

Trustees

Annual Report 2023



HARTLEPOOL SPECIAL NEEDS
support group

supporting local families since 1989

Trustees Report 2023

From 1st January to 31st December 2023

Structure Of The Organisation

Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group is a Voluntary Organisation and consists of:-

Trustees

Jayne Shepherd	-	Chair	Re-Elected February 2021-2024
Julie Carter	-	Secretary	Stepped down May 2023
Karen Taylor	-	Treasurer	Elected February 2021-2024
Marlene Barnard	-		Elected February 2021-2024
Ami Carroll	-	Secretary	Elected February 2021-2024
Jamie Allison	-		Co-opted November 2021-2024
Shaun McCabe	-		Co-opted May 2023

Recruitment of Trustees

Members can nominate trustees or themselves for positions, also trustees can appoint co-opted trustees.

Met a total of 9 times

The Trustees meet monthly to monitor, set targets and discuss a range of issues relating to the efficient running of the group, including operational and financial reports from the Manager to whom the Trustees have delegated the day to day running of the Group. Additional or informal meetings are also held as required. Full members meeting are held at least three times a year.

Staff and Volunteers

Pat Allison	-	Manager
Julie Carter	-	Assistant Manager
Michelle Hall	-	Administration
Bank of Staff 22	-	Support & Care
Volunteers 15	-	Various Roles

Beneficiaries

- 97 Children and Young Adults who have a disability plus their Parent's, carers and siblings.
- 7 Affiliated Families

Address

Resource Centre
109 Park Road
Hartlepool
TS26 9HR

Chartered Accountants

Waltons Business Advisors Ltd
Maritime House
Harbour Walk,
The Marina
Hartlepool, TS24 0UX

Bankers

Virgin Money
118 York Road
Hartlepool
TS26 9BT

Barclays Bank
148 Park Road
Hartlepool
TS26 9BT

Chairs Report 2023

In 2023, Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group has been able to once again successfully provide a wide range of opportunities for its members. We now have a thriving Baby and Toddler Group on Tuesday mornings and regular parent/carer gatherings, we hope to introduce some new sessions and invite speakers to share information relevant to our families into the Resource Centre.

Pat, Michelle and our newly appointed Assistant manager Julie continue to successfully run the office, enabling the smooth running of the group. The dedication of all staff and volunteers, as always, is very much appreciated. Hopefully we will be seeing some positive changes being made to the centre in the coming year.

Here's to a productive and rewarding 2024 for all involved at Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group.

Jayne Shepherd—Chair of Trustees

This Annual Report is circulated to all supporters, further copies are available from the Resource Centre.

H S N S G

History

Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group was established in 1989, a voluntary organisation formed under a constitution adopted July 1990 and amended November 1993, November 1999, June 2003, January 2005 and May 2023 **Registered Charity No. 1031151**

We have been providing this service for thirty three years and have a proven track record of managing large sums of money effectively. In 1999, we started operating from our own premises.

Over the years, we have become recognised as a specialist provider of services in our field. It is very apparent that our young people have an enhanced quality of life, are growing in confidence and are gaining the firm foundations and experiences upon which they can build in order to enjoy future opportunities.

Aims and Objectives

The Charity shall serve families, children and young people in the Borough of Hartlepool and those attending schools in this Borough (herein called "the Area"). From birth onwards, (herein referred to as young people). Such young people who enrol as children may remain as members after the age of 18, if deemed mutually appropriate by all parties.

To relieve the needs and advance the education of children and young people with various profound physical or learning disabilities with varying complex needs, including life limiting conditions, and to support their families and carers. An essential part of our service is to raise public awareness and change preconceptions about disability by encouraging inclusive activities through taking part in activities set in the public domain.

