



**Annual Report
2020-21 Committee Year**

AGM 28th September 2021

Introduction

In a year that has so far seen 442* pre-schools and nurseries close due to financial struggles, national lockdowns #2 and #3, funding cuts being announced by local government (while central government are announcing funding increases!), and numerous staff leaving (mainly out of childcare altogether) CAPS has kept calm and carried on thanks to the hard work and commitment from staff and committee.

We have been extremely lucky on committee to have an accountant as Treasurer, an HR professional, a committed and proactive Secretary/Marketing ace, an experienced Fundraising lead and all trustees have worked very hard this year, facing various challenges with enthusiasm, humour when necessary and unwavering commitment.

Across the country, early years practitioners have felt undervalued and disrespected by government during lockdowns #2 and #3 – with over 100,000+** signatures on a parliament petition to request the closure of nurseries/pre-schools on safety grounds like all other education settings. Staff everywhere were shocked to learn they had to continue to work while not being prioritised for vaccines or even for testing in the early days. Despite any concerns they may have had personally, our brilliant staff have not once let our families down, and have continued throughout, to provide our children with outstanding care.

As a team, this year we have overcome some longstanding HR issues, worked on teamwork and communications (internal and externally), reviewed, and improved numerous operational processes and procedures, recruited new staff, vastly improved administration for ourselves and future committees, created new HR processes and documentation, refurbished large areas of the garden and smashed our fundraising target.

I have enjoyed my year as chair and would like to thank everyone for their support. I will be staying on the committee for 2021/22 and look forward to working with the new committee in whatever capacity members deem me suitable.



Rebecca Bye
Chair of Management Committee

Children

In the academic year, we had 37 children enrolled at Cold Ash Pre-school. We said goodbye to 25 in the Summer who left us to start school. Of these, the majority went to Cold Ash St Marks, a few to St Finians and the rest to other local schools. There are 38 children enrolled this year with a further 5 on the waiting list. And 12 already registered for 2022/23 academic year.

Governance & Leadership

We had 7 parents on the committee this year, three from the previous year and four newbies; each person taking on a specific role. We met every 4-6 weeks as necessary and held urgent 'extraordinary' meetings when needed. All of our meetings bar the last two were held via Zoom unfortunately, but we finally, in May, met in person for the first time!

Despite the obvious issues COVID restrictions caused, we've worked extremely hard together to review and update the admission process, overhaul the recruitment process, develop and put in place a staff handbook, create a simple and effective pay policy, re-introduce Dropbox to CAPS for ease of information sharing (and save re-inventing the wheel each year!) between staff and committee, review and update numerous policies and procedures in line with the latest legislation (including regularly updating COVID procedures as guidelines changed frequently), develop better working relationships between staff and committee, and are in the process of producing a fully comprehensive finance policy.

From our experience as new trustees, we have focused on ensuring that handovers to new trustees will be far more comprehensive in future years. We have also created an annual diary/timetable to ensure everyone knows who is responsible for what and when things are expected to happen.

Finance & Funding

During the year ended 31 August 2021 we saw our income from West Berkshire Council increase to £114,894 from £90,593 the previous year. This was despite a drop in the hourly rates we receive and losing our supplemental income for staff qualifications. This is due to being able to run the pre-school sessions as close to capacity as we could throughout the year and continued efforts to fill session spaces on an ad hoc basis. We were grateful to receive our full funding from West Berkshire Council and maintain setting staff despite many children not attending during lockdowns and a corresponding drop in parent income.

At the year-end we had received grant funding of £19,113 relating to the following Autumn term, therefore our adjusted surplus is £28,861.

A £3,000 sustainability grant helped us with the increased costs arising from the Covid pandemic. We purchased a new outside sink, PPE and cleaning materials.

We continue to work tirelessly on our fundraising campaigns and as seen, the support of parents, the local community and local companies has allowed us to more than double our forecast fundraising income. Fundraising income paid for books and toys for the children as well as educational events and ongoing training for our staff.

Our staff costs have fluctuated throughout the year as we have had some staff moving on after the lockdowns to follow pastures new as well as a member of staff on Furlough. This in turn meant we saw an increase in our legal costs due to administering the Furlough scheme and various checks necessary for new staff and committee members.

