

Charity number: 1186340

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

Unaudited annual report

Year ended 31 August 2025

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

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DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

Reference and administrative details of the Charity for the financial year ended 31 August 2025

Trustees	Mrs H Mercer Mr M Dando Mrs H Smith (appointed 9 October 2025) Mrs F Perrin
Registered office	Ducklings Preschool Creaton CIO 18 Welford Road Creaton Northampton NN6 8NH
Registered charity number	1186340
Bankers	HSBC 22 Abington Street Northampton NN1 2AN
Independent Examiner	Glen Bott FCA

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees present their report together with the financial statements of Ducklings Preschool Creaton CIO (the “Charity”) for the year to 31 August 2025. The Trustees confirm that the report and financial statements of the Charity comply with the Charities Act 2011, the requirements of the Foundation’s governing documents and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (“SORP”) “Accounting and Reporting by Charities”, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

Structure, governance, and management

The Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, governed by a Trust Deed dated 14 November 2019.

Method of appointment or election of Trustees

The setting is regulated by Ofsted and governed by a board of trustees. The trustees oversee the work of the setting manager and officer manager, who are responsible for the day to day running of the setting. Trustees are appointed by resolution at a properly convened meeting and are subject to suitability checks and confidentiality agreements. They follow the foundation model constitution.

Objectives

Ducklings Preschool provides child-led, early years education and holiday club services for children aged 2 to 11 years. We work collaboratively with families to foster an environment where children can thrive. Our setting is regulated by Ofsted and governed by a board of trustees. The trustees ensure that the setting manager and officer manager, who handle the daily operations, are supported and monitored. Trustees are appointed through resolutions in properly convened meetings, subject to suitability checks and confidentiality agreements, and follow the foundation model constitution.

Closure of the Preschool

Subsequent to the year-end the trustees took the decision to close the Preschool with immediate effect on 15 January 2026. The Preschool received a welfare requirements notice from Ofsted in late 2025 and despite the best efforts of all at the Preschool the welfare requirements were not able to be met in a way that allowed the Preschool to continue operating. Therefore the trustees made the difficult decision to cease operating the Preschool.

Achievements and performance

Review of activities and Financial Review

Pupil Numbers and Fees

The academic year began with 60 children registered, attending a total of 1,137 hours per week. By year-end, this had increased to 93 children (including those attending the primary after-school club), with weekly attendance rising to 1,737 hours.

Hourly rates from September 2024 were as follows:

Age Group	2024/2025 Rate
2-year-olds	£5.60
3+ year-olds	£5.40
Breakfast Club & After School Club (all ages)	£4.00
Holiday Club (all ages)	£4.00

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

Hourly rates were last reviewed and changed in September 2024.

Income

Total reported income for the year was **£435,671**, an increase of **50.14%** over the budget.

The main sources of income were:

- Preschool Funding: 43%
- Preschool Invoices: 12%
- Holiday Club Funding and Invoices: 16%
- Breakfast and After School Club Funding and Invoices: 11%
- PAYG (Pay As You Go) Funding and Invoices: 2%
- Hot meal provision 5%
- Wraparound Grant Funding 5%

Preschool Funding continues to grow following the government's extension of funded hours. Wraparound care, holiday club, and meal income also show year-on-year growth.

We also secured EHCP funding for a child with SEND, which funded a Level 2 Apprenticeship for 1:1 care.

Wraparound Childcare Programme

In November 2024, we applied for grant funding under the National Wraparound Childcare Programme (WAP) and were awarded £35,975. The first instalment of £23,830 was received in February 2025, with the balance due in the next financial year. This funding will support staff recruitment, training, and initial operating costs while demand builds.

Following the acquisition of a minibus, we partnered with Spratton Primary School to provide their after-school club provision, including a school collection service. The club began in January 2025 with 5 children and grew to 29 by year-end, with 18 on recurring bookings and 11 attending ad hoc.

Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year was **£444,608** - **11.16%** over budget.

Key expense categories:

- **Employment Costs:** 66%
- **Utilities:** 13%
- **Play Equipment:** 7% This includes accessible playground equipment scheduled for installation in October 2025, funded through a combination of DAF, EYPP, SEND budget, and operating profit. A donation of £2,500 has been requested from Creaton Relief in Need to support the addition of an inclusive ramp and bridge.
- **Reserve Spend (cross category):** £93,257

Competitive wages continue to support staff retention, contributing to a stable and nurturing environment and increased registrations.

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

Investment policy and performance

The Trust Deed permits the Trustees, in their absolute discretion, or any appointed investment advisors, to invest in any investment, securities or property, as it thinks fit. At 31 August 2025, no money had been invested by the Charity.

Reserve Policy

Ducklings Preschool maintains reserves equivalent to three months' running costs and redundancy pay for qualifying staff.

