

Little Acorns

(Herne) Pre-School
Registered Charity No. 1027456

Minutes of Annual General Meeting

**Held on Tuesday 14th May 2023
at Little Acorns (Herne) Pre-School**

Present:	Chair Person	Michael Rigden (MR)
	Pre-school Manager:	Michelle Jones (MJ)
	Committee Members:	Helen McNab (HM)
		Charlotte Murphy (CM)
		Kirsty Smith (KS)
	Staff:	Michelle Jones, Tracey Smith, Lucy Graham, Sarah Williams and Beth Finn
	Parents:	See attached attendance sheet
Apologies:	Treasurer:	Kelly Aves (KA)

Minutes from last AGM meeting. Minutes were acknowledged and approved.

1. Chair's Report

It has been a while since I have been able to look back at the year gone and said it has been business as usual, thanked the team and moved on. First it was Covid and all the after effects it left us, then there was/ is the financial crisis and inflation, and then there was the build.

While it all looks amazing now and the children and staff are loving the set up and flow from indoors to outdoors as Michelle has said the build process was a gigantic challenge for everyone. During the build we were at times just one more shower, one more leak away from an understandable mutiny and I cannot thank the team enough for their dedication and perseverance during this time. Facing adversity can either bring out the best or the worst in people and during this build there was plenty of opportunities for the team to crack. I cannot praise the Little Acorns family enough because it was amazing to see just what a wonderful team we have here as everyone came together to help each other and see us through. We are all very lucky to have the people we have here that make up the Little Acorns team and in particular I would like to thank Michelle and Tracy who kept it all together. Michelle also deserves a special mention for all her hard work in getting the building funded, designed, commissioned and delivered. This has not been a 6 month or even a 12-month project but it has been something she has been working really hard on for a number of years and finally we have the most amazing space to help your children have fun, develop and get ready for school.

While the new building has been the focal point of our work that has not stopped Michelle and the team developing LA in other ways. Tracy is doing a great job as

deputy manager, Lucy as well as SENCO has been promoted to our early years leader and Sarah has been promoted to room leader and Laura is doing amazing work on speech and language.

When you have had 3 reports from OFSTED over a 14-year period stating you are OUTSTANDING it would be easy to become complacent but I want you to know that Michelle and the team work extremely hard to not just maintain those standards but raise them to make sure your children are in the best possible place to prepare them for school life. Examples of this include Michelle securing additional funding for a speech and language therapist to come in and support some of the children, staff have had ongoing training designed to maximise what they can do and how we can support your children, including Beth who is now doing her early years professional development and we brought in a former OFSTED inspector to evaluate us, support our development and make sure we are not getting complacent.

I am pleased to report that not only are the team in a good place and the setting is looking amazing but equally importantly we are also on a sound financial footing as well and set to continue delivering the outstanding service that we have been into next year and beyond. While the children are our number one concern, keeping our fees down is a priority and indeed as a charity run setting it is one of our obligations. The team work very hard to not only keep costs to a minimum but to also identify and secure additional funding from KCC, charities, local business and indeed any other source of support they can, whether that be financial or via people's time. While we should see inflation start come down ease the pressure on bills for us all rest assured, we will remain vigilant on making sure LA is financially secure and can capable of delivering the best possible service to you and your children for many years to come.

I would also like to thank you the parents who continue to give us your support and understanding, particularly this year. I hope you have found this evening informative and helpful and looking forward if you have any suggestions as to where we might be able to secure additional funding or would like to volunteer your time to support LA by joining the committee, please do let us know. Equally if you have any ideas as to how we might be able to improve please do talk to Michelle and the team. We do not have the exclusive rights to having all the best ideas.

My final thank you goes to the rest of the Little Acorns committee. We are all rightly very proud of Little Acorns and the team that runs it and it is fair to say Michelle and the team drive LA forward but my colleagues on the committee have all played their part too and should be very proud of what they have done and the time they have given. I certainly couldn't have done my job without their input and support and I thank you all.

Whatever the next 12 months brings LA will all continue to work very hard to give your children the support they need and continue to make it a fun and inspiring place for them to come and then hopefully next year I will be able to report that it has finally been a year where it is has been business as usual.

Proposals

1) Firstly, we have accounts and I would like to propose that they are a true and accurate representation of our finances and should be signed off as such. If somebody could second that as well.

Proposed: Michael Rigden

Seconded: Helen McNab

Secondly, I have a copy of last year's minutes that I would like to propose as a true and accurate reflection of last year's AGM if somebody would like to second them, please.

Proposed: Michael Rigden

Seconded: Helen McNab

2) There are no amendments to the constitution as supplied to us by Pre-school learning alliance so we will continue as before.

