



Registered Charity Number 1187737

Annual Trustees' Report

Period Ending: 31st December 2021

Future Academy Reference and Administration Information:

1 January – 31 December 2021

Charity Number: 1187737

Date of Registration: 04.02.20

Registered Address: Brierley, First Avenue, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex CO13 9EX

Email: contact@future-academy.net

Website: www.future-academy.net

Instagram: @futureacademy.social

Trustees

Christopher Watts (Chair)

Stephen Appleton

Alex Fisher

Damien Gabet

Max Montgomery

Rob Pilgrim

James Watts

Jane Watts

Key Management Personnel

Christopher Watts (Co-Founder; Chair of Trustees; Director of Future English)

Jane Watts (Treasurer; Governance Lead; Education Consultant)

Max Montgomery (Secretary)

Ahmad Al Jamal (Co-Founder; Operations Lead-Beirut; Director of Future Football)

Consultants

Mariane Lisboa de Paula (Strategy)

Omar Adi (Partnerships)

Meriem Cheikh (Web design)

Bankers

APS Financial Ltd

One London Wall, London EC2Y 5EB

Future Academy was registered by The Charity Commission as a CIO in February 2020 (Charity No. 1187737). This is the report of the Trustees for the year ending 31 December 2021.

Aims and Objectives

The Future Academy Trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the charity each year in January. This report looks at what the charity has achieved; the outcomes of its work in the reporting period and the benefit brought to the young people it supports.

The Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular the Trustees consider how the planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

The objects of Future Academy are for the public benefit to advance in life and relieve the needs of young people up to the age of 18 living in refugee camps in Beirut by:

- a) Developing their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals;*
- b) Advancing education;*
- c) Providing recreational and leisure time activity in the interests of social welfare for people living in the area of benefit who have need by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, poverty or social and economic circumstances with a view to improving the conditions of life of such persons.*

Future Academy was established in Burj Barajneh refugee camp, Beirut in 2019 and operated as an unregistered charity until February 2020 when UK-registration was achieved. Burj Barajneh Camp (also known as Borj el Brajne) was established in 1949 by the League of Red Cross Societies and is located in the southern suburbs of Beirut, a Hezbollah stronghold. The camp was built on one square kilometre of land to accommodate 10,000 refugees initially. However following displacements from other camps, as well as the influx of Syrian and Palestinian Syrian refugees, the population is estimated to have swelled to more than 40,000 individuals: approximately 50% Syrian, 40% Palestinian, 5% Lebanese and 5% migrants of other nationalities.

Living conditions in the camp are extremely dire as infrastructure is generally quite poor, access to basics such as clean water is challenging, the poverty rate is very high, and unemployment is as high as 90%. The camp is not structurally sound, as houses are improperly built and residents have been forbidden by law from bringing building materials into the camp - preventing the repair, expansion, or improvement of homes. Moreover, loose electrical wires hanging low over the alleyways result in the death by electrocution of several individuals each year.

Proliferation of arms and drugs is a notable feature of the camp. Palestinian refugees face restrictions in the labour market, with very few jobs available to them. Apart from support provided by UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency), they have no access to any form of social security or healthcare. Access to primary schools is generally only with the support of humanitarian communities and one in three refugee children fail to complete their primary education. The Covid-19 pandemic and economic crisis in Lebanon have plunged refugees living in Beirut into a more precarious status than ever.

Future Academy aims to deliver activities that will further its objects. These include football coaching; football tournaments; classes in English language, basic numeracy and vocational skills; and sporting/educational field trips in wider Beirut. All activities are risk assessed at the planning stage and again before implementation; they are reviewed afterwards to evaluate their success and impact.

Future Academy's operations are overseen by co-founders Christopher Watts (Chair of Trustees) and Ahmad Al Jamal (Operations Lead, Beirut). Ahmad is responsible for the day-to-day running of Future Football and liaison with the Burj Barajneh community while Chris manages Future English and develops partnerships with potential sponsors. Both volunteer their time and expertise and are integral to the successful operation of Future Academy.

