

# MALVERN Special Families

Excellent play for children  
with disabilities



## Annual Report 2018 - 2019



**Excellent providers of safe, stimulating and fun social opportunities  
for children and young people with disabilities and special needs.**

Malvern Special Families is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity in England and Wales.

Company No. 07413040

Registered Charity No. 1143655

Registered Office & Main Office: First Floor Offices, 73 Church Street, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 2AE.

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[www.malvernspecialfamilies.org.uk](http://www.malvernspecialfamilies.org.uk)

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# Introduction

## Our History

We are proud of our small charity's roots. Set up in Malvern in the 1980s by a group of parents who had children with special needs, Malvern Special Families charity has now grown to deliver excellent clubs and playschemes for children and young people with disabilities in Malvern and Worcester. We are now able to support 175 families and continue to keep our MSF families at the heart of our services as we strive for a better future for children and young people with disabilities.

## Our Work Today

Over the year April 2018 to end March 2019 we provided over 14231 individual hours of short break activities. That's an extra 2031 more hours. This breaks down to over 3521 individual places, helping well over 190 children and young people. This is a 16% increase on 2017/18.

## Our Priorities for 2019 – 2020

First and foremost, our priority for 2019 - 2020 is to provide safe stimulating and engaging activities for children with disabilities throughout Worcestershire.

Our clubs at Regency and Fort Royal schools in Worcester, Malvern Vale and Poolbrook in Malvern, will continue to be exemplars of provision for providing children aged five to eighteen years, with opportunities to thrive, play, learn and develop life skills. We will do this by providing an increased number of trips and days out, so that the children can increase their social interaction and enjoy healthy outdoor activities.

We will also work to create a sustainable income programme and fundraising base, so that we can continue to increase the number of child places we offer and reduce our waiting lists. We will do this by utilising the skills of the trustee's team in publicising our good work and excellent reputation so we become widely known throughout Worcestershire and beyond.

We recognise that parents and carers have a huge amount of knowledge and expertise in what their children need in terms of activities health and education. We intend to utilise this know-how to ensure we are delivering what the families and children need. We will send out a questionnaire to families and stakeholders to ensure we have current feedback on what we are providing and what additional facilities and activities our stake holders would like.

We are also planning to greatly increase our volunteers to assist with fundraising so that we raise funds for state of the art sensory and play equipment that directly benefits the children.

## Our Impact

We make a huge positive difference to the lives of the children who use our services and to their families. We do this through delivering excellent clubs and playschemes, enabling our children to socialise, develop confidence and new skills through play based activities and by raising awareness about special needs in the community. We often hear from MSF families that our service provides a lifeline to them.

## Letter from Malvern Special Families Trustees

We are delighted to report that Malvern Special Families has enjoyed another extremely successful year providing excellent social opportunities for children with disabilities and special needs. We continue to work closely with the special schools in Worcester to offer after school clubs, holiday playschemes and Saturday clubs, as well holiday playschemes, youth and Saturday Clubs in Malvern.

We were very sad to say goodbye to Maria Munday, our Manager, during the year and would like to take this opportunity to say an enormous thank you to her for all her hard work and enthusiasm. Her commitment to the charity has been an inspiration to all those who worked with her and we are extremely grateful to her for moving the charity on during her employment.

We also said farewell to Cassie, who relocated to Australia. The charity is indebted to her for tireless efforts in fundraising and raising the profile of MSF in both Malvern and Worcester. She did this by using all forms of social media which resulted in added publicity and a greater awareness of our charity. Thank you, Cassie.

The Trustees felt that the role of Manager and fundraiser could be combined to facilitate a full time CEO, to lead us into the next phase of our work. We are delighted to welcome Gareth Jones into the role and he has already made a big impact. Gareth has been to the clubs and seen the rewarding work and challenges undertaken by Malvern Special Families. Welcome Gareth.

Caroline continues to rise to the challenges of organising the clubs and ensuring they are fully staffed, as well as completing the necessary paperwork for safeguarding and recording. We are hugely indebted to her for all that she does and are amazed at her efficiency.

We are also hugely grateful to Helen, our administrator, who ensures the invoices are dealt with speedily as well as coping with the day to day enquires. She is the friendly and helpful voice on the phone.