At the start of the year, £94,000 was allocated from the accumulated fund to support a programme of capital improvements:

- **Repairs and Maintenance:** Upgrades included boiler repairs, replacement lighting, installation of an access control system with VDU entry, and outdoor security lighting.
- **ICT:** A new interactive touch table was purchased to support digital learning.
- **Hygge Room:** Designed to create a calm, nurturing space that supports emotional wellbeing. Improvements included new flooring, decorating, blinds, and the purchase of soft furnishings and resources. This space was used for quiet play, small group work, and emotional regulation activities.
- **Sensory Room:** Following clearance, the space was redecorated and fitted with new flooring and lighting. Specialist resources - including bubble lights, a dark tent, and a range of light-up materials - were introduced to create a calming, immersive environment. This dedicated room played a vital role in supporting the wellbeing and development of children who benefit from a more tailored sensory approach.
- **Minibus Acquisition:** A new minibus was purchased to support off-site activities and also enabled us to extend our after-school club provision to local primary schools, with a school collection service included as part of the offer.
- **Office and Library Improvements:** Both spaces were redecorated and equipped with new blinds, furniture, and digital systems to support staff sign in and visitor management. As these were the first areas seen by anyone entering the setting, the overall welcome was noticeably more inviting. While the library had benefitted from new flooring and layout improvements, shelving was purchased, prior to the setting closure, to complete the space.
- **Kitchen Upgrade:** Significant investment was made in installing a new kitchen, including staff lockers, to improve facilities for food preparation and staff welfare.
- **Cloakroom Regeneration**
The funds originally allocated to cloakroom regeneration were not used for their intended purpose, as the anticipated level of disruption during such a busy period proved too difficult to manage. Instead, the budget was redistributed across other areas of improvement where immediate benefit could be achieved.

Lease

The initial five-year lease ended in August 2024. Although the local authority confirmed a 5–7 year extension via email in May 2024, a formal agreement has yet to be issued despite follow-up. Accruals have been made in anticipation of the rent remaining unchanged.

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

Reinvestment Proposals for the coming year

At year-end, total equity stood at £295,747.66. Reserve Spend in 2024-2025 was funded from operating profit, with no savings utilised. Of this, £151,000 is held in reserve in accordance with our policy, and £50,000 is retained for unexpected costs.

We propose reinvesting approximately £50,000 in the coming year, with grant funding sought where possible. Planned improvements include:

- **Flat Roof Replacement (£8,875):** The STEM room roof continues to leak despite repairs. Replacement took place in mid-October.
- **Repairs and Maintenance (£325):** Works include fitting a magna lock to the front door for improved security.
- **Kitchen and Staff Room (£1,000):** Painting throughout and new flooring in the staff room.
- **Play Therapy (£150):** *Full details of this equity allocation have been withheld from the published report to protect the privacy and safeguarding of the children and family involved.*
- **Free of Charge Childcare (£3,000):** *Full details of this equity allocation have been withheld from the published report to protect the privacy and safeguarding of the children and family involved.*
- **Trauma-Informed Training for Staff (£500):** To strengthen our capacity to support children affected by trauma, we propose investing in specialist training through Jogo Behaviour Support. This will equip staff with practical strategies for responding to children's emotional needs, while also addressing the personal impact such disclosures can have on practitioners.
- **Library Furniture (£750):** Purchase of shelving and a check-in/out table to support children's access to books and reading records.

Looking Ahead

In light of the Preschool's closure, the trustees have further resolved that the charity will be formally wound up by 31 July 2026. This decision was taken after careful consideration of the charity's ongoing purpose, its ability to operate safely and sustainably following the Ofsted welfare requirements notice, and the absence of any viable route to resume provision. The trustees are now implementing a wind-down plan to ensure full compliance with the charity's governing document. This includes settling all outstanding liabilities, concluding employment and contractual obligations, managing the secure retention of records, and ensuring that any remaining assets are applied solely for charitable purposes. The trustees will keep the Charity Commission informed throughout the process and will submit all required documentation ahead of the final dissolution date.

Trustees Responsibilities

Trustees are responsible for preparing a Trustees' Annual Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are required to:

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures that must be disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Foundation and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the applicable Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the Trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Foundation and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report was reviewed and approved by the Trustees on 18/3/ 2026 and signed on their behalf by:



Mr M Dando
Trustee

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2025 which are set out on pages 10 to 16.

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 charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW).

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do 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.

Emphasis of matter - financial statements prepared on a basis other than going concern

I draw attention to the going concern policy on page 12 of the financial statements which explains that, subsequent to the year end, the trustees have made the decision to close the Preschool and cease all activities and the Preschool is no longer considered to be a going concern. Accordingly the financial statements have been prepared on a basis other than going concern as described in the going concern policy.

Other than the emphasis of matter noted above, 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.



Glen Bott FCA
5 Pond Spinney
Overstone
Northampton
NN6 0GJ

Date: 19 March 2026

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO
Statement of Financial Activities
For the year ended 31 August 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
INCOME FROM			
Charitable activities	2	435,671	298,900
TOTAL INCOME		<u>435,671</u>	<u>298,900</u>
 EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities	3	444,608	248,861
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>444,608</u>	<u>248,861</u>
 NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		(8,937)	50,039
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED FUNDS as at 1 September 2024		292,423	242,384
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED FUNDS as at 31 August 2025		<u>283,486</u>	<u>292,423</u>

The notes on pages 12 to 16 form part of these financial statements.

