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Opening Hours: 9:15 a.m. — 12.15 p.m.

Registered by Southern Health & Social Care Trust
Registration Number: S000532
Registered Charity No: NIC102114

**Annual Report
for
Financial Year
ending
30 June 2023**

Noah's Ark Playgroup

Office Bearers and Committee Members 2022/2023

Chairperson: Mrs Kerry Geddis

Secretary: Mrs Laura Hawthorne

Treasurer: Mrs Jocelyn Girvan

Committee Members: Mrs Jenny Hull; Mrs Gail Walker; Mrs Catherine Anthony; Mrs Penny Chapman; Ms Naomh Lawlor; Mrs Katie Uprichard, Mrs Renette Castles; Mrs Sarah Sergeant.

Playgroup Leader's Report
for
Noah's Ark Playgroup's Annual Report 2022/2023

On behalf of all the staff at Noah's Ark, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome each and every one of you to our playgroup family. Our members of staff work tirelessly to provide a safe, clean and positive environment for everyone. That continued hard work ensures that every child and their family has a welcoming and happy place to come each morning. A place, where we want everyone to feel at home and to enjoy the Noah's Ark experience.

As staff, we can provide the learning experience and the loving, safe environment, but our playgroup would not exist without the support of our families. So, thank you to all of you, who, by sending your child to Noah's Ark, supports our playgroup – a playgroup which was established in September 1992, so we are now operating in our 32nd year, which is such an achievement in itself.

Thank you also to the support of our hardworking and steadfast Management Committee. We need a committee for two reasons – first of all, because we are a registered charity and secondly, we are a community playgroup and we must be committee run in order to receive funding from the Trust, which amounts to £6 for every day that we are operational - a total of about £1000 per year.

As you will know, that amount of money does not go far, so as well as our fees, we need to fundraise throughout the year to keep the playgroup open and we do that fundraising, with the help of our Committee. We have a challenging year ahead, when costs are continually rising. We always aim to keep our fees as low as we possibly can, but like other non-profit making organisations, we still need to pay our bills. Regular fundraising ensures that we can keep our fees at a minimum.

Last June, our wonderful Committee marked our 30th Birthday by organising a Garden Party for us. It was such a wonderful afternoon, with the staff, the committee, the playgroup children and their families coming together for an afternoon of celebration, laughter, fellowship and fun in the beautiful gardens of the Uprichard Family.

The work that went into that afternoon was a credit to the dedication, hard work and organisational skills of the playgroup committee members involved, with special thanks to Laura Hawthorne and Katie Uprichard who came up with the idea and made it possible.

I would like to thank Gail Walker for the loan and set up of the sensory tent; thank you to the Uprichard family, who allowed us to take over their garden for the day; thanks also to their very understanding neighbours, who allowed us use of their field for parking; and thank you to Kerry Geddis for organising the beautiful baskets of flowers which were kindly gifted to the staff. Thanks to all those committee members, who helped in any way, from bringing food & sandwiches, chairs, tables, games, etc. and to those who helped set up the activities, decorations and bunting and also to those who provided financial assistance to make the

day so special. Our birthday cake was fabulous and enjoyed by everyone. Thanks also to Tesco, who generously gifted fruit, crisps and treats for our party and to the local churches, organisations and Harrison Nursery for the loan of bunting, tables and activities. I would also like to thank one of our playgroup mums, Karen Smith, who came along with her Arcade Coffee truck and gifted all the proceeds to playgroup funds – a very generous and kind thing to do for us. The staff were overwhelmed by everyone's kindness and it will be a day that will always hold special memories for us for many years to come.

So, on behalf of all the staff, I would like to thank the committee for all their help and support over the past year. Many thanks to those of you, who have agreed to stay on to help out for another year. We are also delighted to welcome on board new members and we hope you find the experience of being involved in your child's playgroup rewarding.

I also want to thank my dear friends and colleagues – Hilary Craig, Ray Coleman and Hannah Gardiner. We have a great team of staff here at Noah's Ark and I thank them for their help and support each day. I know the care and attention that each staff member gives to each and every child in their care every day at this playgroup and how much hard work and dedication we all put into ensuring the success of this playgroup as a whole. A lot of work is out of hours and voluntary and it takes special people to want to do that year after year. Noah's Ark Playgroup is our second home. As members of staff, it is our greatest wish, that when you and your child come to playgroup each day, that you also feel 'at home' with us. We hope that you do.

