



Minutes of Annual General Meeting on 7th December 21, at 7:30pm

Present: Amy Downes (AD), Aja Hickford (AH), Abby Maddison (AM), Alison Power (AP) Beth Wiggan (BW), Caroline Cadman (CC), Charlotte Loynes (CL), Ella Pope (EP), Heather Duke (HD), Katie York (KY), Laura Stevens (LS), Liz Lightfoot (LL), Sara Jones (SJ), Sherie Chivers (SC), Ruth Hatfield (RH)

Apologies: James Hayward (JH)

1. Chair's Report for the Year 2020-2021 (1 September 2020 – 31 August 2021)

Presented to the AGM on 7 December 2021 and submitted to the Charities Commission as part of the Charity's annual return.

Reference and Administration details

Charity Name: Haslingfield Little Owls Pre-School CIO

Registered Charity No: 1174884

Charity's Principal Address: Haslingfield Little Owls Pre-School CIO

Haslingfield Methodist Church

High Street

Haslingfield

Cambridge CB23 1JW

Name of the charity trustees who manage the charity:

Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Heather Duke	Chair	Appointed as Chair 28 Jan 2021
Ella Pope	Vice-Chair	Appointed as vice-chair 10 May 2021
Liz Lightfoot	Trustee	Appointed as trustee 16 April 2021
Sara Jones	Secretary	Appointed as trustee 28 Jan 2021 and secretary 10 May 2021
Amy Downes	Treasurer	Appointed as trustee and treasurer on 7 December 2021
Aja Hickford	Trustee	Resigning 7 December 2021
Laura Mavely	Chair	Resigned as Chair and trustee 28 Jan 2021
Helen Brammar	Treasurer	Resigned as Treasurer and trustee 28 Jan 2021
Ruth Hatfield	Trustee	Resigned as trustee 28 Jan 2021
Katie York	Treasurer	Appointed as trustee 28 Jan 2021 and treasurer 10 May 2021 Resigned 21 August 2021

Structure and Governance

The Model CIO Constitution for Childcare Providers 2013 from the Pre-School Alliance (now Early Years Alliance) has been adopted and remains unaltered.

Membership will consist of:

- 1) Family Members – family of children
- 2) Affiliate Members – anyone interested in furthering the aims of the charity.

Trustees will consist of:

- 1) A minimum of 3 members
- 2) A maximum of 12

3) where possible, with at least 60% members having children at the pre-school.

Trustees are appointed and reappointed annually at the Annual General Meeting. All trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits.

Chair's introduction and thanks to the staff

In common with last year, this year at Little Owls has been characterised by huge achievements and varying challenges. I would like to thank our incredible staff team – Abby, Katie, Sobia, Caroline, Charlotte, Laura and Julie. Each one of them brings unique skills and gifts to Little Owls and it has been a huge privilege (both as a parent and a committee member) to see them in action over the past few years. Their commitment to Little Owls is extraordinary and between them they bring experience, creativity, kindness, a passion for Early Years and a devotion to our community which makes Little Owls the lovely setting that it is. Thank you to all of you for your hard work. I'd also like to thank Sarah Rittman and Hannah Golden, both of whom have worked at Little Owls at various points in the past year and brought with them wonderful skills with children and a commitment to help often at late notice.

It is helpful to reflect on this staff team because it is a reminder of how lucky this village is to have people who are passionate about Early Years and long to give the youngest members of our community their very best start.

Objectives & Activities

Our objectives continue to be to work for the public benefit with regards the development and education of children, in particular by:

1. Promoting their care and safety;
2. Promoting their education and promoting parental involvement;
3. Promoting their health and wellbeing;
4. Providing services to support them and their families and carers;
5. Providing services to individuals holding membership of the CIO;
6. Furthering the aims of the preschool learning alliance [now the Early Years Alliance].

The Trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance. Our activities have continued to be the provision of Early Years care to children aged 2- 4 (inclusive).

Achievements and Performance

Staying open

Throughout such a challenging year, Little Owls has managed to stay open for all but a handful of sessions during this last year, which is a real credit to the staff. Our first case of Covid-19 was 16 days ago and so far this is the only case we have had in setting. We did of course all hope that by this point we would have put more of this pandemic behind us. As it stands, two of our staff members are unable to go into setting this week for reasons linked to covid, and the pandemic looms large for us all. But remaining open and meeting our objectives, particularly the promotion of the care, safety, health and wellbeing of our children, is something to be celebrated.

