



delivering

potential

VICTA 2025
Annual impact
report



EMPOWERING
BLIND
CHILDREN
YOUNG ADULTS

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We are unwavering in our mission to help young people challenge limiting presumptions they and others have about their abilities. We want to ensure that young people who are blind or partially sighted have opportunities to develop the skills they need for their future as well as the confidence and self-belief to achieve their goals.



CHAIR'S REVIEW

Pamela Lewis

Vision & practice

Against a backdrop of continued conflict and upheaval across the globe, 2025 proved to be another unsettling year for many children and young people.

Steering a course through such uncertainty requires a sure and steady hand. At VICTA that manifests as a clear and consistent strategy. We work hard to help our young people challenge limiting presumptions they might have about their abilities, helping them and others to view them and their potential in a new way.

We want our young people to be able to make a difference to their own lives. I've seen first-hand

the dedication of our team, collaborators and volunteers as they navigate a rapidly changing world. That gives me confidence that VICTA is not only delivering on its mission but doing so with resilience and purpose.

The challenges facing young people with a vision impairment (VI) grow year-on-year, it is because of this that we continually challenge ourselves to think about what a different future could really look like. We look

beyond traditional thinking, to articulate how a better childhood can impact an entire lifespan. We are committed to building a strong and robust organisation that harnesses the power of constructivist models of learning to build confidence, self-esteem and ambition in young people.

By securing sustainable funding, enabling high-performing teams, strengthening cyber security, and investing strategically in digital, technology and data, we are strengthening our governance, risk management and compliance. In a sector that is grappling with funding uncertainty and policy reform fatigue, these foundations ensure we remain a capable, efficient and effective organisation. We hold both short and long-term goals in mind when planning our programmes and encourage pragmatic decisions to move

towards the world we ultimately want to see.

Over the past year, we have remained firmly focused on deepening our understanding of the difference we make in the lives of children and young people we support. This work is essential: it allows us to assess what is working well, understand how and why we achieve positive change, and identify where we can do better. At the heart of this approach is a commitment to accountability – not just to our funders, donors, and supporters, but above all to the children, young people, and families we exist to serve.

None of this would be possible without the extraordinary people who make up the charity's community. As a Board, we remain grateful for the professionalism and determination of our CEO,

Nick Schofield, and his team, whose leadership continues to set a high standard for impact and integrity. On behalf of the Board, I extend sincere thanks to our partners, collaborators, volunteers, and supporters who bring compassion, expertise, and relentless commitment to everything they do. I am continually inspired by their ability to hold hope in the face of adversity, and to turn that hope into action. I also want to acknowledge the importance of lived experience shared by our young people. Their valuable insight and lived experience continue to shape the work we do. We recognise the potential in every young person.

Pamela Lewis
Chair



CEO Statement Nick Schofield

Numbers can often reveal powerful truths that demand attention

Our programmes combine to build ambition, strengthen social bonds, and improve self-esteem for VI young people. This work is increasingly urgent as we face a deepening crisis in adolescent wellbeing, driven by a landscape that frequently undermines self-belief and stability.

The Children's Society Good Childhood Report 2025 identifies school as a primary source of anxiety, fuelled by peer pressure, academic pressure and social media. It is therefore not surprising that school attendance has found a place within public discourse. Updated figures from the Department

of Education (2024) show that school engagement remains poor post-pandemic, with one in five children now persistently absent which means they are currently missing 10% or more of their school time, the equivalent to an afternoon or more off every week of school.

The link between school attendance and educational outcomes is well documented and, furthermore, with poorer outcomes in later life. Repeatedly, research shows that pupils with special educational needs are

disproportionately represented in both absence and persistent absence figures. Significantly, the transition from primary to secondary school is a particular flashpoint that exacerbates vulnerabilities, often leading to long-term emotional disengagement and increased loneliness.

Multi-year funding has enabled us to strengthen our pathway for VI children from birth to adulthood. Our Pre-teen and Youth programmes provide foundational support to our young people and their families, while

extracurricular activities, including sports, build the resilience, self-esteem and confidence necessary to navigate school successfully. We place a high value on CV building to highlight potential over formal experience. By teaching students to showcase

transferable skills gained through our activities, sports and national awards, we provide them with the tools to build a well-structured and tailored CV, crucial to standing out from other applicants. Findings from the King's Trust TK Maxx Youth Index 2025 point to the continued urgency in this work as well.

A clear theme throughout the research is that young people desperately want to work. The data found 50% of young people (16-25) who are not in work, education or training (NEET) feel hopeless about their future, with many experiencing depression or shame due to unemployment. Our work is designed to help address this by boosting confidence and self-esteem, as long-term unemployment is known to erode a young person's belief in their own skills.

CEO Statement

continued

Our learning over the last 18 months confirms the power of sport not just as a tool for learning and personal growth but as a driver of inclusion, learning, and wellbeing for VI young people. With the VICTA Sports Family Weekend a key fixture, our focus has turned to deepening impact at the grassroots level and strengthening partnerships across the VI sports landscape. This is best exemplified by our collaboration with the Lawn Tennis Association who invited us to join their VI working group to help shape and develop a junior VI tennis strategy.

Responding to the growing influence of AI, we have initiated a dialogue with parents through our workshops and feedback loops to better understand the opportunities and concerns as they present for their children. While young people use AI chatbots in diverse and

imaginative ways including learning and schoolwork, some children, especially those who are more vulnerable, are engaging with AI chatbots not just as tools, but as companions – asking for advice, sharing their daily lives and seeking friendship.

