

Charity registration number 1187356

**THE SPECIAL LIONESSE
ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	C Stewart A Howes J Miller P Windram J Colwill C Oliver L Brown
Charity number	1187356
Principal address	4 Baird Close Washington Tyne & Wear NE37 3HL
Independent examiner	Clover Accounting 4 The Pastures Coulby Newham TS8 0UJ

THE SPECIAL LIONESS

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THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019).

Objectives and activities

Public Benefit

The trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Objectives and aims

Our Vision is a world where all families that have disabled and life limited children have the support that they need, at the time that they need it.

Our purpose is to help families with disabled children to get the support, information and knowledge that they need to give their children a full and happy childhood.

The Special Lioness uses its expertise and knowledge to ensure families are getting the support they need at the time that they need it. We work in a variety of ways to empower the whole family to take control of their future to ensure that they reach their full potential.

Volunteers

During the year the charity had nil (2024: nil) volunteers in addition to its Trustees. All volunteers are unpaid.

Achievements and performance

Charitable activities

The charity received donations, legacies and gift aid totaling £nil (2024: £nil).

An increase in restricted grants for growth and refurbishment, has led to an overall increase in total net income, with a surplus in the period of £25,072 (2024: deficit £6,658) all of which is from the Charity's normal operating activities. The trustees feel that they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a decline in grants.

Financial review

At the end of the year the charity had restricted funds of £25,466 (2024: £17,441) and unrestricted funds of £19,009 (2024: £1,963) of which £16,243 (2024: £nil) are considered as free reserves.

The trustees have established a policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets ("The Free Reserves") held by the Charity should represent 3 months of the resources expended. This has been agreed as a sufficient level with regards to the current economic climate.

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The charity is an unincorporated charity, constituted under a trust deed dated 14 January 2020 and is a registered charity, number 1187356.

THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

C Stewart (Chair)
A Howes
J Miller
P Windram (appointed 6 March 2025)
J Colwill (appointed 10 April 2025)
C Oliver (appointed 20 June 2025)
L Brown (appointed 25 September 2025)

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

The charity is managed by a Council of trustees. Trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting.

The trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 19 January 2026.



C Stewart
Trustee

THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of The Special Lioness (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- 2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
- 3 the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.



Kathryn Hatfield FCCA
Clover Accounting
4 The Pastures
Coulby Newham
TS8 0UJ

Dated: 19 January 2026

THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Current financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>					
Donations and legacies	2	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities	3	34,429	106,638	141,067	45,703
Investments		-	-	-	-
Other income		21,991	-	21,991	18,936
Total income		<u>56,420</u>	<u>106,638</u>	<u>163,058</u>	<u>64,639</u>
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Charitable activities	4	39,374	98,613	137,986	71,297
Adjustments		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		<u>17,046</u>	<u>8,025</u>	<u>25,072</u>	<u>(6,658)</u>
Fund balances at 1 April 2024		<u>1,963</u>	<u>17,441</u>	<u>19,404</u>	<u>26,062</u>
Fund balances at 31 March 2025		<u><u>19,009</u></u>	<u><u>25,466</u></u>	<u><u>44,476</u></u>	<u><u>19,404</u></u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Prior financial year

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
<u>Income and endowments from:</u>				
Donations and legacies	2	-	-	-
Charitable activities	3	11,600	34,103	45,703
Investments	4	-	-	-
Other income		18,936	-	18,936
Total income		30,536	34,103	64,639
<u>Expenditure on:</u>				
Charitable activities	5	40,403	30,894	71,297
Adjustments		(133)	133	-
Net movement in funds		(10,000)	3,342	(6,658)
Fund balances at 1 April 2023		11,963	14,099	26,062
Fund balances at 31 March 2024		1,963	17,441	19,404

THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	9		2,766		4,278
			<u>2,766</u>		<u>4,278</u>
Current assets					
Debtors	10	-		739	
Cash at bank and in hand		42,810		14,789	
		<u>42,810</u>		<u>15,528</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(1,100)		(250)	
Net current assets			41,710		15,278
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>44,476</u>		<u>19,404</u>
Income funds					
Restricted funds	14		25,466		17,411
<u>Unrestricted funds - general</u>					
Designated funds		-		-	
General unrestricted funds		19,009		1,964	
		<u>19,009</u>		<u>1,964</u>	
			44,476		19,404
			<u>44,476</u>		<u>19,404</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 19 January 2026



A Howes
Trustee

THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The Special Lioness is an unincorporated charity, registered charity number 1187356.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1 Accounting policies (Continued)

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost or valuation, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost or valuation of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Computer	33% reducing balance
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The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds general 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Unrestricted funds general 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Donations and gifts	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>

3 Charitable activities

	Other trading activities 2025 £	Other trading activities 2024 £
Grants	141,067	45,703
	<u>141,067</u>	<u>45,703</u>
	<u><u>141,067</u></u>	<u><u>45,703</u></u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds – general	34,429	11,600
Restricted funds	106,638	34,103
	<u>141,067</u>	<u>45,703</u>
	<u><u>141,067</u></u>	<u><u>45,703</u></u>

Included within unrestricted grants was £2,500 received from The Joicey Trust.

5 Charitable activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Play group materials	8,648	4,509
Activities	28,803	21,987
Events / competitions	460	737
Fundraising expense	6,691	5,019
	<u>44,603</u>	<u>32,252</u>
Share of support costs (see note 6)	92,284	39,044
Share of governance costs (see note 6)	1,100	-
	<u>137,986</u>	<u>71,297</u>
	<u><u>137,986</u></u>	<u><u>71,297</u></u>
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds - general	39,374	40,403
Restricted funds	98,613	30,894
	<u>137,986</u>	<u>71,297</u>
	<u><u>137,986</u></u>	<u><u>71,297</u></u>

THE SPECIAL LIONESSE

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

6 Support costs	Support costs	Governance costs	2025	Support costs	Governance costs	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Marketing / advertising	3,318	-	3,318	492	-	492
Subscriptions	2,339	-	2,339	1,200	-	1,200
Training	674	-	674	214	-	214
Gifts	92	-	92	268	-	268
Office equipment	1,621	-	1,621	9,586	-	9,586
Office supplies	440	-	440	1,903	-	1,903
Travel	12,793	-	12,793	12,459	-	12,459
Sundry expense	3,566	-	3,566	364	-	364
Meeting refreshments	2,765	-	2,765	1,416	-	1,416
Utilities	29,723	-	29,723	10,992	-	10,992
Contracts	4,220	-	4,220	-	-	-
Legal and professional	381	1,100	1,481	-	-	-
Renovations	28,989	-	28,989	-	-	-
Depreciation	1,362	-	1,362	150	-	150
	<u>92,284</u>	<u>1,100</u>	<u>93,384</u>	<u>39,045</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>39,045</u>
Analysed between Charitable activities	<u>92,294</u>	<u>1,100</u>	<u>93,384</u>	<u>39,045</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>39,045</u>

Governance costs includes payments for the independent examination of £1,100 (2024- £nil).

7 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

8 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

THE SPECIAL LIONESS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

9	Tangible fixed assets	Computer equipment	Total
		£	£
	Cost		
	At 1 April 2024	4,278	4,278
	At 31 March 2025	4,278	4,278
	Depreciation and impairment		
	At 1 April 2024	150	150
	Depreciation charged in the year	1,362	1,362
	At 31 March 2025	1,512	1,512
	Carrying amount		
	At 31 March 2025	2,766	2,766
	At 31 March 2024	4,128	4,128
10	Debtors	2025	2024
	Amounts falling due within one year:	£	£
	Trade debtors	-	739
	Prepayments and accrued income	-	-
		-	739
11	Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	2025	2024
		£	£
	Trade creditors	-	250
	Accruals	1,100	-
		1,100	250

