

## **Minutes of the AGM held on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 @7.30pm via zoom**

**Present :** Jessica Bowring, Joanne Ryle, Ruth Smith, Gill Graham, Jordan Daughtry, Luke Williams, Emma Smail, Louise Redfern, Mary Hutchinson, Becky Dutton

**Apologies:** Emma Sczesniok, Kristina Shaw, Rebecca Titterton, Michelle Lemon, Sarah White, Katie Austin, Emma Coullie, Gemma Newbon, Vicky Coates, Joanne Lewis, Sarah Bell, Lauren Stevenson, Samantha Jones, Kirstie Bond, Kaylie Lyon, Jodie Ayres, Georgina Woolley, Abbie Massey, Sam Dale, Niki Bainbridge, Jo Fearn, Charlotte Lee, Claire Maznenko, Abigail Pugh, Tasha Clarke, Scott Tomlinson

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Mary welcomed all the people present and thanked them for attending this evening. The Trustees were introduced.

### **2. Chairperson's report for the period September 2023 – August 2024**

We had another busy year at Ladybirds. During the year the Trustees regularly reviewed the policies and met each half term to discuss matters concerning the running of Ladybirds to ensure we continue to be a viable setting within very tight financial pressures with reduce funding and more staff qualifying for the auto enrolment of pension and NI contributions. As Trustees, we have our legal requirements to follow to be a charitable setting.

#### **Trustees**

At the last AGM on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2024, Emma Smail was nominated to go onto the Trustees. She has only recently been approved by OFSTED, so this continues to be a long process.

The Trustees for the year were myself, Mary Hutchinson, Louise Redfern, Ruth Williams and Becky Dutton.

#### **Financially**

There was a minimum wage increase in April 2024 to £11.44 – a £1.02 increase. Yet again the funding didn't go up the same amount as required for this increase. So, we had to decided how we could close the gap of funding rates and how much it actually costs to provide a place. So, consumables to continue to be charged as a mandatory charge. We were concerned that the finances were getting tighter as the funding was not going up as much as the minimum wage per hour. Consumable rates were changed to £7.00 per day, £3.00 per session and the hourly rate rose to £7.50.

Due to finances, we were unable to offer any more permanent hours for staff members, just temporary hours as and when needed.

We introduce an out of school forest school session for Reception and year 1. This was really successful, raising money for Ladybirds. Myself and Jordan volunteered our time.

As part of our role as a Charity, we had to set up a reserves policy. This was to ensure the sustainability of the setting, especially in these uncertain financial times.

#### **Fundraising**

Nativity DVD raised some money as well as the sponsored walk which was very well supported by many members of the families.

#### **Staffing**

Staffing was arranged according to some of the ratios. The government changed the 2 year old ratios from 1:4 to 1:5. We didn't believe that this was in the best interest of the children, so we kept the 1:4 ratios for 2 year olds and 1:8 for the 3 – 4 year olds. We are fortunate that we were able to

have a higher staff to child ratio this year, but we are not sure how much longer we are able to afford this.

Towards the end of the year, the Trustees and I supported the staff through a very difficult time in the Ladybirds history. The situation wasn't really resolved until after the summer holidays, but through it all the staff showed professionalism and perseverance to ensure the children continued to be cared for.

### **3. Financial Administrator report – Joanne Ryle**

Accounts audited and certified: Libra Business Essentials on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024

This financial year for Ladybirds has once again been finely balanced. The first item I must note is that our expenses for the year include a money transfer between our Lloyds bank account and our Leek Building Society savings account. This was agreed by the trustees in order to build up and safeguard our financial reserves. The transfer totalled £12,702.00. Our financial spreadsheets do not have a facility to record a money transfer as such and so this amount appears as part of the total expenditure. We must therefore look at the net expenses to gain a true picture of the financial year.

Total Income:	111,554.92
Total Expenditure:	120,040.08 (including money transfer of 12702.00)
Net Expenditure:	107,338.08 (excluding transfer)
Gain:	4216.84

It can be seen therefore that there was a slim gain of 4216.84 which is in line with previous years. This money, as always, has been retained by Ladybirds to put back into the pre-school and help ensure its continued stability in line with our not for profit charity status.

