



Impact Report

2025





A record breaking year

Charity has always been an integral part of Livery Companies' *raison d'être*, ever since the Middle Ages.

Message from the Chair

Charity has always been an integral part of the Livery Companies' *raison d'être*, dating back to their formation as Fraternities or Trade Guilds in the Middle Ages. This enduring tradition of service and generosity continues to underpin everything we do within the Makers of Playing Cards Charity (MPCC).

The Charity, originally established in 1943 as the Cutler Trust by two distinguished card manufacturers—John Waddington Ltd and De La Rue Company Ltd—was named in honour of the then Master, Lindsay W. S. Cutler Esq. In 2016, the Trust was renamed the *Makers of Playing Cards Charity* to reflect better its close association with our Livery Company, whose members continue to provide, and have long provided, a significant proportion of our funding.

While the Charity's earliest mission focused on supporting beneficiaries and dependents connected to the playing card manufacturing industry, its remit has evolved over time. Today, the MPCC is dedicated to alleviating need, hardship and distress—particularly amongst children—and to supporting education and wellbeing initiatives for those under 25.

The Charity's growth over the past decade has been remarkable. From an income of £16,000 in 2010, our charitable giving has expanded to exceed £120,000 in grants by 2024.. This progress has been made possible by the fantastic generosity of our members—around 80% of whom contribute regularly—alongside income from our investment portfolio and one-off fundraising events, including Masters' Weekends.

This *Impact Report* for 2025 seeks to highlight the activities of the MPCC over the past 12 months and to illustrate the tangible difference our grantmaking continues to make in the lives of our beneficiaries. It is both a record of progress and a celebration of the collective generosity that enables us to uphold the Livery tradition of charity and compassion in a modern context.



Michael Davis-Marks OBE
Chair,
Makers of Playing Cards Charity



Our work an overview

The Makers of Playing Cards Charity was originally created for the relief of hardship and to provide education for families associated with the card making industry by charitable donations from the members of the WCMPC.

The MPCC does good work because of the generosity of its members

Bringing the MPCC's role up to date means the trustees are keen to support education for underprivileged or disadvantaged young people under 25. We work most closely with charities in and around the London area.

The MPCC is primarily a grant giver to registered charities, WCMPC military affiliations and City of London related Charity programmes which are aligned with the general charitable aims of the MPCC. Our team of appointed Liaison Partners work with our chosen charities to forge a relationship with the charity they represent. This ensures our donations are used wisely and in accordance with our stipulations.

The impact of our donations can be difficult to monitor tangibly however, through the efforts of the Liaison Partners working with the Almoners and the

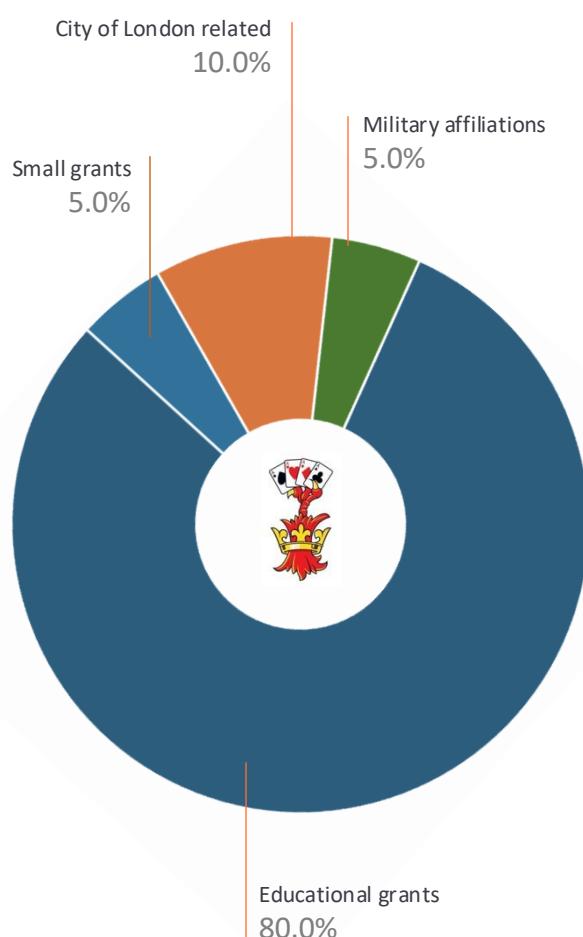
Trustees, the MPCC endeavours to remain informed about the successes of our efforts.