The year we also said goodbye to two Trustees, one of whom was the Treasurer and welcomed one new member, who is a parent using our clubs. We have since had a big drive to find new and experienced trustees, and hopefully can report next year on a strong Board.

As Trustees we have introduced 'Trustee of the Week' during our Summer Playschemes which has meant that all of us have enjoyed the opportunity to visit the clubs and see the amazing work that is done. Each club has been visited weekly and the reports submitted by the Trustees reflect the dedication and skill of our playleaders and playworkers. So I would like to end this letter by saying how amazing you all are! I have seen first-hand how your roles have been challenged and enriched by our young people – we are extremely proud of you. Thank you so much for all your hard work!

*Margaret Buchanan*  
**Acting Chair of Trustees**

## Our Vision

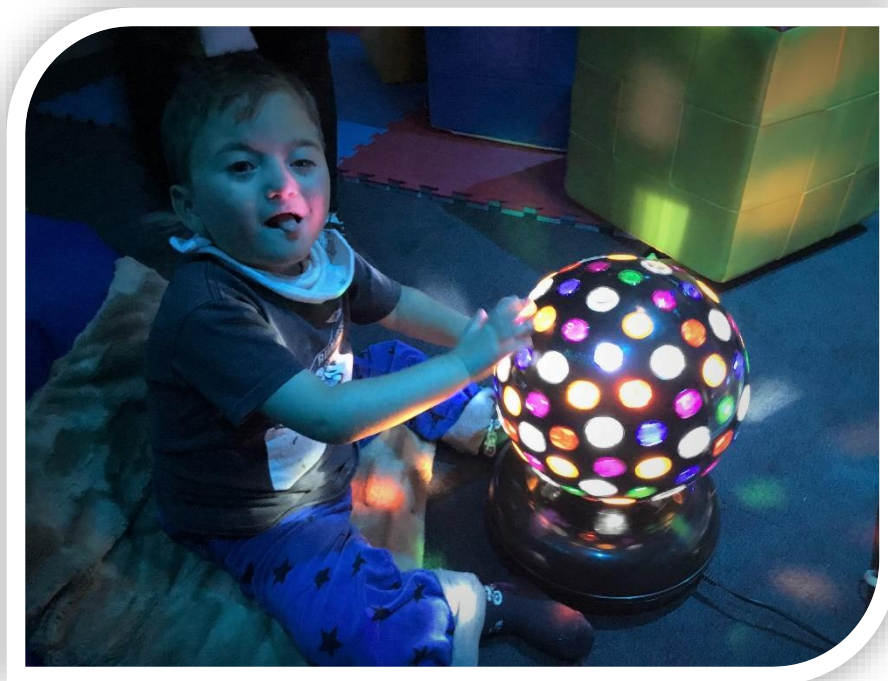
Our vision is for every child and young person to have access to excellent social opportunities within their local community.

## Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide safe and engaging social opportunities for children and young people with disabilities in South Worcestershire. We enable our children and young people to have fun, socialise and develop skills and confidence, whilst providing a short break for the whole family.

## Our Aims

- To enable children and young people with disabilities to access safe, engaging and fun social opportunities
- To create an environment where children and young people with disabilities can be themselves whilst they learn, play and develop skills
- To work in partnership with families to deliver high quality provision
- To assess each child or young person's individual needs, to ensure they receive the best care and social opportunities possible
- To provide excellent care through a high ratio of staff to young people for individual or 2:1 support
- To establish and support a team of experienced and well-trained playworkers
- To continually review our provision to ensure best practice
- To promote disability awareness within our local community
- To strive to be the best in our service area
- To ensure future sustainability for our small charity so that we can continue to support families in South Worcestershire for many years to come



## Our Values

**Committed** – we are committed to providing the best training for our staff and making sure our children and young people receive the best care and social opportunities possible.

**Open** – we are open-minded and inclusive. We understand and welcome the need to work with others where possible to ensure the best care and future for our MSF families.

**Caring** – we treat everyone we come into contact with as an individual and with care. We listen to MSF families' needs and provide them with the support that's right for their child or young person.

