

**Therfield Village Preschool**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 – 28th February 2021**

Registered Charity No. 1086252

## **WELCOME**

Welcome to the Pre-school's 20th Annual Report. This report covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 - 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021.

The purpose of this report is to provide you with information regarding the pre-school, to keep you informed about its development over the past year and our plans for the future.

This report is divided into the following sections:

- Section 1:      Reports:
  - 1.1      Chair's Report
  - 1.2      Leader's Report
  - 1.3      Finance & Fundraising Report
- Section 2:      Aims of the Pre School
- Section 3:      People:
  - 3.1      The Staff Team
  - 3.2      The Committee
- Section 4:      Key Developments
- Section 5:      Future Plans

## **SECTION 1: REPORTS**

### **1.1 CHAIR'S REPORT – Vassilisa Noble**

This past year has been one of many ups and downs and as you can all imagine a lot of new and unforeseeable challenges.

We have had a very positive start to our Pre-School year, our pre-school numbers are up and we have many new starters to replace our OWLS who moved up in September 2020. This trend is set to continue as we look forward to the Autumn Term and welcoming many more new children and their parents.

To carry out the responsibilities of a Chair would be impossible without the support and guidance from the pre-school leader, Tina Downing and her wonderfully hard working and enthusiastic team. There have been numerous challenges over the past 18 months and we have done everything in our power to remain open as much as possible when a lot of other nurseries/preschools have not been able to. The dedication of our preschool team is simply amazing.

I would also like to thank the many other people for their role in the life of the pre-school including but not limited to:

- The parents of the children attending the pre-school for all their continued support of us.
- Joe Bailey, our IT guru, for all his hard work on our website.
- Therfield First School and all the teachers and teaching assistants for promoting strong links between the two settings and working with the pre-school to ensure a smooth transition to school for our Owls.
- The Therfield residents for supporting our various fundraising activities that have been held in the past. Although in this 2020 year, this has not been possible but there is going to be the Campout, in September, to look forward to and I'm sure many more things to come.
- The Village Hall Committee for all the hard work in getting the village hall to be able to be used by pre-school and for putting all the necessary steps in place in order for us to be able to stay open when all the other clubs have not been able to operate.

#### ***The Staff Team***

Firstly I would like to say a huge thank you to all the staff for their hard work in this challenging 2020 year and now 2021. Throughout the year and a half, the staff have kept the pre-school a happy, warm and safe environment in which our children can play and learn. We have had many new starters and the staff have done an outstanding job of settling them in. Our staff continue to deliver the EYFS to our children whilst catering to the needs of the individual child in order to provide the EYFS required child-led curriculum. Activities led by the children's interests and curiosity continue to be the strengths of our small and friendly pre-school. The Pre-school continues to thrive and offer a unique, happy and homely environment in a close-knit village.

Therfield Village Pre-school is extremely fortunate in having Tina Downing as its leader and our Deputy leader Natalie Hunn and the rest of the outstanding team. Sue Hamilton, Aline Revell remain valued pre-school assistants. Our new members of the team - Dunja Starc and Nicola Drew are very welcome. We have also seen some changes within our bank staff team welcoming Laura Jenkins as a valued member of the team.

We also did welcome Laura Wilmott as a pre-school assistant. She has had a good autumn term of 2020 with us but due to personal reasons, she decided not to stay on. We wish her all the best in her future and we are thankful for the time that she has been with us.

We had our surprise Ofsted visit back in November 2019. We were rated Good – this was a great result considering all the changes that were taking place at that time.

## *Community*

Our pre-school is fortunate in having the close link with the Therfield First School and we will continue to be working in the future together to build on the transition periods for the children as they move onto the bigger schools.

There is a special thank you that needs to be said for the Village Hall Committee. Who worked together with Tina, her team and myself in insuring that the village hall was able to remain open to pre-school throughout the lockdowns and restrictions. It has been a monumental task to keep up with all the changes that needed to be taken into consideration and all the steps to be taken in order to keep the pre-school open and operating.

## *Committee Changes and Challenges*

As a committee led pre-school we value greatly our committee members for giving their precious time and commitment.

We are coming into a change period in our committee and we need new parents to join us as there are a couple of members that need to step down and their roles are required to be covered in order for the preschool to remain operational.

Any parents that would like to join us, are able to help and want to know more about the roles that we have and need to be covered, please have a look at the section 3.2 Committee Members and you are always welcome to come have a chat with me or any other members. We will always be more than happy to take you through what we do and how we do it. Please do come and join us if you can.

