

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



*Sensational Kids*  
Therapy • Toys • Training

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# CHAIRPERSON'S STATEMENT

As departing Chairperson of the Board of Sensational Kids, I present the Annual Report for 2023, a year marked by resilience, innovation, and growth. This report is not just a testament to the achievements but also a reflection of the ongoing commitment to making a profound difference in the lives of children and families across Ireland.

In 2023, Sensational Kids continued to advance its mission to provide affordable and accessible therapy and learning support services. The teams worked tirelessly to ensure that every child, regardless of their circumstances, could reach their full potential. The dedication and expertise of our therapists, educators, and staff have been instrumental in driving the positive outcomes detailed in this report.

This year, Sensational Kids expanded its reach and increased the number of therapy appointments delivered for children. With thanks to the generosity of donors, the hard work of volunteers, and the unwavering support of partners, these collective efforts have provided subsidized therapy services for hundreds of children who might otherwise have gone without.

Resources have been managed with prudence. We acknowledge the diligence of the finance team. The financial statements in this report demonstrate a commitment to transparency and accountability.

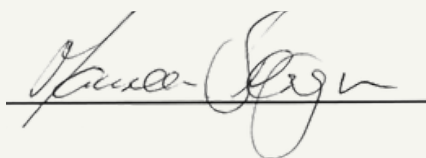
Ambitious goals have been set for 2024 and beyond, aiming to expand the services further, reach more children, and continue to innovate in the ways Sensational Kids support the community. The team are confident that with the continued support of partners, donors, volunteers, and staff, these goals will be achieved.

In closing, I want to extend my thanks to everyone who has contributed to the success of Sensational Kids. Your support, whether through donations, volunteering, or simply spreading the word about our work, has been invaluable.

Sensational Kids will continue its mission to making a real and lasting difference in the lives of children and families across Ireland.

Thank you for being a part of the Sensational Kids journey.

Warm regards,



Maureen Bergin  
Chairperson of the Board  
Sensational Kids



# MESSAGE FROM CEO & FOUNDER

Welcome to our 2023 annual report. I hope you enjoy reading about the remarkable impact that Sensational Kids is making to the lives of children with additional needs around Ireland.

We are so grateful for the kindness and generosity of all of the wonderful organisations and people who give so much to enable Sensational Kids to make a difference to the lives of vulnerable children. I especially want to thank and recognise those who have fundraised, given donations, or have volunteered as trustees, company members, company secretary, board sub-group members, and those who have volunteered at our child development centres throughout the year.

This year has been a very challenging year financially for several reasons, including the ending of 460k of core grant funding, a drop in fundraised income due to time needed to revisit our fundraising strategy and recruit a new fundraising manager. Like many other social enterprises, over the past three years, we have grappled with challenges like the Covid-19 pandemic, enforced closures, the Ukraine war, rising business costs, and the cost-of-living crisis. These changes in the external environment mean that we have experienced a temporary core funding gap throughout 2023. We are confident that we can improve financial sustainability and have been exploring options to revisit our business model to get us back on track.

Despite the challenges, we are proud to have increased the number of therapy appointments provided to children and adolescents this year as well as increasing the number of parents, clinicians and educators who attended our training workshops. We are particularly proud of our clinical outcome measure which demonstrates a consistently high level of experience and reflects the significant positive impact of Sensational Kids' services on children's progress and development. Thank you to the families who place their trust and hope in Sensational Kids. It is our privilege to support so many wonderful families and children.

At the heart of creating this meaningful social impact is a talented and passionate team at Sensational Kids, who are dedicated to improving the lives of children and adolescents with additional needs. I am especially grateful to these very special people who choose to work at Sensational Kids. Thank you all for being part of this incredible journey that is empowering so many children to reach their full potential.

Warm regards,



Karen Leigh  
CEO & Founder  
Sensational Kids





# ABOUT US



# WHAT IS SENSATIONAL KIDS?

Sensational Kids is a social enterprise providing affordable and accessible developmental assessments and therapies to children and adolescents. Sensational Kids bridges the gap between public services with long waiting lists and expensive private services. Sensational Kids was founded in 2008 by Karen Leigh, following her frustration at the lack of services for her son Conor.

To date Sensational Kids has supported over 10,000 children and adolescents across our Child Development Centres in Kildare, Cork, Mayo and Monaghan. With over 86,000 children on long public waiting lists for assessments, diagnosis and development therapies – the demand for Sensational Kids services has never been greater.

## OUR AMBITION



No child  
left  
waiting

“Access to  
affordable, timely  
and impactful  
therapeutic services  
for every child and  
adolescent in  
Ireland”



# NEEDS AND MISSION

## NEED

Sensational Kids exists to improve access to affordable and accessible specialist therapeutic supports to help children with additional needs. Too many children in Ireland are struggling to reach their full potential:

- **There are 1.68 million children in Ireland**
- **1 in 4 has a special educational need**
- **That's 420,000 children in Ireland with special educational needs**
- **86,000+ children waiting on public services**



## VISION

All children and adolescents in Ireland have access to timely and impactful therapeutic services.

## MISSION

Our mission is to **transform the lives of children** through therapy, toys and training.

## VALUES

**FAMILY CENTERED:** It is more than just the child/ adolescents

**INCLUSIVE:** All children, all adolescents, all ages, all abilities

**RESPECT:** Everyone is equal and TRUST is key

**FUN:** Always finding time to smile and laugh.

**PLAY:** Play-based model to support therapeutic engagement

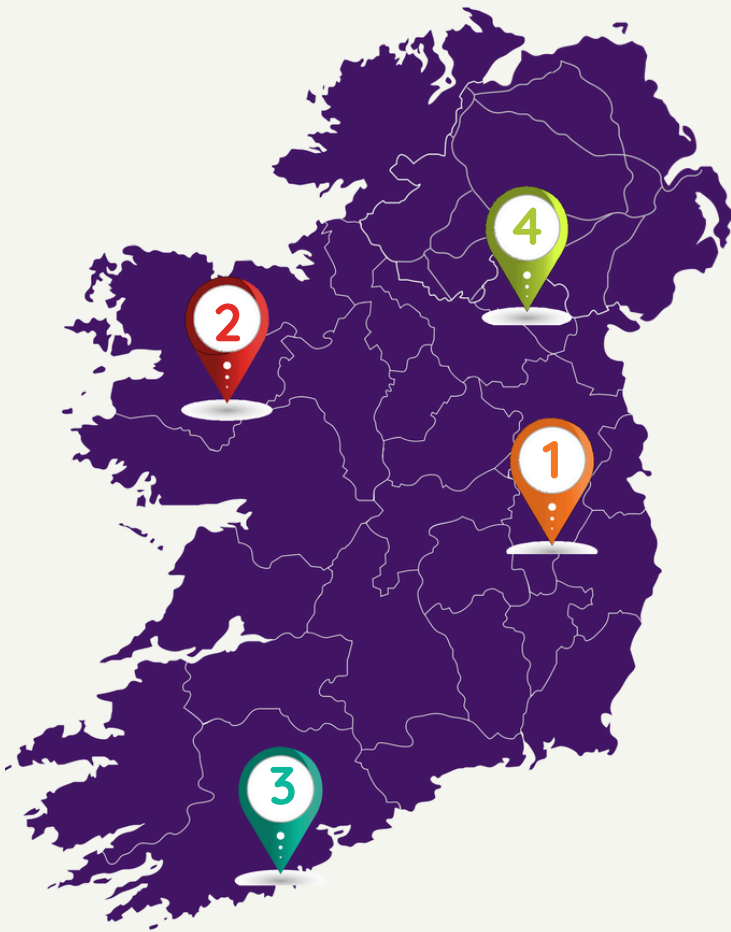
**EXCELLENCE:** Quality in everything we do