Focus on equality

It is well known within the sector that the pandemic has had a significant impact on children's education and care. But it is also true that families have experienced the pandemic in very different ways and that, far from being in the same boat, the ability of families to weather the storm has been linked to privilege and opportunity. Once again, disadvantaged children and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are most likely to suffer. This has been a big passion and focus for our staff team who have been completely dedicated to doing all they can to close the gap and give all children, including those with additional needs, a solid foundation and start to their education.

Staffing

Staffing has been a chronic problem for Little Owls –the low remuneration and high workload in the Early Years sector makes this an increasingly difficult area in which to work. But the decision to invest in staff really is paying dividends now. Caroline and Charlotte have achieved their level 3 qualifications – to do this during a pandemic really is extraordinary. We have employed Laura Stevens as our Early Years Assistant on a zero hours basis which has made an enormous difference to the children and staff alike, particularly during a year with so many additional pressures and requirements, e.g. all the extra cleaning necessary because of Covid-19. We were able to re-open the Thursday session in Spring 2021 and so now offer Monday and Tuesday 9am-3pm, Wednesday 9am-1pm and Thursday 9am-1pm. We wish it could be more, but again we are so pleased to have sessions for children on four out of five days of the week.

Links with our community

We continue to be grateful for our strong links with other groups in our community, which have been invaluable through the pandemic. I would like to thank the Methodist Church for their continued support and for sharing their building with us during a time in which it has been very difficult for them and other faith-based communities to continue to meet. The beautiful garden at the Methodist Church truly contributes to the well-being of both staff and children and we feel particularly grateful for that, especially during a period when the children and adults have been outside for as much time as possible. We are also grateful to our local primary school – thank you to Mr Hayward and Mrs Lightfoot for logging on tonight. Liz Lightfoot joined the committee in April specifically to bring Early Years' experience to committee. Liz is the Reception Class teacher and Early Years lead at Haslingfield School. Thank you both for your commitment to supporting Little Owls. School transition is so important and when the rules have permitted this, Liz has been able to go into setting to meet the Moonbeam cohort, read stories and ease their transition into primary school. I would also like to extend thanks to the Early Years advisory team at the County Council who have given us support this year, particularly during a period when our previous deputy left the setting. Abby is quick to reach out for help on Little Owls' behalf and to tap into training and resources to which we have access, to the benefit of all at Little Owls. Our gratitude extends also to the Parish Council for their ongoing support and their willingness to help Little Owls financially when a deficit is forecast. They have issued an ongoing invitation for us to attend annually to update them and request financial support where needed.

The year ahead

The focus of our year ahead, with such a wonderful staff team now in place, rests on a couple of areas:

- Our financial sustainability – Aja will go through with us in a moment our draft accounts but it has not been easy this past year (particularly this last term). We do of course have this in common with the early years sector in general – financial pressures and concerns about sustainability have been experienced across the sector. Our former Chair, Laura Mavely, and former treasurers, Pippa Keynes and Helen Brammar set our reserves at a healthy sum and it is reassuring in these uncertain times knowing we have that separate amount in our savings account.
- Our operational model – the demands of the pandemic, the loss of fundraising income and our reliance on children attending Little Owls as their second childcare setting (their first one generally being used as the main childcare for working parents), has highlighted the fragility of our operational model. Any robustness in the voluntary committee-run approach comes only from the commitment of individual members as opposed to the viability of that model in itself. We have seen a shrinking in the numbers of people able to be involved- perhaps this is linked to the sheer fatigue of having lived through a pandemic. Whatever the causes, which are no doubt multi-faceted, the reality is that pre-schools like ours seem constantly to

be fire-fighting. This is the case for both the staff and also the committee members. The purpose of reviewing our business model is to ensure a secure future for Little Owls.

- We are losing our fantastic manager, Abby. Abby's commitment to Little Owls and her work ethic has been extraordinary. She has managed the setting for three challenging years, utterly committed to making Little Owls as brilliant as it can be. Thankfully Abby's hard-work will stay with us as we have staff she has trained and a strong child-centred ethos. Thank you, Abby, for your commitment. Our recruitment of a new manager is underway and we hope to hold interviews next week with a view to a new manager taking the position after February half term 2022.

