

Eastwood Community Playgroup Association

Registered Charity No. 1023369
OFSTED Registration
EY310444 / EZ119473 / EY555930
EYA Membership No. 27242

Eastwood Community Nursery
The Len Forge Centre

Eastwood Community Pre-School
Eastwood Community Centre

Eastwood Community Early Years
Edwards Hall School

TRUSTEES' REPORT 1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024

Charity Aims

The provision of sessional or full-day care and educational facilities across three Settings serving the community of Eastwood and the immediate surrounding areas for children from the age of eighteen months up to acceptance in Reception Classes at Local Schools.

The Children who attend our Settings are cared for in secure environments in which they have the opportunity to learn and develop their skills assisted by our experienced and dedicated staff who seek to fully utilise the different amenities available at our Settings.

Charity Structure & Governance

Pre-School Learning Alliance Model Pre-School Constitution adopted in 2011.

Governing Committee comprises Trustees and Parent Members

Settings have an Ofsted Rating of GOOD.

Charity Trustees

Jessica White (Chair) Robert Pickup (Secretary/Treasurer) Susan Bishop

Committee

Sarah Wheddon, Jenna Fryer, Sonia Odey, Leanne Bengel, Olivia Jay

Source of Income

Grant of Funding from Southend City Council under the Nursery Education Scheme in respect of children of Families who qualify for State Funding for Early Years Learning. Fee Income from Families of children who attend our Settings for periods in excess of the State Funding Allowance and/or from Families of children who attend who do not qualify for State Funding.

General Fund Raising from Parties and Events and Miscellaneous Donations

Current Position

ECPA continue to provide the normal full day, morning and/or afternoon sessions at each of our Settings and include Early Start at Nursery. Early Years provide Breakfast & After School Clubs which are also attended by school-age children. Sessions at Forest School during Term-Time continue to be popular and Holiday Club Sessions are provided for the October and February Half-Terms, Easter and Summer Holidays. Forest School for our older children is included at no additional cost and has again proved very popular as are our Graduation Parties for those children who were moving on to Reception Classes at our Local Schools.

At the start of Autumn Term 2023 our initial registrations for daytime attendance were 111 children across our three Settings, a reduction of 36% on our July 2023 numbers. Additional children had been registered to start in Spring Term 24 when numbers increased to 145 and by the end of Summer Term 24 these had increased to 165, this growth being achieved partly due to the extension of Funding to qualifying Families of 2-year-old children. The number of children using our provision of Breakfast & After School Clubs started at 111 (an increase of 13% on July 23) and increased to 124 by the end of Summer Term 24 (a further increase of 12% over the year).

Our Funded Income has benefited from a small increase in the 3/4-year-old Hourly Rate and the inclusion of 2-year-old Funding from April 24 produced in an increase to Funded Income of 3% for the year and this now represents 73.5% of our Total Fee Income. Unfortunately, our Income from Families who do not qualify for Funding or from Funded Families who elected to take additional hours shows a reduction of 5.7% which can be attributed to the continuing increases to the cost of living that has taken place during this period and the decision by Families not to take additional Sessions. More positively, higher attendances at our Breakfast & After School Clubs and our Holiday Clubs show an increase in Income of 17% which has enabled us to achieve an Overall Income at the same level as last year.

Despite careful management of our Operational Costs, our Expenditure increased by 6% this year. This was primarily driven by the increase to our Staff Costs of 10.5% following large increases applied to the National Living Wage in April. Premises Costs are up 1.3% but we achieved a reduction of 15.4% for our General Equipment and Support Costs which has resulted in the year producing a Surplus that will be utilised to support the future development of our Settings.

The Future

The Trustees are aware that a Family's financial position and whether they qualify for Funding will continue to influence their decisions on where and for how long they can afford Early Years Services. This is even more of an issue for those Families that do not qualify for funding and it should not be overlooked that 26% of our Income is from Non-Funded Families.

The extension of Funding to Under 2-year-old children of Working Parents from Autumn Term 2024 is reflected in the number of enquiries we have received for places. However, whilst the Hourly Rate for these children may appear viable, this income would reduce by 27% once they attain 2 years of age and buy a further 29% when they are 3 years old. The adjustment in carer/child ratios for the different age ranges will not produce a saving in Staff Costs sufficient to offset the loss of income particularly as the new Government is forecasting the National Living Wage will increase in April 2025 by an amount significantly higher than the current Rate of Inflation. This, together with the proposed changes to Employers' National Insurance Contributions, requires that we carefully monitor the balance of our child numbers for those under and over the age of 2 years. It is not anticipated that Government will increase the Hourly Rate for 3/4-year-olds by any significant amount in April 2025 and this has prompted the Trustees to conduct a review of our Hourly Rates payable for Non-Funded Sessions and Additional Services which have had to be increased by 16% in order to maintain our services.

ECPA have lowered the minimum age at which they will accept children to eighteen months maintaining a flexible approach to opening hours. Attendances at our provisions of Breakfast and After School Clubs, Holiday Clubs and Forest School continue to increase helping to maintain the overall numbers at our Settings. The challenge continues to ensure that attendances do not drift down to a level that endangers the financial viability of the Settings. ECPA work closely with the Local Authority who utilise our ability to provide support for short-term placements for children and for those with particular care or learning requirements. Our Staff are trained for those children with Special Educational Needs and the number of children requiring this support has increased. We are proud that we were one of the first Early Years Settings in the area to provide care and learning for the children of Families from Ukraine. The City of Southend on Sea are increasingly required to provide services to several Families from different countries and have sought to place their children at our Settings.