**SOCIAL ENTERPRISE:** The SK mission is the heart of everything we do

**INNOVATION:** Always looking at what could progress and be better



# OUR LOCATIONS



## Kildare

- 1** Sensational Kids,  
Unit C2 Kildare Business Park,  
Melitta Road,  
Kildare Town,  
R51 WP02

## Mayo

- 2** Sensational Kids,  
Lakeside  
Retail Park, Claremorris,  
Co Mayo,  
F12 P2H9

## West Cork

- 3** Sensational Kids, 2nd Floor,  
Building G, West Cork Technology Park,  
Clonakilty,  
Co Cork,  
P85 VF62

## Monaghan

- 4** Sensational Kids,  
Unit 8 Clones Business Technology Park,  
Clones, County Monaghan  
H23 P294

# THE SERVICES WE PROVIDE

- Educational Psychological Assessment and Diagnosis
- Occupational Therapy Assessment and Intervention
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Play Therapy - Psychotherapy, delivered through play for children





# THE SKILLS WE SUPPORT

## Fine Motor Skills

- Strengthening
- Endurance
- Dexterity – isolated finger movement
- Pre-writing skills
- Handwriting
- Dressing, buttons, zips, shoelaces
- Feeding – managing utensils

## HOW A CHILD MAY PRESENT:

Poorly developed pencil grasp, difficulty with opening snacks and lids on tubs or bottles, threading beads, posting coins, drawing, colouring, cutting, writing letters and numbers, doing buttons and zips, tying shoelaces, using a spoon etc.

## Gross Motor Skills

- Postural control and core stability
- Integrated movement patterns
- Transitional movements
- Balance and equilibrium
- Eye hand coordination
- Eye foot coordination
- Postural strengthening
- Shoulder girdle stability

Difficulty with climbing, jumping, running, hopping, playing balancing games and ball games, child may have poor endurance, have difficulty sitting up straight at the desk or on the mat, get tired when having to stay in one position for too long or may get tired easily when playing sports games.

## ADL – development of skill and independence in

- Dressing
- Feeding
- Toileting
- Bathing
- Grooming
- Sleeping
- Routines

May be unable to dress themselves, bathe, brush teeth or toilet independently and may require support that is greater than what is expected for a child of their age.

## Cognitive skills and executive function

- Memory (visual and auditory)
- Sequential memory
- Working memory
- Following of instructions
- Impulse control
- Focus and concentration.
- Task organisation and time management
- Use of cognitive strategies, ie visual schedules, token economies

May have difficulty with task organisation, understanding and following instructions in the classroom, starting and finishing a task on time, difficulty planning what needs to be done and the order in which a task needs to be completed, may be easily distracted and need repeated reminders or prompts, may have difficulty controlling their behaviour.

## Social Engagement

- Peer engagement skills, ie sharing, waiting, turn-taking

Difficulty playing games with peers, may become frustrated when they have to wait, may not like to share toys, may have difficulty initiating play effectively, may struggle with winning and losing.

# THE SKILLS WE SUPPORT

## Visual Perceptual Skills

- Visual figure ground
- Visual discrimination
- Visual closure
- Visual motor integration
- Visual spatial relationships
- Position in space

## HOW A CHILD MAY PRESENT:

Difficulty matching shapes or seeing differences in pictures, struggles with block building and puzzles, difficulty with reading and writing, copying off the board or out of a book, learning how to draw shapes, letters and numbers, may lose their place when copying down information or reading, difficulty organising information on a page, may struggle with consistent letter sizing and spacing when writing.

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## Sensory Processing

- Sensory and emotional regulation
- Sensory motor based skills – body schema development, bilateral motor coordination, motor planning
- Sensory discrimination

Meltdowns, distractibility, over-reactivity, avoidance, withdrawal and poor frustration tolerance, delayed acquisition of movement skills, poor coordination (skipping, galloping, riding a bicycle, swimming) difficulty controlling movements and learning new skills.

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## Communication

- Engagement
- Expressive language
- Receptive language
- AAC: alternative and augmentative communication
- Fluency
- Voice
- Phonemic awareness
- Vocabulary Extension
- Pragmatic language
- Literacy and pre-literacy skills

Difficulty understanding others and following instructions, difficulty making their needs known and expressing themselves, difficulty being understood and speaking clearly, difficulty engaging in reciprocal play and conversations and difficulty interpreting and understanding, body language, facial expressions and the meaning of social communication in context.

---

## Mental Health

- Stress management.
- Relaxation techniques
- Coping strategies
- Assertiveness
- Emotional expression
- Cognitive reframing
- Problem solving
- Self-esteem and self-expression
- Trauma processing and resolution
- Boundaries
- Empathy and perspective taking

Increase or sudden onset of challenging or reactive behaviour, changes in sleep patterns or diet, increased restlessness or fidgeting, withdrawal from friends or favourite activities, school refusal, changes in academic performance, mood swings, difficulty concentrating, lack of motivation and energy, increased anxiety or fears that interfere with daily activities.

# THE RANGE AND COMPLEXITY OF CONDITIONS WE SUPPORT

One in four children in Ireland has a special educational need. We support children and adolescents including those with developmental delays and diagnosis including:

- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- ADD/ ADHD
- Apraxia of Speech
- Dyslexia
- Developmental Coordination Disorder (Dyspraxia)
- Down Syndrome
- Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Fragile X Syndrome
- Intellectual Disability
- Sensory Processing Difficulties
- Selective Mutism
- Stuttering
- Speech and Language Delays and Disorders
- Mental Health Issues
- Pre & Non Verbal Children

At Sensational Kids, we do not require a diagnosis or referral to begin therapy. We work with children of all ages and abilities to support their journeys in education and life.

## OUR MODELS OF PRACTICE

At Sensational Kids our therapy support team employ the following models of practice

- Ayres Sensory Integration
- Trauma informed approach
- Neuroaffirmative
- Perceptual Motor
- Sensory Motor
- Co-Op The CO-OP approach is a child centred, performance-based, problem-solving approach that enables skill acquisition through the process of strategy use and guided discovery
- DIR floortime
- SOS Feeding
- CBT (cognitive behaviour therapy)
- Person centred and trauma informed practice

Demonstrating the depth of the skills and expertise of the therapy supports available from Sensational Kids

# IMPACT



# HOW SENSATIONAL KIDS ASSESSES ITS IMPACT

Sensational Kids places a strong emphasis on measuring its impact to ensure the effectiveness of its therapeutic interventions. The organisation employs a comprehensive approach, using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), metrics, surveys, and client feedback to assess and enhance the outcomes of its occupational therapy (OT) and speech and language therapy (SLT) programs.

## **Therapy Objectives:**

Sensational Kids strategically selects KPIs aligned with its therapy objectives to quantitatively gauge the success of its interventions. For OT, objectives include improvements in emotional and sensory regulation, task focus, fine and gross motor skill development, motor planning, and executive function skills. Functional independence skills, such as dressing, feeding, and toileting, are also vital indicators. Meanwhile, for SLT, objectives focus on the development of engagement and communication skills, expansion of vocabulary, enhancement of expressive and receptive language, and the improvement of phonemic awareness and fluency.

## **Metrics:**

In addition to KPIs, Sensational Kids employs specific metrics to measure progress in therapy objectives. Metrics can be tailored to each individual's needs, tracking advancements in sensory regulation, task completion, social skills, and language development. These measurable outcomes serve as benchmarks for both therapists and clients, providing tangible evidence of progress over time.

## **Surveys:**

Annual surveys are conducted to gather valuable insights from clients and their families. These surveys delve into the overall satisfaction with the therapy programs. Feedback from surveys helps Sensational Kids make informed decisions about refining its services and addressing specific needs.

## **Client Feedback:**

Client feedback is a cornerstone of Sensational Kids' approach to measuring impact. Through ongoing communication with clients and their families, therapists gain qualitative insights into the effectiveness of interventions. The feedback loop allows for continuous adjustment of therapy plans, ensuring they are responsive to the unique needs and progress of each individual.

