

Dingley's Promise AGM
Thursday 28th September
At Dingley's Promise, Reading

Chair: Russ Fowler (RF) – Chair of the Board for Dingley's Promise
Attendees: Catherine McLeod MBE (CM), Chief Executive, Dingley's Promise
Naomi Khoo - Patron
Lee Friend – Chief Operating Officer, Dingley's Promise
Peter Brogden – Treasurer, Trustee, Dingley's Promise
Helen Edwards – Trustee, Dingley's Promise
Hannah Goddard – Centre Manager, Reading, Dingley's Promise
Kym More – Deputy Manager, Newbury, Dingley's Promise
Louise White – Operations Manager, Dingley's Promise
Meggie Fisher – Quality Manager, Dingley's Promise
Peter McLintock - Supporter
Apologies: Lord Brownlow

1. 2022 AGM Minutes approved.
2. Trustee Board Approach

Russ Fowler (RF) outlined the structure and frequency of Board meetings which take place in person on a bi-monthly basis. Board meetings are focussed on operational reviews, financial update/forecast, risks, safeguarding, and any conflicts of interest.

In addition to the bi-monthly Board meetings, ad-hoc exceptional board meetings are held to discuss budgets, accounts, CEO proposals as required. Project teams have been set up with a Trustee working with Dingley's staff on topics such as central team structure, resource, and training expansion.

The Trustees support Dingley's events including fundraising and team days and visit one Centre each term.

The Trustees will come together for a full day in December 2023 to discuss strategy.

RF shared that the organisational strategy was reviewed 18 months ago. RF reported the Board are happy with the current model as it is having a meaningful impact on the families Dingley's Promise reaches. RF said Dingley's Promise wants to reach more families and as such are opening new centres, extending the training offering, have joined a national change programme, and are developing excellence in all centres. The Board take responsibility for building internal capability and resources.

Thanks were extended to the staff and volunteers in the organisation and to the organisations that have supported us financially through the year.

3. Chief Executive Report

Catherine McLeod (CM) presented a review of Dingley's Promise in 2022-23 focussing on the growing impact and influence.

In 2022-23 Dingley's reached 320 children directly, up 15% on the previous year and 7,179 children indirectly through training and increase of 225% on the previous year. This is more children than we have ever reached in our history.

Children transitioning to mainstream reduced from 65% to 53%. Children's level of need reduced with EHCPs down 35% and 1:1s down 21% versus the previous year. Although, parents disagreeing on destination increased.

Outcomes for families:

	2023	2022
More positive about the future?	92.3%	92.6%
More confident about supporting your child?	89.4%	96.3%
More united as a family?	83.7%	88.9%

Training was a major focus in the year, with 5414 new learners reached and 99% of trainees feeling more confident after completing training. 2,975 new spaces were created in mainstream settings and level 3 accredited qualification was brought in-house.

The Dingley's Promise team has expanded with new teams in Gloucester and Southampton. Lee Friend joined the team as Chief Operations Officer and Meggie Fisher as Quality Manager. The team remain focussed on career progression for all staff.

Dingley's Promise continues to grow our national voice with CM speaking at national conferences, joining the NCFE training content advisory panel and SPH advisory group. Three government consultation responses were submitted, and CM continues to speak at APPG and has been asked for advice by the 10 Downing Street team. We have helped bring about EYE criteria change and had our first national television interview on the BBC.

Focus for the next year is on opening our sixth centre in Bournemouth, looking to open a group of northern centres, launching the Dingley's Promise manifesto, providing research to inform government, providing advisory support for the DfE, and further growing training.

CM expressed her thanks to the supporters of Dingley's Promise.

4. Treasurers Report

Peter Brogden (PB) gave an overview of income and expenditure for 2022/2023.

The financial year 2022/23 was another year of growth for Dingley's Promise. Total income increased by 16% over the previous year to reach £991K. Local Authority payments grew by £73K (+72%) and Nursery Education Grants by £55K (+39%), while earnings from Consultancy and Training increased from £71K to £97K, a growth of 37%. The programmes funded by the major grantors, Comic Relief, Big Lottery and Children in Need, continued unchanged.

Expenditure increased from £825k in the previous year to £1021k in 2022/23 (+20%). Within this increased spend of £48k related to two new centres, and £20k to the new Stronger Practice Hub project.

At the end of 2022/23 the charity reported a net deficit of £30k. The Trustees, however, are confident that this is a temporary imbalance. The balance sheet remains strong with net assets of £243k and cash available of £304k.

The two new centres in Gloucester and Southampton, together with continuing growth in the Consultancy and Training activity, will contribute to a 50% growth in the charity's income in 2023/4.

5. Election of Directors – none.

6. Election of Trustees

Since the last AGM, Helen Williams and Liz Roles were appointed Trustees, with due process and Joy Essien and Michael Scheepers have stepped down from their Trustee roles. No Trustees are currently eligible for re-election.

7. Any other business - none.

8. Date of next AGM - 24th September 2024.