

STEPPING STONES PRE-SCHOOL

England & Wales · Charity number 1038393

Details

Other names STEPPING STONES PLAYGROUP (TEYNHAM)

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 1994-06-06

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Lynsted Little Hall
Lynsted And Norton School
Lynsted Lane
Lynsted
Sittingbourne
KENT

Phone 01795522736

Email office@steppingstoneslynsted.org.uk

Activities

Objects: TO ENHANCE THE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN UNDER STATUTORY SCHOOL AGE BY ENCOURAGING PARENTS TO UNDERSTAND AND PROVIDE FOR THE NEEDS OF THEIR CHILDREN THROUGH COMMUNITY GROUPS

Activities: Rural committee run pre-school offering childcare between 8.50 am and 3.00 pm. Extended hours are available. Aim is to deliver quality affordable care giving children a sound foundation to learn from. Play approach benefits all in their learning no matter what their individual abilities. Aspire to give skills for the rest of their lives and in future be positive contributors to society.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services
- **What:** Education/training
- **Who:** Children/young People

Geography

- Kent

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-04-05	£59,171	£58,404	-	-
2024-04-05	£73,121	£71,334	-	-
2023-04-05	£77,674	£84,516	-	-
2022-04-05	£80,602	£88,088	-	-
2021-04-05	£97,279	£84,724	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Rowena Catherine Grace Fletcher	Chair	2019-11-21
Elizabeth Bailey		2023-12-01
Hendy Bep Cockbain		2024-11-21
Joanne Lesley Burwood-Wilson		2024-11-21
Lisa Clare Simester		2023-11-13
Olivia-Claire Hyland		2025-11-20
Senka Cicvara		2024-11-21
William Christopher Pike		2025-11-20

STEPPING STONES PRE-SCHOOL

England & Wales - Charity number 1038393

Accounts

Stepping Stones Pre-School



Ofsted no: 127646

Charity no: 1038393

Lynsted Little Hall

Lynsted Lane

Sittingbourne

Kent

Me9 0rl

Telephone: 01795 522 736

Email: office@steppingstoneslynsted.org.uk

Annual Report Apr 2024-Mar 2025

Our staff team continues to evolve with the same core staff still in place-manager; deputy manager; 1 full-time staff member & 1 part-time staff member; administrator & 1 volunteer.

Our numbers continue to be low, despite the introduction of 2-year-old working entitlement. This is still the ongoing impact of Covid and low birth rates.

We still used our independent SALT (Speech & Language Teacher) to support staff and assess complex language needs but as SENIF funds cannot be used for this, it has become increasingly challenging to fund these visits, even though they are needed more than ever with the squeeze on NHS SALT services.

During Term 5 & 6, we had the lambs visit, again with Elmo (who used to attend preschool) and The local band Hullabaloo came to play for us, with children being able to not only listen to the instruments but also attempt to play themselves. We had a Rugby Tots session delivered on the field, helping develop gross motor & ball skills as well as co-operative & team building opportunities. Our Father's Day event welcomed 5 parents for activities and games. We joined the school to celebrate the opening of their outdoor classroom which we will be able to use.

We interviewed to replace one staff member but were unable to offer hours-our level 3 apprentice continued her training. We supported 2 students with their work experience.

During June & July, we again offered parents evening in person, on an individual basis-this is now within the session and means we now have 100% attendance

We continued to have a high level of SEND children.

We held Sports Week to allow for children's holidays and over the week, children participated in daily races and still received their medal & certificate.

All staff supported their key children with transitions to school with meetings and visits and a child gained a place at Aspire, having been supported through the deferred year with an EHCP.

Graduation Day was blessed with lovely weather as we said goodbye to 8 children.



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Pre-School



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During the summer, the emergency maintenance on the garden fence carried out in April was upgraded with new fencing and an access gate directly to the school field.

In September, numbers were low, but we continue to have a high level of SEND with 25% of children needing support or intervention. A member of staff reduced her hours due to a change in family circumstances, and we had a student from Canterbury College for the term.

We welcomed 4 Grandparents in for story time to celebrate Grandparents' Day and held a 'Speak like a pirate day' with pirate themed activities and dressing up.

Children enjoyed a hands-on visit learning all about caring for chickens, the school regularly visited with pupils for shared reading time, we held our annual 'Welly Walk' fundraiser and December saw the children perform their Christmas production 'A Wiggly Nativity' in the school hall with a total of £225 being raised over these events.

A child we had supported gained their EHCP at their new setting.