A recent report by Internet Matters found almost a quarter (23%) of children who use AI chatbots have sought advice, and over a third (35%) of children who have used AI chatbots said chatting with an AI chatbot feels like talking to a friend, with this figure rising to 50% for vulnerable children. Furthermore, one in eight (12%) children who use AI chatbots said they talk to them because they have no one else to speak with.

Unlike peers, teachers or professionals, AI chatbots offer responses based solely on the context a child provides, without a deeper understanding of the

child's broader circumstances. While this responsiveness may feel validating, it risks producing one-sided or inappropriate emotional feedback that children may not be developmentally equipped to assess.

Our conversations with the National Youth Agency (NYA) suggest that while the growing use of AI chatbots amplifies existing online risks, it also introduces new ones, and protections for children have not kept pace with this rapid innovation. Within our work we try to help young people develop the skills to make good decisions including the decisions they take online. We feel compelled to keep a watching brief in this space.

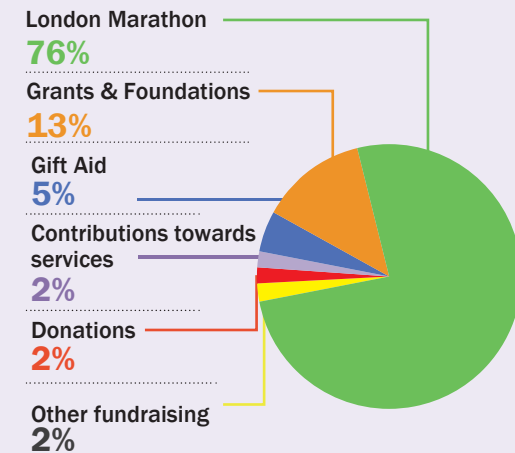
Nick Schofield
CEO

VICTA 2025

income & spending

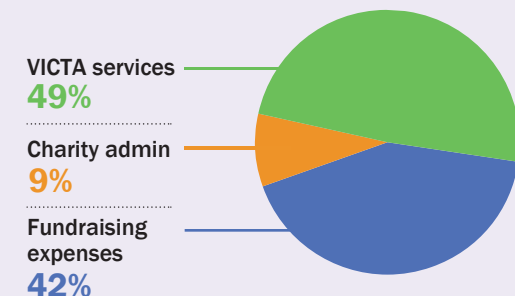
Income

2025



Spending

2025



our mission



Empowering children and
young adults who are
blind or partially sighted

VICTA values



We're led by blind and partially sighted children and young adults and their families – we anticipate need and continuously develop new ways to add value to our relationships

We value others – we behave in a way that promotes dignity and respect at work at all times and under all circumstances

We're collaborative – we make it easy to work with us, so that together we can make the biggest difference

We're creative – we understand challenges and find ways to overcome them

We're inclusive – we include and value people with diverse experience, abilities and backgrounds

We value professionalism – we strive for excellence. We're always receptive to better ways of working and better ways of delivering our services



our why

Aware that feelings of isolation and loneliness are dominant within the world of vision impairment, we focus on activity-based learning as a positive setting for social interaction and personal growth.

For our young people, involvement in group activities can be positively associated with social acceptance and a sense of belonging, especially where such involvement is characterised by positive coaching, progressive skill development and peer support. This is particularly meaningful, relevant, and necessary for VI students when they are preparing for transition into secondary education, higher education or the workplace. We believe wellbeing, social connectedness, confidence & self-esteem help counter the physical, mental & emotional problems faced within the VI community.

The mental health gap for VI youth is stark: by age 14, they are twice as likely as their peers to feel consistently unhappy, and by 17, they are six times more likely to feel hopeless all or most of the time and five times as likely to say they feel depressed all or most of the time. This disparity extends into adulthood, where 16–25-year-olds with vision impairment are twice as likely to be NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training). Most disturbingly, a degree provides no competitive edge; a blind or partially sighted graduate has the same employment prospects as a sighted person with no qualifications at all.



our how

Our programmes, which build to create a seamless pathway for VI children and young adults, are underpinned by constructivist models of learning in which young people are seen as active participants in the processes of seeking out knowledge, making sense of their experiences and gaining intrinsic satisfaction from learning and solving problems. Indeed, experiential education research demonstrates that people retain approximately: 5% of what they hear; 10% of what they read; 75% of what they practice doing; and 90% of what they teach to others.

Related to this approach is sociocultural theory. Here a young person's active role in learning is set in the context of their membership of social groups and communities which jointly create knowledge through their engagement in purposeful and valued activities. Significantly, there is an evidence base from the field of Positive Psychology that tells us when young people are taught how to use their strengths, they develop wellbeing and resilience as well as skills for learning and achievement. All of these are essential for promoting positive mental health and preventing mental health problems developing.



The Powell Family Foundation

Pre-teen programme (0-13)

“ We are sincerely grateful to The Powell Family Foundation for their belief in the work of VICTA. A two-year grant to December 2025 enabled us to deepen VICTA’s pre-teen and family programmes by enabling the creation of a sustainable portfolio of educational, developmental and sport-focused activities designed to improve outcomes for vision impaired (VI) children and young people, while strengthening family resilience and peer support networks.”

Nick Schofield
CEO



The Powell Family Foundation

Pre-teen programme (0-13)



Over the lifetime of the grant, we introduced an additional 834 VI children and their families to the Pre-teen programme. This represents a significant expansion in access, ensuring that more VI children and their families are aware of, connected to and able to engage with VICTA's targeted opportunities. By reaching new families the programme has strengthened early engagement pathways, increasing visibility and widening participation.

Independent social value modelling using HACT Social Value Calculator indicates that the Pre-teen programme generates £15.86 in social value for every £1 invested, equating to £2,154,399 in total social impact over the grant funding period 2024-2025.

