



St Matthews Pre-School Group

Annual Trustees Report 2023-2024

Introduction

St Matthews Pre-School Group, a registered charity (No. 1019336), is dedicated to transparency and accountability. As part of our legal obligations, we hold an AGM and present this Trustees' Annual Report, which includes a comprehensive financial overview for the year. This document is subsequently submitted to the Charities Commission and made available on their website for public viewing.

We operate in accordance with the 2011 Early Years Alliance Constitution, and our committee, composed of service users (parents/caregivers), oversees the pre-school's operations. The committee must include a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and at least two additional members to form a quorum for decision-making.

Overview of the Year 2023/24

In September 2023, we welcomed a new Pre-School Manager, Louise Moye. The year began with 18 children on the register—some returning and some new—who all settled quickly. By January, enrolment had increased to 23, prompting the recruitment of an additional childcare practitioner. By the end of July, we had 26 children enrolled, with 12 transitioning to primary school.

Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, we introduced several improvements, including moving to an online nursery management system, which enhanced communication with parents and streamlined invoicing. Mid-autumn term, we further expanded the system to include electronic learning journeys, a change that was well received by parents.

In the interest of financial efficiency, we made several cutbacks at the start of the year, including discontinuing our landline, changing website providers, and adjusting our broadband and mobile phone services.

Our fundraising efforts continued successfully, with events such as the sponsored Autumn Toddle, family photoshoot, and raffles held during the Christmas Nativity and Sports Day. Additional funds were raised through an Easter party, doorstep Santa visits, and a donut sale at the school's summer fair. These efforts helped fund essential resources, including the purchase of two iPads to support the transition to electronic learning journeys.

Changes to government funding were introduced this year, allowing working parents of two-year-olds to receive 15 hours of free childcare from April 2024 onwards. Parents of children aged three and over remain eligible for up to 15 hours of free childcare (30 hours if eligible). St Matthews Pre School receives its funding through Warrington Borough Council.

We had several exciting visitors this year, including Vicar Alan, Warrington Wolves player Ben Currie, a fire engine and police car, and a local farmer with his steam traction engine. Additionally, we enjoyed regular weekly visits from Beth from Les Petit Pois, who provided Fun French lessons for the children.

At the close of the 2023-2024 school year, we bid farewell to two long-serving childcare practitioners. After a successful recruitment process, we welcomed a new practitioner in September 2024, with another staff member increasing her hours to ensure full coverage and compliance with required staff-to-child ratios.

Committee

The 2023/24 committee members were as follows:

- Chair – Victoria Lockwood
- Secretary – Bethan Fawcett
- Treasurer – Rebecca King
- Member – Louise Moye
- Member – Natasha Holdsworth
- Member – Victoria Howarth

- Member – Rachel Young

Louise Moye serves as the nominated person for Ofsted, and Rebecca King is our point of contact for the Charities Commission. The payroll signatories are Rebecca King and Victoria Lockwood.

Looking Forward to 2024/25

The new academic year has begun positively, with 10 new starters who have all settled well. A healthy waiting list and upcoming new starters suggest another promising year ahead.

Last year, we began the process of converting the charity to a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) to ensure the pre-school's future stability. We anticipate completing this process within the current school year.

We look forward to increasing our extra-curricular offering, with the continuation of Fun French sessions and additional sessions such as phonics classes.

Our main goal for this year is to replace all the outdoor surfacing. To achieve this, we will continue our fundraising efforts, utilise surplus income from 2023-2024, and may need to apply for a charity grant. Over the summer, we have already replaced all pre-school tables and chairs, re-roofed and repainted the play shed, replaced the main gate for enhanced safety, and purchased other much-needed resources.

Thank You

We would like to extend our gratitude to all the staff for their hard work and dedication to the pre school. The nurturing environment they provide fosters confidence and independence, qualities that are greatly appreciated by parents and carers.

We also wish to thank the committee for their support over the past year—their fundraising efforts, ideas, and ongoing encouragement have been invaluable.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to the parents, relatives, and friends whose generous donations and continued support sustain the operation of our pre-school.

