

# CHAIR REPORT

## 2021 / 2022

Sparklers Pre-School has probably seen its biggest period of change in the past 2 years than at any time in its long history. Not only did the Pre-School Supervisor of 20+ years retire but we were also hit by the completely unprecedented effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In late 2019 the standing Chair stood down and the Pre-School was left in a difficult situation. The Pre-School requires a minimum number of appointed members in order to form a voting quorum and legally operate. Having had my own children, and now grandchildren going through Sparklers I was happy to step in and become co-opted Chair to manage the operation until a new Committee could be voted for at the September 2020 AGM.

With the Country, and indeed the world spending time in and out of varying degrees of lockdown it was felt that an AGM was not a viable option. Bare in mind of course that Sparklers is a charitable organisation run by volunteers under strict rules of governance. Not only did the governance document not allow for any such situation it also didn't allow for changes to be made by the Committee to account for such a situation either, something we'll be addressing soon.

Just over two years later and I'm still here having also had to delay the 2021 AGM because of the ongoing effects of COVID that still affect us even today.

I was delighted to appoint Sarah Hodges to the role of Supervisor back in December 2019 to take over from Lynn McMahon who has retired.

Sarah has been an inspiration to the Pre-School and has enough drive and energy alone to put us all to shame. With the support of the committee she has transformed the learning experience and the delivery of curriculum content and it is clear from the child reports that everyone is benefiting from her expertise and experience.

We've also invested in additional team members to provide a more diverse set of skills enabling 1:1 care and SEN (*Special Educational Needs*) Support.

The Committee has been able to invest heavily in new equipment, toys and learning materials as well as new systems to bring the Pre-School up-to-date with modern technology.

What else have we done?

- Replaced all of our lighting with low-energy LED daylight
- Completely re-decorated the Pre-School
- Installed external lighting and cctv
- Installed high speed internet and wifi
- Installed large tv screens for interactive learning
- Music / Speaker system
- iPads for child records and digital audits

We've introduced the Parent App (Blossom) enabling the Pre-School Team to instantly capture and record child activity as well as also being able to share it instantly with parents enabling a collaborative approach to child development.

Training and Personal Development has been a huge factor in our planning and not only have we improved the baseline training for all staff we've also begun upskilling across multiple disciplines to ensure that all staff are qualified in multiple areas of the Pre-School activity.

We've introduced uniform for staff and children providing a sense of belonging and enabling Sarah's 'messy play' to become a regular activity without the worry of damaging clothing.

Overall the level of new activity and the investment into the Pre-School has made for a much more conducive environment for our children, the feedback is great with 100% of parents rating Sparklers as Excellent or Very Good.

There is much more to Sparklers than the activities you see on a daily basis, the hours of planning and curriculum reporting is a testament to the hard work and dedication of Sarah and her team. Not forgetting of course the admin, a special thank you to Amy who diligently keeps Sparklers on track with compliance and finances and continues to text me at 10pm with queries!

The interim financial report is healthy and despite the impact of the Pandemic we have maintained our mandatory reserve and are working now to reduce costs, improve pay and benefits and develop Sparklers Pre-School still further.

<b>Income</b>	74,981		71,017	
SBC 3yr/4yr funding	2		37	
Bank account interest	-		38	
T-shirt and sweatshirt sales	-		43	
Photographs and commission	<u>396</u>		<u>-</u>	
Trips		75,379		71,135
<b>Expenditure</b>	40		-	
Donations	5,355		5,483	
Room hire	2,435		1,092	
Membership and insurance	2,539		-	
Repairs and maintenance	2,650		-	
Playground	152		-	
Cleaning expenses	61,640		54,759	
Wages and pensions	877		716	
Telephone	1,288		920	
Post and stationery	1,004		110	
Website	58		-	
Sparklers food supplies	26		-	
Advertising	246		240	
Accountancy	3,910		592	
Software	2,242		877	
General pre-school materials	1,394		-	
Sparklers personalised clothing	705		230	
Staff training	557		-	
Summer trip costs	-		40	
Visits and outings	325		318	
Summer leavers party/presents	42		27	
Easter expenses	-		216	
Christmas expenses	552		448	
Gifts	860		-	
Health and safety	240		28	
Books	3,289		199	
Toys and games	<u>873</u>		<u>-</u>	
Topic expenses		93,299		66,295
		(17,920)		4,840

ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT TO  
SPARKLERS PRE-SCHOOL

In accordance with instructions given to us we have prepared without carrying out an audit the annexed financial statements from the accounting records of Sparklers Pre-School and from information and explanations supplied to us.



Ekins & Co (Swindon)  
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Date: ..... 31/12/2021 .....