

# **ST HELEN'S PLAYGROUP**

## **AGM MINUTES**

**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 9.00am**

### **In attendance:**

Committee

Charlotte Ayers (Chair)

Carol Pickering (Co-opted Committee Member and Manager, acting Secretary)

Parents

Akintunde Basirat, Viviana Botti, Marcus Cormack, Sara Ghaiora, Stephanie Goodall, Temutayo Johnson, Chanel Lewis, O. Ogunleye, Kithariyan Saran, Pooja Sharma, Jaspreet Singh Arora, Lizzie Slomka, Luke and Chelsea Smith

Hilary Smith – Church Warden

### **Apologies:**

Jyoti Agwar (Treasurer)

Katie Strowger

Helsie Hallums

Ben Ianson

### **1. Welcome**

Charlotte Ayers welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced herself as Chairperson and gave the apologies of Jyoti, the Treasurer and Katie Strowger, the other Committee Member.

### **2. Chairperson's Report**

St Helen's Playgroup has been running now for over 35 years and continues to thrive despite all the challenges that pre-schools are having to face, from a lack of government funding and annual increases to the national minimum wage to increased expectations.

St Helen's Playgroup, St Helen's Church, St Helen's Street, Ipswich, IP4 2LS

Charity Number: 1029698

Ofsted Number: 251649

A Committee of volunteers consisting of parents and past parents oversees the Playgroup with Carol providing the day-to-day management of the setting. We currently have 7 members of staff on permanent contracts and 2 on zero hour contracts to provide cover when needed. The required adult : child ratios are always exceeded. This has always been the philosophy of the playgroup and although maximising these ratios would bring in more revenue we believe that this would compromise the care and learning opportunities that we would be able to provide for the children.

We are currently full and have already started a waiting list for September. The sudden closure of all Alpha Nurseries at the end of December, which included Bluebells Nursery in nearby Bond Street, means that demand for spaces locally has increased.

The Playgroup continues to provide as many varied opportunities for the children as possible, including various trips and visits throughout the year. For the past two years the children have enjoyed fully funded sessions at Goals during the summer months to develop their football skills and it is hoped that we will be able to do this again this summer.

Following an application to the Suffolk Community Foundation we were awarded £1,875.00 to carry out necessary repairs to our outside space. This work was completed over the summer with the help of two volunteers, making the garden a safe and fully usable space for the children to enjoy once again.

Finally, we believe that the government chose to offer “free” early education to all children from the age of 3 and that it is therefore their responsibility to ensure that this is properly funded. We don't want to find ourselves in the same position as Alpha Nurseries, having to close because we can no longer afford to deliver quality early years education. That's why we're asking as many people as possible to speak out by writing to our local MP. If you would like to do this, please ask Carol for details.

### **3. Treasurer's Report**

The Chairperson presented the report on behalf of the Treasurer.

A copy of this report is attached to the Minutes of this meeting. The accounts for 2022/23 were subject to an independent examination and no concerns were raised.

83 % of our income comes from EEF/ EYPP. 88 % of our expenditure is wages.

St Helen's Playgroup, St Helen's Church, St Helen's Street, Ipswich, IP4 2LS

Charity Number: 1029698

Ofsted Number: 251649

The minimum wage is increasing by 9.8% from April which means that our wages bill will increase by 9.8%. However, although the Early Education Funding rate increasing, it is not set to increase by an equivalent amount. We are also anticipating a large increase in rent to cover the increased costs of running the building. This means that we will not make a profit this year and may make a loss next year, unless the funding rates set by the government are increased. In the future, we may have to consider reducing our staffing levels to the required minimum, which will impact hugely on the level of attention that each individual child will receive.

#### **4. Election of a New Committee**

Charlotte invited anyone interested in becoming a Committee member, particularly if they are interested in fund raising for Playgroup, to speak with Carol. New Committee members will be required to undertake a DBS check.

#### **5. Playgroup Update from the Manager**

Most of the equipment that Playgroup buys is funded by specific funds or fund raising. Last year the Committee raised money for a new trampoline. Several of the children have mentioned basketball recently and we would like to be able to buy a basketball hoop for the garden, but we need to raise some extra funds for this. They cost around £50 but we already have £23 from our Christmas raffle so are almost half way there. If you would like to help, please let Carol know.

The team at St Helen's Playgroup are always happy to talk with you about your child and how you can support their development at home and can also offer advice and reassurance on things like toilet training and managing challenging behaviour. The staff are here to help support you as well as care for your child. The nearest Family Hub is Treehouse but as this is quite a way away, Carol is therefore working with one of their Child Health Practitioners to run some information sessions for parents during Playgroup sessions. The first session will hopefully run in March and will focus on healthy eating.

#### **6. Any Other Business**

There were no further questions so Charlotte thanked everyone for attending the meeting. The meeting closed at 9.30am.

**St Helen's Playgroup**  
**Treasurers Report**  
**Annual Accounts for Year End 2023**

The following balances were held by St Helens Playgroup on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023:

<b>Llyods Account</b>	<b>£41,127.45</b>
<b>Petty Cash in Hand</b>	<b>nil</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£41,127.45</b>

The accounts for the period May 2022 to April 2023 are as shown below:

<b>Income</b>	<b>£ 59,428.31</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£ 50,485.91</b>
<b>Profit/ (Loss)</b>	<b>£ 8,942.40</b>

	<b>FY2022/23</b>	<b>FY2021/22</b>
<b>Profit/ (Loss)</b>	<b>£8,942.40</b>	<b>£3,628.19</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>£59,428.31</b>	<b>£50,061.98</b>
Local Authority Funding	£45,583.98	£42,510.85
Attendance Fees	£2,963.00	£6,915.00
Grants	£1,875.00	£570.00
Fund Raising	£280.85	0
Other	£8,725.48	£66.13
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£50,485.91</b>	<b>£46,433.79</b>
Wages	£44,581.18	£39,811.56
Training	£268.07	£1,516.17
Rent	£1,472.00	£1,600.00
Equipment	£838.55	£1,214.34
Consumables	£949.46	£877.12
Other	£2,376.65	£1,414.60

It should be noted that of the £41,127.45 held on 28/04/2023, £18,321.06 related to specific funding and £18,377.00 to allocated reserves, leaving £4,429.39 of accessible funds.



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Charity Name  
St Helen's Playgroup

On accounts for the year  
ended

30 April 2023

Charity no  
(if any)

1029698

Set out on pages

Financial Summary

(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 **30 / 04 / 2022**.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 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 (other than that disclosed below \*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn 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:

Date: 21/10/2023

Name:

Gary L Parker

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

FCCA

Address:

23 Woodrush Road, Purdis Farm, Ipswich, IP3 8RB

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight 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.**