

## **Kids United Pre-School**

### **Annual General Meeting**

**24th November 2023**

#### **Present:**

Cath Tanner - Committee Chair  
Paula Thompson - Pre-School Manager  
Emily Luscombe - Committee Treasurer  
Lesley Hartt - Committee Secretary  
Roger Jones - Church Minister, Tolworth Reform Church  
Lily Beswick - Parent  
Heather Lucas Brown - Grandparent

#### **Apologies**

Claire Richardson - Committee member

### **1. Introduction and Welcome**

Paula, the Pre-school Manager introduced and welcomed everyone to the AGM, thanking those present; explaining an AGM is a statutory requirement as Kids United Pre-school is a registered charity. Kids United has been operating for over 20 years, opening on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2003, and obtaining Ofsted registration on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2003.

### **2. Chairperson's Report**

Cath, as Chair of the committee, reflected upon changes the setting has seen since formation, back in 2003. The pre-school operates 4 days a week (9.15am-12.15pm), including twice-weekly lunch-clubs (12.15-1.45pm) to offer 15 funded hours for those eligible, and benefits from a consistent staff team. The pre-school is usually served well with the number of children on the register, however last year the numbers were low, and this year are worryingly low.

Cath detailed the responsibilities of the committee, meeting a minimum of once a term to discuss the pre-school.

Finance is one of the areas which the committee looks at and Cath raised the challenging financial situation affecting sessional settings that do not offer full-time 8am-6pm nursery care which an increasing number of families are looking for. The forthcoming minimum wage increase in April 2024 will also affect financial sustainability.

A discussion was held with regards to the government increase to 30 funded hours for eligible children (currently 3 - 4-year-olds) and what Kids United could offer. Paula had previously enquired how much extra rent the church would want if the pre-school opened 9.15am-2.15pm four days a week but had not heard back. Operating between 9.15am-2.15pm would give parents the option of taking up to 20 hours in funding as well as enabling staff to pick their children up from school. The

12.15pm pick-up will still be needed for those only eligible for 15 hours. Roger will raise the question of longer opening times at the next Church Elders meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024.

Paula will poll current parents to gauge who would take up extra hours. If only a few children sign up, then not all staff will need to work the increased hours each day.

Paula went through the future changes when children become eligible for funding, stating the setting's financial position is dictated by government:

- April 2024 - 2-year-olds of working parents accessing 15 hours funding.
- September 2024 - all children 9 months and above of working parents accessing 15 hours funding.
- September 2025 - funding increasing to 30 hours for children 9 months and above of working parents.
- Working parents need to work a minimum of 16 hours to qualify; income also impacts eligibility.

Heather, a grandparent, raised a lack of awareness of Kids United at other drop-in settings she visits and thinks other grandparents looking after their grandchildren may welcome dropping off children at Kids United. We need to tap into people that do not want the long day-care sessions.

This led to a discussion about linking into other local drop-in groups and raising awareness. Paula will provide updated leaflets with the aim of distributing to:

- Wednesday mother and toddler group run by the Tolworth Reform Church in the Raeburn Hall.
- Local Kingston child support officer
- Tolworth Reform Church groups working with Ukrainian and Korean families.
- Various children centres on/near the K2 bus route.
- Surbiton and other local libraries, including displaying a poster.

Paula will ask current parents if they can drop leaflets off at any other drop-in groups they attend.

Paula is of the opinion that many parents are waiting for the 3-year-old funding to be applicable but then taking fewer sessions. Paula also believes Kids United is the most expensive in the area for fee paying rates.

This led to a conversation about the government funding rate being lower than the session cost and the forthcoming increase in the minimum wage in April 2024. The government increased the funding rates for the current and spring term, but no indication of rates post-April 2024. Many settings are struggling or closing. Paula has spoken with Kingston Early Years, who estimate Kingston is short of 100 places if all possible 2-year-olds take up their places when eligible. However, the birth rate is falling, and many families appear to be moving out of Kingston to cheaper areas as part of new post covid working patterns.

Emily raised the topic of other local pre-school settings with low numbers. Paula will contact the manager of Noah's Ark, as their September numbers had been low. Purely hypothetical, but perhaps there is something both settings can do to help each other, as Noah's Ark already offers 30 hours compared to Kids United's current 15 hours.

Kids United's Ofsted registration states we can take up to 32 children per session, however 26-28 is the ideal. If the sessions did increase to 9.15am-2.15pm and the numbers increased, then Kids United would be able to pay for the additional 2 hours in rent. Roger will include this with his conversations with the Church Elders. The pre-school is currently unable to afford future rent increases.

