

**Registered Charity Number: 1140764**

**Company No: 07324545**

**M4S-MAIDSTONE SPECIAL NEEDS SUPPORT SERVICE  
(A company limited by guarantee)**

**REPORT AND  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

**M4S**  
**(A company limited by guarantee)**

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**Trustees**

Janet Crosby  
Janette Larkin  
Jane Clarke  
Amanda Franklin  
Peter Ananicz  
Martin Pember

**Company registered number**

07324545

**Charity registered number**

1140764

**Registered and principal operating office**

Howard de Walden Centre, Bluett Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 2UG

**Bankers**

HSBC, 1-5 Week Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1QW

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

The Directors, who are also the Trustees of the Charitable Company present their annual report with the financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2015, prepared in accordance with Statement 416 of the Companies Act 2006 and is also the Trustees report as required by Part VI of the Charities Act 1993.

**Structure, governance and management**

**Constitution**

M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 23rd July 2010 and was registered as a charity on 10th March 2011. M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service is a parent driven members organisation that recognises that the experiences and knowledge parents bring should be valued and used as the building block for service development and provision for disabled children and their families in Maidstone.

**Method of appointment or election of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees must comprise between at least 50% and 70% of parents of disabled children and young people. However the charitable company recognises that a range of skills is required within the Board if the charity is to develop and two non-parent trustees with professional business and social care backgrounds continue to bring an active and positive contribution to the organisation.

Trustees are nominated and selected by Directors at the Annual General Meeting. A third of the Trustees retire in rotation at the Annual General Meeting but can stand for re-election. The third AGM of the charitable company was on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2015. There have been no changes to the Board since the last published annual accounts. The articles of Association require a minimum of 3 trustees and a maximum of 12.

**Organisational structure and decision making**

Staff in the charity report to the Manager who is responsible for the day to day operation of the company. The Board meet typically bi monthly with individual trustees in addition to the appointed officer positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer leading on specific areas of work. These include having a named safeguarding lead for both children and vulnerable adults, a lead for Policies and Procedures and a Quality lead. Existing Policies and Procedures of the charity are reviewed regularly and amended to reflect current best practice with additional policies added as required to reflect the growing operations of the charity.

The staff team at end March 2015 comprised the Manager (30 hours a week), an Information Worker (18 hours a week), two 25 hour IS workers and a full time Office Based IS Worker. Ailsa McMahon ended her employment as Manager for M4S on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and Claire Haffenden commenced working for M4S as Manager on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015. The Family Support Worker role was vacant at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, with a recruitment campaign planned for April 2015. In addition to these salaried staff, quality sessional staff are also employed to help offer support to allow children and young people to access activities and/or where additional staff are required to ensure quality delivery.

**Risk management**

The Trustees conduct regular assessments of the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the charity and are satisfied that appropriate controls are in place to mitigate our exposure to major risks. These include a financial controls policy; which is reviewed at least every two years and a designated financial reserve; which is reviewed annually.



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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

**Objectives and Activities**

M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service's object as set out in its Articles of Association is to provide or otherwise support the provision of services for disabled and special needs children and young people and their family members where the child is on the roll of a school and/or lives in Maidstone or the surrounding areas and is up to and including 25 years of age.

**Strategic vision**

Thus, M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service's strategic vision is to support disabled children and young people and those with special needs to have the same life opportunities as their non-disabled peers, both educationally and socially and for their parents and families to feel supported, empowered and valued. This is achieved through 4 key objectives

- Providing comprehensive information, advice and signposting through a Single point of Access information hub to ensure families can make informed choices and access services that meet their needs.
- Offering a range of formal and informal support and social opportunities for parents and disabled children and young people.
- Working to ensure future services are parent driven and responsive to the needs of families and disabled children and young people by speaking up for what families tell us they need and representing them to key partners.
- Working to ensure that disabled children are able to access universal provision where desired in a safe and supported manner and in doing so feel included and valued.

