

## Chairpersons's Report – 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025

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.

We currently have 7 members of staff on permanent contracts and 1 on a zero hour contract to provide cover when needed. The minimum 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 have been full to capacity since September and already have a waiting list for next September.

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 three years the children have enjoyed free 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. During the past year, there have also been trips to Dial Lane Bookshop, soft play, Pipers Vale Gymnastics Centre, the Christmas Tree Festival, library and both Alexandra and Christchurch Parks. The children have also enjoyed visits from the charity Let's Talk Reading, a puppet theatre, Together Dental and an array of pets.

Our biggest challenge is remaining financially viable. In 18 months our annual rent has increased from £1,500 per annum to over £4,000. The minimum wage also continues to increase year on year, which has a huge impact on our pay scales. However, with almost all of our children receiving the Government's Early Education Funding, there is little opportunity for us to increase income from fees. We do not want to have to compromise the care and learning opportunities that the children benefit from but if financial pressures continue we may have to consider reducing the number of staff we have at each session. Your support is therefore vital to us either by contributing towards the cost of providing a healthy snack for the children each day when asked to do so each term or by organising fund raising activities to enable us to buy additional resources.

The team here 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. They are here to help support you as well as caring for and supporting your child.

**St Helen's Playgroup**  
**Treasurers Report**  
**Annual Accounts Report YE2024**

The following balances were held by St Helens Playgroup as at 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024:

<b>Llyods Account</b>	<b>£43,266.58</b>
<b>Petty Cash in Hand</b>	<b>nil</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£43,266.58</b>

The accounts for the period May 2023 to April 2024 are as shown below:

<b>Income</b>	<b>£54,864.96</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£53,088.22</b>
<b>Profit/ (Loss)</b>	<b>£1,776.74</b>

	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY23</b>
<b>Profit/ (Loss)</b>	<b>£1,776.74</b>	<b>£8,942.40</b>
<b>Income</b>	<b>£54,864.96</b>	<b>£59,428.31</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£53,088.22</b>	<b>£50,485.91</b>
Local Authority Funding	£44,691.25	£45,583.98
Attendance Fees	£6,610.00	£2,963.00
Grants	£700.00	£1,875.00
Fund Raising	£227.31	£280.85
Other	£2,636.40	£8,725.48
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Wages	£45,742.20	£44,581.18
Training	£116.60	£268.07
Rent	£1,480.00	£1,472.00
Equipment	£972.34	£838.55
Consumables	£1,260.60	£949.46
Other	£3,516.48	£2,376.65

It should be noted that of the £43,266.58 held on 01/05/2024, £18,477.84 related to specific funding and £21,165.00 to allocated reserves, leaving £3,623.74 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 2024

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 / 2024**.

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: 04/11/2024

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.**