



**TrinityLearning's Annual Report**  
**for the reporting period**  
**1st September 2022 - 31 August 2023**

Registered Charity Number 118272

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## **Our Mission**

TrinityLearning believes that every child deserves a calm, positive start in life. We aim to relieve the pressures on busy schools through specially tailored activities, including practical help for school leaders, regular mentoring for children and workshops for pupils and staff.

## **Chair's Review**

We have had another busy and exciting year at TrinityLearning. We were delighted to be back in church for Experience Easter this year, the first time since the pandemic, and were able to make use of some of the videos made during lock down to provide a hybrid approach which worked well. For the first time this year all the children were able to experience the Easter Story in order, which was helpful.

I was very grateful to be welcomed alongside Nicola Williams and Taz for the Make a Difference Week at Larkmead School in July. I enjoyed getting involved in this worthwhile "Toolkit for Happiness" project and seeing the ripple effect it had on the Year 7 children, as well as the 6<sup>th</sup> formers who delivered the project to them.

We were also able to support some students from Kingfisher School again this year with their work experience at Trinity Toddler Group, which benefited students and toddlers alike. We welcomed two new volunteers for Thinking Books this year, which has helped to ease the increasing demand from schools. Our singing group continue to enjoy weekly visits to Kingfisher, where we feel appreciated and valued.

We also had our first "Volunteer Tea Party" in the summer which was a lovely celebration of our dedicated volunteers and a chance to meet those who we might not normally encounter. Excitingly we also discovered that we had been nominated for The King's Award for Voluntary Service, and subsequently had a visit from a deputy Lord Lieutenant who was most interested and encouraged by our work.

I must finish by saying a heartfelt thank you to Eve Newton, who is standing down as a trustee at our 2024 AGM. We are all most grateful to Eve for her dedication to TrinityLearning over the years, acting as a very wise and competent Chair of Trustees since the start of our Charity Status, and then throughout the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. Her calm, positive and 'can do' attitude will be missed. We are glad that Eve will continue to be a volunteer. We are, as always most grateful to all our volunteers as none of this important work could happen without you.

**Katie Doney, TrinityLearning Chair of Trustees.**

## **Our Objectives**

### **Programme**

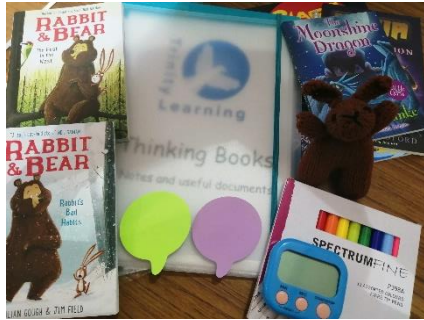
- To fully return to in-school volunteer led TrinityLearning Projects (post Covid).
- To ensure greater access to our workshops by offering live workshops in addition to online versions
- To continue delivering ongoing and one-off TrinityLearning projects
- To celebrate and share the achievements and impact of our volunteers

### **Legal and administrative**

- To review TrinityLearning's mission
- To complete website renewal
- To ensure policies and procedures meet current best practice advice

## Review of activities and achievements against our programme objectives

### To fully return to in-school volunteer led TrinityLearning Projects (post Covid).



**Thinking Books** – this is our mentoring scheme for primary schools. Volunteer mentors go into schools regularly to meet children one-to-one or in small groups. They share reading of carefully selected books which start conversations about feelings and relationships.

2022 – 2023 was our first full year of Thinking Books and was very successful with nine volunteers delivering ten sessions each to over 40 children. Generous grants from Abingdon Town Council and Christ's Hospital enabled us to give each child a copy of the book they had worked with over the 10 sessions.

All in-school volunteers receive relevant project training (for example in-depth Thinking Books training) as well as Safeguarding Training before starting their work in schools. TrinityLearning staff are qualified to deliver this Safeguarding Training in-house to the same standard as schools, enabling us to fully prepare volunteers for their varied in-school roles. In addition to the training all new Thinking Books volunteers are mentored by TrinityLearning staff for a minimum of three sessions, allowing volunteers to build confidence and access the range of Thinking Books guidance and resources.