Over the year, staff continued to make use of the training platform with Early Years Alliance completing Safeguarding, SEND, Communication & Language and Characteristics of Effective Learning courses amongst others.

Numbers didn't increase significantly, and this continues to impact on the fundraising which covers the shortfall.

2 members of staff updated their paediatric 1st Aid.

In March we celebrated World Book Day, dressing up as favorite characters & sharing stories & book themed activities with some parents joining us for stories. We welcomed the Mums in for Mother's Day tea and cake, with a high attendance. This showcases our children's self-help skills, as they poured their mummies a drink and offered them a selection of cakes.

To conclude, it continues to be challenging to keep the setting operating with increasing costs & falling numbers- Covid is still impacting birth rates.

We need to continue to explore grants and funding streams to help bridge the gap.



Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Stepping Stones Pre-School

I reported the accounts on the Stepping Stones Pre School for the year ended 5th April 2025, which are enclosed.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner.

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43 (2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7) (b) of the Act, whether particular matter have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. 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 of disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required for an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

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(1) which gives me reason to believe that in any material respect the requirements

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to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to
comply with the accounting requirements of the 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.

Name: John Crowder

Date:

16/10/2025

Relevant professional qualification of body: FFA FTA

Address: J&S Accountancy
16 West Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 1AW

STEPPING STONES PRE SCHOOL (Lynsted)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 5th APRIL 2025

Section 2

Balances brought forward

Lloyds Business Extra Account	184.77	
Cash in hand	7.03	
Retained Cash	24.46	
Instant access	40.86	
		257.12
		<u>767.22</u>

Excess of income over expenditure

1024.34

Balances carried forward

Lloyds Business Extra Account	603.07	
Cash in hand	2.05	
Retained Cash	317.91	
Instant access	101.31	
		1024.34

Excess of expenditure over income

1024.34

K. J. W. ROWENA FLETCHER. class - 20/11/25

LISA SIMESTER 20/11/25

Stepping Stones Pre-School



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Lynsted Little Hall

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We need to continue to explore grants and funding streams to help bridge the gap.



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understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name: John Crowder

Date: 16/10/2025

Relevant professional qualification of body: FFA FTA

Address: J&S Accountancy
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STEPPING STONES PRE-SCHOOL

England & Wales - Charity number 1038393

Accounts

Stepping Stones
Pre-School



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Charity no: 1038393

Lynsted Little Hall

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Annual Report Apr 2023-Mar 2024

Our staff team saw some changes with the same core staff still in place-manager; deputy manager; 1 full-time staff member & 1 part-time staff member; administrator & 1 volunteer.

Our numbers continue to drop, despite the introduction of 2 year old working entitlement. This is still the impact of Covid and low birth rates.

We are still using our independent SALT (Speech & Language Teacher) to support staff and assess complex language needs.

During Term 5 & 6, we had Piggy the pony visit with the children learning safety & how to care for horses from having his feet trimmed by a farrier to grooming-we all got to use a brush. A part-time member of staff moved to bank staff only. We celebrated the King's coronation joining the school for a picnic and games afternoon on the field.

Our long-standing manager handed in her notice after 28 years.

During June & July, we again offered parents evening in person, on an individual basis.

We continued to have a high level of SEND children, 3 of which were supported at a high level.

In early July, we had Sports Day with a good turnout of children & families and had some stalls.

All staff supported their key children with transitions to school by sharing social stories featuring their school environment & uniform, meeting with teachers in person at the setting or over the phone, to pass on end of year reports & any relevant information.

Graduation was again held outside in the garden at the end of term. It was a lovely day to celebrate our children's achievements and say goodbye to the manager.

During the summer, the committee had interviews to consider her replacement. The school upgraded their fencing and security cameras, with a buzzer system and key fobs for staff-this makes the whole site safer.





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In September, numbers were low and a level 3 member of staff left for a position at a full time nursery. One of our SEND children gained an EHCP and deferred entry to Reception to stay with us for the year. The school began works on their Forest School classroom which we will have access to.

Staff attended Autism Awareness Training which is being rolled out to all early years and primary settings.

We welcomed Grandparents in for story time to celebrate Grandparents' Day.

In November, our deputy was appointed interim manager to later be confirmed in the position in the New Year. A former practitioner returned to the team.

We held our annual 'Welly Walk' fundraiser, started having cake sales and December saw the children perform their Christmas production in the school hall with a total of £287.65 being raised over these events.

It came to light that the lease had expired for the building and the school had been approached about the possibility of taking over pre-school by the exiting manager in the summer. Discussions ensued to explore all possibilities.

