

St Paul's Pre-school, Winchester

Chair Report - 2023 / 2024

Presented by outgoing Chairperson, Michelle Beck

It has been my privilege to lead the St Paul's Pre-school Committee as Chair for the past two years and , as I step down from my role, I am delighted to be leaving the Pre-school in both excellent health and very capable hands.

The Pre-school AGM is a very important event as it is the time of the year when we join together as a community to reflect on the year past, and to prepare for the next 12 months ahead.

This evening will see some members of our current Committee stepping down. We will also be welcoming some new parents from our Pre-school community to the fold and we will be asking them to form a new Committee.

As you will be aware, the Committee is charged with the management of the Pre-school. Without a Committee in place, with a quorum of at least 3 Officers and 5 Committee members in total, the Pre-school cannot operate.

This is a hugely important fact to grasp and I want to make it very clear for the avoidance of doubt. If the Pre-school Committee does not have a quorum of 5 Committee Members in total, a minimum of 3 of whom are Officers, then the Pre-school will be forced to close for good.

I cannot express enough the importance of parents becoming involved – we are a community-based setting and can only exist if members of our families actively support our endeavours.

While it is difficult to obtain recent closure numbers for Hampshire, Ofsted data tells us that between March and August 2023, 242 early years providers across Kent, Sussex and Surrey shut their doors.

In essence, the point I wish to make is that, in order for our much-adored, treasured and very special Pre-school to survive, we need to pull together as a community to ensure that, we too, do not become a statistic.

We are all busy people. We all have families. We all have commitments. But I would urge you not to be complacent and to stand together and work in partnership with our amazing teaching team to support their efforts and to support your Pre-school.

General Update

It is fair to state, that the past two years have been some of the most difficult and challenging that St Paul's Pre-school has ever faced.

The year-end results for the 22-23 financial year saw the Pre-school make an operating loss of almost £25,000. And this was after an incredibly tense time for the Committee and Pre-school staff, where a number of initiatives, but also constraints were put in place during the year to attempt to limit our losses. The reality of my first year as Chair is that the Committee came within two weeks of needing to declare the permanent closure of the Pre-school.

However, the strategy we put in place succeeded and the tactics that came into play during Year 1 of my tenure as Chair has seen the Pre-school now entering a bright and beautiful new age.

As you will hear in a moment from our Financial Administrator, who will be presenting you with the financials for the past 12 months, we are now in good shape financially and the tide has very much been turned. Not only have we survived, but we have THRIVED!

We slowly built up our intake of children over the course of 2023-24 and a number of initiatives established the year prior, such as offering 30 hours and lowering our intake age to 2.5 years, has benefited our setting enormously.

Thus, we have started this academic year with a record-number of new families joining us in September, and we are already at capacity for a number of our sessions.

I would personally like to acknowledge the enormous efforts of Silvia Brown and her team (Mel, Emma, Rachel, Leonie, Katie and Anne – and our amazing

Bank Staff team of Andrea and Cathy) and publicly thank them for everything they do.

This is the nurturing 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. Our teaching team are the heart and the soul of the setting and are responsible for the outstanding care and attention 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 the unachievable, and I am immensely grateful for your energy and your dedication. When I look back to where we were two years ago, as a newly formed Committee, and then taking into account all that we were up against, I am filled with an immense sense of pride for all that we have achieved together.

A huge debt of gratitude must also go to those current Committee members who are choosing to remain on the Committee for a further 12 months. The consistency and continuity that this will provide the new Committee is not be underestimated and I thank you for your dedication.

In terms of a brief update of the 2023-24 academic year, let me begin with staffing.

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.

We also benefit from our wonderful bank staff members, Cathy and Andrea, who are our “on call” team and who go above and beyond.

In terms of our administrative staff, our dynamic duo of Lisa and Yoosun are an integral part of the Pre-school and work incredibly hard behind the scenes. Thank you both for all of your support over the past year, the Committee is incredibly appreciative.

We must also pay tribute to the amazing Dawn, who joined us last year as our set-up and pack-away assistant, and who is adored by everyone she comes into contact with. Dawn is a key member of our team and we thank her for everything she does for us.

We are unusual as an early years setting in that our staffing levels remain stable and consistent. Our staff are our key asset, and we are so lucky to be blessed with such an exceptional team of practitioners.

Throughout the year we also welcomed placement students from the University of Winchester who spent time with us as part of their course requirements. We will also take on two new students later this year.

I am also delighted to advise that our revived financial position enabled us to pay out two separate, and very well-deserved, bonuses this year to our team.