The Strategy and three year business plan for 2012-15 approved by the Board in April 2012 continued to be implemented. This was revisited in early 2014 and revised to reflect M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service growing aspirations to deliver additional services to meet the needs of more diverse group of children and young people and specifically to recognise the need to consider offering services to young people aged 18-25.

Although the M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service Board is responsible for the strategy and business plan of the organisation, service developments must be underpinned by the expressed needs of parents of disabled children and young people and the disabled children and young people themselves if the parent driven ethos of the charity is to be maintained. Hence opportunities to gather views through feedback at events and consultations continues on an ongoing basis and operational plans developed accordingly to be responsive to members expressed needs.

The three year business plan will be refreshed in the next financial year, M4S will invite the views of parents as well as other stakeholders of the charity to create a renewed plan for the next period.

**Volunteers**

Over the 2014-15 financial year the organisation has benefitted from the input of a number of volunteers, in addition to that of the trustees who also act as volunteers. The input of all volunteers is highly valued. We plan to recruit volunteers into specific roles in the next financial year to support the growing needs of the charity. In particular we would like to recruit parents who wish to gain skills and confidence for work; having been out of the workplace for some time looking after their special needs child.



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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

## **Achievements and performance**

### **Going concern**

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

### **Review of activities**

This year we have continued to offer information and advice and social support to our members via our Kent County Council (KCC) 'All together for Disabled Children' contract; which we will be running until September 30<sup>th</sup> 2015. This is a Kent wide contract; which we deliver in Maidstone and West Kent, alongside 4 other charities who run an identical local service; which covers the rest of Kent. We continue to produce a comprehensive newsletter quarterly, update our website regularly and proactively use social media as an interactive communication forum for parents. An added aspect of information giving introduced in 2013 was the introduction of parent workshops on specific topics of interest to parents. M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service delivered three such workshops in partnership with SPACE charity in this financial year.

Family events continue to be a cornerstone of the formal and informal support and social opportunities from which individual disabled children, parents, siblings and whole families all benefit. We held 12 events this year, some of which were run in partnership with SPACE (one of our consortium partners). Our events are arranged to include a variety of experiences for our families and specifically their children with special needs. Events this year included exclusive soft play sessions, a trip to the seaside, the ever popular pantomime and an educational visit to Maidstone Museum.

Last year we piloted two new clubs exclusively for young people with special needs; Music and Friendship and Dance. Both of these groups have continued to run this year for children aged between 7 and 16. Our dance group has even performed at a local fete; much to the delight of the parents present. We plan to continue these groups in the next financial year.

Our other new 2013/14 club (Sam's Saturday stay and play); which is for preschool children with special needs and their parents has continued to run this year. Reaching families when their children are first diagnosed is crucial for us and the Sam's club enables parents with a new diagnosis to seek peer support from other parents as well as professional support and signposting from our Family Support Worker.

Our Family Support Worker; which was a new post for M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service in 2013/14 left in January. We were very sad to lose this really valuable member of staff who had worked very hard to provide intensive support to parents when they were most at need. We plan to recruit for a replacement member of staff early in the next financial year. We hope the new post holder will be able to continue to support families, build links with local referral agencies and represent the needs of M4S members at local forums and meetings.

This year in a move to strengthen our consortium partnership with the four other parent led charities as well as improve the support available to parents we bid for and secured the Independent Support contract. M4S-Special Needs Support Service was the lead agent for phase one of this contract; which ran to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015, then from 1<sup>st</sup> April Parents Consortium will take over the lead for phase 2 of the contract; which runs to the end of March 2016. The funding enables us to employ 11 part time Independent Support Workers across the county (3 of whom are directly employed by M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service). The Independent Support workers are employed to work directly with parents to help them through the process of transferring from statements to Education Health and Care Plans.