"Thinking Books has been very useful for a boy in my class who struggles to access a wide range of books. He does not have much confidence with reading but he is always smiling when I see him outside with his adult from Thinking Books. He enjoys the quality 1-1 time and being able to read for a long stretch of time without being interrupted... He often comes back into the classroom telling us how much he enjoyed the story that day. Throughout the week he sometimes asks how many days until he can read with his Thinking Books adult again and reminds me of the details of the story. It has definitely been a worthwhile and useful tool for him." Feedback from class teacher at an Abingdon Primary School

## To ensure greater access to our workshops by offering live workshops in addition to online versions

**Experience Easter** – we were delighted that we were able to return 'live' to Trinity Church in March 2023. After two years of being fully online, we were finally able to bring schools back to Trinity Church for Experience Easter. Due to changes in volunteer availability and circumstances we decided to completely re-



evaluate Experience Easter and consider new ways to present and share the workshops. This resulted in simpler staging, working with Trinity Church's regular layout and offering the experience to one class at a time. This approach allowed all the children to experience the workshops in the correct order. It also enabled children who were struggling with large group activities to work away from the main group while still being involved and able to take part in all the activities. Adults supporting school groups expressed their appreciation for the peaceful atmosphere and all the children who attended engaged with the activities.

We used a mixture of live storytelling with volunteers and videos from the online Experience Easter to ensure that, even with a lower number of volunteers, children still benefited from hearing the story from a range of voices.

Some schools still opted to use the online Experience Easter to reduce travel costs and we were able to support one new school in learning to use this effectively.

Overall, 445 children from approximately 15 classes and eight different schools took part in Experience Easter either live or online. The change in layout enabled us to leave the Experience Easter staging in place for longer enabling Trinity Church congregation and Trinity Toddlers to use the spaces for services.

Contemplating the tomb and thinking about how the disciples could have felt on that first Easter morning produced some thoughtful responses with children suggesting that Jesus's friends could have felt "happy, confused, joyful, shocked, perplexed and hopeful".

## To continue delivering ongoing and one-off TrinityLearning projects

**Kingfisher Singing Group** -The Kingfisher Singing Group continued to go from strength to strength this year. The Group meets weekly to sing nursery rhymes and action songs with children with a range of impairments and health conditions. Kingfisher School really appreciates the connections built with the singing group and this year these were expanded to include visits to school open days and events as well as inclusion in other TrinityLearning projects such as the specially adapted Experience Easter workshop supported by the Kingfisher Singing Group.

**Toolkit for Happiness** – in July 2023 we welcomed 6th Form volunteers from Larkmead School as part of their Make a Difference event. A total of twelve 6th form students volunteered for our Toolkit for Happiness project - a series of five workshops designed to enable children to learn about different strategies they can use to boost their own happiness, such as getting out into nature, doing exercise, helping others or feeling thankful.



Each student gave between two and five days of their time to deliver wellbeing workshops to around 180 year 7 pupils.

Following training each morning from TrinityLearning's Education Development Manager, and Workshop Coordinator the students then led workshops in two teams, with each team leading workshops for three year 7 classes over the rest of the day.

We especially enjoyed their music and dance suggestions and all enjoyed learning the Macarena and the Cha Cha Slide as well as playing singing games to finish our Physical Activity and Creativity workshops. The students' enthusiasm and commitment to the project was extremely impressive.

We would like to say a massive thank you to TrinityLearning for giving us a great experience that we can take the skills we learnt with us and apply it to other aspects of our lives. [Year 12 volunteer](#)



## **Extract from our Chair of Trustees' MAD week blog**

**TrinityLearning Chair, Katie Doney writes about her time spent working with 6th form volunteers on a TrinityLearning project. See the full blog on our website at [My Experience at Larkmead School's 'Make a Difference Week'](#)**

Earlier in July I helped with Make a Difference Week (MaD) at Larkmead School. There are child friendly activities for each topic, such as making bracelets to give to someone else, writing a card to thank someone, noticing nature around you, trying some guided relaxation and making a fidget keyring to reduce stress.



It was lovely to see the confidence of the 6th formers grow throughout the week, and how much the younger children valued their input. I was encouraged by the way the year 7 children, who had varied abilities and skills, were supportive of each other.