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

**Balance Sheet
As at 31 August 2025**

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
FIXED ASSETS	5	24,522	-
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors		1,752	2,676
Cash at bank		291,980	316,754
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors	6	34,768	27,007
NET ASSETS		<u>283,486</u>	<u>292,423</u>
CHARITY FUNDS			
Unrestricted funds	7	283,486	292,423
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>283,486</u>	<u>292,423</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 18/3/ 2026 and signed on their behalf by:


Mr M Dando

Trustee

The notes on pages 12 to 16 form part of these financial statements.

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO

Notes to the Financial Statements For the year ended 31 August 2025

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation of financial statement

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities," applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011 and applicable regulations.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised as cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to the accounts.

The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

Going concern

Subsequent to the year-end the trustees made the decision to close the Preschool with immediate effect on 15 January 2026. The Preschool received a welfare requirements notice from Ofsted in late 2025 and despite the best efforts of all at the Preschool the welfare requirements were not able to be met in a way that allowed the Preschool to continue operating. Therefore the trustees made the difficult decision to cease operating the Preschool.

Due to the decision to close the Preschool, all activities will cease and the Preschool is no longer considered to be a going concern. It is therefore appropriate for the financial statements to be prepared on a basis other than going concern. There are no changes to the valuation of assets and liabilities in these financial statements as a result of the decision to prepare them on a basis other than going concern.

Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the Charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably, and it is probable the income will be received.

Resources expended

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities, they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

Fixed assets

Assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset on a straight-line basis over its expected useful lives, as follows:

- Motor vehicles – 3 years

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2025

2. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2025	2024
	£	£
Preschool Fees	50,892	41,783
PAYG	6,899	6,022
DAF	6,426	-
EHCP	7,027	-
Preschool Funding	187,650	135,522
EYPP	2,044	387
TSF (formally HNF)	3,325	2,389
Breakfast and After School Club	49,851	33,493
Holiday Club	71,356	56,312
Meals	19,679	15,164
NMRU – Milk	765	716
Children’s Uniform	0	21
Room Hire	324	591
Interest	4,278	4,433
Fundraising INC	767	1,067
Educational Skills Funding	500	1,000
Grants	23,830	-
Donations	58	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	435,671	298,900
	<hr/>	<hr/>

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2025

3. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2025	2024
	£	£
Food	7,350	5,999
Milk	732	771
Children's Uniform	-	-
Employment costs	284,040	199,953
Utilities	54,289	14,685
Rent and Rates	3,297	3,127
Insurance	1,727	1,288
Registration and Licensing	439	400
Finance	429	432
Health and Safety	4,867	9,386
Office	7,282	1,860
SALT, SEND and EYPP	7,473	1,524
Curriculum Enhancement	2,225	3,028
Play Equipment	31,907	756
Consumables (Craft)	2,250	1,390
Transport Costs	1,581	-
DAF	6,426	-
EHCP	7,027	-
Hygiene and Cleaning	2,467	1,477
Other Setting Costs	1,855	529
Other Staff Costs	3,018	910
Other Costs	1,666	1,346
Depreciation	12,261	-
	<hr/> 444,608 <hr/>	<hr/> 248,861 <hr/>

4. NET INCOMING RESOURCES

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration.

During the year, no Trustees received any benefits in kind.

During the year, no Trustees received any reimbursement of expenses.

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2025

5. FIXED ASSETS

	Motor vehicles	Total
	2025	2025
	£	£
Cost		
Brought forward at 1 September 2024	-	-
Additions in the year	36,783	36,783
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Carried forward at 31 August 2025	36,783	36,783
Depreciation		
Brought forward at 1 September 2024	-	-
Charge in the year	12,261	12,261
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Carried forward at 31 August 2025	12,261	12,261
Net book value		
At 31 August 2025	24,522	24,522
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 August 2024	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>

6. CREDITORS

	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	2025	2024
	£	£
Social security and other taxes	-	6,820
Other creditors	-	-
Accruals and deferred income	34,768	20,187
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	34,768	27,007
	<hr/>	<hr/>

7. FUNDS

	Brought Forward	Incoming resources	Resources Expended	Carried Forward
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds				
General funds	<u>292,423</u>	<u>435,671</u>	<u>(444,608)</u>	<u>283,486</u>

DUCKLINGS PRESCHOOL CREATON CIO
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2025

8. RELATED PARTIES

There were no related party transactions during the year.

9. EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO THE YEAR END

Subsequent to the year-end the trustees made the decision to close the Preschool with immediate effect on 15 January 2026. The Preschool received a welfare requirements notice from Ofsted in late 2025 and despite the best efforts of all at the Preschool the welfare requirements were not able to be met in a way that allowed the Preschool to continue operating. Therefore the trustees made the difficult decision to cease operating the Preschool.