Elaine Hutton - Playgroup Leader

Secretary's Report for Noah's Ark Playgroup
Annual Report 2022/2023

The year started off with Noah's Ark reaching its 30th Birthday, having first opened its doors in September 1992.

Improvements had been made to the outside of the property at the end of August, when N. I. Water fitted a new storm drain on the Main Street in Waringstown, which ran through our playgroup yard. This meant a new courtyard wall was built, a new outer door onto the laneway was installed and the laneway leading up to the main road was tarmacked.

Staff returned for 2 days of training & set up on Tuesday 30 & Wednesday 31 August. Induction visits for the new children took place over 2 days on Thursday 1 & Friday 2 September.

Our new term started on Monday 5 September with 15 children on our register. Our members of staff were Playgroup Leader - Elaine Hutton, Deputy Playgroup Leader - Hilary Craig, Playgroup Assistant - Ray Coleman and Relief Assistant - Hannah Gardiner.

The playgroup closed on Monday 19 September as a mark of respect for the State Funeral of Queen Elizabeth II

We gratefully received a donation of toys and outdoor vehicles from the Hawthorne family.

During the month of October, parents received a Settling-In Report for their child, keeping them informed of how well their child was progressing, after their first month at the playgroup.

Three members of staff i.e. Elaine Hutton, Hilary Craig and Hannah Gardiner updated their First Aid Training on the evenings of Monday 2 and Tuesday 3 October.

Our Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday 18 October at 8pm at the playgroup. 11 people attended and a committee of 11 people was duly elected: Chairperson: Kerry Geddis; Treasurer: Jocelyn Girvan; Secretary: Laura Hawthorne; Committee Members: Sarah Sergeant, Renette Castles, Jenny Hull, Katie Uprichard, Penny Chapman, Gail Walker, Naomh Lawlor and Catherine Anthony. After the short business part of the evening, a light supper was served.

Annual Reports for 2021/2022 were printed and copies left in the hallway for parents or visitors to take.

The playgroup was closed from Monday 31 October – Friday 4 November inclusive for the half-term break, during which time some remedial work was carried out above the Fire Exit Door in the main playroom.

The first Monitoring Report from the Playgroup Leader was emailed to the Committee on 7 November.

It was decided that our Christmas fundraisers would involve selling Fireside Quiz sheets, organising a Marks & Spencer/Luxury Christmas Hamper Raffle, holding a sponsored Christmas Jumper Week, as well as selling Playgroup Calendars to help raise money for playgroup funds. It was agreed that we would also purchase engraved pens and distribute them to parents to sell next term. As in previous years, staff made a Wish List of sundry items, required for the playgroup, which parents could buy in lieu of staff Christmas presents. It was also agreed that we would start to sell pre-loved uniforms at £5 per item. Our committee member Renette Castles kindly offered to bake a range of Christmas Cookies for us to sell for playgroup funds.

Elaine Hutton and Hilary Craig completed 2 nights of Health and Safety, Risk Assessment and Manual Handling Training.

Our December newsletter was sponsored by the Uprichard family.

We also gratefully received a donation of paper from the Sergeant family.

During the first week of December, the playgroup children posted their letters to Santa and there was great excitement as we put up the Christmas tree and decorated the playgroup for Christmas. A post box was also left in the hallway for children to post cards to their friends.

Parents received their child's observations, which were sent home for them to read, as well as a short progress report on their child's first term.

Every Christmas, since the playgroup opened in 1992, we have been delivering hampers of groceries to local pensioners. A total of 19 bags of groceries, donated by parents and staff, were delivered by the playgroup staff, on behalf of the

children, to the local pensioners early December. A Christmas card, handmade in the playgroup by each child, was included in the hamper of food.

In return, we received donations from some of the pensioners for our playgroup funds, with thanks to Mrs Rutherford, Mrs Barnes, Mr Hagan, Mr King and Mr & Mrs Steen.

The term finished with a Christmas Party Week, at the end of which, each child received a Christmas gift and party box. A selection box for each of the playgroup children was also kindly donated by Waringstown LOL 83. The party food was kindly provided by the staff and committee and a great time was had by all.

Our last day of term was Wednesday 21 December. We had 21 children on our register.