**Inspiring** – our shared passion for what we do to help improve the lives of our MSF children and young people inspires us to do our best and to inspire others. Our energy and enthusiasm while inspire our children and young people and encourage others to get involved with fundraising to help change lives for the better.

**Striving for more** – we will strive for more for our MSF families and as an organisation, we will continue to review our best practice and evolve to ensure a sustainable future for our small charity.

### Debenhams 'Charity of the Year' (Worcester)

*"We are delighted to support the local charity Malvern Special Families. We love the fact they give hundreds of Worcestershire children opportunities to take part in activities they might otherwise miss out on."*

Julie Cartwright  
Sales Manager, Debenhams (Worcester)

**16%**  
increase  
in club  
hours  
delivered



*Countless new friendships, life skills and happy memories made.*



### Children in Need Success

Malvern Special Families received high praise during their annual visit from Children in Need in February 2019.

*"We are thrilled to be able to support Malvern Special Families and I have seen first-hand the great work they do. The activities they offer the children are engaging, interesting and fun."*

Carla Belle  
Regional Officer - Children in Need

*Malvern Special Families staff rated 'Excellent' by 97% of MSF families.*

*Charity awarded 'Excellent' by 90% of families during Summer 2018 survey.*

### Feedback from MSF family...

*"X has so much more confidence with the other children. He has made a friend or two and loves all their staff. He went down a slide which is a very new thing. With X's medical balance issues, if he didn't have a safe place to play and meet other children he would not have the chance to grow. He has severe separation anxiety from me except when he goes to club. He trusts all the lovely staff and that is a huge thing for us. It gives me a well needed break and I know he is well taken care of as he comes out happy and cannot wait for the session"*

### Feedback from MSF child...

*"I love coming to Malvern Special Families so much. I get to go on trips and meet my friends and learn how to cook. The staff are amazing."*



## What Our Families Say...

*MSF is an amazing group of people who work tirelessly to provide an ever changing programme of activities from days out, to cooking and just chilling.*

Fantastic staff, so pleased I have found this little gem for my boys....my boys love it, always come away smiling. One happy Mummy.

He came home happy every day after club this summer.

Don't change a thing.

My daughter loves going to club, meeting her friends and having fun and without noticing she has gained social skills and confidence.

It allows my son to be in a safe and familiar environment with people who he knows and I trust. He is now at an age where it is difficult to find things to do that inspire him so without the scheme life for him in particular would be quite lonely.

He wouldn't be able to attend any other holiday activity and I can rest easy knowing he is getting great care and also being worn out a bit! I can't thank you enough.

We would end up being prisoners in our own home as we don't have the additional support to take both my boys out in the community.

The club makes a huge difference to our family, we couldn't manage without it. D doesn't have friends outside of school so this is so important for her.

This is my first annual report for Malvern Special Families.

Malvern Special Families has an excellent reputation throughout Worcestershire and that is down to everybody involved the staff team families' trustees and of course most importantly the children and young people.

The playleaders and staff teams across our clubs have continued to inspire us with their unbridled enthusiasm and commitment. They have organized numerous trips, activities and themed weeks to provide enjoyable entertaining and lively clubs week after week. The staff team are the most important resource for MSF and I thank them all.

I would like to start by putting on record heartfelt thanks to Business Manager Maria Munday who worked tirelessly for Malvern Special Families for over 11 years. Maria left in February 2019 and always provided professional and diligent leadership which enabled MSF to grow and progress during changing and challenging times in the third sector.

Also huge thanks are due to Community Fundraiser Cassie Zorro, who left Malvern Special Families in September 2018 for pastures new in Australia. Cassie engaged the community of Worcestershire in fundraising for MSF and made the events fun and varied. Cassie always ensured acknowledgements were sent to our donors - she will be missed.

I have been extremely lucky in my new role in having an excellent Service Manager, Caroline Conein, and Office Administrator, Helen Link, to provide excellent guidance and support. Caroline has worked for MSF for over 12 years and has continued to organise and coordinate the playschemes, ensuring that they are all compliant and running smoothly. Caroline has a large remit of responsibility and in partnership with the MSF staff ensures the children supported by MSF have as much fun as possible in a safe stimulating environment. Helen completed her first year working for MSF in September 2018 and has proved to be invaluable. Her conscientious approach to bookkeeping and excellent communication skills mean that she continues to be an excellent asset to the MSF team.

