

The Children's Ark
Minutes from AGM
21st November 2023

Present:

Sarrah Cottingham (Chair)

Michaela Gibling

Amy Whittaker

Fran O'Leary

Trudi Crumley

Gemma Walters

Lucy Ellis

Jade Jennings

Apologies: Reene Ehrman

Minutes from last year's AGM were approved, proposed by Sarah, seconded by Lucy.

Sarah delivers the Chairperson's report:

Chairperson's Report 2023

So, another challenging year for the Ark this year with rising costs, and lack of realistic funding yet again at the forefront of our minds as we try to provide for the children and parents of our community.

The Ark aided 13 pre-schoolers into their transition to primary schools, thanks to visits and hard work in preparing them from our pre-school team.

Currently we have 30 children on role at the Ark, consisting of 12 Pre-school 5 babies, 9 tiddlers and 4 school children. Although the challenges mentioned above, we continue to create an amazing environment to learn and thrive, with our amazing nursery sitting proudly within Pendeen as a leading childcare provider.

Staffing levels to cover this are challenging and we have had to lean on our manager, Michaela far more than any other manager before, covering for staff absence which has been difficult this year. We have had to say goodbye to Sharon Hopkins, our accountant, who provisionally was to help from her new role and is sadly missing. Accounting is a vital requirement for our nursery to function successfully, and this gives Michaela the difficult task of having to take on more within her role, with an already full to do list.

We thank Michaela as a committee in being able to spin numerous plates and put the care of our children as a priority. We do hope to see this workload ease next year with more support from her team and hopefully an improvement in recruitment within the childcare sector nationwide.

It goes without saying that the level of care within the nursery has continued to be exceptional from the amazing staff team, who always go above and beyond to provide supportive and nurturing care for our children.

I also want to thank the SEN provisions being provided by Jade, given her added role of deputy manager this year. She has worked hard to make sure our nursery is equipped and has the capabilities to be a suitable and inclusive nursery for all at the setting.

This year saw the return of our Annual Open Day, which is always an excellent opportunity to showcase our brilliant nursery to the parents and children, both currently attending and others within the wider community. They get to have fun and see all our facilities and team, and we managed to raise £120.90.

We also had the return of the Duck Race, which provides a great fundraising income, raising a grand total of £624.40

We plan to do more next year, and we will of course be having our Christmas nativity and raffle to raise more money. This has helped to provide new materials. toys etc for the nursery which we couldn't have done so without.

2024

Moving forward, we are still looking to reorganise our nursery, with the hope of transitioning to TPAT. We want to ensure that we future proof our nursery and the benefit it provides for the community, but under the umbrella of the school and TPAT's resources and support. It is clear that running as a charity with a committee, gets more difficult year on year, with a lack of volunteer members coming forward and an ever dwindling committee for the nursery to lean into. The transition would be a mutually beneficial agreement that would see both the nursery and school harmonise its impact on Pendeen and West Penwith.

We need to also focus on how better to use our own facilities in the meantime, with an extension of our holiday club that would better fit a wider age range, something that as a committee we know is lacking in our area and we could provide, giving us a more solid income stream. This is vital if we are going to face more increases in wages or running costs in the months to come.

I know that with our amazing team, we will continue to watch the children thrive in a nursery we can be proud of.

Discussion follows about how hard it is to recruit new committee members. Parents seem reluctant to get involved. Current committee members have children which have now left the Ark and they would like to stand down, but are unable to due to lack of new committee members.

Fran delivers the financial report:

Financial Report: (Draft statement attached)

This year has been a better year, with a £26k loss in 2021-21, a £32.5k loss in 2021-22, we have a £600 profit for 2022-23.

However our income is down.

Donations, grants and fundraising is good (up by about £500).

No job retention income

No photo sales

Consumables expenditure is much improved

Our spending is £110,000 (£141,000 the previous year)

We are saving on salaries and pensions (having not replaced members of staff who have left)

We haven't had any legal fees

Bank account – we have less in the bank, we have eaten into our funds a bit with having to purchase a new boiler.

Our reserve has increased.

Ways to continue to save money – perhaps buy power from the school, using their account as it may work out to be more cost effective. Maybe make more use of the school's resources (this also helps us look integrated with the school through the eyes of TPAT).

The staff have done really well with keeping costs down. Michaela has kept a really good tight hold on expenditure.

With regard to TPAT it is important to show we are being pro-active about transitioning by integrating more with the school, participating in school activities and supporting the school/having a presence at the school with their fundraising events.

Michaela Delivers the Manager's report:

Manager's report November 2023. AGM

We have 30 children- 12 pre-schoolers, 9 Tiddlers and 5 babies, 4 school children.

We have 6 children on the waiting list to start between January and January 2025. January 2024 2 non funded children, (1 baby and 1 tiddler) 1 funded tiddler at Easter, 2 non funded babies Sept 2024 and 1 non funded child January 2025. Funded children may change due to government changes in who can claim funding, e.g bringing in from 9 month olds.

We are coping with the staffing we have although some times when staff are off, it is trickier due to lack of bank staff.

Staffing

Jade is still finding the work load tricky at times but seeking support for those children in need via Matt Green (head area SENDCO).

We currently have 3 SEN children with 1 more on our watch list, Jade is seeking support from home and Matt on next steps for this child.

Sharon Hopkins has left but has agreed with Chris at school that she is able to support with financials when needed, currently supporting with wages.