We have invested £1,408 in new assets throughout the year including new laptops, printers and mobile phones to ensure our staff can work efficiently and effectively.

<u>Fund Balances</u>		
Account	Balance 31/08/21	Balance 31/08/20
Main	£85,550	£38,696
Fundraising	£4,525	£3,405
Deposit	£16,015	£16,013
Cash	£22	£21

<u>Income/Spend Summary</u>		
	Budgete d	Actual
Income	£100,603	£139,122
Spend	£85,446	£91,148
Net	£15,158	£47,974

Fundraising: Events, Donations & Matched Funding

Fundraising was extremely successful this year with £4,525 raised. The Nativity DVD and Christmas Raffle both contributed significantly towards this. Other fundraising activities included:

- Incredi-bauble Challenge
- Bex Willis' Photos
- Sponsored Bounce
- Mini Marathon
- Ugly Duckling Pottery Painting
- Christmas Card Creations

We were also kindly gifted a substantial sum of cash by a CAPS family and managed to secure some matched funding from Vodafone.

In addition, we have received a steady flow of donations via our online donation platforms:

- EasyFundraising
- Amazon Smile
- West Berkshire Lottery

We've had building materials, play sand, a playhouse and furniture all donated for free by local businesses and individuals, and we were lucky enough to get physical support in building, repairing and maintaining our sheds, classroom, garden, playhouse and sandpit by kind people volunteering their time and muscle.

A huge thank you to everyone who has generously donated to our fundraising and volunteer requests, the support is always gratefully received and monies are spent carefully.

Marketing & PR

We have been very active on our Facebook page this year; this is a public page where we have enjoyed sharing what we've been up to at CAPS with the wider community and prospective parents.

We've also had lots of activity in our private parents' group (CAPS Members) which seemed to be a welcome form of communication for parents, especially during a time when COVID restrictions limited the opportunity for social interaction.

We also managed to secure a space in the local Parish Magazine which enabled us to keep our local community informed of all the latest news and events. Tucked away behind the village hall, many members of the community have commented that they didn't know or had forgotten that we were here so this has proven to be a very worthwhile PR exercise.

We have had a large sign made for the gate to ensure any visitors to The Acland Hall and/or recreation ground know where we are.

Our website was rather out of date at the beginning of the year, and while it is still work in progress, we have made some significant changes. Hopefully it is now clearer and more concise and better enables parents and prospective parents to find the information they need.

And today, hot off the press, thanks to the epic efforts of our marathon running Mum Selina, we have made the local news!!

Parent Partnership

With regards to communication and relationship building with parents, it has been a tricky year due to COVID restrictions.

We haven't been able to invite parents into sessions to stay and play; nor have we been able to hold any social events or in-setting fundraising events.

We have continued throughout the year to remind parents of our 'open door' policy. We have encouraged parents to call or email our staff anytime to arrange a meeting or phone call if they have any queries or concerns regarding their children or the pre-school. In addition, we have posted on FBook a 'weekly round up' each Friday describing what the children have been up to and sent out a newsletter at the end of each half term with all the latest news and events.

We have continued to use Eylog for sharing 'wow' moments, milestones and news about children with their parents, with all staff (not just key workers) contributing to all childrens' learning journeys. In such a small setting we have the advantage of all the setting staff getting to know all the children extremely well and sharing in their growth and development.

Human Resources

It has been an extremely busy year for us with regards to staff.

We said a sad farewell to our longest serving member of staff, Theresa. She had been with CAPS for some 30 years as a pre-school assistant and was extremely well liked (most would say loved) by children, families, and colleagues alike.

Our leader, Zoe, took the leap and followed her lifelong dream with a big career change out of childcare. She had stepped up as leader at the start of the pandemic in March 2020 and did a brilliant job of leading the pre-school through the toughest of circumstances.

Kathryn and Clare, our part time pre-school assistants, both moved on from CAPS and out of childcare settings.