The Manager and her team work hard to achieve the Group's objectives by carrying out the following:

- Develop the group, encourage participation, recruit, train and support Volunteers and staff.
- Design appropriate programmes of activities both at centre and outreach and look for new opportunities
- Support the children and young adults under their care
- Provide support and information to parents
- Develop links with other agencies
- Maintain links with existing funding sources and research potential funders
- Ensure the smooth running of the resource centre

Contingency Policy

The Trustees agreed to continue this policy of keeping a contingency fund equal to six months running costs of the Charity. This policy is reviewed and monitored regularly.

Risk Management

The trustees have put systems in place to mitigate any major risks which affect the Charity.

Public Benefit

The Charity Trustees consider they have complied with their duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Commission.

Resource Centre and out in the wider community:-

Throughout 2023 services have resumes with number of attendees increasing.

- Carer Support and Information sessions for parents and carers
- Children's Fun Club
- Babies/Toddlers/Parent & Carer Group
- Friends Fun Club
- Get-Together Club
- Youth Club
- Drama Club "Constellation"
- Multi-sensory Sessions
- Parent/Carers Social Events
- Film Nights
- Themed Social Sessions
- Use of centre for private use
- Training and awareness sessions
- Fundraising events (*see Donations—fundraising*)

Our Resource Centre



Children's Fun Club

The club is held every Monday evening during term-time with a busy schedule of activities enjoyed by children aged 3-12 years. Activities include arts, crafts, multisensory sessions, energetic and table top games. The children always enjoy participating in the extra fun session with lunch and treats held throughout the year during school/college holidays. All were excited for the Christmas party with a visit from Santa and a gift.



Baby/Toddler/Parent Club

Held on Tuesday mornings 10 am to 12 pm with regular attendance. The babies and toddlers enjoy accessing the multi-sensory room and play area and continue to have a great rapport with our work placement who supports the sessions. This gives parents, grandparents and carers an opportunity to meet in a relaxed environment with time for refreshments.

Multi-Sensory Room

The multi-sensory room continues to be well used, with bookings from members, non-members and individuals.



Get-Together Club

This club is held every Wednesday during term time for over 18's, who enjoy completing various tasks including delivering messages, general office duties and preparing gifts for other regular clubs. The members help to organise and deliver various fundraising events including fayres, raffles etc, and always look forward to welcoming all visitors serving them delicious refreshments. Treats of pizza and cakes are enjoyed to all.

Youth Club

The club is held every Wednesday evening during term-time. The club is aimed for ages 12 years plus, or when agreed it is appropriate for the needs of a young person. The young people are always delighted to meet up and socialise with their friends, and enjoy an exciting, busy programme of activities including bingo, cold cookery and crafts etc with treats and prizes. The introduction of running a tuck shop is a big favourite. The year finished with a party and visit from Santa.



Friends Fun Club

Friends Fun Club meet on Tuesdays 5.30 pm—7.30 pm for children aged 3—13 years. The Children are a lively group who enjoy singing on the microphone, dancing, performing and there is always time for some fun and games. The Stars are always enthusiastic in rehearsals for forthcoming performances in front of their family and friends. The year ended with a festive performance for their families, a Christmas party and a visit from Santa with personalised gifts.



Constellation

Constellation sessions are held on Thursdays 6 pm to 8 pm for a group of young people aged 13+ who enjoy performing. Stars work hard during the sessions to practice their individual and group parts in preparation for their annual show in a live theatre. Visits to theatre performances by other local groups were made this helps collate ideas for future shows. Along with Friends Fun Club they showcased their talents in a successful production of “Royalty The Princes and Princess’ of Disney” to a full audience. The year was finished with family entertainment evening followed by a Party with treats and a visit from Santa.

Parent/Carer Sessions

The regular coffee-mornings held at the base give parent/carers the opportunity to meet up with a coffee and chat with friends, sharing any relevant information. A delicious afternoon tea treat was served and well attended, with time to relax all thoroughly enjoyed.



Hydro-Therapy Sessions

We initially introduced various sessions for different age ranges in February. The baby/toddler session proved extremely popular held early evening Thursdays, this session continues and we have since started an extra evening on Wednesdays. This is a fun and relaxing activity, with parents enjoying the water as much as the children.