Our largest expenditure remains wages costs followed by rent and our largest income is the funding from Derbyshire Country Council and the fees paid by parents. Please note that the funding didn't cover the staff wage bill.

This was an excellent year for fundraising with a total of 2432.95 raised from Xmas nativity DVD sales, the Xmas raffle and Nature Explorers.

Looking ahead, next year will contain many financial challenges with a rise to the minimum wage and the expansion to the extension of the early years funding and the resulting loss of flexibility this will bring with regards to fees.

### **4. Manager's Report – Rebecca Dutton**

#### **Improvement Planning**

Our garden was again our priority. Jess and I continued the role of maintaining the garden. The garden is loved by both the children and staff and it has such a calming effect for those children who sometimes find being inside tricky.

We continued the ELKLAN course to become an Accredited setting supporting the Confident Communicators training. Michelle continued the role of lead practitioner and she had webinars each week and then work to be done within setting, working with the staff and implementing the learning and teaching. This course was for 18 months. Michelle spent many intensive hours to complete and train us and in May 2024, after being observed and visited by an Early Years professional, we were awarded The Confident Communicators Accreditation and Michelle gained a

level 4 in ELKLAN. An amazing achievement particularly for Michelle and for the rest of the staff who worked throughout the year at each staff meeting. We have implemented our new ideas to support children's communication and language.

Staff met each half term to work on the ELKLAN training, but also to discuss priorities within the setting, cause of concerns and staff well-being.

### **Training**

The staff attended individual training in accordance with the EYFS framework this year such as food hygiene and safeguarding and ensured all these were updated on a regular basis and within our staff meetings. Any learning was then updated with the staff and if required, we put the necessary updates in place in the setting.

All staff completed the updated prevent duty and online safety training.

During the staff meetings, staff took part in quizzes to keep updated with the new regulations in Child Protection, Ofsted and SEND.

I attended the Leaders and Managers and SENCO briefings each half term.

Staff meetings and training are done in the evenings. I am thankful that the staff gave up their time to keep updated with all the various changes that seem to occur on a regular basis.

### **Ofsted**

We continued to have regular updates from Ofsted and we continued to comply to the necessary expectations.

### **Staffing**

Michelle continued as her role as Supervisor on a Monday on a permanent basis. This enabled me to have one day in the office rather than being in ratio. Emma took on the role of Supervisor so that Tracey was able to have some time in the office.

Staff continued to take on and accept more responsibilities to support me, often doing these in our own time to enable the setting to continue to be viable. Ladybirds is very lucky to have such dedicated members of staff who work for the good of the children.

Thank you to Jordan and Mary who gave up their time on Mondays after school to open up The Nature Explorer's group. All this was done voluntary and I am truly grateful to them for giving up their time.

### **Next year – September 2024 – August 2025**

We will be discussing funding opportunities to support projects and help with the sustainability of Ladybirds. The year will be financially different due to the uptake of the 2 year old funding from September 2024. Again, this funding doesn't match our hourly rate, so yet again there will be a short fall. We will have more 2 year old attending, so we will need to change the way we do things. We will be continuing to enhance the garden. We are hoping to have a climbing frame, slide and climbing wall in the garden.

### **Thanks**

Thanks go to the parents for entrusting your children with us. It is a privilege to work with you and them. Next, my thanks go to the Trustees who have supported me and the staff this year, sometimes through some very stressful situations.

My grateful thanks go to our amazing staff team who work so hard to ensure the children have the very best time at Ladybirds and are able to develop to their full potential. All the staff are so passionate about Early Years and go above and beyond their pay grade to enable Ladybirds to be the very special place it is for all children and each other. I am so thankful for each and every staff member. They all bring their gifts and that is what makes us the fantastic team we are. I saw this saying recently that reflects us as a team 'Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.' I believe that Ladybirds is a family and each staff member plays a very important part in that family. I am one very lucky Manager.