THE SPECIAL LIONESS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

12 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 April 2024	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Revaluations, gains and losses	Balance at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£	£
Community Foundation - Moonbeam	2,004	4,700	(2,004)	-	4,700
Community Foundation - PMLD	-	9,200	(3,433)	-	5,767
County Durham Wind Farm	(1,613)	-	1,613	-	-
BISL	78	-	(78)	-	-
FOYLE	1,283	-	(1,283)	-	-
Freemasons - Wonka Ball	11,656	-	(11,656)	-	-
Freemasons - Sensory Expansion	-	28,996	(14,340)	-	14,656
Together for Children	(189)	10,000	(8,907)	-	904
Well Bank Foundation	282	-	(282)	-	-
National Lottery Grant	3,940	14,500	(18,308)	-	132
Postcode Lottery	-	19,400	(19,400)	-	-
Asda	-	1,292	(1,292)	-	-
Catherine Cookson	-	500	(500)	-	-
The Hedley Foundation	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Focus Foundation	-	3,310	(3,310)	-	-
Reece Foundation	-	10,000	(10,000)	-	-
Point North	-	1,000	(1,000)	-	-
Slater and Gordon Law	-	2,340	(2,340)	-	-
Warburtons	-	245	(245)	-	-
Others	-	155	(848)	-	(693)
	<u>17,441</u>	<u>106,638</u>	<u>(98,613)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,466</u>

13 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total Unrestricted funds		Restricted funds	Total
	2025	2025	2025	2024	2024	2024
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 March are represented by:						
Tangible assets	2,766	-	2,766	4,128	-	4,128
Current assets/(liabilities)	16,243	25,466	41,710	(2,165)	17,441	15,278
	<u>19,009</u>	<u>25,466</u>	<u>44,476</u>	<u>1,963</u>	<u>17,441</u>	<u>19,404</u>

14 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2024 – none).



Trustees Annual Report 2024-25



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TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

The Trustees present their report along with the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 March 2025. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies and comply with the Charity's Constitution and applicable law.

Objectives

Vision Our vision is a society where every family raising a disabled or life-limited child is met with timely, tailored support, whenever they need it, however they need it.

Purpose Our purpose is to empower families of disabled and life-limited children with the support, information, and confidence they need to nurture joyful, fulfilling childhoods.

Mission Our mission is to stand alongside families of children with disabilities and life limiting conditions, ensuring they receive the right support at the right time. Through our expertise, creativity, and care, we empower whole families to shape their futures with confidence, joy, and resilience. We do this by providing:

Activities We provide a variety of activities to enable and develop relationships and provide essential social opportunities

Safe spaces Where families can come and be themselves and receive support, advice, comfort and strength in a non-judgemental atmosphere with likeminded parents and carers

Values Reaching families one by one - We recognise the importance and uniqueness of every individual family and the life changing difference in which we can make

Available to all Every family that has a child with additional needs, disabilities and/or life limiting conditions are welcome, Integrity is the heart of our service. We create a place of trust and safety where people can grow in a safe and secure environment, and we endeavour to never be boring. We always have a sense of fun, excitement and adventure in all that we do.

Although we started in Sunderland, we continue to provide services to the local area and beyond, reaching as far as Birmingham, Manchester and Edinburgh, covering a wide area of the North of England.

Our priorities have altered due to what our families have said they need and by following the current economic difficulties our families face, these can be broadly classified as Support, Training, Play Groups, Family Support, Accessible Events and Parties, Education Support, Emergency Essentials including food and warm accessories.

