



FANTASTIC JOURNEYS CIC

INTERIM AGM

1ST OF JANUARY 2025 – 31ST OF JULY 2025





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January – July 2025 in numbers

113 Delivery Days

414 Sessions

2987 Individual Contacts

400 Participants (Approx)

177 Participants in Long Term Projects

10 Freelance Creative Arts Practitioners

1 Music and Intensive Interaction Intern

1 Family Support Worker

3 Session Volunteers

6 Voluntary Directors



Mission statement

“To support and empower people with Additional Needs through joyful, participant led, creative arts practice.”

Values

Creative

We make space for joyful expression.

We believe people can express creativity in many ways when given the freedom, so we make space for joyful, artistic exploration and celebrate every contribution.

Inclusive

Everyone belongs and can take part.

We believe everyone should have access to creative arts, so we embrace diversity and actively find ways to involve people who might otherwise be excluded due to their needs.

Supportive

People thrive when they feel safe and seen.

We believe people learn and experience more when they feel safe to be themselves, so we value individuality and meet everyone where they are with kindness and understanding.

Community

We grow stronger through shared experience.

We believe community is an important source of pride, inspiration and support, so we bring people together and foster positive connections through shared experiences and mutual contribution.



Introduction

Fantastic Journeys was constituted in July 2021. It is a Community Interest Company (CIC) that focuses on supporting people with Additional Needs to take part in the creative arts. Fantastic Journeys has a dedicated team of freelance practitioners. This team includes music facilitators, movement and dance facilitators, play professionals and a family support worker. The CIC also has 6 directors who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the organisation.

Rationale for interim AGM

Fantastic Journeys financial year runs from 1st of August to 31st of July. Previously the CIC had held an AGM annually with a report based on each calendar year (January–December). The directors have decided to change the annual reporting period so that it aligns with the financial reporting period. To facilitate this and to remain within the constraints of the CIC's Articles of Association this report will cover 7 months, from 1st of January 2025 – 31st of July 2025.



Fantastic Journey's clubs

OurTime and Musical Conversations

OurTime is a cross arts club for children with Additional Needs and siblings. The children who attend the sessions take part in instrument playing, singing, dancing, moving and storytelling activities. Sessions take place on Mondays, after school.

Musical Conversations is a multi-sensory music club for children with PMLD and/or complex support needs and siblings. The children who attend take part in instrument playing, singing, vocalising and exploring sensory props and puppets. Sessions take place on Sunday mornings.

Spring Term 2025

During the spring term both clubs were funded by the Dulverton Trust. Twenty two sessions were delivered over eleven delivery days. There were twelve OurTime sessions and ten Musical Conversations sessions. Across both clubs we had twenty eight children attend. OurTime sessions focused on a story about Mr Zagg and his TV show. Mr Zagg had a failing TV show and the children had to help him to make it better. Musical Conversations sessions continued with a number of familiar activities including musical activities with slinkys and pompoms.



Feedback from a parent carer about Fantastic Journeys Clubs

A safe space to have my child be happy, not judged... involves and improves her socialisation and communication."



Fantastic Journey's clubs

Summer Term 2025

During the summer term our clubs were funded by the True Colours Trust. Over the term we worked with thirty eight children across both clubs. We delivered twenty seven sessions over fourteen delivery days. There were fifteen OurTime sessions and twelve Musical Conversations sessions. On most days we delivered two sessions but on the last session of OurTime we combined the groups for a performance.

OurTime continued with the Mr Zagg story. Each week Mr Zagg the children took part different ways including dressing as and becoming peacocks, exploring different types of weather and moving and dancing with coloured scarves.

Musical Conversations continued with similar activities. A new musical activity using large pieces of lycra proved to be very popular.



Parent carers were asked what difference Fantastic Journeys Clubs made to them:

“It made a big difference, my child can be himself at this group without being judged by others. We truly appreciate this group.”

“XXXX looks forward to the sessions, to seeing people he knows and to doing activities together, he loves a group activity. He laughed a lot tonight.”

“An opportunity for her to participate in a group that that understands her limitations and adapts around them so that she can comfortably enjoy the session.”