The MPCC does good work because of the generosity of the WCMPC members. We are very proud of its charitable endeavours which are at the heart of the Livery movement. We are grateful to our members for supporting the MPCC.

David Hussey
Prime Almoner,
Makers of Playing Cards Charity

The Master and Master Elect
meeting 84 Squadron





Grants an overview

In 2025, the MPCC Trustees will award c.£110,000 to c.20 charity partners, WCMPC military affiliates and regular City of London charitable programmes.

The significant majority of the annual awards are dedicated to supporting the charities' own educational projects. Initial awards are modest, then as the charity deepens its relationship with the MPCC, we will offer multi-year grants.

The Trustees are keen to support smaller charities with income c.£1m or less in the provision of educational activities to the under 25s from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The majority of the charities supported will be in and around the Greater London area.

The Almoners typically receive applications from c.100 individual charities annually. These are whittled down to a more manageable handful so the grants awarded bi-annually will have a meaningful impact.

Small grant awards are often at the Almoners' discretion and dedicated to supporting one-off good causes. Often these applications will come from our members.



WCMPC Affiliates

HMS Diamond
33 Regiment RE (Felix Fund)
84 Squadron
Middx & NW London Army Cadets
Air Cadets & 82 Squadron ATC
Tooting and Balham Sea Cadets

City related

Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund
Lord Mayor's Appeal
Treloars

WCMPC Beneficiaries

Eastside Young Leaders Academy
Book Clubs in Schools
GASP Motor Project
Grove Cottage
Innovations for Learning
Grand Union Orchestra
Scotty's Little Soldiers
School Home Support
Small Green Shoots
No Going Back
Team Up

Arts Therapies for Children
Bloomfield Learning Centre
Number Champions
Quest for Learning
Dallaglio Rugby Works
Guildhall Young Artists
New Tricks
Bag Books
The Children's Literacy Trust
The Maypole Project