## **1.2 - Leader's report March 2020-February 2021**

### **2020/21 Developments – taken from previous proposed and planned actions:**

Supporting the Continuous Professional Development all members of the team, including Health and Safety Awareness, and Fire Safety training for the appropriate representatives.

During the Covid-19 pandemic training has been online. The staff team have all been supported to complete core training. Tina will access health and safety training and Natalie fire safety training.

Working with Therfield First School to monitor the need for increased provision and hours for children in the area, working towards 'wrap around' care.

During these unprecedented times it has been necessary to focus on continuing to offer safe care and provision for the children for the operational hours already in place. We will continue to monitor the need for extended hours during the next academic year.

A second member of the team to take on the Role of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator for the setting, accessing the appropriate training and working alongside the leader to assess and meet the needs of individual children, and to support the staff team as key people for children with varying needs.

Sue has completed the relevant training and has taken on the role with no problems, working alongside Tina to support the staff team, and work with families, ensuring that our provision is fully inclusive and meets the needs of all children.

## This year's highlights:

### Spring 2020:

We began the spring term thinking about our beautiful, exciting and multi-cultural world and were looking forward to lots of planned special events including our hugely exciting fundraising week, Mother's day celebration and Easter Egg Hunt and party. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic the Spring term for schools and settings was cut short as we and our families began to accept the changes taking place.

### Summer 2020:

With the children home schooling for the first half of the Summer term we were grateful to have our online learning platform Tapestry, enabling us to share activities and messages with our families, and to engage in their learning at home through their own observations. Combined with the introduction and availability of various free online lessons, plans and resources to support home-schooling, which we were pleased to share with our families, we were secure in the knowledge that the children were learning and developing safely in their own homes.

The highlight for us was therefore being allowed to re-open for the final half term of the year, even though for restricted numbers. We were able to offer provision for both keyworker children and the children moving onto school in the Autumn term. Although activities and resources had to be restricted the children showed us immediately that welcoming them in was the right decision and we had a different and challenging but hugely rewarding half term.



We finished with a goodbye and good luck to our friends, presenting their gifts and books individually in front of pre-school.



## Autumn 2020

We were excited to welcome back the children in greater numbers, inviting those who had attended prior to the summer term first, settling them back in and re-establishing key person bonds, before then welcoming new friends. Our main focus for the Autumn term was the children's health and wellbeing, even more so than in previous years. We therefore focused on building confidence and self-esteem, recognising and handling our own feelings and activities and resources that encouraged being and working together.

One of the highlights was our Halloween week with a witch's house, complete with fireplace and cauldron, a shelf full of spells and lots of discovery and messy play that engaged the children fully.



We also held our annual Christmas party for the children and this year Father Christmas sent us a personal video message along with a very generous sack of gifts for being so good and for making pre-school such a joy to be a part of.

### Staff update:

Whilst being fortunate to gain Dunja on our team this year, we have also had to say a sad farewell to Sara, a hugely valued and popular member of the team, loved by staff, families and children. We know that Sara's future setting will be lucky to have her and are grateful for all of her hard work and commitment to pre-school over the years.

Natalie has continued to offer inspiration and support to myself and the team as our deputy leader, seemingly tireless in her work, leading sessions and the setting as required, and as always turning a role-play area into the most exciting of adventures, and Sue has confidently put her extensive skills and knowledge to good use as joint Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, ensuring that the needs of all children are recognised and catered for. Aline as a qualified and experienced pre-school assistant continues to actively support planning, the implementation of our curriculum, key work and even DIY for us. We are also extremely proud of our newest member of the team, Dunja who has been reliable, flexible and fitted in perfectly to our well established team thanks to her enthusiasm, energy and work rate.

### Leader's Note:

This year has been full of challenges and difficulties that none of us have experienced previously. During these times we have been faced with the sometimes overwhelming responsibility of providing the safest care and education we can, whilst following and adhering to the changing rules and guidance we also worked hard to balance the emotional needs of the children with the need for hygiene and distance. Throughout this our priority has been the wellbeing of the children ensuring that they know they are safe and secure with us, the health and safety of our families and the safety and wellbeing of our staff team. This has involved amongst other things rethinking our drop off and pick up arrangements, the resources and toys available to the children, our daily routine and ongoing planning as well as enhancing our cleaning and clearing procedures.

This would not have been at all possible without the fantastic and pro-active support of our committee, particularly Vassilisa and Claire who have been inundated with guidance and legislation to work through, the dedication of the staff team which has at times included making sacrifices in their personal life to continue caring for our little ones, and the unquestioning support and understanding of our families throughout.

