



The Uphill Trust

Supporting Uphill Junior School in western Uganda

Scottish Charity: SC045385

Annual Report and Financial Statement

1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025



Trustees' Annual Report

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report and financial statements for the year 1 January to 31 December 2025.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name	The Uphill Trust
Charity Number	SC045385
Charity Status Awarded	29 January 2015
Charitable Purpose	The advancement of education
Registered Address	21 Strachan Crescent, Dollar, FK14 7HL
Trustees	N R L Macdonald (<i>Chairman</i>) B L Macdonald H E S Laird S A Macdonald C J Macdonald

Structure, Governance and Management

The Uphill Trust is a Scottish Charitable Trust and all current trustees were named in the Trust Deed at the outset. There is only one formal management role, that of Chairman. The trustees take responsibility for administration and governance according to their areas of expertise. These include: Website maintenance, digital newsletters and social media; developing promotional videos; minutes and record keeping; developing and updating policies; accounting and finance; networking; and fundraising activities. The Uphill Trust does not have any employees and the everyday running costs of the charity are paid for by the trustees, ensuring that 100% of fundraising income is available to support projects in Uganda.

Objectives and Activities

Charitable Purposes

To advance education by securing the establishment and development of Uphill Junior School (UJS) in western Uganda. By providing continuing financial support we are helping the UJS Management Committee to develop a well-respected Primary school with Kindergarten in Iruhuura, a small trading centre in the rural district of Kabarole.

Uphill Junior School

The school is located in an impoverished rural area and the collected fee income is very low. Many of the families are subsistence farmers with little or no money. Prior to The Uphill Trust's involvement, the staff were paid intermittently and school facilities were very poor. At the end of 2014, UJS was teaching 196 children, across 3 kindergarten and 4 primary year groups, in a wooden building with earth floors on rented land.

In 2017, with our help, the school moved to a permanent, secure site and, since the end of 2019, all the primary pupils have been taught in purpose-built brick classrooms with good quality latrines. The Uphill Kindergarten moved to a separate fenced-in site in 2021; the classrooms currently have wooden walls, shutters and doors, and stone floors. When money becomes available, permanent brick classrooms will be built.

The 2025 school roll at UJS averaged 280 pupils across the 10 year groups.

Fifteen Primary 7 children sat the Uganda Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) in November 2024, many of whom had been at the school since Kindergarten.



Primary 7 Examination Candidates with their Teachers, November 2025

Activities

The role of the Trust is to support UJS. Trustees do not have a role in the management of the school.

The main focus of the charity is to raise money through a variety of fundraising activities. We work closely with the school director to support the development of the school, and we maintain regular contact via email and digital messaging. Trustees visit to the school in person 1-2 times a year to monitor developments.

The Trust supports the day-to-day running of the school and also provides funds for capital projects. We also have some specialist funds: The Pupil Support Fund helps some of the most severely disadvantaged children attend school, and the Uphill Porridge Club funds a daily meal of nutritious soya/maize meal porridge to every pupil at morning break. From time to time, when funding is available, additional support is provided to improve health and enhance the quality of life for pupils, staff and the wider community.

Achievements and Performance

2025: Capital Projects

- Final completion of staff sanitation block with latrines, urinal, showers and clothes washing area
- Lightning arrestor installed for staff accommodation terrace
- Kitchen in staff compound converted into living accommodation, and new kitchen constructed from iron sheets
- Staff compost toilets on school site upgraded and extended
- Retaining walls and paving installed to reduce water erosion on school site
- Vocational skills workshop constructed, with electricity and water harvesting system
- Additional water harvesting tanks installed for school kitchen, kindergarten and staff sanitation block

2025: Development & Maintenance Activities

- Staff salaries (13 full-time teachers, 1 headteacher, 1 director, 1 school nurse) paid monthly
- 23 children attended school with help from Pupil Support Fund
- Uphill Porridge Club provided a hot meal every day in school for all pupils
- Brownies and Junior Guides with leaders enrolled and registered with the Ugandan Girlguiding Association (February)
- School examination centre registration costs funded: Successful registration achieved (April), with PLE examinations held in school for the first time (November)
- Access road to UJS upgraded (August)