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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

This year our membership dropped from 124 families in 2013/14 to 101 families. Whilst this is disappointing, we take this as a sign that we need to listen to our member families and deliver activities that they feel are relevant to their needs. Taking on and setting up the Independent Support contract was also a challenge for our very small team and whilst this work is of unquestionable benefit to our members in the long term, the short term effect was that we had less time to network and advertise M4S; which may have affected membership levels.

### **Financial review**

The Charity's total incoming resources for the year ended 31st March 2015 totalled £238,758. (2014: £79,864). Resources expended totalled £228,437 (2014: £62,185). The fund balance at 31st March 2015 was £71,773 (2014: £61,452).

### **Principal funding**

There are two principal sources of funding for the organisation. The Independent Support contract; which M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service manages and disperses on behalf of the five Kent Disabled Children's Parent Driven Consortium (KDCPDC) partner charities (this arrangement ended on 31st March 2015; when the contract lead was passed to Parent's Consortium) and the KCC Disabled Children's services contract; which continues to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Our funding for the latter contract comes via Parent's Consortium; who are the lead agency. We are yet to find out whether or not KCC wish to continue funding the consortium post September 2015.

Aside from contracts; the increase in incoming resources also reflects the organisation's success in securing donations from Charitable Trusts and small local community groups. The effort required to secure and set up the Independent Support contract meant that we were not able to run as many community fundraising events and therefore the income from this source is slightly reduced in comparison to 2014.

Resources expended on our core work were broadly similar to 2014, but the Independent Support contract brought a new level of expenditure to the organisation as well as the need to disperse large amounts of money to our partner charities. Next year we expect to see a decreased income as a result of the change in management of the Independent Support contract.

Core operational costs continue to be monitored carefully to ensure the organisation operates in a low cost but quality assured manner. Given the robust cash balance at year end the Trustees took this opportunity to further build their reserves in line with their stated reserve policy, the revised 3 month reserve takes into account slightly increased running costs as a result of the continuation of the Independent Support contract.

### **Reserves policy**

The Directors have agreed that a reserve policy equivalent to 3 months operating costs is an appropriate level of reserve for a charitable company of the size of M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service. This more than covers any contractual obligations that might need to be met in an uncertain financial environment. This reserve level has now been achieved and is held in a designated fund.



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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

**Plans for the future**

Over the next financial year we plan to renew our efforts to engage with existing and potential members to ensure families with disabled children receive the information, support and services which allow all family members to live fulfilled lives. KCC funds are now secure until at least September 2015. However we will continue to look to diversify our funding, both as an independent charity and by identifying possible additional county wide sources through the KDCPDC. At a time of reduced statutory funding, identifying and securing funds from a variety of sources will continue to be essential. Other priorities include:

- Maintaining our family events that provide opportunities that families with a non-disabled child take for granted and that break down isolation, using both parent and child feedback to inform the type of events we offer is a key service. Evidence from families shows this is highly valued.
- Giving information advice and guidance to individuals who contact us, parents, carers, young people and professionals
- Offering a wider range of activities that disabled children and young people can access without their parents, both through M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service direct service delivery and through working in partnership with others
- Ensuring that our work continues to be parent driven and responsive to identified needs by consulting both formally and informally with members and other parents. Starting with our annual membership survey in May 2015
- Responding to parental requests for information workshops on topics identified by families that would be useful, for example Understanding the Mental Capacity Act and Surviving School Holidays
- Ensuring our website and newsletter remains informative and current, whilst looking to reduce costs by moving as much of our communications over to electronic formats as possible
- Building on our partnership work with other agencies so families are made aware of our services
- Bedding down our Information Support service (in partnership with the other KDCPDC charities)
- Developing further our work with universal providers to ensure better access and support for disabled and SN children in mainstream leisure and sport opportunities
- Raising funding for and piloting two youth groups; one for age 11-16 and one for age 16 and above
- Seeking funding for our project work from a range of funding streams to diversify our funding to ensure sustainability
- Developing a fundraising sub-group to build on parental engagement and to arrange a major fundraising event to celebrate our 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday in 2016
- Encouraging new parents to consider becoming a Parent Trustee
- Keeping abreast with changing Special Educational Needs and Disabled (SEND) legislation and societal changes to ensure M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service remains relevant and valued

By continuing to deliver in these priority areas the Board of Trustees is confident that M4S-Maidstone Special Needs Support Service will continue to provide services for families of disabled children and young people that offer public benefit and meet our charitable objectives and vision.



