



Annual General Meeting (AGM)
Thursday 19th January 2023 @ 7.30pm
in the Church Rooms

Attended by Chair, Jayne Russell, Hannah Neal, Trustee, Minty Meade, Trustee, Jo Galloway Manager, Zoe Bedford Cooper, Business Manager and Kat Woodcock. Deputy Manager. Caroline Hoare, guest speaker

All staff and parents invited to attend.

MINUTES

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW - JAYNE RUSSELL

Chairs Report:

Thank you for joining us tonight and supporting Goudhurst Village Pre-school, which is now enjoying its 9th year and is becoming increasingly sought after with each passing year.

Over the past year the pre-school has continued to expand and grow, which given the past few years of pandemic disruption is an incredible achievement when many other settings are closing their doors. By March we will have 48 children on role that enjoy the many and varied activities each week. This number is forever changing as more enquiries come in and which our fabulous manager Jo has to contend with on a weekly basis.

We are incredibly fortunate to have a fantastic team of staff who continue to amaze us with their enthusiasm and commitment to giving all your children the best possible pre-school experience on a daily basis. Whilst I would like to thank all our staff for making this pre-school amazing, I would particularly like to highlight the hard work that Jo puts into the setting to make it somewhere families want to send their children. Behind the scenes Jo juggles changing sessions daily, whilst keeping the pre-school moving forward, managing the staff, keeping up with Ofsted guidelines and keeping track of the increasing number of SEN children coming through the doors and much, much more.

We are already filling up for September 2023 and beyond and the popularity of the setting can only be attributed to the hard work of Jo and all the staff, Kat, Mary, Dee, Emma and Christina and of course our wonderful business manager Zoe who works incredibly hard behind the scenes. A huge thank you to you all.

We have all worked very hard over the last few years to financially keep the pre-school afloat, in a backdrop where many local pre-schools are closing their doors. The pandemic, the differential between KCC funding and pre-school hourly rates, along with the government increases in minimum wages have all contributed to the closures. We are very proud to be a prosperous pre-school that is complimented by parents and professionals alike. It may be interesting for you to note that for every funded child the preschool is in deficit by £1.38 per hour per child in comparison to fee paying children. Zoe will discuss this a little later.

We are very lucky to be able to rent the beautiful setting of the Church Rooms and to have such a wonderful outdoor space at our disposal. We would like to thank the Church Room committee for continuing to help us stay afloat by maintaining our original rental fee each month, despite increasing cost for them.

We would like to thank all our parents for their support with fundraising events, help in setting and for generally being lovely. We continue to invest in resources and equipment, whilst being mindful of financial sustainability for the future.

We welcomed Minty Meade as Trustee in 2022 to join myself and Hannah Neal. Lindsay Roberts and Marie Donoghue stepped down from the committee in July 2022, so we are always looking for new enthusiasm to join the team. We are very happy that Nicky Newberry has agreed to come on board. With our manager Jo, the pre-school team, our Business Manager, Zoe Bedford Cooper and our trustees, the preschool is in good hands for continued growth and to continue to offer a fabulous service in our community.

We do our very best to keep in good financial shape and you can always view all our accounts on the charities commission. In 2020-21 we recorded a loss of £7,860, and last year (2021-22) a profit of £6,131, which shows recovery from the covid-19 pandemic where we were forced to dip into reserves. We are working hard as a team and the outlook into the future is looking healthy.

A big thank you should be extended to Travis Willis who has offered his time and expertise to Audit our accounts for the Charities Commission for the last five years free of charge.

In short, I would like to thank Jo, Zoe, Kat, Mary, Dee, Christina and Emma for being the backbone of such a successful setting, all our trustees for working behind the scenes, all our supporters and those that help us out and finally we would all like to thank you as parents, as without you and your wonderful children the pre-school would not be what it is today.

2. UPDATE OF PAST SUCCESSES AND FUTURE PLANS - JO GALLOWAY

Managers' Report:

Good evening, everyone, I would like to thank the staff for their dedication to the children and the Pre-school.

Although we said goodbye to Emily, we have welcomed Emma and Christina into the Preschool, and will hopefully be employing another member of staff in the next few weeks. I hope you agree that we have an amazing team who make the children's time at Goudhurst Village Preschool so happy and special.

We returned in September with all sessions nearly full, for the whole of the 2022/23 academic year, (they are now completely full). We are booking children in already for September 2024 and places are going very quickly, we are certainly in demand.

We were sorry to say goodbye to Aydin and Lorenzo but are so pleased that they have found their forever family. It was so special to have been involved in their lives to see them grow and to have had the opportunity to work with the team, including Nicky and her family, that helped them begin a new life.

Staff continue training in all areas, keeping up with the statutory requirements, all staff have to be First Aid Trained, have Child Protection, or as management have Safeguarding training.

Mary continues to attend LIFT meetings and Jo and Mary keep up to date with SEND training and updates. We are also working with outside agencies, which include SALT, (Speech and Language), Occupational Therapy, Specialist Teachers, SENIF practitioners, and soon to be working with Portage for one family.

We hope to do lots of exciting things in the coming year, including a visit from the Fire Brigade, a Dentist, Doctor, Pet week and parents and family members, we will hopefully manage to go on a couple of trips too.

