

Trustee Report

Chairperson's Welcome and Report - Michelle Beck

Good evening everyone and thank you very much for attending the 2023 St Paul's Pre-school AGM. It is my privilege to lead the Committee as Chair and I look forward to doing so for a further year. Tonight is a very important event as it is the time of the year when the Committee both reflect on the year past and prepare for the next 12 months ahead.

As part of this preparation there will be some members of our current Committee stepping down, and we hope to welcome some new members of the Pre-school parent community to the Committee. The Committee is charged with the management of the Pre-school. Without a Committee in place, with a minimum quorum of 3 Officers and 5 Committee members in total, the Pre-school cannot operate. I cannot express enough the importance of parents becoming involved – we are a community based setting and can only exist if members of our community actively support our endeavours. As the Pre-school has navigated past the pandemic, it has been a very busy year and one not without some challenges. I would personally like to acknowledge the enormous efforts of Silvia and her team (Mel, Emma, Rachel, Leonie, Katie and Anne) and publicly thank them for the sacrifices they make on a daily basis. This is the dream team who ensure that your children are provided with a day filled with joy and wonder every time they come into the care of the Pre-school. They are the heart and the soul of the setting and are responsible for the outstanding care that your children receive.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the current Committee for all your hard work and your support over the past year. We have achieved a huge amount and I am immensely grateful for all your energy and your dedication.

In terms of a whistle-stop tour of the year that was, allow me to take you on a short journey.

Staff

Our team of teachers is led by Silvia who brings out the best in both practitioners and children alike. Every child is nurtured according to their needs and are treated as the unique individuals that they are. They are in no better hands than our exceptional team of experienced teachers. In terms of our administrative staff, our dynamic duo of Lisa and Yoosun are an integral part of the Pre-school and go above and beyond on a daily basis. Thank you both for all of your support over the past year, the Committee is incredibly appreciative. We must also pay tribute to Ella, who has continued on as our set-up and pack-away assistant and who is adored by every child she comes into contact with.

We have had a very stable year as far as staff is concerned. We said goodbye to our wonderful Cathy Blackburn at the end of the summer term when retirement beckoned. However, Cathy is still a member of our Bank Staff team and as such will still be with us on occasion, filling in and continuing to spread her special brand of magic. Throughout the year we also welcomed Demedi, Lauren and Mackenzie, placement students from the University of Winchester who spent time with us as part of their course requirements in social work and early childhood studies respectively.

This term has seen us welcome new volunteers Lucy, from the University of Winchester, and Louise, and we very much appreciate the extra help that these two volunteers will be providing the setting during the months to come.

Finally, we have our SENCo, Katie Hillier, on leave at present and we expect that Katie will be re-joining the team at the beginning of the winter term. In the interim, Silvia has taken on the SENCo lead.

While we were not in a position to pay a bonus this year, we reviewed all staff wages in December 2022 and the teaching team received an average pay increase of 7.95%. Our next pay review is set for April 2024.

The Committee

The end of last year saw the entire Pre-school Committee, who had navigated the Pre-school through the practical difficulties of the pandemic, step down en masse. Quite rightly as many of their smaller people had long left the Pre-school and they had continued on in their roles during this unprecedented time.

The current Committee took over the reins of the management and governance of the setting last October. The Committee consists of myself as Chair, Katie as Secretary, Tessa as Treasurer, and Izzie and Sarah as Committee members.

Parents and Carers / Fundraising

Parental support is essential to the running of the Pre-school. Throughout the year, parents have assisted with tasks such as tea towel washing, rubbish removal and garden maintenance as well as providing support physically and financially to the various fundraising initiatives undertaken. As a community-based charity, the Pre-school is heavily reliant on fundraising, which is used to purchase resources that benefit our children.

Our key fundraising events throughout the year were the Christmas Fayre, which raised £3,267, the annual Roll and Ride event which raised an incredible £1,535, and the Summer Festival, which raised £785. The Committee also brought in additional funding via the Winchester Car Boot market fundraiser, the Summer Series events (which included an author reading and a family singing workshop) and we were successful in securing a grant for £1,000 from Winchester City Council.

Our most significant purchases during the year were an art trolley and a new mud kitchen – both built to last and withstand anything that can be (literally) thrown at them. We also invested in a new banner that can be seen on the railing on St Paul's Hill and we partially funded the annual Pre-school trip to Manor Farm.