In terms of funding 2018 – 2019 was a challenging year. We did secure part funding from Worcestershire County Council for a further 3 years which takes us up to 2021. We also benefitted from a Children in Need Grant which has one more year to run. Contributions of core funding were also received from Garfield Weston Foundation and the Eveson Trust.

As usual we have been very lucky in the support we have received from fundraisers within the local and wider community. Here is a list of as many of the events and supporters held in the last year that space permits us to include.

- White Stuff Worcester have continued to support us through, amongst other things, the sales of their Christmas jumpers.
- Tom Brazington - Double Iron Man Triathlon in Snowdonia
- Devil Mud Run
- University of Worcester Climbing and mountaineering Climb Everest challenge
- Belle Beauty
- MSJ Bonfire and Christmas Party
- National Citizens Service - Malvern Summer Fayre and street collection

The board of trustees have continued to support and drive the charity, using their individual and collective skills to ensure Malvern Special Families receives the best possible governance. They have all been supportive of me and are true ambassadors for MSF.

*Gareth Jones*

**Chief Executive Officer (C.E.O.)**



## Service Manager's Report

The work of our staff, trustees and volunteers enables us to continue to provide a lifeline to parents and carers of local children with additional needs and enabling families to have a short break knowing that their child is happy, safe and cared for.

I continue to be so proud of the work we undertake and the positive difference we make to the lives of our children and their families. We are fortunate to have a team of incredible play staff delivering a high quality service with limited resources. At the front of those teams are our exceptional playleaders who ensure the high quality of children's experiences at the settings.

Our clubs are all out of school time and although we see many of the children infrequently, the play staff help provide them with opportunities to show their true and full potential. The staff have built excellent relationships with families and this underpins the success of the clubs in ensuring that each child is fully included and progresses well.

We are often reminded by our children that our strongest asset is our staff and none of what we do would be possible without them. It is an honour to support them in their work and I thank them for their dedication, passion and commitment to ensuring MSF's families receive an exemplary service.

*Caroline Conein*

**Service Manager**

## Playleader's Report – Children's Group (5 -11 yrs.) – Worcester and Malvern

We have had a great year at Poolbrook and Fort Royal, enjoying activities such as messy play, recycling fun and swimming. We had a great response to our Macmillan Coffee afternoon, raising over £100!

Over this year we have also helped to support the families through hard times and allowed them essential respite with other siblings. This is heart-warming to hear and see. We have had children move up to Regency and we love to hear the stories of how well they are doing. We have welcomed new children who have settled in really well and have got stuck in to the fun activities. The staff are fantastic, supporting all our children, encouraging them to take part in activities and celebrating all the children's successes and triumphs.

We are looking forward to the next year of fun filled activities.

*Laura Venables*

**Playleader**

## Playleader's Report – Children's Group (5 -11 yrs.) – Worcester Holidays

Another successful summer!

We really enjoyed lots of exciting activities this summer and revisited some of the children's favourites from last year. We had use of the school hydro pool, visited Cadbury World and Newbridge Farm Park, went for walks out into the local community, visited a pet store and shopped for ingredients to make our pizzas. We enjoyed lots of outdoor play and lolly making on those hot sunny days. As usual the staff had as much fun as the children 😊



*Amy Tomlins & Sophie Harrison*

**Playleaders**

Malvern Youth are a fantastic bunch of children and staff.

We have enjoyed a fun packed year, with our annual treasure hunt in Hereford proving a great success. In May we had a wonderful trip to Upton Warren Water Sports Centre. The weather was not great but this didn't faze our Malvern Youth team and children who just got into their canoes and were up for the challenge. They were competitive to the last and of course the soaking some staff added to the jollity.

In the summer we decided to try out Cotswold Water Park...well who needs the seaside when you have this park. The beach was fantastic, the weather amazing and the water cool and calm. After a day of swimming, games and relaxing on the beach, our journey home was full of singing and laughter.