# HOW SENSATIONAL KIDS ASSESSES ITS IMPACT

By combining KPIs, metrics, surveys, and client feedback, Sensational Kids establishes a robust framework for assessing the impact of its OT and SLT programs. This commitment to measurement not only ensures accountability and transparency but also drives a culture of continuous improvement, ultimately enhancing the quality of services provided to the community.

## Outcome Measurement:

We have always known from many testimonials that we significantly change the lives of children. To prove these outcomes, in 2021 we set about measuring our clinical outcomes for children over 2 years, using the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure, (an evidence-based clinical outcome measure). Results were collated via an external and independent review by a therapy company in the USA. Read the full outcome measurement report [here](#).

A change score (the average difference in ratings across time) of about 2 points is considered to reflect clinically meaningful difference – that is, change that would be noticeable and impactful on daily life for a client (Cusick et al., 2007; Law, 2021).

Our average change score for client ratings of goal performance is 3.05 points. These perceived gains are further supported by therapist reports of client changes over the course of treatment, which show a meaningful difference at an average of 3.06 points. Client satisfaction with child performance has also increased over the course of intervention at our child development centres, at an average of 3.21 points per client. Therapist satisfaction changed at an average of 3.15 points per client.

**These average ratings are particularly powerful considering they have remained about 3 points over time.**





# SPOTLIGHT ON 2023



# 2023

## A YEAR IN REVIEW

7,462  
THERAPY  
APPOINTMENTS  
& ASSESSMENTS



1,277  
CHILDREN AND  
ADOLESCENTS  
SUPPORTED



149 CHILDREN SUPPORTED THROUGH OUR SCHOOL-BASED  
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICE IN 2 SCHOOLS

521  
PARENTS &  
EDUCATORS  
ATTENDED  
WEBINARS



388  
PARENTS &  
EDUCATORS  
ATTENDED  
WORKSHOPS



# 2023

# SESSIONS BY SERVICE

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

- Occupational Therapy Sessions: 2832
- Occupational Therapy Assessments: 54
- Diagnostic Therapy Sessions: 316



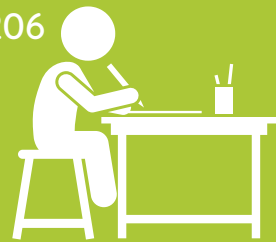
## SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY

- Speech & Language Therapy: 2598
- Speech & Language Assessments: 4



## PSYCHOLOGY

- Educational Psychological Assessments 206
- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: 12
- Dare (Disability Access Route to Education) Reviews: 6



