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**PENHILL PLAYGROUP STEERING COMMITTEE ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON**

Wednesday 24th September 2025

AT PENHILL PLAYGROUP, PENHILL ROAD, LANCING

PRESENT

Katie Ayling, Clair Newbery, Kate Atkinson, Rachael Ticehurst, Michelle Venn, Nicky Smith, Ellis Boote

Meeting commenced at approximately 7.35pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Nicola Kirk, Laurie Turton.

2. WELCOME BY THE CHAIRPERSON

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting and thanked for coming.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, held on Wednesday 25th September 2024 were agreed as correct, proposed by Michelle Venn and seconded by Kate Atkinson.

4. MATTERS ARISING

The BT line and Internet connection was sorted shortly after the AGM and has been running fine all year. It has been helpful for Katie to have internet access at work as she can complete some work there without having to take it home. The children have also enjoyed being able to access CBeebies and a few other websites and it has been useful to find out information straight away about topics the children are interested in.

5. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

No report but said how much she loves Penhill.

6. MANAGER'S REPORT

We started the academic year with 16 children registered with us and this had increased to 31 children by the end of July. 16 children moved on to school at the end of the academic year. During the year, we referred two children for speech and language therapy, supported another one already receiving therapy and offered referrals to Health Visitors for another two children. We have also been involved in a Child Protection case, attending regular online meetings.

We had one child in receipt of Inclusion funding during the year which meant being able to provide some specialist resources, having time to create some new, specific resources, attending meetings and training and paying staff for additional time to complete Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) paperwork and referrals. We also received a Disability Access Fund payment for this child as they receive Disability Living Allowance. This money enabled us to provide a whole staff training session around Autism at the beginning of the 2025/26 academic year.

The number of children in receipt of Early Years Pupil Premium increased and we were again able to provide a toothbrush and toothpaste for every child at the setting, as well as for a few

younger siblings and Stay and Play children. We were also able to use some of the money to pay for our outing costs and for hall hire and staffing costs for our parent/carer and craft sessions and to purchase additional school uniform items, for the children to use at Playgroup and also to borrow to take home in readiness for the transition to school.

We have continued to use the children's interests as a starting point for our planning, introducing new themes and topics we have felt it is important for the children to learn about.

In December, we took all our older children out, in small groups to the local post box, to post Christmas cards to their families, a mini outing to see how we got on!

We held our Christmas party for all children on the last day of term and following on from a trial last year, offered some physical and creative activities, alongside party games, singing and food, in order for all the children attending to feel comfortable and involved. We were fortunate that Father Christmas found time to visit us and hand out presents to all the children, although not all of them enjoyed his visit.

From January, we provided our usual outing sessions, which were offered to all our older children. We did short town walks and visited a number of parks, locally and further afield, as well as train and bus trips to Worthing, Brighton, Southwick and Shoreham, which the children really enjoyed. We also completed a beach litter pick and were invited to Seaside Primary school three times, which meant the children got lots of experience going into school and being in the Reception environment, which we hope prepared them well and made them excited about starting school. We were fortunate to have Angie supporting our outings again this year and then Kate joined us, bringing her daughter along to share these experiences and to get to know some of the children she would be at school with.

The funding rates have improved, but our costs continue to rise. We increased our fees again in April 2025, although there are fewer parents paying fees now.

Our parent /carer afternoon in November was attended by 9 parents/carers and 9 children. We had 13 adults and 17 children at our Christmas Craft Afternoon in December and a very well attended Mother's Day Afternoon, with 17 adults and 19 children, when the Mum's got to look through and contribute to their child's Learning Journal if they wanted to, as well as being able to play and engage with their child using the Playgroup's resources. Our annual Dad's Day on a Saturday in June was attended by 6 dad's and 7 children, so not as well attended as the previous year, but still worth doing and it was lovely to meet some of the dad's we had never met before, who were all very friendly and chatty.

Training

Staff have continued to update their mandatory training in food hygiene and safeguarding, and three staff have updated their First Aid. Nicky's is due to expire in November, but we have had to cancel her space due to staff shortages so hope to book some training for her early in 2026.

Safeguarding

All staff are up to date with their training and Katie completed her Designated Safeguarding Lead training last Autumn. Our setting has signed up to Operation Encompass which notifies schools and early years settings if any of their children have been involved in a domestic violence incident, for which Katie has completed all the training and updated our policies to reflect this additional safeguarding avenue we now have.

Fundraising

Held a fairly well attended Table Sale in November.

Our Easter/Spring craft afternoon was held during the Easter Holidays in order to raise money for Stand Up to Cancer as several of our Playgroup families have been affected by cancer over the last year. This was well supported and raised over £300.