This year has made us all think about what is important and possibly re-evaluate, and in my case most definitely appreciate how lucky I am to work in the Early Years supported by so many, thank you all.

Tina.

### Planned Actions for 2022/23

- Continuing to follow National and local guidelines and advice to provide effective and safe provision for all children.
- The implementation of the revised Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, with increased focus on engagement and time with the children and less time spent on evidence gathering.
- Improving our support of families in making healthy choices, providing further information and guidance, and in particular developing our healthy lunchbox policies.
- Implementing recent attachment and trauma training guidance and de-escalation strategies to continue to support children's wellbeing, accessing the STEPS early years behaviour training as a team.
- Supporting the Continuous Professional Development all members of the team, including Health and Safety Awareness, and Fire Safety training for the appropriate representatives.
- Working with Therfield First School to monitor the need for increased provision and hours for children in the area, working towards 'wrap around' care.

### 1.3 EXPENDITURE REPORT

Therfield Village Preschool - Income and Expenditure (1<sup>st</sup> March 2020 – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2021)

<b>Income</b>	<b>20-21</b>
ENP/DAF/ENF/30 hours funding	incl below
Nursery Funding received	<b>£55,752.35</b>
Other grants	<b>£0.00</b>
Events/fundraising/donations	<b>£550.00</b>
Fees received	<b>£11,711.20</b>
Owlets Income	incl. above
Lunch club	incl. above
Owls club	incl. above
Clothes and bag sales	<b>£0.00</b>
Interest	
Other	<b>£0.00</b>
HMRC JRS (COVID)	<b>£4,646.21</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£72,659.76</b>

<b>Income</b>	<b>19-20</b>
ENP/DAF/ENF/30 hours funding	Incl below
Nursery Funding received	£47,954.44
Other grants	£0.00
Events/fundraising	£1,376.51
Fees received	£19,564.52
Owlets Income	incl. above
Lunch club	incl. above
Owls club	incl. above
Clothes and bag sales	£102.80
Interest	£0.00
Other	£403.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>£69,401.42</b>

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>20-21</b>
Preschool equipment	-£822.56
Wages, Pensions & PAYE	-59,670.05
Insurance, Registration, Accounting	-£3,287.49
Advertising/marketing	£0.00
Hall Hire	-£2,176.00
Petty cash (daily consumables)	-£210.00
Jumper/t shirts	£0.00
Stationary/craft	£0.00
Printing/photocopying	-£316.21
Phone	-£136.68
Fundraising costs	£0.00
Bank charges	-£66.00
Staff training	-£72.00
Other	-£120.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>-£66,876.99</b>

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>19-20</b>
Preschool equipment	-£1,825.17
Wages, Pensions & PAYE	-£59,993.94
Insurance, Registration, Accounting	-£2,581.16
Advertising/marketing	£0.00
Hall Hire	-£6,979.75
Daily Consumables – petty cash	-£1,365.00
Jumper/t shirts	-£261.20
Stationary/craft	-£1,008.25
Printing/photocopying	-£629.29
Phone	-£133.75
Fundraising costs	-£90.00
Maintenance	-£60.00
Student support/tuition fees	-£438.89
Other	-£147.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>-75,513.65</b>

Excess of Income over expenditure	<b>£5,782.77</b>
Add Balance brought forward	<b>£8,409.38</b>
Balance carried forward	<b>£14,192.15</b>
Represented by:	
Balance CafCash A/C	<b>£14,192.15</b>
Balance Caf Savings A/C	<b>£7,600.73</b>
Balance of petty cash	<b>£31.59</b>
Cash in Hand	<b>£0.00</b>
Paypal	<b>£30.00</b>
National Lottery Grant on prepaid card	<b>£0.00</b>
Difference	<b>£0.00</b>
	<b>£21,855.47</b>

Excess of Income over expenditure	-£6,112.23
Add Balance brought forward	£14,521.61
Balance carried forward	£8,409.38
Represented by:	
Balance CafCash A/C	£8,409.38
Balance Caf Savings A/C	£7,594.64
	£215.58
Cash in Hand	£132.22
Paypal	£30.00
National Lottery Grant on prepaid card	£956.00
Difference	£0.00
	£17,337.82

### **Things to note for spending February 2021 onwards:**

- Consider National Living Wage increase April 2021. This will rise to £8.91. Other wages will need to be increased in line with these increases.
- Consider fees increase
- No income during the summer holidays, but wages still need to be paid
- Staff needed if numbers of children remain high
- Ensure we have a good intake for September 2021