Admissions & Funding

We have started the 2022/23 academic year not yet at full capacity but in a far better position than we were 12 months ago, with 25 children on our register in September and many more on our waiting list to start in the winter term and beyond.

Our LEA (otherwise referred to as “free hours funding”) for 3-4 year olds is currently £4.97 per hour. This is problematic as our current hourly fee is £6.50 per hour. We receive only 76% of our actual hourly fee from the government which creates further difficulties as the LEA relates only to “term-time”. Other settings, such as day nurseries, claw back the funding shortfall as they operate 52 weeks of the year. However, as a term-time only setting we are at a distinct disadvantage.

Likewise, the cost of living crisis has seen many parents reluctant to increase their hours over and above the 15 hours of funding they receive. Yoosun will be running through the finances of the Pre-school in further detail during this meeting, but it is fair to say we have not been immune from the numerous challenges facing the childcare sector generally.

Key Changes

In order to ensure the ongoing viability of the Pre-school the Committee took a number of steps at the beginning of the summer term, to increase our income. 30 Hours Free Childcare Funding was a new initiative for the Pre-school, having only offered 15 hours of funding previously. Our aim was to benefit both existing families who were eligible and also attract new families to our setting.

We abolished the Snack Fee and established a voluntary Consumables Fee to help cover the cost of daily snacks, dairy-free milk, arts & crafts, sunscreen in summer, and extracurricular activities such as music and cooking.

We lowered our Age Intake from 2-years-9-months to 2-years-6-months. Due to our space constraints, and the logistics of caring for younger children, we offer only limited places for 2 year olds.

The Committee launched a Holiday Club concept outside of term time, and held three holiday clubs at the setting during the year which brought in over £2,000.

Finally, we launched an awareness & recruitment campaign to further get the word out about our wonderful setting and we increased our presence using social media and a targeted leafleting campaign.

The Year Ahead

We look to further enhance the collaboration between the Committee, the teaching team and the administrative team alongside the parents – these connections are vital to the running of St Paul’s pre-school.

With the Church as our landlord, we will retain a Church Liaison Officer as a member of the Committee who will be responsible for maintaining the positive relationship we have with St Paul’s Church.

We will also continue to build on the many inroads made during the 22-23 academic year, closely monitoring outcomes and tapping into the local community to ensure we are able to further increase the number of children in our setting, and also increase our practitioners hours.

How Can You Help?

1) Hours

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage any parents / carers using only their 15 free hours at the Pre-school to consider adding another session if this is at all manageable as this will greatly assist us at a time when the child-care sector is facing increasing financial pressures.

2) Volunteer

Without the support of parents, we cannot go that extra mile. Please consider helping out in terms of our weekly washing rota, our spring garden clean-up, or getting involved in one of our fundraising initiatives.

It's a great way to meet other parents and be further involved in the Pre-school community.

3) Donate

If you cannot spare any time, and I appreciate that all parents are time- poor, then perhaps a monthly or an annual donation to the Pre-school may be possible for your family.

4) Engage

Word of mouth is an extremely important part of our marketing strategy and is a crucial to our setting attracting new families. If you are on social media, find us on Facebook and Instagram and like and share our posts and provide us with a review on Facebook, as this helps to support our Google profile. And please shout from the rooftops about what a wonderful setting we are!

Thank you again for all of your support.

3. Treasurer's Report - presented by Yoosun Hur on behalf of Tessa Taylor

2022-2023 - Income and Expenditure

Our total income for the year 2022/23 was £122,544, primarily from early years education funding (£69,356), parents' fees (£38,677), holiday clubs (£2,345) and fundraising and donations (£11,438). Our total expenditure amounted to £144,387, giving us a net deficit of £21,843. This means that our carried forward balance at 31st August 2023 was £57,049.

The LEA funding (£69,356) received decreased by 16%, compared to the last academic year (£82,661) and parents' fees (£38,677) also decreased by 9% compared to the last academic year (£42,631). Many parents were reluctant to increase over and above the universal 15 hours unless they were eligible for 30 hours funding and the number of children was lower than average throughout the academic year.. We believe that these trends were affected by the tight government budget on early years settings, the cost-of-living crisis across the country and a low birth year. The LEA funding rate remains low from £4.76 to £4.97 per child, per hour from April 2023 for 3 and 4 year-olds, which is a contributing factor to this year's net deficit. The parents' fee remained at £6.50 per hour for all ages from September 2022 as a part of being a community based charity Pre-school.