We finished our summer with a trip to the splash pad in Worcester, where we were able to meet up with the team from our Regency group, which made the day even more fun. Both children and staff were so excited to share the day with each other and the fun had by all in the water was priceless.

Our annual Autumn trip the Maize Maze was made extra special this year by our group being offered the chance to dig their own potatoes. After a careful search and me, coming from a very green fingered family, showing them where they should be digging and hey presto they went home with a few potatoes each. Of course everyone was keen to say that they had found the biggest potato. They were all so proud of their find.

Now of course we can't forget our evenings at The Vale on Wednesdays. We did the usual things like bingo, bowling and swimming at Osbourne Court - it's a good job the place is fairly soundproof because the shrieks of fun and laughter is always apparent. Hamma Beads...now we hadn't done this before and the first few didn't go so well (don't ask)...let's just say it's all in the ironing and thankfully my deputy was on hand to lead the way. The different designs created by the group were absolutely fantastic!

During the year we also cooked, fished, cycled at the gym, pottered, tie-dyed and best of all we watched some great movies. I think our favourite has got to be The Greatest Showman - nobody moved for the entire film! To top it all off we had a lovely barbecue during the last session before the summer holidays. All parents and families were invited. Yet again the staff did us proud by contributing all of their own dishes, helping to make a really successful evening. The warm summer weather was an added bonus.

We have started our autumn as we mean to go on but I look forward to telling you all about that next year. Of course we must remember that none of our fun and exciting activities would happen without the fantastic staff at our Malvern Youth clubs and the team in the office striving to make things possible.

*Margaret Bennett*

**Playleader**

We are very lucky at Regency High School to have access to great facilities such as rebound room, swimming pool, sports hall, sensory room and soft play room as well as a fantastic outside space with swings, zip wire, slide and monkey bars. These are all very well used by us and the young people. The sensory room is a very relaxing room which stimulates all of the senses, while the rebound room and soft play allow the young people to expand their energy in a safe environment.

### **After School Club**

After school clubs run between 3.30 and 5pm during term time, these are very popular and numbers have risen once again. Tuesday club is multi club. These activities include rebound, film club, cooking, local walks and trips to the park and arts and crafts.

During our cooking sessions we make cakes, biscuits, pancakes, pizza etc. The young people have a very sensory input in preparing, smelling and especially tasting the ingredients and are very proud to show their parents/ carers what they have cooked.

One of the most popular things to be made during our cooking sessions is chocolate art. The young people use the microwave with support to melt their chocolate and then have free choice as to how they decorate their piece of art.



The young people love to go for a walk around the local park or around the woods. We are very fortunate to have full use of all the school minibuses, so this makes it easier to go out on these sorts of trips. Our walks around the Countryside Centre woods are popular.

The young people enjoy the freedom of rambling through the woods looking for bugs and birds, following our usual trail. We always finish with a drink and biscuit in the café area and play on the park.

Thursday club is always sports themed. We have use of the pool, rebound room and sensory rooms and sometimes even get the wheelchair basketball chairs out in the sports hall.

### **Saturday Club**

I run two clubs a month and try to go out one week and stay onsite for the other. This gives parents the choice as to whether their child stays at school or go on a trip. Recent trips have been to VUE cinema, bowling, Churchfields ice cream parlour and at Christmas we go to the Swan Theatre to watch the pantomime (oh yes we do!).

We have full use of the school if we stay onsite and get to use the fantastic facilities. We even do indoor camping- setting up tents, having a pretend campfire and relaxing with sleeping bags, singing camp songs.

### **Holiday Clubs**

We run playschemes in Feb, Easter, Whitsun, October and four weeks during the summer.

I try to go out three times a week and stay in for two. We had our usual trip to the splash pad.



One very enjoyable day was a trip to Avoncroft Museum as this is the first time that the model train has been running. Most of the young people took advantage of this and fun was had by all.