Intellectual curiosity

We created opportunities for families and VI children to build their intellectual curiosity, which we measure through academic, creative and physical endeavours. We aim to demonstrate that learning can be both fun and useful, with the hope that children remember these experiences and carry their enthusiasm for learning into the classroom.

Within our Young Achievers Award, over the grant period 150 young people embraced 198 problem-solving challenges with 100% success rate.

Beyond this, 246 VI children engaged with our online virtual Science Fair developed and delivered with the British Science Association. And in terms of creative endeavour, 602 competition entries were received over the grant period proving accessible ways for children to express themselves, build confidence and share their achievements.

Empowering parents with knowledge enables them to challenge limiting presumptions about their child's abilities, both within and beyond education settings.



The Powell Family Foundation Pre-teen programme (0-13)

Knowledge



Parent workshops over the grant period

- 23 workshops reached 479 parents
- 100% reported an increase in their confidence
- 95% reported an increase in their knowledge

Sleep service

- 17 families accessed our Sleep Service
- 21 families participated in sleep workshops
- 100% reported an increase in their knowledge
- 100% reported an increase in their confidence

Early Years Sensory Discovery Packs (and associated play sessions)

over the grant period

- 120 Sensory Discovery Packs distributed to families
- 37 professional packs distributed
- Estimated reach of 580 VI children

Outcomes reported by parents

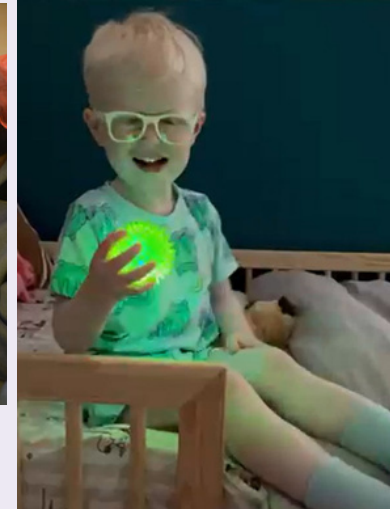
- 100% feel more informed about where to source information and support via the VICTA Parent Portal
- Play videos were watched 801 times

Parents applied for packs to

- support their child's development
- learn more about the senses
- enjoy a fun activity together
- following encouragement from a professional

After two weeks, parents reported they

- felt more knowledgeable about adapting play for vision impairment
- are enjoying play with their child
- felt more informed about support available





Networks of support

Building networks of support helps combat isolation and loneliness while fostering a sense of belonging.

VICTA Activities

across the grant period

- 77 of 85 activities gave families and VI children opportunities to create friendship groups
- 96% met someone new

VICTA parent online support network

Our closed Facebook group provides a safe and welcoming space for parents to ask questions, share experiences and celebrate achievements.

- Over 1,333 members by the end of 2025 an increase of 15% year on year
- Number of followers has grown from 3.4K to 4.1K, an increase of 20% on the period

“ We have met other VI children and their families, and our confidence has grown especially socially and around independence.”

VICTA Parent

Wellbeing

Research shows that people who are more connected with nature are usually happier in life and more likely to report feeling their lives are worthwhile.

Physical activity is recognised as contributing to emotional and social wellbeing as well as linked to positive life choices.

- 8 different sports were introduced to 44 VI children
- 60% tried something new
- 100% learnt something new
- 100% met someone new
- 100% were able to source information locally





Vinchel Foundation

Youth programme (14-17)

“Thanks to the Vinchel Foundation’s consistent, multi-year commitment, we have not only successfully launched and embedded a youth programme but established an equally successful 18 Plus programme based on disability advocacy, employability and leadership for young adults aged 18-29 with a vision impairment.

The Vinchel Foundation has been a true partner in this journey. Their trust has given us the space to think strategically, move beyond outcomes to consider longer term impacts thereby creating meaningful and lasting change in our community. While this specific grant cycle is closing, the impact of their investment will continue to be felt for years to come. We are honoured to have worked with the Vinchel Foundation and can’t thank Mikhail Vinchel enough.”

Nick Schofield
CEO



Vinchel Foundation

Youth programme (14-17)

The Vinchel Foundation funding has allowed us to both sustain and strengthen our pathway for VI youth. A calendar of extracurricular activity including sport designed to build confidence, self-esteem and a sense of future, ensures students within our programme are in the best position to get the most out of their time at school. We also recognise the importance of curriculum vitae (CV) building.

Creating opportunities for students to shine on paper is vital, it is an opportunity to highlight potential over experience. We help students understand the importance of a strong CV and how it serves as a primary marketing tool to secure internships, part-time jobs, and initial graduate roles. Since recruiters often spend seconds scanning a resume, a well-structured and tailored CV is crucial to standing out from other applicants, showcasing skills and potential even with little or no formal work experience. We talk about the importance of transferable skills – those soft skills such as communication, teamwork, organisation, and problem-solving gained from extracurricular activities, sports, and national awards.

Programme delivery

In 2025, we delivered structured, progressive opportunities designed to support the personal development of young people aged 14-17. Our youth programme focused on building knowledge, practical skills, leadership capacity, and overall wellbeing.