Future Academy's aims for 2021 were to:

1) Maintain our current provision of weekly activities for the current cohort of 50 children and host the 3rd Future Cup. *This was achieved in full. Despite the Coronavirus pandemic our activities ceased only for 2 weeks in early 2021, when there was a full camp lockdown; we implemented our remote learning protocol enabling students to continue their education. Volunteer teachers set work for students which was delivered and collected by assistant teachers living within the camp.*

2) Increase stability by raising sufficient funds to create reserves amounting to 6 months activity and to provide a contingency of £1000 to allow us to react quickly to emergency situations within the camp. *This was partially achieved: On 1 January 2022 we had reserves amounting to 5 months activity and a contingency of \$500 held in Beirut.*

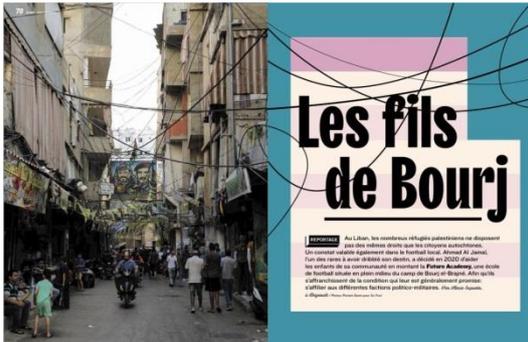
Achievements and Performance

Future Academy is proud to have continued activities throughout the coronavirus pandemic and have increased the number of children attending both football and English sessions.

In **May 2021** we published the first Future Academy newsletter. This is a quarterly publication which is sent to all donors and website subscribers.

In **June 2021** we had the opportunity to extend our provision by establishing our football academy in Shatila Camp, Beirut. Following approval from the Charities Commission, the Trustees passed a resolution to amend the FA governing document to reflect this change; our area of operation now extends to the whole of Beirut. In Shatila Camp, up to 30 children currently attend football coaching sessions.

In **August**, Lebanon was plunged into darkness for 24-hours. Since then the state-owned Electricité du Liban has only been able to supply power for two hours a day. Those who can, supplement this by running diesel generators; if you are already living in poverty this is not an option. As a short term solution, we held lessons on the football pitch after training. In **September**, we installed LED lighting in the classroom: power banks charge whenever electricity is available (this may be at night), and then provide light during lesson time. In **October**, Future academy was the subject of a 6-page article in French football magazine “So Foot”. Journalist Alexis Exposito spent time with the team in Burj Barajneh. He returned with several copies of the magazine; the children were delighted to see themselves in print.



Also in **October**, co-founder and Chair of Trustees, Chris Watts, was invited to join a panel of expert speakers at Newcastle University’s Day of Action 2021. The theme was social justice and the online event was attended by more than 4000 delegates from 56 countries. In **December** Future Academy hosted the 3rd Future cup for U15 Refugees in Beirut.

Future Football

Future Football sessions are led by a qualified local coach (Asian Football Federation Accreditation) and supported by at least one assistant coach. Sessions focus on the acquisition of football skills, tactics, fair play and fun; groups are split according to age and ability. Monthly awards are given for attendance, improvement, fair play and leadership.

In Burj Barajneh, 60 children regularly attend the four, weekly sessions led by Coach Saleh and his team. We hire an Astro turf pitch just outside the camp for these sessions.

In Shatila Camp, Coach Mahmoud runs two sessions a week for 30 children; we hire an Astro turf pitch within the camp for these sessions. The Future Cup provides the children with an opportunity to test themselves competitively against other teams.



The Future Cup – Future Academy’s Annual Football Tournament

Future Academy is proud to host the only annual football tournament for refugee children in Beirut. In December, Burj Barajneh welcomed teams from all of Beirut’s refugee camps to compete in the U15 Refugee Championship. After group stages and semi-finals, Future Academy (Burj Barajneh) met Dreams of Refugees (Shatila) in the final. Watched by friends, families and fans, Future Academy triumphed 6-3, sparking wild celebrations.



Future English

Our school is located in Burj Barajneh Camp; Co-founder and Chair of trustees Chris Watts leads a dedicated team comprising TEFL-qualified, native English speaking volunteer teachers and local, bilingual teachers. We offer an innovative, bespoke curriculum that is designed to meet the children’s needs and to supplement their limited, formal schooling. Approximately half of our students attend the local UNRWA school part-time (mornings or afternoons); the other students had never been to school before. All students complete a baseline assessment of English skills during their first month and are then allocated to the most appropriate class. Lessons focus on the acquisition of English skills (both oral and written), complemented with other curriculum areas and vocational skills. Student progress is measured both within a lesson (by engagement, outcome, intervention and self-evaluation) and over time (using the Future English Proficiency scale).