## **SECTION 2. AIMS OF THE PRE-SCHOOL**

- Provide quality, affordable childcare for children between the ages of two years to five.
- Help build children's early relationships with their peers, prior to going on to primary school
- Provide a warm and friendly environment to encourage children's personal, social and emotional development
- Offer a wide range of structured and free-play activities to develop independence and confidence
- Encourage understanding and development of the six Learning Areas: Personal, Social & Emotional development; Communication, Language & Literacy; Problem Solving, Reasoning & Numeracy; Physical development; Knowledge and Understanding of the World; and Creative development
- Encourage development in all skills according to the age and ability of the individual child
- Provide a curriculum in accordance with nationally approved learning goals
- Offer state grants to cover the cost of places for children the term after they are three years old, and grants or subsidies for younger children, where families are on a low income
- Liaise closely with Therfield First School

## **SECTION 3: PEOPLE**

### **3.1 THE STAFF TEAM**

We are extremely fortunate to have a truly wonderful, dedicated team of staff who work at the pre-school:

#### **Tina Downing - Leader**

Tina has been with us for over 10 years as our Pre-School Leader. She holds a certificate in Early Years Practice and a Foundation Degree in Early Years Child Care and Education. Tina initiates and organises the daily programme of activities at the pre-school, monitoring the quality of teaching and charting developmental progress of the children. She is responsible for short and long-term planning. She also supervises all staff including appraisals and liaises with Therfield First School and the pre-school committee. Tina heads up the senior management team and has now completed her SENCO training and she is now the SENCO lead.

#### **Natalie Hunn, - Deputy Leader**

Natalie has been working for the pre-School for over 10 years and is the leader of Owlets. She holds a Cache Level 3 Diploma in childcare. Natalie became our Deputy Leader in September 2018 and has had a positive impact within the team from the very start. She has introduced number of new initiatives to help streamline how the pre-school works and has been working closely with Tina.

**Sara Walker** – Pre-School Assistant/ has now moved onto the bank staff.

Sara has been with the pre-school since 2008. She holds a Cache Level 3 Diploma in pre-school practice. Sara is also trained in Makaton Sign Language, completed a Safeguarding and due to attend a Line Tree Learning First Aid training and food hygiene course later in the year.

#### **Aline Revell - Pre-School Assistant**

Aline joined the pre-school in February 2014 as a pre-school assistant. She is qualified in Food Hygiene. She qualified in her Skillsfirst Level 2 certificate for the Children and Young People's Workforce (QCF) in May 2017.

Further training undertaken: PREVENT Safeguarding (November 16)

Aline is due to attend a Lime Tree learning First Aid training course later in the year.

#### **Sue Hamilton, Pre-School Assistant**

Sue has been a permanent member of staff since September 2014 (she was bank staff previously). She is a former Pre-school parent and committee member, and an experienced foster carer. She is working towards her Skillsfirst Level 2 certificate for the Children and Young People's Workforce (QCF).

Sue has attended an Introduction to Sign Language and Solutions Circle and an Improving the School Experience for the Child with Autism course. In February she attended Solutions Circle, Social Stories and completed her Level 2 Food Hygiene and Safety for Catering. She has also attended a Paediatric First Aid course, safeguarding training and Effective EYFS teaching and learning. Sue has also taken on the SENCO training and now working closely with Tina in this area.

#### **Dunja Starc – Pre-School Assistant**

Dunja joined the team after October 2020 half term and she has become part of the team very quickly. She has joined us from Rainbow nursery that had to close down due to Covid.

#### **Natalie Askew - Pre-School Assistant (Bank Staff)**

Natalie joined us in January 2019 and has been a huge support to the team.

All members of staff are police checked through the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service), participate in half-termly planning meetings to plan the curriculum and share ideas, and are updating continuously their knowledge and skills through additional childcare training courses. With a key worker system in operation, staff members are each responsible for observing and charting the progress of a small group of children.

### **3.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Committee changes:

– Emily Stirk is stepping down as our Head of Fundraising. We thank you, Emily, for all your hard work, fun and enthusiasm that you brought when you have been able to organise our preschool fundraising events. Therfield Campout is going to be the last event that Emily will be in charge of for preschool together with Friends of Therfield committee.

-We are still looking for a volunteer to take on the role of the joint treasure and to take over from Robyn. She has been a valued member of the team for quite a few years now but her son has left preschool a long time ago and she would like to pass this role onto a new parent when possible.