It was good to experience this week for myself after hearing about it in Trustee Meetings.

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**Gardening projects** - Our regular team of volunteers has continued to maintain the beautiful garden at Kingfisher School which was originally designed by Rosemary Perrow. A small team of volunteers also gave up a morning to tidy the Carswell School Peace Garden.



**Supporting Christmas Events** - This year saw the full return of Christmas events to Trinity Church. TrinityLearning worked with Trinity Church to support schools in rehearsals and welcome around 1200 children, staff and family members to four performances in just over a week.



## To celebrate and share the achievements and impact of our volunteers

**We worked out that TrinityLearning volunteers provide an amazing 3276 volunteer hours a year and if it wasn't for them, we simply wouldn't be able to support our local school communities in the way we do.**

**Volunteer Celebration -** around 20 TrinityLearning volunteers joined us on Thursday 15th June as we hosted a special Volunteer Celebration to say thank you for the fantastic work our volunteers do to support our TrinityLearning projects and events.



Trustees provided a lovely buffet, and display boards highlighted all the many ways volunteers support us – from working one to one with children in school, to a regular in-school singing group, to preparing Experience Easter resources and making soft toys for some of our packs.

It was great to be able to recognise and celebrate our volunteers as well as hear how much enjoyment they find in volunteering with us and working together in a strong, friendly volunteer community.

"The highlight of volunteering for me is shared purpose and camaraderie; being part of something valuable and valued"

**What do you enjoy most about volunteering with TrinityLearning?**

"[The best thing about volunteering is...] the welcome given by the school and the feeling of being useful again."

**Shared All Saints and Trinity events -** TrinityLearning has been hugely supported by the Trinity and All Saints Church volunteer communities this year, and our Education Development Officer, Nicola, was delighted to be invited to All Saints Church for their joint autumn partnership supper. It was fantastic to see the strong links between the two churches, many of which have been built and strengthened through shared volunteering for TrinityLearning.

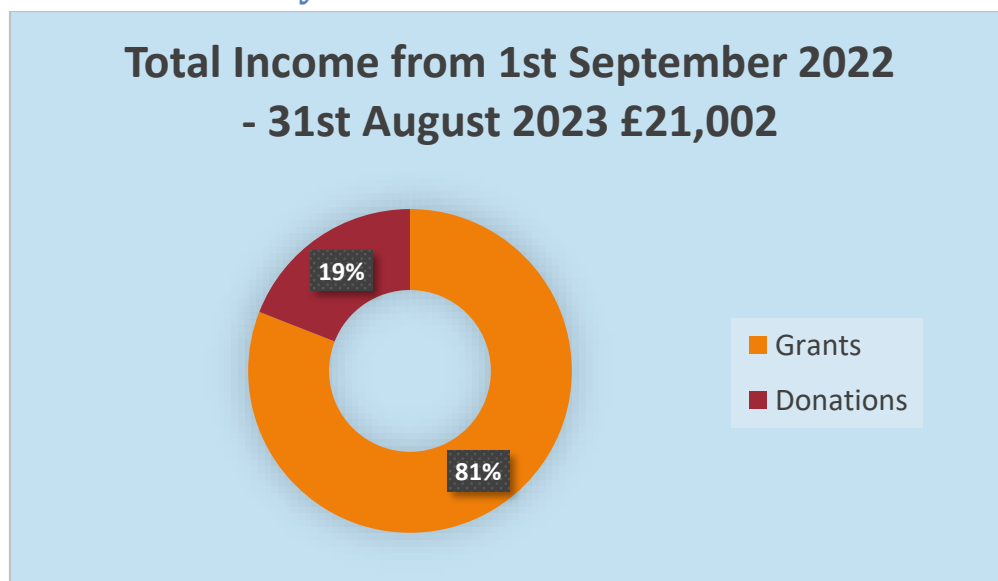


**King's Award for Voluntary Service** – we were delighted to be able to announce this year that TrinityLearning had been nominated for the King's Award for Voluntary Service. It was around Christmas 2021 that we first received the exciting news that TrinityLearning had been nominated for the then Queen's Voluntary Service Award. As a result of the nomination, we were asked to detail all the work our many volunteers do, and a description of the value they add to children's lives. This was followed up by a visit from a deputy Lord-Lieutenant who interviewed a selection of our volunteers to find out more about their experiences of volunteering with TrinityLearning.