The Uphill Trust: Annual Report 2025

- Toothbrushing programme maintained and monitored
- Dental health clinics run by the charity Dentaaid held in school (September)
- Vocational skills equipment donated by Trust supporters and transported by the charity Workaid arrive at UJS (December)
- Extracurricular resources donated by trustees and supporters
- Reading glasses donated for community elders by trustees and supporters

2025: Fundraising & Governance

- Annual Report prepared & uploaded onto website
- Annual charity submission to OSCR
- Gift Aid claimed for online and direct-to-bank giving, totally £5,966
- Online giving platforms used in 2025: Total Giving, GiveAsYouLive Donate, JustGiving (Kiltwalk only)
- GiveAsYouLive online shopping site continued to generation donations
- Christmas Appeal raised £1,379 to fund 7 refurbished laptops for UJS
- Walkers took part in the Dundee Kiltwalk, raising £1,659
- Partner schools raised £7,700 through sponsored events
- Newport Brownies raised £2,000 from a sponsored walk
- Funds raised to cover school nurse salary (£1,265) raised from a sponsored event
- Fundraising quiz hosted by a supporter raised £1,000
- Craft sales and donations at talks and craft fairs raised £3,037
- Rotary clubs donated £1,016 for projects at the school
- Kindergarten build appeal launched at start of year with £16,592 raised to date
- Grants received from Meeting Needs and Kilsyth Rotary for the vocational workshop project
- Digital newsletters x 4 plus regular social media posts on Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn
- Website blog posts x 8
- Uphill Trust policies reviewed & revised as necessary: Financial Support for UJS, Anti-Bribery Policy, Trustee Expenses Policy, Communications Policy, Financial Reserves Policy, Privacy Policy, Notifiable Events Policy, Safeguarding Children Policy, Fundraising Standards Policy, Cookie Policy
- Trustees visited UJS three times in 2025 to monitor project developments

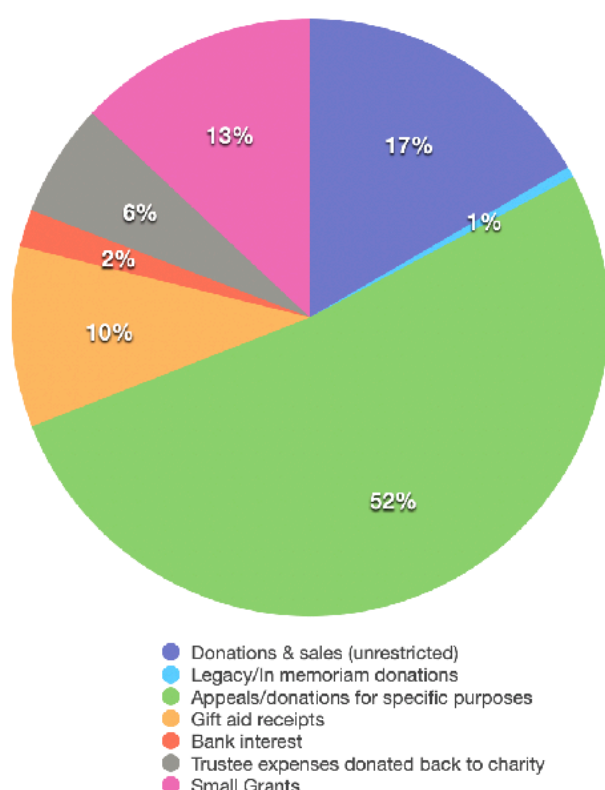


- Trust celebrates 10 years of registered charity status (January)
- Drone and operator hired to capture 10 years of infrastructure development (February trustee visit)

Pupil Support Fund beneficiaries, February 2025

Financial Review

Where our funds came from in 2025



Our community fundraising income remained healthy during 2025, and although we lost some regular donors, others came on board to replace them.

Appeals and regular donations for specific projects generated 52% of our income this year, with an additional 17% coming in from general fundraising activities (all community-based fundraising).

We were awarded 2 small grants for a specific infrastructure project, which brought in 13% of our annual income.

