

NEWTOWN COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL AGM (2024) MINUTES – 19th July 2025

For financial year (FY) Sept 2023-August 2024

Present:

Apologies:

1	<p>Welcome - DPW</p> <p>Before the meeting started Jayne gave an update on our lease agreement with the school and advised that the lease has been extended until October 2026. The meeting debated the pro and cons of becoming part of ACE and further committee meetings will be required to discuss this further.</p>
2	<p>Chair Report – DPW</p> <p>Firstly, I'd like to welcome you all and thank you for attending today. For those that don't know me, my name is Dave and I have now been the Chair for several years. My son left preschool in July 21 and my daughter left in 2024.</p> <p>On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank all staff for their immense amount of hard work and ongoing commitment over the past few years. The past couple of years have been difficult financially mostly due to continued under funding and a high turnover of children which has brought many challenges.</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>As usual, it is the passion, energy and dedication of the staff that keeps preschool running.</p> <p>In September Sue took over the daily running of the preschool and Jayne continued with the responsibility for the financial management of the setting. In October Emma joined the setting as Deputy Preschool Leader.</p> <p>We currently have 7 permanent staff and 4 bank staff and all Ofsted obligations in terms of training have been met.</p> <p>As our numbers grew significantly this term, we hired bank staff to help out. Teresa, Anne, Frankie and Annie have been a great help.</p>

Committee

Chairperson – Dave kindly agreed to continue as Chairperson but is happy to step down if someone else would like to take on the role.

Treasurer – Ana notified the meeting that she will be stepping down today.

Secretary – we have not had a secretary for this year and really need to fill this position going forward to arrange and organise regular committee meetings.

Preschool needs the support of parents and carers if it is to fulfil its legal obligations with third parties such as Ofsted and the Charity Commission and so it is time to elect a new committee and in particular the roles of Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary.

The nature of our preschool is to operate with parental involvement and the more people involved the better, any help that you can give is appreciated.

Joining the committee is not an onerous task and we are always on hand to guide committee members through the necessary procedures throughout the academic year. Previous committee members have found it to be a hugely positive experience and in addition joining the committee means:

- that you and other parents can have a say in the way our preschool is run,
- you get to know other parents better,
- it gives you experience that looks very good on your CV!
- the children love to see their parents joining in activities and events

There are also opportunities for parents and carers to get involved with the preschool and contribute in other ways including:

- helping at fund raising events
- helping us with DIY tasks
- helping us promote preschool
- repairing toys and equipment
- grant applications

All committee member appointments will be subject to a clear enhanced DBS check and will be required to sign up to the DBS update service and will also need to be registered with Ofsted. Committee members automatically become Trustees of the charity.

Aside from being part of the committee, there are always jobs to be done around preschool so if you can offer any practical help please let us know. Preschool staff work extremely hard, under huge pressure and on low wages and it helps with staff morale if parents are contributing. It is also very rewarding for parents to be involved.

A strong committee and parental involvement is vital in our ongoing battle to survive during these challenging times.

Overview

September 2023- August 2024

The number of children attending preschool rose steadily throughout the academic year from 25 in September and by the end of the summer term we had 43 children registered with us. This was largely due to several children attending who were temporarily housed in Exeter.

September 2024 –

In September last year we started with 20 children, a few lower than our target. However, we bounced back and in the Spring term this year we had 31 children attending preschool. We currently have 33 children registered as a few have left us due to relocation in the past couple of months.

September 2025 onwards

We currently have 23 children registered for September this year, although most of these are part time. If you have any friends or family that might be interested in a space, then please do let Jayne know or ask them to contact preschool.

Promoting ourselves needs to be a continued focus. We have our own website and Facebook page, and we place articles in Newtown Primary School's newsletter but need to be more active on both social media and other outlets. Our committee members have previously distributed posters and flyers to Exeter Library and the Baby Room on Paris Street and even at their child's birthday party. If any parents can put a poster up in their workplace, community group, church etc then please do let me know.

However, word of mouth still appears to be our most successful marketing tools and we thank all those parents who recommend us to their friends and family. We would be grateful if you could continue to spread the word and to like and share our Facebook page whenever possible.

Fees

Our fees increased in April 23 to £5.74 (2yo) and £5.28 (3yo) in order to meet rising operating costs, mostly due to the increase in National Minimum Wage in April 24 and further predicted increase in NMW in April 25, our current fees of £6.00 and £5.50 were introduced in September 24.

Fees will remain the same for September 2025.

Treasurer Report – JJ

Jayne explained that the preschool has two bank accounts: a current account for day to day business, and a savings account to cover contingencies such as possible redundancy payments.

Sept 2023 – August 2024

Our results for the year 2023-2024 are:

Our income for the 2023-2024 FY was approx. £124,432k.