Financial Overview of St Matthews Pre-School Group Accounts

(1st August 2023 - 31st July 2024)

Registered Charity No: 1019336

Overview

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis, covering the period from 1st August 2023 to 31st July 2024. Total income for the year amounted to £99,328, with the main sources being fees and grants (£89,722), parental contributions for hot lunches, snacks, and consumables (£4,637), and fundraising efforts (£2,480).

Expenditure for the year totalled £82,806, a significant £15,462 increase compared to the previous year, but in line with the income growth. Despite the rise in expenditure, the year ended with a £16,522 surplus, which will be reinvested into the preschool and used to regenerate the business reserve, which had been utilised and depleted in previous years.

The closing balance for the current account is £3,994, while the reserve account stands at £24,024.

Key Areas to Note

Fees & Grants – Income from parental fees and grants provided by Warrington Borough Council (WBC) amounted to £89,722, up from £61,046 the previous year. The main source of this increase was the change in government funding, which now provides working parents of 2-year-olds with 15 hours of funding. The government funding rate for 2-year-olds is significantly higher than pre-school's session fees for that age group.

Snack/Consumables Fees – We gratefully received £2,483 in voluntary financial assistance towards the cost of snacks and consumables. These funds were used to provide healthy snacks for the children, maintain cleanliness of the premises and equipment, and support the costs of arts and crafts supplies.

Fundraising – Fundraising efforts during 2023/24 raised £2,480, with a net total of £1,890. The most profitable events included the Autumn Toddle, family photoshoot, Nativity and sports day raffles, and the

Summer Fair donut stall. Annex 2 provides a detailed breakdown of fundraising income and expenditure.

Expenditure

The main areas of expenditure are highlighted below:

Staff Costs – As a childcare organisation, staffing is our largest expense. Total staff costs this year amounted to £56,870, compared to £53,044 in 2022/23, with six staff members on the payroll throughout the year. In April 2024, there was a significant increase in the National Living Wage. While we are limited as a registered charity to paying what we can afford, we were able, due to our financial position, to raise practitioner salaries above the National Minimum Wage (NMW) more than ever before. By the end of the year, the hourly rates were:

- Manager: £14/hour
- Deputy Manager: £12.70/hour
- Assistants: £11.70/hour

For reference, the NMW from April 2024 was £11.43/hour. We are also legally obligated to contribute to a workforce pension scheme.

Snacks, Lunches & Supplies – Expenditure on snacks and lunches (payable to WBC) amounted to £2,748, with an additional £147 spent on cleaning supplies (e.g., Dettol wipes, hand sanitiser). Healthy snacks were provided for each child, and we are grateful for ongoing parental contributions towards these costs.

Rent – Rent payable to St Matthews PCC totalled £9,301, compared to £6,375 in 2022/23. The hourly rate in 2023/24 was £10, representing a significant 49% increase from the previous year's rate of £6.70/hour.

Toys & Equipment – A total of £1,933 was spent on toys and equipment. This marks a significant increase from the £243 spent the previous year but is in line with the increase in income and the requirement, as a charity, to reinvest profit back into the organisation. A detailed breakdown of toys and equipment spending is shown in Annex 1.

Curriculum, Outings & Events – We spent £2,119 on special events and extra-curricular activities. Of this, £1,649 was spent on Fun French extra-curricular lessons, with the remainder covering the school leavers' trip, Sports Day, and the Christmas party.

Mobile Phone & Broadband – £245 was spent on the preschool's mobile phone and broadband. A decision was made to discontinue the landline and use only the mobile phone for communication. Both the mobile phone and broadband are provided by Three. In comparison to the previous year, when phone and internet costs were £566, this represents a 56.71% saving.

Staff Training - Thanks to our improved financial position, we significantly increased expenditure on staff training from £170 in the 2022-2023 financial year to £948 this year. Staff benefited from access to an improved online training platform (Noodle Now), Phonics training, an Early Years Conference day, as well as training days put on by Warrington Borough Council covering Ofsted and safeguarding.

Other – Other expenses included £1,575 on consultancy fees for the charity's conversion to CIO status, staff and committee DBS checks, and other one-off expenses.

