

**Therfield Village Preschool**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 – 29th February 2024**

Registered Charity No. 1086252

## **WELCOME**

Welcome to Therfield Village Preschool's 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report. This report covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 - 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024.

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

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 Preschool
- 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 – Lisa Kingsley**

A very warm welcome to everyone!

The end of Spring and Summer terms (2023) were strong for preschool with thirty-four children on roll and 12 Owls graduating to their next Reception class. The ladies, as always doing a fantastic job ensuring a smooth transition for all the children leaving preschool.

Overall, we had a good start to September, with a number of new families joining us. We would like to welcome all our new children and their families.

We have maintained our extended opening hours for our preschool this year and, although there were lower numbers in the afternoons from September, the Mondays Owls club remains popular.

On the personal note, with no longer having a child attending preschool and work commitments changing, I am no longer able to stay as the Chairperson of the committee, therefore, I have taken the decision to step down from the role as soon as a new Chairperson can be found and elected.

Thank you to everyone at the preschool for your hard work and all the support that you have given in the past two years. It has been a great experience and a challenge at the same time, and we have achieved a vast number of things across the board.

We started the year with a bang, publishing our parent/carer results. Our average recommendation score was a whopping 9.8 out of 10! 98% of the positive comments were about our fantastic team of ladies. One area highlighted for development was communication and in response to this the ladies have worked really hard to introduce daily feedback to families via our Tapestry app. Following the success of the survey, we have introduced a visitor's survey which will hopefully provide us with some insight of what parents like/dislike about our setting after an initial visit.

The committee worked extremely hard to raise vital funds for preschool, this year has seen the highest amount raised in 5 years. Fantastic funding efforts including: Tractor Rally (April 23), Coronation cake sale (May 23), Therfield Fete (June 23), Christmas Market (Nov 23), Christmas cards & gifts (Dec 23)

We also ran a huge Outdoor Space improvement project, which attracted donations from parents and the local community. We were gifted £400 from Steve Jarvis, £250 from South Farm, £250 for TTP and several other donations via a new JustGiving page.

This large fundraising event has enabled the Committee to purchase the following items for the garden: Daisy Chalkboard, Mark Making Mirror Tree, Peekaboo Tower, Music Chimes wall, Plank & Stack box, A water wall and jugs, Foam house bricks, new footballs, and a new portable sandpit.

Other fundraising has enabled the purchase of Coronation keepsake medals, Sports day medals, End of term graduation hats & gifts, Little Wiggles end of Term visit, as well as leaving gifts for Vassilisa from the Committee, Nic, Aline and Louise from the Staff team.

We have had an exceptional Committee team this year and I could not have managed as chairperson without you all. Thank you.

We would also like to thank many others for their role in the life of the preschool including but not limited to:

- The parents of the children attending the preschool for all their continued support.
- Joe Bailey, for his continued support in managing our website.
- Therfield First School, their teachers and teaching assistants for promoting strong links between our two settings, working with us to ensure a smooth transition for our Owls.

- The Therfield residents for supporting our various fundraising activities that have been held.
- Ivan Titmass, landlord of the Fox & Duck, for continuing to allow us to use his facilities for various fundraising activities.
- The Village Hall Committee, especially Martin Drury, for continuing to support the preschool, and assisting with the necessary steps to keep us running smoothly.

### ***The staff team***

Firstly, we would like to say a huge thank you to all the staff for their hard work throughout the year, to keep the preschool a happy, warm and safe environment in which our children can play and learn.

To carry out the responsibilities of Chairperson would be impossible without the support and guidance from the preschool leader, Tina Downing and her wonderfully hard working and enthusiastic team. Natalie Hunn continues as Deputy Leader and Sue Hamilton as SENCo. Dunja Starc continues as a key member of the team as a qualified practitioner. It is fair to say we have faced several staffing changes this last year, saying goodbye to Nic Drew at Easter and Aline Revell at Christmas, and after a long and rather stressful recruitment period, we welcomed Louise Young to the team, although she too said goodbye in January. However, we are incredibly pleased to now have Sara Walker returning to our team and Gemma Moule who is joining our Bank staff team along with our existing bank member Harry Walsh. Sue and Dunja continue to work towards their Level 3 qualifications which will offer us an entire team with Level 3 and above qualifications. The dedication of our preschool team is simply amazing.

We would like to acknowledge the Key Worker of The Year nomination received by Natalie Hunn in May with the Family First Awards. A fantastic achievement and very well deserved.

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 child-led curriculum. Activities led by the children's interests and curiosity continue to be the strengths of our small and friendly preschool. The preschool continues to offer a unique, happy, and homely environment in a close-knit village.