## PLAY THERAPY

- Play Therapy Sessions: 486



## READING TUITION

- Reading Tuition: 21



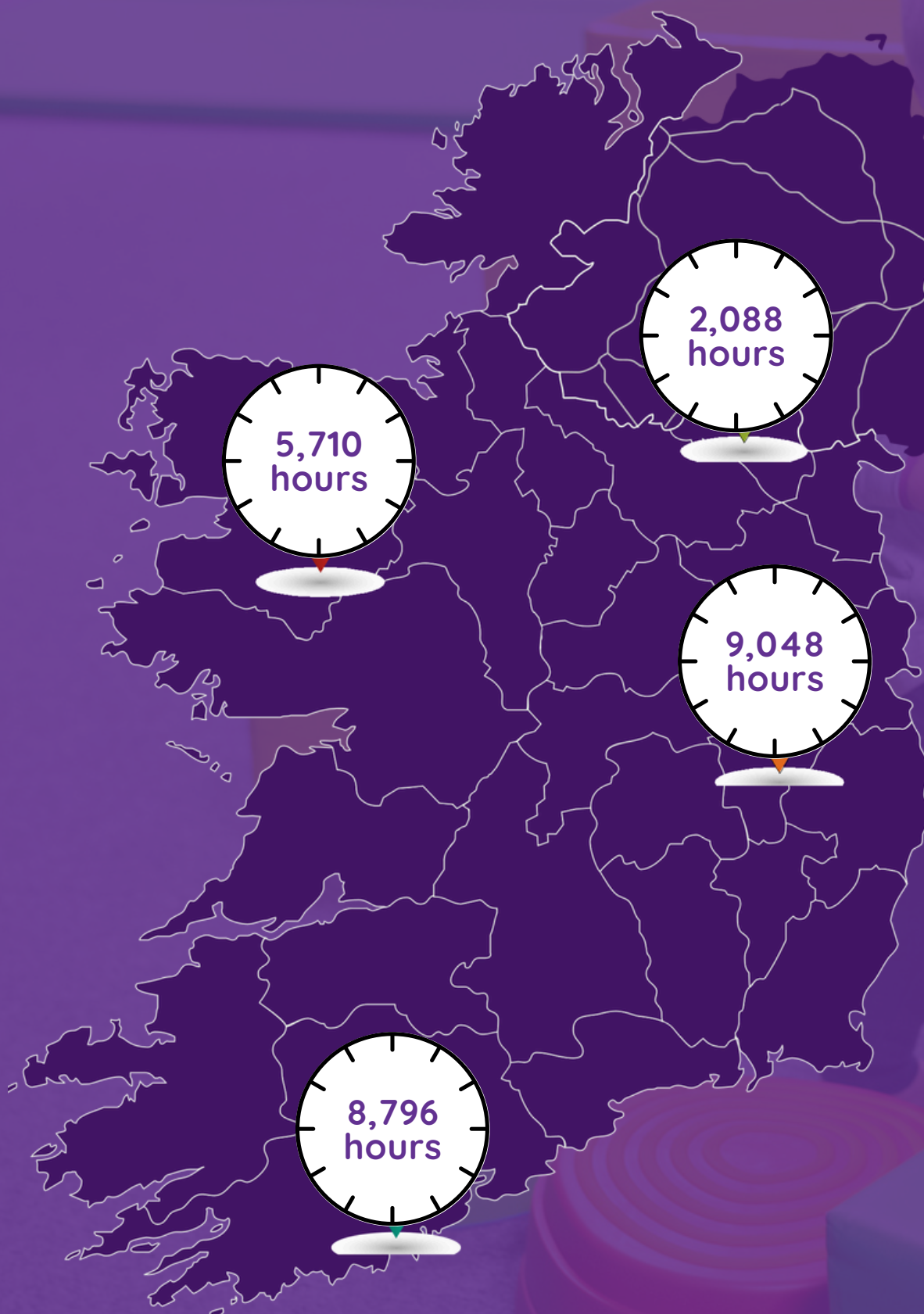
## PARENT CONSULTATIONS

- Parent Consultations: 927

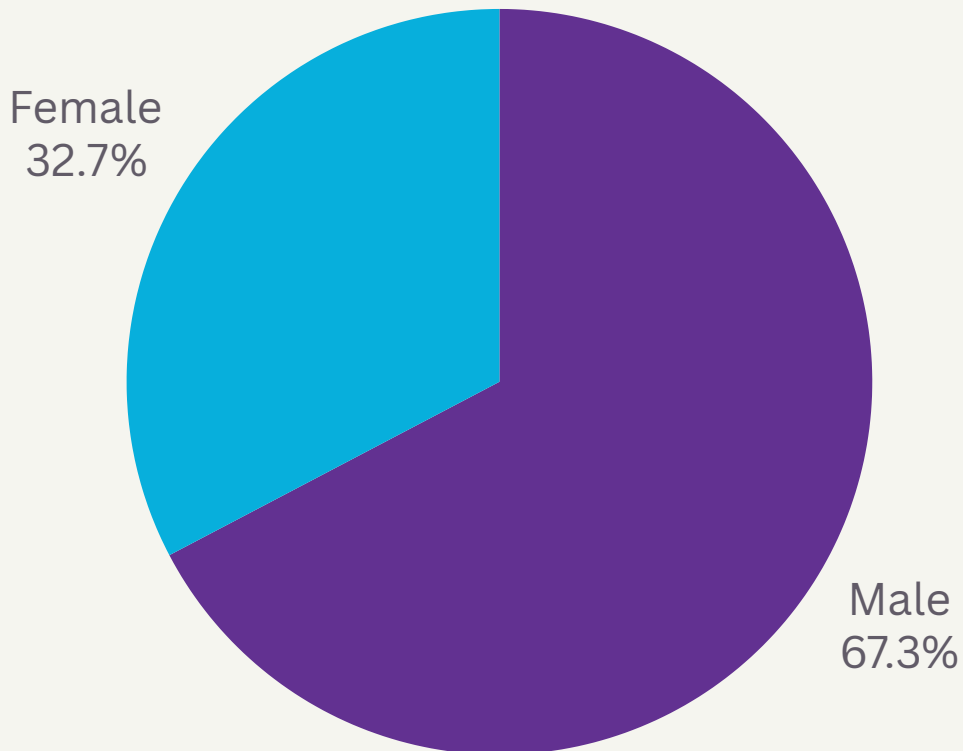
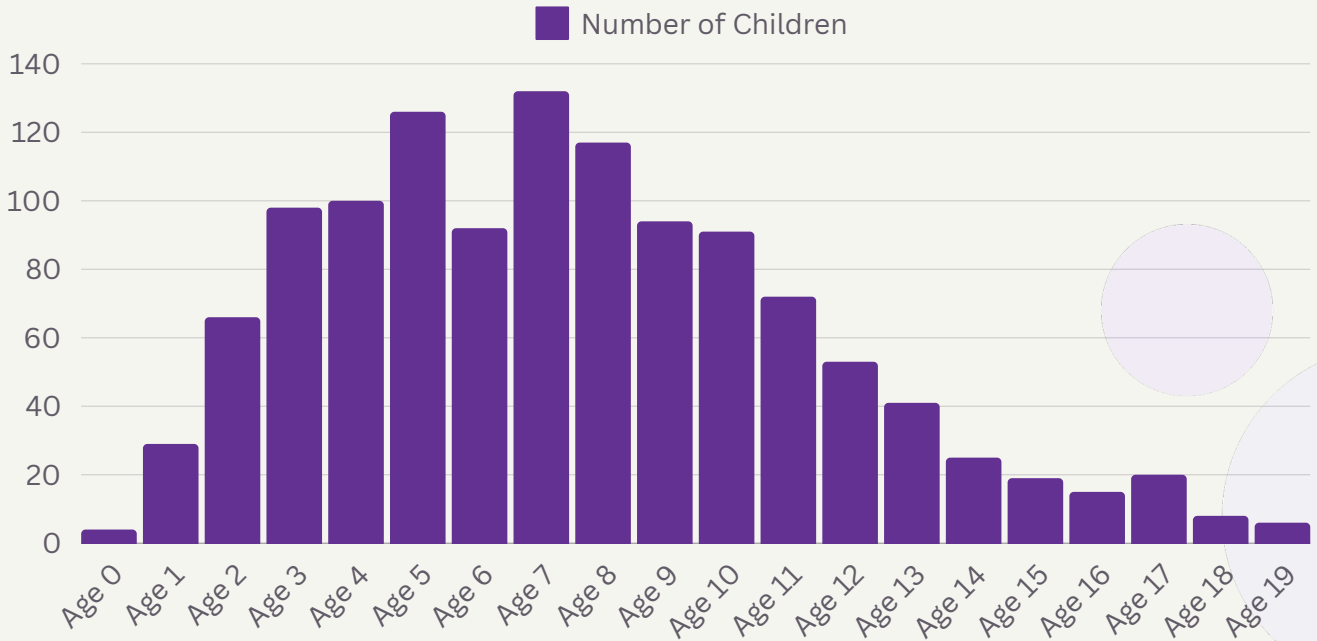


# 2023

## IMPACT IN HOURS



# THE CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WE SUPPORT



# 2023 AMOUNT SAVED BY FAMILIES

# €535,120

In addition, 150 families pay nothing for services.  
3.5% pay less than the standard subsidised rate  
of €90 per appointment

# 2023

## PLAY DEVELOP & LEARN STORE IMPACT



### 4 WAYS TO SHOP

- 📍 Kildare Town, Kildare
- 📍 Claremorris, Mayo
- 📍 Clonakilty, West Cork
- 🌐 [www.sensationalkids.ie](http://www.sensationalkids.ie)

### 45,138 PRODUCTS SOLD

### 30,212 ORDERS

### 4 TEAM MEMBERS



2023

PLAY DEVELOP & LEARN  
STORE REVIEWS



**Prompt delivery**  
Prompt delivery, lots of great items. Will buy again.  
Date of experience: 02 March 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Great service fantastic product...**  
Great service fantastic product delivery was very quick  
Date of experience: 04 April 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Good quality**  
Didn't take long to... was... my purchase...  
Date of experience: 01 July 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Satisfied**  
I found everything what I need. Quick delivery...  
Date of experience: 03 August 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Always great service with sensational...**  
Always great service with sensational kids. The quality of the toys...  
Date of experience: 03 November 2022  
★★★★★ Verified

**Great Service**  
Great resource for items suitable with... extremely limited in shops. Wide variety...  
Date of experience: 04 November 2022  
★★★★★ Verified

**Very good service**  
Very obliging over the phone, I... straight away, giving me lots of...  
Date of experience: 05 July 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Lifesaver**  
Lifesaver! I needed some special... wasn't for sensational kids, I would... charge far higher than the already... processed quickly, the headphones arrived... condition. Satisfactory customer experience...  
Date of experience: 10 August 2022  
★★★★★ Verified

**Professional and efficient service**  
Professional and efficient service. My purchase arrived well packed...  
Date of experience: 06 December 2023  
★★★★★

**Fantastic charity**  
Only heard about Sensational Kids earlier this year so first time using them fantastic to deal with.  
Date of experience: 10 Dec 2023  
★★★★★

**Fast delivery**  
Fast delivery. Flat rate P&P v helpful. Thanks for stocking this book, otherwise only available from the US.  
Date of experience: 07 August 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Quick delivery of product and good...**  
Quick delivery of product and good website  
Date of experience: 07 August 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**I found you online searching for sensory toys for a baby with special needs.**  
Lovely product...you have a nice portfolio and as I live abroad I was delighted to see an Irish company with your ethos doing this. This was in June or July..I cannot recall date  
Date of experience: 04 July 2022  
★★★★★ Verified

**Good products and delivered super fast**  
... delivered super fast, will definitely deal with them again 🙌  
Date of experience: 01 March 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Easy ordering and no delay receiving my...**  
Easy ordering and no delay receiving my product  
Date of experience: 07 August 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Great service**  
... prompt delivery... will use again.  
Date of experience: 04 October 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Good quality**  
... as...  
Date of experience: 04 December 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Always great service with sensational...**  
... informed and item was... customer  
Date of experience: 03 November 2022  
★★★★★ Verified

**Great Service**  
... in the product will shop here  
Date of experience: 07 Aug 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Very good service**  
... was fast. I would highly  
Date of experience: 12 Dec 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Lifesaver**  
... described online.  
Date of experience: 14 Dec 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Professional and efficient service**  
...  
Date of experience: 4 Nov 2022  
★★★★★ Verified

**I found you online searching for sensory toys for a baby with special needs.**  
...  
Date of experience: 4 Nov 2022  
★★★★★ Verified

**Fast delivery**  
...  
Date of experience: 12 Sept 2023  
★★★★★ Verified

**Quick delivery of product and good...**  
...  
Date of experience: 07 Jan 2024  
★★★★★ Verified

# SPOTLIGHT ON 2023

## Sensational Kids in the Media - Highlights of 2023

Sensational Kids has been repeatedly covered in Irish media and achieved wider recognition within Irish society as a result. Some examples of publications include





# OUTCOMES





# CLINICAL SERVICES SURVEY 2023

## **Introduction:**

The survey covered various aspects, including overall satisfaction, progress assessment, duration of attendance, service utilisation, and administrative support.

