culture

Developing a highly skilled and qualified workforce is central to providing the best possible support for our children and young people. Our Learning and Development Team provides a wide range of learning opportunities aligned with the Harmony Way, plus specialist topics relating to the age and stage of our young people. This year also saw a continued focus on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and wellbeing.

Investing in professional development

Between August 2025 and July 2026, we supported 25 colleagues to achieve SVQ and HNC qualifications required for their roles, strengthening professional expertise, leadership capacity and opportunities for career progression.

Alongside formal qualifications, specialist sessions provide opportunities to explore research-informed practice. In June, Bruce Robertson, CEO of Next Level Education and author of the Power Up Your Pedagogy series, shared practical approaches to strengthening children's learning, engagement and resilience through everyday interactions.

We also delivered training on adolescent development, wellbeing and behaviour, covering attachment, sexual health, food trauma, progressive masculinity, LGBTQIA+ awareness, gaming and gambling harm prevention, online safety, cyberbullying and ligature awareness.

Our investment in professional development extends to supporting the next generation of social work professionals through high-quality student placements. Working in partnership with universities including the University of Edinburgh, University of Stirling, University of Dundee and The Open University, we provide meaningful opportunities to gain practical experience and learn alongside experienced practitioners.



Mandy Shiel, Head of Education and Bruce Robertson, CEO of Next Level Education.

“Coming to a place where you can genuinely help and support is absolutely life-affirming stuff. It was refreshing to see people so invested in their young people, and genuinely they are a credit to the place.”

**Social Work Student,
2026 Placement**

Celebrating lasting contributions

We were proud to celebrate significant work anniversaries for 20, 25 and 30 years of service for several colleagues this year, recognising the experience, commitment and organisational knowledge that they bring to our community. Their long service provides great continuity for generations of young people and colleagues and a fantastic ability to share memories with our former pupils.

We also marked the retirement of Ron Smith, our longest-serving volunteer, following 40 years of volunteering over a 60-year connection with Harmeny. As our woodwork instructor, Ron has helped generations of young people to develop practical skills, creativity and a sense of achievement through one-to-one sessions, while also contributing to fundraising, improvements across our estate and projects within the local community. His contribution leaves a lasting legacy and he will always be part of the Harmeny family.



Ron Smith, with the refurbished sign from his previous workshop which was rehung to mark his retirement from volunteering.

Wellbeing shaped by staff voices



In spring we launched a staff survey to understand colleagues' day-to-day experiences and assess our existing support across mental, physical, financial, social and occupational wellbeing. The findings were explored further through face-to-face discussions, ensuring that colleagues had meaningful opportunities to share what works well and where improvements are needed.

Most respondents rated their wellbeing as good or very good, highlighting flexible working and access to wellbeing and emotional support resources as particular strengths. These insights will inform a new wellbeing strategy, including further work to promote psychological safety and support colleagues following challenging shifts.

Building a more inclusive Harmeny

In 2025 we began a new four-year period under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As part of this, we established an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Group with colleagues from across Harmeny. Representing the nine protected characteristics, the group gives staff a voice in shaping EDI policy and practice and identifying meaningful improvements.

Alongside supporting our LGBT inclusion work, the group has made significant progress in developing a consistent, trauma-informed approach to responding to racist language and behaviour from young people. In partnership with Intercultural Youth Scotland (IYS), we are developing a framework to equip colleagues with the understanding and tools to respond consistently. The EDI group will also explore new ways to better understand and support neurodivergent colleagues.



Grace Dempsey, IYS Education Programme Coordinator, delivered training on responding to racism.

Strengthening LGBT inclusion



Working towards recognition as an LGBT-friendly employer has been an important focus of our EDI agenda and Equality Mainstreaming Report. In partnership with LGBT Youth Scotland, we have undertaken the LGBT Charter, supporting positive change across leadership, policy, practice and visibility.

Activities have included marking LGBT History Month and Purple Friday, sharing learning resources and encouraging colleagues to share their pronouns. Pride celebrations brought young people and adults together through a colour run and an afternoon of shared celebration, learning and reflection on the importance of inclusion and belonging. As we approach completion of the Charter, this work is helping to embed greater understanding, acceptance and inclusion across Harmeny.

Places and tools that help us thrive

Priority 4: Infrastructure and environment

We are continuing to build strong foundations to support the delivery of our work and provide the right environment and spaces that our young people need to grow and thrive. This year has seen the opening of our first semi-independent accommodation (see page 10) and a permanent space for bushcraft activities (see page 9). The development of our estate continues through the launch of our Play Appeal and research into more independent living options (page 20). Behind the scenes we have also been streamlining systems and embracing technology to give staff time to focus on what matters.