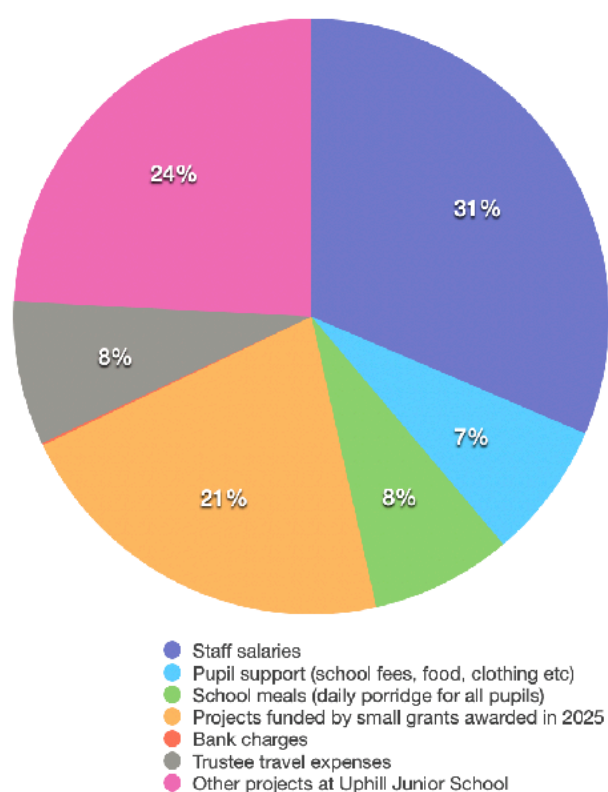
Gift Aid contributed a further 10%, with 2% coming from bank interest credits.

Trustee travel expenses donated back to the charity accounted for 6% of our income.

This year we continued to contribute to some of the running costs for UJS, namely staff salaries, pupil support funding and the school meals service. Much of this funding is covered by regular donations.

We continue to seek additional regular donors to provide security for our core support costs for the school, and to replace donors who decide to stop their regular payments.

How funds were spent in 2025



We funded one new infrastructure project in 2025 and completed other ongoing projects. These accounted for 45% of our expenditure.

Staff salaries made up 31% of our charity spending. Salaries remained stable in 2025, on the advice of the School Management Committee.

Helping some of the most disadvantaged children to attend UJS accounted for 7% of our total outgoings, and maintaining the Uphill Porridge Club accounted for 8%.

Trustee travel expenses were 8% of trust expenditure but these were paid back into the charity in full, as gift-aided donations.

All our capital projects have detailed budgets. Expenditure is confirmed by receipts and/or photographs of purchases, giving our charity a high level of accountability.

The Uphill Trust is a zero overheads charity. Administration and marketing expenses for the charity, plus trustee visits to Uganda, are covered by trustees' personal funds.

Note: Percentages in pie charts are subject to rounding and may not add up to 100%

Plans for 2025

The trust will continue to pay salaries for the UJS teachers, headteacher, director and school nurse.

We have funding to support 23 children when the school re-opens in February 2026. The Pupil Support Fund provides uniform, clothing and shoes, school supplies and other personal items, a hot lunch and pays school fees for some of the most disadvantaged pupils at UJS. It also funds examination expenses and school trips for supported pupils. One-off medical expenses, and other essential financial assistance for any child in the school, are considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Uphill Porridge Club continues to feed all the pupils at mid morning break. This is a very popular project with both pupils and parents and is one of the reasons that parents choose to send their children to the school. We have sufficient ring-fenced funds to cover this project for 2026. Additional fundraising will be required to build funds for 2027.

The majority of Uphill children are unable to afford secondary schooling, so an introduction to vocational skills and business budgeting are important adjuncts to their education. At the start of the year we will work with UJS staff to plan an extracurricular vocational training programme, which will include woodwork, tailoring, machine knitting and other creative skills. The building is in place, but needs furniture and storage units. Tools and equipment were donated and transported to the school in 2025.

The 2025 Christmas Appeal raised enough money to purchase 7 refurbished HP laptops for the school. These will be available for both staff and pupils to use and, when UJS gets a reliable internet connection, will enhance the teaching and learning opportunities for everyone in the school community.

The school vegetable garden, started in 2019, continues to be funded entirely by the school. Vegetables grown by the pupils are used in school meals and donated to families who are known to have restricted and/or inadequate diets. There are plans in 2026 to introduce cooking lessons for the pupils using the produce they have grown. This important co-curricular project provides valuable life skills for UJS pupils, many of whom will rely on home-grown produce to feed themselves and their families in the future.