- 145 structured participation opportunities delivered
- Across 34 structured activities, including:
 - 4 residential experiences
 - 6 online activities and competitions
 - 24 in-person activities
 - 19 activities were delivered through the VICTA Sport programme, introducing 52 students to new sports leading to increased physical confidence



“Our daughter had an amazing time at camp. She made lots of new friends and loved seeing her old friends from last year. Since home she has continued chatting to her friends. I’d like to say a huge thank you all at VICTA and the volunteers who made it all possible! ” VICTA Parent

Participation & engagement

- 41% of participants were new to VICTA activities, expanding our reach to new young people
- 41% of students participated in two or more activities across the year, demonstrating sustained engagement
- 50% of students progressed to the next stage of VICTA pathway
- All students who progressed participated in multiple activities (more than two each), reflecting depth of engagement
- 34 competition entries were submitted

Achievement & accreditation

Students achieved recognised awards and certifications, demonstrating measurable skill development and CV markers

- 16 students achieved an Arts Award Discover
- 16 students achieved a Go Lead Leadership Development Award
- 16 students achieved Goalball School Leaders Certification

Measurable outcomes

Post-programme feedback
100% of participants reported:

- increased confidence
- meeting someone new
- learning something new



Engagement

In 2025, engagement data for 14–17-year-olds demonstrated sustained involvement at a critical stage of adolescence. We believe development programmes serve as a vital framework for adolescent growth, offering structured environments where individuals can cultivate critical thinking and self-awareness during a formative developmental stage. By integrating activities that prioritise the enhancement of emotional intelligence - specifically the capacity to manage interpersonal dynamics and resolve conflicts - these initiatives equip teens with the necessary competencies for both professional advancement and

personal well-being. Ultimately, the early acquisition of these leadership and socio-emotional skills fosters greater psychological resilience and facilitates the establishment of constructive relationships across diverse social contexts. And while many young people initially engaged through a single activity, 16% returned to participate in two or more activities within the same year, reflecting increasing trust in the programme and a shift from introductory engagement to ongoing participation.

Pleasingly, across the three-year funding period, we are able to demonstrate strengthening social

value generation across our youth programme. In 2023, using the HACT Social Value Calculator, the youth programme evidenced a return of £11.20 for every £1 invested. In 2025, that had risen to an evidenced return of £16.13 return for every £1 invested. Clear demonstration of the power and benefits of sustained and consistent funding. With the support of the Vinchel Foundation we have been able to deepen our strategic thinking. Over the period, we have been able to reflect, refine and enhance our offer. Responding more closely to the needs and aspiration of our young people ensures a more compelling offer which in turn delivers

greater impact. Our partnership with the Vinchel Foundation has clearly strengthened programme effectiveness and impact. It has enabled us to strengthen our developmental pathway, improve programme quality, and deepen engagement with participants over time.

Vinchel Foundation funding has allowed us to build continuity of support for young people as they transition through key stages of development, resulting in stronger outcomes for young people and improved social return.

Anonymous Funder

Why leadership development matters



At VICTA, leadership is not just about guiding others – it's about self-reflection, personal growth, navigating relationships, and creating a positive impact. We believe developing leadership skills in young people to be transformative by shaping emotional, social, and intellectual growth. Multi-year funding from an anonymous donor, has allowed us to think strategically about our approach and explore behavioural psychology to ensure our leadership programmes build not just strong leaders, but resilient, empathetic, and considered individuals.



Anonymous Funder

Why leadership development matters

Research suggests that leadership development activities empower young people at a pivotal stage by helping them explore their potential, identify strengths, and build critical thinking skills necessary for personal and professional growth. Central to this development is the cultivation of emotional intelligence, which teaches young people to manage their own emotions while effectively navigating social complexities and conflicts through collaboration. We believe that by fostering these abilities early through structured programmes and community involvement, young people achieve greater emotional well-being and establish the groundwork for healthy, lasting relationships throughout their lives.

We believe that when young people feel empowered to take on leadership roles, they are more likely to pursue new opportunities, try new things, and face difficult

situations with a positive attitude. This self-assurance can translate into greater academic success, improved relationships, and a greater sense of overall well-being.

In partnership with the Leadership Skills Foundation (LSF), Agent Academy and Train2Train, we provide a comprehensive range of awards and courses designed to empower young people through the integration of leadership, project management, and advocacy. For younger participants, our programmes offer a supportive environment to interact, share ideas, and collaborate with others. These experiences help teens develop social skills, such as empathy, active listening, and conflict resolution, which are essential for forming and maintaining healthy relationships throughout their lives. As a student progresses, the focus shifts toward mastering professional skills, including the

principles of project management, effective communication and accountability, ensuring growth at every stage of development.

By equipping students with the tools to set goals, prioritise tasks, and apply creative problem-solving, we prepare them for the demands of both academic and professional life. Research from the National Association of Secondary School Principals links these leadership initiatives to higher academic achievement and improved career outcomes. Ultimately, we believe these programmes build a lasting foundation of confidence and responsibility, shaping a roadmap for success at every stage of a young person's development.

Anonymous Funder

Why leadership development matters

Young Leader Award

Between October and November, we piloted an online leadership programme for six 10–13 year olds. Partnering with the LSF, we delivered their Young Leader Award across three virtual workshops on Microsoft Teams. The award introduces leadership by encouraging participants to problem-solve, lead small activities, and build the confidence and resilience needed for greater responsibilities. To make the sessions engaging, we used Taskmaster Education resources, allowing the group to meet the award requirements through creative tasks that involved their local communities.

Go Lead Award

During VICTA's annual Summer Camp, 16 young people (aged 14–17) took part in a pilot of LSF's Go Lead Award. This practical leadership programme focused on developing the core competencies needed to design and lead activity sessions. Throughout the week, participants worked in small groups to create games for their fellow campmates. This gave them a platform to provide peer-to-peer feedback and instruction in a real-world setting. A key part of the award involved self-reflection, encouraging the group to evaluate their own leadership styles, lead by example, and learn how to adapt activities to suit a wide range of abilities.