Sadly, due to the death of Queen Elizabeth II, the application was paused until we finally received word in summer 2023 that TrinityLearning's nomination had been passed to the new King's Voluntary Service Award. We are now looking forward to the awardees being announced on King Charles III birthday on the 14<sup>th</sup> November.

## Finances

### Where our money comes from

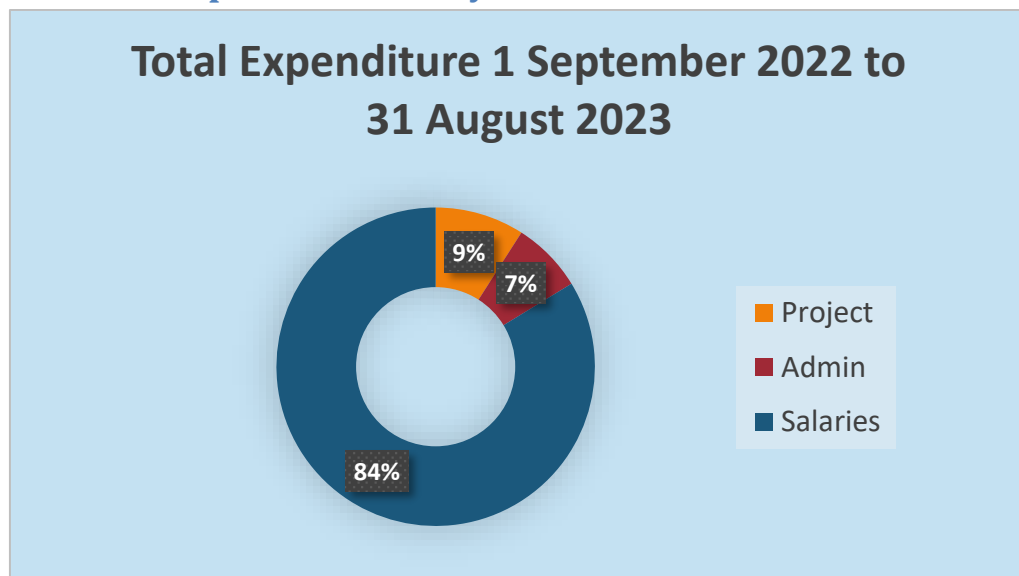


Our core funding is provided through grants from the URC Wessex Trust and the Wantage Methodist Circuit. The original three-year funding plan was extended by two years in 2021 and this funding period encompasses the second year of the funding extension. The URC Wessex Trust agreed to further extend the funding period by an additional two years in April 2023 and the Wantage and Abingdon Methodist Circuit have recently agreed to match this.

This financial period we received a £1250 grant from Christ's Hospital which has enabled us to continue to gift books to children taking part in the Thinking Books project during the 2022-23 school year and will do so for the 2023-2024 school year.

During this financial year we have also received financial support from St Helen's Church, Churches in Abingdon and All Saints Church - both in the form of regular funding as well as the proceeds from special events such as the shared All Saints and Trinity Church Harvest Supper. Individual supporters, mainly from Trinity Church, regularly donate money through the church to support our work as well.