Special Awards / MPCC Legacies

City Harvest / Livery Food Initiative
English Bridge
School prizes

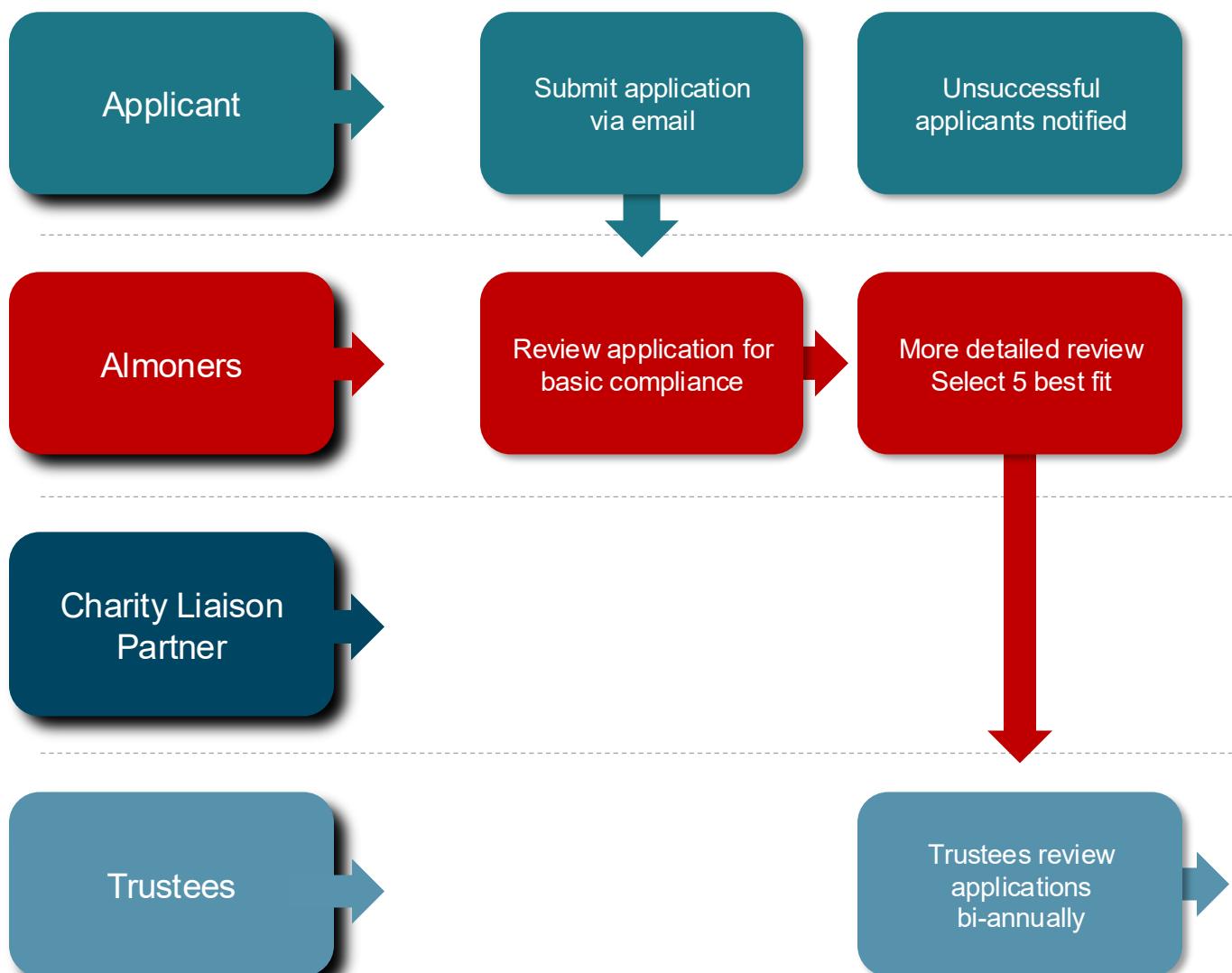
Small grants

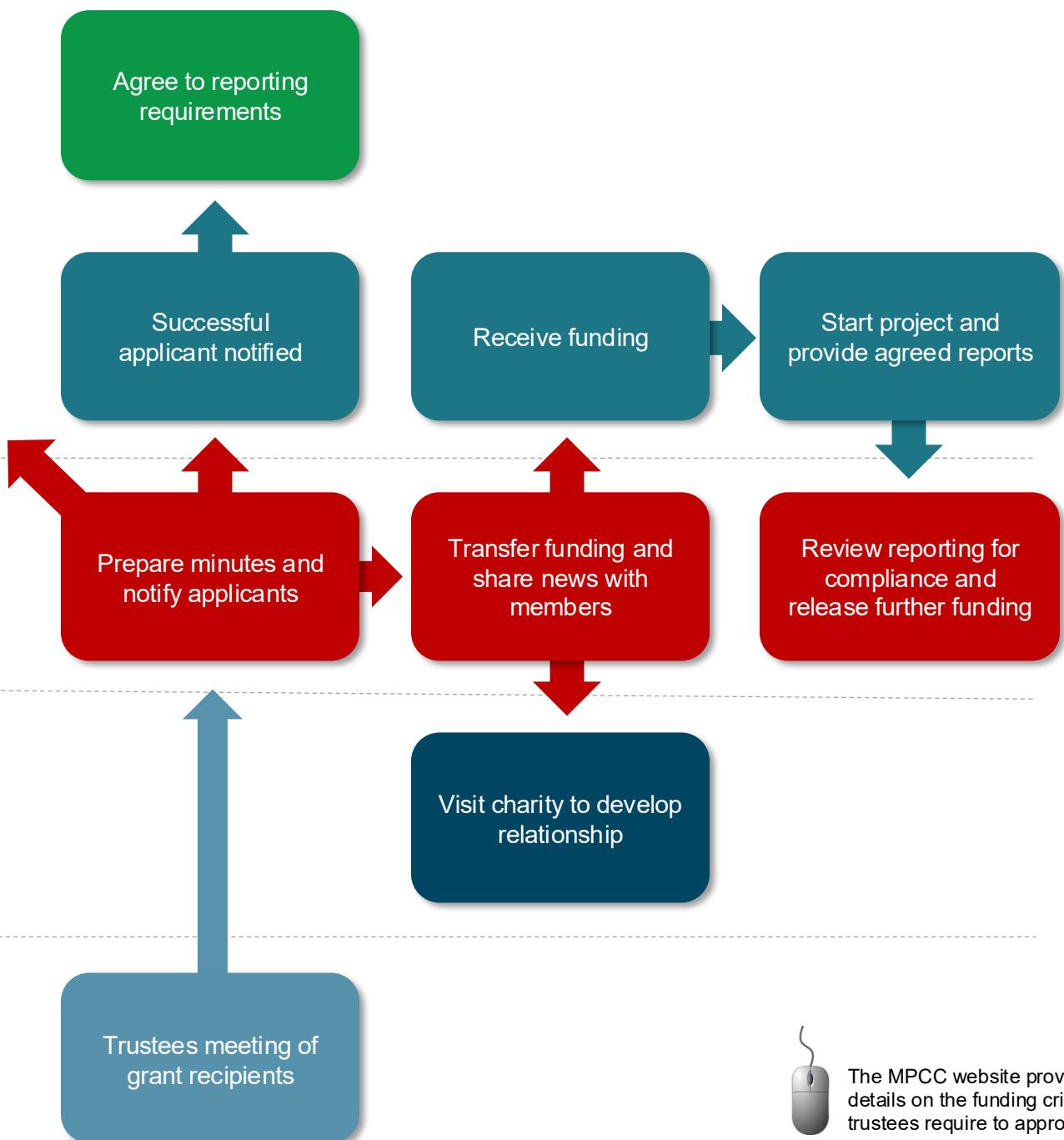
We awarded over £5,000 to a variety of one-off small grants, typically £1,000 each