3) My role as chairperson has to be approved each year at the AGM. If you are all happy for me to continue then could I ask somebody to propose me and then somebody else to second?

Proposed: Michelle Jones

Seconded: Helen McNab

4) The same goes for our treasurer Kelly who I am more than happy to propose if somebody would like to second.

Proposed: Michael Rigden

Seconded: Michelle Jones

5) The rest of the committee can be elected as one. Assuming everybody is happy to stand again I happy to propose that last year's committee is to be reformed with the existing members.

Proposed: Michael Rigden

Seconded: Lee Baker

A brief insight into the committee and how you can help

This being a charity run nursery we have to have a committee to oversee the running of Little Acorns. It is staffed by volunteers of current and former parents of children that attend Little Acorns. Our role is supporting the management and the staff and to make sure that the statutory requirements are being met and that the setting remains financially viable. We would welcome anybody who would like to join the committee.

2. Manager's Report

It has been a very busy couple of years!! When I was asked by the Committee to design and project manage a replacement building, I did not expect the challenge to be as troublesome as it was.

1. Agree a New lease from KCC (15 year)
2. Agree the licence from KCC to carry out the works
3. Planning Permission from CCC
4. Design the building keeping within the budgets
5. Demolishing the old building
6. Time scales – should have been done during the summer break
7. Leaking canopy roof

Then came the really hard work: Opening the nursery 5th September, the demolition people turned up and said they were taking the doors off and by 11.30 that morning I went over to find they had demolished the internal walls.

Then came the Portaloo – staff were not happy!! After 3 days of staff not eating or drinking so they wouldn't need to use the dreaded toilet, we had a toilet put in the store cupboard in the cabin.

Staff worked relentlessly as we only had outside and under the canopy, but the weather was good and the children were happy.

Then came the rain, wind and cold winter, no building and a leaking canopy.

The demolition was well under way and 6 inches of mud everywhere!

Staff and children carried on – we can laugh about it now but they had to work over and above just to keep going.

We then had a new roof put on the canopy with skylights. This was to reduce the noise level when raining as some children find it very loud.

The new building arrived on 24th October the building started to take shape

We are now the very proud owners of a lovely new building, which works really well of the staff and children.

A huge thank you to all the staff, children, parents and committee for all their understanding through these tough times.

Children have settled into the new building quickly and are learning new skills all the time.

We even managed to have the big top and paths re-tarmacked and the conker garden fitted with artificial grass.

The bunny bounce money will hopefully pay for new playground markings for the children.

We have also been lucky enough to receive some funding to allow for an independent Speech & Language Therapist to come in and support children with their development of their speech & language before going to school

The Future - we are full up to September 2024 with a long waiting list

We will continue to move forward with insulating the canopy, adding windows to the front and additional heating/air con to ensure the canopy is usable all year round.

Nathan is keen to add a science hut to the garden, and Lucy to develop the forest school area further. We will be using the rear garden for children to grow vegetables

4. Report from Deputy Manager

Our focus is to ensure that every child is offered equal opportunities to be able to grow within our setting as individuals. We aim to offer a relaxed, welcoming and enriched environment which supports children's desires to explore and discover as they learn and develop.

Ofsted continue to challenge us and continue to move the goal posts - they now do not expect staff to spend time on administration (which includes writing up observations) but to spend more time engaging with your children...their motto being "if you are not making a difference to the child, why are you doing it?"

With this in mind we have written our vision statement...allowing us to focus on what is important for your child in the preparation for the next chapter in their life, big school!

.... explain vision statement. Although each child arrives with a different starting point, our end vision for each individual remains the same (independence, social skills, etc how we do this is embedded from the child's very first day with us and carried through until their day of leaving.

- What does this mean for Us: are we changing our way of working yes. We are here as early educators for your children, we need to get to know them and their family. Firstly, we will be re-introducing home visits (stopped covid), allows us to see your child in their own environment, family (siblings), routines (naps), personal care, health/diet issues.
- We will carry out a Baseline assessment - within the first term of child starting with us. This will be across 16 areas of learning under the 'Birth-to-5 guide.
- 2-year check if appropriate and this will be placed in your child's red book (requirement)
- You will no longer get weekly observations as we have done in the past. Instead, you will receive a termly summary of achievements, looking similar to this. The summary indicates the areas of learning that your child has confidently achieved this whilst here at Nursery. Additionally, we will add a couple of photos and a next steps statement (example counting to 10 - missing numbers, extending to 20). Starting this week.