Anonymous Funder

Why leadership development matters

Level 3 – Environment Leaders

As part of our expanded 18+ leadership pilot, eight young adults are currently undertaking the LSF Level 3 qualification in Leading a Project for Positive Change. Running from December 2025 to June 2026, this programme empowers participants to plan, lead, and evaluate a project that benefits themselves, their community, and the environment. Across five units, the group audits their own leadership qualities, explores the power of community action, and works as a team to implement a project with a clear social aim.

For this pilot, the group is collaborating with the London Canal Museum to bridge a gap in accessible educational

resources. Their focus is on creating tactile resources to accompany museum exhibits, enhancing the learning experience for visitors with sight loss. The programme blends virtual workshops on Microsoft Teams with independent group work and in-person research. To kickstart the design phase, VICTA hosted a residential in Edinburgh, where participants evaluated accessibility at world-class museums to inform their own project priorities. As the project progresses, the team will consult with stakeholders, visit the London Canal Museum to coordinate with staff, and eventually test their resources with VI families to measure their impact.



Anonymous Funder

Why leadership development matters

Changemakers: Creative Industries Programme



changemakers

Ultimately, within our Changemaker programme for young adults (18+), we don't view leadership as a skill but as a mindset. A way of approaching the world with confidence, empathy, and determination. By investing in leadership training, we want to shape a generation of individuals who are not only capable but inspired to make a difference. The Changemakers Creative Industries Programme is rooted in lived experience. This one-year fully accessible, co-designed programme which commenced in September 2025 is structured to build confidence, develop creative and digital skills and challenge public assumptions.

Through real-world creative training, 10 VI young adults will explore industry-relevant modules including creative strategy, insight and data, user experience, design, videography, animation, sound design, social media campaigns, communication, PR, digital platforms and event production. Sessions are supported by industry mentors and mapped to an NCFE qualification. Delivery includes 12 online sessions and two residential weekends in Liverpool.

The group will co-create a public awareness campaign and a myth-busting film designed to shift perceptions and open conversations

around VI inclusion. The campaign will be activated regionally, used to engage and train employers and schools, inform inclusive practice and be presented to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Creative Industries Board to influence accessibility policy.

Anonymous Funder

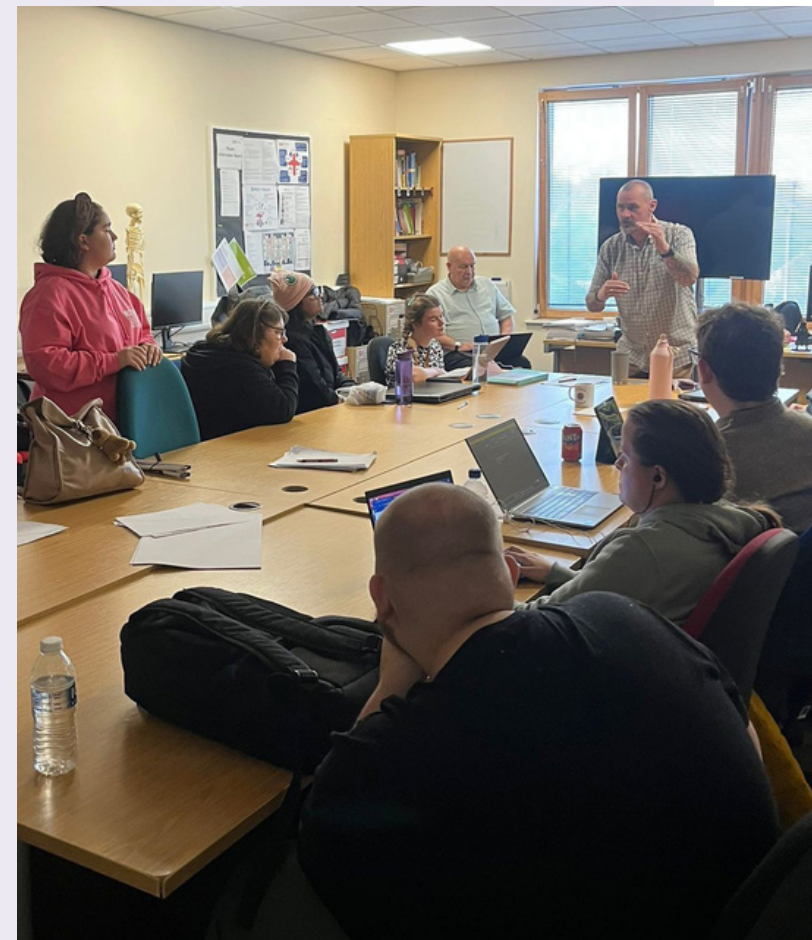
Why leadership development matters

Get Workplace Ready

Get Workplace Ready is a three-month, Ofqual-regulated employability course designed for unemployed VI young adults (18+) identified as being one-step removed from the labour market. Developed in partnership with Train2Train, the programme begins with an intensive six-day residential at The Royal National College for the Blind (RNC) in Hereford.

The course uses cognitive behavioural group approaches and coaching to help participants (re-)discover their career goals, overcome the fear of failure, increase self-confidence and boost their overall wellbeing. Through 10 interactive classroom sessions and four activity-

based workshops, attendees learn to manage their “inner dialogue” and lean into their personal strengths. To ensure long-term success, participants receive targeted 1:1 support and explore basic self-coaching skills. Attendees learn how to become aware and take control of their inner dialogue and rediscover their personal strengths. The programme also fosters a strong peer-mentor culture, encouraging the group to build a lasting support network that continues long after the course ends.



