



ANNUAL REPORT 2021



Heel & Toe Children's Charity
(Registered Charity No. 1125695)

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Chairman's Welcome

Welcome to the Heel & Toe Children's Charity Annual Report 2021.

I think we can all agree it has been an extraordinarily challenging 18 months.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak we were forced to stop carrying out therapy, close our centres and cease all fundraising activities. This is possibly the single biggest challenge the Charity has ever faced. We have had to adapt and change the way we operate and engage with children and families in order to deliver therapy and operate safely within the government's ever-changing regulations.

Most of our 2020 events had to be cancelled and our 2021 events were postponed until later in the year. We have lost £350,000 in revenue since COVID-19. We envisage 2022 will still be a difficult year for fundraising with the continuing concerns over the pandemic so our need for support is more important now than ever before.

The safety and wellbeing of each and every child and family who uses Heel & Toe remains our absolute priority, and my fellow Trustees and I are proud of the hard work and innovation that has taken place in order to maintain our vital services for the children and young people of the North East.

Thank you for your continued support. I hope you will stay with us on our journey to help every young person reach their potential.

Paul Gilsenan

Chairman



Board of Trustees

Paul Gilsenan (Chairman)
Heather Hastie
Anthony Guest

Angela Kirtley
Peter Bartley
Heather Plunkett

John Brady
Mark Ward
Jackie Turner

Small Steps Lead To Great Things

Our journey since opening in 2008, with four children in a port-a-cabin annex at the rear of the Meadows School in Spennymoor, has been exciting, sometimes exasperating, but always rewarding.

In 2021 we worked to support over 220 children with disabilities during a period of unprecedented challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Now that we have reopened our centres for face-to-face services we remain focused on our long term strategy to bring beneficial therapy to all the children who need it in the North East region.

I would like to extend my thanks to our many supporters who generously continue to fund our work and the hundreds of people who help, volunteer, fundraise, sponsor and donate to Heel & Toe.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the children, parents and carers whose care, dedication and input has been vital to the development of Heel & Toe Children's Charity.



Doug Long
Chief Executive

Our Mission

Heel & Toe supports children and young people with profound physical and neurological disabilities from the North East region to live active, fulfilling, independent lives by the provision of free and subsidised therapy.

Achieving our Mission

We offer a range of services, led by highly qualified therapists, to children and young people of all ages from 3 months to 24 years (in line with current NHS Children and Young Adult Services criterion). Therapy sessions can be one-to-one or group, depending on the child's needs, and are available from 9.30am to 6.30pm, Monday to Saturday. We liaise with all external organisations concerned with a child's care to aid and assist the NHS, Social Services and the LEA wherever possible and to develop and enhance our service.

Our Vision

Our vision is to support children with disabilities to live full, productive lives where possibilities and opportunities are not constrained by their disabilities. We focus on supporting achievement and building on a child's success. We aim to improve children and young people's quality of life, and that of their families, by supporting them to make real improvements to their physical and emotional health. This in turn improves their level of confidence and self-esteem, motivation and fun. We want children, young people and their families to have the chance to look forward to a more independent and fulfilling future.

Value Statement: we believe that no child or young person should be denied Conductive Education due to a lack of money.

Our Achievements 2008-2021

2008 Heel & Toe was established in June 2008, and was granted charity status on 4 September 2008. The first Centre opened on 4 October 2008. Operating from a port-a-cabin annex, we offered FREE Conductive Education Therapy for any child with Cerebral Palsy from the North East.

2011 Demand for Heel & Toe's services was high and in 2011 the Charity relocated to larger rented premises in a more central location.

2012 The Charity launched additional therapies, including: physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy.

2013 & 2014 As part of its three-year plan, in August 2013 the Charity purchased its first building. After a period of fundraising the building was refurbished. This represented a saving of £40,000 in rent each year and allowed the Charity to recruit additional clinical staff. The Centre comprises four therapy rooms, a sensory room and a fully adapted gym.



2015 Heel & Toe launched intensive weekly block physiotherapy programmes.

2018 In 2018, after a 2-year fundraising campaign, Heel & Toe opened a state-of-the-art Hydrotherapy Pool. It is the only pool in the region providing goal-focused, monitored hydrotherapy led by a fully qualified paediatric therapist, for children and young people.



