



# **The James Gillespie's Trust Trustees' Annual Report**

Period From 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025



## **Charity contact information**

The James Gillespie's Trust

Scottish Charity Number: SC022811

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## Charity Trustees

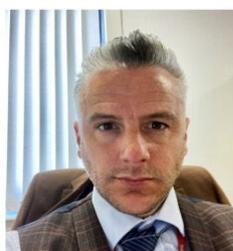
1. Sheena Purdom (chair – retired Nov. 2024)
2. Bruce Crawford (chair – from Nov. 2024)
3. Susan Scullion (treasurer)
4. Vikki Plant (secretary)
5. Neil McCallum (Head Teacher)
6. Ian Porter (Depute Head Teacher)
7. Pauline Flannery (Local Councillor)
8. Liz Boakes
9. Ross Grimley
10. Duncan Bell (Parent Council – joined Jan 2025)



Bruce Crawford



Lizzie Boakes



Ian Porter



Pauline Flannery



Neil McCallum



Vikki Plant



Ross Grimley



Susan Scullion



Sheena Purdom



Duncan Bell

## **Objectives and activities**

James Gillespie's Trust was set up in 1994 to advance the education and improve the circumstances of the students of James Gillespie's High School, Edinburgh by:

1. supporting the school in providing a high-quality learning and teaching environment for all, including the wider community;
2. promoting, supporting and helping to resource projects, programmes and initiatives designed to enhance the education delivered, whether local, national or international, with which the school may from time to time be associated including the provision of resources, through such projects, programmes and initiatives, to partner institutions of the school wheresoever they may be situated;
3. promoting and conducting research related to developing the educational role and by providing briefings on this research;
4. promoting and conducting research into the history of the school and associated matters;
5. facilitating communication between and among students, staff, parents, former students, the community, Parent Council or any successor organisations representing or involving the parents of students; and
6. delivering resources and support to students, staff or parents/carers to help deliver the above purposes effectively.

## **The Trust's Main Activities**

- Small Grants Scheme - to disburse funds to realisable student projects. This scheme will account for no more than 20% of the Trust's assets in any year, in grants of up to £500.
- Staff Grants to support field trips, residential experiences and special projects.
- Assisting and attending at alumni events of the school. In past years we have had open mornings for the alumni to peruse our archives, a literary event celebrating the centenary of Muriel Spark's birth and tours round both the old school and the new one.
- We act as a resource to help inform current practice based on past experience.

## **Structure, governance and management**

James Gillespie's Trust is governed by a Trust Deed which has been updated three times since 1994 to reflect changing circumstances.

### **Trustee recruitment and appointment**

Trustees and office-bearers are appointed at the AGM and, on occasions, during the year. Trustees come from a range of backgrounds, experiences, knowledge and skills, including:

- JGHS headteacher and depute headteacher;
- Parent Council for JGHS;
- local councillor for the school catchment area and
- parents, staff or alumni from the school.

The Trust also has a dedicated and hard-working team of Alumni members who regularly liaise with the Trustees to achieve our objectives and we look forward to developing this in the future.

### **Chair's Report**

The trustees formally met five times during the year to conduct the business of the trust. The meetings were all hosted in the head teacher's office, for which we are grateful.

The meetings included reports from the chair, the treasurer, the head teacher and the alumni group. Funding applications were considered when received and ideas for future income generation progressed through the year. Decisions were all reached by consensus and there was often a healthy debate to consider all perspectives and to ensure the purpose and values of the trust were being upheld. During the year the school resumed trips and excursions to normal levels. The trustees were made aware that the S1 residential outdoor activities trip that had seen hundreds of pupils attend Lockerbie Manor, had come to an end. For many years, the trust had provided funding to support pupils in receipt of free school meals, to facilitate their participation. The trustees agreed that they would consider any request to facilitate a similar initiative in the future.

## Trustee Obituary

In January 2025 the Trustees were saddened by the sudden passing of Sheena Purdom (1948-2025) a former trustee and former pupil who attended the school for 13 years, at a time when it was an all-girls school. She made lifelong friends and remained an active member of the local community. Sheena trained as a teacher and followed a career in education until she retired.

Sheena was always keen to support those who needed an extra helping hand and served as a Trustee, giving her time and expertise where it was most needed to support the young people and staff at JGHS. Her time as a Trustee culminated with three years serving as chair of the Trust until she stepped down in November 2024. Sheena made a real difference to so many young people and her legacy will continue as the needs and interests of young people will continue to guide the decisions of the Trust in future. Further information was published on the Trust website [here](#).

## Achievements and performance

We received a wide range of Staff and Small Grant applications during the year. This process allows staff and pupils to apply for funding where other financial support is in place but the Trust's support will make a real difference and the project would not be able to proceed without our support.

Here are details of some of the projects we funded during 2025:

### Benches for use in the Darroch campus



## Equipment for use in the SNUG



## Financial assistance for pupils visiting Hong Kong



- supporting young people attending the Youth Parliament

## Alumni

The Alumni team kindly organised two Gatherings, once at which former pupil Grant Stott was the guest speaker and the other was our Head Teacher, Neil McCallum.