60 children have attended English lessons this year but attendance fluctuates. All of our students live chaotic lives; poverty is widespread; they live in poor quality, overcrowded homes and have no access to reading materials. We recognise that attendance will be sporadic; refugee camps do not run to a timetable and achieving regular attendance will be a challenge. Attendance is reviewed by teachers every month and the data is analysed quarterly. We set annual attendance targets for 2021 but these were only partly met. There were many reasons for this; they include Covid-19, Ramadan, internal camp security issues, and students having to care for younger siblings or work to support their family. Targets for 2022 will remain the same; we have implemented a range of strategies to improve attendance. These include monthly awards (for attendance, effort, achievement, progress and leadership); a student feedback survey; home visits to identify barriers to attendance

and interventions to address these; encouragement and reinforcement by Future Football staff. Our school operates for 52 weeks of the year and is open to both girls and boys.

2021 targets

75% of students will attend \geq 25% of sessions: **met** - 75% attended \geq 25% sessions

50% of students will attend \geq 50% of sessions: **just missed** – 48% attended \geq 50% sessions

25% of students will attend \geq 75% of sessions: **not met** – 19% attended \geq 75% sessions

There is no school yet in Shatila camp, but occasional English lessons are held on the football pitch after training. It is a medium term aim to open a school in Shatila camp too.

Case Study

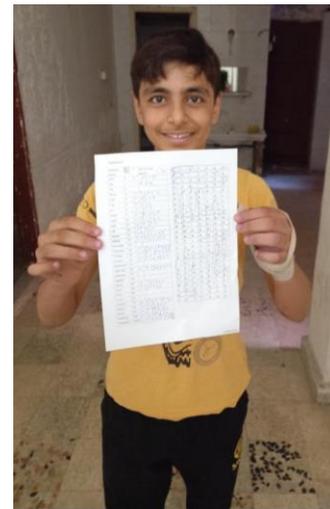


Before Future Academy arrived, Akram (left, aged 13) had never been to school. He knew three English words: *hello*, *yes* and *Neymar*. Akram quickly became our keenest student: first to arrive and last to leave, clutching his homework. He loves word searches, writing on the board and homework. Akram is nearly double the age of some of his classmates but he's not bothered – in fact, the opposite – he's appointed himself as an unofficial mentor for the younger students.

One year later (right, aged 14) he's holding a list of some of the many words he's learnt; he also knows Neymar is a proper noun and doesn't

really count as English vocabulary! Akram is still the first to arrive and the last to leave; he loves school.

Then one Monday, Akram missed his first class ever. He still hadn't returned to class by Friday, so we searched for him. We discovered he'd got a job to help support his family; he was working in a clothes shop seven days a week, so he couldn't come to school anymore. Sadly this is the reality for some of our children; we can choose to accept it or we can fight.



At Future Academy we fight: before every lesson Chris delivers worksheets and materials to Akram's shop where, in between customers, he completes his worksheets and word searches. Akram is a resourceful teenager and is desperate to come to school. Sometimes he is able to take a break or can find someone to cover for him; on these occasions he is now the last to arrive at school (out of breath, because he has run all the way) and first to leave – but still clutching his homework. Difficult situations require different solutions: our after school club, opening later this year, will become a lifeline to Akram and others like him. As well as providing children with a safe, social space with adult-led leisure activities, it will also provide valuable catch up classes for students who are unable to attend day time lessons.

Community Relationships

Charities and NGOs operating in refugee camps are often viewed with scepticism. Residents are wary of charities arriving and promising great new opportunities, then disappearing when too many obstacles occur or diverting resources when a crisis happens elsewhere. Future Academy's commitment to the children of Burj Barajneh and Shatila is long term: Ahmad, FA's co-founder and Future Football Director, was a child refugee who spent part of his childhood in both camps, becoming a professional footballer; he is well known and respected. Our football coaches, assistant teachers and security staff are all local residents. The communities are becoming familiar with our programme of activities and children are keen to participate. Coronavirus and the current economic and political chaos in Lebanon have made life even more challenging for the refugee community. Rival armed, political factions jostle for supremacy and control; the fallout impacts the community, our students and sometimes our activities.

Volunteer Contribution

Without the significant contribution of volunteers, Future Academy would be unable to deliver its activities to so many children.

In addition to the time donated by The Board of Trustees and occasional volunteers, the contributions provided by our key management personnel, consultants and volunteer teachers equate to more than 48 hours per week. A conservative estimate of the financial value of their contribution to Future Academy is £3840/month (more than £46,000/year).

Future Plans

Our aims for 2022 are to:

1) Maintain our current provision in both Burj Barajneh and Shatila Camps

Football academy and English school in Burj Barajneh for 60 children.

Football academy and occasional English classes in Shatila for 30 children.

2) Create a library and afterschool club in Burj Barajneh Camp.

