



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 1st April 2024
Period end date

Period start date To 31st March 2025

Charity name: Asian Students Christian Trust CIO (Children of the Dump Manila)

Charity registration number:1198301

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	<p>The relief of poverty amongst Asian students and children.</p> <p>Children of the Dump (registered as Asian Students Christian Trust) provides education, family support and loving care to deprived children living in extreme poverty around the Payatas and San Isidro rubbish dump communities in Manila. During 2024 - 2025 we had over 300 children in our care; supported in different ways; some of whom have been neglected, abused or even abandoned. Since 1975 the supporters of Children of the Dump and our Filipino partner Asian Students Christian Foundation, have been giving young lives the chance to escape the cycle of poverty through education.</p>
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	<p>During 2024-2025, our partner in Manila operated a residential children's home (Mango Tree House) a scholarship programme (Grapevine) and delivered early years education through the Cashew Tree School. These services are provided to children who live in communities near the dumpsites and around Mango Tree House.</p>
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	<p>Trustees have the interests of our beneficiaries at the heart of each decision and discussion.</p>

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
		Organisations in the Philippines that:

Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	<p>Are registered and licensed to deliver appropriate services.</p> <p>Share the values and principles of the UK organisation.</p> <p>Commit to working in partnership and providing necessary monitoring information on the use of funds and quality of services.</p> <p>Individuals in receipt of services are selected by professionally qualified local staff based on their assessment of need.</p>
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	<p>All Trustees are volunteers and take no expenses from the charity, even for trips to Manila which are all undertaken at their own expense.</p> <p>Non- Trustee volunteers have played an increasingly vital role in recent years, bringing new skill sets especially in social media and digital working. Increased emphasis has been placed on enhancing our engagement with Filipinos resident in the UK by engaging more volunteers from those communities.</p>
Other		

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
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Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.

Para
1.20

This report relates to the Asian Students Christian Trust (Children of the Dump) Charitable Incorporated Organisation established on 1st July 2022 with all assets having transferred from the charity Asian Students Christian Trust which was wound up on 30th June 2022. The mission and values of the new organisation remain identical to those of its predecessor; Trustees considered a CIO to be a more efficient charity structure.

Manila

UK Trustees visited Manila services in January / February 2024. Trustees fund these visits themselves at no cost to the charity, they also pay ASCF for any costs they incur during the visit such as food.

The relationship with ASCF is governed by an annual partnership agreement which details the respective roles and responsibilities of each organisation, the delivery objectives that year and information sharing requirements. This is an important two-way governance process in collaborative working.

The environments for our communities have changed over the years but rubbish and scavenging remain at the heart of the local economy even though the massive Payatas dumpsite closed over 7 years ago. San Isidro dumpsite population has grown massively with hundreds of squatter shacks appearing in places that were raw jungle last time we visited. Unfortunately the infrastructure remains non-existent with no potable water, electricity or sewage systems in place. Local supporters of the charity worked hard to refurbish a pump in the heart of the community which now provides washing and cooking water for over 700 families. This community is the focus of service development for the charity. The dumpsite has been there for many years but it is only since the closure of Payatas that the number of scavenger families has exploded. We met people who have lived there for more than 18 years in extreme poverty. Many of the adults never went to school, are unable to read and write and the children's births have never been registered, meaning they were not eligible to go to school. The team have assisted families to get their children registered thus opening up future opportunities for them. There are no local schools apart from our satellite Cashew Tree early years facility so if a child is to get to any school after the age of 6, they have to pay for transport on a shared trike at 40 peso a day which is a massive proportion of a scavenger's daily wage.

Fortunately, our main facilities are conveniently situated equi-distant between Payatas and San Isidro and can serve both communities as well as the nearby resettlement town of Kasiglahan which originally housed people evicted from their squatter shelters but has now grown beyond recognition

even with a MacDonaldis fast food shop. Poverty remains a constant issue for all our communities.