The Committee

The Committee formed in October 2023 saw all three previous Officers (myself as Chair, Katie Gilbert as Secretary, and Tessa Taylor as Treasurer) remain in their roles. This is unusual, as the Committee, or at the very least the Officers, will generally change every 12 months.

However, we all felt that the huge task of ensuring the viability of the Pre-school was not yet complete. Thus, we each committed to continuing on in our respective roles for a further year in order to ensure the continuation of the plan put into place during the beginning of 2023.

Likewise, Sarah Neate remained on the Committee. We had one Committee member step down at last years AGM, but we welcomed two new members – Molly Tilbury and Nadine Kedrus-Marshall.

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 Market, which raised £3,051 and the annual and much-loved Roll and Ride event which raised £1,293. The Committee was also successful in securing a grant for £500 from Tesco.

Our most significant purchases during the year were a Trike Shed, to ensure that our trikes, bikes and scooters are kept dry and away from the elements, a new projector, and a number of new resources for our outdoor meadow space. We also invested in new Pre-school signage and we partially funded the annual Pre-school trip to Long Down Activity Farm.

40 Year Anniversary

We are a setting that has a long history, and this year we turned 40!

The Pre-school held a very successful Family Fun Picnic in the Meadow in June of this year, as a way of celebrating this very important occasion.

The sun shone and we were joined by families current and past to enjoy a wonderful few hours of smoothie-making, face-painting, hook-a-duck-ing, ceramic painting and let's not forget the consuming of that magnificent cake! This was a joyous event and a fitting way to mark 40 years of St Paul's Pre-school.

We also received excellent news coverage and our 40th Anniversary Picnic featured in the Winchester Forum magazine and the St Paul's Church Parish magazine. The Hampshire Chronicle also featured the event online and provided us with a single-page of coverage in their physical publication. This support was very pleasing to see and helps to raise our profile within the local community.

Admissions & Funding

We have started the 2023/24 academic year very close to capacity in terms of the number of children with us each day.

To compare and contrast, last year we started the year with 25 children on our register in September. However, this year we began the academic year with 49 children and our register continues to grow, with a waiting list extending into 2025 and beyond.

To ease pressures on staff, from September of this year we have capped the total number of children to 26 (previously our daily limit was 28) and the number of Under 3's is now 4 (whereas previously this number was 8).

In terms of funding, the LEA funding rate changed to £5.61 per hour from £4.97 per hour for 3 and 4 year olds and is now £7.81 per hour for 2 year olds. The Pre-school parent's fee was increased to £6.90 per hour (from £6.50 per hour) for all ages from January 2024.

It is worth me pointing out at this stage that there is still a gap between the rate we receive for 3-4 years old's and our parents fees. This shortfall equates to a deficit for the Pre-school of £1.29 per hour per funded child, and this is just one of the many challenges that the childcare sector in its totality is facing.

It is fair to say that, while we have not been immune from the numerous challenges facing the childcare sector generally, we have managed to weather the storm and are once again in a sustainable position.

At this point in time I would like to acknowledge the incredible efforts of our amazing Treasurer, Tessa Taylor, for the phenomenal job she has done over the past two years in shoring up our financial position. We are all indebted to you.

The Year Ahead

It is hoped that the new management team will 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, it is recommended that the Committee 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.

The Pre-school and the PCC (who oversee St Paul's Church) formalised a contract during the year and this will ensure fair and just representations for the Pre-school with assurances in terms of rental rate rises now formally agreed for the next 4 years. This was a key undertaking and one that will benefit the Pre-school for years to come.

I would also hope that the new Committee will continue to build on the many inroads made during the 23-24 academic year, closely monitoring outcomes. A key focus will be to increase our numbers of practitioners within our Bank Staff team and there is also a need to focus on fundraising opportunities.

How Can You Help?

1) Volunteer

Without the support of parents, we cannot go that extra mile.

Tonight is your opportunity to join the Committee and have your say, offer your time and your skills, and support this wonderful setting.

And do 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.

2) Donate

Perhaps a monthly or an annual donation to the Pre-school may be possible for your family. As a charity, we are very reliant on the generosity of the local community.

3) 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 out Google profile. And please shout from the rooftops about what a wonderful setting we are!

Once again, it has been a true honour and a privilege to hold the position of Chairperson for St Paul's Pre-school for the past two years.

Thank you to Silvia and the teaching team, to our administrative team, and finally to the Committee for your support.

St Paul's Pre-school truly is a magical place, where wonder begins, and it will always hold a special place in my heart.