The Primary Club: Murray Fund

Building confidence, inclusion and leadership through sport

Thanks to a two-year grant from The Primary Club's Murray Fund, we have expanded and strengthened our I Can Play pathway into the VICTA Sports Family Weekend: a bespoke weekend dedicated to VI sports for VI young people aged 7 to 17 and their families.

The I Can Play initiative demonstrates how sport and physical activity can drive inclusion, learning, and wellbeing for blind and partially sighted young people. Beyond competition, this model positions sport as a catalyst for tolerance, cooperation, and empowerment, helping children and young people to develop essential life skills, strengthen confidence, and build meaningful connections with peers and families.

Throughout 2025, our structured pathway within sport has provided tailored opportunities that remove barriers to participation, nurture physical literacy, and promote lifelong engagement in physical activity.

The VICTA Sports Family Weekend, which sits at the heart of the I Can Play pathway, is dedicated to vision impaired (VI) sports and is founded on the belief that sport is a powerful tool for learning and personal growth. Through inclusive and accessible sporting activities participants build confidence, teamwork, skills, and a strong sense of belonging, key factors that enhance social inclusion and support successful transitions into secondary education.

Twenty-two families (80 people – 27 VI young people, 16 siblings, 37 parents) from across the UK attended the 2025 Sports Family Weekend, benefitting from improved family cohesion and understanding of physical activity as a shared learning

Working with seven sporting bodies supported by 13 VICTA volunteers 4 of whom were VI, we delivered the following sports:

- Blind football
- Goalball
- Blind baseball
- Blind cricket
- Judo
- VI tennis
- Boccia

Social impact

Using the HACT social value calculator, the Primary Club's £10,000 grant delivered a £137,000 social return on investment.

Families reported sustained re-engagement in physical activity. Our post event survey showed 88% participation continuity, 100% of parents were able to obtain information locally and 100% reported an increase in their VI child's confidence. Using this data with the HACT social value calculator we estimate that for every £1 invested in VICTA Sports Family Weekend there is a £13.70 social return.

The I Can Play pathway contributes directly to national priorities in health, inclusion, and education.

- Supports the UK Physical Activity Strategy by reducing inactivity among underrepresented groups.
- Contributes to the SEND inclusion agenda, promoting equal access to extracurricular learning.
- Aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, notably:
 - Goal 3 Good Health and Wellbeing
 - Goal 4 Quality Education
 - Goal 10 Reduced Inequalities

The Primary Club: Murray Fund

Building confidence, inclusion and leadership through sport

Spotlight on Sport

Scarlett & Eliza Humphrey & swimming

Scarlett and Eliza both have a vision impairment and have been attending VICTA activities with their family since the age of seven. This includes Family Weekends, days out and age-specific residential including the annual VICTA Summer Camp for teenagers. They are currently disability advocates within the VICTA Changemakers programme

At a young age, they attended mainstream swimming lessons but almost gave up as they struggled to progress as part of a larger class. Their parents eventually found a swimming teacher who would teach them 2:1, allowing them to succeed, develop a love for the sport and in their teenage years, begin competing regionally and nationally. In 2024, they were

selected by Paralympics GB to compete in swimming (S11 classification) at the Paris Paralympics. Both prior and post Paralympic Games, they recorded video interviews with VICTA about their experiences.

Now 20 years old, they were invited to speak at the VICTA Sports Family Weekend 2025. As well as speaking about their sporting experiences from a young age through to the Paris Games, they also described the role that VICTA has had in their personal development. Attending VICTA activities and events from a young age empowered them to be more independent and helped them recognise that they could achieve far more than they thought possible.



The Primary Club: Murray Fund

Building confidence, inclusion and leadership through sport



Sophie (aged 12) & rowing

Leicester Rowing Club (LRC) is part of British Rowing & Love Rowing's 'Row the Rhythm' programme that aims to encourage more people with a vision impairment to take up the sport. VICTA Sport is a partner to the programme, working with rowing clubs to host taster and open days as way of welcoming VI young people into the programme.

Sophie attended the taster day hosted by LRC and VICTA Sport in April 2025. She was paired with a sighted member of LRC's junior section, who guided her through the day including orientation around the clubhouse, practising on the indoor rowing machines and finally out on the water. Sophie loved the day and expressed an interest in continuing to row after the event.

Fast forward three months to the VICTA Sports Family Weekend, and when asked if she had continued rowing, it transpired she hadn't, as her parents were unsure how their local rowing club would be able to support her. Both parents, particularly her father, were hesitant about how much they would get out of the VICTA Sports Family Weekend, later admitting they were trying to find an excuse to leave. A week after the conclusion of the Family Weekend, Sophie's father wrote to us.

"As I write this, I'm watching Sophie do her first taster session at Loughborough Boat Club. They didn't bat an eye when I mentioned the VI and noted it's a perfect fit for her. Her trainer seems to have links with Leicester too.

I'll be honest – I had some hesitation when I arrived (at the Family Weekend). I've never really spent time around so many families in similar circumstances. But as the weekend went on, I really got into it. It was a pleasure to meet some lovely parents and kids, and it really opened our eyes to the art of the possible. It made us realise that so many of the barriers to VI sport were in my head."

Spectris Grant

Testing the inclusivity of virtual reality headsets

We were thrilled to receive £5,000 from Spectris, a grant secured thanks to the initiative of a dedicated marathon runner. This funding will support our Online Science Fair, an annual celebration of STEM for VI children and young adults (ages 0–29). The fair is designed to inspire a passion for STEM while championing greater industry inclusion.