Developing spaces to play and socialise

Following a consultation in early 2026 with children and adults around play, we identified that many of our existing play spaces no longer meet our young people's needs. Our much-loved adventure play area, The Venchie, is now over 30 years old with the various structures and apparatus at the end of their functional lifespan. The play equipment on our front lawn and within our cottage gardens is also outdated. Our young people have also requested suitable spaces for all-year-round team games such as football and basketball.

As a result, in March, we launched our Play Appeal to raise funds to install a new multi-use games surface and gym equipment, improve drainage on our grass play area, and replace play equipment in the Venchie, on the front lawn and in the cottage gardens.

Thanks to the incredible support of funders, including the Nancie Massey Charitable Trust, we have already made great progress in the appeal, enabling us to appoint CAP.CO in June to help to bring our ideas to life.

Through consultation with our young people and staff the team at CAP.CO have now finalised the design for the new Venchie, with the aim of installing the new play equipment in the autumn.

Our fundraising continues to ensure we have a variety of spaces and opportunities for young people to play, learn, attach and relax in line with our PLAR approach (see page 16 for more on PLAR). To find out more about the progress or ways that you can support the appeal, please visit

harmony.org.uk/playappeal



Concept visuals for the new adventure playground.

Many hands make light work

We are very grateful to all the volunteers who have supported Harmeny on both a regular and one-off basis throughout the year.

Between August 2025 and July 2026, 17 teams from 11 companies took part in our corporate volunteering programme, with 77 volunteers giving 462 hours in total to help with maintenance projects within our estate and preparations for our Christmas Show.

A further 13 volunteers provided regular volunteering support in roles such as education support, gardening and governance.

90

volunteers helped
across Harmeny
this year



A team from Natwest helped build our new bushcraft area.

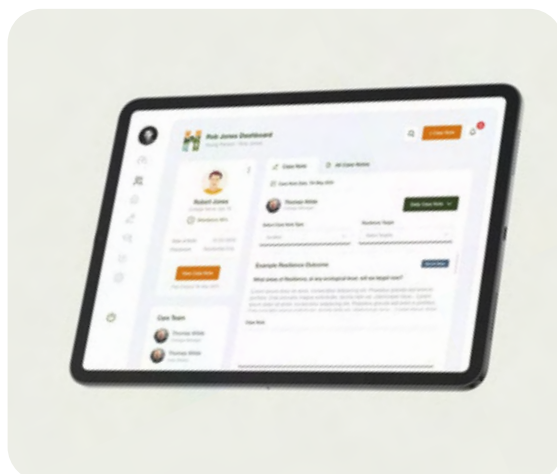


A team of High Constables helped construct new compost bays.

Working smarter, staying connected

Our digital transformation programme brings together seven interconnected projects to improve different aspects of our systems, data security and ways of working.

One major piece of work has been replacing our old database for managing information about our children and young people. Our new database has improved security, reliability and ways of recording attainment, engagement, targets and outcomes for our young people.



We have also begun exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) could support our work, while developing a shared understanding of its limitations and the importance of using it responsibly and securely.

Staff feedback and our Digital Champions continue to shape this work and support colleagues through change.

Getting ready for the future

Priority 5: Fit for the future

It is vital that we stay responsive to an ever-changing environment to ensure that Harmeny remains visible, valued and well-positioned to meet developing needs. We do this by working closely with our partners, membership bodies and the third sector, plus local authorities and the Scottish Government to inform regulations and legislation (see page 19). As a not-for-profit we continue to invest surpluses into developing our services to ensure that we remain sustainable in the years to come.

Reducing transitions

Previous investment into the extension of our services to support young people beyond age 14 has already resulted in reduced transitions for our young people.

The average stay for a young person at Harmeny as of July 2026 is now four years and two months, compared to three years and five months for young people who attended Harmeny between 2020 and 2023.

Over half (51%) of our young people have spent more than four years at Harmeny, compared to just 26% of young people who attended during 2020–2023. This aligns with our commitment to reduce transitions and provide consistent care and education to young people who have experienced significant disruption in their early years.

