



# The Uphill Trust

*Supporting Uphill Junior School in western Uganda*

**Scottish Charity: SC045385**

## **Annual Report and Financial Statement**

1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024



## **Trustees' Annual Report**

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report and financial statements for the year 1 January to 31 December 2024.

### **Reference and Administrative Information**

<b>Charity Name</b>	The Uphill Trust
<b>Charity Number</b>	SC045385
<b>Charity Status Awarded</b>	29 January 2015
<b>Charitable Purpose</b>	The advancement of education
<b>Registered Address</b>	21 Strachan Crescent, Dollar, FK14 7HL
<b>Trustees</b>	N R L Macdonald ( <i>Chairman</i> ) B L Macdonald H E S Laird S A Macdonald C J Macdonald

### **Structure, Governance and Management**

The Uphill Trust is a Scottish Charitable Trust and all current trustees were named in the Trust Deed at the outset. There is only one formal management role, that of Chairman. The trustees take responsibility for administration and governance according to their areas of expertise. These include: Website maintenance, digital newsletters and social media; developing promotional videos; minutes and record keeping; developing and updating policies; accounting and finance; networking; and fundraising activities. The Uphill Trust does not have any employees and the everyday running costs of the charity are paid for by the trustees, ensuring that 100% of fundraising income is available to support projects in Uganda.

### **Objectives and Activities**

#### **Charitable Purposes**

To advance education by securing the establishment and development of Uphill Junior School (UJS) in western Uganda. By providing continuing financial support we are helping the UJS Management Committee to develop a well-respected Primary school with Kindergarten in Iruhuura, a small trading centre in the rural district of Kabarole.

#### **Uphill Junior School**

The school is located in an impoverished rural area and the collected fee income is very low. Many of the families are subsistence farmers with little or no money. Prior to The Uphill Trust's involvement, the staff were paid intermittently and school facilities were very poor. At the end of 2014, UJS was teaching 196 children, across 3 kindergarten and 4 primary year groups, in a wooden building with earth floors on rented land.

In 2017, with our help, the school moved to a permanent, secure site and, since the end of 2019, all the primary pupils are taught in purpose-built brick classrooms with good quality latrines. The Uphill Kindergarten moved to a separate fenced-in site in 2021; the classrooms currently have wooden walls, shutters and doors, and stone floors. When money becomes available, permanent brick classrooms will be built.

The 2024 school roll at UJS averaged 350 pupils across the 10 year groups.

Nineteen Primary 7 children sat the Uganda Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) in November 2024, many of whom had been at the school since Kindergarten



*Primary 7 Leavers, November 2024*

## **Activities**

The role of The Uphill Trust is to support UJS. Trustees do not have a role in the management of the school.

The main focus of the charity is to raise money through a variety of fundraising activities. We work closely with the school director to support the development of the school and maintain regular contact via email and digital messaging. Trustees visit to the school in person 1-2 times a year to monitor developments.

The Trust supports the day-to-day running of the school and also provides funds for capital projects. The Pupil Support Fund helps some of the most severely disadvantaged children attend school. From time to time, when funding is available, additional support is provided to improve health and enhance the quality of life for pupils, staff and the wider community.

## **Achievements and Performance**

### *2024: Capital Projects*

- Sanitation block with latrines, urinal, showers and clothes washing area built in staff compound
- Water protection rain skirt installed for staff accommodation terrace
- Chain link fence installed around staff compound
- Lightening arrestors installed on the Primary 1/2 and Primary 3/4 classroom blocks
- Large mural painted on end wall of multipurpose hall/kitchen building
- Water harvesting funded for staff compound (guttering plus 10,000L collection tank)