Over the year, staff made use of the training platform with Early Years Alliance completing Safeguarding, SEND and Characteristics of Effective Learning courses amongst others.

In the New Year, the school met with us to say that a takeover wasn't financially viable for them at present but we would continue to work closely & collaboratively with them.

Numbers didn't increase significantly, and this continues to impact the fundraising which covers the shortfall. We had a paramedic visit in February and the children thoroughly enjoyed learning basic care and 1st Aid.

A member of staff started their Level 3 training with Parenta.

In March we celebrated World Book Day, dressing up as favourite characters & sharing stories & book themed activities with some parents joining us for stories. We welcomed the Mums in for Mother's Day tea with a high attendance.

To conclude, it continues to be challenging to keep the setting operating with increasing costs & falling numbers- Covid is still impacting birth rates.

We need to explore grants and funding streams to help bridge the gap.



STEPPING STONES PRE-SCHOOL (Lynsted)

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5th APRIL 2024

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Fees from parents	11,465.47	Premises costs	
Local authority grant	400.00	Rent and services	1,727.50
Fund raising	434.11	Repairs and renewals	3,144.45
KCC vouchers	60,820.71	Phone	1,482.49
Donations	0.00	DBS Checks / Offsted	0.00
Staff training and wages	0.00	Equipment	0.00
Interest received	0.47	Insurance	2,256.91
Staff furlough grants	0.00	Wages	
		Net Wages	53,892.34
		Paye	5,499.81
		NEST Pension	1,574.96
		Training	97.20
		Accountancy	240.00
		Payroll / Software Charges	761.34
		Bank Charges	306.50
		Uniform purchases	16.00
		Refreshments etc.	286.23
		Sundries	48.50
	<hr/> 73,120.76		<hr/> 71,334.23
Excess of expenditure over income	0.00	Excess of income over expenditure	1,786.53
	<hr/> <hr/> 73,120.76		<hr/> <hr/> 73,120.76

*L. Jones,
Chair*

21/11/24

[Signature]

21/11/24

STEPPING STONES PRE SCHOOL (Lynsted)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 5th APRIL 2024

Section 2

Balances brought forward

Lloyds Business Extra Account	-2,020
Cash in hand	32
Retained Cash	218
Instant access	240

Excess of income over expenditure

1,787

257

Balances carried forward

Lloyds Business Extra Account	185
Cash in hand	7
Retained Cash	24
Instant access	41

257

Excess of expenditure over income

0

257

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Stepping Stones Pre-School

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Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner.

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Independent examiner's statement

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understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Name: John Crowder

Date: 21.11.2024

Relevant professional qualification of body: FFA FTA

Address:

16 West Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 1AW

J & S Accountancy Ltd
16 West Street,
Sittingbourne,
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STEPPING STONES PRE-SCHOOL

England & Wales - Charity number 1038393

Accounts

Stepping Stones Pre-School



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Annual Report Apr 2022-Mar 2023

Our staff team saw some changes with the same core staff still in place-manager; deputy manager; 1 level 3 full-time staff member; 2 practitioners became permanent staff on zero hours contracts; administrator & 1 volunteer.

Our numbers levelled out but were still lower than other years.

We are still using our independent SALT (Speech & Language Teacher) to support staff and assess complex language needs.

During summer, we had the local bee keeper visit the setting again & children used their learnt knowledge to do the 'Question & answer'.

At the beginning of term 6, we welcomed a new team member, who has a level 2 & was working towards a level 3.

During June & July, we offered parents evening in person, on an individual basis.

We continued to have a high level of SEND children, 3 of which were supported at a high level.

In early July, we returned to Sports Day in person.

All staff supported their key children with transitions to school by sharing social stories featuring their school environment & uniform, meeting with teachers in person at the setting or over the phone, to pass on end of year reports & any relevant information.

Graduation was held outside in the garden at the end of term. It was a lovely day to celebrate our children's achievements with parents, after such challenging times.

In July, our administrator handed in her notice. During the summer, the committee & manager had meetings to consider her replacement.

We welcomed a new administrator to the team in September, as her replacement. Numbers were low & some expected returning children did not materialize-this meant we were over staffed on most days.

The dentist visited & resources were given to every family to support good dental hygiene & practices.

Xmas themed photos were taken for families and we received a small commission for this.



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In November, we held a joint 'Welly Walk' fundraiser with Lynsted & Norton School and December saw the children perform their Christmas production in person again, in the school hall with a total of £574 being raised over these events.