### ***Community***

The preschool is fortunate in having close links with Therfield First School and we hope to continue to work together to build on the transition periods for the children as they move onto the bigger schools.

The Parish Council continues to support the preschool and have recently approached us regarding a possible donation of \$106 money to develop our resources.

The role of Rector at St Mary's Church has recently been filled by Rev Carol Newman, and we welcomed her on 7<sup>th</sup> February. Once settled, we hope to establish close links once again with the church family.

### ***Committee changes and challenges***

As a committee led preschool, we greatly value our committee members for giving their precious time and commitment. I do not underestimate the time you have given freely to preschool, ensuring its smooth running and current success and would like to thank each one of you. We say a sad goodbye to Nicola Henderson and Vassilisa Noble at the end of the summer term and thank them both for their commitment over the years to the preschool committee.

Any parents, family or community members that would like to join us, are able to help or want to know more about the roles that we have, 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 - LEADERS REPORT MARCH 2023-FEBRUARY 2024

### 2023/24 Developments – taken from previous proposed and planned actions:

- Improving our support of families in making healthy choices, providing further information and guidance, ensuring this includes the importance of good dental hygiene, and in particular, developing our healthy lunchbox policies.  
This remains a priority and we will continuously review our policies and the advice in place for parents and carers.
- Supporting the Continuous Professional Development of all members of the team, including supporting Sue and Dunja to complete their Level 3 Training.  
We are extremely proud of Sue and Dunja for their additional hard work in completing their Level 3 Training throughout this year and look forward to sharing their final results with you.
- Completing the introduction of Terrific Talkers and embedding in practice.  
This action has been surpassed at this time by the introduction of the Little Wandles programme which includes a foundation for language commitment.

### Sharing some of the Special Events from this year:

**Spring Term** – creating our Mother's Day board to celebrate all they do for us before inviting families in for a Mother's Day celebration.



Celebrating Easter with an Easter party followed by an Easter Egg Hunt at the Recreation ground.

## Summer Term



Introducing the children to some of the new features and developments in the garden

Celebrating the King's coronation, including receiving individual commemorative medals from the committee followed by a fundraising cake sale.



Enjoying Sports day at Therfield Recreation Ground

Enjoying our End of Term party with the help of Little Wiggles, followed by our Graduation ceremony.



## Autumn Term

Learning about and celebrating festivals including Halloween, Diwali and Hannukah



Celebrating Christmas, including welcoming parents in to help with our Christmas decorations, and delivering Christmas thank you gifts to friends.



Finishing our year with our exciting Christmas party, including our show and a visit from Father Christmas



## Leader's note



As always, I have felt honoured and extremely fortunate to be part of such a passionate and proactive preschool team.

In this last year Natalie's years of dedication and hard work were acknowledged with her award for being one of Herts Key persons of the year.

Well done Natalie, hugely deserved and long overdue.

We are extremely proud with the commitment from Sue and Dunja, continuing with their demanding roles at preschool and their key work whilst completing their Level 3 training in Early years childcare and education. Although team changes have taken place as shared in

Lisa's chairperson report we are happy to share feedback during this time included the fact that our expectations and work rate as a team are extremely high. In addition, we were fortunate to be able to welcome back Sara who remains as bubbly and caring as ever.

Finally, from the whole preschool team we would like to say a huge thank you to our committee, particularly those who were prepared to stay on to keep us running smoothly for a further year. Firstly, Lisa for continuing in the tireless role of being our Committee Chair and to Claire for continuing as our treasurer. We are aware of the commitment and effort required and are hugely grateful for their ongoing support and help throughout. We have also been extremely lucky to have Abbie on the committee whose fundraising efforts, along with Danielle have been innovative and great fun for all involved. Thank you also to Sophie M, Vassilisa, Laura, Sophie B and Nicola for all giving up their own valuable time to help ensure that we can continue offering care and education for our families and children.

## 2023/24 plans for development:

- Improving our support of families in making healthy choices, providing further information and guidance, ensuring this includes the importance of good dental hygiene, and in particular developing our healthy lunchbox policies.
- Supporting the Continuous Professional Development all members of the team, including updating core training for the entire team. Tina completing Level 6 training and to support Sara in accessing up to date training.
- Completing the Little Wandles pilot programme and determining if it is appropriate for preschool and embedding in provision.
- Further development of our outdoor area including natural resources and storage.
- Being pro-active in our Ofsted preparation, keeping up to date with national and local policy.

