

Chairperson report Thurlton Preschool, July 2024

As we started the year, we faced an element of instability with the main officers stepping down there was limited handover, in particular we were in a difficult position with the accounts not being well recorded and not submitted to the Charity Commission.

With great effort and commitment Megan worked to make sense of the accounts, created a budget and got us back on track. Liz kindly stepped in to helped back track on the previous years accounts that had been missed and these were submitted, all be it a year late.

We met in the autumn term to consider some of the threats and opportunities for the preschool. One key threat is that lack of uptake in the committee roles, which is why at this AGM we want to review the current constitution to remove the requirement to have a percentage of current parents on the committee, in the hope to attract other locals to help run and manage the preschool.

We also reviewed continuing issues around the hall use, while amicable and the space appropriate, the setting up and packing away each day, detracts from the provision. We, however, could not find a suitable alternative at this time.

With changes to childcare funding ongoing, resulting in all children receiving 30hrs free from 9 months old in Sept 2025, we need to consider how families childcare needs may change with an expectation of accessing this free funding, which at the moment the preschool is not adapted to providing.

Despite the threats and challenges the preschool continues to thrive, whilst remaining financially stable and viable, it also provides excellent care and education to the children who attend, ratified by the excellent Ofsted outcome this year, where the preschool was rated as Good!

The preschool team continue to develop its specialist skill in supporting children with additional needs, led by Sandy's enthusiasm, empathy and diligence. Sandy completed a Makaton training session and has worked hard to share her learning of Makaton communication with all the staff.

Emma has worked to grow the team which now includes 5 colleagues working on casual contracts. Emma works to ensure work is allocated to all colleagues, while maintaining the right staffing levels. Emma has worked particularly on the professional development of one colleague, to build their skill and confidence.

This year we rebranded, with the introduction of a new logo and a rainbow theme showing the inclusivity of the preschool, I can't wait to see the new uniforms next year!

As we move forward, it would be good to see the relationship between the preschool and primary school develop, enabling opportunities for the preschoolers to spend time integrating with the primary school.

Thank you to Megan and Liz for their efforts in untangling the accounts and thank you to Grace for taking over as treasurer.

Finally, a massive thank you to Emma, Sandy and all the preschool staff for all your hard work and effort in ensuring an excellent year at preschool!