Grants how they are made

The Almoners typically receive new grant applications via email. Their role is vetting and evaluating the many applications received annually to ensure they comply with the MPCC's strict funding criteria. Also to ensure annual compliance with those criteria and release further funds as required.





The MPCC website provides full details on the funding criteria that the trustees require to approve a grant.



Impact: Affiliations

The Makers of Playing Cards Charity (MPCC) is proud to maintain strong and enduring affiliations across the Royal Navy, British Army, Royal Air Force, and the UK cadet forces. These relationships lie at the heart of our commitment to supporting the wellbeing, development, and welfare of young service personnel. Each year, MPCC provides grants dedicated to supporting members of our affiliated units aged under 25, in line with the Charity's founding objectives.

In 2024–25, our affiliations continued to flourish, marked by moments of distinction, new partnerships, and community engagement.

ROYAL NAVY: HMS Diamond

US Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation

The crew of **HMS Diamond**, a Type 45 destroyer, were formally recognised by the United States Navy for their extraordinary actions while deployed in the Red Sea from **December 2023 to June 2024**. During this high-risk mission, HMS Diamond protected international shipping lanes and allied vessels as part of **Operation Prosperity Guardian**, operating alongside the US Fifth Fleet.

Under relentless threat from Houthi missile and drone attacks, HMS Diamond's ship's company successfully intercepted **nine drones** and **one ballistic missile**, with one particularly intense day—**9 January 2024**—seeing the ship destroy **seven incoming drones**, the highest number neutralised in a single day by a Royal Navy warship in modern times.

The commendation, received in Washington DC by Commander Peter Evans on behalf of the crew, praised HMS Diamond's “distinctive accomplishments, unrelenting perseverance, and unfailing devotion to duty,” reflecting the high regard in which the ship's company is held by both UK and US naval leadership.



In addition to her protection duties, HMS Diamond conducted **12 opposed transits** of the Bab-al-Mandeb Strait—an international trade artery accounting for 11% of global maritime commerce—and played a role in counter-narcotics operations, destroying **2.4 tonnes of illegal drugs**.