### 1.3 EXPENDITURE REPORT

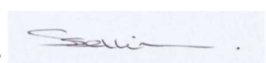
Therfield Village Preschool - Income and Expenditure (1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 – 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024)

Income	23-24	Income	22-23
HCC Funding	£63,676.01	HCC Funding	£65,660.25
Grants	£0.00	Grants	£0.00
Fundraising	£1,862.90	Fundraising	£1,067.99
Fees	£20,868.03	Fees	£22,529.05
Current account interest	£34.64	Interest	£16.91
Savings account interest	£143.23	Other	£5.23
Petty Cash account interest	£1.28	JRS Gov Grant (Covid)	£0.00
TOTAL	£86,441.58	TOTAL	£89,279.43
Expenditure	23-24	Expenditure	22-23
Preschool Equip. resources	£3,002.43	Preschool Equip. resources	£1,077.22
Wages, Pensions, PAYE	£78,205.75	Wages, Pensions, PAYE	£72,139.97
Insurance, Reg. Account.	£1,939.34	Insurance, Reg. Account.	£2,632.39
Advertising	£60.00	Advertising	£151.20
Hall hire	£7,688.45	Hall hire	£7,272.00
Petty cash	£1,022.33	Petty cash	£840.00
Clothing	£322.36	Clothing	£437.50
Printing	£458.33	Printing	£583.46
Phone, internet, website	£207.10	Phone, internet, website	£286.21
Bank charges	£60.00	Bank charges	£75.00
Staff training	£1,128.00	Staff training	£165.60
Other	£1,049.09	Other	£202.70
Fundraising costs	£0.00	Fundraising costs	£19.99
Student support	£0.00	Student support	£0.00
Stationary (now inc. in resources)	£0.00	Stationary (now inc. in resources)	£0.00
TOTAL	£95,143.18	TOTAL	£85,883.24
Excess of Income over Exp.	-£8,557.09	Excess of Income over Exp.	£3,396.19
Add balance brought forward	£24,095.30	Add balance brought forward	£13,088.60
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Balance CafCash A/C	£7,557.94	Balance CafCash A/C	£16,484.88
Balance Caf Savings A/C	£7,773.78	Balance Caf Savings A/C	£7,630.55
Balance of Petty Cash A/C	£168.95	Balance of Petty Cash A/C	£0.00
Balance of Petty Cash in cash	£7.54	Balance of Petty Cash in cash	-£50.13
Cash in hand	£0.00	Cash in hand	£0.00
PayPal	£30.00	PayPal	£30.00
National lottery grant	£0.00	National lottery grant	£0.00
Difference	£0.00	Difference	£0.00
TOTAL	£15,538.21	TOTAL	£24,095.30

Treasurer:

Date: 17/07/24

Independent Auditor:



Date: 28/12/24

## **SECTION 2. AIMS OF THE PRESCHOOL**

- Provide quality, affordable childcare for children between the ages of two to five years.
- 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 7 Learning Areas: Communication & Language, Personal, Social & emotional development; Physical development; Literacy; Mathematics; Understanding the World; Expressive Arts & Design
- 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 and all the other schools our children move onto.

## **SECTION 3: PEOPLE**

### **3.1 THE STAFF TEAM**

We are extremely fortunate to have a truly wonderful, dedicated team of staff working at the preschool:

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

Tina has been with us for over 13 years as Preschool Leader. She holds a certificate in Early Years Practice and a Foundation Degree in Early Years Child Care and Education and is currently working towards her Level 6 Degree. Tina initiates and organises the daily programme of activities at the preschool, monitoring the quality of teaching and charting developmental progress of the children. She is responsible for short and long-term planning. She supervises all staff and their appraisals, liaises with Therfield First School and the preschool committee. Tina heads up the senior management team.

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

Natalie has been working for the preschool for over 14 years. She holds a Cache Level 3 Diploma in childcare. She became our Deputy Leader in September 2018 and had a positive impact within the team from the start. She has introduced number of new initiatives to help streamline how preschool works and works closely alongside Tina.

#### **Sue Hamilton - Qualified Assistant and SENCo.**

Sue has been a permanent member of staff since September 2014. She is a former preschool parent and committee member, and an experienced foster carer. She has almost completed an apprenticeship in her Level 3 Early Years Childcare & Education qualification whilst also working as the Preschool SENCO.

#### **Dunja Starc – Qualified Assistant and Health & Safety Lead**

Dunja joined preschool in October 2020, and she has become a valuable team member very quickly. She has just completed her apprenticeship in her Level 3 Early Years Childcare & Education with a Distinction.

#### **Sara Walker – Qualified Assistant**

Sara holds a Level 3 qualification in Early Years Childcare & Education. We are pleased to welcome Sara back to our preschool team, she has returned with the passion and enthusiasm that we love about her.