In addition, Lucy B, our deputy leader also moved onto pastures new... but she hasn't gone far and some of us will no doubt see her in the coming years at a local primary school. We've also kept her on as bank staff so don't be surprised if you still see her at CAPS, it's lovely to still have her around.

With all these changes we've been very busy recruiting. We've welcomed Lucy S as our new leader, she came from a local nursery as has many years experience in childcare. She immediately started making improvements to our garden and building stronger relationships between setting and committee. She has big aspirations for CAPS and is fully committed to continuing to provide outstanding care to our children.

Our new recruit, Natalie, joined us as a pre-school assistant from another local pre-school with a very similar ethos to ours and has settled in extremely well. So much so, that she has recently been promoted to deputy leader.

At the time of writing, we are in the process of recruiting a new, full time pre-school assistant whom we hope will join the team in October.

We have also recruited a team of four bank staff, all level 3 or above, whom we call upon as the need arises.

Alongside the recruitment we have introduced a staff handbook, reviewed and updated the setting staff job descriptions and assessed our staff training programme. We have signed up to Noodle Now, an online learning platform, that all staff can access as necessary.

Operations & Administration

We strengthened our relationships with The Acland Hall and Parish Council (our landlords) addressing several safeguarding issues together such as signage, health and safety matters and site security. In addition, we have secured the pre-school use of land behind the hall, and hope to develop the area this year.

Setting staff have been very busy working their way through our storage cupboards identifying any resources and equipment that are surplus to requirement and selling them where possible.

The new Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (EYFS) (which sets out what we are legally required to do as childcare providers) came into effect on 1st September, so setting staff have been busy studying the new document guidelines and implementing changes as necessary.

WE WOULD LIKE TO SAY A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS SUPPORTED COLD ASH PRE-SCHOOL THIS YEAR

Staff:

Carol Taylor
Claire Choules
Emily Jezzard

Gemma Chandler
Helen Barnes
Kathryn O'Brien
Lucy Brocklesby

Lucy Sandel
Natalie Williams
Zoe Denness

Committee:

Emily Jezzard
Holly Meikle

Kimberley Gavigan
Laurette Clilverd
Louise Green

Meg Smith
Rebecca Bye

Businesses:

AMJ Carpentry & Construction
ApplePrint
Belvoir Newbury

Elite Garage Services Ltd
Garcia Carpentry & Building
Indigo Design
Rivar Sand & Gravel

TSB Newbury
Vodafone

Sooooo many lovely businesses and individuals that donated raffle prizes, money and time – please see our Facebook page for more details.

And, most importantly all the girls, boys, Mums, dads, carers and other family members at Cold Ash Pre-school

*source: <https://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/news/article/more-than-2-000-early-years-providers-lost-since-the-start-of-the-year>

**source: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/566718>

Cold Ash Pre School**Accounts For the year ended 31 August 2021**

	2021	2020
Receipts		
Main activities	134,379.80	108,418.00
Fundraising activities	4,246.00	1,770.00
Uniform	496.00	572.00
Interest	0.00	2.00
 Total receipts	 139,121.80	 110,762.00
 Payments		
Main activities	90,723.85	100,825.57
Fund raising activities	424.00	34.00
 Total payments	 91,147.85	 100,859.57
 Net surplus for year	 47,973.95	 9,902.43
 Opening balance		
Current account	38,696.37	26,863.57
Fund raising account	3,405.17	5,342.92
Deposit account	16,013.38	16,006.00
Cash book	20.98	20.98
Net surplus/(deficit) for year	47,973.95	9,902.43
	106,109.85	58,135.90
 Closing balance		
Current account	85,550.12	38,696.37
Fund raising account	4,525.37	3,405.17
Deposit account	16,014.98	16,013.38
Cash book	19.38	20.98
	106,109.85	58,135.90



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Cold Ash Pre-School

On accounts for the year
ended

31 August 2021

Charity no
(if any)

~~1044160~~

1174604

Set out on pages

1-2

Responsibilities and
basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/08/2021

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.

Signed:

Date:

29/11/2021

Name:

Gillian Down

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

ICAEW

Address:

EJBC Limited

The Rectory. 1 Toomers Wharf

Newbury, RG14 1DY

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.