### *2024: Development & Maintenance Activities*

- Staff salaries (13 full-time teachers, 1 headteacher, 1 director,) paid monthly
- Salary for school nurse, funded by grant from Souter Charitable Trust
- 24 children attended school with help from Pupil Support Fund
- Uphill Porridge Club funded for another year - a hot meal every in school for all pupils
- 3 refurbished laptops purchased in Uganda for the school IT program
- Vocational skills training programme funded for older pupils
- Electronic keyboard, traditional drum set, speaker system and microphones funded
- 3 additional CCTV cameras purchased to extend the existing CCTV system
- School registration costs funded: Successful registration achieved in August 2024 - a major milestone
- Shade and fruit trees funded for the school compound
- Staff latrine in school grounds converted to compost toilet model (with training)

## ***The Uphill Trust: Annual Report 2024***

- Packs of wooden blocks purchased in Uganda to support STEM teaching in the school (with training)
- Additional fire extinguishers funded, along with maintenance of existing fire prevention kit
- Extracurricular resources donated by trustees and supporters
- Reading glasses donated for community elders by trustees and supporters
- Additional interactive science resources donated by Dollar Academy (with training workshop)
- Additional furniture funded for nurse's clinic and for the library area
- Training for Brownie and Junior Guide leaders funded by corporate donation from Scotland

### ***2024: Fundraising & Governance***

- 2024 Annual Report prepared & uploaded onto website
- Annual charity submission to OSCR
- Gift Aid claimed for online and direct-to-bank giving
- Online giving platforms used in 2024: Total Giving, GiveAsYouLive Donate, JustGiving (for Kiltwalk)
- Donate-for-free online shopping sites used in 2024: GiveAsYouLive
- 2024 Christmas Appeal raised £929 to fund an additional water harvesting tank at UJS
- Walkers took part in the Glasgow and Dundee Kiltwalks, raising £2,144
- Partner schools raised £847 through sponsored events
- Newport Brownies raised £287
- Craft sales and donation at talks and craft fairs raised £3,690
- Kilsyth Rotary International Night was held to raise funds for the new vocational classroom at UJS (funds to be transferred to the charity early on 2025)
- Digital newsletters x 5 plus regular social media posts on Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn
- Website blog posts x 8
- Uphill Trust policies reviewed & revised as necessary: Financial Support for UJS, Anti-Bribery Policy, Trustee Expenses Policy, Communications Policy, Financial Reserves Policy, Privacy Policy, Notifiable Events Policy, Safeguarding Children Policy, Fundraising Standards Policy, Cookie Policy
- Trustees visited UJS three times in 2024 to monitor project developments

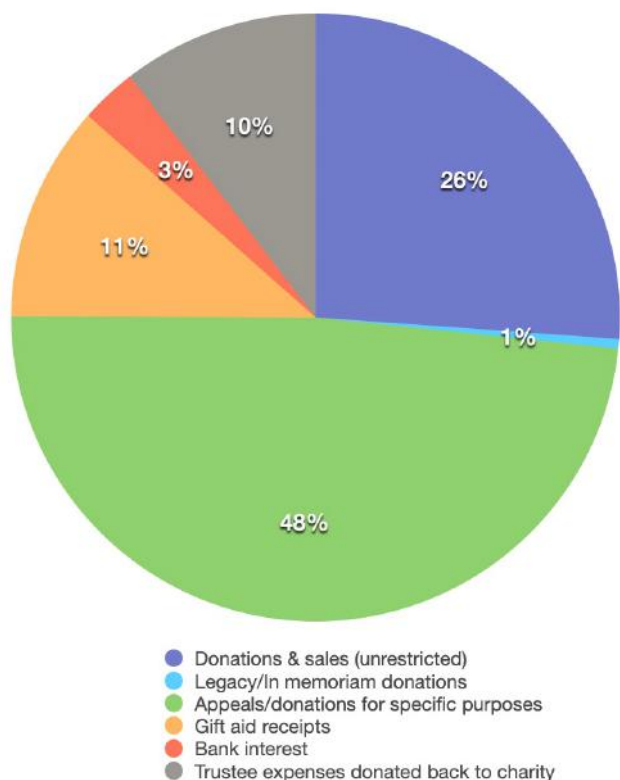


*Vocational skills workshop, January 2024*



## Financial Review

Where our funds came from in 2024



In 2024, the cost of living crisis in the UK continued to affect fundraising income and this situation is likely to continue in 2025.