- The main sources of income were Early Years Funding and fees totalling. £118,373k.
- Grants of £4670 –details are below:

We were successful in applying for the following grants:

Exeter City Council £320 – table top cooker and hand washing unit

Devon County Council £950 – expansion funding to purchase resources for the younger children including sleep mats and bedding

Norman Family Charitable Trust - £2500 towards operating costs and to replace funds in the deposit account

South West Water Conservation grant - £950 to cover the cost of the new water tray, staff time and resources for the children to do some planting/gardening

Our expenditure for the year was approx. £102.6k

- The major expense was wages and tax/NI which totalled around £93.4K.
- The other significant expense was rent totalled approx £4.8k, although £3660 wasn't invoice before the end of the financial year and so falls into 24-25 accounts.

The figures show a surplus of just over £21.8K, but the real surplus is actually £18k as we the majority of the rent for 23-24 was paid in September 25 due to not receiving the invoices are time from ACE. This also included the significant amount of £4670 of grants, so the real surplus is £13.5k, a very healthy amount.

Despite this, these remain challenging times, the main reason being underfunding, the amount that we are paid by the government just doesn't cover the running costs of the preschool, particularly the wages. The increase in funding levels fell significantly short of the increase in National Minimum Wage.

In July 2024 we were able to transfer £2.5k back into the deposit account which is there to provide redundancy payments if needed.

The accounts were accepted and agreed by the meeting.

The accounts have been audited by an independent auditor and will be submitted to the Charity Commission following this meeting.

September 2025 onwards

Providing that our children numbers remain as they are we currently stand to make a smaller surplus this year mostly due to our increased wage bill, we have had to employ a higher ratio of staff to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all children. Thanks to the forecasting spreadsheet set up by the previous treasurer, this allows us to keep an accurate picture of how we are doing financially and to react to changes quickly.

Fundraising

We haven't been actively fundraising for the past few years, mostly due to our awareness of the rising costs of living that our families are facing and the reduction in their disposable income.

However, it would be amazing if all our families could sign up to Easyfundraising, some settings earn a huge amount of money from this each year so it would be great to get you all on board. It doesn't cost you anything but if you use this platform for online purchases the preschool will receive a donation for every purchase you make. This applies to thousands of online stores/suppliers.

We did attend the Winter Celebration at Newtown Primary School and have since joined other events run by Friends of Newtown School.

Preschool leader's report

Overview

This year we have focussed on becoming established in the new systems we have in place with the children, reflecting on our current practice and making adjustments where we need to, so that we can provide the best learning

environment for all our children. It is important that we provide a welcoming and calming environment that is also exciting for the children to explore and develop their curiosity and interests. We continually try to improve our learning environment to extend the play opportunities available to the children and follow each of their interests.

The Team

I believe we have a strong Leadership team, Jayne Emma and Sue and each have strengths that we add to the running of the preschool.

Jayne is responsible for all business matters, and much more. She is the glue that keeps the partnership with families and connection with the team together. She steps in many times when we need another pair of hands with the children and clearly takes pride in all that she does. Jayne has always gone above and beyond her 'job role' to support staff and families and we are so grateful that she is part of our team.

Emma brings joy and fun to the team and is responsible for the day to day planning and running of the group, when Sue is not in ratio. She brings new and fresh ideas that the children love. Emma (and Jayne) had to step up a lot when Sue left the Preschool and this was at a time when we had our Ofsted Inspection. This was a huge challenge for them both, but together they were exemplary, and we were awarded a 'Good' rating. As Designated Safeguarding Officer, she brings a strong and sensitive approach to supporting children and has such empathy. It is a privilege to work alongside Emma, and I know that we will continue to develop our role together as we keep moving forward.

Sue, along with overseeing the running of the preschool group, I am the SENDCo. My passion lies with supporting all children and their families, to offer advice and support where they may be struggling and to make referrals to outside agencies if necessary. I strive to be a role model to staff, supporting them to see the individual child as unique, and work towards supporting every child's exceptional qualities along with their individual challenges. I work closely with outside agencies, gather and record evidence and make referrals as necessary.

The Setting

We have an exceptional team of staff and together we have embraced all the children in our care. We are reflective as a team and through staff meetings and general conversations, we are open to making changes where we need to, which is always influenced by the cohort of children that we have, following their interests and needs. It is always a priority to us that we build strong bonds with the children and get to know them very well. This is the foundation for all children to feel confident to explore their learning environment and become strong, independent learners where children thrive and become successful. We

have rhythms and routines throughout the day, which give children a structure they can feel secure in. This comprises of :-

Registration first thing in the morning – we break into two groups, which gives the opportunity for the children to engage in activities that are suited to their ability. For the Rising 5's we have developed a progress system of teaching Maths and Literacy. For the 3 year olds, we practice

developing their listening and attention, through fun and interactive games, and the 2 year olds, we are teaching them the early skills for listening and attention, and social interaction.

Snack – We have a rolling snack in the morning, and whole group snack time in the afternoon. This is a wonder opportunity for the children to develop their social and interaction skills.