Our fundraising in December raised the following amounts of money for playgroup funds:

- Marks & Spencer Christmas Hamper Raffle - £140
- Christmas Fireside Quiz Sheets - £117
- Christmas Jumper Week- £27
- Calendars - £162
- Christmas Donations for toy fund - £100
- Donations from pensioners - £70
- Christmas Cookies - £51

Our sincere thanks to the committee for donating the hamper and food items for our Luxury Hamper Raffle. Thank you also to those who donated prize items for the Fireside Quiz i.e. Mrs Gail Walker from The Big White Coach Events, who donated a Build A Bear Kit; The Mace, Waringstown, for donating a food voucher; Mr & Mrs Tim Smith from Arcade Coffee for donating a coffee voucher and Mrs Alex Keegan from AK Hair Design for donating a hair voucher. Thank you to everyone who sold quiz sheets or raffle squares for us. Your help and support was greatly appreciated.

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Our new term commenced on Wednesday 4 January 2023 with 28 children on our register.

Our January newsletter was sponsored by Mr Stephen Girvan from Valley Engineering Services.

The annual grant from the Trust was received on 6 January. This amounted to £1050.

All 4 staff members attended Anaphylaxis Awareness and Epi-Pen Training.

A photographer from CS Moments in Ballymena came to the playgroup on Monday 30 January to take individual professional photos of each child. A total of £145 was raised for playgroup funds.

The Playgroup Leader's second Monitoring Report was emailed to the Committee on 1 February 2023. Fundraising for this term would be playgroup photographs, selling pens and raffling a Pamper Hamper, kindly donated by committee member, Katie Uprichard. It was also agreed that we would hold our usual summer term 20p/smartie tube fundraiser, so the committee donated tubes of smarties, which were to be given to all children before Easter.

Our playgroup leader, Elaine Hutton, submitted our Annual Monitoring Report to the Charity Commission and carried out the annual update of our Fire Risk Assessment.

5 Noah's Ark printed pens were distributed to each family to sell, raising a total of £370 for playgroup funds.

The playgroup was closed from 13 – 17 February inclusive for the half term break. A burst radiator over the half-term break caused flooding damage and the playgroup was closed the following week to allow the playroom to dry out, damages to be repaired and new vinyl flooring to be fitted. New radiators were also fitted throughout the building. Parents were refunded for the week that we were closed. We were very grateful to the families who donated their refunds to playgroup funds. We would also like to thank Mr and Mrs Brian Uprichard and Mrs Anne Dunlop who gave donations for playgroup funds at this difficult time.

Our Playgroup Leader, Elaine Hutton, and Deputy Leader, Hilary Craig, updated their Designated Officer Training over 2 nights in Armagh.

Our March newsletter was sponsored by the Love Family.

In celebration of World Book Day at the start of March, a book token was distributed to each child and children were invited to bring along their favourite book and dress up if they wish.

Our Playgroup Assistant, Ray Coleman, completed online Fire Safety and Risk Assessment Training via Zoom.

The playgroup closed on Friday 17 March and Monday 20 March for St Patrick's Day.

We raffled a Mother's Day Pamper Hamper, which was kindly donated by Mrs Katie Uprichard and raised £100 for playgroup funds.

Once again, children's observations for the term were sent home to parents at the end of March.

In the last week of term, the Easter Bunny paid his annual visit to the playgroup and caused great excitement by leaving the children a crème egg in the Easter baskets they had made. Once again, we thank Ray Coleman for donating the eggs for the children.

We sold hand knit Easter character toys, kindly donated by Mrs Barbara Simpson, and raised £57 for playgroup funds.

Our term finished on Friday 31 March with 29 children on our register

A mandatory qualification audit of all staff and volunteers was completed and sent to the Trust (HSC) at the beginning of April.

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Mr Gilbert Crook over the Easter period. Gilbert had been long associated with Noah's Ark, by independently auditing our playgroup accounts every year.

After 10 days of closure over Easter, the summer term commenced on Monday 17 April 2023.

Our April newsletter was kindly sponsored for the second time by the Uprichard family.

Committee Members were emailed their third Monitoring Report from the Playgroup Leader on 17 April.

Due to a week's loss of fees in February from the flooding closure, it was decided that the playgroup would stay open until the end of June to recuperate the loss of income. There was a review of fees for 2023/2024 and due to the increase in rent and general expenses over the past year, it was agreed that fees would be increased by £1 per session and that the deposit would be increased to be equivalent to 2 weeks' payment, pro rata. The annual update of policies was also

agreed. The Committee also decided to mark the playgroup's 30th birthday with a Garden Party in June, which they would organise.