Covid restrictions were no longer in place but Strep caused illness and we continued to clean & sanitise to minimize the spread.

Over the year, staff also attended ICAN training and implemented this with a small group.

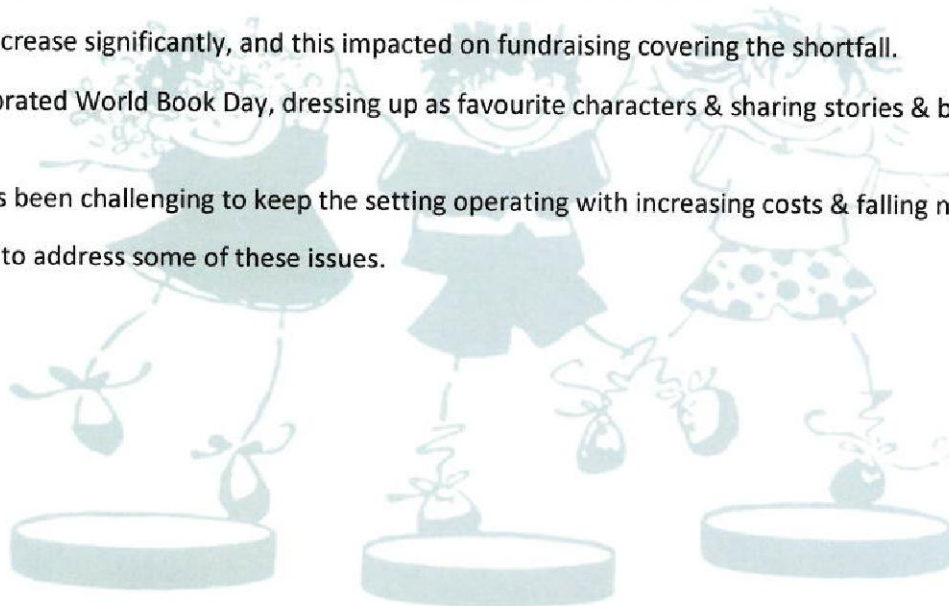
Our deputy did some mental health CACHE online training in her own time which will help us support children & families post Covid.

Numbers didn't increase significantly, and this impacted on fundraising covering the shortfall.

In March we celebrated World Book Day, dressing up as favourite characters & sharing stories & book themed activities.

To conclude, it has been challenging to keep the setting operating with increasing costs & falling numbers.

We are beginning to address some of these issues.



STEPPING STONES PRE SCHOOL (Lynsted)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 5th APRIL 2023

Section 2

Balances brought forward:

Lloyds Business Extra Account	3,248
Cash in hand	1
Retained Cash	562
Instant access	1,502

Excess of income over expenditure

5,313

Balances carried forward

Lloyds Business Extra Account	-2,020
Cash in hand	32
Retained Cash	219
Instant access	240

-1,529

 Excess of expenditure over income

6,842

5,313

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Name: John Crowder

Date: 24.10.2023

Relevant professional qualification of body: FPA FTA

Address:

16 West Street
Sittingbourne
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Annual Report Apr 2021-Mar 2022

Our staff team remained consistent with the same core staff still in place-manager; deputy manager; lead teacher; 2 level 3 members of full-time staff, administrator & 2 volunteers.

Our numbers levelled out but were still lower than other years.

Covid was still impacting on staffing/costs/ratios/fundraising events & parent meetings & the AGM had to be postponed several times due to Covid. As a setting, we continued to monitor the situation and adjusted our working to meet changes in the guidelines. We continued daily, deep cleaning, sanitizing all hands on entering the building, staff were doing lateral testing twice a week & we asked visitors if they had tested too.

We were still awaiting a full Ofsted inspection. Training had been brought in & planned for. We were still using our independent SALT (Speech & Language Teacher) to support staff and aid the setting with our focus on speech & language, ensuring we supported all our children to a high level.

As we sit on the grounds of a primary school & to safeguard all children on site, we worked in collaboration with the school to update the Lockdown procedure. It was decided the entry system needed upgrading & the works were carried out.

During May, we had 2 local bee keepers visit the setting to support our topic of 'The Natural World' & 'Life cycles'. Both children & staff gained a lot of knowledge & enjoyment from this.

During June & July, we offered parents evening by telephone, on an individual basis.

We continued to have a high level of SEND children, 3 of which were supported at a high level and 1 successfully gained an EHCP (Education, Health & Care Plan)

In June, our 2 Designated Safeguard Leads updated their training.