Appeals and donations for specific projects generated 48% of our income this year (restricted funding), with an additional 26% coming from general fundraising (*ad hoc* donations and online appeals, plus craft sales at talks and occasional fairs/galas).

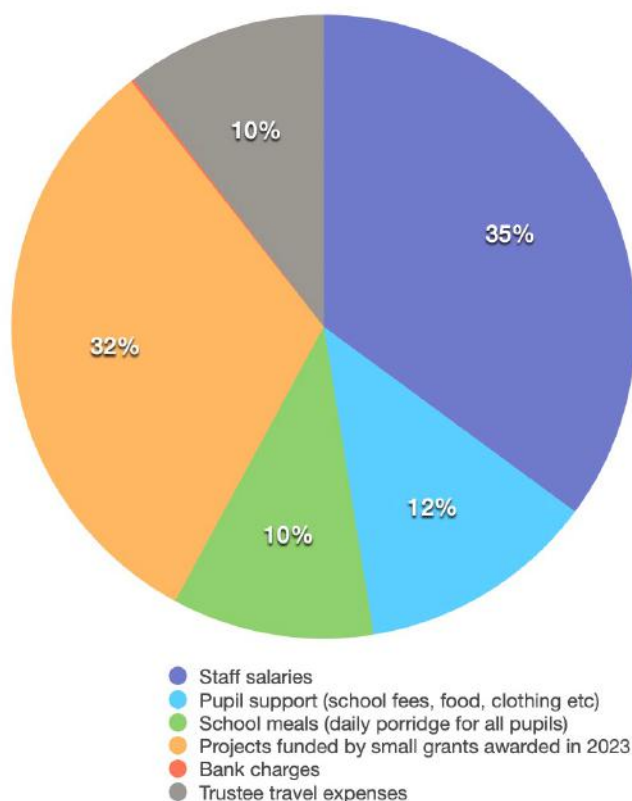
Gift Aid contributed 11% of our income, with an additional 3% of funding coming from bank interest credits.

Trustee travel expenses donated back to the charity accounted for 10% of our income.

This year we continued to contribute to some of the running costs for UJS, namely staff salaries, pupil support funding and the school meals service. Much of this funding is covered by regular donations.

We continue to seek additional regular donors to provide security for our core support costs for the school, and to replace donors who choose to stop their regular payments.

How funds were spent in 2024



We funded one large infrastructure project in 2024. This accounted for 32% of our expenditure.

Staff salaries made up 35% of our charity spending. Salaries were raised again in 2024 to help offset the marked cost of living increase in Uganda and across the world in the past few years.

Helping some of the most disadvantaged children to attend UJS accounted for 12% of our outgoings, and maintaining the Uphill Porridge Club used 10% of our funding.

Trustee travel expenses accounted for 10% of expenditure but these were paid back into the charity in full, as gift-aided donations.

All our capital projects have detailed budgets. Expenditure is confirmed by receipts and/or photographs of purchases, giving our charity a high level of accountability.

The Uphill Trust is a zero overheads charity. Administration and marketing expenses for the charity, plus trustee visits to Uganda, are covered by trustees' personal funds.

## **Plans for 2025**

The trust will continue to pay increased salaries for teachers and UJS director and will take on support for the school nurse.

We have funding to support 20 children when the school re-opens in February 2025. The Pupil Support Fund provides uniform, clothing and shoes, school supplies and other personal items, and a hot lunch along with school fees, for some of the most disadvantaged pupils at UJS. It also funds projects that benefit a large number of children, such as vocational skills workshops that are sometimes held in the school holidays. One-off medical expenses, and other essential financial assistance for any child in the school, are considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Uphill Porridge Club continues to feed all the pupils at mid morning break. This is a very popular project with both pupils and parents and is one of the reasons that parents choose to send their children to the school. We have sufficient ring-fenced funds to cover project costs for 2025. Additional fundraising will be required this year to build funds for 2026.