### Where we spend our money

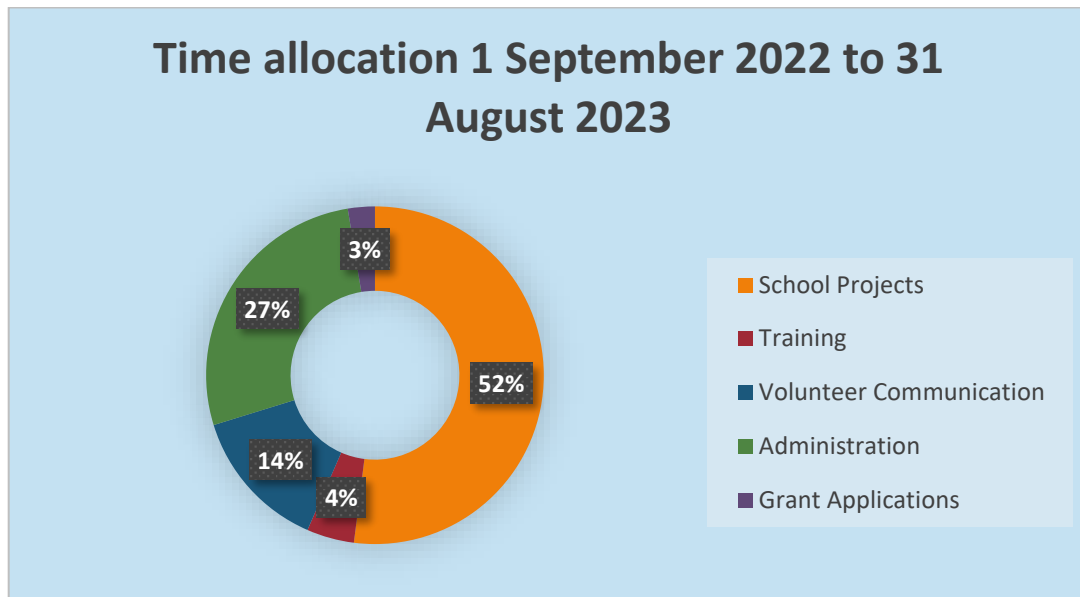


Our expenditure in this reporting period was generally consistent with last year. Project spending was slightly increased due to the continuation of the book gifting for Thinking Books, made possible by the Christ's Hospital grant, as well as the provision of new resources for Experience Easter as this returned to its live version in Trinity Church for the first time since 2019.

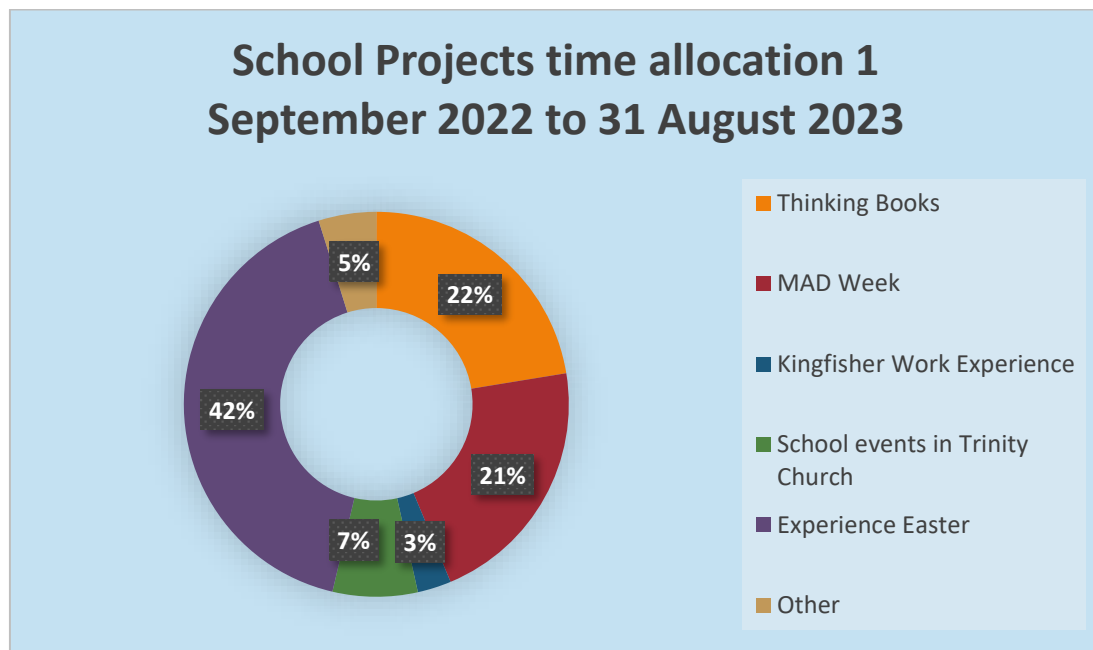
There was also an increase in training spending as our Education Development Officer repeated the Safeguarding Designated Lead Training, including Safer Recruitment Training and our Workshop Leader also undertook the same training providing better resilience within TrinityLearning as a result. As always, the largest spend was staff wages and details on staff time are included below.