At 30 square metres it is one of the largest Hydrotherapy pools in the region. It has an automatic track hoist system to lift children safely and quickly and the changing rooms are fully adapted with the most up-to-date changing beds and specialist showers. The pool area is equipped with sensory lighting and music, both above and below the water, which can be changed to suit mood and therapy objectives. There is a projector system to radiate shapes, patterns and colours over the pool's surface.

2020 When the COVID-19 pandemic began our teams quickly adapted to new ways of working. Our fundraising team worked from home, and our clinical team created a new online therapy service delivering therapy to children in their own homes. We worked hard to make our centre 'COVID-secure' for the gradual return of children from the Autumn with staff wearing full PPE and carrying out enhanced hygiene cleaning between each session.



Current Services

We currently support over 220 children and young people, and their families, with a variety of therapies. We focus on supporting achievement and building on individual success.

We provide:

- Conductive Education Therapy
- Hydrotherapy
- Physiotherapy
- Speech and Language therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Massage Therapy
- Weekly and intensive block sessions
- Remote video assessments and therapy sessions

Families can expect:

- Full professional assessments for children
- Individual learning and therapy plans with clear goals for each child
- Regular review and monitoring of achievements with progression reports
- Home tasks for parents/carers to consolidate children's learning

Additional services include:

- Outreach service in home or school
- Parent support groups and forums
- Parent information, advice and guidance service including leaflets and parent information packs
- A 'signposting' service to guide children, young people, parents/carers to other supporting agencies
- Advocacy service – supporting parents with all aspects of legal and/or welfare benefits issues
- Proactive information service to local schools, GP surgeries, local hospitals and social services within the region

Conductive Education Therapy

Conductive Education is a form of special education and habilitation/rehabilitation for children and adults with motor disorders. It is appropriate for conditions where disease or damage to the central nervous system affects a person's ability to control movement. Conductive Education is an educational approach.

The aim is so that children can learn to overcome problems of movement as a way of enabling them to live more active, independent and fulfilling lives. Goals are regularly reviewed. Children are treated in groups where possible, creating an environment where cooperation, peer encouragement, social interaction and healthy competition is encouraged.



Hydrotherapy



During Hydrotherapy sessions, children complete a series of exercises led by a qualified clinician, including gentle stretching of arms and legs, floating and relaxation exercises, strengthening exercises using the water's natural resistance and movement exercises to mimic walking or running etc.

Hydrotherapy has many physical and emotional benefits for children and young people with disabilities:

- 90% of the child's bodyweight is supported encouraging movement.
- Water provides resistance to help strengthen and improve muscle tone.
- Increases circulation, heart function and breathing control.
- Reduces muscle spasms, joint stress and pain.
- Improves physical function – movement, coordination and posture.
- Improves flexibility, balance and endurance.
- Improves self-confidence and self-esteem – the child is 'free' to move independently and experience success.
- Encourages relaxation, and fun!

Physiotherapy

We offer physiotherapy assessment and treatment of conditions including Cerebral Palsy and other Acquired Brain Injuries, Developmental Delay, Joint or muscle problems, Neurological conditions, post-operative surgery/illness and rehabilitation, Walking anomalies and Pre and Post-operative Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy*.



*Pre and Post-Operative Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy (SDR) Therapy: The NHS have begun funding Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy (SDR) operations in five hospitals in the UK. Nerve fibres running from the muscles back to the spinal cord play a major role in maintaining this muscle stiffness. SDR divides some of these fibres reducing stiffness and improving mobility.

Pre-Operative: children require an intensive programme of therapy to strengthen abdominal and leg muscles. Leeds Hospital will not operate on a child who does not have the required core strength.

Post-Operative: children require an intensive two-week programme of therapy, with two daily one-hour sessions, followed by six months of therapy at least three times per week (as recommended by Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital). Therapy continues over the following five years with regular therapy, reviews and progression.

Speech and Language Therapy

Our experienced speech and language therapist works with children of all abilities to develop their speech, language and communication skills to the best of their ability. Our therapist provides a flexible approach to assessment by using a mix of formal (standardised and norm-referenced) and informal assessments to gain an accurate

picture of a child's needs. This information is then used to plan effective, accessible and fun therapy for a child.

Some children may need support to develop the building blocks necessary for language development, such as attention, listening, interaction and play skills. Others may be ready to develop their receptive and expressive language skills. Many children struggle to develop clear speech and so are likely to benefit from therapy to learn about sounds in words and how to use these sounds for talking. Some children require additional or alternative means to support their communication, such as signing or a symbol based system. Play and games are often used in therapy sessions to ensure the treatment sessions are fun and engaging for each child.



