

Upstart Scotland

Scottish Charity Number SC047775

Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended 31st December 2024



Trustees' Annual Report

for the period 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report and the Independent Financial Examiner's Report for the above-mentioned period.

Reference & Administrative Information

Charity Name: Upstart Scotland

Charity No: SC047775

Address of Principal Office: The Old Police Station, Isleornsay, Isle of Skye
IV43 8QR

Current Trustees:	Trustees who served in the period:
David Ashford (Treasurer)	David Ashford (Treasurer)
Tam Baillie	Tam Baillie
Dawn Ewan (Vice Chair)	Dawn Ewan (Vice Chair)
John Frank	John Frank
Willie French (Chair)	Willie French (Chair)
Kathleen Margaret Johnston	Kathleen Margaret Johnston
Gillian McMahon	Gillian McMahon
Sue Palmer (Honorary President)	Sue Palmer (Honorary President)
Lesley Young	Lesley Young

Structure Governance & Management

Constitution:

The Charity became a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 26th September 2017. It is governed by its SCIO Constitution which was adopted on 13th September 2017.

Appointment of Trustees

The Board of Trustees, which normally meets at least thrice annually, consists of the charity's Trustees. They are elected at Annual General Meetings. Under the constitution, there must be a minimum of three and not more than nine elected Trustees. The Trustees may co-opt a further three Trustees if they consider it would be in the interests of the charity to do so. Membership of the Board is open to all Members of the charity.

Management:

The Trustees are responsible for the strategic direction and governance of the charity, whilst day-to-day running is delegated to the Secretary and the Chair's Assistant.

Board meetings were held in 2024 on Tuesday 20th February, Tuesday 5th March, Thursday 4th April, Tuesday 21st May, Tuesday 11th June, Wednesday 9th October and Tuesday 10th December.

Objectives & Activities

Charitable purposes:

The advancement of children's education, health and well-being. In furtherance of the same are the following intentions:

- a) to advance awareness of the need for Scottish children - up to and including the age of seven - to benefit from a statutory play-based 'kindergarten stage' before beginning formal schooling.
- b) to promote the role of Early Years education in 'levelling the educational playing field' by ensuring all children have secure foundations for school-based learning underpinned by play - especially outdoors - as being vital for all aspects of children's physical, emotional and cognitive development including health and well-being and, where practicable, outdoor play in the natural environment.
- c) to disseminate information about the importance of supporting children's social, emotional and spoken language development as the foundation for successful educational achievement, having regard to the need for a well-qualified, highly-respected, child-centric workforce, well-informed about the principles of child development in the Early Years.

- d) to relieve stress engendered by premature schoolification and testing, which research now suggests is counterproductive to children's long-term well-being and educational success and therefore more likely to increase than decrease the achievement gap between rich and poor.

Activities:

International evidence shows that children under the age of seven benefit from an educational approach that supports their all-round physical, emotional, social and cognitive development, rather than pushing them towards early academic achievement. Therefore, Upstart Scotland campaigns for a kindergarten stage for children aged three to seven believing that through play (especially outdoors and in natural environments), their inborn learning drive will flourish.

Our aspiration across the calendar year of 2024 continued to that of raising our profile further, and to increase our engagement with politicians and other significant personnel who might influence our campaign positively. It is clear that appealing to our elected politicians is key to changing our education and childcare structure. Board members are also aware that sustaining our campaign will require additional finance and, if possible, calling upon personnel with campaigning knowledge and expertise. Our evaluation of these aspirations is good and we consider that we have made progress, and 2025 might result in the appointment of a campaign organiser with the support of some external funding.

The work undertaken by our Board of Trustees and our registered supporters has realised success resulting in the following quantitative data; we have 12,955 followers on X (formerly Twitter), 12,699 followers on Facebook, 430 subscribed members nationally and up to 400 delegates have registered and attended our training events.

Our challenge with regard to publicity is raising our profile to convince prospective parents and carers of the benefit of our campaign, something we hope to focus on further in 2025.

During the course of 2024, we set up and hosted an Upstart stall at the Scottish Parliament. The stall attracted a significant number of MSP's representatives of the five major political parties.

The Chair met with Natalie Don SNP MSP and Minister for Children and Young People. She and Fulton MacGregor SNP MSP are both very supportive of our campaign. Natalie Don will be hosting a cross party round table event in the summer of 2025 with our campaign as the focus.

Upstart convened and hosted a very successful hustings event preceding the UK Parliament election in July 2024. The Hustings was hosted by broadcaster Lesley Riddoch and included cross party representatives. The event was well attended and raised our campaign profile further. Lesley Riddoch also advocated for our campaign in BBC Scotland's 'Debate Night'.

During the course of 2024, Board members suggested that we should elect three members of the group to form a 'Steering Group'. This was duly formed and the steering group's brief consisted of three areas: Policy and influencing, Financial Modelling and Challenging Questions. To support this work, the Steering Group has produced three such titled papers.