Total staff costs increased by 8% to £118,830 compared to the last academic year (£109,956) due to our teacher to child ratio being over and above the statutory requirement, an increase in the national minimum wage and the deployment of set up assistants to help our pack away setting. The employer's contribution on pensions remains the same at 3% for eligible employees.

In this academic year, we have raised an impressive £11,438 from various fundraising events and generous donations. We had a variety of fundraising events this year, such as the Christmas Fayre (£3,267), Run and Ride (£1,535) and our Summer Festival (£785). In addition, we were awarded £1,000 from Winchester City Council to replace our old mud kitchen for our Pre-school pupils as well as the community toddler group.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Net assets as at 31 st August 2023 were £57,049.

Whilst the national funding rate for early years settings has remained low, along with the post Covid financial crisis, it has been a challenge for the Pre-school to provide high quality education, maintain affordable parents' fees and retain valuable staff. The deficit is not at all unexpected, however the Committee has been able to implement many necessary measurements, such as introducing holiday clubs, increasing the consumables fee, accepting 30 hours funding and lowering the intake age to 2 years 6 months (previously 2 years 9 months), to the point where we have been able to continue to operate moving forward.

Thank you very much to the Committee, the teachers, the volunteers and the parents. Without your hard work and dedication, we would not be able to go on. We are all very much looking forward to another fantastic year together and we are very proud to be a part of the St Paul's community! Thank you.

4. Lead Teacher's Report - presented by Silvia Brown

The difficult situation affecting every area of life and every family in a variety of degrees also caught up with our setting and during 2022-23.

It was noticeable from the start of the school year in September 2022 that things were not as they had been. On our first day of school, as we opened the door to the families, expecting 24 children to start attending during September, numbers were reduced to between 9 and 14 as many families had to find alternative childcare that would fit with their work requirements. We also faced the result of a low birth rate 2-3 years before and we were not necessarily prepared for the tough year ahead.

The committee and the admin team took the reins with determination and conviction that we could turn things around, and they did. Not to the extent that we would have liked them to be, but still, arriving at the end of the school year with a positive outlook.

Through the 2022-23 period, the teaching team at Preschool worked closely with seven children with Special Educational Needs, including Speech and Language difficulties, children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and developmental delays. We also supported seven children with English as an additional language and a child with severe allergies and medical conditions that required close supervision.

The team pulled their strength, knowledge and skills together to get to know the children and families and offer the best possible support to all children attending the setting, with the understanding that, at one point or another, everybody will go through a stage when they might experience additional needs.

Having teachers trained and experienced to support the children in our care is the foundation of our practice and I am proud of the team where Katie, Anne and myself have qualification, experience and further training to support children with SEND.

All teachers at Preschool are qualified to level 3 in Early Years care and Education, with Katie and Anne holding Level 3 in SEND; Cathy Level 4 in Early Education and myself, having Qualified Early Years Teacher Status. Although these extra qualifications enhance our practice, it is also important to mention

that Mel continues to develop her knowledge and understanding following a Counselling training course; Leonie completed Health and Safety training, while Emma and Rachel updated their Continuous Professional Development reviewing policies and practice.

We have taken pride in being a training setting, and for years we have offered students the opportunity to complete work placements with us. Last year was not an exception, and we had Dumebi, a second-year student in the Social Work Degree at Winchester University, and Lauren and Mackenzie, studying the Early Childhood Studies degree at the same university. These young people really made an impression on us and the children, becoming confident in their understanding of early years development and positive models for the children. I am glad to say that Mackenzie loved working with us so much, she applied to be part of our cover team, working at Holiday Clubs and being part of our Bank Team. The positive effect of having these students at Preschool is not observed just on the students, but also on the team, as we all have to be aware of what we are doing and why, as members of the team need to explain, justify and substantiate our actions, and in doing so, we cement our understanding of theory, legislation and practice.

Through the year we were also able to employ Ella Wilton, who arrives at 7:30am to clean and mop floors in the playroom, kitchen, and toilets, and again at 2:00pm, to help with the packing. This has had a huge impact on the work of the team, as teachers have been enabled to spend more time with the children, especially in the afternoon, when we must make sure we are out of the room before other groups arrive at the door. Thanks to the level of cover and numbers of teachers available during sessions, last school year was the first in my nearly 13 years of experience working at Preschool, when I was able to take two afternoon not counted in the rations, and could use this admin time during the school hours, rather than having to take the work home. A rather welcome relief!