Adapted Caravan Short Break

Some of our families were given the opportunity to enjoy a short break in Reighton Sands staying in an adapted caravan, the site had a programme of activities on offer to book and enjoy. All attended reported the full family had benefitted from the break away and had a lovely time exploring the site, the adapted caravan was easily accessible, comfortable, attractive and met individuals needs.

Summer Scheme 2023

Due to our normal venue undergoing alterations we looked into alternative suitable locations. After a number of enquiries and visits to various venues, Stranton Primary School were very helpful and suited our requirements. It was another great success enabling all children and young adults to participate and enjoy the full programme of activities on offer. Including in-house and external entertainers, i.e. Bubbleman, Circurama, Fae Parties, Farm Bus, Hartlepotz, Pets4People, Sparkling Treasures and Steve's Animal Ark. The added bonus of an on-site soft play area and bouncy castle was one of the highlights of the day for many. The specialized bikes hired were well used and popular, as were the visits from the fire engine and ice-cream van. All trips to the off-site hydro-therapy pool were enjoyed by all who attended. It was a lovely to see so many members who have attended previous summer schemes and a delight to welcome a number of new families to our services.

Quotes from parents/carers:

This is **Theo's** first year at Summer Scheme and he will definitely be returning. He has enjoyed every minute and we feel he has been supported really well, can't fault any of the staff and I have felt at ease leaving him.

I am so pleased to have found this Group, **Guy** would love to attend next year and even some clubs as he gets older. Staff could not be better, everyone is so friendly and understanding. I felt my child was in safe hands and well cared for.

Evan and Leo enjoyed the Summer Scheme and will definitely be back next year. Thank you to everyone who made it possible.

All the staff have done an amazing job as always, **Jessica** enjoyed the different activities and fun things on offer. We can't thank all staff enough for their support this summer.

Children and young adults:

Using our widget symbol individuals completed forms. All identified "happy faces" and the variety of activities on offer were thoroughly enjoyed.

Quotes from Staff and Volunteers:

I have really enjoyed my time working during the summer scheme, I felt the activities were tailored to each individual ensuring everyone could be involved. I would love the opportunity to continue working with the children and young adults.