ENDS

Financial Report and Accounts 2023-2024

Income and Expenditure

Our total income for the year 2023/24 was £169,659, primarily from early years education funding (£105,514), parents' fees (£52,674), holiday clubs (£1,130) and fundraising and donations (£9,364). Our total expenditure amounted to £151,694 giving us a net surplus of £17,966. Our carried forward balance at 31st August 2024 was £75,015.

Local authority funding (£105,514) received increased by 52%, compared to the last academic year (£69,356) and parents' fees (£52,674) also increased by 36% compared to the last academic year (£38,677). This is a remarkable achievement compared to this time last year and has strengthened our 2024-2025's financial position.

We have seen continually increasing children's number during the year 2023-2024, Particularly for younger children and this trend has had a positive impact on our gross income.

The LEA funding rate changed to £5.61 per hour from £4.97 per hour for 3 and 4 year olds and £7.81 per hour for 2 year olds. The parents' fee was increased to £6.90 per hour (from £6.50 per hour) for all ages from January 2024. With inflation at an all time high, the Committee decided this 6% parent rate increase was needed to help boost income but still remain affordable for parents, as a part of being a community based charity Pre-school.

Total staff costs increased by 3% to £122,248 compared to the last academic year (£118,830). This year's staff cost included a year end bonus of £8,550, therefore the staff cost excluding bonus actually decreased by £5,132. This was achieved by the Committee and teaching team, through the careful deployment of staff at the beginning and throughout the year.

In this academic year, we raised £9,364 from various fundraising events and generous donations. We had a variety of fundraising events this year, such as the Christmas Fayre (£3,051) and Run and Ride (£1,293). However, we did spend £11,773 on new resources and equipment, which was more than we raised this year so we used fundraising reserves from previous years. Our focus for 2024-25 will be to increase our fundraising efforts. In addition, we were awarded £500 from Tesco Community Grant to build a trike storage shed for our Pre-school pupils.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Net assets as at 31 st August 2024 were £75,015.

Whilst the national funding rate for early years settings has remained low, we consistently and successfully applied for the various grants to support disadvantaged children and families throughout the year. The Committee is working very closely with the staff to provide high quality education, maintain affordable parents' fees as well as maintaining a stable head count which is crucial for ensuring the safety and well-being of the children.

This year's surplus was achieved through the Committee's implementation which started two years ago; accepting 30 hours funding, lowering the intake age to 2 years 6 months, improving marketing efforts, increasing the fees paid by parents and carefully monitoring costs. We have almost entirely recovered from a difficult year last year, where we experienced losses due to children's numbers being unusually low but costs remained high. We are now expecting to see a continual growth year on year.

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 continue operating. 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.

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On behalf of the Treasurer

St Paul's Pre-School
2023-2024 Report and Accounts

Registered Charity No.
1020155

Income and Expenditure account
for the year ended 31 August 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Income					
Local Authority funding			£105,514		£69,356
Fees from parents			£52,674		£38,677
Holiday Clubs			£1,130		£2,345
Student Replacement			£560		£560
Receipts from operating activities			£159,878		£110,938
Fundraising and donations			£9,364		£11,438
Bank Interest			£418		£167
TOTAL INCOME			£169,659		£122,544
Expenditure					
Staff Costs		£122,248		£118,830	
Premises		£10,457		£9,847	
Consumables/Essentials		£3,690		£2,586	
Insurance		£825		£754	
Administration		£2,701		£1,593	
Art/Stationery/Printing		£0		£1,945	
Payments for operating activities		£139,921		£135,555	
Fundraising		£11,773		£8,832	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			£151,694		£144,387
<i>Operating surplus / (deficit) for the period</i>			<i>£19,957</i>		<i>(£24,617)</i>
Net surplus / (deficit) for the period			£17,966		(£21,843)
Balance brought forward at 1 September 2023			£57,050		£78,893

Balance carried forward at 31 August 2024		£75,015	£57,050
<div> <div>St Paul's Pre-School</div> <div>2023-2024 Report and Accounts</div> </div> <div>Registered Charity No. 1020155</div>			
Statement of assets and liabilities for the year ended 31 August 2024	- - - - -		
	Notes	<div>2024</div> <div>£</div>	<div>2023</div> <div>£</div>
Assets			
Deposit account (Reserve)		£33,385	£32,967
Fundraising account		£6,678	£9,086
Current account		£38,946	£17,765
Liquid Assets		£79,008	£59,818
Outstanding Fees and Monies		£0	£1,671
Total Assets		£79,008	£61,489
Liabilities		£3,993	£4,440
Net Assets		£75,015	£57,049
Carried forward at 31 August 2024		£75,015	£57,049



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
St Paul's Pre-School

On accounts for the year
ended

31st August 2024

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 / 2024.

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 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:

16/12/2024

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.