For the young people we serve, technology is transformative. Beyond education and career goals, it is essential for daily life – facilitating independence through screen readers, magnification,

and audio description. As digital integration grows, so does the need for digital wellbeing and accessibility. To address this, the NYA invited VICTA to collaborate on a project exploring how VR headsets can bridge the digital gap and enhance connectivity. This partnership allows us to test emerging technology alongside industry leaders while ensuring the needs of the VI community remain a priority. The NYA are a charity that supports and improves services for young people while providing best-practice regulations for youth work practice.

To delve deeper into these possibilities, we are using the Spectris grant to launch a technology roadshow in 2026. These research sessions will allow students to test the limits of VR technology and connect with peers. The roadshow includes workshops at New College Worcester, RNC (Hereford), and a dedicated session for young adults at the Thomas Pocklington Trust in London.



Sport England Grant

Sport England Movement Fund

Thanks to a grant from Sport England's Movement Fund, we've expanded the success of VICTA Sport with two new initiatives, including our VICTA Sport Young Achievers Award.

Launched in June 2025 at the historic Stoke Mandeville Stadium, home of the Paralympic Games, this award is for children following a primary curriculum and encourages and rewards the development of physical literacy in VI children. By focusing on three core themes – sporting participation, movement skills, and environmental awareness – the programme builds vital confidence, independence, and resilience. Participants earn pin badges and certificates across three rounds, culminating in a VICTA Sport Young Achievers

medal. The award is flexible and can be completed at home, at school, or during our dedicated VICTA Sport Young Achievers (SYA) Days.

The funding has opened doors to unique experiences. Our first group enjoyed a behind-the-scenes look at Paralympic history, handling historic artefacts at Stoke Mandeville before tackling blind football and athletics to earn their 'Get Set' badge. The adventure continued in August with kayaking at Langstone Harbour, Portsmouth for the 'Game On' badge. We wrapped up the year in November with a geocaching "treasure hunt" in the Kent woodlands to earn the 'Super Me' badge. This final session also featured VI-accessible

cricket and tennis sessions, connecting families directly with local clubs like Kent Cricket and Kent Tennis.

The second initiative supported by the funding was our pilot Sports Leadership Camp. During the October 2025 half-term, nine VI teenagers (ages 14–17) attended a five-day residential at RNC, Hereford. Working with expert VI sports coaches in purpose-built facilities, the group trained toward their Level 1 Qualification in Sports Leadership.

For over half the group, this was their first time joining a VICTA Sport programme – and for one participant, it was their first experience with VICTA entirely. It was a week of "firsts" packed with intensive personal

development. The impact was clear; one parent share, "It was noticeable how much confidence and self-esteem he gained. He was incredibly proud to have all his paperwork signed off. Thank you for running the award."

In support of both initiatives, the Movement Fund also provided essential specialist equipment, including adapted balls, eye shades, and running tethers. We were also able to invest in additional cricket and blind football kit. This equipment gave participants the chance to explore a wide variety of sports and physical activities. For our Sports Leadership Camp cohort in particular, having access to these tools provided much greater autonomy as they planned and led their own sports sessions.

"My child has gained more independence and belief in herself and a greater love for sport, in particular goalball and boccia. And she's made new friends which is great for me. I've gained a better idea how to support my child and how to access different sports. The VICTA team is incredible and so knowledgeable and supportive of all our children."

VICTA Parent



collaborator spotlight



Stargardts Connected

Since 2022, VICTA and Stargardts Connected have partnered to help families build stronger support networks through shared adventures. These joint events — ranging from historical tours of Bletchley Park to high-ropes courses at Willen Lake — provide vital opportunities for families to connect and grow.

In September 2025, the collaboration headed to Lee Valley White Water Centre. Families tackled the “Water Wipeout” obstacle course before braving the rapids together for a session of white-water rafting. It was a fantastic day of growth, seeing both children and parents step outside their comfort zones, forge new friendships, and learn more about the specialised support services both organisations offer.



Adventure Sports making driving accessible

Never say never. Last year's youth programme featured a highly successful driving day at Adventure Sports' 100-acre Warwickshire site.

Demand far exceeded expectations. Although we increased our initial booking from 10 to 20 participants, we received over 40 applications. The itinerary included 4x4 off-road driving with an off-road dual-controlled Land Rover, a reverse-steer buggy challenge using converted golf buggies, and target shooting with gas-powered pistols and rifles. This was a popular day.

Following the success of this event – defined by its accessibility, the sense of fun and achievement felt by participants, and the positive impact on our

“Being unable to drive has been one of the most difficult things for my son to accept about his sight loss. He is now 17 and so many of his friends are currently learning to drive and gaining that independence he will never have.”

VICTA Parent

young people – we will likely repeat the experience in 2026. Although initially apprehensive, the professional drivers involved thoroughly enjoyed the experience. So much so, they welcomed our offer of sighted guide training for their whole team. By helping to build their awareness of sight loss and wider understanding of disability, we help to make the world a slightly more inclusive place.

“I may never drive on the road, but the 4x4 experience showed me there are no limits on what I can achieve.”

VICTA Participant



My Chocolate making independent living skills engaging

Our youth & parent chocolate making workshop was a unique and truly engaging workshop and was a great success.

It was tactile, messy and both young person and parent could get involved. We had nothing but positive feedback from participants.

All participants left with a bag of cooking chocolate so that they could continue their chocolate making at home. And more significantly, eight of the 10 families were new to VICTA.

“ [My daughter] loved telling her family about her day when we got back which is a major positive as [she] often struggles with short term memory so nice must have made an impression. Thanks again.”

VICTA Parent

“ [My daughter] really liked making something herself and packaging it up to bring home. It really did lift her mood.”