*Ann Gilchrist*

**Playleader**

Our Funders and Supporters (2018 – 2019)



Garfield Weston  
FOUNDATION



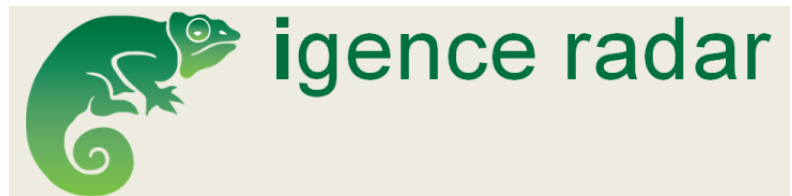
The Eveson Charitable Trust



MALVERN ST JAMES  
GIRLS' SCHOOL

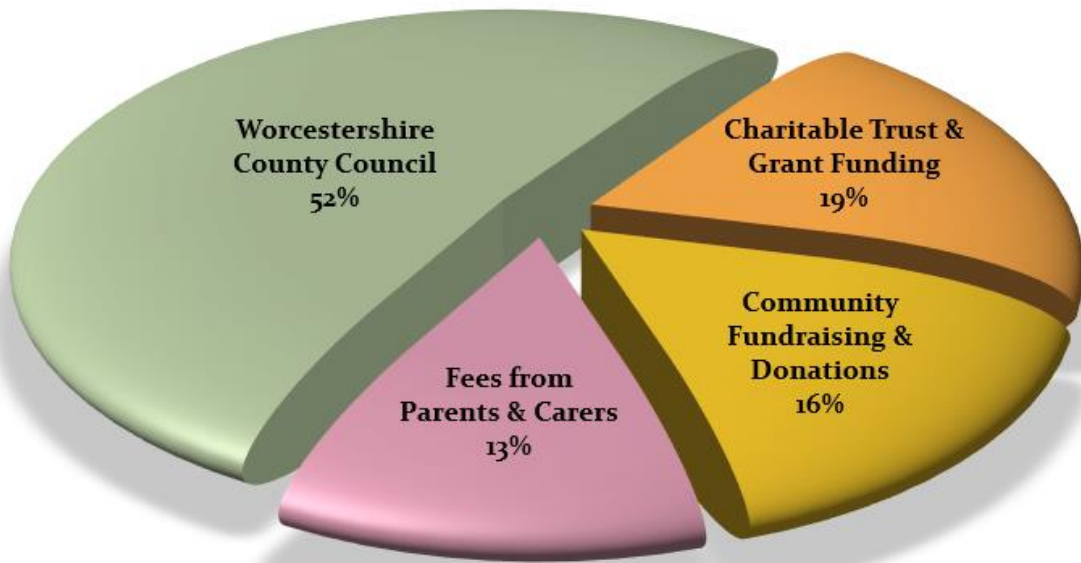


Harvey's

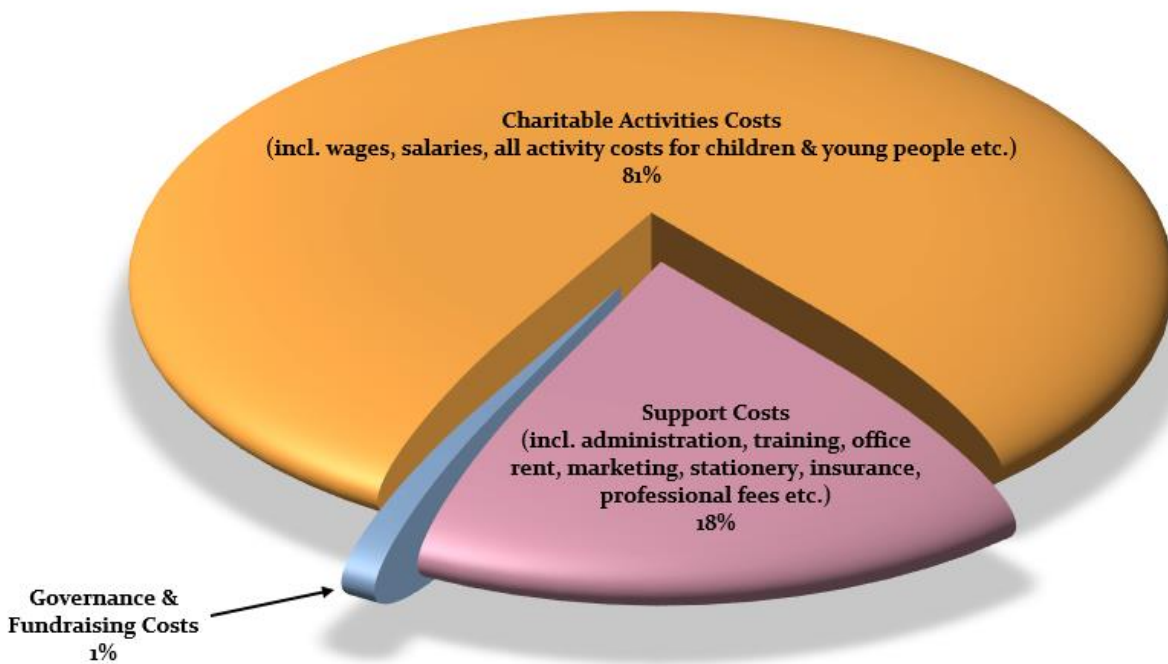


Debenhams

**Funding 2018 - 2019  
- Income -**



**Funding 2018 - 2019  
- Expenditure -**



## Governance and Trustee Board

Malvern Special Families charity is governed by a volunteer trustee board made up of individuals from the local community, with a variety of backgrounds and expertise.

### Our Trustees for the financial year 2018 – 2019 were:



#### **Margaret Buchanan** – Acting Chairperson (appointed in 2004)

Margaret cares for one of the young people attending our clubs. Having retired from a career in teaching, she remains in touch with the profession by being a school governor. Margaret has also been a short break carer for children with special needs for over 25 years, as well as enjoying her role as Acting Chair of Trustees for Malvern Special Families.



#### **Ceri Kay** - Vice Chair (appointed in 2016)

Ceri previously worked as a playworker for Worcestershire County Council then Malvern Special Families. She has a BSc in Psychology, is a qualified teacher and currently teaches within a small unit for pupils with Special Educational Needs.



#### **Helen Attree** (appointed in 2004)

Helen is a parent of three young people who have previously attended our clubs over a number of years. She is proud to have been Chair of Trustees for Malvern Special Families for many years and has continued in the role of Trustee in more recent years. Helen was employed by the Alzheimer's Society as a Dementia Café Manager and is a registered nurse.



#### **Sally Rowe** (appointed in 2010)

Sally is a paediatric nurse and worked for over 15 years as a school nurse in various special schools across Worcestershire. As a Trustee for Malvern Special Families, Sally is dedicated to helping raise vital funds for the charity and assists at many local fundraising events, alongside our other Trustees.