None of our students have access to reading materials at home, so the library will be a vital resource that can be used during school time and at the after school club (ASC). Every student will be able to attend at least one weekly ASC session. This will be a safe space for students to socialise and take part in adult-led leisure activities. In addition we will be providing catch up classes to students who are unable to attend regular school sessions and scholarship classes for students aiming for higher education. The most vulnerable students will be able to attend additional sessions as part of our new nurture group initiative.

Funding for this provision has been provided by The Jephcott Charitable Trust. We hope the library will open in April 2022 and plan for the after school club to follow in the summer.

3) Create a dedicated girls' class in Burj Barajneh Camp.

Although all our sessions are open to both girls and boys, in practice 95% of students are male. Female students tend to be younger siblings of existing male students or the daughters of our local staff team. Currently only 27% of female refugees complete secondary school (source: UNHCR 2022).

Investing in girls' education transforms communities, countries and the entire world. Girls who receive an education are less likely to marry young and more likely to lead healthy, productive lives. Girls' education strengthens economies and reduces inequality. It contributes to more stable resilient societies that give all individuals – including boys and men – the opportunity to fulfil their potential. Education for girls is about more than access to school. It is also about girls feeling safe in classrooms and supported in the subjects and careers they choose to pursue. Barriers to girls' education include cultural and societal traditions, poverty, child-marriage and gender-based violence. (Source: UNICEF, 2022)

Initially we will be providing female students with 2 English lessons a week and will implement a range of additional safeguarding measures to facilitate the attendance of female students. Once additional funding is secured we will be providing this class with the full Future Academy provision:

- English Language (speaking & listening, reading, writing)
- Numeracy and vocational skills (to include accredited qualifications and access to/tuition in technology)
- Art, PHSE, Yoga, Football
- After School Club (safe social space; adult-led leisure activities; homework/study area)
- Opportunity to participate in 2 educational/sporting field trips in wider Beirut

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties. The public benefit of the Charity's activities is to advance in life and relieve the needs of young people living in refugee camps in Beirut; this is achieved principally by providing the children with regular educational and sporting activities.

Structure, Governance and Management

Future Academy was registered as a CIO with the Charities Commission in February 2020. The governing document is the Charity Commission's Foundation Model Constitution. Future Academy has a board of eight Trustees, who have a varied skillset.

Three Trustees are key officials who are responsible for the day-to-day running of the charity (alongside co-founder Ahmad Al Jamal, who is Operational Lead in Beirut). Key officials are appointed to the board for an initial period of four years; other Trustees are appointed for three years. (Existing Trustees may be reappointed for additional terms).

The Trustees will consider recruitment of new Trustees as the need arises. Applications from suitable candidates would be sought by identifying specific gaps in professional skills and seeking recommendations of professionally qualified candidates, if necessary, placing advertisements in suitable publications. Applicants would be provided with an information pack outlining the history of the organisation, its structure, activities and objectives, roles and expectations of Trustees plus other relevant supporting information.

The board meets a minimum of two times a year. Policies are reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis along with the risk register. The board are committed to developing a training budget so that Future Academy Trustees and the wider team are appropriately trained for their roles.

2020 Training (ICET unless stated otherwise)	2021 Training (ICET unless stated otherwise)
1:1 virtual meeting with International Charities Engagement Team (ICET)	Charities and safeguarding in an international context
Holding, moving and receiving funds safely when working internationally	Working internationally - Due diligence checks and monitoring the end use of funds
UK sanctions - policy and compliance	Risks and requirements when operating in cash internationally
Running your charity during Covid-19	Recovering with integrity - charities united against corruption internationally
Trusted Charity Workshop (NCVO)	Child Protection: Children's Rights in Theory and Practice (Harvard University) - ongoing 2021/2022

In addition, a full safeguarding audit was carried out in Beirut during 2021 by a trustee working as a volunteer teacher. Actions resulting from this review are:

(i) The production of a practical safeguarding guide for volunteers working in refugee camps in Beirut.

(ii) The development of a series of PSHE lessons for students to learn about empowerment, safeguarding and children's rights (based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child).

"At both community and household levels, violent disciplinary practices remain prevalent, affecting 81.7 per cent of Palestine refugee children in Lebanon and 77 per cent of Palestinian refugee children from Syria. Child labour and child marriage are increasingly used as coping mechanisms against deepening financial constraints". (unicef.org/Lebanon, 2022)

Financial Review

Future Academy raises funds from the general public, individual donors, charitable trusts, workplace giving schemes and corporate sponsors. In October 2021, we received a grant from the Jephcott Charitable Trust to establish a library and after school club in Burj Barajneh; all other funds are unrestricted; we do not use professional fundraisers.