Occupational Therapy

Occupational Therapy (OT) helps children with different needs develop skills to perform the purposeful activities that make up everyday life. It is useful for a wide range of conditions and problems and aims to help children be as independent as possible. Our Occupational Therapist is trained to assess the component areas involved in the performance of daily activities, which are sensory, motor, cognitive and psychosocial.



OT is helpful for children who are experiencing any difficulty in performing the daily activities expected of them, including self-care, movement and coordination, sensory processing and modulation, play skills, attention and emotional regulation, handwriting and planning and organising skills at home or at school.

Massage and Movement Therapy

Therapeutic massage is the manipulation of soft body tissue, tendons, muscles, ligaments, skin, joints and connective tissues. The particular method used is a combination of 'pure massage' during which connective tissues and muscles are massaged, 'Swedish Massage' which concentrates on circular pressure/kneading/tapping to increase oxygen levels and improve circulation, 'Yoga' with soft movements to strengthen and improve muscle tone, and 'Chinese Reflexology' concentrating on reflex points on soles/tops/sides of feet, hands and face.



Massage Therapy:

- Stimulates digestion and elimination of waste thus helping with colic or constipation. It may also help premature babies absorb food and gain weight more easily
- Stimulates the flow of lymph and elimination of toxins. This will aid the immune system and help resistance to infections

- Encourages muscle co-ordination
- Stimulates the central nervous system. This is important for both neurological and motor development
- Improves skin tone
- Aids recovery from childhood ailments such as asthma, catarrh, sleep problems, teething and earache
- Stimulates release of endorphins (happy hormones) that induce feelings of well-being
- Stimulates awareness
- Promotes trust between parent and child and can help children feel more secure
- Reduces anxiety, is calming and relaxing
- Improves bonding and attachment for parents and child through skin-to-skin contact, increased eye contact and gives parents confidence in caring for their child.

We use massage therapy as a therapy in itself for children with even the most complex disabilities who cannot withstand the rigors of the more demanding therapies we offer. Babies and very small children can also benefit.

Intensive Block Therapy



Children typically have between 1-4 hours of different therapies each week. While regular therapy over a sustained timeframe is very beneficial, progress can be slower than desired. In recent years there has been much research to show that intensive, intermittent blocks of daily therapy, followed by a rest period, are highly effective in producing long-term gains more quickly, particularly in children with the most severe impairment.

During an Intensive Block children would have two hours of therapy every day for one or two weeks, followed by a rest period. Children can then return to ordinary weekly therapy, or have another block treatment, or a combination of these. We continue to see excellent results using this method of therapy. We are also able to combine disciplines to 'co-treat', whereby two or more specialist therapists will work together with children towards similar goals.

Remote Video Assessments and Therapy Sessions

During the pandemic we delivered therapy and carried out new child assessments using video call technology. Most children are planning to return to face-to-face therapy as soon as possible, but we understand that some children and families may feel more comfortable continuing to shield from unnecessary travel and interactions. Therefore we are pleased to be able to continue offering video therapy to children and young people, whether they have already attended Heel & Toe or if they are new to the charity, for as long as it is needed.

If you are interested in any of our services, please contact us on 0191 386 8606.

Plans and Ambitions for 2022 and Beyond



We have been fundraising since 2018 for our capital project to construct a wraparound extension at the Hydrotherapy Pool Centre. We have managed to secure most of the build costs but recent hikes in material costs mean we have a little further to go to reach our target. 2022 will see our Fundraising Team working to raise the additional funds needed. The additional space will house a brand-new Therapy Suite and will see the introduction of an innovative new service. The therapy suite extensions will be built as internal open spaces but will include soundproof moveable panels so we can use the space as it is needed, and tailor the space to individual session requirements.

Rebound Therapy

Rebound therapy increases physical health, motivation and confidence and enhances movement skills by using a specialist floor-sunken trampoline. Children and young people are accompanied on the trampoline by one or two therapists, depending on needs. Rebound Therapy:



- Improves movement and balance due to the 'bounce' movement and gravity
- Increases heart/breathing rate and muscle tone
- Improves postural support by strengthening the joints and muscles
- Increases spatial awareness and coordination
- Improves communication skills – the child needs to interact with therapist
- Improves concentration – bouncing encourages the child to think about remaining stable
- Can be used with children with mild to complex disabilities.