VICTA Parent



2025 at a glance

91

reaching

1,343

delivering

activities in person
& online

people reached
& supported

10
(FTE)

members
of staff

56

equaling

2,201

in-person
activities

staff hours dedicated to
in person activity delivery

SUPPORTED BY

62

volunteering
opportunities

reaching

2,612

hours volunteered

20

volunteers who have
a vision impairment



2025 governance & finance matters



Charity details

Key Staff and Trustees

Nick Schofield, Chief Executive

Pamela Lewis, Chair

Special responsibility for finance

Gurvinder Kaur, Trustee

Special responsibility for legal matters

Elizabeth Richards, Trustee

Special responsibility grants

Christian Sprenger, Trustee

Special responsibility for engagement, fundraising and marketing

Our Patrons

Michel Roux Jr

Michel Roux Jr took over the helm at the world famous Michelin starred Le Gavroche in 1991. Since then, Michel has won numerous awards for his cuisine and has continued to set the standard for classical French fine dining in London. Prior to Le Gavroche, Michel honed his skills working for master chefs in Paris, Lyon, Hong Kong and London, spending two years with Alain Chapel and cooking at the Elysee Palace for President Mitterrand.

Michel has also been a judge on Masterchef: The Professionals. Michel has been a great supporter of VICTA for many years, he continues to run in the London Marathon raising money to help us to provide our services.

Mardy Smith OBE

Mardy worked at New College Worcester (NCW), a residential school for students who are blind or partially sighted for 27 years, including the last 13 years as Principal. She retired at Christmas 2016 but maintains her commitment to ensuring young people who are blind or partially sighted have a wide range of opportunities and challenges. In addition to such experiences resulting in enjoyment and achievement, the positive impact on self-esteem and self-confidence is invaluable and Mardy is pleased to be able to support VICTA in their work with young people and their families.

Clarke Reynolds

Clarke Reynolds is registered severely sight impaired and is a successful visual artist. His artistic language is Braille, the tactile coding system which is made up of a six-dot cell and allows people of low vision to read. As a Braille typographer and artist, Clarke takes the tactile braille experience and gives it a visual language. His aim is to bring Braille into the 21st century through workshops, exhibitions and public art. He is passionate about being a role model for people of all ages with a vision impairment.

As words are important to a vision impaired person, Clarke's art explores the power of the English language and uses the Braille dot as a vessel to hold that word through the shape, colour and size of the dot. Over the past two years Clarke has held multiple exhibitions including his first solo show in London at the Quantus gallery.

Abbie Robinson

Abbie is a competitive climber from the North East. Having grown up an active, adventurous person, Abbie started indoor climbing when she was 13 at her local climbing wall in Sunderland. At 17, she was diagnosed with Stargardt Macular Dystrophy and registered legally blind. It was then that she was introduced to the world of paraclimbing and quickly went on to join the GB Paraclimbing Team, so far securing 7 international gold medals, including 3 consecutive world championship titles.

Having initially struggled to come to terms with the label of being 'disabled', Abbie is passionate about showing the world that disability does not have to be a barrier to success, independence or adventure. She is keen to make sport accessible for all in the hope that other people with disabilities can find the same freedom, confidence and strength through sport that she did.

Charity details

Registered Charity Details

Registered Charity Name

VICTA Children Ltd

Charity Registration Number

1065029

Company Registration Number

03424608

Principal Office

Challenge House
Sherwood Drive
Milton Keynes
MK3 6DP

Auditors

Nordens

The Retreat
406 Roding Lane South
Woodford Green
IG8 8EY

Bankers

CAF Bank

25 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hall
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

Metro Bank

44-46 Midsummer Arcade
Midsummer Boulevard
Milton Keynes
MK9 3BB

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

Income and expenditure account

	(£)	2025 (£)	2024 (£)
INCOME			
Income from generating funds:			
Donations and gift aid		77,100	83,093
Restricted grants		163,461	126,711
Other trading activities			
Fundraising events	6,647		
Marathon runners	601,179		
Sundry income	27,806	635,632	472,048
Income from investments		15,996	16,033
TOTAL INCOME		892,189	697,885
EXPENDITURE			
Charitable activities	480,360		
Charity administration	80,706		
Other fund raising costs	72,499		
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		633,565	611,199
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR		258,624	86,686
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward		454,543	367,857
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		713,167	454,543

This report includes all income and expenditure in the years detailed.

All of the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

Balance sheet

	(£)	2025 (£)	2024 (£)
FIXED ASSETS			
Office equipment and computers		5,641	1,114
CURRENT ASSETS			
Inventory	13,813		14,637
Cash at bank	784,242		574,575
	798,055		589,212
CREDITORS:			
Trade creditors	6,499		6,688
PAYE and social security	11,497		9,661
Marathon income received in advance	38,105		47,400
Other creditors including grants approved but not yet delivered	34,428		72,034
	90,529		135,783
NET CURRENT ASSETS		707,526	453,429
TOTAL NET ASSETS		<u>713,167</u>	<u>454,543</u>
FUNDS			
Designated funds		361,973	338,000
General funds		351,194	116,397
Restricted funds			146
		<u>713,167</u>	<u>454,543</u>

These accounts have been extracted from the audited financial statement approved by the Trustees and signed on 26/06/2026 on behalf of the Charity.

The audited financial statements can be found on the VICTA website and are available on both the Companies House and Charity Commission websites.



VICTA

Challenge House
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Milton Keynes
MK3 6DP

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victa.org.uk

VICTA Children Ltd. Charity No. 1065029.

 /VICTAUK  @VICTAUK



EMPOWERING
BLIND
CHILDREN
YOUNG ADULTS