#### **Harry Walsh – Preschool Assistant (Bank Staff)**

Harry provides additional support to the team when he is home in the UK, in between his education in the States on a football scholarship. He is much loved by the children and team alike, bringing a young and fresh dynamic with him.

### **Gemma Moule – Preschool Assistant (Bank Staff)**

As a former preschool team member, Gemma has joined us as a valuable member of the bank staff while also working as a teaching assistant for Therfield First School.

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:

- Nicola Henderson joined the committee to assist with fundraising.
- Sophie Brogden joined the committee to assist with fundraising.
- 

The committee is facing a few changes in the next year, and I believe these changes ensure that we always have a committee who are fully dedicated to the current and future needs of the preschool. We ensure the majority of members have either previously had, or currently have, a child attending the preschool.

For the period of 2023-2024 our committee members:

Lisa Kingsley	Chairperson & Designated Safeguarding Person
Claire Lewzey	Joint Treasurer
Sophie Murphy	Joint Treasurer/Accounts
Abbie Knights	Secretary & Fundraising
Laura Hanson	Admissions Coordinator
Vassilisa Noble	Village Hall Committee (Stepping down July 24)
Sophie Brogden	Fundraising support
Nicola Henderson	Fundraising support (Stepping down July 24)

### **Committee Roles**

The committee is organised into various sub-committees (Finance, Admissions, Fundraising) 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 participates in fundraising as much as they are able.

The committee is responsible for the management of the preschool and undertakes various roles including the following:

- Admissions
- Applying for government grants including nursery grants
- Attending meetings and circulation of minutes
- Budgeting, payroll, and financial planning
- Conducting Disclosure and Barring checks
- Formulating and reviewing policies, Staff Handbook & Operational Plan
- Fundraising
- Health & Safety
- Liaising with Fordham Memorial Hall Management Committee
- Managing accounts & issuing bills
- Marketing
- Ofsted liaison and compliance.
- Organising insurance & licences

- Purchasing consumables & new equipment
- Researching and applying for any other available grants
- Responding to changing needs – e.g. facilities and supplies
- Responding to changing Ofsted, law and charity regulations
- Safe recruitment and managing contracts of employment.
- Safeguarding
- Staff appraisals

## **SECTION 4: KEY DEVELOPMENTS**

### **4.1 Government Childcare expansion plans.**

The government has started to roll out new childcare expansion offer of 15 hours free childcare to eligible families, starting the term after the child turns two. This will in turn, be expanded to all eligible children from the term after the child turns 9-months old. The funding rates for 2-year-old children is currently more than our payable fees however the rates for those aged 3-years and over is currently below expenditure. We support any ongoing work to ensure future government rates are increased in line with inflation and National Living Wage that the charity needs to accommodate.

### **4.2 Starting age.**

The starting age for preschool children was reduced to 2 years in September 2013 and we are happy to continue to offer places from this age. The numbers of children under 2.5 years old are monitored very closely by the Leader (Tina) and Chair (Lisa). If a term is forecast to have a high number of children under 2.5 years old joining the preschool, 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 our preschool throughout the years. Currently, the rent charges are remaining the same. The next Village Hall AGM is planned for 25<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

### **4.4 Marketing and Fundraising**

We continue to spread the word about the setting via our website, leaflets, current parents, and social media platforms. We have a healthy number of children attending preschool currently, it is however important we do not sit back to ensure we see numbers grow following a large Owl departure in the summer term.

Fundraising events this year have raised a fantastic amount and a special thank you must go to Abbie, for your amazing commitment, your time and efforts to support our preschool and to all the people who gave their time and support to enable these fundraising efforts and fun days to go ahead.

## **5. FUTURE PLANS**

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

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

### **6.1 Committee responsibilities**

The committee responsibilities will be reviewed and carefully considered with the introduction of new Trustees and the departure of current members.

### 1.3 EXPENDITURE REPORT

Therfield Village Preschool - Income and Expenditure (1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 – 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024)

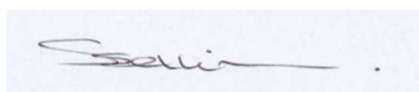
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**Treasurer:**

**Date: 17/07/2024**

**Independent Auditor:**

**Date: 27/12/2024**





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

THERFIELD VILLAGE PRE-SCHOOL

On accounts for the year  
ended

29<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024

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 **29/02/2024**.

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

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 to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

27/12/2024

Name:

Samantha Selkirk

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

MAAT

Address:

56 Browning Close

Royston

Herts, SG8 7EY

**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.**

N/A