Summary and thanks to committee

I would like to finish by reiterating my thanks to you all, including to our small committee. Ella Pope, our vice-chair, has spent hours and hours a week on Little Owls all of this year, and really does have no idea how brilliant she is and we're all very grateful to her. Sara Jones joined our committee and is now our secretary – bringing a fresh perspective and a willingness to take on tasks that is much appreciated. I mentioned Liz above and our appreciation of her giving time to Little Owls. Very sadly, we say goodbye to Aja Hickford tonight. Aja has been on committee since summer 2019 and has been heavily involved in payroll, our pension scheme, bank accounts, invoices and many other areas for the past few years. We are especially grateful for her hard-work these past few months when we have been without a treasurer. As a busy accountant and Mum, we are so grateful Aja for the experience and the skills you've brought to committee. Like many before you, you have stayed on beyond your time in order to facilitate a smooth handover with our new treasurer, Amy Downes. We welcome Amy Downes onto committee tonight and are looking forward to working with her. Thank you too to the parents who have sent offers of help and also have donated generously to Little Owls – a couple of you have logged on tonight and we are grateful for the ways you are supporting us. There is also a parent-led fundraising committee which Ella will speak about in a moment, and we would like specifically to thank Jane Spence, Ruth Hatfield and Helen Brammar for their fundraising efforts over the past year.

I am so proud of the way that Little Owls has continued to serve its community in the most challenging of circumstances, to the benefit of many young children. And they are, after all, what this is all about.

Heather Duke
Chair, Haslingfield Little Owls Pre-School Management Committee
December 2021

EP and AM thanked HD for how brilliantly she runs the committee and for all her hard work. Committee and staff are all so grateful.

2. Fundraising Report for the Year 2020-2021 (1 September 2020 – 31 August 2021)

Table showing main fundraising events/income

Month	Event	Funds raised £
Sept	Pizza night	1603
All year	Easyfundraising	176
All year	Amazon smile	41
Nov/Dec	tea towels	208
Dec	PTFA quiz	553
Dec	Xmas fair	482
Feb	Coffee morning (football)	84
Mar	Easter bags	250
May	Nature hunt/ sunflowers	413
Aug	Pizza night	1273
Aug	South Cambs community chest grant	1000

These figures do not include fundraising expenditure unless noted.

Total 6085

We raised a total of just over £6k (- £1k expenses), this includes a ring-fenced SC community chest grant of £1000.

The main earners this year were 2 pizza nights in Sept 20 and Aug 21 (1,600, and 1,270), the PTFA quiz night (550), and the Christmas fair (480).

Other fundraisers are shown on the report above.

We ended the year 27% down on fundraising income compared to the previous year. Donations were down 63% compared to previous year. Bonfire night is usually a high earner for us (2000 previous year) and that didn't go ahead due to Covid. The same was true of the regular coffee mornings, and we also weren't able to put on any large-scale events (such as the comedy night as per last year).

This year we decided to adjust our fundraising structure. Previous committee members formed a fundraising group outside of committee and took on the organisation of our fundraising events, the purpose being to trial a recommendation to rely less heavily on fundraising to contribute to the day to day running of setting (namely salaries).

It has worked well to separate fundraising, to a point, but meeting the costs of running the setting without a contribution from fundraising has been a struggle. There is a discussion ongoing at the moment about how we go forward, and whether we return to the less than ideal scenario of raising more funds for these purposes.

I want to reiterate Heather's thanks to Helen, Jane, and Ruth and all those who have contributed, for their herculean efforts and commitment, I'm in awe of you all.

If there is anybody who is keen to be involved on the fundraising side, do let us know. it doesn't necessarily mean you have to have trustee responsibilities. I've always found being involved with the organisation of these events really great fun and a lovely way to meet new families, and spend time with a lovely bunch of people.

Ella Pope

Vice-Chair, Haslingfield Little Owls Pre-School Committee

December 2021

3. Finance Report for the Year 2020-2021 (1 September 2020 – 31 August 2021)

Attached is the current report for income and expenditure for your information and approval. Appendix 1 shows the summary accounts sheet. This report is based on the draft final accounts submitted for audit.

Current situation

- Current account balance: £15,299 (prior year £14,350).

- Income for this financial year totals £70,953 (prior year £63,165).
 1. Fees and funding: £61,119.00 (prior year £44,529).

2. Fundraising: We have raised net £6,085 (prior year £8,339).
1. Donations: £3,748.00 (prior year £10,245) has been received.

- Expenditure: £74,274 (prior year £62,692).
 - 4 The largest expenditure is on wages and salaries £61,889 (prior year £47,701); rent is £6291 (prior year £3,550)

Our income versus expenditure has left us with a deficit of £3,321.52 (prior year surplus of £473).

