



## **Rathfriland Pre-School Playgroup Trustee Annual Report 2023/2024**

**Charity name:** Rathfriland Pre-School Playgroup

**Charity No:** 101066

**This report relates to the financial year:** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024

**Principal Address:** 21 John Street, Rathfriland, Co Down, BT34 5QH

**The following individuals served as charity trustees on the date this report was approved:**

Grace Lynch (Chairperson), Keri Lynch (Vice Chairperson), Ciára Monaghan (Treasurer), Victoria Costello (Secretary), Committee members: Natasha Corbett, Aisling Devlin, Melissa Gawley, Suzanne McAlinden, Michelle McClean, Danielle McConville, Thérèse McQuaid, Tracy Nicholls, Chantal Parsons.

**The following individuals served as charity trustees during the year:**

Grace Lynch (Chairperson), Keri Lynch (Vice Chairperson), Ciára Monaghan (Treasurer), Victoria Costello (Secretary), Committee members: Aisling Devlin, Melissa Gawley, Leona Lynch, Michelle McClean, Danielle McConville, Thérèse McQuaid, Tracy Nicholls, Chantal Parsons.

### **Charitable purposes**

Rathfriland Pre-School was established in 1983 to promote and provide access to high quality Pre-School education to children and families in the Rathfriland area regardless of religion, culture, race or disability. The children in our care are provided with the opportunity to develop their skills of communication, problem solving while developing confidence, self-esteem along with the ability to relate to others before their transition to Primary School.

The Pre-School is registered to accept a maximum of 24 children. In the school year 2023/24 we placed 23 children in funded places. We also placed 2 children in pre Pre-School places over the year. The sessions run 3 hours each day; from 9am to 12pm.

We have three highly qualified staff who continuously update their training and professional development to benefit the children. We also employ two relief staff members to cover in cases of absence etc.

The Pre-School is governed by its constitution and governance documents as an unincorporated association. The constitution sets out the aims and powers of the Committee. Each year members, who are also trustees, are elected at an annual AGM. Monthly meetings are held to discuss Pre-School business and activity, to set admissions criteria and to ensure the Pre-School is meeting its benefit aims to the children and their families.

Throughout the year the Trustees have given careful consideration to the Charity Commissions Public Benefit requirement statutory guidance to ensure the activity of the setting has achieved the Charity's purpose and has benefited the beneficiaries.

Parental participation is extremely valued in the importance of their children's learning. Staff and parents meet at least twice a year to discuss their child's progress. The settling in meetings took place as a school report to discuss the children's development. Parents also received a transition form in June to pass on to their child's Primary One teacher. Feedback is gained from parent via a questionnaire to help us ensure the benefits are being met in the Pre-School's provision and service.

The Pre-School is a member of Early Years – the organization for young children, who provide advice and support throughout the year e.g. Online PSEP Forums, Leader's Days and staff training sessions. Online and onsite monitoring visits from a designated Early Years Specialist also take place to give support and advice.

The Pre-School is also under the Early Years Team (Southern Area Social Services Trust). This body is responsible for inspections ensuring that the Pre-School is providing a care and educational setting in line with minimum standards. The report we receive including parents comments is used to improve our service and further benefit the children. Our annual inspection was held on 30<sup>th</sup> April, the report showed a continued high standard of service and positive feedback from the parents and children.

Pre-School is also subject to Department of Education, Education Training Inspectorate inspections. Our last inspection was in 2016 in which we received the Every School a Good School award in recognition of the Pre-School having being evaluated as having a high level of capacity for sustained improvement in the interest of all the learners. Recommendations for improved practice from all our inspecting bodies are taken on board and amendments made to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for the children. All staff participate in self-evaluation assessment processes e.g. ISEF, PQA documents which ensure staff continue to be reflective of their practice and the setting as a whole to allow us to identify areas of improvement and make these changes for the benefit of the children.