Fundraising in 2026 will continue to target capital projects (a permanent Kindergarten is next on the list), along with increasing the number of regular donors for core funding to cover salaries, the porridge club and financial support for the pupils who need additional help in order to attend school.

Research into a portfolio of income-generating projects for the school will continue in 2026. Our long term goal is to gradually withdraw salary, and other, support so that the school eventually becomes fully self-sustaining.

The UJS school development programme will continue to reflect the needs of the school and the recommendations of the school inspectors. As in past years, the trust remains receptive to new projects and opportunities that may arise during the year. Three trustees, along with two volunteers, will travel to Uganda in February 2026 to review ongoing projects and discuss future developments for 2026 and beyond.

Gallery: Examples of our Impact at Uphill Junior School in 2025

Under the leadership of school director, Muhimbise Elius, and with the support of the trust, UJS continues to be regarded as one of the top primary schools in Kabarole District.

The whole school community regularly express their gratitude to the Uphill donors who have helped to make this possible.



Uphill Junior School site from the air



Aerial view of main school compound



Relative locations of school site & staff compound



Kindergarten children excited to see the drone



Dance display at Kindergarten graduation



Uphill Brownies & Junior Guides



Kindergarten graduation 2025



IT training for staff



Observing lessons during our trustee visit



Hands on science experiments for older pupils



Kindergarten pupils enjoy a mealtime chat



Younger pupils learn to make banana fibre dolls



Donation of toothbrushes & mugs from local supporter



Uphill builders & plumber



School vegetable garden continues to thrive



School Director Elius shows off a huge cauliflower



A daily mug of porridge for every pupil



Hands on construction is still a favourite activity



Dentaid visits Uphill & runs clinics in school



Vocational workshop building completed



Tools arrive from the charity Worked



Retaining walls installed to control water erosion

Summary of Accounts for the Year Ending 31 December 2025

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total funds current period
Receipts			
Fundraising Donations	7,559	32,734	40,293
Fundraising Sales	2,954	0	2,954
In Memoriam Donations	375	0	375
Bank Interest	1,271	0	1,271
Donated Trustee Expenses	3,888	0	3,888
Gift Aid Receipts	6,189.13	0	6,189.13
Grants	0	8,328	8,328
Total Receipts	22,236	41,062	63,298
Payments			
Money sent to Uphill Junior School	10,142	35,667	45,809
Trustee expenses	3,888	0	3,888
Bank charges	60	0	60
Total payments	14,090	35,667	49,757
Surplus/deficit for the year	8,146	5,395	13,541

Statement of Balances on 31 December 2025

Opening balance in bank accounts (<i>1 January 2025</i>)	44,016
Closing balance in bank accounts (<i>31 December 2025</i>)	<u>57,558</u>
Surplus/deficit	<u>13,541</u>

Notes to the Accounts - for the Year Ending 31 December 2025

1. Basis of Accounting

These accounts have been prepared on a Receipts & Payments basis in accordance with the *Charities & Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005* and the *Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006*.

2. Nature and Purpose of Funds

Unrestricted Funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the trustees to further the objects of the charity.

Restricted Funds may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or grant funder. Restricted and Unrestricted Fund monies are held together in the charity bank accounts but logged separately in the accounts.

During the accounting period 1 January to 31 December 2025, Restricted Funds included balances raised for school infrastructure projects, the school meals service, teacher salaries, the school nurse project and support for the neediest pupils.

The balance of funds raised in 2025 will be used to finance planned projects in 2026 and beyond.

3. Reserves Policy

The unrestricted financial reserve during 2025 was £3,000 (based on the *Financial Reserves Policy: The Uphill Trust 2023*). Dedicated restricted fund balances are also held to cover salary and pupil support payments for one term, along with money being held for planned infrastructure and other projects.

4. Expenses

In line with the *Trustees Expenses Policy: The Uphill Trust (2015)*, trustees do not claim expenses for day-to-day administrative activities or for attending trust meetings/training courses. The trustees may claim expenses for return air fares to Uganda and for Ugandan entry visa fees. In 2025, as in previous years, trustees paid the claimed travel expenses back into the charity as donations eligible for gift aid.

5. How Money is Held

All money is held in our bank accounts - there is no cash-in-hand balance.

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustee's report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:



N R L Macdonald
Chairman



B L Macdonald
Trustee

Date: 11 January 2026

Date: 11 January 2026