Cash Flow

Cash flow is closely monitored and managed on a term-by-term basis. This year, it was not necessary to access the reserve account, primarily due to improved enrolment numbers in the autumn term, which continued to increase throughout the year.

St Matthews Pre-School Group maintains a business reserve account to:

1. Meet redundancy liabilities
2. Provide general contingency reserves for emergency use, equivalent to one term's essential expenditure (approximately one-third of the annual running costs). This includes salaries (including National Insurance and pensions), subscriptions, telephone, rent, and basic supplies.

The total annual essential running costs amount to £70,860, and £24,024 is currently available in the business reserve account, covering one-third of these costs.

Annex 1

Toys & Equipment Expenditure	£
2 iPads and cases	£616.80
Temu resources – games, sports equipment, sensory materials	£346.52
Julia Donaldson Story Sacks	£124.10
Phonics and Maths Resources from Etsy	£96.79
Rugs and Cushions	£88
Sports Scooter Boards	£71.94
Dressing Up Costumes	£71.50
Water Wall	£69.99
Sleep mats	£54.80
Easter Bunny Costume	£49
Children's Cutlery	£46.62
Shower hats and water play aprons	£45.63
Coffee Flask	£39.99
Nativity Costumes	£33.96
Rhythm Sticks	£31.98
Sports Quoits	£27.98
Nursery Rhyme Stones	£23.80
Dual Toilet Seat	£19.99
Emotion Fans	£17.34
ID card holders and whistles	£15.35
Lifecycle Resources	£12.95
LCD writing boards	£12.56
Fridge Thermometer	£8.99
Children's Scissors	£6.59
Total Toys & Equipment Expenditure	£1933.17

Annex 2

Event	Income	Expenditure	Net Profit
Autumn Toddle	£442		£442
Family Photoshoot	£719	£410	£309
Summer photo commission	£60		£60
Nativity	£260	£57	£203
Doorstep Santa	£140	£59	£81
Christmas Calendars	£25	£39	-£14
Easter Party	£120		£120
Sports Day	£152	£25	£127
Bike to School	£30		£30
Summer Fair Donut Stall	£323		£323
Bag2School	£183		£183
EasyFundraising	£25		£25
Total Fundraising	£2480	£590	£1890

ST MATTHEWS PRE SCHOOL GROUP					
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE					
YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2024					
REGISTERED CHARITY NO: 1019336					
	Year Ended	Year Ended		Year Ended	Year Ended
INCOME	31 July 2024	31 July 2023	EXPENDITURE	31 July 2024	31 July 2023
	£	£		£	£
Balance brought forward 1 August			Salaries / Pensions	56,870	53,044
Current account	927	2,694			
Reserve account	10,529	8,521	Nlns / Tax	1,638	671
Accruals / Prepayments		902			
Cash	30	20	Payslip Service	533	547
Fees	24,471	21,482	Subscriptions / Insurance	2,274	1,119
Government Grants	65,251	39,564	Rent	9,301	6,375
			Telephone	245	566
			Staff Training	948	170
Sub-Total	89,722	61,046	Sub-Total	71,808	62,493
Snack Fees & Lunch Fees	4,637	2,420	Snacks & Lunches	2,748	2,617
Uniform Sales & Registration Fees	605	535	Uniform & Bag Supplies	939	0
Curriculum, Outings & Events	1,734	150	Curriculum, Outings & Events	2,119	184
Fundraising (inc Gift Aid)	2,480	2,296	Fundraising Expenses	590	456
Grants & Donations (inc. matched giving)	0	340	Cleaning Supplies / PPE	147	94
Other	0	49	Stationery/Postage	429	81
Bank Interest	151	8	Daily Activities	332	99
			Children's Profiles	52	173
			Toys & Equipment	1,933	243
			Other / Advertising	1,710	904
Total Income in the Year	99,328	66,844	Total Expenditure in the Year	82,806	67,344
			Balance carried forward 31 July		
			Current Account	3,994	927
			Reserve Account	24,024	10,529
			Accruals / Prepayments		151
			Cash in Hand	20	30
Total	£110,814	£78,981	Total	£110,844	£78,981