## **1. Overall Satisfaction:**

The majority of respondents expressed a very positive experience with the clinical services offered by Sensational Kids, with 75.34% giving a "Very Positive" rating. Additionally, 15.07% reported a "Positive" experience, showcasing a high level of satisfaction among the participants.

## **2. Child's Progress:**

Respondents were asked to rate their child's progress, and the results were equally encouraging. A significant 49.32% reported a "Very Positive" assessment, and 26.03% expressed a "Positive" evaluation. This reflects positively on the impact our clinical services have on the developmental progress of the children attending Sensational Kids.

## **3. Centre Attendance:**

The survey revealed that the majority of respondents attended the Kildare centre (50.68%), followed by Clonakilty (26.03%), Clones (12.33%), and Claremorris (10.96%). These statistics highlight the distribution of attendees across different centres.

## **4. Duration of Attendance:**

The majority of respondents (68.33%) have been attending Sensational Kids for less than a year, indicating a consistent influx of new clients. Additionally, 31.67% have been attending for more than a year, showcasing the sustained engagement of a significant portion of our clientele.

## **5. Therapy Services Utilisation:**

The survey assessed the types of services accessed by respondents, with 41.10% utilising Occupational Therapy, 35.62% Speech & Language Therapy, 26.03% Educational Psychology, and 10.96% Play Therapy. The diversity in service utilisation reflects the comprehensive range of offerings at Sensational Kids.

## **6. Administrative Support:**

An overwhelming 76.71% of respondents reported being "Very Satisfied" with the admin support received at their local centre, highlighting the effectiveness of our administrative processes in supporting the overall client experience.

## **Conclusion:**

The 2023 Clinical Service Impact Report demonstrates a consistently high level of satisfaction among respondents, reflecting the positive impact of Sensational Kids' services on both children's progress and overall client experience. The findings will inform ongoing efforts to enhance and expand our services to better meet the needs of our community.

Note: The survey data is based on responses from 73 participants.

# CLINICAL SERVICES SURVEY 2023

“All the people involved in Sensational Kids in Kildare are extremely efficient and so very welcoming”.

“Maria Osbourne was wonderful with my daughter Saoirse. I left feeling very hopeful/happy about her future instead of my usual worries! Maria is excellent! The ladies on reception were so friendly and helpful too, the whole experience was a happy one”.

“Stephanie is an amazing therapist. She was amazing with my little girl x Kelda on reception is also amazing”.

“Wonderful team in sensational kids. Awaiting occupational therapy and am excited about that. Joan is also amazing and helpful”.

“Excellent service which has helped my child work out how to control their emotional behaviour”.

“Great service, Blathine is amazing with my daughter we have gone from strength to strength, Joan is with admin and is extremely helpful with receipts and appointments always up to date, extremely satisfied with the service they provide for us”.

“We had a very professional experience and I would highly recommend their services to anyone seeking any relevant service they provide”.

“Excellent service”.

“Report very detailed. Some great resources and recommendations in it”



“Just a few words to say thank you to Yvonne for making Aoibheann feel so comfortable and relaxed during her assessment”.

“Maria Osbourne was exceptional to deal with. I would highly recommend her. The sensitivity and kindness shown to my daughter made the process much less daunting. I received an extremely professional assessment. Our school has also commented on how thorough and specific the finds were outlined”.

“Positive experience during a potentially negative time”.

“My daughter attended for a dyslexia assessment. The planning was easy, my daughter was comfortable during the assessment and enjoyed the experience. Following the assessment the assessor gave a great overview of findings and recommendations. The report was very clear and the assessor was available to answer any queries we had”.

“My son loves his appointments with Sheena and his progress has been amazing. Loretta is so nice to deal with and always so kind to the kids and efficient with setting up appointments and sending on receipts etc. Excellent service and I recommend it to everyone”.

“Darragh was absolutely brilliant from the get go, he has such a calm, genuine and caring manner and I just knew that my little boy would get on great with him. He put us at ease from the beginning and my son ran in the door each week for his appointment - he really helped us to understand our little boys emotions and provided us with strategies and tools that we can put in place daily for him. He helped him to understand his emotions a little bit more and gave us the reassurance we needed that there was nothing we needed to be concerned about. I would highly recommend Sensational Kids and Djola and Michelle were always so kind and helpful with any queries etc”.

# SCHOOL BASED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PROGRAMME

## Project Activities

During the academic year 2022-2023, the School Based Occupational Therapy Project in West Cork aimed to provide comprehensive support to children through various interventions. This included classroom observations, screening assessments, and recommendations for motor skills, sensory regulation, and emotional strategies. Additionally, workshops were conducted for teachers and parents, and resources were compiled for easy access to developmental activities. Movement pathways and sensory circuits were created in school hallways, and support was offered to children transitioning to secondary school. Despite some discrepancies in planned versus executed activities, the project made significant progress in fulfilling its objectives.

## Project Impact

**Directly, 149 children and 31 teaching staff benefitted from therapeutic interventions and workshops, resulting in improved skills and classroom engagement.** Indirectly, all school children benefited from sensory paths, and parents gained valuable resources through blogs and webinars. The project has also had a significant impact on the organisation, enabling the development of a successful School Based Occupational Therapy service and expansion of support to more children and teachers.

## Conclusion

The School Based Occupational Therapy Project in West Cork has demonstrated its effectiveness in providing essential therapy supports to children in school settings. The project has made significant strides in improving outcomes and enhancing the quality of education for children with disabilities. Additionally, it has contributed valuable insights and resources to the wider educational and therapy sector, laying the groundwork for future advocacy and expansion of similar initiatives.

“ We love working with Karyn, her help, support, enthusiasm and good nature with the children was infectious and her ability to explain and help me as a teacher to help other children was amazing ”



# 2023 SENSATIONAL KIDS WEBINARS

11  
WEBINARS  
IN 2023

Webinar	Number of participants	Number of survey Respondents*	% respondents who report workshop is excellent or very good*
Managing Emotions and Challenging Behaviour January 2023	94	11	81.8%
Supporting Communication in ASD February 2023	29	5	60.0%
Common Handwriting Difficulties and Strategies Webinar March 2023	56	8	87.5%
The Importance of Play in Child Development May 2023	25	9	77.7%
Unpacking and Supporting Childhood Anxiety Webinar July 2023	80	15	100.0%
Sensory Processing in the Classroom - Focus on Modulation August 2023	10	4	100.0%
Supporting Your Family Through the Transition to Secondary School August 2023	7	4	40.0%
Supporting Communication Difficulties in the Classroom September 2023	31	7	100.0%
Speech & Language Webinar September 2023	99	15	93.3%
Supporting Children With Feeding Difficulties Following the SOS Feeding Approach - October 2023	21	1	100.0%
Selective Mutism Webinar - November 2023	55	14	85.7%

\*The number of survey respondents is the number of attendees who answered any survey question. Not all respondents answered all survey questions. Thus the percentages may use different denominators than the number of survey respondents shown.

# 2023 HANDWRITING WITHOUT TEARS WORKSHOPS

**150 parents and teachers attended** our 2023 Handwriting Without Tears workshops. Handwriting Without Tears is a must-do one-day online course for parents, teachers and healthcare professionals working with children to enhance writing skills. The online workshop provides you with the knowledge, skills and materials needed to effectively teach handwriting. The comprehensive, easy-to-use curriculum applies engaging multisensory techniques and research-based methods to make handwriting a natural and automatic skill for children of all ages and abilities.