The majority of Uphill children are unable to afford secondary schooling, so an introduction to vocational skills and budgeting are important adjuncts to their education. We plan to build a vocational training classroom on the school site in 2025 to teach woodwork, tailoring, machine knitting and other creative skills. Partial funding is in place and we hope to be able to augment this with grant money and start the build this year. A large collection of donated tools and machines is being transported from the UK to UJS at no cost to ourselves by the charity WorkAid, following an opportunistic meeting during our trustee visit at the start of the year.

The staff sanitation block in the accommodation compound should be up and running by the start of the new academic year. The block has 4 shower cubicles, 4 compost toilet cubicles, a urinal, a hand washing basin and an area for washing clothes. Water harvesting tanks will be added to collect rain water from the roof and, in time, additional harvested rain water from the staff house roof will be used to feed the shower plumbing. This project was entirely grant funded.

The school vegetable garden, started in 2019, continues to be funded entirely by the school. Vegetables grown by the pupils are used in school meals and donated to families who are known to have restricted and/or inadequate diets. There are plans in 2025 to introduce cooking lessons for the pupils using the produce they have grown. This important co-curricular project provides valuable life skills for UJS pupils, many of whom will rely on home-grown produce to feed themselves and their families in future.

2025 is the tenth anniversary of The Uphill Trust and events are being planned to promote this milestone. We also hope to host the UJS director in Scotland this year and will plan events for donors and partner schools to meet with him. Fundraising in 2025 will continue to target capital projects (a permanent Kindergarten is next on the list after the vocational classroom), along with increasing the number of regular donors for core funding - especially for teacher salaries, the school nurse, porridge club and pupil support.

Research into a portfolio of income-generating projects for the school will continue in 2025. Our long term goal is to gradually withdraw salary, and other, support so that the school eventually becomes fully self-sustaining.

The UJS school development programme will continue to reflect the needs of the school and the recommendations of the school inspectors. As in past years, the trust remains receptive to new projects and opportunities that may arise during the year. Three trustees will travel to Uganda in February to review ongoing projects and discuss future developments for 2025 and beyond.

**Gallery: Some of The Uphill Trust's Achievements at Uphill Junior School in 2024**

Under the leadership of school director, Muhimbise Elius, and with the support of The Uphill Trust, UJS continues to be regarded as one of the top primary schools in Kabarole District. The whole school community regularly express their gratitude to the Uphill donors who have helped to make this possible.