Submissions have been made to the following bodies: Barnardos, The Robertson Trust and Cattanach with a view to securing funding and personnel with campaign experience. Various meetings have been convened to discuss the potential for such. Further work is scheduled for 2025.

The Chair also met with Nicola Killean, Scotland's Children's Commissioner, to discuss, share and identify where our work shares common aspiration.

The main objective of our campaign is to raise the formal starting age of primary school, replacing the present early stage of primary school with a kindergarten stage focused on play and a developmental approach. However, below our main objective, there are three sub-objectives as follows: sustaining our 'Play not Tests' campaign to ensure the removal of P.1 SNSA Assessments, ensuring that 'Realising the Ambition' is applied consistently in every establishment across Scotland and, to appeal to all major political parties to include our campaign on their party manifesto for the 2026 Scottish Parliament elections.

Approved by the Trustees prior to the 22nd day of March 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



David Ashford
Treasurer

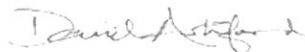
Upstart Scotland
 Receipts and Payments Accounts
 For the year ended 31st December 2024
 Scottish Charity Number SC047775

		Year to 2024 Unrestricted £	Year to 2024 Restricted £	Year to 2024 Total £	Year to 2023 Total £
Receipts					
Grants and Donations					
Grants	4	-	-	-	-
Donations	5	930	-	930	1,817
Fundraising Activities					
Kym Scott Event		2,845	-	2,845	17,225
Next Kym Scott Event		85	-	85	-
Miscellaneous		1,335	-	1,335	-
Bank interest received		-	-	-	-
Total Receipts		5,196	-	5,196	19,041
Payments					
Charitable Activities					
Kym Scott Event		10,860	-	10,860	978
Admin / Staff Services		5,200	-	5,200	4,800
Hall Hire / Zoom		1,186	-	1,186	720
Stationary & Equipment		706	-	706	-
Website & Video		658	-	658	1,205
Sundries		135	-	135	95
Governance Costs					
Independent Examination	7	150	-	150	-
Total Payments		18,895	-	18,895	7,798
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year before transfers		(13,700)	-	(13,700)	11,244
Transfers between funds	6	-	-	-	-
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		(13,700)	-	(13,700)	11,244

Upstart Scotland
 Receipts and Payments Accounts
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	Year to 2024 Unrestricted	Year to 2024 Restricted	Year to 2024 Total	Year to 2023 Total
Statement of Balances as at 31st December 2024				
Opening cash at bank and in hand	24,046	-	24,046	12,802
Add Income	5,196	-	5,196	19,041
Less Expenditure	29,241	-	29,241	31,844
Transfers	18,895	-	18,895	7,798
6	-	-	-	-
Closing cash at bank and in hand	10,346	-	10,346	24,046
Bank and Cash Balances				
Community Directplus Account	10,346	-	10,346	24,036
Outstanding lodgements	-	-	-	-
Outstanding cheques	-	-	-	-
PayPal Account	-	-	-	9
Petty cash	-	-	-	-
9 & 10	10,346	-	10,346	24,046
	-	-	-	-

Signed on behalf of all Trustees:



Name: David Ashford

Date: 5th April 025

The notes on the following 2 pages form part of these financial statements

1 Basis of Accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments basis in accordance with the Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

2 Nature and purpose of funds

Unrestricted funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the objects of the charity. The trustees maintain a single unrestricted fund for the day-to-day running of the SCIO.

Restricted funds may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for specific purposes.

3 Related party transactions

No remuneration was paid to the trustees or any connected persons during the year (2023: £NIL).

4 Grants

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
Grants	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-

5 Donations

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
Misc Donations	930	-	930	1,817
	930	-	930	1,817

6 Transfers between funds

There were no transfers between funds during the year (2023: £NIL).

7 Governance Costs

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
Independent Examination	150	-	150	-
Accounting Services	-	-	-	-
	150	-	150	-

8 Volunteers

The trustees would like to record their thanks to all the volunteers who dedicate a significant amount of time for no remuneration to the charity.

9 Restricted Funds

	At 1st January 2024	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	At 31st December 2024
Restricted Funds	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-

10 Unrestricted Funds

	At 1st January 2024	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfers	At 31st December 2024
Unrestricted Funds	24,046	5,196	(18,895)	-	10,346
	24,046	5,196	(18,895)	-	10,346

Upstart Scotland
Scottish Charity Number SC047775

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees on the unaudited accounts of Upstart Scotland.

I report on the accounts of the SCIO for the year ended 31st December 2024 which are set out on the previous 4 pages.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and independent examiner

The Charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the 2006 Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1 which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- * to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and
- * to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations

have not been met, or

2 to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Marie McMillan Cert Acct (Open)
Date: - 15/4/2025
Finance Manager
Voluntary Action Lochaber
An Drochaid, Claggan Road
Fort William
PH13 6PH