Bought

I have bought minimal to try and save costs.

I have been asked by outside SEN support workers to purchase specific toys for children, but due to funds at the moment we haven't been able to supply these.

We do have funds from DAF where we are looking at doing 1:1 from after Christmas, were trying to arrange from when to use up DAF funding, currently there's not enough DAF funding to complete 1 day a week from after Christmas to July.

Jade is in the process for applying for SENIF for a child, and sourcing more SEN training.

Training

All staff are up to date with statutory training.

Sharon will take over Safeguarding Lead when I leave for maternity. She will need to re-do Level 3 safeguarding training before May 2023.

Jade and Sally have just completed a basic awareness safeguarding course.

All staff have been signed up through Cornwall council to complete appropriate training and be up to date.

Fran has sorted our electricity so that from the new year we will be on a different tariff with a different company, saving money.

Election of officers

Sarah is stepping down as Chair of the committee.

Fran is elected as Chair, proposed by Trudi, Seconded by Amy

Vice Chair – Lucy is proposed by Gemma and Seconded by Amy

Treasurer – Amy is proposed by Lucy and Seconded by Gemma

Secretary – Trudi is proposed by Fran and Seconded by Sarah

Safeguarding Officer – Amy is proposed by Trudi and Seconded by Gemma

General Committee – Sarah Cottingham

Gemma Walters

Reene Ehrman

The Committee and staff at the Ark would like to extend their thanks and appreciation to Sarah for her work and dedication during her years as the Chair. She has guided us through some very difficult times and has remained on the Committee for much longer (nearly 7 years) than she wanted to due to lack of other members. Her work and loyalty is very much appreciated.

Any Other Business

TPAT is the main issue. It is moving forward with a hope to join in September but there is still a lot to do. It is suggested to draw up a strategy and a plan to go forward and manage the transition and the volume of work required to move over to TPAT.

We need to look at making more of Holiday Club – perhaps extend to 5 days (staff would be happy for more income). Other nurseries are full for holiday club so there is a need there, perhaps we should look at capitalising on this and increase our income?

The front door – the door needs repairing as it isn't latching properly. In the meantime staff have been made aware to ensure it is locked properly to ensure children's safety.

We need new committee members, Michaela will put emails out and hopefully some parents will join or encourage family members to join.

Charities Commission – people are still listed who shouldn't be. Michaela has taken them off Companies House but they are still listed on the Charities Commission. She is trying to work out how to access it and remove them (with Fran's help).

Nativity.

Nativity is in the church on Friday 8th December 2023 at 1.30.

I have asked parents to drop children at the Ark for 1.00pm to ensure all children are ready to go.

Who can help? Trudi, Reene, Fran. – on raffle and tea/cake stall.

Staff will cover ratio for children, craft bag stall, c.d stall, Santa.

We may not have a stage as parts are missing but the vicar said they would be looking for it and hopefully will go up in time. We are looking at alternatives in case.

Profit and Loss

The Children's Amazing Rural Kids For the year ended 31 August 2023

2023

Unrestricted Income

Funded Hours	83,356.88
Unfunded Hours	26,506.39
Total Unrestricted Income	109,863.27

Restricted Income

Grants Received	1,700.00
Donations & Fundraising	1,190.67
Total Restricted Income	2,890.67

Other Income

Interest Income	123.72
Total Other Income	123.72

Total Incoming Resources 112,877.66

Consumables

Food & Nutrition	751.07
Personal Care	308.46
Play & Craft Supplies	1,180.59
Total Consumables	2,240.12

Gross Profit 110,637.54

Expenses

Advertising & Marketing	197.73
Audit & Accountancy Fees	997.00
Cleaning	654.54
Computer Software & Consumables	372.93
Consulting	300.00
General Expenses	53.10
Insurance	1,006.44
Light, Power, Heating	5,513.48
Pensions Contributions	2,787.87
Printing & Stationery	756.82
Repairs & Maintenance	585.91
Salaries	93,997.77
Staff Training	744.90
Subscriptions	520.58
Telephone & Internet	592.15
Uniforms	132.54
Water	449.78
Total Expenses	109,663.54

Governance

	2023
Legal & Professional Expenses	361.34
Total Governance	361.34
Total Resources Expended	110,024.88
Operating Profit	612.66

DRAFT

Balance Sheet

The Children's Amazing Rural Kids As at 31 August 2023

31 AUG 2023

Fixed Assets

Tangible Assets

Fittings & Equipment B/f	36,310.00
Fittings & Equipment Additions	6,237.36
Less Accumulated Depreciation On Fittings & Equipment	(34,072.25)
Total Tangible Assets	8,475.11

Total Fixed Assets	8,475.11
---------------------------	-----------------

Current Assets

Cash at bank and in hand

Fundraising Account	2,234.17
Reserves Account	15,615.89
THE CHILDRENS AMAZING RURAL KI	8,222.80
Total Cash at bank and in hand	26,072.86

Total Current Assets	26,072.86
-----------------------------	------------------

Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Accounts Payable	364.05
Historical Adjustment	3,926.26
Total Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4,290.31

Net Current Assets (Liabilities)	21,782.55
---	------------------

Total Assets less Current Liabilities	30,257.66
--	------------------

Net Assets	30,257.66
-------------------	------------------

Capital and Reserves

Retained Earnings	29,645.00
Current Year Earnings	612.66
Total Capital and Reserves	30,257.66