Compost Toilet Conversion Project



Grand Opening of Staff Accommodation Compound



Vegetable Growing - An Essential Skill



Vocational Training Workshop



UJS Teaching Staff



School Nurse at Work





Kindergarten Graduation



Kindergarten Graduates with Certificates



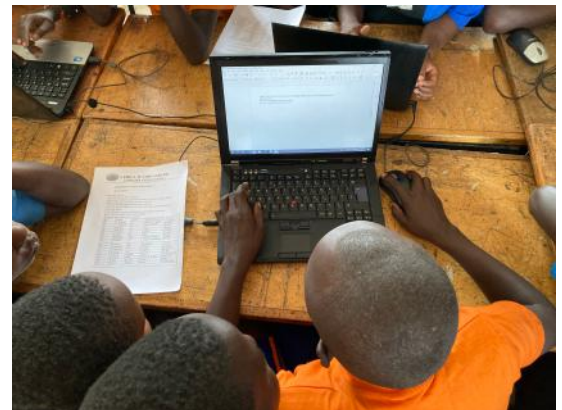
Selling Vocational Crafts at Graduation



Cultural Displays for Graduation Guests



Enjoying Games of Mental Skill



Upper School IT Lesson with New Laptops



Installing Lightening Arrestors on a Classroom

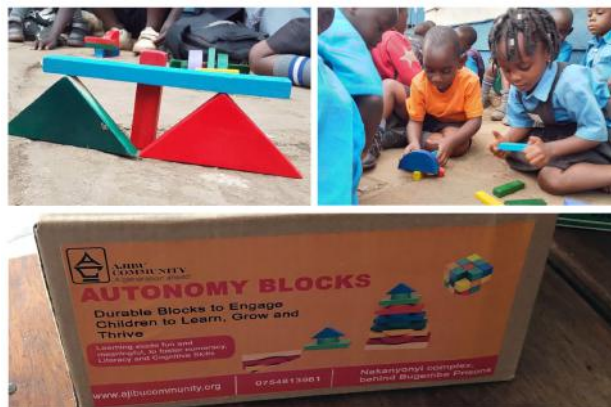


Some of the Pupils We Supported in 2024





Hands On Learning in Primary School



Hands On Learning in Kindergarten



Rain Water Harvesting in Staff Compound



Extra Shelves In Library Area



Meeting with Brownie and Guide Leaders



Mural Celebrating the Uphill Team



Keyboard Lessons for Pupils



Pupils Enjoying the New Traditional Drum Set

**Summary of Accounts for the Year Ending 31 December 2024**

	<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Total funds current period</b>
<b>Receipts</b>			
Fundraising Donations	5,999.18	19,284.76	25,283.94
Fundraising Sales	4,407.51	0	4,407.51
In Memoriam Donations	200	0	200
Bank Interest	1,196.65	0	1,196.65
Donated Trustee Expenses	4,158	0	4,158
Gift Aid Receipts	4,574.55	0	4,574.55
Grants	0	0	0
Total Receipts	<u>20,536</u>	<u>19,285</u>	<u>39,821</u>
<b>Payments</b>			
Money sent to Uphill Junior School	11,335	36,512	47,847
Trustee expenses	4,158	0	4,158
Bank charges	60	0	60
Total payments	<u>15,553</u>	<u>36,512</u>	<u>52,065</u>
<b>Surplus/deficit for the year</b>	<u><b>4,983</b></u>	<u><b>-17,228</b></u>	<u><b>-12,245</b></u>

**Statement of Balances on 31 December 2024**

Opening balance in bank accounts ( <i>1 January 2024</i> )	56,261
Closing balance in bank accounts ( <i>31 December 2024</i> )	<u>44,016</u>
<b>Surplus/deficit</b>	<u><b>-12,245</b></u>

## **Notes to the Accounts - for the Year Ending 31 December 2024**

### **1. Basis of Accounting**

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

### **2. Nature and Purpose of Funds**

Unrestricted Funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the trustees to further the objects of the charity.

Restricted Funds may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or grant funder. Restricted and Unrestricted Fund monies are held together in the charity bank accounts but logged separately in the accounts.

During the accounting period 1 January to 31 December 2024, Restricted Funds included balances raised for school infrastructure projects, the school meals service, teacher salaries, the school nurse project and support for the neediest pupils.

The balance of funds raised in 2024 will be used to finance planned projects in 2025 and beyond.

### **3. Reserves Policy**

The unrestricted financial reserve during 2024 was £3,000 (based on the *Financial Reserves Policy: The Uphill Trust 2023*). Dedicated restricted fund balances are also held to cover salary and pupil support payments for 1 term, along with money being held for planned infrastructure and other projects.

### **4. Expenses**

In line with the *Trustees Expenses Policy: The Uphill Trust (2015)*, trustees do not claim expenses for day-to-day administrative activities or for attending trust meetings/training courses. The trustees may claim expenses for return air fares to Uganda and for Ugandan entry visa fees. In 2024, as in previous years, trustees paid the claimed travel expenses back into the charity as donations eligible for gift aid.

### **5. How Money is Held**

All money is held in our bank accounts - there is no cash-in-hand balance.

### **Declaration**

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustee's report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:



N R L Macdonald  
Chairman

Date: 10 January 2025



B L Macdonald  
Trustee

Date: 10 January 2025