At the end of April, Mr Stephen Girvan from Valley Engineering Services kindly carried out our annual PAT testing free of charge, with our grateful thanks to him.

The Trust Annual Inspection took place on Friday 28 April. This year's Inspection Area was "Quality of the Physical Environment and Monitoring and Evaluation". All went well and credit must be given to the continued dedication and hard work of the staff. A copy of our current Inspection Report is always available in the hallway for parents' perusal.

Our May newsletter was sponsored by the Hampton family.

The playgroup was closed on Monday 1 May and Tuesday 2 May for the May Day bank holiday and again on Monday 8 May for the Coronation of King Charles III. The playgroup celebrated the King's Coronation with the children making their own royal crowns to wear during our special week of Coronation parties, where we enjoyed specially baked Coronation cupcakes and treats. Each child was presented with a Coronation gift bag filled with mementoes of this historic occasion. Mrs Joanne Wheeler, one of our parents, kindly donated some Coronation cupcake toppers, as well as bun cases and cake decorations for future use.

Questionnaires were distributed to families, along with the May newsletters, asking parents to evaluate our service. Feedback was positive and encouraging for the staff.

Open Days were held on 3 days from Monday 15 – Wednesday 17 May inclusive.

The playgroup was closed again on Friday 26 and Monday 29 May for the Spring Bank Holiday.

Our June newsletter was sponsored by the Kane family.

Our big event of the year took place on the afternoon of Saturday 17 June, when the Committee organised and invited all the children and their families to attend our 30th Birthday Celebration Garden Party, kindly hosted in the beautiful family garden of our committee member, Mrs Katie Uprichard.

As well as a slide, swings and climbing frame, there was lots of space to run and play, a wild garden to walk through, a sensory tent to explore in, a sheltered area to sit and relax and a variety of outdoor games and activities to engage in.

One of our parents, Mrs Karen Smith, brought along her Arcade Coffee truck and served a variety of delicious drinks and tasty tray bakes, with all proceeds going to playgroup funds. Party food was provided by the committee members and Tesco's donated a selection of crisps, fruit and treats for the occasion.

Our afternoon finished off with a birthday cake and the presentation of a basket of flowers to each of the 4 members of staff from the Committee.

A fabulous time was had by all, with special thanks to all those committee members who put so much effort into organising this special and memorable event.

Our thanks also to Gail Walker from The Big White Coach Events, for setting up the sensory tent for us, thank you to Harrison Nursery for the loan of their bunting, thank you to the churches and organisations who lent us a variety of games and equipment and a special mention of thanks to the Uprichard Family for allowing us use of their wonderful garden for the party and also their neighbour for the use of their field for the parking. While no entry fee was requested, donations were gratefully received. We raised £255.67, plus £154.80 from Arcade Coffee, making a total of £410.47 for playgroup funds.

Also this month, we decided to raffle an original oil painting, painted and donated by Mrs Mary Coleman. We raised £57 for playgroup funds.

During the last week of term, as part of our Teddy Bears' Picnic Party Week, we held a 'Sunhats and Shades' fundraiser, raising £195 for Cancer Fund for Children. For taking part, each child received an activity sheet.

At the end of June, parents received their child's End of Year Work Folder and Booklet, which is a selection of each child's work undertaken during their time at Noah's Ark. A progress report and complete set of observations were also included in their booklet. Every child received a party bag and the gift of a book, as a reminder of their time at Noah's Ark.

Our playgroup year ended on Thursday 29 June with 33 children on our register.

When the last child had left, staff cleared the room for the summer and spent the following day repainting the walls, doors and skirting boards of the main playroom, in preparation for the new term in September.

Our remaining fundraising totals for the year were as follows:

- Newsletter Sponsorship for the year raised £330
- Loose change collected throughout the year in our charity box at NISA Petrol Station totalled £140
- Sale of new uniforms amounted to £472
- Sale of pre-loved uniforms amounted to £50
- 20p fundraiser raised £195
- Sale of handknit children's woolly hats raised £50
- Donations given throughout the year amounted to £180, with grateful thanks to the Emerson family, the Wilson family, the McCullough family, the Cameron family, the Locke family, the Hampton family, the Larmour family and the Uprichard family.