Oxford Affiliation

In **February 2025**, HMS Diamond entered a new phase of community engagement through an official affiliation with the county of **Oxfordshire**. The ceremony, held at **Blenheim Palace**, marked the formal connection between the ship and the county—strengthening ties between regional civic life and the Royal Navy.

Special Edition Playing Cards

To commemorate the ship's ten-month deployment, the Ship's Company designed a unique deck of playing cards funded by MPCC. The cards feature imagery of threats encountered and neutralised during the mission, including the four categories of drones and missiles engaged—a creative expression of pride, resilience, and remembrance.



BRITISH ARMY: The Band of the Household Cavalry

MPCC was delighted this year to formalise a new affiliation with the **Band of the Household Cavalry**, the largest regular military band in the UK, comprising more than sixty musicians from across British Army Music.

A band with historic roots

The Band's heritage draws on the rich traditions of both the **Life Guards** and the **Blues and Royals**, whose origins date back to the 1660s under King Charles II. From early kettledrummers and trumpeters to the presentation of silver kettledrums by King William IV in 1831—still used today—music has remained integral to the identity and ceremony of the Household Cavalry.

The Band continues to appear in both red (Life Guards) and blue (Blues and Royals) tunics, as well as the historic **State Dress**—the oldest continuously worn military uniform in the British Army—when performing for senior royalty or the Lord Mayor of London.

As one of the most visible ceremonial units in the world, the Band of the Household Cavalry showcases musical excellence at state occasions, parades, and national celebrations. MPCC looks forward to supporting its young musicians in their training, welfare, and professional development.

ROYAL AIR FORCE: 84 Squadron

Our longstanding support for **84 Squadron**, an RAF Search and Rescue and humanitarian assistance unit, continued throughout 2024–25. The squadron's younger personnel benefit directly from MPCC grants, which help promote morale, welfare, and personal development.

CADET FORCES SUPPORT

Beyond our affiliations with active service units, MPCC also supports the youth organisations that help shape the next generation of citizens and service personnel:

Army Cadet Force (ACF); Sea Cadet Corps (SCC); Air Training Corps (ATC)

Cadets frequently contribute to Company events—such as forming a carpet guard at formal dinners—and MPCC provides charitable donations, welfare support, and annual awards. Cadet forces are nationally recognised for building teamwork, leadership, confidence, and life skills that benefit young people both inside and outside military environments.



The Master at the Guildhall with the State Trumpeters

ARMY: 33 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal & Search).

The regiment's highly skilled personnel carry out demanding and often dangerous tasks in support of military and civilian authorities. Our support helps ensure that younger soldiers have access to opportunities and welfare provision that enhances resilience, and future career prospects.





Impact: EYLA

Eastside Young Leaders' Academy

EYLA's aim is to create leaders of character and purpose for tomorrow's world, drawn from those most in need in grassroots communities.

We view education as a launchpad for this mission and as a gateway to belonging to an influential peer group who will individually and collectively exert positive influence in society.





Impact: Eastside Young Leaders' Academy

“ 2025 has been an exceptionally busy year at Eastside in terms of growth, delivery and engagement. We celebrated outstanding GCSE and A-Level results with exciting next steps for those moving into higher education.



A Level Results and Destinations

16 students sat 3+ A levels or their equivalent.

53% achieved A* or A

National average: 28.3%
London average: 32.1%

GCSE Level Results

28 students sat GCSE's this summer.

**93% achieved
at least 8 GCSE grades 9-4**

**96% achieved
at least 5+ grades 9-4**

National average: 67.4%
London average: 71.6%

The Scholars Programme

The scholars programme is accessible to those enrolled on our Leadership Programme. It is a boarding school bursary programme not aimed at the academically elite. Our goal is to identify boys and girls and give them the preparation and support to succeed at entrance exams, interviews and thereafter through their experience as a boarder.

This year's boarding school intake was smaller than usual due to the impact of the VAT tariff on our partner schools. 11 scholars around half our typical number graduated this summer and have now embarked on their boarding school journeys.

We currently have 87 boarders in placement. Numbers are projected to rise again by 2026. Since 2007, we have successfully placed 307 students into boarding schools, maintaining a 97% retention rate. While the process is not without its challenges, each year brings valuable learning that enables us to further strengthen our recruitment, preparation and throughcare support.