Savings account

- Our savings account holds £10,013.48 (prior year £10,012.48)

General position

We are ending the year with a deficit of £3,321.52. Continuing covid related and unforeseen staffing challenges this year have contributed to this deficit and have impacted on donations and fundraising capabilities.

Our total cash holding is: £25,313 (prior year £24,433).

Reserves policy

This policy aims to set out the optimum level of reserves required by Haslingfield Little Owls Preschool CIO in order to function as a responsible and financially healthy preschool. The current reserves held are in line with the policy.

Report ends. Thank you.

Aja Hickford

Treasurer, Haslingfield Little Owls Pre-School Committee

December 2021

Resolution (agreed): The committee resolves to approve the Haslingfield Little Owls accounts as sent to the independent examiner.

2. Committee: resignations, election and appointments

The new committee was voted on:

- Heather Duke (Chair) – Proposed by EP and seconded by SJ
- Ella Pope (Vice-Chair) – Proposed by HD and seconded by LL
- Sara Jones (Secretary) – Proposed by LL and seconded by HD
- Liz Lightfoot – Proposed by SJ and seconded by EP
- Amy Downes (Treasurer) – Proposed by EP and seconded by SJ

3. Dates for the diary

- **Tuesday 14th December** – Nativity play. There will be more details being sent round about the play shortly.
- **Tuesday 14 December** – Fundraising meeting in the evening for anyone interested in learning more – probably at Jane's house!
- **Thursday 16 December** - last day of term
- **4-5 Jan** - Staff training days
- **Thursday 6th Jan** – Children return to preschool

4. Q&A

BW asked for clarification on our reserves policy

EP - holding appropriate levels of financial reserves to protect against closure costs. HD explained that this will vary depending on staffing and that it was set at a healthy level.

AP asked why we didn't ask for any funding from the Parish Council (PC)

HD – explained that we have been to the PC every year and we take a forecast of accounts. The year ends don't correspond and this year in the lead up Little Owls received two big donations. We wanted to be honest and anticipated to break even.

BW asked whether we could base our application for funding from the PC on previous year ends rather than a forecast?

HD – our treasurer role has been vacant at times this year so it is an area that will improve, we might explore approaching the PC sooner.

5. Any Other Business

There was no other business and so the Chair closed the meeting at 8:10pm.

Haslingfield Little Owls
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021

	12 months 2020/21	12 months 2019/20
INCOME		
Fees	61119	44628
Fund raising income	6085	8339
Donations	3748	10245
Government Grants	2092	0
Interest	0	0
Interest	1	52
Total Income	73044	63264

EXPENDITURE

Wages and salaries	63981	47701
Fund raising expenditure	1044	1663
Rent	6291	3550
Professional fees	1068	1310
Equipment purchases	980	6925
Insurance	503	451
Miscellaneous expenses	1174	327
Training	568	754
Subscriptions	756	12
Total Expenditure	76366	62692
Surplus (Deficit)	(3,322)	572

Haslingfield Little Owls
BALANCE SHEET
As at 31st August 2021

	2020/21	2019/20
CASH		
Cash (bank current account)	15299.61	14350.12
Cash (bank deposit account)	10013.48	10012.48
Cash in hand	0	70.25
Total Cash	25,313	24,433

DEBTORS

Prepayments and accrued income	382.38	1,427.72
Interest accrued		
Milk refund		
Unpaid fees		
Fund raising income		
Fees received late		99.00
Total Debtors	382	1,527

CREDITORS

Invoices payable	(1,816.92)	
Refund of fees (covid)		(260.50)
Holiday pay		
Expenses Due		(81.71)
Fees paid in advance	(1,816.75)	
PAYE		(234.04)
Donation HPC for next fy		
Fundraising income		
Total Creditors	-3,634	-576
Total	22,062	25,383

ACCUMULATED FUND

Balance brought forward	25,383.32	24,810.88
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	(3,321.52)	572.44
Total	22,062	25,383



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name

Haslingfield Little Owls Preschool CIO

On accounts for the year
ended

31st August 2021

Charity no
(if any)

CE012367

Set out on pages

1 to 3

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

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

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with 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 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.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Date: 20.05.2022

Name:

David J Rowe

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

Fellow of CIMA and CGMA

Address:

16 Wytherlies Drive

Bristol

BS16 1HX

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

Nothing to report