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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

**Small Company Exemptions**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to the companies subject to the small companies regime in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006

Approved by the Directors and signed on their behalf by



JANET CROSBY  
Chair

Date..... 5.11.15 .....

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF M4S-MAIDSTONE SPECIAL  
NEEDS SUPPORT SERVICE: CHARITY NUMBER 1140764**

For the year ended 31st March 2015 as set out on pages 11 to 15 and carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011.

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. 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 seeking 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

In connection with 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 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

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.



.....  
Peter Bodycombe  
FCIB

Date 3/11/15 .....

21 Georgian Drive  
Coxheath  
Maidstone  
Kent ME17 4QT



**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**(Incorporating income and expenditure account)**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2015	Restricted Funds 2015	Total Funds 2015	Total Funds 2014
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
Incoming resources from Charitable activities:					
Grants and funding	2	220,967.68	6,273.28	227,240.96	58,281.50
Incoming resources from generated funds:					
Donations and events	3	11,482.13		11,482.13	21,559.82
Investment income:					
Bank interest from deposit account		35.03		35.03	22.72
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>		<u>232,484.84</u>	<u>6,273.28</u>	<u>238,758.12</u>	<u>79,864.04</u>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
Charitable Activities	4	223,613.58	4,823.28	228,436.86	62,184.88
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>	5	<u>223,613.58</u>	<u>4,823.28</u>	<u>228,436.86</u>	<u>62,184.88</u>
<b>NET (OUTGOING)/INCOMING RESOURCES AND NET (EXPENDITURE)/INCOME FOR THE YEAR</b>	6	88,71.26	1,450.00	10,321.26	17,679.16
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MARCH 2015</b>		<u>70,322.84</u>	<u>1,450.00</u>	<u>71,772.84</u>	<u>61,451.58</u>

The notes on pages 13 to 15 form part of these statements.

**BALANCE SHEET  
AT 31st MARCH 2015**

	Notes	2015	2014
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash at bank and in hand		71,772.84	61,451.58
<b>CREDITORS:</b>			
amounts falling due within one year	9	0	0
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
		71,772.84	61,451.58
<b>NET ASSETS</b>			
		<u>71,772.84</u>	<u>61,451.58</u>
<b>CHARITY FUNDS</b>			
Unrestricted Funds	10	70,322.84	50,103.58
Restricted Funds	10	1,450.00	11,348.00
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>			
		<u>71,772.84</u>	<u>61,451.58</u>

For the year ending 31st March 2015 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

- the members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476,
- the directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts
- these accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2015 and were signed on its behalf by



JANET CROSBY, CHAIR



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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2015**

**1. Accounting policies**

**1.1 Accounting convention**

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities.

**1.2 Compliance with accounting standards**

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards.

**1.3 Incoming Resources**

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities and any unspent balances, after the appropriate allocation of management and support costs are retained as General Funds for on-going activity.

**1.4 Fund Accounting**

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees. Restricted funds can only be used for the particular restricted purposes within the charitable objectives. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for a particular restricted purpose.