The clarity of the leaflets was raised, with the need to include the opening hours and the fact adults do not need to stay with the children. Could a sentence be added to include special education need provision. There was a discussion about wording, the different terminology of playgroups / pre-schools / nurseries and people's expectations of what a particular setting provides. Roger will provide Paula with a link to printing companies he has used.

Roger raised the subject of grants as Kids United is a charity. There may be organisations that offer grants which the pre-school can apply for. Kids United has received grants in the past to support various children.

### **3. Treasurer's Report**

Paula presented the financial report for the 2022/23 academic year, highlighting a loss of £6,956.77.

A member of staff has been on maternity leave and Paula has so far been unable to claim the £4,000 owed from HMRC. Paula has the phone within the queue to be answered but in the end the phone battery has run out. Re-calling the line resets the position in the queue. As a matter of urgency Paula will use a mobile to phone instead, as this can be left plugged into a charger. The downside to using a mobile is that it will incur charges to call the line. Paula was able to recoup some of the maternity costs from tax owed to HMRC which explains the 45% drop in tax, insurance & membership in 2022/23. Once the £4,000 payment is received, even though it will be reflected in the 2023/24 accounting period, it will in effect mean the 2022/23 loss will be comparable to the 2021/22 period.

The pre-school also benefitted from fundraising activities, with parents invited to give donations towards activities.

Headlines for the current 2023/24 financial year:

- As of 24<sup>th</sup> November 2023, approximately £35,000 is in the HSBC bank account.
- Adjusting for the current £2k operating surplus, once November & December wages, as well as this  $\frac{1}{2}$  term rent is paid out, the pre-school will be down £7k to £8k for the financial year. No further income due in until fees / funding received in the spring term.
- Committee will hold a separate meeting in January to discuss the financial situation.
- No voluntary donations received so far.

- Fundraising has been positive, with a crazy hair day raising £35. Kids United will also hold a Christmas jumper day. Emily asked whether artwork or handprints will be made for Christmas presents to raise money; Paula said nothing has been arranged so far.
- There are only 12 children on the register: 11 attending on Mondays and Tuesdays / 8 attending on Thursdays and Fridays. Three new starters enrolled for January 2024.
- Discussed that parents can access extra sessions/extra lunch clubs, but they would be chargeable. To claim government funding, it would have to become a regular session and not ad-hoc. Heather said she had not realised ad-hoc sessions was a possibility. Paula will let parents know using email / WhatsApp.
- Considering offering 1 day only options to raise numbers.

#### **4. Nomination and Election of Committee Members**

The current committee members are:

Cath Tanner - Chair

Emily Luscombe - Treasurer

Lesley Hartt - Secretary

Claire Richardson

and they are happy to stay on.

#### **5. Question Time**

No further questions were asked.

The AGM was concluded with Paula thanking everyone for their attendance.

# Kids United

## Treasurers Report 2022/2023

AGM - 24th November 2023

	2022/2023	2021/2022	% change
Balance brought forward	£40,251.72	£43,215.31	-7%

### Receipts

Fees	54,639.26	£56,468.81	-3%
Voluntary contribution	£1,686.00	£1,818.30	-7%
Grants	£0.00	£0.00	0%
Fundraising	£772.40	£165.17	368%
Trips	£0.00	£0.00	0%
Uniform	£125.00	£150.00	-17%
Donation	£119.00	£23.00	417%
Sundries	£0.00	£0.00	0%
<b>Total receipts for year</b>	<b>£58,210.66</b>	<b>£58,871.28</b>	<b>-1%</b>

### Payments

Salaries	£51,321.79	£47,293.10	9%
Rent & rates	£9,292.00	£10,020.00	-7%
Staff Training	£0.00	£144.00	-100%
Pension	£1,026.88	£1,009.95	2%
Tax, Insurance & Membership	£1,539.64	£2,804.89	-45%
Equipment & supplies	£523.70	£433.32	21%
Uniform	£307.06	£0.00	
Trips	£0.00	£0.00	0%
Catering	£21.32	£0.00	
Cost of fundraising/ Refunds	£251.00	£0.00	
Office costs	£1,532.33	£1,134.39	35%
<b>Total payments for year</b>	<b>£65,167.43</b>	<b>£61,834.87</b>	<b>5%</b>

	<b>-£6,956.77</b>	<b>-£2,963.59</b>	135%
<b>Total balance carried forward</b>	<b>£33,294.95</b>	<b>£40,251.72</b>	<b>-17%</b>



## Independent examiner's report and statement

### Respective responsibilities of trustees and the examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 43 (3) (a) of the Act);
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 43 (7) (b) of the Act); and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### Basis of independent examiner's statement

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 or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

### Independent examiner's statement

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

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and 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 *Mrs Lesley Mould*

Signed *[Signature]*

Date *12/3/2014*

Relevant professional qualification or body (if any)

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