



Scottish Charity SCO37292

Annual Report 2024

Fun - Friendship-Community

Fun First continues to provide sessions for pre school children and their parents with sessions every day somewhere between Helensburgh, Cardross, Garelohead and Rosneath.

All our sessions are popular, in particular Mondays, in Helensburgh Library and Fitness sessions at Victoria Halls. This year's fitness sessions are supported by a generous grant from Argyll and Bute Supporting Communities Fund.

Staffing continues to be with trained leaders and administrators paid the Living Wage. We said goodbye to leaders Kirsty and Louise but have been very happy to welcome Jo, Aimie, Ellie and Hannah. We are lucky to receive excellent applicants when we advertise our jobs. We appointed Fiona Gunn as an administrative assistant to work with our social media, grant applications and finances. She has taken over the hours previously worked by Sue McCartney plus extra. An organization is only ever as good as the staff who work for it and we thank all our leaders experienced and new and of course our experienced manager Jennie for their dedication and hard work.

In November all our leaders and committee members participated in First Aid for Mental Health training which proved to be extremely useful. We would highly recommend it to other organisations

In March we participated in training to run Outdoor Sessions for parents and children with Under the Trees Outdoor Learning from Falkirk. This training was paid for by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund and took place on a very rainy and cold day in Hermitage Park. Thanks to everyone including leader's children who participated We have another day's training planned in May. We then hope to start regular outdoor sessions, initially in Helensburgh, to prepare children for the outdoor and forest school activities they will experience in both ELC settings and when they start school. We also hope this will further encourage young families to spend more time outside enjoying everything our beautiful area has to offer. We have applied to the Argyll and Bute Supporting Communities Fund for support with this.

We were delighted to receive a grant from the TSI Health and Wellbeing Fund to fund our Fun First Friends sessions this year. These sessions are not only for our current users, but also for expectant parents and families new to the area. They are held fortnightly in the Drumfork Community Centre family room. Relevant speakers are invited for a short presentation, refreshments are provided, children can use the soft play and above all friendships are made and relevant support and information shared. Signposting support is an important part of our service.

Parties continue to be an important part of our annual programme. They are held in Victoria Halls and offer a chance for the whole Fun First community to come together. They raise funds and provide a positive social occasion. Father Christmas attended our Christmas one and Jackie Baillie MSP our summer event. We welcomed Caryl McClean our new local TSI coordinator to our Halloween Party.

We thank the Co op and their customers for a generous donation of almost £5,000 from their Community Fund. We received £2,500 towards our fitness sessions from the Argyll and Bute Supporting Communities Fund and a grant of £1,500 for outdoor equipment from the Argyll and Bute Climate Action Network. The Argyll and Bute Early Years department also gave us a generous £5,000 donation towards our core costs.

Fundraising activities included the Rhu Gala, Hermitage Academy Christmas and Spring Fayre and Christmas bauble painting with Pitter Patter Potter. We are reliant on grant funding; session donations and fund raising to continue our service and thank everyone who helps us from the smallest donation to more substantial grants. We thank Helensburgh Community Hub for their support as a venue and their provision of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library for our Helensburgh members. The Chair recently attended a TSI funding conference which will hopefully lead to more positive outcomes.

We held an EGM to change our constitution, a workday with leaders and committee members and the Chair has held appraisal discussions with leaders.

We thank the volunteers who make up our committee for their hard work and support. We are always looking for new members. The commitment is a monthly zoom meeting and help at events and fund raising when possible.

We have exciting new plans for the next year including an Early Years Information morning in early September, and the addition of our Outdoor Sessions. We need to continue to look for fundraising opportunities.

Please contact contactfunfirst@gmail.com or our Chair sarahd Davies@yahoo.co.uk for further information about our service.

Sarah Davies

Chair Fun First -Tel 07845 193590