A summer raffle was held at our 45th Birthday Party in July, which was well supported by staff, parents and children, old and new.

Staffing

We were fortunate to be supported by three very willing volunteers this year, which has made a real difference as we have been through some challenging times regarding staffing over the last 12 months. We are lucky that Julie and Angie continue to want to help, but we were sad to say goodbye to Millie who is off to university. Lisa Ansell started work with us in September 2024 and has been a real asset to the team, quickly learning the ropes and working hard to maintain her key children's learning Journals, with some support from more experienced staff.

Sadly, Becky Hicks who was employed to start in September 2024, left after 4 weeks, for personal reasons. She was replaced by Ginette Norris who was unable to start until December due to waiting for references to be completed. In January 2025 she left and was replaced by Sarah Scaysbrook, who was able to start straight after the February Half Term and completed 5 months with us before suddenly handing in her notice during the first week of the summer holidays. This has meant that we are not fully staffed at present and are having great difficulties recruiting to fulfil the role, with two candidates withdrawing their applications and two not showing up for their visits. Nicky and Hannah both agreed to stay on as Deputies and Katie continues to fulfil the Designated Safeguarding Lead and SENCO roles for the time being, alongside being Manager.

Stay and Play

Due to demand, this group re-started its Friday sessions from November 2024. We applied for and were awarded a Warm Spaces Grant of £600 to help towards the cost of this additional session. Although not as busy as the Tuesday session, it has been supported by a regular number of children and families, many of whom have now started at Playgroup and transitioned in smoothly as a result.

We have continued to offer toast and drinks for both the children and adults and cake or biscuits on special occasions. Clare from the Oral Health Team, attended one session to talk to parents and carers about dental health and we have held a couple of toy/book/clothes exchanges which were well supported. A Christmas session was held where all the children received a gift from Father Christmas.

Current Situation

We currently have 25 children registered with us, which is more than anticipated, although many only attend a few sessions a week. We have three children due to start in January but have had to put additional sessions for children on hold until we have managed to recruit a new member of staff. Only two of our current intake pay fees, the rest are funded and 6 children share funding with local childminders.

The main concern at present is staffing. How do we recruit to this part time role? Do we pay to advertise through Indeed or an agency? Do we increase the pay, but then we would have to do that for all staff to make it fair. Can we increase the hours? To claim Universal Credit, work needs to be for 24 hours a week, which this job doesn't currently offer.

It has been commented on by Seaside Reception staff that at Penhill we see our children as individuals and not just numbers and a source of income. We know them well and want the best for them, so thank you to the staff and volunteers who work so hard to keep the Playgroup

going. Despite our ups and downs staffing wise this year, we have continued to provide a good educational start, as well as a caring and supportive environment for those children and their parents and carers who have become a part of the Penhill family. Thanks also to the committee for helping out when needed at events and for being a listening ear for me at times.

7. TREASURER'S REPORT

The accounts which have been independently examined were shared (attached). Overall, we made a slight loss over the year, which if we had used the Easter fundraising for Playgroup, would have put us slightly in profit. However, we are still in a financially strong position with our reserves.

Other additional costs this year have included mandatory training as all staff needed to update safeguarding and first aid skills this year, as well as paying out for DBS checks for three new staff, which cost almost £50 each.

It was asked whether all the staff that have left over the course of the year have been over paid. Two staff had their pay adjusted to take into account of any sick leave or holiday accrued. One staff member was overpaid and when she left said she would pay it back but hasn't. She has been contacted about this and is not currently in a position to be able to pay it back. The committee took the decision not to pursue this through the Small Claims Court as it would cost us money, take a long time and be added stress both for us and the former member of staff and if she hasn't got the money to pay it back, it still couldn't be paid anyway. She has been notified that the committee will not be pursuing this debt but that if she is in a position to repay it in the future, it would be appreciated as we are a charity. The amount owed is just over £500.

The Playgroup recently received new authentication cards for Judith Atkinson and Zoe Brown, neither of whom are on the committee anymore and neither of whom are still signatories on the account. Michelle will chase up why these cards have been sent and why Clair has not yet received a card reader or card, both of which were requested over 6 months ago.

The treasurer also explained that she will be putting £35,000 into a 32 day notice account @ 2.15% gross interest per annum and £35,000 into a 95 day notice account @ 3.01% gross interest per annum, as agreed at the last committee meeting in April.

8. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Katie Wastell had agreed to be an independent examiner again and was proposed by Katie Ayling and seconded by Michelle Venn.

9. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Members staying on:

Katie Ayling as Manager, Clair Newbery, Kate Atkinson, Rachael Ticehurst and Michelle Venn

Resignations:

Nicola Kirk

New members:

Laurie Turton, proposed by Katie Ayling and seconded by Nicky Smith.

