

Westwood Farm Community Pre-School

Registered Charity 294802

Westwood Farm Community Centre, Downs Way, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 6SL
www.WestwoodFarmPreSchool.co.uk

Chairperson's Report October 2024

Hi, I am Marie, the Chair of the Committee, I currently have no children at the pre school. No plans for any more either!!) My son has just left and started school at Downsway this September and my daughter attended the pre-school and is now in year 4 at Downsway.

For those of you who have joined us tonight, let me give a little background to how the Preschool is run. The preschool staff team comprises of the most dedicated and hardest working group of wonderful ladies who are managed day-to-day by Clare and then the committee oversee this. The committee currently comprises of a group of former parents and one current parent. A committee is a group of people who ensure that an organisation fulfils all its legal obligations and operates efficiently and according to their constitution. The committee is required to have a chair, a treasurer, a secretary and 5-12 committee members. 60% of the committee needs to have a child attending the Preschool for us to be in line with our constitution. As it stands, now that many of our committee's children left and started school this September, we will need to find several new parents to join to ensure we are in line with our constitution. As a governing body, we have a shared vision of what Westwood Farm Community Pre-School is about and what it hopes for and works towards. The committee is responsible for the overall management and organisation of the setting which includes such things as HR, payroll, monitoring accounts, purchasing, marketing, and fund-raising events. Over the last few years, the make-up of our committee has changed to all being working parents which means it isn't always possible to do the types of fundraising activities we have had in the past. I'd like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to the staff for their efforts with fundraising this year again, especially the Xmas fair which was all their hard work and doing. They have always simply taken things on and got stuff done, mucking in with us, a lot of which has been in their own time. The staff always go over and above and this is just one way they show it. I'd also like to thank our volunteer committee who worked so hard at our summer fayre making it a great success, it was a real team effort and I appreciate it so much. And for all the hard work they have done this year supporting me and staff with cover and other important HR tasks.

This year we had a Christmas, Easter and Summer fayre at the end of each term inside the Pre-school. This was a lovely way to get families in and enjoying activities and games together with their children whilst raising valuable funds for Preschool. We also had an amazing Summer and Xmas raffle, huge thanks to the staff team led by Amanda for gathering the absolutely amazing prizes, we give the schools a run for their money! We also ran the Mothers shop, Fathers Day chocolate poem gifts, Christmas shop. Over the year, Pre-school organised some exciting learning and enrichment activities for the children. Such as the wonderful all day trip to Beale park, visits from the emergency services for the children to investigate the vehicles and learn about their jobs, local walk to the shops to

collect ingredients and make cakes, making biscuits for the elderly group that meets in the club and lovely nature walks in the park. This year staff also revamped the mud kitchen which was completely dismantled and made so much better for the children to enjoy, another huge undertaking.

The minimum wage increased again in April, by quite a large percent, which is great for our staff, but has a huge impact on our Pre-school budget. Along with very low numbers this September we have had to reduce everyone's hours quite considerably to ensure that we stayed financially viable. We said a very sad goodbye to Mrs Muir, our fantastic SENCO, who after many years has moved on to work here at the club, but luckily she is still returning for our charity events and cover. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Mrs Muir's incredible hard work throughout the years. Mrs Muir was a wonderful practitioner and was loved by all the staff and children; we wish her all the best of luck in her new role and are very pleased she isn't going too far! Clare and Charyl have now taken on the role as joint SENCO and we could not be more grateful for them stepping up to this big challenge. We know they will do the best job. We have also recruited Grace who is now helping with our lunch clubs and cover, so we welcome her to the team. Last year we had 2 trainee members of staff who are currently in education learning to be EY practitioners. Armani has now left us for full time employment but Latasha still continues with us and is such a great addition to the team. She does some wonderful work with the children and we are so pleased she is continuing her studies and placement with us this year. Finally we would like to say a huge good luck and well done to Steph who is going to start her Level 3 qualification this year, strengthening her place in the pre school as well as her own qualifications.

OFSTED decided to inspect our pre-school in July of the year. The inspection went as we thought it would, which is very well indeed. The report is available to read online and is a glowing review of our team and their hard work, resulting in a result of GOOD. I would like to take this time now to really thank the staff team for everything they did to achieve this result. Clare worked so very hard on all the preparation and paperwork, including some very difficult sequencing and curriculum work that she did lots of in her spare time. I know that Cheryl was a big support as our Deputy and the rest of the team were amazing. They were super prepared and super ready for it and I know this is no easy task and certainly a very daunting one! I just don't think there are the words to describe what a relief this result was to us all and that without this amazing team of staff we would have never got there. Thank you will never be enough but we all mean it so much.

With such low numbers this term and with very few on our waiting list for the Spring and Summer term, we will not be able to reinstate staff hours until the number of children increases.