In early July, we held a sponsored Sports Week, documenting & sharing the event with parents via Tapestry.

All staff supported their key children with transitions to school by sharing social stories featuring their school environment & uniform, meeting with teachers in person at the setting or over the phone, to pass on end of year reports & any relevant information.

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At the end of July, the lead teacher Millie, handed in her notice. During the summer, the committee & manager had meetings to consider her replacement.

After looking at low numbers & staff levels, it was decided that we would not replace her but return to practitioner-led teaching.

In November, we held a joint 'Welly Walk' fundraiser with Lynsted & Norton School and December saw the children perform their Christmas production without an audience, but online-staff filmed all children over the week and shared the performances with parents on Tapestry.

On 20th January, a full Ofsted inspection was carried out under the new inspection framework with the outcome of 'Good' in all areas. Although we had dropped from 'Outstanding', due to the challenging times faced by the early sector through Covid over the last year, we were happy with the report. The manager, staff & committee have put plans in place to look at necessary areas of development following the inspection.

Over the year, staff also attended training on counselling, emotional regulation, ASD & 1st Aid.

During March, Spring photos were taken outside, raising funds for pre-school.

At the end of term, another member of staff handed in their notice, due to family pressures.

To conclude, it has been challenging to keep the setting operating this year safely & with a return to more normality, fundraising being one of our biggest difficulties-our main source is parent attended events, such as Christmas production, Sports Day, Welly Walk.

But we were able to fundraise **£640.33** by thinking outside the box to keep our charity in the black!



STEPPING STONES PRE SCHOOL

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

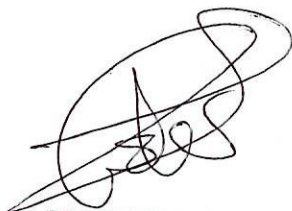
**FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 5TH
APRIL 2022**

J & S ACCOUNTANCY LTD

16 West Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 1AW

ACCOUNTANTS REPORT

In accordance with instructions given to us we have prepared, without carrying out an Audit, the attached Accounts from the accounting records of the business and from information and explanations supplied to us.

 03/08/2022

J & S Accountancy Ltd
16 West Street,
Sittingbourne,
Kent, ME10 1AW
Phone: 01795 437317
Email: info@jsaccounts.com

STEPPING STONES PRE-SCHOOL (Lynsted)

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 5th APRIL 2022

Section 1

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
Fees from parents	24,229.25	Premises costs	
Local authority grant	170.84	Rent services & R&R	650.00
Fund raising	640.33	Repairs and renewals	4,742.66
KCC vouchers	54,978.76	Phone	2,044.86
Donations	0.00	DBS Checks / Offsted	468.15
Staff training and wages	0.00	Equipment	2,815.42
Interest received	0.34	Insurance	2,091.37
Staff furlough grants	582.00	Wages	
		Net Wages	64,421.26
		Paye	4,383.74
		NEST Pension	2,358.63
		Training	195.00
		Accountancy	240.00
		Payroll / Software Charges	66.81
		Bank Charges	1364.00
		Uniform purchases	64.95
		Refreshments etc.	626.46
		Sundries	1,555.00
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	80,601.52		88,088.31
Excess of expenditure over income	7,486.79	Excess of income over expenditure	
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	97,278.60		97,278.60

STEPPING STONES PRE SCHOOL (Lynsted)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 5th APRIL 2022

Section 2

Balances brought forward

Lloyds Business Extra Account	6,090
Cash in hand	118
Retained Cash	638
Instant access	5,954

Excess of income over expenditure

12,800

Balances carried forward

Lloyds Business Extra Account	1,502
Cash in hand	1
Retained Cash	562
Instant access	3,248
	<u>5,313</u>

Excess of expenditure over income

7,487

12,800

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Stepping Stones Pre-School

I reported the accounts on the Stepping Stones Pre School for the year ended 5th April 2022, which are enclosed.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner.

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43 (2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43 (7) (b) of the Act, whether particular matter have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report.

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. 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 of disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required for an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reason to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act;
 - and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Acthave 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.

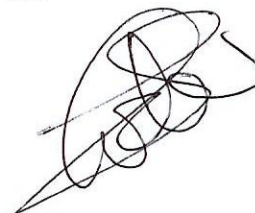
Name: John Crowder

Date: 03.08.2022

Relevant professional qualification of body: FFA FTA

Address:

16 West Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 1AW



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16 West Street,

Sittingbourne,

Kent, ME10 1AW

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