## SAMPLE WORKSHOP FEEDBACK:

“Excellent content, excellent teacher, everything broken down and easy to understand. Have learned so much today” L. Gleeson

“Very happy with the workshop, and I’m looking forward to implementing it with my son” M. Siewierska

“Excellent Course. Lots of very good information” A. Hughes

“It was very worthwhile. A lot of information delivered in a very explanatory manner – also very practical” H.O’Connor

“Very enjoyable and lots of learning” S.Hallahan

“Very informative and enjoyable, and plenty of resources, Thank you” B. Belton

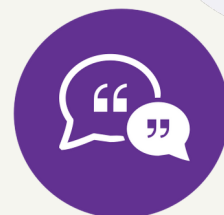
“The presenter was excellent!” W O’Donoghue

“Doing this course helps me to see it’s possible for anyone to learn to write easily” M. Caulfield

“Workshop, really, really worthwhile. Tania has super presentation/teaching skills and has experience” A. Donagher

“Excellent speaker and workshop. I know so much going home after this wonderful workshop with Tania” O. Kilcane

“Very practical workshop, Looking forward to putting it into practice. Great resource packs. Wonderful facilitator” E Ni Chatasaigh





# WHAT OUR FAMILIES SAY



# FAMILY TESTIMONIALS

## Ruairí

“ I cannot recommend Sensational Kids highly enough. Our son, Ruairí, has attended occupational therapy for just over 2 years. The care, compassion and dedication shown to him and to us has been exemplary.

**Attending Sensational Kids has improved and enriched Ruairí's life immeasurably.**

We are learning how to support him in regulating himself which has allowed him to engage in experiences which were once far too overwhelming for him. Attending sensational kids has opened up his world and for that, we will be forever grateful. ”

**Testimonial from Ruairí's Parents**

## Matthew

“ Our little Matthew arrived to Sensational Kids in September 2021. At that time he was nonverbal, distracted and a very unregulated little boy. Our hearts were broken with worry. However, over the last two years due to the dedicated team of experts in Sensational Kids, Matthew is now focused, regulated and semi verbal. He is enjoying mainstream school with his SNA and making new little friends every day. Only last week Matthew won 'Pupil of the week' for his participation in class, especially his singing, and tonight Matthew wrote down letters from the alphabet for his parents. We are beyond joyful.

We know that Matthew has made this significant progress due to the expertise, patience and consistent dedication of Dana and her team in Sensational Kids.

We feel confident now that Matthew's future is bright and sensational Kids have been a significant contributor in his success. We are extremely fortunate we found Sensational Kids for our son and we will be eternally grateful to them. ”

**Testimonial from Matthew's Parents**





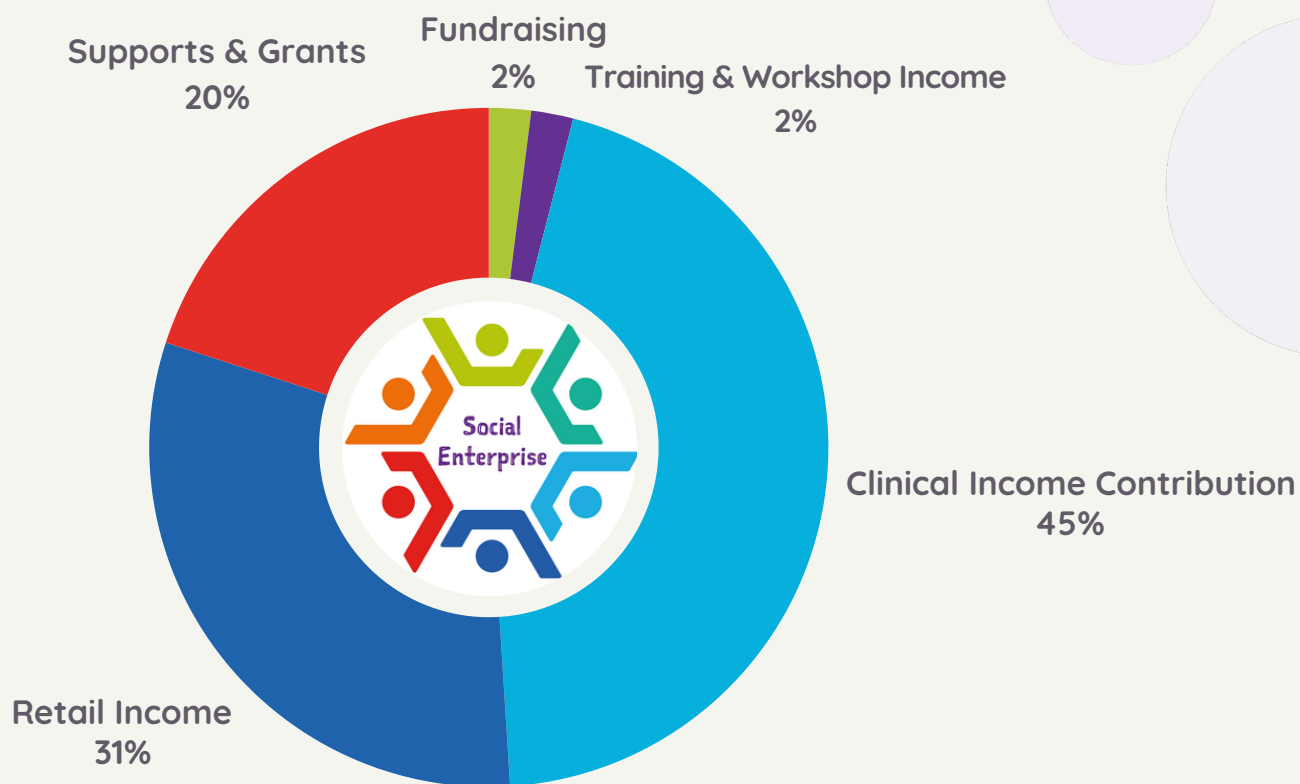
# FUNDING



# FUNDING

## Business Model

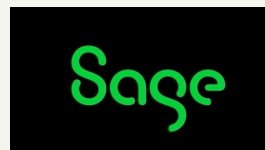
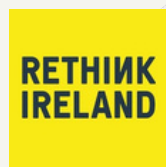
Sensational Kids is a social enterprise with charitable status. We earn income from our Play, Develop & Learn store, clinical contributions and training courses/workshops. We also receive support from corporate partners, grants and other philanthropic sources. This allows us to offer a standard subsidised rate for our services. We also facilitate lower scaled rates for families experiencing financial hardship, and 150 families currently avail of therapy services free of charge. This innovative model enables Sensational Kids to provide accessible, high-quality and affordable development therapies to children in need all over Ireland.



# FUNDING

## Our Partners and Supporters

We would like to thank our incredible community of Sensational Friends who supported us in 2023. Without your generosity, the work we do would not be possible. Last year, we gratefully received grants, donations, pro bono support and fundraising proceeds from:



- The Big C Choir
- Play, Develop & Learn Store Customers
- Individual Donors & Fundraisers



# FINANCIAL REPORTING

# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Sensational Kids Company Limited By Guarantee (the company) for the year ended 31 December 2023, which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including the summary of significant accounting policies set out in note 1. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is Irish Law and Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* issued in the United Kingdom by the Financial Reporting Council, as modified by the Charities SORP (FRS 102) *Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)*.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at 31 December 2023 and of its loss for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland*, as modified by the Charities SORP (FRS 102); and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

## Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are described below in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard for Auditors (Ireland) issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and the provisions available for small entities, in the circumstances set out in note 30 to the financial statements, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

## Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information in the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2014

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit, we report that:

- the information given in the Directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Directors' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

We have obtained all the information and explanations which, to the best of our knowledge and belief, are necessary for the purposes of our audit.

In our opinion the accounting records of the company were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited, and the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified any material misstatements in the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of our obligation under the Companies Act 2014 to report to you if, in our opinion, the disclosures of directors' remuneration and transactions specified by sections 305 to 312 of the Act are not made.