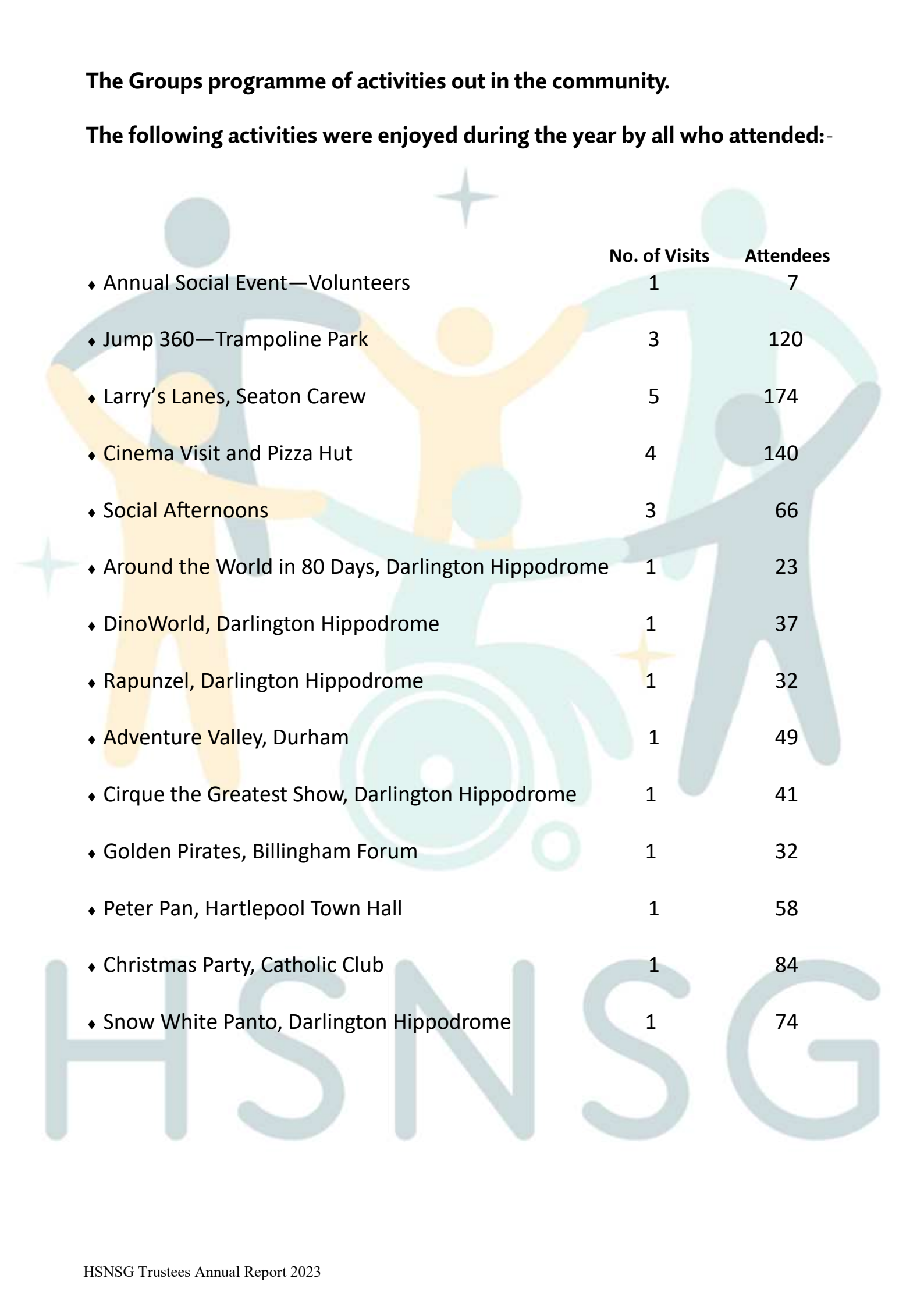
I have enjoyed my time working at the summer scheme, it has helped me to develop new skills and appreciate others.

I have enjoyed working again during this years summer scheme, and activities were really good and engaging for all. All members of staff were helpful and easy to talk to for advice, I hope to continue working with Hartlepool Special needs Support Group.



The Groups programme of activities out in the community.

The following activities were enjoyed during the year by all who attended:-



	No. of Visits	Attendees
◆ Annual Social Event—Volunteers	1	7
◆ Jump 360—Trampoline Park	3	120
◆ Larry’s Lanes, Seaton Carew	5	174
◆ Cinema Visit and Pizza Hut	4	140
◆ Social Afternoons	3	66
◆ Around the World in 80 Days, Darlington Hippodrome	1	23
◆ DinoWorld, Darlington Hippodrome	1	37
◆ Rapunzel, Darlington Hippodrome	1	32
◆ Adventure Valley, Durham	1	49
◆ Cirque the Greatest Show, Darlington Hippodrome	1	41
◆ Golden Pirates, Billingham Forum	1	32
◆ Peter Pan, Hartlepool Town Hall	1	58
◆ Christmas Party, Catholic Club	1	84
◆ Snow White Panto, Darlington Hippodrome	1	74

Information Sharing

We continue to work closely with the voluntary and statutory sector within our base and visiting events out in the community.

Work Placements

A number of young adults continue to attend carrying out various tasks including general office duties, checking and purchase of supplies, Preparing and setting-up other clubs, contributing to the running of the Charity whilst enabling them to build on their own skills and confidence.