A full break down of our income and expenditure can be seen in the accompanying accounts.

## Time allocation



This year saw a slight reduction in the time spent on administration with slightly more time spent on grant applications, helping to secure the additional two-year extension to our core funding grants. More time was also spent on volunteer communication as we celebrated our volunteers' commitments and achievements by holding our first volunteer celebration event in June.



Experience Easter took more time than usual this year due to the redesign to allow it to run live in Trinity Church. Whilst many volunteers still support this project, the majority now opt to do so in non-child facing roles, such as craft preparation, which required more time from the Education Development Officer and Workshop Leader to lead workshop

sessions. We anticipate that time allocation will be a little lower for Experience Easter next year now that the redesign is complete.

Thinking Books takes significant amounts of time in training and volunteer support however, it delivers significantly more 1:1 time to children as each volunteer delivers between 10 and 30 hours per year. Make a Difference week is our final core project, and, as with Experience Easter and Thinking Books, impacts a significant number of children. Some of our projects such as the Kingfisher Singing Group, or the crocheted toys for packs, use very limited staff time and positively impact many children and young people.

## **Review of activities and achievements against our legal and administrative objectives**

### **To review TrinityLearning's mission and complete website renewal**

Although the main focus of our work - supporting school communities - has not changed since we first began working in 2009, TrinityLearning has adapted and evolved since then both as an organisation and in terms of the ways in which it supports school communities. As a result, Trustees and staff felt it was timely to review the original mission statement to ensure it reflected those changes.

**Our revised mission statement** - TrinityLearning believes that every child deserves a calm, positive start in life. We aim to relieve the pressures on busy schools through specially tailored activities, including practical help for school leaders, regular mentoring for children and workshops for pupils and staff. Our goal is to provide support for school communities in order to reduce stress and make space for the spirit.



**Website revision** – following on from the revised mission statement, a revised 'About' TrinityLearning section was also created. This section clearly lays out our mission statement and what we do, as well as providing a short overview of our history. It brings this section into line with the 'tone' and look of the rest of the website, making for a more consistent site overall.


## To ensure policies and procedures meet current best practice advice

Each TrinityLearning policy has a review date of between one and two years and TrinityLearning Trustees proactively review relevant policies and procedures during each Trustee meeting in line with these timelines or when needed due to changes in legislation or working practices.


**Safeguarding policies and procedures** – over this reporting period, we have reviewed and amended our recruitment procedures to ensure they continue to remain in line with safer recruitment policies and best practice guidelines. This is key for ensuring safe environments for the children, and young people both our staff and volunteers work with.

Our Workshop Leader has also completed Deputy Safeguarding Lead training, ensuring they have the knowledge and skills to carry out this role and allowing them to support the Education Development Officer in carrying out their role as well as providing cover and resilience to TrinityLearning as an organisation.

In addition, our Education Development Officer and our Safeguarding Trustee continue to meet regularly to review and audit TrinityLearning policies and procedures against the NSPCC's Safeguarding and child protection self-assessment tool. This tool provides a step-by-step guide to help schools and organisations meet best safeguarding and child protection practices.



"It's vital that we work in a safe and trusted environment at TrinityLearning, where safeguarding is prioritised and everyone is aware of their responsibilities. Reviewing the policies and procedures through NSPCC and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) Audits helps Trustees to ensure that TrinityLearning follows best practice guidelines to ensure a safe environment for the children and young people we support." TrinityLearning Safeguarding Trustee





## **Get Involved**

Volunteers play a vital role in TrinityLearning, enabling us to work with children, teachers and the wider school community and give them the support they need. From helping to set up workshop spaces to supporting children's emotional literacy, our outreach work would not be possible without the invaluable input of our volunteers.

We can offer school-based or remote volunteering options and we provide training and support for all roles.

Find out more about volunteering with TrinityLearning on our website:  
<https://trinitylearning.org.uk/volunteer/>

### **Connect and keep up to date with our work**

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TrinityLearning-108933674177652/>

Website: [www.trinitylearning.org.uk](http://www.trinitylearning.org.uk)