## Responsibilities of Directors for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the statement of Directors' responsibilities, the Directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

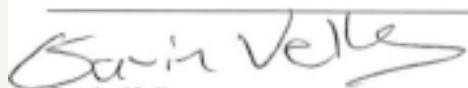
## Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the company's financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the IAASA's website at: <https://iaasa.ie/publications/description-of-the-auditors-responsibilities-for-the-audit-of-the-financial-statements/>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

## The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities.

This report is made solely to the company's members as a body in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters that we are required to state to them in the audit report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company or the company's members as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Gavin Kelly

for and on behalf of SCD Accountants Ltd

6 September 2024

Chartered Accountants  
Statutory audit firm

Barrettstown Business Centre  
Barrettstown  
Newbridge  
Co. Kildare  
W12 NP63

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

		Unrestricted funds 2023 €	Restricted funds 2023 €	Total 2023 €	Unrestricted funds 2022 €	Restricted funds 2022 €	Total 2022 €
Notes							
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>							
Donations and collections.	2	192,328	186,889	379,217	114,250	630,414	744,664
Other trading activities	3	1,408,295	-	1,408,295	1,330,256	-	1,330,256
Other income	4	9,347	-	9,347	4,012	-	4,012
<b>Total income</b>		<u>1,609,970</u>	<u>186,889</u>	<u>1,796,859</u>	<u>1,448,518</u>	<u>630,414</u>	<u>2,078,932</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Charitable Activity	5	2,045,139	372,223	2,417,362	1,607,126	408,122	2,015,248
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<u>2,045,139</u>	<u>372,223</u>	<u>2,417,362</u>	<u>1,607,126</u>	<u>408,122</u>	<u>2,015,248</u>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		<u>(435,169)</u>	<u>(185,334)</u>	<u>(620,503)</u>	<u>(158,608)</u>	<u>222,292</u>	<u>63,684</u>
Transfers between funds		93,826	(93,826)	-	(69,652)	69,652	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	8	<u>(341,343)</u>	<u>(279,160)</u>	<u>(620,503)</u>	<u>(228,260)</u>	<u>291,944</u>	<u>63,684</u>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Fund balances at 1 January 2023		192,972	406,976	599,948	421,232	115,032	536,264
<b>Fund balances at 31 December 2023</b>		<u>(148,371)</u>	<u>127,816</u>	<u>(20,555)</u>	<u>192,972</u>	<u>406,976</u>	<u>599,948</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

# BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	2023		2022	
		€	€	€	€
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Intangible assets	12		9,549		15,077
Tangible assets	13		1,989,629		1,609,277
			<u>1,999,178</u>		<u>1,624,354</u>
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stocks	14	51,806		60,438	
Debtors	15	83,514		79,690	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,575,200		2,065,705	
		<u>1,710,520</u>		<u>2,205,833</u>	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	17		<u>(864,582)</u>		<u>(368,234)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>845,938</u>		<u>1,837,599</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>2,845,116</u>		<u>3,461,953</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</b>	18		<u>(2,865,671)</u>		<u>(2,862,005)</u>
<b>Net (liabilities)/assets</b>			<u>(20,555)</u>		<u>599,948</u>
<b>The funds of the company</b>					
Restricted income funds	21		127,816		406,976
Unrestricted funds	22		(148,371)		192,972
			<u>(20,555)</u>		<u>599,948</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on 6 September 2024

*John McDonagh*

John McDonagh  
Director

*Dennis O'Connor*

Dennis O'Connor  
Director

Company registration number 432465



# STRATEGY





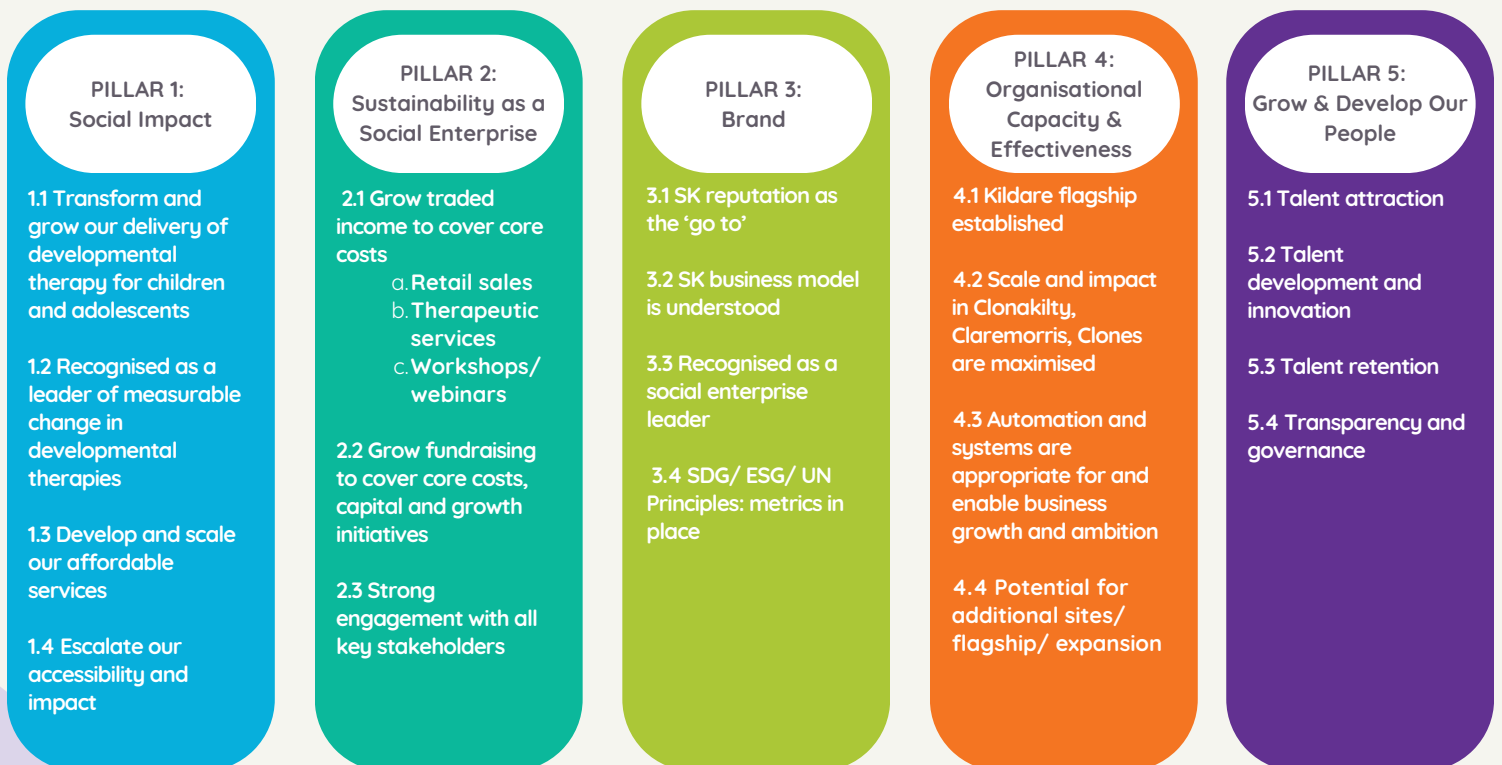
# STRATEGY

## Strategic Pillars

Throughout 2023, we continued to focus on the delivery of the goals in our strategic plan. With many of the goals mostly achieved, or well on the way to being achieved, we plan to review and update our strategy in 2024



## Strategic Goals



# STRATEGY

## Strategic Priorities

### Focus areas

Affordable (1.3)  
Traded income (2.1)  
Talent attraction (5.1)  
Automation & appropriate systems  
(4.3)  
Fundraising (2.1)  
Accessible (1.4)  
Talent development (5.2)  
Talent retention (5.3)  
Kildare flagship (4.1)  
Needs of non Kildare locations (4.2)

### Ongoing priorities

Reputation (3.1)  
Stakeholder management (2.3)  
Recognised SE leader (3.3)  
Governance (5.4)  
Business model understood (3.2)  
Flagship in southern counties (4.4)  
Measurable change (1.2)  
Transform service delivery (1.1)  
SGD/ ESG metrics (3.4)



# GOVERNANCE



# GOVERNANCE

## Corporate Governance

Sensational Kids is a privately funded social enterprise with charitable status. We receive grants and donations from individuals, corporate partners and trusts & foundations. We commit to all donors that we operate to, and adhere to, the highest standards of governance, transparency, and accountability.