Independent Learning – The children make full use of the indoor and outdoor areas, where they can engage with the activities and resources we have set up, but also make independent choices to play with toys they want. We are trying to teach the children to tidy up as they go, and we will continue to work on this. With the team of staff that we have, it has been exciting to see the different creative ideas that they have brought. We make good use of the play trays, which can be anything from an arctic ocean to a fairy landscape. Just by adding something new to a resource, changes the way the children play. For example, the sand tray is a continuous provision that we provide, and we took out all of the buckets and spades and added small bricks and large diggers. The children loved this and were able to develop completely different skills in their play.

Adult planned activity runs alongside this. Topics we have focussed on over this last year have been:-

- Nursery Rhymes
- All about me – giving the children a sense of identity, and celebrating each other and our differences
- Autumn, Christmas and Winter
- The Hungry Caterpillar
- Spring
- On the Farm and animal babies
- Mini Beasts

· Under the Sea

· Summer and beach

Long Term Planning – I will be working on the planning for next year, over the summer, and would welcome any ideas/topics that you would like us to bring. We often follow topics through the seasons. Please message Sue if you have any ideas to add to this.

Medium Term Planning – A break down of the topic that we will be focussing on, and looking more closely at what we want the children to learn during this time.

Short Term Planning – The day to day planning which focusses on the activity, words we want the children to learn, and the learning focus for that activity.

Lunch Time

We have worked hard on the lunch time period, where we try to provide an environment that is calm for the children to be able to eat together.

Afternoon:

Afternoon Registration – We have a music and movement session, which the children love. This is often using the iPad, and they follow ‘Go Danny’ movements.

Independent learning and Planned Activities – The children then play independently and we have two adult led activities which run alongside this.

Snack

Outdoor Play

Story Time

I would like to say thank you to all our parents at the preschool, and who are involved in many different ways. We love to work with you, because we know and understand that you know your children the best.

Report written by Sue Knab, Preschool Leader/SENDCo 19/07/2025

Election of the new Committee – After a brief explanation of the committee's roles, the following roles were elected:

- Chair: re-elected Dave Paterson-Watts
- Treasurer: Eleanor Tomlinson
- Secretary: Jayne Jarman
- Lauren Palucci agreed to remain on the committee.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those parents who have supported preschool when we have asked for volunteers to help with tasks either recycling centre trips, donations to preschool etc.

Meeting closed.

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6	Thanks given to those who attended AGM your support is really appreciated! Close

	NEWTOWN PRESCHOOL PROFIT AND LOSS 29TH AUGUST			
	2023 TO 28TH AUGUST 2024			
INCOME			EXPENDITURE	
FUNDING	£93,340.29		WAGES	£86,038.76
FEES	£25,033.04		TAX	£7,372.14
FUNDRAISING	£57.24		COMMUNITY PROJECT	
ACS	£0.00		RENT	£1,214.98
OTHER	£1,255.98		EXPENSES	£4,311.87
INTEREST	£ 76.33		EQUIPMENT	£2,078.13
GRANT	£4,670.00		PETTY CASH	£50.00
TODDLERS	£0.00		OTHER	£0.00
	0		TRAINING	£456.57
TOTAL	£124,432.88		CONSUMABLES	£1,075.91
			NEW BUILDING	£0.00
INCOME	£124,432.88		TOTAL	£102,598.36
EXPENDITURE	£102,598.36			
SURPLUS	£ 21,834.52			

Note: Rent wasn't paid in Spring and Summer term as invoices weren't issued. Paid in 24-25 £3660 so real surplus

BALANCE SHEET			
ACCOUNTS	Total	Current Account	Savings Account
OPENING BALANCE	£ 13,282.16	£ 7,454.25	£ 5,827.91
CASH INFLOW	£ 21,834.52	£ 21,758.19	£ 2,576.33
CLOSING BALANCE	£ 35,116.68	£ 29,212.44	8404.24
BANK			
LLOYDS CURRENT	£ 26,712.44		
LLOYDS SAVINGS	£ 8,404.24		
	£ 35,116.68		£ -

Independent examiner's report on the accounts



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Name
Newtown Preschool

On accounts for the year
ended

28th August 2024

Charity no
(if any)

1031577

Set out on pages

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Respective
responsibilities of
trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed. [The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [named body]]. *Delete [] if not applicable.*

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent
examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent
examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below *)

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, 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:

N A Hooper

Date:

07/07/2025

Name:

N A Hooper

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

FMAAT

Address:

21 Cherry Tree Close

Exeter

Devon EX4 5AT

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems.(E.g. accounting records have not been kept in accordance with s132 of the Charities' Act 2011 and those accounts do not comply with the requirements of the 2008 Regulations setting out the form and content of charity accounts; any material expenditure or action which appears not to be in accordance with the trusts of the charity; any failure to be provided with information and explanations by any past or present trustee, officer or employee; and any material consistency between the accounts and the trustees' annual report.)

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.