



**Trustees Annual Report**  
**2023-24 Committee Year**

## **Annual General Meeting: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

### **Introduction and Chair's Report**

This academic year has been a very busy one for CAPs and one that can best be described as a 'transitional' year.

The Trustees have all worked together throughout the year and the committee has been an excellent team, working closely with all of the staff at CAPs.

Staffing has been a challenge at times with us relying heavily on bank staff and on volunteers at points through the academic year. At the end of the Autumn term, we said goodbye to Lucy our Pre-school Leader. After running a recruitment campaign, we promoted Caitlin, an existing member of staff to the position. Towards the end of the summer term, we said goodbye to Kelly as well. Due to the staffing issues encountered at times we have taken the decision to hire Donna on a permanent basis who will be working with us three days a week and we have also taken on our new Bank Staff member Lisa on a fixed term contract for the year working two days a week whilst also completing her Level 2 qualification with our support. We wish both our former employees the best of luck in their new work challenges and they will always remain a key part of what has made CAPs such a brilliant Pre-school over the years. We also welcome our two new staff members and we are excited to have them and look forward to working with them going forward.

We have had a very exciting year at CAPs. The children made the most of the late autumn sunshine by having regular visits to the WAG being guided by one of our children's parents and Cold Ash local resident, which all of the children enjoyed. We were also invited to attend a performance of the St Marks Primary School Christmas Nativity which was again enjoyed by all who attended. In the last week of term before Christmas, the children put on a Christmas performance for the parents with all the children singing Christmas songs. Alongside this we held our annual fundraising Christmas Raffle. The spring term was hampered by the weather with outside excursions limited but we did hold an Easter event for all the children to partake in. In the summer term we welcomed Farms2Ewe, the ice cream van and sports day. All were attended well by the parents of our children and again showcased how well supported we are by the parents. The last week of the school year was marked by the Leavers ceremony. The fact that it was the hottest day of the year did not take away from the emotion and enjoyment. The children came out in their graduation caps and received their certificates. A wonderful yet emotional video montage was created by our own committee member Shelley and it went down amazingly well with all the parents and was the perfect ending to the Leavers ceremony marking the children's time with CAPs.

The children also had the pleasure of visits from Muddy Pig Pottery, another one of our amazing committee members, numerous times throughout the year when they made really lovely keepsakes.

Caitlin and all the staff have worked extremely hard to create a plan for this academic year. They all attended an inset day at the beginning of term to ensure that they hit the ground running and the information about what the children will be learning was sent to parents. I have no doubt that all the children attending this year will thrive under this staff team.

A Teaching and Learning review by an Early Years Specialist was booked and actioned in the winter term. The 'mockstead' gave all the staff an idea of what to expect when Ofsted come calling. It also gave the staff and the committee points to work on in preparation for an Ofsted inspection to ensure we do everything we can to make it run smoothly. These have been implemented already with some things such as the 'Meet the Team' board you see each morning at drop off and the communication box. We will continue to prepare for Ofsted and be ready for this when it happens and make sure that we give the staff all the necessary support to feel ready for the inspection.

Staff training as always has been a priority. Since becoming Leader Caitlin has enrolled and been undertaking a leadership course. She has been taking her learning and putting it in to practice each day. Lisa who has joined us this year will be enrolled on a Level 2 scholarship that will be finalised in the next month and an enrolment date provisionally set as October 3<sup>rd</sup>. The committee will be funding the additional costs to help with her learning and development. All staff are encouraged to come to the committee if they wish to conduct further training to help expand their learning to not only benefit CAP's but themselves as well.

A year that at times was challenging, yet one that pulled everyone together. Thank you to all the staff and trustees.