- We comply with the Charities Act and are registered with the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA), Ireland's national regulatory agency for charitable organisations.
- We have adopted and are fully compliant with The Charities Regulator Governance Code as well as the Guidelines for Charitable Organisations on Fundraising from the public.
- Sensational Kids is a registered company (company limited by guarantee) and completes annual returns to the Companies Registration Office (CRO).
- We have adopted the Charity Standard of Recommended Practice SORP (FRS 102) for our financial statements.
- Sensational Kids annual financial statements are fully audited by SC Dunne Accountants Ltd
- Our annual accounts and annual reports are published on our website

### CHARITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY



Sensational Kids is a registered charity since 2007. Our Charities Regulator Authority Number is 20065133. We share annual reports and governance information with the CRA each year.

### COMPANIES REGISTRATION OFFICE



Sensational Kids is a registered company limited by guarantee. Our registered company number is 432465. We maintain compliance with CRO annually.

### THE CHARITIES REGULATOR GOVERNANCE CODE



Sensational Kids is fully compliant with The Charities Regulator Governance Code.

# GOVERNANCE

## Board of Directors



Maureen Bergin is the Community & Business Relations Director at Kildare Village. Maureen has been with Kildare Village since its opening in 2006 and held the position of Retail Director, overseeing the day-to-day operations of 100 boutiques, until January 2017. Prior to joining Kildare Village, Maureen spent 10 years in Dunnes Store HO as part of the group buying teams. Maureen is currently President of the County Kildare Chamber of Commerce and an executive member of Kildare Town Chamber.



Dr Katie Cremin is an award-winning Assistant Professor in the Discipline of Occupational Therapy (OT) Trinity College Dublin (TCD) since 2002. She completed her PhD in the area of secondary school and students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, with a specific focus on parents, teachers and peers. Katie's awards include a National Disability Authority: An exploration of the participation of children with fine motor difficulties and the impact of occupational therapy intervention. Katie lends her extensive academic and clinical expertise to the board and to the future development of Sensational Kids as well as chairing the Clinical Governance Sub Committee, at Sensational Kids.



Ann Howgego has twenty years of experience in the corporate and non-profit sectors. Ann has spent the last sixteen years in various advisory, consultancy and fundraising roles. She has previously worked in Corporate Social Responsibility with Business in the Community Ireland, then in philanthropy with the Community Foundation for Ireland. Ann holds an advanced Diploma in project management and a certificate in Corporate Responsibility. Ann is also a voluntary director and vice-chair of non-profit, My Legacy.



Leontia joined the board of directors at Sensational Kids in January 2022. Leontia has over twenty years of experience in developing and delivering impactful and transformative communications strategies that connect with external and internal stakeholders and support the delivery of business objectives. Her wide ranging leadership and communications experience covers a number of key areas, including; Corporate Affairs and Media Relations, Internal Communications, Employee Engagement, Culture and Sustainability. She has worked across both in-house and agency roles in the financial services, telecoms, retail, technology and FMCG industries.

# GOVERNANCE

## Board of Directors



Renata Bocotan is a qualified Chartered Accountant who currently works as a Financial Controller at Bank of Ireland and prior to that worked as an auditor at Deloitte. Renata's qualifications include a Bachelors Degree in Accounting from the National College of Ireland in 2017 and in 2021 Renata became an ACA Chartered Accountant. Renata joined as a voluntary board member to make a valuable contribution and make a difference by supporting such a great cause of helping families and children at Sensational Kids.



Lorraine Corcoran is a founder of Afanite, a company that utilises her extensive strategy, policy, and implementation skills to bridge the gap between social, commercial and public sectors. She is a recognised expert in the social enterprise sector and is a founding Director of Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland (SERI), the representative body for the sector in Ireland.

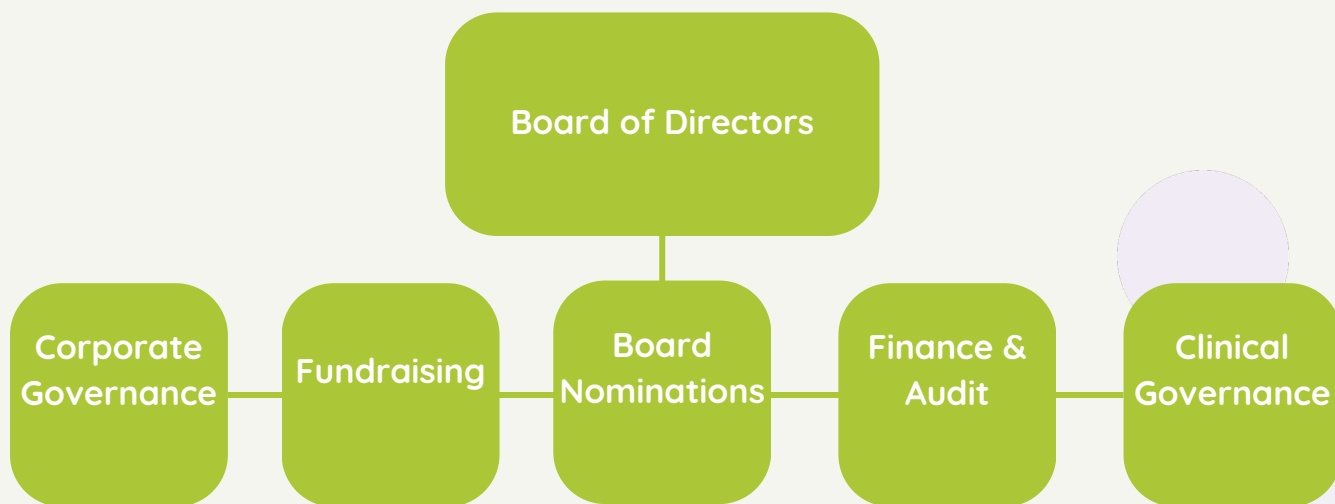
## Company Secretary



Liam Swords is a Manager in KPMG Law's Company Secretarial Team in Dublin. Liam provides company secretarial advices and assistance to a wide variety of clients, ranging from small startups to large listed and multinational companies across a wide variety of sectors. Liam graduated from Ulster University with an MSc in Management and Corporate Governance in 2022 and is a Chartered Company Secretary and member of the Chartered Governance Institute UK & Ireland.

# GOVERNANCE

## Board Sub Committees:



# WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT



## Kildare

Sensational Kids,  
Unit C2 Kildare Business Park,  
Melitta Road,  
Kildare Town, R51 WP02  
045 520900  
info@sensationalkids.ie

## West Cork

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023 887 8208  
clonakilty@sensationalkids.ie

## Mayo

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Lakeside  
Retail Park, Claremorris, Co Mayo,  
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094 9357005  
claremorris@sensationalkids.ie

## Monaghan

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047 52671  
clones@sensationalkids.ie

Instagram @sensational\_kids  
Twitter @SenKidsIreland

Facebook @SensationalKidsIreland  
LinkedIn Sensational Kids CLG

### SENSATIONAL KIDS ANNUAL REPORT

Registered in Ireland Company Number 432465. Registered Charity No CHY 17477.  
Charities Regulatory Authority Number 20065133