So we are in a bit of a pickle now. We've got lots of people on our committee willing to help but are now ex parents. I can keep some of these people on, many hands make light work, if I gain the right ratio with more current parents joining too. We are a lovely team at the moment who is happy to share the load and so by joining you'd never be asked to do too much. We are looking for dedicated individuals like yourselves to join our committee and help us achieve our goals. Positive change starts with passionate individuals coming together to work towards a common cause... your children! Your children need the fun and education, families need childcare, if we don't have a committee unfortunately there will

come a time when we will no longer be able to provide the service we do. The Early Years is so very important to life-long learning and therefore our committee plays a vital role in creating a lasting impact on the lives of the children in our Preschool family.

Being part of a committee can be both enjoyable and rewarding. Each trustee brings with them their own set of skills and ideas that can be used to enhance the group and therefore support and strengthen the Pre-school. In return, there are benefits to yourself in volunteering, making new friends, gaining opportunities to develop new skills in areas such as management, marketing and recruitment. Parental involvement is voluntary and mostly informal, but it is absolutely critical to our future – it is simple, without a committee of trustees, Westwood Farm community Preschool would not exist. Even if you can only manage to add your name in writing but not much physical help that is enough, we need enough parents signed on so then ex parents who want to continue to help can stay. If not we may have many of our current members leaving us and therefore have many spaces to fill. I want to thank all our committee leavers for all of their support over the last year and the years before that, we appreciate the time you have given to your role. A special thanks to Liz, who is not here tonight, but has always been such a huge supporter of the preschool over the years and has stayed with the committee above and beyond. Thank you for all your help and support Liz, it won't be forgotten.

So, what does joining the committee look like? It's a small commitment, a 1-2 hour meeting 3-6 times a year, plus whatever jobs you volunteer to do, so it can be as time consuming as you make it! As I say you can be a committee member in name mostly and we will just keep you updated with all info so you are aware if ever needing to weigh in on a vote. It's a fun, informal atmosphere at the meetings (as you can see!) which are held here in the bar at the club and always online if you can't make it. You will have an opportunity in shaping and developing the Pre-school. If you are interested in joining the committee, but don't want to put your name down right now then you can always speak to a member of the current committee or staff tonight, or alternatively you can email or call me for a chat about it. We have an extremely loving and dedicated team of staff who are warm and welcoming, it is a pleasure working with them all and I hope more of you will be able to join our committee to see this first hand too.

Finally myself and Rich, our treasurer are both non parents and although we are ok to continue our roles for the moment we feel it would be more appropriate for such important roles to be held by current parents at the pre-school. Therefore if anyone would be interested in taking on either of these positions then please don't hesitate to contact us for more details.

Thank you for listening, and I hope it has helped make things a little clearer as to how a Preschool is managed. Hopefully I haven't scared you off and that there are some new parents who would be interested in joining!

Marie Cope

Pre-school Chair

Westwood Farm Community Pre-School

AGM 2023-24 – 30 September 2024

Treasurers Report

For the period to 31 March 2024

Hello all, my name is Richard Churchill, and I am the current treasurer for Westwood Farm Community

Pre-School and a committee member. I became treasurer during the last financial year in February

2023. I do not have any children at the pre school but have previously had Ben, Martha and Ruby all

attend the pre school over the last 10 years and my wife, Michelle was the chair before Jo who

preceded Marie.

The pre-school is a registered charity but its primary funding sources are the funding received from

the local authority and fees received from parents. The donations and fundraising income received is

usually less than 10% of the total revenue. However, in the year to 31 March 2024 I made a one off

donation of £5,000 which we were able to match fund with Microsoft and therefore received £10,000.

That is why in the accounts to 31 March 2024 fundraising activities total £16,985 compared with

£5,396 in the prior period.

The accounts for 31 March 2024 have been drafted and I will arrange for a contact to conduct an

independent review prior to their filing, and I would like to thank Nicki for her hard work on this.

The Pre-School has been through a rollercoaster financially in the last few years. In 2022/23 the pre

school had too great a staff cost for its child numbers and with the benefit of hindsight did not act

quickly enough on this. During the Spring and Summer of 2023 myself and Jo supported by the

committee reduced salary costs but in the year to 31 March 2023 the pre-school suffered a deficit for

the year of £12,213, the comparative period to these accounts. However as a result of reduced costs I

am pleased to say that in the year to 31 March 2024 the pre school has reported a surplus of £3,466.

This year includes the period 1 April 2023 to 31 August 2023 during which time staff costs were

proportionally high to child numbers and during that period the pre school operated at a deficit. So in

the period 1 September 2023 to 31 March 2024 (the last school year) the Pre School has operated at

a good surplus this is primarily a result of reduced costs which I and the committee are aware has

caused a lot of hard work to be done by our team at the nursery.

