



Equal People  
Performing Arts  
celebrating difference

Office & Studios: 29 Brook Road  
Rayleigh, SS6 7XJ

Phone: 01268 906740  
[www.equalpeople.org.uk](http://www.equalpeople.org.uk)

Fundraising Committee Chair: **Steve Westrop** • 07550 089918 • [steve@equalpeople.org.uk](mailto:steve@equalpeople.org.uk)

February 2016

Dear Friends,

Having been asked to take on a new role as Chair of the charity's Fundraising Team, I wanted to write and share with you some of the opportunities and plans for 2016, and at the same time give a quick introduction to those who don't know me!

I knew there was something special about **Mushroom** and **Equal People** from the day Samuel first came to a workshop in 'the shed' six years ago – he walked straight in, no "Bye Dad", and didn't want to leave afterwards! That's never really changed since, and it's been a privilege and joy to support and be a part of two such fantastic organisations, with so many amazing people. As well as being a parent, I've been involved with fundraising here for a while, manage the website and social media for Mushroom and Equal People, and got to look silly at carnivals!

Hopefully some of my previous experience will help with the new role, though I'm not quite sure where teaching RE, juggling, magic or puppetry fit in. Yes, often at the same time!

Whilst adjusting to parenthood and disability some years ago I volunteered to provide advice and support to disabled parent families through a leading national charity; later becoming IT Manager, Operations Director and Chair of that charity. I've been involved in a number of other organisations since, in various roles, which led to training Social Workers in the Social Model, leading investigations into failings at Basildon Hospital, and championing change in the care of those with Learning Difficulties.

I'm a big advocate of volunteering: ultimately everything I've achieved over the past ten years can be attributed back to time spent as a volunteer. Had someone told me then that - despite long-term medical problems ('disability') - I'd lead a national charity, employ 7 staff, setup a new company and become the Operations Manager of a micro-multinational, I'd never have believed them. **Never underestimate the value of volunteering or volunteers...or Equal People!**

Back to **Equal People** then, none of it would ever have been possible without **Penni's** vision; the commitment of the Trustees; the passion and dedication of so many volunteers; and the generosity and support of parents, family, friends, and wider community. We all know that.

Two years ago the Fundraising Team accepted the challenge to raise **£1000 a month** – each and every month. We've smashed this target: and by 'we' I mean all of us. You too.

# Thank You!

Whether you entered a raffle, tipped change into a jar, bought a drink on Saturday, sponsored a table at the Ball, donated clothes for recycling, ... If you're receiving this letter, then **you're a part of our success story, and for that we thank you.** It's not over yet though!

---

Equal People Performing Arts is a registered charity, number 1116649. Patron: Lee Mead  
Supported by Mushroom Theatre Company. Founder & Creative Advisor: Penni Bubb

Equal People Performing Arts

Before I share some of the plans we have already for 2016, I want to ask you two questions:

1. Is there anything you think we could do in 2016 to help raise more money?
2. Is there anything you could do to help us achieve our £1000 a month goal?

We're going to be providing two things in Reception to help with these questions. Our **PALS** group are going to make a **Suggestion Box**, so if you think of anything you can pop it in there. You're welcome to speak to any of us in person of course at any time.

I'm also working on creating a **Jobs Board**. It's not as scary as it sounds: there are often little jobs that need doing, so if you have a spare hour or two that you're happy to give up for us, then have a look on the board or have a chat with one of us. We'll also post these on the **website**. To give you an idea, we need someone to help make tea and coffee some Saturdays, and would love to have someone help us Google for incorrect web listings that have our old details still. We'll often have more specific tasks as events and activities come round too.

Speaking of which, we've got a few dates for you: grab your diaries and pencil in the following:

- **March 16** – Quiz Night
- **April 30** – Annual Ball (adults only)
- **July 17** – MTC Awards Event

We'll share more information as we go, but keep an eye on the website and our Facebook page.

There's also all the ongoing fundraising. Clothes recycling has raised hundreds of pounds for us; collection pots at local shops have been quite lucrative, but we'd like to get some more out there; local schools and organisation adopting us as their charity of the year is always great too.

There are lots of opportunities and possibilities, and we'd welcome suggestions and ideas.

## Get in Touch!

If you want to get more involved, or want any more information you're welcome to contact me directly any time (email [steve@equalpeople.org.uk](mailto:steve@equalpeople.org.uk), phone **07550 089918**, or via the new-look website). I'm usually on Reception Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and around on Saturday.

It's a team effort though, and you can chat to any of us. **Pat** (also a Trustee) is generally on Reception on a Saturday; **Penni**, **Amanda** and **Julie** are almost always here; **Chris** and **Katie** are in and out with their children (Charlotte and Mia respectively); **Paul** (also a Trustee) is a bit pre-occupied with his new-born (Phoebe) right now, but is around from time to time.

Thanks again for all your help and support.