Being part of the voluntary sector and a registered charity means that we are always in need of extra funds. Even when our numbers increased, at the latter part of the Spring term and during the Summer term, the teaching team and the management committee worked together and separately to fundraise for the preschool.

From our Sausage Sizzle, celebrating Bonfire day with sausages and apple cake in the meadow, and making just over £100, to the Roll and Ride, when children and teachers rolled and rode for a week, accumulating rounds and pennies and bringing in over £1200 to support Preschool projects. Thanks to these efforts we were able to purchase two new (and rather expensive!) much needed storage trolleys. These are essential to our setting, as they are strong, sturdy, and made for purpose, so we can wheel them into the playroom and pack them away everyday without the worry that they will fall apart! The fundraising efforts did not stop there! The committee worked tirelessly organising the Christmas Fayre, and the Summer Celebration in the meadow; members of the committee got up super early one summer Sunday to collect entry tickets at the Car Boot Sale; Katie Gilbert and Sozienka, a local writer and artist, ran music and creative writing workshops and teachers and children set up a Toy Shop and a Preschool Bakery, selling cakes and second hand toys.

The setting also received funds from the LEA to help support families during a difficult year. The teaching team devised a series of Cooking Workshops during the Spring Term, inviting parents to come along to cook with the children. We prepared food for lunch and a pudding for up to 30 children, and everyone attending was able to take home a goody bag of delicious home (preschool!) cooked food to share at home, and a recipe, to do it again. We received many reports from happy parents and children who had the opportunity to work closely with their children, while tasting some new and interesting flavours. The

best one, that must be mentioned, would be the experience of making falafels, when we spent around two hours smelling, chopping, tasting, shaping and cooking falafels to share with everyone. The only sad thing about the event was that we only made enough for one each!

The end of the school year arrived, and we said goodbye to 19 children, who went to a wide range of schools in the area and further afield. We also said goodbye to our long term teacher Cathy, as she decided to pack away her Early Years bag and retire from the day-to-day work to explore other possibilities. Although we were sad to say goodbye, we knew that Cathy would not keep away for long, and she promptly signed up to be part of the bank team, so we still get to have her with us from time to time.

As the challenges continue, the preschool team and committee are committed to the work at Preschool, and we endeavour to provide our children with a caring and exciting environment that enables them to develop and learn.

5. Election of Committee

The following current committee members will be staying on:

Michelle Beck - Chair
Catherine Gilbert - Secretary
Tessa Taylor - Treasurer
Sarah Neate

Catherine (Katie) Gilbert agreed to remain as Secretary for the time being.

The following current committee members stepped down:

Isobel Dighe

New Committee Members were elected as follows:

Nadine Marshall - general committee
Flora Birmingham - general committee
Molly Newby - general committee

The supporting documentation including the eligibility declarations and nomination forms were completed for new committee members. The first Committee Meeting will be Tuesday 14th November.

6. Any Other Business

None to report.

7. Date of Next Meeting:

The next AGM date to be agreed for October 2024.

Income and Expenditure account
for the year ended 31 August 2023

Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Income				
Local Authority funding		£69,356		£82,661
Fees from parents		£38,677		£42,631
Holiday Clubs		£2,345		
Student Replacement		£560		£960
Receipts from operating activities		£110,938		£126,252
Fundraising and donations		£11,438		£6,852
Bank Interest		£167		£4
TOTAL INCOME		£122,544		£133,108
Expenditure				
Staff Costs	£118,830		£109,956	
Premises	£9,847		£8,600	
Other consumables	£2,586		£2,185	
Insurance	£754		£733	
Administration	£1,593		£2,903	
Equipment and services	£1,945		£1,388	
Payments for operating activities	£135,555		£125,765	
Fundraising	£8,832		£5,189	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£144,387		£130,953
<i>Operating surplus / (deficit) for the period</i>		<i>(£24,617)</i>		<i>£487</i>
Net surplus / (deficit) for the period		(£21,843)		£2,155
Balance brought forward at 1 September 2022		£78,893		£76,737
Balance carried forward at 31 August 2023		£57,049		£78,893



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
St Pauls Pre-School

On accounts for the year
ended

31/08/2023

Charity no
(if any)

1020155

Set out on pages

1-2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/08/2023.

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

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination 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.

Signed:

Date:

10/01/2024

Name:

KERRY TAYLOR

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

FCCA

Address:

39 BALMORAL CRESCENT, DORCHESTER
DORSET DT1 2BN

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.

N/a