Partnership work (schools and colleges)

Westminster School

The Westminster School is a special school in Rowley Regis for students with Moderate Learning Difficulties plus Additional Needs. This project is called Move, Dance, Play. The aim of the project is to support the school in the delivery of their creative arts curriculum. Interactive storytelling sessions with a focus on music, movement and role playing/drama were delivered during the spring and summer terms. Two days of sessions were delivered each week. Over the course of the two terms there were forty eight delivery days. Practitioners worked with six classes on each delivery day. The themes for these sessions were Witches and Wizards (Spring Term) and Under the Sea (Summer Term). At the end of the Summer Term the students took part in 2 performances for parent carers and other students.

Feedback from Westminster School Staff

"Sessions are extremely engaging. Staff are calm and encouraging. Students take part in each section of the lesson. PSHE skills are enhanced through teamwork."

Victoria College

Victoria College is a further education setting in Northfield for young adults with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities. This project is all about making music in the moment using Intensive Interaction techniques. A small group of students participated in the project. Twenty one sessions were delivered over the spring and summer terms. Over the two terms the students worked on developing their music skills through singing, vocalising, using and exploring instruments and activating sounds on an Ipad. The theme for the sessions was Carnival and the participants took part in a lively piece of calypso music played on guitar and accordion.

This project was funded by Northfield Neighbourhood Network Scheme. This funding was all about bringing people from the community together. Fantastic Journeys worked with Creative Support (An organisation that supports people in Mental Health Recovery). Through this connection we recruited 2 volunteers who attended our weekly sessions and supported the students to participate. This funding also paid for an additional musician to join the project as a music intern.

Feedback from Creative Support Volunteer

"Working with the students always fills me with joy and seeing the progress during the sessions gives me a sense of achievement."



During this period Fantastic Journeys also delivered two days of sessions with other schools. These schools were Fort Royal School in Worcester and Hall Green Infant School in Birmingham

Partnership work (other partners)

Go-Play Sandwell

Fantastic Journeys continued to work with Go-Play Sandwell over the Spring and Summer terms. The CIC delivered Multi sensory music and movement sessions during each of the school holidays. During the main school holidays these were funded by the national Holidays And Food Programme. During the half term holidays the sessions were funded as part of Go-Play's Creating a Playable Sandwell project. There were 8 delivery days. On each delivery day the families were given a choice of joining a lively session or a smaller, quieter session. These sessions were delivered at Windmill Community Centre in Smethwick. We had a team of 5 practitioners delivering these sessions and had a capacity for 30 children a day. Themes for these sessions included "Under the sea", "The animal planet" and "The peacocks feather."



Feedback from parent carers about our sessions funded by Go-Play Sandwell

"We had a marvellous morning as a family and would like to come again."

"XXXX was very happy and so was I. We really had lots of fun and enjoyed every minute."



Partnership work (other partners)

Other Partners

Fantastic Journeys delivered sessions with a number of other partners during the spring and summers terms. These partners included Bearwood Hub, The Forge at Parks for Play in Selly Oak, Coppice Lodge Children's Home, New Art Gallery Walsall and Kids Charity. We delivered a range of different sessions including "The peacocks feather" and "Colin the clownfish and his underwater circus". One the highlights was working at Northfield Beach (a project organised by Northfield Community Partnership). Three practitioners delivered a day of workshops culminating in a performance in a big top tent. Overall there were 10 delivery days with other partners.





Family support work

Spring Term 2025

In 2024 Fantastic Journeys received funding from Esmee Fairbairn Foundation for our family support project. This work continued into 2025. The focus of this funding was to facilitate peer support amongst parent carers of children with Additional Needs. This was done in a number of ways. Amy Findly (Family Support Worker) facilitated monthly parent/carers meet ups including crafting sessions and welling being walks. She also brought parent carers together for a monthly coffee and chat. Amy also set up a regular meet up for parent carers who home educate children with Additional Needs. This funding also paid for Makaton Training for parent carers and a New Years Family Party. This project finished in February 2025. Amy invited parent carers to evaluate the project and let us know its impact. Quotes from parent carers can be found below. During this period Amy worked with 21 parent carers.

When asked what difference the Family Support Work has made this is what Parent Carers said:

"The opportunity to talk about challenges that you face.....Picking up ideas and suggestions by spending time with people going through the same as you. You trust the advice that naturally comes up because it has been 'battle tested'."