Our sincere thanks also go to all those parents and committee members, who donated money, resources, cleaning products, amazon vouchers, printing paper, as well as craft and art materials during the year. Thanks also to New Creation printing business in Lurgan, for their donation of paper.

The playgroup staff and committee are very grateful for all the donations and fundraising support received throughout the year and they thank everyone involved.

And that concludes the Secretary's Report for the year ending 30 June 2023.

Laura Hawthorne – Playgroup Secretary

Noah's Ark Playgroup
Charity no: NIC102114
Treasurer's Report for Financial Year
Ending 30 June 2023

Noah's Ark Playgroup is a non-profit making registered charity. All money received by Noah's Ark goes back into the running and the upkeep of the playgroup. Because we are committee run and have a written constitution, we receive from the Trust a small grant of only £6 for each day that we are open (which amounts to approximately £1000 each year). We receive no funding from any other official body.

However, as you can imagine, this grant alone would not sustain us, so, along with income from the fees we receive from parents, we also supplement our income during the year with fundraising, which was up almost £600 from the previous financial year.

However, our fee income for 2022/2023 was down £6300 from the previous year, which led to a difficult year financially for the playgroup.

Parents and local businesses have also kindly supported us during the year with monthly newsletter sponsorship and donations and we are always very grateful for these.

Our playgroup accounts are checked and independently verified each year and we thank Mrs Carol McAlister for doing this for us.

Our total income for the financial year ending 30 June 2023 was **£36,812.70**

This consisted of the following:

Fees received from parents - **£31,996.00**

Milk refund- **£424.23**

Fundraising (including the sale of uniforms) - **£2,967.47**

Annual Trust Grant - **£1,050.00**

Donations - **£180.00**

Cancer Fund for Children (money donated by parents) - **£195.00**

Our total expenditure for year ending 30 June 2023 was **£44,958.25**

This consisted of the following:

Staff costs (4 staff members) which includes salaries, pensions and payments to Inland Revenue - **£37,106.04**

Premises (including maintenance, rent & telephone costs) - **£4,307.40**

Milk - **£383.67**

Insurance - **£519.38**

Consumables - **£463.90**

Fundraising costs, including purchase of uniforms - **£535.33**

Membership subscriptions - **£87.00**

Equipment - **£104.50**

Other expenses (including groceries, cleaning materials, bank charges, postage costs, Christmas & end of year gifts for children, King Charles III Coronation gifts for children, health & safety supplies, staff uniforms, annual administration fee for pension, purchase of credits for text messaging service, purchase of stationery i.e. sessional register and money (donated by parents) sent to Cancer Fund for children - **£1,451.03**

The deficit of income over expenditure for the year was **£8,145.55**

Our total assets at the end of the financial year were listed as **£6597.06**

And this consisted of:

Equipment valued at - **£724.57**

Cash in the bank - **£5,856.91**

And petty cash in hand - **£15.58**

Jocelyn Girvan - Playgroup Treasurer

Noah's Ark Playgroup
Income and Expenditure Account
For Year Ending 30 June 2023

Income		2023		2022
Fees received from parents	£	31,996.00	£	38,305.08
Milk Refund	£	424.23	£	291.00
Fundraising	£	2,967.47	£	2,394.40
Grants	£	1,050.00	£	6,428.92
Donations	£	180.00	£	341.00
NI Cancer Fund for Children * (*donated by parents)	£	195.00	£	188.00
Fees paid by parent in error	£	-	£	208.00
Covid Grant duplicated in error	£	-	£	850.00
		£36,812.70	£	49,006.40

Expenditure		2023		2022
Salaries (inc. NICS/PAYE/Pension)	£	37,106.04	£	37,154.04
Premises (rent, maintenance & phone)	£	4,307.40	£	4,723.27
Milk	£	383.67	£	423.48
Insurance	£	519.38	£	429.05
Consumables	£	463.90	£	1,094.31
Fundraising (incl purchase of uniforms)	£	535.33	£	962.12
Equipment bought during year	£	104.50	£	427.35
Membership Subscriptions	£	87.00	£	87.00
Other Expenses (see page 4 attached for breakdown)	£	1,451.03	£	2,673.71
		£44,958.25	£	47,974.33

Profit/Deficit of Income over Expenditure	-£	8,145.55	£	1,032.07
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