Once revenue reaches £25,000 Future Academy will be required to have its accounts independently examined. Until that time the accounts will be reviewed by trustees not involved in the day-to-day running of the activities.

In 2021 total receipts of funds were £21,860; expenditure totalled £20,676 leaving a net balance on 31 December of £10,693.

Future Academy's main expenses are staff costs, the hire of the football pitch and school plus costs associated with operating a charity overseas.

We estimate that the cost of activities planned for 2022 to be £29,000 and we expect to have income in excess of £30,000.

Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Future Academy does not pay any UK-based Key Management Personnel.

Remuneration of Local (Beirut) Personnel

Our policy is, wherever possible, to employ staff from the refugee community. Local football coaches and assistant teachers are paid by the session, in USD. In 2021 we had 13 local staff on our team – 10 male and 3 female; 12 from the refugee community and one Lebanese.

Trustee Expenses

In 2021 Future Academy paid volunteer expenses of £4,830 to two Trustees. The expenses covered accommodation and travel costs associated with volunteering, as teachers, in Beirut for a total of 225 days. They were approved, in principle, in advance and paid retrospectively on receipt of appropriate documentation [in accordance with Future Academy Internal Financial Controls Policy, 6.3: Expenses]

In addition, two other Trustees made self-funded visits to Beirut so that they could see first-hand how the charitable activities are delivered; meet the Beirut team; and monitor the end use of funds.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees aim to maintain reserves allowing Future Academy activities to run for six months. This provides stability and enables us to honour our commitment to the children of Burj Barajneh and Shatila. Our current reserves equate to approximately 5 months, which suggests that we are maintaining an appropriate level of liquidity whilst ensuring that excessive funds are not accumulated. The adequacy of this policy is reviewed annually.

Details of Any Funds Materially in Deficit

The Trustees declare that the charity had no funds which were materially in deficit at the date of the statement of assets & liabilities.

Particulars of Any Outstanding Guarantee Given by the Charity

The Trustees declare that the charity has given no guarantee where potential liability is outstanding at the date of the statement of assets & liabilities.

Particulars of Any Outstanding Debt

The Trustees declare that the charity has no outstanding debts which are secured by an express charge on any of the assets of the charity at the date of the statement of assets & liabilities.

Risk

The major risks to which the Charity is exposed have been identified by the Trustees; procedures established to mitigate these risks are monitored and reviewed regularly and have been recorded in the risk register. Three major risks have been identified and arrangements have been put in place to mitigate these risks.

Camp Security Issues: This could include clashes between camp residents and the surrounding Lebanese areas over resources such as fuel, or over personal disputes; clashes inside camp between different armed factions or refugees. Mitigations include:

- Direct access to the latest security briefings from UNRWA and Red Cross (Beirut)
- Established communication chain between security lead, head of operations and staff leading activities to ensure all staff and students are informed
- Volunteer/staff safeguarding guide outlines procedures for such incidents

Armed Political Factions within Camp: Rival armed, political factions jostle for supremacy and control; the fallout impacts the community, our students and sometimes our activities.

Our charter is very clear:

We are apolitical. Our children are victims of history; we don't take sides in the fight for their future. We do not turn away anyone who wants to learn. We do not accept funding from political organisations or their affiliates. Mitigations include:

- Maintain a neutral, non-confrontational position at all times
- Deliver some activities off-site e.g. football training
- Restrict the number of visitors to camp to those that are essential for the delivery of charitable activities

Financial Issues:

Financial risk relates mainly to establishing stable revenue streams and overseas currency fluctuations - our revenue is in £ sterling but most payments made in Beirut are in Lebanese lira (converted from US dollars). The Lebanese lira has fallen drastically against the, previously fixed, US dollar rate of \$1 = 1,500 L.L. causing banks to create an unofficial capital control – basically freezing accounts and only releasing a limited amount of dollars using the “bank rate”. On 31 December 2021 this was set at \$1 = 3,900 L.L. while the unofficial exchange rate was \$1 = 20,000 L.L. Prices in Lebanon have risen dramatically; poverty is now widespread and this is especially true within the refugee camps.

Mitigations include:

- Maintain and develop relationships with existing funders; provide quarterly newsletters and personalised feedback to demonstrate the impact of their funds.
- Follow the Charity Commission Toolkit guidance relating to “Moving, handling and receiving funds safely when working in the UK and internationally”. [Chapter 4]
- FA internal financial controls policy is reviewed annually to ensure it is robust; full and proper written records are kept; all transactions are monitored.
- The formal banking system is used whenever possible and appropriate.
- Risk assessment undertaken before using alternative methods for transferring funds
- Local staff (Beirut) are paid in USD