***Robert Allum, Chair, Cold Ash Pre-school Management Committee***

## Finance & Funding

### Fund Balances

Account	Balance 31/08/24	Balance 31/08/23
Main	£80,497	£47,579
Fundraising	£9,275	£8,596
Deposit	£60,000	£50,000
Cash	£19	£19

### Income/Spend Summary

	Budgeted	Actual
Income	£149,972	£169,732
Expenditure	£128,111	£126,136
Net	£21,861	£43,596

### Treasurer's report

Overall, we have had a very busy but successful year at CAPs. We have been careful with our spending to make sure we are well prepared for anything that comes our way, such as the 9.8% National Living Wage increase that took effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and various changes to the staff team that have occurred this year. The staff worked well as a team to cover a period in which we were short staffed and during the year the committee took time to gather feedback from the staff. From this, we were able to offer staff bonuses this summer in recognition of their efforts over the past year and increased their pay for the year ahead. The committee also introduced Long Service Awards to recognise staff who have worked at the pre-school for 10+ years.

Due to the cost of living rising, it was deemed wise to increase our reserves to ensure that we have enough budget for unexpected bills, emergencies or other short-term deficits. Therefore, we added an additional £10,000 to our reserves, bringing our total to £60,000. This means that when looking at the figures in the table above, our actual expenditure for the past year is £126,136 and £10,000 added to our reserves.

Cold Ash Pre-school has a healthy set of funds which need to be carefully protected when budgeting for the year ahead. As experienced this year, unexpected expenditure can arise at any moment. It is important that we prepare for this to ensure the Pre-school can continue to run in the future. It is still unknown to us what the effect will be on our pre-school with the introduction of the 2-year-old childcare funding and how this will impact our intake. So, although our funds look healthy at present, we need to remain mindful of how quickly this can change and take care to safeguard our budget for contingencies.

### **Fundraising: Events, Donations & Matched Funding**

Over the last year, we held several fundraising events and activities including our Christmas Raffle, Christmas Baubles, Easter Event, Sponsored Bounce, Bags2School and we created many beautiful things through Muddy Pig Pottery. The Christmas Carol and Raffle event was particularly successful with the children singing a great collection of songs, a beautifully produced programme which received generous donations from attendees and of course an amazing collection of prizes donated from many different companies - overall a good team effort to create such a successful event raising £1542!

Our records show that our Fundraising income totalled £2,932 this year, however an additional £572 has since been paid into the bank from the last Bags2School collection, Sponsored Bounce, and Easter event. Therefore, our Fundraising income for the past year was £3,504. We have been generously supported by parents, staff, members of the local community and local businesses with donations and services provided. Most of our fundraising income is generated through the very supportive CAPS families and friends. We are very grateful for all the support received over the past year.

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

- Easy Fundraising
- West Berkshire Lottery

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.

### **Children**

In the academic year 2023-24, we had 43 children enrolled at Cold Ash Pre-school. We said goodbye to 32 this Summer who left us to start school. Of these, the majority went to Cold Ash St. Marks and the rest to other local schools. There are 41 children enrolled for the academic year 2024-25.

### **Governance & Leadership**

We had 10 parents on the committee this year. We met every 4-6 weeks as necessary.

We worked extremely hard on a number of aspects including the banking and reserves, our Safeguarding audit, updating and adding to our policies and procedures, ensuring staff were looked after and supported and ensuring our facilities were maintained and updated where necessary.

## **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 is a welcome form of communication for parents. Our leader has aimed to post weekly updates with pictures of what the children and staff have been doing in setting that week. This hasn't always been done and many parents have fed back that this year they felt a bit out of the loop with what their children are doing in setting. This will be a top priority this year ensuring that all parents receive weekly updates to ensure they feel a part of the CAPs family. Our white board provides updates and again has been out everyday so far this term. We will do better with our communication to parents.

We have sent newsletters through the year to communicate with parents and keep them up to date with reminders and information. The website is also under constant review. We will also shortly be sending out a full list of dates of events to parents to give them as much notice as possible to allow them to make arrangements if they wish to attend. We know how much of a struggle it can be to rearrange commitments at a week's notice.

## **Parent Partnership**

We have a good relationship with parents but again due to the transition between leaders and other staff members we have not been able to conduct the usual parent survey. This is something that will be reintroduced this year with the aim of getting feedback during the year and also at the end of the year. We will also bring back the stay and play sessions and continue to ask for parent/carers volunteers with the parent/carers skills audit form sent out with all enrolment forms.