"You learn the most from other parents, including knowledge on EHCPs, benefits, schools, other services in the area. It has been beneficial being part of the cycle and giving back the knowledge."

"Having these get togethers, has stopped me from being isolated. It has been an opportunity to simply natter to other like-minded people without judgement, people who just get it."

Summer Term 2025

During the Summer Term Natalie Ferguson took over the role of Family Support Worker. This period of time was a bit quieter. However the CIC received a small pot of funding from the Nisa Make A Difference Locally Fund. With this funding we were able to host three parent carer lunches at Warley Woods Pavilion. Over this period of time Fantastic Journeys worked with ten parent carers.



Training and mentoring

During the reporting period Fantastic Journeys had one music and Intensive Interaction intern training with them. Isaac Boothman started his internship in September 2024. Thanks to Northfield Neighbourhood Network Scheme Isaac was funded to support Victoria College music sessions and also attend 9 mentoring sessions over the year. In addition Isaac was also funded to attend an Introduction to Makaton Training session. In July 2025 Isaac completed his internship. He continues to work with Peter at Victoria College.

Directors

Fantastic Journeys has 6 directors. Over the reporting period two director's meetings were held including the AGM in March. Our AGM was attended by almost 100 people and was also a chance to celebrate each of the families we work with. We were wonderfully entertained by Brandhall Community Choir.

The directors also worked with an organisation called Pilotlight and with parent carer Alex Ferguson to develop mission statement and set of values. These can be found on page five of this document.

The directors have also been active behind scenes, supporting the organisation in a number of different ways. Some examples of this support includes: interviewing potential members of staff, writing policies, meeting with potential volunteers, proof reading and commenting on funding applications, signing contracts and doing finance checks.



Brandhall Community Choir performing at the AGM in March 2025

Annual consultation survey results



All 18 respondees said that they are extremely likely to recommend FJ to other families.



Identified USPs

a creative, empathetic and flexible approach that involves everyone
quiet sessions
short and local activities
accessible music and drama

When asked 'What difference has FJ made to you and your family this year?' people shared:

what they felt

sense of community
included supported
warmth safe
joy relaxed
light delighted
happiness less isolated
welcome at all times

what they did

met people made friends
sang danced
socialised played
talked about anything
spent time together

what that led to

giggling focus development 'help with my mental health'
laughter interaction participation creativity engagement respite
'an outlet via music to be himself' enjoyment 'joining at his own pace'



100% voted 5/5 for our communication
94% voted 5/5 for our session content
84% voted 5/5 for our session spaces



Suggestions

more sessions during the holidays
outdoor sessions
1:1 sessions
different locations

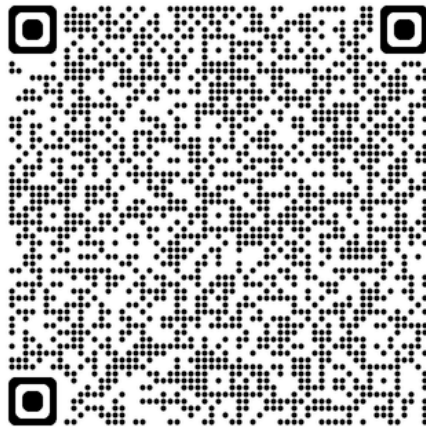
seasonal celebrations
a soothing session, yoga or shadow play
different musical instruments to try
children taking on more roles in the storytelling

more physical activities
more singing
more resources
a concert



Financial report

Fantastic Journeys financial year runs from the 1st of August to the 31st of July. A prepared set of accounts for August 2024 – July 2025 can be viewed scanning the QR code below.



Acknowledgements

Fantastic Journeys relies on grants for a large part of its work. The directors would like to acknowledge the organisations who have provided funding during 2025. These organisations are:

- Esmee Fairbain Foundation
- Go-Play Sandwell
- Heart of England Community Foundation (The Dulverton Trust)
- NISA Make a Difference Locally
- Northfield Neighbourhood Network Scheme
- True Colours Trust



For more information, or if you have any questions please contact Peter Burgess at fantasticjourneyscic@gmail.com