#### **5. Trustee nominations for this year**

**Mary Hutchinson - Chairperson** – nominated by Becky Dutton, seconded by all - unanimous.

**Becky Dutton – Secretary** – nominated by Mary Hutchinson, seconded by all - unanimous.

**Ruth Smith – member** - nominated by Becky Dutton, seconded by all - unanimous.

**Louise Redfern – member** - nominated by Mary Hutchinson, seconded by all - unanimous.

**Emma Smail – member** - nominated by Louise Redfern, seconded by all - unanimous.

#### **6. Charity Commission**

Becky explained to the meeting that as a registered charity, the accounts, the minutes and the auditors report needs to be entered onto the annual returns. **ACTION : BD**

#### **7. Date of next AGM**

This needs to be held in the Spring 2 term 2026. This will be to give reports for the year September 2024 until August 2025. **ACTION: MH**

#### **8. Any questions / comments**

Mary asked the meeting for any comments or questions. Ruth thanked the staff for their hard work and Ladybirds was such a special place. This was unanimously agreed. Mary closed the meeting at 8.10pm

\*Total expenses include transfer to Leek Building Society of 12702.00

**PROFIT & LOSS**  
**FOR ST OSWALD'S LADYBIRDS PRE-SCHOOL**  
**FROM**  
**SEPTEMBER 2023– AUGUST 2024**

**CHARITY NUMBER 1163362**

**INCOME:**

DCC FUNDING	83949.39	
FEES PAID BY BACS	24009.30	
FEES PAID BY CASH	0	
CONSUMABLE FEES	0	
SWEATSHIRTS/T-SHIRTS	133.08	FUNDRAISING
2432.95		
MILK REFUND	913.53	
MISC	113.55	
Petty Cash adj	3.12	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>111554.92</b>	

**EXPENSES: 120040.08**

GROSS WAGES	84223.49	
EMPLOYER NI	1309.91	
PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS	2858.83	
<b>MISC (incl. transfer to Leek BSoc)</b>	<b>**15680.41</b>	<b>(12,702.00)</b>
WAGE COST	680.88	
STATIONERY	311.75	
STAMPS	40.00	
PLAYGROUP ACTIVITIES	1272.30	
SNACKS	854.60	
SWEATSHIRTS	508.20	
CLEANING MATERIALS	791.75	
PHONE	193.76	
MILK	942.00	
FUNDRAISING PURCHASES	1205.54	
FUNDRAISING COSTS	74.07	
INSURANCE	1176.95	
PHOTOCOPIER LEASE	763.20	
PHOTOCOPYING	886.02	
GARDEN	265.32	
RENT	6000.00	
PETTY CASH ADJ	1.10	

**\*\* This figure includes 12702.00 transferred to Leek Building Society for reserve fund**

**TOTAL EXPENSES 120040.08**

**NET EXPENSES 107338.08**

# Libra Business Essentials Ltd



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4th January 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**Independent Examiners Report  
For  
St Oswald's Ladybirds Preschool Ashbourne**

This report relates to the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 of St Oswald's Ladybirds Preschool. Samantha Heath MAAT of Libra Business Essentials Ltd has independently reviewed the financial records.

As the examiner has not seen a diary of events, she is not able to confirm that there are no further fund-raising sources and income other than those reported by the Preschool, which were:

30/09/2022	Sponsored Walk	£60.08
Nov to May	DVD's	£168.00
17/05/2023	Easy Fundraising	£17.01
31/05/2023	cake stall	£117.51
31/07/2023	Sponsored Walk	£571.00

The examination carried out included a review of the accounting records and a comparison of the bank accounts with those records. It also included considering any unusual items in the accounts and seeking explanations when required. There are no outstanding issues from the queries raised.

Independent Examiners Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives reason for any concern over the accounts of St Oswald's Ladybirds Preschool Ashbourne for the year to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

Signed.....*S. Heath*.....

Dated.....*4/1/24*.....

Samantha Heath MAAT  
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