Training

Course

Basic First Aid

Attendees

1 Tutors and Manager
13 Support staff and volunteers

In-House Training

Positive Behaviour &
Disability Awareness

1 Tutor and Manager
13 Support staff and Volunteers

Summer Scheme Introduction

Manager & Admin
29 Support Staff and Volunteers

H S N S G

Volunteers

We started 2023 rewarding our committed team of volunteers with a social evening, it was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

We rely heavily on our dedicated team of volunteers to assist with the provision of our services, supporting children and young adults members enabling them to participate and enjoy regular activities held at the resource centre or out in the community. Also providing help numerous ways behind the scenes contributing to the success of the Group. The Summer Scheme attracted some new students to the team offering their time during their Summer Break and continue to be involved.

We are very proud of them all, we much appreciate the time and effort they give to the Group, well done.

Thank You

Grants, Trusts and Businesses

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following for financial assistance:-

Hartlepool Families First—Extended Activities and Play Schemes
Happy Days
The Teesside Charity
Tesco Community Grant

Members Personal Donations and Fundraising Events

Donations

Pauline Hunter—Christmas cakes made & decorated
Greg Foster, Alfie Smailes and Sam Robson families
Adapted Caravan Short Breaks via The Teesside Charity

Use of Centre and Equipment

Hunter, Ellis Families, Roseanne Waites & Friends of Bluebell Meadow via Emma Allison.
Sensory Room Bookings

Events

Café & Tuck Shop
Spring and Christmas Fayres with Raffles
Easter Treats and Mince Pie afternoon
Production and sale of Constellation and Friends DVD

Through the efforts from members, friends, families and supporters who have donated or participated in fundraising events we raised a grand total of **£13,032**.

Many hours of voluntary work were contributed by our Members and Supporters, it is impossible to place a value on the time given, but without it, much of the work undertaken could not be achieved. We very much appreciate all the donations and assistance from our Members, Friends & Supporters, not forgetting all the prizes.

Core Fundraising Group:

This is a small group of volunteers with their key aims to organise events and come up with ideas to increase funds and also general awareness of Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group.

Events held in 2023 were:

- ◆ Race Night
- ◆ Great North Run
- ◆ Christmas Jumper Day

We continue to receive great support from the local community and raised an amazing **£6626.50** in the year.



A huge “Thank you” to all involved with the events.

FINANCIAL REVIEW - Accounts for the year end 31 December 2023

Full Accounts 2023 are available at the Resource Centre

INCOME	£166,631
EXPENDITURE	£141,656
BALANCE	£202,100

Finally - A message from your Manager, Pat Allison:-

I am delighted to report 2023 has been an extremely busy year lots of exciting activities and activities within the resource centre and out in the wider community. It has been wonderful to see the group back to participating and enjoying a jam packed programme at our regular clubs and out of school social activities and trips.

It has been lovely to welcome new families and to see the number of members accessing our regular clubs and social opportunities increase. All our clubs provide a wide-range of activities all catered for the specific age-range and needs. I would like to take this opportunity to say I am super proud of our dedicated teams of support staff and volunteers who due to their commitment have allowed the Group to continue delivering services successfully throughout the year.

Sadly we lost a special friend Ryan, who was a valued member of our Drama Club "Constellation" and participated in some social events building up a close network of friends, we will miss him dearly and he will always have a special place in our hearts.

I would like to say a big thank you to Michelle for her continued support and efficiency in keeping the office and our systems running smoothly. Her relationships with the families has grown and developed getting to know them personally. In May this year Julie was a welcome addition to our team and has settled in well, getting to know families and all our staff. Also thank you to Abbie-Leigh for continuing her work placement with lots of enthusiasm.

My appreciation must go to our wonderful team of staff, trustees and volunteers who have continued to show they commitment and dedication to the group. Throughout the year they help steer and ensure the smooth running of the group contributing to its success.

As always I am overwhelmed with the support and generous donations from families, these are always appreciated and helps the group raise much needed funds. I would also like to thank all our children and young adults, parents and carers for their support.

Well done everyone I look forward to another year.



Hartlepool Special Needs Support Group

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Website: www.hsnsg.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/hsnsghartlepool



Christmas Party, Catholic Club

supporting local families since 1989