



education  
otherwise

## Education Otherwise Association Ltd

Trustees Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2019

Company Registration Number: 01917107 Charity Registration Number: 1055120

The Trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, have pleasure in presenting their report and the financial statements for the charitable company for the year ended 30 June 2019. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their annual accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015).

### **Objectives and activities**

#### Purposes of the charity

To promote, maintain, improve, and advance public education, particularly by the provision of information, support and facilities to enable parents to make educational provision for their children otherwise than through full time state or private educational institutions.

#### Summary of main activities

Education Otherwise is a membership organisation for the public benefit, which provides support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school, and for those who wish to uphold the freedom of families to take direct responsibility for the education of their children.

Our principal aims are:

- To encourage learning outside the school system.
- To re-affirm that parents have the primary responsibility for their children's education and that they have the right to exercise this responsibility by educating them out of school.
- To establish the primary right of children to have full consideration given to their wishes and feelings about their education.
- To promote knowledge, understanding and acceptance of education otherwise than at school in the world at large.

These aims are met via our network of volunteers and public website as well as through the public helpline, internet support lists and a Facebook group. Support and information is provided to members, home educators, the media, local and national government and other interested parties including voluntary agencies. We also signpost to other services. In addition, members receive a quarterly newsletter and have access to specialist contacts, the member home area of website and Internet support.. Local Home Education Groups organised by EO members may take advantage of reduced premiums for Public Liability Insurance through EO's Policy.

The main activities undertaken by the charity are in furtherance of the public benefit. In organising these activities, trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Education otherwise is entirely run and managed by volunteers and the trustees acknowledge and applaud the vast contribution made by our volunteers. The value of this contribution far exceeds any financial statement.

## **Achievements and Performance**

The charity continues to make a difference through the support given. The telephone helpline receives in the order of 100 calls per month and families are reassured and supported by the information they receive. The website also receives a steady flow of traffic reading the support pages and downloading information sheets. The number of active volunteers continues to decline and it is clear that trustees need to take positive action to improve the recruitment and retention of volunteers. Groundwork for a recruitment campaign has begun and this work will be a priority for the trustees in 2019/20.

Considerable progress has been made in the provision of a new phone system for helpline volunteers and local contacts. The new system is now running alongside the existing one and we expect to move live operations across in a matter of weeks. Our planned move from Basecamp to Office 365 has been cancelled as we found that the tools available in Office 365 did not give us the flexibility offered by Basecamp. We are continuing to evaluate lower cost alternatives.

We applied to the Charity Commission for the change to CIO status after the last AGM. However, the Commission rejected our application due to some differences in wording between our current governing documents and the CIO constitution. As a result we will be tabling resolutions at the next AGM to bring the wording into line.

Following the release of new home education guidelines by the Department for Education, it was decided to invest in legal advice about the implications of the new regime. This advice has now been received and we will be updating our documents to reflect the new guidance and the advice received over the next few months.

## **Financial Review**

### Income

Income from all sources is slightly more than the previous year. This is primarily because of a one-off donation that was received from an alternative education charity that was closing down and chose us as the beneficiary of its remaining funds. Membership income, continues to show a steady decline from £8,024 last year to £6574 this year. Given the current economic climate and the lack of highly visible activity by the charity, this is not unexpected. However, we do need to be more visible in the future so that families can see the benefit of supporting our work through membership.

### Expenditure

Once again, we have been able to reduce ordinary operating expenditure this year from £5,709 last year to £4,638. The addition of one-off legal expenses of £3,000 brings our overall costs this year to £7,638, which is still lower than last year's figure of £9,192.

### Balances

Overall, the charity made a small surplus of £1,266 this year. Overall, funds held amount to some £38,252, which is more than three year's turnover at current levels.

### Principal sources of funds

The principal source of funds remains the sale of memberships. Many members also round-up their membership fees to provide a small donation. The charity also charges a small fee for local groups to be included under the cover of its insurance policy and a significant portion of the annual insurance fee is covered by this income.

The charity did not undertake any other fundraising activities during this period.

### Principal Risks

Income from memberships continues to decline steadily and the most common reason given for not renewing is that the member felt that they received little of any value from their membership. Of course, we do have the funds to weather a decline in membership for quite some time to come. However, your

trustees are concerned that the charity must continue to update and strive to do more in providing value both to the members and to the general public.

### Reserves

The charity currently holds reserves amounting to approximately three years' expenditure. The trustees consider this to be more than adequate and are considering ways in which some of these funds could be put to better use.

### Going concern

The charity's financial position remains secure and so there is no uncertainty about continuing as a going concern at the present time.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

### Constitution

Education Otherwise Association Ltd is currently a charitable company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. A resolution was passed at a previous AGM to begin the process of converting to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and the trustees continue to work towards that goal. The charity is not linked with any other organisation.

### Membership

Membership is by annual subscription, and is open to persons and organisations who are involved or have an interest in home education. Family members are eligible to sign up as Guarantors of the Company, with voting rights, and are recorded in the Register of Members.

### Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

Trustees are recruited from signed-up members (Guarantors) who have usually been involved as volunteers at a local or national level. Potential trustees are proposed to the AGM for membership of Council. Trustees are appointed for a term of three years. Trustees can be co-opted between AGMs but must either stand down or stand for election at the next AGM. A third of elected trustees are required to stand down by rotation at each AGM.

There is policy in place to ensure that potential trustees meet basic eligibility criteria before being proposed for election or co-opted.

### Trustee Induction and Training

New trustees are provided with information about their role and responsibilities as Trustees and Company Directors via the Trustee forum and electronic documentation from Companies House and the Charity Commission.

## **Reference and Administration**

### **Trustees for the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2018 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019**

#### Joined during the period

- None

#### Continuing in post throughout the period

- S. Willans (elected 24/01/2018)
- T. Crellin (co-opted 04/04/2016, elected 22/10/2016 & 14/04/2019)
- F. Mukwamba-Sendall (elected 01/12/12, 24/10/2015 & 14/04/2019)
- G. Evans (co-opted 0/08/2016, elected 22/10/2016 & 14/04/2019)

#### Retired during the period

- None

## **Trustees responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements**

The trustees (who are also directors for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom accounting standards. Company law requires the trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume the company will continue in business

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware, there is no relevant information of which the company's independent examiners are unaware; and the trustees have taken all reasonable steps they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the examiners are aware of the information.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities SORP.

## **Declarations**

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees report above

Fe Mukwamba-Sendall, Tom Crellin, Graeme Evans, Sarah Willans

30<sup>th</sup> September 2019