



Ofsted no: 127646

Charity no: 1038393

Lynsted Little Hall

Lynsted Lane

Sittingbourne

Kent

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Telephone: 01795 522 736

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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.



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

Prinze 2/11/24

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

I reported the accounts on the Stepping Stones Pre School for the year ended 5th April 2024, 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 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: 21.11.2024

Relevant professional qualification of body: FFA FTA

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