Both were a great success, very well attended with generous donations to the Trust. We look forward to supporting future Gatherings which will also involve student participating:

<https://www.jamesgillespietrust.com/jghs-reunions-and-meetups/>

The Gatherings were also an opportunity for Alumni to view memorabilia, share memories as well as renewing old and forming new friendships:

<https://www.jamesgillespietrust.com/jgt-alumni-news/>

<https://www.jamesgillespietrust.com/archives-and-memories/>

## Muriel Spark Walks

Fiona Donaldson of the Alumni team undertook a project to research the history of one of our most famous former pupils, Muriel Spark. She kindly organised a walk in June 2025 exploring connected landmarks and other historical places in Edinburgh.

These were all very well attended with excellent feedback and over £50 kindly donated to the Trust which is greatly appreciated. Here are some comments from the walkers:

“Congratulations, Fiona, on providing our group with a very informative and most enjoyable Muriel Spark Walking Tour. It was very comprehensive and your passion and depth of research shone through”.

“Lots of interesting places to see I would recommend others to join you if you do another one”.

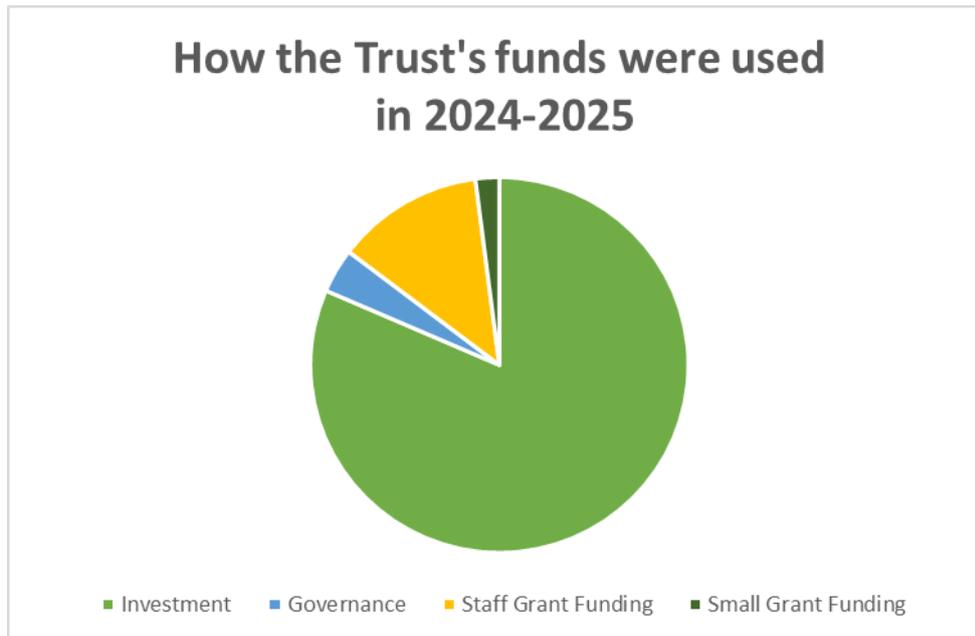
## Muriel Spark Walk – June 2025



Since then, Fiona arranged two further walks in July and September 2025 which were also well attended.

We are very grateful for her time, support and enthusiasm in arranging these and look forward to hearing of future dates in 2026.

## Financial Review



### Statement of the charity's policy on reserves

It is the policy of the Trust to maintain unrestricted funds which are the free reserves of the Trust at a level sufficient to sustain current expenditure for a period of six months without any income. It is estimated approximately £2,000 would provide sufficient funds to cover administration costs and others incurred in the furtherance of the charity's objectives for that period.

To maximise funds of a generous bequest from a former pupil a few years ago, the Trust decided to invest £20,000 in a specific charity investment fund which is providing a very good return. Despite reducing funds, we welcome applications for funding in accordance with the Trust's aims and objectives.

### Gift Aid – Make Tax Less Taxing!

We re-opened our Gift Aid account to increase the generous donations this year and thank all those who have kindly contributed.

We can receive donations in many different ways including cash, cheques and our Paypal donate button. This will be especially helpful to those of you who no longer live in the UK.

If you would like to Gift Aid your donation, James Gillespie's Trust can claim an additional 25p on every pound you give at no extra cost to you!

Please contact us for us for a Gift Aid declaration if you pay tax at the standard or higher rate, at: [finance@jamesgillespiestrust.com](mailto:finance@jamesgillespiestrust.com).

### Future plans

The Trust will continue to provide financial support to activities and initiatives that enhance the holistic opportunities for young people, particularly to remove financial barriers that might prevent some from fulfilling their ambitions.

The Trustees look forward to supporting the Alumni team at future Gatherings, Muriel Spark walks and other events. They are also actively researching potential fundraising projects, ideas and activities as well as collaborating with other supporters of the school.

### Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:



Print name	<b>Bruce Crawford</b>
Designation	<b>James Gillespies Trust - Chair</b>
Date	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> December 2025</b>