Rebound therapy also provides a 'different' therapy for children who have limited access to do anything unusual, interesting and fun whilst still supporting goal-focused outcomes for movement. The cost of the Trampoline and the rollerstand/lift is around £3,000. Our Physiotherapists are qualified to deliver Rebound Therapy and will be aided by our therapy assistants.

Corporate Support



Heel & Toe receives an overwhelming amount of corporate support from many businesses every year. No matter how big or small a company is, there are always ways to support the charity

including entering a team into one of our events, sponsoring t-shirts, fundraising in your place of work, volunteering at our events or even monthly donations through pay roll giving. A big thank you to Eco Simplified for donating £200 every month to the charity, and attending our charity ball and volunteering at our Sportsman's dinner.

Many businesses adopt us as their chosen charity, and this is not only good for Heel & Toe but encourages staff to get involved in the community and can boost team spirit. We have many events that are suitable for a business to enter a team, for example for many years Park Electrical Distributors have entered staff into the Total Warrior, and Lowes Financial Management Limited entered a team in the Hadrian's Wall Walk. Co Op Birtley Depot supported Heel & Toe by entering a team into the Golf Day and the Three Peaks challenge. Our special thanks to businesses for getting so involved in supporting Heel & Toe.



Not only can a business get involved with one of our events, but a business can also organise their own event with the help and support from the Fundraising Team. For many years Bradley Hall Estate Agents have organised a Festive Fundraiser to support Heel & Toe. In 2021 they raised a whopping £25,000! Brick Services have also organised their own event for two years in a row. An annual ball to celebrate their relationship with construction companies, but to also raise money for Heel & Toe. We thank you for your continued support, and for the introduction to so many other businesses within the North East.

Another way for businesses to support Heel & Toe is through sponsoring our corporate events. A big thank you goes to Irwin Mitchell Solicitors for their partnership with Heel & Toe for many years. Irwin Mitchell have sponsored our annual charity ball and sportsman's dinners and produced charity material at no cost. Their commitment to the charity is appreciated wholeheartedly.



We would like to thank Stanley Travel and The Scott Family for their ongoing support of the charity every year.

If you think your business can support Heel & Toe in any way, please contact the Fundraising Team on 0191 386 8606 or email info@heelandtoe.org.uk
We look forward to working with you.

Our Fundraising Events

If you or someone you know would like to get involved with fundraising for Heel & Toe, please contact reception or speak to one of our Fundraisers on (0191) 386 8606, to find out more. We have a huge range of opportunities available with something guaranteed to suit everyone! In 2022, events include:

- Bingo Goes Bonkers
- All Ability Bike ride
- Hadrian's Wall sponsored walk
- Annual Golf Day
- An Evening with Paul Merson
- Total Warrior
- Great North Family Mile and 10K
- Superhero Walk
- Back to the 90s Night
- Mad Hatters Afternoon Tea
- Three Peaks
- Skydive
- Mini and Junior Great North Run
- Great North Run
- Annual Charity Ball
- Children's Christmas Party



Community Support

Heel & Toe relies on support from the community to continue offering our services to so many children. We would like to thank everyone who donates weekly in supermarkets to our volunteers who tin collect and bag pack. We would also like to thank schools and groups who choose to support us through different activities. If you think your school or group can support Heel & Toe in any way, please contact the Fundraising Team on 0191 386 8606 or email info@heelandtoe.org.uk

With Special Thanks

Heel & Toe would not be able to operate without the remarkable generosity of its volunteers, supporters, corporate sponsors and donors. We are immensely grateful to the hundreds of wonderful people who challenge themselves to run, walk, swim or jump out of planes for us each year, taking part in our annual fundraising events programme.



Grants received from charitable trusts and foundations have enabled us to develop our facilities and services in order to meet the needs of the amazing children we serve. In particular, The David Family Foundation generously donated towards our appeal to fund new equipment for the extension at the Hydrotherapy Centre. We are so grateful for their support.

Our biggest “Thank You” of course goes to the inspiring children and families whose wisdom and guidance steers everything we do.

THANK YOU



Income and Expenditure

	2021	2020
	£	£
Events	220751	118254
Giftaid	22051	15335
Tin collecting and Bag packing	9955	23405
Business Donations	59719	118945
Grants	93478	139084
Covid support grants	102625	276568
Services provided	176170	95371
Rental income	79442	51814
Other	108559	361178
Total	872750	1199954
Expenditure on charitable activities	767620	782114
Fundraising costs	73522	11239
Governance costs	2460	2460
Total	843602	795813
Number of staff	24	22



Heel & Toe Children's Charity

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