#### **Sarah Musgrave** (appointed in 2014)

Sarah first became involved with fundraising for Malvern Special Families while working as a teacher at Malvern Girls' College and subsequently as Deputy Head of Malvern St James Girls' School. She grew to understand how important, the charity's work is to local families and encouraged the school to adopt MSF as its dedicated Malvern charity.



#### **Judy Gudgeon** (appointed in 2017)

Judy brings a wealth of expertise to the MSF Trustee Board from her time at Fort Royal Special School. She grew up with an older sister with learning difficulties, so knows what a difference family support can make. Judy always looks forward to visiting our clubs, meeting the staff, children and their families, experiencing Malvern Special Families quality provision first hand.



#### **Damian Hayes** (appointed in 2018)

Damian Hayes is a local businessman who owns an insurance brokerage within the area. His daughter attends the clubs on a regular basis, so he is fully aware of the importance of how the clubs can assist and help with family life.

## Charity Details

**Registered Charity No.:** 1143655  
**Company No.:** 07413040

**Registered Address & Main Office:** First Floor Offices, 73 Church Street, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 2AE.

**Acting Chairperson:** Margaret Buchanan  
**Vice Chairperson:** Ceri Kay

**Chief Executive Officer:** Gareth Jones  
**Service Manager:** Caroline Conein  
**Office Administrator:** Helen Link

**Bookkeeper:** Kelly Philpotts (ACMA, FMAAT)  
**Accountants:** Kendall Wadley LLP, Granta Lodge, 71 Graham Road, Malvern, WR14 2JS

**Bank:** HSBC, 1 Church Street, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 2AB.

## Contact Information

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