Unfortunately, our enthusiasm regarding the new building to be erected at our Nursery Setting and our hope that this would be available for the Autumn Term 24 was a little premature. Our Building Consultant sought clarifications in relation to some of the Planning Conditions which were felt should not be applied to a building of the size proposed which has delayed matters and resulted in the need to apply for these to be removed and/or modified. Fortunately, common sense prevailed and agreement was obtained in July 24 and work is scheduled to commence in October 24.

Notwithstanding the difficult economic circumstances of the last eighteen months, commercial and housing developments continue to be slowly moving forward. The Trustees are confident that our proximity to these developments, the flexible services we can offer and our reputation with the Local Authority and our Families, should help us to maintain our position as one of the first choices for Early Learning in Eastwood and the immediate surrounding districts.

Jessica White

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Jessica White - Chair of Trustees

Date 8th November 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Eastwood Community Playgroup Association

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31st August 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) of the 2011 ACT: and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - (i) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - (ii) to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act;

have not been met; nor

- to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Changrez Khan FCCA


Office 22 The Link Business Centre

2nd Floor Tylers House

Southend On Sea

SS1 2BB

17 December 2024

 17-12-2024

EASTWOOD COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP ASSOCIATION


Registered Charity 1023369

OFSTED Registration EZ119473 EY310444 EY555930

Income & Expenditure Account

Year Ended 31 August 2024

	2024	2024	2023	2023
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Fees - SBC Funded	445,267.92		475,958.55	
Fees - DAF-PP Funding	45,370.00		-	
Fees - Invoiced/Vouchers	176,714.99		189,726.52	
Fees - Extra Sessions	1,635.35		3,175.00	
Fees - Uniform	698.00		823.10	
Parties - Xmas	570.00		689.00	
Parties - Summer	398.00		461.00	
Miscellaneous - Sundries			30.00	
Fund Raising - Photo Commissions	480.10		-	
Other Income - Donations	218.40		141.17	
Other Income - Interest	6,632.26		3,740.89	
Total Income		677,985.02		674,745.23
EXPENDITURE				
Staff Costs - Net Wages	447,382.17		432,113.87	
Staff Costs - HMRC Tax / NIC / StuLoans / Attachments	47,193.66		23,438.58	
Staff Costs - Pension	25,675.81		23,203.54	
Staff Costs - Training	2,162.80		2,706.12	
Staff Costs - Payroll	1,664.00		1,620.00	
Premises - Rent	57,324.16		56,898.44	
Premises - Telephone	3,764.68		3,345.05	
Premises - Gardens/Bldg Maintenance	41.33		275.84	
Premises - EY Alliance Gen. Insurance	2,706.03		2,424.72	
Premise - Cleaning/Waste	6,368.48		6,351.25	
Premises - Nursery Cabin	35,720.82		1,870.00	
Food Purchase - Kitchen/Snacks	4,707.00		4,803.74	
Operating Costs - Office	1,567.01		1,484.76	
Operating Costs - Arts/crafts	1,747.32		1,749.96	
Operating Costs - Equipment	10,645.60		13,072.30	
Operating Costs - Equipment Insurance	-		107.88	
Operating Costs - Consumables	3,878.11		7,616.05	
Operating Costs - Mini bus	3,669.63		2,856.65	
Operating Costs - Uniforms	1,145.77		1,315.59	
Operating Costs - Advertising	-		130.00	
Independent Accounts Examiner Fee	2,400.00		2,400.00	
Fees/Charges - Website	918.43		301.96	
Fees/Charges - Ofsted	305.00		305.00	
Fees/Charges - Data Protection	35.00		35.00	
Fees/Charges - EY Alliance	243.00		194.96	
Fees/Charges - S'market Delivery	51.50		48.50	
Misc - Gifts/Refreshments	585.64		855.75	
Misc - Sundry	95.08		30.00	
Parties - Xmas & Summer	1,043.31		1,134.02	
Total Expenditure		663,041.34		592,689.53
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year		14,943.68		82,055.70


17.12.2024

EASTWOOD COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP ASSOCIATION


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Balance Sheet

As on 31 August 2024

Current Assets	2024	2023
	£	£
Debtors	11,787.05	8,832.47
Uniform Stock	436.27	697.24
Cash at Bank	430,181.66	415,791.76
Cash in Hand	235.09	232.12
Total Assets	442,640.07	425,553.59
Current Liabilities		
Creditors	4,542.80	2,400.00
Total Assets less liabilities	<u>438,097.27</u>	<u>423,153.59</u>
Reserves		
Balance Brought Forward	423,153.59	341,097.89
Suplus in the Year	14,943.68	82,055.70
Total Surplus Funds	<u>438,097.27</u>	<u>423,153.59</u>


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Note to the Accounts

As on 31 August 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Debtors		
Outstanding Fee as August 31, 2024*	11,537.80	6,393.49
Receipts in Bank related to Y/E August 31, 2024 received after the date	249.25	2,438.98
	11,787.05	8,832.47
 * This is treated as Fee Income for the Y/E August 31, 2024		
Cash at Bank		
Checking Account	31,506.78	18,516.09
Reserve Account	143,670.05	226,822.84
Monmouthshire Building Society Account	85,000.00	85,000.00
Redwood Bank	85,004.83	85,452.83
Saffron E Saver	85,000.00	-
	430,181.66	415,791.76
Creditors		
Payments in Bank related to Y/E August 31, 2024 paid after the date*	2,142.80	-
Independent Examiner Fee	2,400.00	2,400.00
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* This is treated as Expense for the Y/E August 31, 2024


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