During 2024-2025 we have provided an extensive list of events and activities, and we are proud to have secured many supporters and funders to allow us to offer these experiences to over 800 families across our region. An example of these are:

Activity	Sponsor / Funder
Baby and Toddler SEND Playgroups x35	Together for Children
Special Bonds - Groups for Cared for Families x29	Together for Children
Roaring Rainforest Open Sessions PMLD	National Lottery Awards for All
WetWheels - Sensory on the North Sea x 23	Anonymous
Dinosaur Dig Half Term Event	Great North Swim
Parent/Carer Coffee Mornings	Warburtons (CAF)
Sensory garden Renovation	Reece Foundation
SEND Haircuts	Saints Barbers
Emergency Services Day	The Hedley Foundation
Alice in Wonderland - Stage Show	Unrestricted Funds
World Lion Day - Sensory Garden Opening	Unrestricted Funds
Pirates & Mermaids Party	Great North Run
Moonbeam Theatre - Fully Immersive Sensory Show	Community Foundation
Wonka World of Imagination Ball	Durham Benevolence & SJP Foundation
Scarecrow Trail	Together for Children

A Very Christmassy Christmas Party	Together for Children
Peter Pan Christmas Pantomime	Focus Foundation
Santa's Grotto	Poppy's Light Foundation
Christmas Wreath Making Parents/Carers	LS Care LTD
PMLD Open Rainforst Sessions 20weeks	1989 Willan Charitable Trust
Sip & Paint Parent/Carer Wellbeing	Anonymous

A few highlights of our year:



Special Bonds

These groups create safe, joyful spaces where cared for children with additional needs feel seen, celebrated, and included. While their families connect with others who understand their journey, the children build friendships, explore new experiences, and thrive in an environment shaped by empathy and acceptance. These groups nurture not just the caregivers, but the children themselves, boosting confidence, reducing isolation, and helping each child feel part of a wider, loving community that truly understands them.

Emergency Services Day

Our Emergency Services Day was held at North East Land Sea and Air Museum, we had services from Northumbria Police community and dog unit, Tyne & Wear Fire Service with an active engine and the education department to give families a lesson on fire with a jaw dropping example of a chip pan fire. Families had open access to the museum to explore all the museum had to offer, from jet planes to military trucks and much, much more.



WetWheels Sensory on the North Sea

Our annual WetWheels adventures from North Shields gave 300 little Captains the thrill of a lifetime this year. These fully accessible, sensory-rich boat trips aboard the specially adapted WetWheels catamaran allowed children with disabilities and life-limiting conditions to experience the open sea in a way that's rarely possible. With the wind in their hair and the chance to take the helm, each child became the captain of their own journey—building confidence, sparking joy, and creating unforgettable memories. For many families, it was their first time on the water together, and the impact was profound: laughter echoed across the waves, barriers were broken, and a deep sense of freedom and inclusion was felt by all.



Pre-School Sensory Group

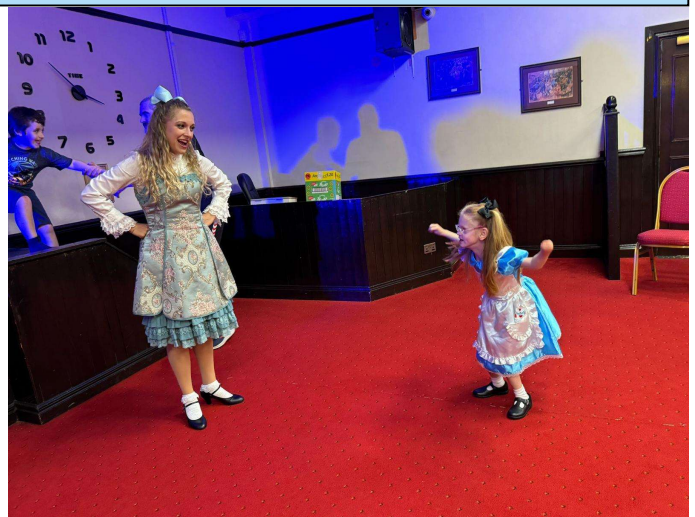
Our Pre-School Sensory Group aims to reach families in the early days of diagnosis to give families a safe and stimulating group to attend. Where parents and carers can gain much needed support, advice, signposting and children can start to build social circles and along with their parents and carers learn, grow and celebrate their milestones no matter how big or small that may be.