During the Trustee visit to ASCF in February 2024, concerns crystalised about the leadership of the operations. Steps taken resulted in the departure of two senior leaders and appointment of a new Executive Director and finance team through a consultancy organisation. Through this new leadership, concerns about the operational policies emerged and increasing levels of anxiety regarding lack of appropriate governance from the ASCF Board. The UK attempted to support but lost confidence in the existing board delivering appropriate action and requested their resignations if ongoing funding from the UK was to be provided. The new Executive Director led a process of identifying appropriately motivated and qualified individuals to form a new board of Trustees who held their first formal meeting in April 2025. To strengthen partnership and governance further, there is reciprocal attendance on both the Manila and UK boards.

Historically, the UK has provided 90% of the operational costs of services with the remaining 10% raised locally in Philippines. Trustees in the UK are keen to support ASCF in its fundraising capability and delivery as they consider it will become increasingly important to raise a greater proportion of costs locally. The first meeting of the ASCF board in Manila jointly signed off a long-term funding plan with the UK which demonstrated the requirement for local income growth.

Mango Tree House has provided a loving residential home for children from four years of age. The Mango children who re-integrated into families have continued to be monitored and supported throughout the year to ensure they remain safe and well. Their education has similarly been supported where necessary through the Grapevine scheme. We are really proud of this reintegration programme, despite the wonderful care delivered in Mango Tree House, research is clear that outcomes for children are consistently better if they are raised within a loving family environment. Our social workers did such a great job and it was wonderful to see the children thriving when we visited. The new ASCF director determined that as resident numbers in Mango continue to reduce, no new admissions would be made until the implementation of local fundraising was embedded.

Grapevine has continued to increase the number of children supported, growing from 125 last year to 140 this year; allowing more children to be educated while living with their family. This support enables students to focus on their schooling and

avoids the need for the children to work scavenging to assist the family income. Children who succeed in education, will utilise their new earning power to support their siblings and family to also step-out from poverty. One child's life transformed thus impacts on many others. Saturday School is an important component of the scholarship program where Grapevine students come together at Mango Tree House, joining residents for additional tutorials, fun and social activities along with food and spiritual development. Parents also volunteer and these days really help to build a sense of common purpose and mutual support among the team and beneficiaries. Phrases used by beneficiaries included: Feeling part of a wider family that cares about you; Feeling valued and being given a chance to succeed; Having expectations that you will achieve your goals in life.

Cashew Tree School, which was newly built on the Mango Tree House site in 2019, with two satellite facilities; one in Payatas and the other in San Isidro to keep the service as close to children's homes as possible and encourage parents to be more involved in helping the teachers. In total 175 students are enrolled. Each child gets the best possible start in their educational journey plus a nutritious daily meal as malnutrition is a common feature in the population. The San Isidro site came to fruition during the pandemic when the staff team partnered with parents, together with local supporters they created the make-shift school building which has operated for four years; the regulatory authorities have issued requirements that this site is unable to meet as the charity does not own the land and in future children will be transported to the main Cashew site.

We are incredibly proud of all the children, their work ethic and enthusiasm for learning is inspirational. So many have seen their lives transformed by the support of the charity, affording them opportunities that would never have been possible before. The staff team in Manila under the auspices of ASCF continued to deliver loving care and professional dedicated expertise for our beneficiaries, We are indebted to them for their dedication.

UK

Under the new CIO, the drive to improve value from every penny continues alongside the enhanced use of digital communications with donors, supporters and the public. This year, we have continued to test innovative ideas and to learn from others experience to increase our fundraising power. Increasing involvement of more volunteers has been a priority this year, especially with our UK Filipino friends. We are grateful to people who stepped forward and have made such an impact on

being able to spread the message about the charity's work. The financial out-turn for the year is testament to everyone's efforts and of course to our wonderful loyal supporters.

Communications

The use of more digital communications has continued this year with video messages being shared between children and their sponsors. Introduction videos, Birthday and Christmas gifts are acknowledged with a video from the children who love making messages and sponsors found being able to see and hear their supported student really engaging, many making their own video in return. Monthly news sheets are sent to supporters via Mailchimp with dedicated updates for Church congregations also shared monthly. The priority placed on communication with donors is illustrated by the wonderful efforts of our UK Manager to achieve this is to be commended:

Website optimisation has been taking place to enhance our positioning in internet searches which is appearing successful, attracting new supporters to our 'sponsor a child' page where details of children available for new sponsors are displayed. Paypal has been adopted to make donating smoother and simpler with less 'clicks' necessary and offering more refined choices to donors for specific projects.