-- Fay is also not able to carry on with her role. Thank you Fay for all your dedication and note takings of our meetings.

We would like to thank Claire Lewzey for her unwavering reliability and efficiency in her role as Joint Treasurer. Her hard work ensures the accounts are kept in great order.

Thanks also to Robyn Childs who undertakes her role as Joint Treasurer with great efficiency and ability; Sara Atkins for organising training for our staff members and being our safe guarding representative.

I would also like to welcome Abbi Knights as a new member of the committee.

The committee is going to be undergoing a changes as highlighted above but I believe these changes ensure that we always have a committee who are fully dedicated to the current and future needs of the pre-school. We ensure that the majority of our members have either previously had, or currently have, a child attending the pre-school.

Our current committee members:

Vassilisa Noble	Chair
Claire Lewzey	Joint Treasurer
Robyn Childs	Joint Treasurer – stepping down
Emily Stirk	Head of Fundraising – stepping down
Fay Nolan Neylan	Secretary & Training Organiser – stepping down
Sara Atkins	Training Organiser & Safe Guarding

## **Committee Roles**

The committee has been re-organised into various sub-committees (Finance, Health & Safety, and school and IT) all of which are overseen by the Chair. The members of the sub-committees are responsible for taking forward their own specific areas of work as well as being involved in more general committee work. Every member is involved in fundraising as much as they are able to.

The committee is responsible for the management of the pre-school and undertakes various roles including the following:

- Admissions
- Applying for government grants including nursery grant
- Applying for any other grants including and researching available grants
- Attending meetings
- Budgeting, payroll and financial planning
- Carrying out Disclosure and Barring checks
- Formulating and reviewing policies, Staff Handbook & Operational Plan
- Fundraising
- Health & Safety
- Liaising with Fordham Memorial Hall Management Committee
- Ofsted liaison and compliance with
- Managing accounts & issuing bills
- Managing contracts of employment
- Marketing
- Organising insurance & licences
- Purchasing consumables & new equipment
- Responding to changing needs – e.g. more storage
- Responding to changing Ofsted, law and charity regulations
- Safeguarding
- Safe recruitment
- Staff appraisals
- Writing & circulating minutes

## **SECTION 4: KEY DEVELOPMENTS**

### **4.1 Owls' club**

We have been able, again, to offer an Owls' club (for the children moving on to school in September) during the summer term of this year. The aim of this club is to provide the children with more focused activities in preparation for school and to ease their transition to school. The Owls' club operates in the summer term.

### **4.2 Starting age**

The starting age for pre-school children was reduced to 2 years in September 2013. This has continued to be a popular age to join the Preschool. We are happy to continue to offer places for children from 2 years old. The numbers of children under 2.5 years old are monitored very closely by the Leader (Tina) and Chair (Vassilisa). If a term is forecast to have a high number of children under 2.5 years old joining the pre-school, these children's start dates are staggered accordingly to ensure each child is settled in based on their individual needs.

#### **4.3 Village hall**

Thank you to the Village Hall for supporting us in waiving rent for the time we were closed due to Covid. In January a payment of £1000 was paid to the Village Hall. From February 2021 a standing order of £898.00 monthly was set up to ensure the hall hire debt was paid by the end of August ready for the next academic term. During this tax year March 2020 – Feb 2021 the amount paid to the village hall was significantly lower than usual because of either closure or payments in arrears whilst waiting for confirmation of Covid funding.

#### **4.4 Marketing**

We continue to spread the word about the setting via our website, current parents, social media (especially sharing fundraiser information on Face Book), and the occasional flyer drop. We have a healthy number of children attending pre-school currently, almost to capacity. It is however important we do not sit back to ensure we see numbers grow following a large Owl departure in the summer term.

### **5. FUTURE PLANS**

#### **5.1 Policies – updates and implementation**

Tina has undertaken the policy updating role. The policies are now all reviewed for this year and updated.

### 1.3 EXPENDITURE REPORT

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Difference	£0.00
	£17,337.82

Treasurer:

*Clare Lewis*

Date: 21/12/21

Independent Auditor:

*S. Davies*

Date: 21/12/21





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Charity Name  
Therfield Village Preschool

On accounts for the year  
ended

28<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Charity no  
(if any)

1086252

Set out on pages

1-12

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 28/ 02 / 2021.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 all 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 in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below \*) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report 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:

S. Davies

Date:

21/12/21

Name:

Sarah Davies

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

Accounts Manager

Address:

1 Meadow Drive, Horringer, Bury St Edmunds, IP29 5SB

**Section B****Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material 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.**