### **Main activities and achievements during the year**

Throughout the year the children are provided with activities and resources to allow learning through play both indoors and outdoors, while following the Pre-School curriculum. We offer a wide range of play activities: arts/crafts, sand/water play, writing table, table top and floor activities, home corner, role play, construction area, book corner, ICT area, songs/rhymes, mud kitchen, nature areas, gardening, cookery activities. Staff continuously observe the children and evaluate their use of the activities to ensure the opportunities given are developing and progressing the children's learning and skills.

The activities are planned to develop all areas of the children's development to help in their preparation for Primary School. The areas of learning are divided in to 6 areas: personal, social and emotional development, language development, physical development, the arts, mathematical development and the world around us. The activities are implemented to progress the children's personal value, confidence, communication skills, hand/eye coordination, fine/gross motor skills,

concentration along with having a fun filled positive Pre-School experience. To benefit the children's learning and development staff ensure the activities provided are relevant to their interests. This then determines the topics covered and the activities/resources provided.

This year through successful Regional Childcare Partnership Small Grants Scheme funding application we were very pleased to be able to cover costs of restructuring our playframe to create a separate climbing frame and playhouse which allowed for greater play and learning opportunities for the children.

During the year we enhance the children's learning and development through visitors and outings. We had visits from Primary 1 teachers of the schools the children will be transitioning to. For our annual school trip we visited Fort Evergreen, Warrenpoint. This was a great day thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Throughout the year various fundraising activities were organized. We held a 'Wear your favourite colour' day and Picnic with Pudsey to raise money for Children in Need. We fundraised for Pre-School funds with a pub quiz, shopping trip to Blanchardstown, Christmas raffle, sale of Christmas cards, Easter raffle and bucket collections in the Milestone and Eurospar in Rathfriland and in Tesco Banbridge. We also had two Cash for Clobber collections during the year. Our successful fundraisers has enabled us help cover running costs and provide new equipment and activities for the children.

Our annual Graduation Day to celebrate the children's year in Pre-School was held in the Pre-School with parents in attendance. The children all received an individual learning journey which documented their year filled with photographs, the children's' thoughts and art work as a keepsake of their time in Pre-School. The day was enjoyed by all and was very special for the children, their parents and staff to have this opportunity to celebrate each of the children and their journey of learning and development during their time in Pre-School.

The trustees really appreciate the help and support from the parents throughout the year and are very grateful to the staff for their commitment to the children throughout their Pre-School experience.

#### **Financial Position 2023/24**

The Pre-School is governed by the Education Authority as a PSEO setting. The Education Authority Funding is our main source of income. They provide funding for the children of Pre-School age over the course of 10 months. This payment is received on a monthly basis; it is calculated on a flat rate per place in accordance with the attendance per month.

As we did not fill all the funded places we were able to place 2 pre Pre-School aged children. Cost per session was £10.00 per day.

Our PSEP funding and the fee-paying income is further subsidized by fundraising activities throughout the year e.g. Cash for Clobber collections, Bucket Collections, Raffles, etc. The Trustees are grateful to the parent for the help and support throughout the year and to those local businesses that helped our fundraising efforts through events and donations.

The Pre-School seek to apply for eligible funding each year to help with the cost of resources for the children when there is opportunity for such funding. We have been successful in receiving Extended Services Funding which was used to purchase items to extend our provision with the introduction of a sensory room. We also used funding from the Regional Childcare Partnership Small Grants Scheme to cover costs of restructuring our playframe to create a separate climbing frame and playhouse. We were also very kindly donated some lovely art and craft items by Tesco Banbridge.

The Pre-School holds two Bank Accounts; a Current Account and a Savings Account.

The Pre-School has various running expenses including staff wages, rent, resources, etc. The Committee recognise that a Reserve must be held to ensure a contingency for unforeseen circumstances and expenses. The Committee can report that the Reserve remains in a healthy position for this financial year.

Accounts for the year 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 show receipts totaling £65,034, payments totaling £66,683, showing a net deficit of -£1,649.

The Current Account bank balance at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 shows we have £3,910. Total Reserves £16,071.

There are no funds held by the charity that are materially in deficit.

All payments in the account were for the benefit of the Pre-School.

Signature: 

Print name: Grace Buckley Lynch

Date: 11/12/24

On behalf of Rathfriland Pre-School Playgroup Committee