We have also continued our emphasis on the use of social media, participating in national campaigns. Our biggest effort focused on the Big Give Christmas Campaign where donations are match funded. 2024 proved successful thanks to the response by supporters, making it our biggest single fundraiser for the year. Social media coverage on Facebook and Instagram has increased thanks to the efforts of dedicated volunteer which has generated more followers and adoption from Filipino Facebook groups which has helped to spread messages and stories. Unfortunately the success of birthday fundraisers in previous years has not been repeated. Grant applications have not been prioritised this year due to the uncertainty around leadership in Manila and service strategy.

Donors and supporters gave willingly and generously to ensure that the charity could continue to do its utmost to deliver its beneficiaries the best possible help and support.

Trustees are excited for the future, aware of the challenges we face in the long term but optimistic that with the continued help of donors we can meet that challenge in partnership with our colleagues in Manila. Trustees are grateful to so many people – our donors, volunteers, churches, the staff team in

		<p>Manila and especially the children who have all worked so hard to make the most of the opportunities afforded to them.</p>
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

<p>Achievements against objectives set</p>	<p>Para 1.41</p>	
<p>Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set</p>	<p>Para 1.41</p>	
<p>Investment performance against objectives</p>	<p>Para 1.41</p>	
<p>Other</p>		

Financial Review

<p>Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period</p>	<p>Para 1.21</p>	<p>Income For the 2024/2025 year our total income was £185,029.59. This was £7,412.59 over budget. This is an excellent result. It is also an increase on 2023/24 when our income was £178,555.06.</p> <p>UK Expenditure For the 2024/25 year our total UK expenditure was £34,556.91. This was £3,566.91 over budget due to the back payment of pension as well as various other expenses being marginally higher than anticipated. UK Expenditure in 2023/24 was £33,738.36. When you remove the pension back pay which should have been in 2023/24, we have seen a decrease in expenditure in the UK over the last 12 months.</p> <p>Philippines Expenditure Including the Interim costs, we have spent £176,875.47 in the Philippines this year. If you remove those expenses the money sent was £159,503.01. This is significantly under the original budget by £48,738.17 due to favourable exchange rates and a reduction in funds required towards the end of the year. This is also a decrease from last years figure of £247,995.35.</p> <p>Expenditure Summary This year in total the charity had expenses of £211,432.38, this is a reduction from the previous year's figure of £281,733,71.</p> <p>Cash Position Cash balances at the end of the year were £344,510.75. This is a reduction of £26,364.63 over the year.</p>
<p>Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held</p>	<p>Para 1.22</p>	<p>Trustees believe it is essential to hold reserves to allow service changes in Manila to be made in a managed process should income levels fall substantially.</p> <p>Trustees calculate the target level of free reserves each financial year based on the approved budget for the next year, the general economic climate, exchange rate and trends in charity giving. The target free reserves for the year were £70,000</p>
<p>Amount of reserves held</p>	<p>Para 1.22</p>	<p>March 2025 there are restricted funds of £7000 and designated reserves of £236,000 leaving the unrestricted reserves of £101,510 close to target levels. The designated reserves are for service sustainability over the next couple of years</p>

		to enable ASCF to embed their local fundraising processes.
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	
Other		

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	CIO from July 2022.
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	Board selection.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Asian Students Christian Trust
Other name the charity uses	Children of the Dump – Manila
Registered charity number	1198301
Charity's principal address	High Cross Church Knoll Rd Camberley Surrey GU15 3SY

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
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Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

John Busby Charity Manager

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

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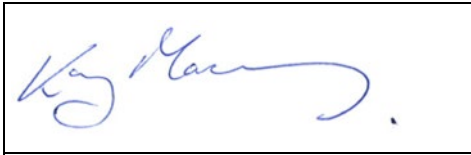
Other optional information

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Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Kay Mackay	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	
Date		