We would like to thank everyone who came in before Christmas to help out, it really makes it special for the children to have visitors.

Our amazing team of staff will continue to provide the best care possible for your children.

Thank you for choosing Goudhurst Village Preschool and for your continuing support.

3. FINANCES BY ZOE BEDFORD-COOPER, (including information on funding)

Business Managers report:

Hello I am the pre-school business manager, my role for the pre-school is to manage outgoing and incoming invoices, manage the financial accounts along with our chair Jayne Russell, payroll for the staff, GDPR and funding for 2 year olds, 3 and 4 year olds and the 30 hour funding.

The Pre-school is financially accountable to the charity commission, as we are a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. At the end of each financial year, we submit our accounts to the charities commission which are available to be viewed by the public. We have to have our accounts checked by an accountant and very kindly Travis Willis has given his time for free to complete the Independent Examination of the accounts and given further advice on financial issues as the pre-school continues to grow. We are very thankful to Travis for his support for the last few years!

For the financial year 2021-2022 we showed a profit of £6000. Over the last year we have continued to update our resources, many of those we have had for the last 9 years or so are in need of an update. We are slowly replacing plastic resources with wooden resources and continue to build our sensory equipment.

We have set up an amazon wish list and have been kindly donated an Amazon Alexa - which we use for music and audiobooks.

Our forecast for this financial year 2022/2023 so far is showing a profit of under £2000. The numbers of children attending the pre-school are fantastic, and we continue to welcome new families. As the pre-school continues to grow our contingency grows to cover staff redundancy if any were to occur, so we keep provision for such circumstances in our deposit account.

Our fees were increased last September to £6. We hope parents are understanding of this small increase. We may have to increase our fees again in the Summer due to a 9.7% increase in minimum wage and the continuing rise of inflation. We will, of course, let you know by the end of this term of any increases. We openly encourage parents to assist the pre-school in their day-to-day activities by paying a voluntary contribution. This will be set out in a separate invoice to your session invoice. This voluntary contribution helps pay for arts, crafts and other additional activities which benefit every

child in the setting. The voluntary contribution we have received so far from September 2022 is £460. Over the last year the amount received for voluntary contributions has risen and it is important that we thank you for this as it makes a huge difference to the activities we can offer on a weekly basis. Furthermore, we have implemented the new invoice software from September meaning that we no longer print off invoices for parents which has saved a lot of paper therefore helping the environment as well as cutting costs.

We continue to use payment contracts to help spread the cost of your childcare. We understand that large amounts can be difficult to pay off in one lump sum. Thank you to those who have adhered to the terms in their individual payment contracts, and as always please let me know if you would like to set up a payment contract or talk about your existing one.

FUNDING:

We offer three types of funding.

Free For 2 Funding, Three and Four Year old funding and 30 hour funding.

Free for 2 funding is 15 hours of free funding a week for 38 weeks a year, for 2-year-olds whose parents receive some form of support through the government.

Three and Four year old funding is for every family in England, and entitles every family to receive 15 hours free childcare for 38 weeks a year. A child is eligible for this funding from the term after they turn three. For example, if a child turns 3 in October they will get the 15 hours free funding from January. Each parent has to fill in a funding form the term before their child turns three, and will then need to sign this every term going forward. The form states what hours your child is doing for each term.

30-hour funding:

30-hour funding is also for 3 and 4 year olds. It is eligible for some working parents. Each parent has to earn at least £152 a week, no more than £100,000 a year.

Although you may be eligible for this type of funding we can only offer 10 places a term for 30 hours, this is due to the government not matching our hourly fee and balancing the needs of parents with the financial stability of the pre-school. To get this funding you have to apply, we do not do this for you. You then need to reconfirm your details with HMRC every 3 months, you should receive an email from HMRC reminding you of this. If you do not reconfirm then you may lose your funding and your funding place with the pre-school.

We work on a first come first served basis. Please let me know as soon as possible if you would like a 30-hour space so I can put you on our list. For the Spring and Summer term we have filled these 10 spaces. We have a waiting list in case any family leaves.

We finally offer tax free childcare. This needs to also be applied for. Please email me if you are using tax free childcare with your reference code.

For some working families, including the self-employed, in the UK.

- Earning under £100k and at least £152 per week
- With children aged 0-11 (or 0-16 if disabled)
- For every £8 you pay into an online account, the government will add an extra £2, up to £2,000 per child per year

If you need any further details of this funding please visit childcarechoices.gov.uk, here you can find further information and you can input your personal details to see what you are eligible for and you can also apply through this website.

Thank you again for all your help and support. All of us at the preschool really appreciate this.

4. EXPECTATIONS FOR STARTING PRIMARY SCHOOL – CAROLINE HOARE

Caroline discussed what the expectations were as children transition to Primary School. In Short: that the most important skills children could learn before September is independence in putting coats and shoes on and off and independent use of the toilet. Writing their name and numbers to ten were a bonus but that was what they will learn during the first years in school and what reception class is for. Children continue to learn through play in the first year before embarking on the KS1 national curriculum topics in year 1.

Also, that the allocation of places is decided by Kent County Council, based on distance from a school and the school has no input into this.

5. QUESTIONS????

One question was raised regarding funding to understand the loss the pre-school makes for funded children and to clarify why we limited our places to 10 for 30-hours.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: None