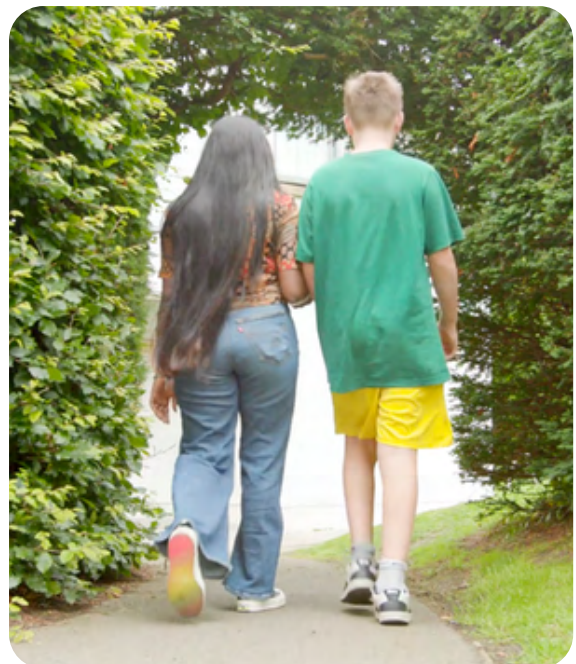
50

months is the average stay for a young person at Harmeny

Exploring opportunities beyond Scotland

This year saw the publication of the Cross Border Placement of Children (Scotland) Regulations following on from the work of a two-year working party including Harmeny Chief Executive Gavin Calder.

Harmeny's services have never been available to young people in other parts of the UK before, but the safeguards built into these regulations mean that we could be part of the matching process in the future. We are now working to increase knowledge of the Harmeny Way beyond Scotland.



Our financial year to March 2026

Harmeny is a not-for-profit organisation, which reinvests any surpluses to provide sustainable therapeutic care for our children and young people. Most of our income comes from statutory fees paid by local authorities, with additional support from the Scottish Government as a Grant-Aided Special School.

We also benefit from fundraising activities that enhance our services and facilities. During the 2025/26 financial year, we recorded a surplus of £145k, an increase compared to last year's surplus of £6.2k. This is due to an increase in school fee and grant income coupled with savings across our expenditure.

During the year we recorded £80.8k of fundraised income, and received a further £21k from funders for activities that took place early in the 2026/27 financial year.

Our pupil numbers remained at around 85% of capacity throughout the year, which was below our target. We did see a significant increase in the number of referrals into the service and were able to welcome seven new young people into the service. However, five young people moved on from our service in the same time period.

Around 80% of our expenditure goes towards staff costs. Our staff team are an integral part of our service, so alongside salaries, we continue to invest in staff learning and development as well as wellbeing.

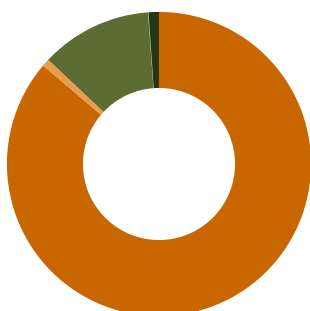
We also continue to invest in maintaining and improving our grounds and buildings to ensure high quality facilities for the years ahead. This includes day-to-day maintenance as well as planned preventative maintenance work.

Our unrestricted reserves remain at target level, giving us the capacity to manage unforeseen costs. During the financial year, the trustees agreed to designate £1.2m of free reserves towards capital developments around the estate to allow us to invest in our future services.

Looking ahead, the phased withdrawal of the Scottish Government Grant by 2029 and pressures on local authority budgets present ongoing challenges. Securing new referrals, diversifying our income and maintaining strict cost control therefore remain key priorities.

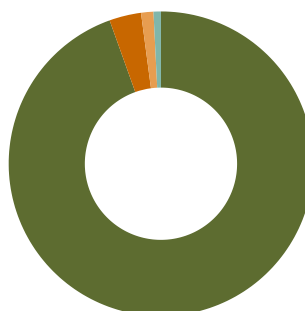
Income sources in 2025-26 £'000

- Fees from local authorities £8,622
- Fundraised income £81
- Scottish Government Grants £1,184
- Misc income £5
- Investment income £110



Expenditure in 2025-26 £'000

- Care and Education Services £9,292
- Administration £332
- Fundraising expenses £129
- Governance £77



A full copy of the audited accounts is available at harmeny.org.uk/our-key-information.



Harmeny

***A place to live,
a space to thrive***



**If you'd like to connect with us, please get in touch
to find out more.**



@harmenyed



Harmeny Education Trust



harmeny.org.uk