**2. Incoming resources from charitable activities**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds 2015</b>	<b>Restricted Funds 2015</b>	<b>Total Funds 2015</b>	<b>Total Funds 2014</b>
Kent County Council Disabled Children's services	39,125.00		39,125.00	41,986.50
Council for Disabled Children Independent Support Contract	179,991.98		179,991.98	0
Grant Maidstone Borough Council			0	10,295.00
Grant Whitehead Monckton Charitable Foundation			0	5,000.00
Grant Kent Community Foundation			0	1,000.00
Funkidz		2,644.00	2,644.00	0
KCC Sensory equipment grant		3,629.28	3,629.28	0
Misc Grants	1,850.70		1,850.70	0
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>220,967.68</u></b>	<b><u>6,273.28</u></b>	<b><u>227,240.96</u></b>	<b><u>58,281.50</u></b>

### 3. Incoming resources from generated funds

	Unrestricted Funds 2015	Restricted Funds 2015	Total Funds 2015	Total Funds 2014
Family contributions at events	2,658.30		2,658.30	3,510.25
Parent membership	465.00		465.00	545.00
Donation from World Custard Pie Committee	100.00		100.00	200.00
Donation from ETM Foundation			0	10,000.00
Donation from Help a Maidstone Child	350.00		350.00	434.50
Misc donations	7,908.83		7,908.83	6,870.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,482.13</b>		<b>11,482.13</b>	<b>21,559.82</b>

### 4. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds 2015	Restricted Funds 2015	Total Funds 2015	Total Funds 2014
Salaries(incl tax and NI)	63,765.12		63,765.12	45,062.74
DBS	336.00		336.00	224.00
Staff expenses/petrol	2,616.52		2,616.52	790.43
Rent	3,080.51		3,080.51	2,563.55
Insurance	384.25		384.25	768.25
Office costs	4,172.94		4,172.94	2,490.56
Phone and internet	1,766.81		1,766.81	746.20
Event costs	4,997.46		4,997.46	7,691.59
Equipment	3,272.23	3,629.28	6,901.51	1,066.22
Professional charges (payroll)	178.50		178.50	150.00
Recruitment	1,064.00		1,064.00	631.34
Training	130.00		130.00	0
Independent Support Project	135,843.24		135,843.24	0
Fun Kidz	2,006.00	1,194.00	3,200.00	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>223,613.58</b>	<b>4,823.28</b>	<b>228,436.86</b>	<b>62,184.88</b>

### 5. Analysis of resources expended by expenditure type

	Staff costs 2015	Other costs 2015	Total 2015	Total 2014
Charitable Activities	65,007.62	163,429.24	228,436.86	62,184.88

### 6. Net (outgoing)/Incoming resources

During the period, no Trustees received any remuneration (2014 - £NIL)  
 During the period, no Trustees received any benefits in kind (2014 - £NIL)



## 7. Staff Costs

Staff costs were as follows:

	2015	2014
Wages and salaries	63,765.12	45,062.74
Payroll costs	178.50	130.00
Recruitment and training	1,064.00	631.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>65,007.62</b>	<b>45,824.08</b>

The average monthly number of employees during the period was as follows:

	2015 No.	2014 No.
Staff	4	2

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

## 8. Taxation

The company is required to make a corporation tax return for 2014-15, such return to be submitted by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

## 9. Creditors

	2015	2014
Amounts falling due within one year	£ 0	0

## 10. Statement of funds

In the previous accounts £11,348.96 designated reserves were mistakenly stated as restricted reserves. This has been rectified below.

	Brought Forward	Incoming Resources	Resources Expended	Carried Forward
<b>Undesignated funds</b>				
General funds	50,103.58	8,871.26	(3,652)	55,322.84
<b>Restricted income fund</b>				
Fund kidz	0	2,644.00	(1,194.00)	1,450.00
3 months operating costs	11,348.00		(11,348.00)	0
<b>Designated Funds</b>				
3 months operating costs (from 2014)	0	11,348.00		11,348.00
Adjustment to 2015 3 month operating cost level	0	3,652.00		3,652.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>61,451.58</b>	<b>26,515.26</b>	<b>(16,194.00)</b>	<b>71,772.84</b>