We continue to ensure we have a robust keyworker/buddy system. If for any reason your child's keyworker is not available, their buddy will be. Introduced 'buddy time' each week whereby the buddy gets to know children in depth too.

By continuing to link statements onto the Learning Book, we are able to compile progress reports on each child. Michelle, Lucy and myself will continue to track develop of each child to ensure we are reaching your child's full potential and put develop plans into place if we feel these would be beneficial.

- Hold 3 x parents' afternoons each year to discuss progress.
- Open door policy, always

Secret world of school life 'what have you done today' - may get the response 'nothing' or 'football'

Children learn through play. With each activity we do consideration and thought is given on what is the planned outcome? What will the child get out of this, what is the learning objective?

We need to ensure what we do is fun and engaging.

Is he just kicking a ball...he is learning to share that ball, tolerate delay by taking turns, waiting patiently for a turn. Measure distance. Understand he may not always a winner and that's ok.

Painting a picture - exploring colours, how we can make paint lighter or darker, what happens when we mix paint. Adding textures - describing these = extending language.

Even snack and lunch times are a learning experience - understanding where our foods come from, what is needed to help them grow, different ways of eating foods, and more.

Can you help at home, of course.... encourage putting on coats, zips/button, shoes. Not always going to get you out the door when you need to leave, but try and allow that extra time.

What else is extra in our daily routine....in addition to our role play

- Choosing time - their choice
- Happy Minds - school leavers, understanding emotions and how to deal with them
- Monster Phonics - introduction to literacy
- Sports
- Forest school
- Cookery

4. Treasurers Report -

MR on KA's behalf offers the accounts to be true and accurate stating that Little Acorns continues to strive and remain in a sound financial position.

6. Any other business -

No other business.

AGM concluded at 6:45pm

Little Acorns (Herne) Pre-School
Charity Commission Number 1027456

Financial Statements
for the year to 31st August 2022



Prepared by Zazie Business Services Ltd

Independent Examiners Unqualified Report for the year to 31st August 2022

This report relates to the accounts for the charity for the period ended 31st August 2022

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Charity's trustees are responsible for the accounts. This period the trustees have not required an audit under s144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under s145 of the Act)
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (s145(5)(b) of the Act)
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of Independent Examiners Report

The examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. This includes a review of the Accounting Records and a comparison of the accounts with those records. In addition, consideration is given to any unusual items and explanations will be sought from the trustees if considered necessary. The procedures followed are not sufficient for audit purposes and there is no opinion given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair" view and therefore the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention

1. Which gives me cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with s130 of the 2011 Act and
 - To prepare accounts which accord with accounting records and comply with requirements of the Acthave not been met or
2. To which my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper undertaking of the accounts to be reached.


M E Hill BA(Hons) MSc
Zazie Business Services Ltd
Innovation Centre Medway
Maidstone Road
Chatham
Kent ME5 9FD

21st November 2022



	Year to 31/8/22		Year to 31/8/21	
	£	£	£	£
Receipts				
Fees		204,594		208,037
Fundraising and Donations		205		3,416
Interest		10		135
Other KCC Grants		0		0
		<u>204,809</u>		<u>211,589</u>
Payments				
Wages	156,654		134,476	
Other Costs	<u>1,684</u>		<u>1,486</u>	
Total Staff Costs		158,338		135,962
Resources	2,805		1,129	
Child Sponsorship	429		380	
Fundraising	41		70	
Healthy Eating	665		453	
Uniforms	588		194	
Entertainment	<u>0</u>		<u>0</u>	
Total Cost of children's services		4,528		2,226
Premises Costs		6,953		5,825
Cleaning		2,541		2,192
Repairs		4,183		4,361
Administration		1,950		1,406
Professional Fees		1,267		1,138
Other Costs				
Gifts	0		0	
Miscellaneous	564		332	
Insurance	1,237		1,210	
Advertising	240		330	
Depreciation	<u>5,000</u>		<u>5,000</u>	
		<u>7,041</u>		<u>6,871</u>
Total Payments		<u>186,801</u>		<u>159,982</u>
Net Receipts		<u>18,009</u>		<u>51,607</u>
Less Capital Expenditure				
Building Development		<u>57,716</u>		<u>17,865</u>
Excess Income		<u>(39,707)</u>		<u>33,742</u>

Statement of Assets

Fixed Assets	124,104	71,388
Cash at Bank	119,687	132,005
Other current liabilities	<u>0</u>	<u>(385)</u>
	<u>243,791</u>	<u>203,009</u>

Bank Balances

Current	21,260	52,942
Deposit	150,159	100,045
Advanced	<u>(51,732)</u>	<u>(20,982)</u>
	<u>119,687</u>	<u>132,005</u>

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