Furthermore I can see that in the period 1 April 2024 to 31 August 2024 (immediately after these

accounts) the Pre School operated at a healthy surplus of over £10,000. This means that as of now the

Pre School has a healthy retained surplus of £45,381 at 31 March 2024 which would be more like

£55,000 as of now.

In the prior year, 31 March 2023, our funding was £98,868 and wage costs £107,904. In the year to 31

March 2024 our funding decreased to £95,502 but wage costs decreased to £99,668. The majority of

the Pre-School's other costs are quite fixed and are usually between £18,000-£20,000 each year.

Accordingly it is the relationship between funding and wages which has the largest impact on the Pre

School

As at 31 March 2024 the Pre-School had a retained surplus of £45,381.

There was a recent (April 2024) increase in National Minimum Wage which the Pre School has

observed and awarded pay rises to all members of staff. However the current child numbers at Pre

School are low however there are a number on the waiting list for January. This means that I forecast

the Pre School is operating at a deficit currently. I estimate in the year to 31 March 2025 that the Pre

School will operate at a deficit of approximately £6,500. Whilst this is sustainable for the Pre School

given its current surplus it will require careful budgeting for future periods. Obviously should child

numbers change then as we have shown in the current year the Pre School can operate at a surplus.

Additionally there is new government and maybe a change in focus in terms of childcare provision

however funding levels are set at a local authority level. Therefore as a committee we will need to

continue to monitor child numbers and financial position and outlook.

As I said at the outset I do not have any children at the Pre-School and took up the treasurer role to

allow the Pre-School to have a functioning committee in accordance with its articles. If anyone is

interested in taking on the role then I am happy to stand down to allow this to happen but will continue

should no one wish to take on the role.

WESTWOOD FARM COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL**Charity Number:294802****ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD****1 APRIL 2023 TO 31 MARCH 2024****INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT**

	31 -Mar-24	31 -Mar-23
	£	£
<u>INCOME</u>		
WEST BERKS FUNDING	95,502.18	98,868.49
FUND RAISING EVENTS	16,985.58	5,396.03
FEES	8,341.12	12,676.35
REGISTRATIONS		-
UNIFORM SALES	112.00	414.88
OTHER INCOME	2,220.50	915.14
INTEREST	308.38	38.88
TOTAL INCOME BEFORE EXPENSES	123,469.76	118,309.77
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
WAGES	99,668.02	107,904.37
ENTERTAINMENT/EVENTS	40.52	-
OFSTED/CRD CHECKS	-	-
STATIONERY	529.90	1,126.12
RENT & SERVICES	7,326.00	7,326.00
CLEANING	859.11	857.75
TRAVEL & TRIPS	827.50	937.50
SUBSCRIPTIONS	1,953.33	1,701.34
EQUIPMENT & PLAYGROUND	700.43	2,202.83
IT	315.20	445.60
IT EQUIPMENT	1,403.11	-
TRAINING	1,748.06	1,577.00
FUNDRAISING	479.93	729.27
INSURANCE	1,590.20	1,543.75
REFRESHMENTS/SNACKS	762.43	852.99
PRINTING: UNIFORM/TSHIRTS	-	1,492.71
PUPIL PREMIUM EQUIPMENT	870.08	1,044.71
OTHER EXPENSES	929.51	780.92
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	120,003.33	130,522.86
NET INCOME FOR THE PERIOD	3,466.43	(12,213.09)

WESTWOOD FARM COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL**BALANCE SHEET****as at 31 MARCH 2024**

	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-23
	£	£
<u>ASSETS</u>		
SAVINGS ACCOUNT BALANCE 31/3/24	30,432.48	21,124.10
ORDINARY ACCOUNT BALANCE 31/3/24	31,147.55	40,020.76
LESS OUTSTANDING WAGES	(12,831.82)	(20,221.83)
	18,315.73	19,798.93
 TREASURERS ACCOUNT BALANCE 31 MARCH 2024	991.98	991.98
 FEES RECEIVED IN ADVANCE	- 4,358.75	-
	45,381.44	41,915.01
 RETAINED SURPLUS AS AT 1 APRIL 2023	41,915.01	54,128.10
LESS: NET DEFECIT IN PERIOD	3,466.43	(12,213.09)
 RETAINED SURPLUS AS AT 31 MARCH 2024	45,381.44	41,915.01



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
WESTWOOD FARM COMMUNITY PRE-SCHOOL

On accounts for the year
ended

31 March 2024

Charity no
(if any)

294802

Set out on pages

1 page showing income and expenditure and retained reserves, headed accounts for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31 March 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 am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of ICAEW.

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.

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

Signed: *Rick Behan*

Date: 21/01/25

Name: Rick Behan

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body

ICAEW - 1176341

(if any):

Address:

3 Coldbath Square
London
EC1R 5HL

Section B	Disclosure
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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.

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