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. Rob (Chair) or Tracey (Vice-Chair) have also been available throughout the year to help parents if they have any questions or concerns. We have continued to utilise Tapestry this year and this has been received positively. There is definitely more that we can do with this system and we will be looking into other ways to get the maximum out of it. Not only for parents to see their child's learning journey but also help with the children's move into Reception as many local schools use Tapestry. All staff (not just key workers) are able to contribute to the children's 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**

This year we have welcomed Lisa and Gemma as bank staff, and they have quickly become valued members of the team. We were fortunate to have Emily work with us as a Bank Worker, however she has moved on to a permanent position elsewhere and we all wish her well. We are currently in the process of enrolling a new bank staff member and will continue to have a bank staff position advertised due to the limitations of days available of our current bank staff.

As previously mentioned, we have promoted from within for the Pre-school Leader position and have added Donna as a new permanent member of staff. We also have Lisa taking a fixed term contract for the 2024-2025 academic year.

All staff members are encouraged to explore further training opportunities and the committee will support this in any way possible.

The Pre-school continue to boast a staff team with lots of knowledge, skills and experience and we are grateful for all the work that Helen our SENCO (Special Education Needs Coordinator) and Amy our ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) both undertake throughout the year and of course the care and commitment the whole staff team provide to all the children.

We will be changing the job title of our staff from Pre-school Assistant to Pre-school Practitioner and will also be changing the job title of Clare our administrator to Business Manager.

## **Operations & Administration**

We have fundraised throughout the course of the year and have been spending this throughout the year on supplies for the Pre-school. We are also looking to the future and before the end of term gained permission to move some of our current storage buildings around and erect a new outdoor classroom area. This is not only to help current children but to help secure the future of CAPs with us being able to take on younger children. We have applied for further funding from the government for this and await a site visit from them to talk through our plans. This date will be scheduled in the coming weeks. We also held a parent morning asking parents to come and help maintain some of the outdoor area and this was well attended by the committee.

A review of reserves and current political, social and financial climate was undertaken and as mentioned in the Treasurer's report section an additional £10,000 was moved across to our financial reserves account.

We would also like to say a big thank you to everyone who has supported Cold Ash Pre-school this year.

**Staff:**

Caitlin Dagleish (Leader)	Amy Chambers	Gemma Allum
Natalie Williams (Deputy Leader)	Helen Barnes	Kelly Eeles
Clare Wormald (Business Manager)	Lisa Wyatt	Lucy Sandel
Carol Terry	Donna Fordham	Emily Jezzard

**Committee 2023-2024:**

Robert Allum (Chair)	Shannon Pike	Sarah Stroud
Tracey Bell (Vice-Chair)	Clare Hook	Jarrold Price
Shelley Nardini (Treasurer)	Samantha Marshall	Richard Hanks
Sophie Callaway (Secretary)		



**Cold Ash Pre School**  
**Accounts For the year ended 31 August 2024**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Receipts</b>		
Main activities	165,650	110,493
Fundraising activities	2,932	6,076
Uniform	674	620
Interest	477	389
Gift Aid	0	291
Total receipts	169,732	117,869
 <b>Payments</b>		
Main activities	126,136	121,573
Fund raising activities	0	0
 Total payments	126,136	121,573
 Net surplus for year	43,596	-3,704
  Opening balance		
Current account	47,580	52,421
Fund raising account	8,596	7,458
Deposit account	50,000	50,000
Cash book	19	20
Net (deficit)/surplus/ for year	43,596	-3,704
	149,791	106,195
  Closing balance		
Current account	80,497	47,580
Fund raising account	9,275	8,596
Deposit account	60,000	50,000
Cash book	19	19
	149,791	106,195



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Cold Ash Pre-School

On accounts for the year  
ended

31 August 2024

Charity no  
(if any)

1174604

Set out on pages

1-2

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/08/2024

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 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:

09/06/2025

Name:

Emma Thomas

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

ICAEW

Address:

EJ Business Consultants Ltd

2 Toomers Wharf, Newbury, RG14 1DY

**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.