Officers:

Chairperson	Clair Newbery
Vice Chair	Kate Atkinson/Rachael Ticehurst
Secretary	Katie Ayling
Treasurer	Michelle Venn

10. MEETING OPEN TO THE FLOOR

As regards advertising for staff, Katie will look into the costs for Indeed and it may be worth promoting the job as an apprenticeship for Level 3 at local colleges - Rachael's son can post something at Chichester College. It may also be worth looking at Happity, where we have advertised our Stay and Play group and continue to use Facebook and the Early Years and childcare bulletin, Job Centre and could also readvertise looking for volunteers too.

Michelle asked to express the committee's thanks to all the staff for their hard work over the year saying what an important time the early years is for children's learning and development.

It was decided to put out feelers about whether we should hold a Christmas Table Sale - Clair will post a message on Facebook. Ellis mentioned that his partner Chloe has lots of crocheted items at home she has made which we might be able to sell.

The idea of a children's art exhibition in the summer was suggested, which could be supported by a raffle, cake sale, etc. and parents buy their child's work. It would be good to be able to value the effort and skills that go into the children's arts and crafts so that their parents understand the processes involved and why it is important to value any work their child comes home with, even if it doesn't look like much. This could include paintings, drawings, models etc. Several years ago, Boundstone Nursery held an art exhibition in St Michael's Church, which was open to members of the public to look round. This may be possible for Penhill. Katie will investigate what opportunities there are.

St Michael and All Angels are having a Christmas Tree Festival again this year, over the first weekend of December and Playgroup have been asked if they would like to take part. It costs £20 if we provide our own tree which it was agreed was fine to spend. Rachael suggested that we could do a joint effort with her childminding business and share the cost. This was agreed and if any other local childminders would like to join in, they would be very welcome. Katie will reply to the invitation expressing our interest.

Clair was presented with some flowers as a thank you for filling the role of Chairperson for the year.

11. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Next meeting: Wednesday 12th November 2025, 7.30pm at 13 Penhill Road

MEETING CLOSED AT APPROXIMATELY 8.15pm.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

PENHILL PLAYGROUP

On accounts for the year
ended

31 08 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1001217

Set out on pages

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ('the Trust') for the year ended 31/08/2025

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

~~The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]. Delete [] if not applicable.~~

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

K WASTELL

Date:

24/9/2025

Name:

K WASTELL

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body

FCCA

(if any):

Address:

PJCO, ST JAMES HALL, MILL ROAD,
LANSING, BN15 0PT

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

Profit and Loss

Penhill Playgroup

For the year ended 31 August 2025

	2025
Turnover	
Clothing Sales	1.00
Donations	16.00
Fundraising from Raffles	99.90
General Fundraising	418.01
Milk Reimbursement	78.13
Parent Paid Fees	2,181.26
Stay and Play Fees	966.50
West Sussex County Council Funding	72,970.30
Total Turnover	76,731.10
Gross Profit	76,731.10
Administrative Costs	
Audit & Accountancy fees	540.00
Bank Fees	124.65
Cleaning	35.00
Consulting	8.59
Employers National Insurance	4,041.92
Entertainment	255.00
Entertainment - School Trips	138.35
Equipment	1,491.44
General Supplies	157.78
Gifts	202.72
Insurance	485.76
IT Software and Consumables	437.19
Memberships and Subscriptions	496.57
Milk	94.63
Music License	68.32
Pensions Costs	1,006.54
Postage, Freight & Courier	63.55
Printing	16.35
Rent	1,792.00
Repairs & Maintenance	13.75
Salaries	62,553.65
Staff Training	414.00
Stationery	153.83
Telephone & Internet	930.03
Warm Spaces Expense	(500.00)
Total Administrative Costs	80,904.02
Operating Profit	(4,172.92)

Other Income

Employers NI Receivable	4,041.92
Total Other Income	4,041.92
Profit on Ordinary Activities Before Taxation	(131.00)
Profit after Taxation	(131.00)

Balance Sheet

Penhill Playgroup

As at 31 August 2025

31 AUG 2025

Current Assets

Cash at bank and in hand

Penhill Playgroup	94,177.19
Petty Cash Account	121.83
Total Cash at bank and in hand	94,299.02

Total Current Assets	94,299.02
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Net Current Assets (Liabilities)	94,299.02
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Total Assets less Current Liabilities	94,299.02
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Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

NIC/PAYE	(723.46)
Total Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(723.46)

Net Assets	95,022.48
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Capital and Reserves

Current Year Earnings	(131.00)
Retained Earnings	95,153.48
Total Capital and Reserves	95,022.48