We are very grateful to the Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards for your continued support.

Productive discussions are also underway with the Open University to host curriculum units on its Open Learn Create platform, alongside a collaborative Youth Leadership Impact Study focused on Prevention through Skills for Training, Education and Employment.



The Livery Food Initiative (LFI), comprises a number of leading Livery Companies, including WCMPC, has been a three year project supporting City Harvest, a food redistribution charity.

Quite literally City Harvest rescues tons of going to waste food and by so doing delivers free nutritious meals to the tune of well over one million meals each month to vulnerable communities across London.

Impact:



The meals help alleviate food poverty especially in young families enabling school children to focus better on their studies.

Recently the LFI has also managed to raise sufficient funds through the generosity of donors such as the Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards to purchase a large truck to help with, and increase distribution of, food to vulnerable communities.





Impact: The Livery Food Initiative

- The Livery Food Initiative was launched in December 2022 partnering with City Harvest.
- Nearly 60 livery companies have generously contributed.
- City Harvest rescues food that is going to waste and delivers it to 375+ charities across London, feeding over 100,000 people each week.
- Since October 2023, The Livery Food Initiative has raised over £125,000 to support a City Harvest 7.5 tonne truck, collecting food from around the country to avoid waste & deliver free food to the 25% of our population unable to afford food.
- City Harvest vans deliver free nutritious food for 1.2 million meals a month to 375+ charities and groups across London. In a time where children are denied free school meals and families cannot afford to eat at home, this van is a symbol of the humanitarian crisis we are facing.



Impact:



Highlights

Expert Literacy Lab

90%

of our Literacy Lab graduates closed or significantly narrowed their literacy gap

75% closed their reading age gap entirely
7% came within 3 months of closing their reading age gap
8% came within 4 to 6 months of closing their reading age gap
10% narrowed their reading age gap

4.1 RATIO GAIN* AVERAGE

For every one month a child has our Literacy Lab tuition, children make 4.1 months of reading progress.

*A ratio gain of 2 or more is considered 'useful impact'. Above 4.0 is considered 'remarkable impact'. (Brooks 2007)

Expert Reading Lab

10 → 7

WEEKS OF TUITION **MONTHS OF PROGRESS**

Schools reported:

- Significant impact on children's love for reading, confidence and self-esteem
- Strong evidence of children's improved classroom engagement
- Satisfaction with high quality of CLC tutors

“ Children attending our Literacy and Reading Labs last year continued to make outstanding progress and the trial of our early years intervention, Story Lab, is showing very encouraging results, with over 80% of the reception children participating achieving The Early Language Goal in Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL).

In total, our expert tutors delivered over 16,500 specialist literacy sessions to 1,200 children. Our Reader Leader mentoring training supported 1,400 pupils and we expanded our parental engagement programme, delivering over 170 celebration assemblies”



Impact: Small Grant Awards

Each year the Almoners have discretion to award small grants to various charities often supported by our wider membership.

Notable beneficiaries this year have included those listed below.



£500 for UK Aid, Lance Whitehouse volunteering to drive an aid convoy to Ukraine

£500 Mudchute Farm (David Barrett sponsored) – kids educational activities

£500 Raw Workshop to help with the Raw Potential Workshop

£500 Rochester Museum (Edward Copisarrow sponsored) to help restore a doll's house made of Georgian playing Cards.

£500 Cobham Rugby Club – young person's accessibility wheelchair ramp (Lionel Frewin sponsored – pictures below)

£500 Guildford Books Festival (Suzanne Nichols sponsored)



£500 S&R Trial & Error cards (David Barrett sponsored)

£500 to King Edwards Witley towards their annual Bridewell Service

£500 to King Solomon High School (KSHS) for textbooks. (sponsored by Joseph Schneider)

£500 for giant Uno playing cards for Treloars.



Makers of Playing Cards

CHARITY

To donate, please visit

<https://www.justgiving.com/makersof-playingcards>

and click on the donate button,
or by BACS transfer to:

MPCC
Sort code: 40-11-60
Account no: 90222437

Charity Commission Number: 232876