We are very proud to work alongside Together for Children to provide this much needed and vital service for young children and their families.



Alice in Wonderland - A Summer Theatre Adventure

This summer, we invited families into a fully accessible and inclusive world of Alice in Wonderland, a magical theatre experience designed especially for children with additional needs. With gentle lighting, reduced volume, and a relaxed atmosphere, every element of the show was crafted to support sensory comfort and joyful engagement. Children were free to enjoy the performance in whatever way suited them best, whether walking around, sitting on soft mats at the front, or dancing with friends and family in the open space provided. Traditional theatre settings can often be overwhelming or inaccessible for many children, but our adapted performances open the door to wonder, laughter, and shared memories. We believe every child deserves the chance to experience the magic of live theatre—on their own terms and surrounded by those who love them.



Moonbeam

We were very proud to be the first community provider in the North East to host a specialist performance by Moonbeam Theatre. Moonbeam design and perform shows specifically for children with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD), the most medically fragile and vulnerable children. These specific children require up close intensive interaction and highly stimulating activities, which requires highly skilled performers with bespoke equipment and resources. We were thrilled to be able to host 3 sessions over 1 day, giving 36 PMLD children and their parents/carers this opportunity as possible. The interaction, smiles and responses from these families was heart-warming and incredible, to be able to give these families this unique opportunity to make special memories was an honour.





Santa Grotto

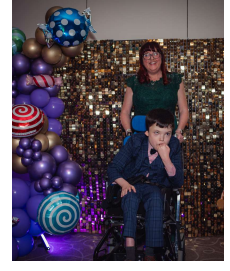
This year, 72 children and their families stepped into a truly magical and fully inclusive Santa's Grotto, thoughtfully designed for children with disabilities and life-limiting conditions. Every detail was tailored to ensure comfort, joy, and accessibility, from the calm, sensory and considerate environment to the carefully chosen gifts that reflected each child's individual needs and interests. At the heart of it all was Santa himself, whose warmth, patience, and gentle adaptability made every visit unforgettable. Whether using Makaton, taking extra time, or adjusting his tone and pace, Santa met each child exactly where they were, creating moments of wonder, connection, and pure festive joy for the whole family.

A Royal Celebration - Black Tie Ball

Families were welcomed into a dazzling Wonka World of Imagination, a fully inclusive ball bursting with colour, creativity, and joy. From candy-striped corridors to golden ticket surprises, every corner of the venue was transformed into a sensory-friendly wonderland designed for children with disabilities and life-limiting conditions.

But this wasn't just an event for the children, it was a celebration for the whole family. Parents, siblings, carers, and loved ones danced together, laughed together, and made memories that will last a lifetime. With soft matted areas, accessible spaces, and a relaxed atmosphere, everyone could join in the fun in their own way. The magic was tangible: shared smiles, spontaneous hugs, and moments of pure delight reminded us all that joy is most powerful when it's shared.

We are incredibly grateful to the Durham Benevolence Fund and the SJP Foundation for helping us bring our Wonka World of Imagination Family Ball to life, a joyful, inclusive celebration filled with unforgettable memories.



Looking Ahead

Our priorities going forward are to continue to be a lifeline and source of support and resources to our current families but to grow our reach further to support as many families as possible and help to create special memories with those special families.

With the successful completion of our Roaring Rainforest sensory space, we're now excited to explore the next phase of development. In the near future, we hope to expand further by creating additional sensory rich environments that spark imagination, comfort, and connection. One of our key ambitions is to introduce a dedicated music therapy and exploration space, where children can engage with sound, rhythm, and movement in ways that support emotional expression and communication.

As part of this, we're looking into adaptive technologies such as Soundbeam, an innovative system that uses motion sensors to translate physical movement into music. This allows children of all abilities, including those with limited mobility or verbal communication, to create and interact with sound in a deeply empowering and joyful way. Our goal is to build spaces where every child can explore, express, and connect on their own terms, and always with their family by their side.

“There is no stronger mother than the Lioness, until you meet The Special Lioness”