



## Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 Period start date

To 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 Period end date

Charity name: Dodleston Pre-school

Charity registration number: 1035994

## Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	To provide a safe and welcoming, fully inclusive environment for all children ages 2–5, with a particular emphasis on risky play and outdoor-based activities. We aim to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework while fostering a strong sense of self-belief, confidence, and independence in each child, in accordance with their individual needs. Our objective is to enable children to become self-motivated and engaged learners by offering a nourishing and stimulating setting in which they can grow and flourish.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	<p>Dodleston Pre-School's purpose is to provide an affordable, flexible, and safe childcare environment, where managed risk and in-the-moment planning form the foundation of our practice. We enable children to make their own choices about how they spend their time with us, thereby fostering independence, confidence, and decision-making skills.</p> <p>We follow local term dates in order to enable families using multiple settings to enjoy holiday periods together, instead of navigating conflicting attendance schedules. Our aim is to be as flexible as possible in our delivery, with no minimum sessions required, and with accommodations for early drop-off or late collection to meet the needs of individual</p>

		<p>families — although most children typically attend either full morning sessions or full days.</p> <p>We are situated close to the border between England and Wales, placing us in a convenient position to serve families from both jurisdictions. The childcare sector can be challenging and subject to frequent change; we have continually reviewed and adapted our routines and practices to remain relevant, accessible, and responsive to the needs of children and families.</p> <p>We continue to accept funding for two-, three-, and four-year-olds, as well as childcare vouchers, Tax-free Childcare payments, and we strive to keep our fees as affordable as possible for families who pay directly for their childcare. We believe we have successfully fulfilled our purpose by delivering a safe, flexible, and cost-effective service for families in the local area and further afield — ensuring that children’s safety and well-being remain our highest priority, regardless of their individual circumstances.</p> <p>We hold regular meetings — including full committee sessions, with and without staff, parent meetings, and staff supervision sessions — which contribute to maintaining clear and open communication. These enable us to appreciate the challenges we face and manage them effectively, while reflecting upon our objectives, our delivery, and our responsibilities toward the children, their families, the local community, and the wider area.</p>
<p>Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit</p>	<p>Para 1.18</p>	<p>The Trustees are mindful of the guidance on public benefit and have taken due account of it in their oversight of the Pre-School. Staffing has, as ever, presented a challenge; however, the Trustees have taken care to ensure that the necessary services and support are made available to those who require them, while retaining an appropriate balance with the operational needs of the setting, including the welfare</p>

		and safety of children and the ongoing affordability of the service.
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### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	
Other		

### Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	<p>This has been another challenging year, encompassing ongoing issues related to staffing and financial sustainability. Nevertheless, the Trustees have acted in the best interests of all those who rely upon the Pre-School — both as a service provider and as an employer.</p> <p>Attendance remained steady throughout the year. At the start of the year, there were 13 children on roll — 6 two-year-olds and 7 three-year-olds — of whom 8 were in receipt of either partial or full Early Years funding. By year's end, there were 27 children on roll, with 8 two-year-olds (1 in receipt of funding) and 19 children ages 3 and 4, all of whom were in receipt of some level of funding.</p> <p>Overall income fell by approximately £14,000, due in part to lower numbers at the start of the year and some defaults on</p>

		<p>payments due in relation to fees. One-to-one care has, in most cases, had to be self-funded due to the challenges associated with navigating the application process and securing appropriate funding or support from the local authority. In order to ensure that the children requiring such care are still able to attend and benefit from it, the Pre-School has absorbed the associated costs. This decision was made to avoid placing additional financial pressure on families or, alternatively, having to inform them that we are unable to meet their child's needs — a situation which could leave them without viable support or childcare options. Costs, meanwhile, increased by approximately £4,195; this rise can predominantly be attributed to additional training to keep Continuing Professional Development up to date and to increases in hourly wage rates. This has, regrettably, resulted in a fourth consecutive year of financial deficit.</p> <p>Staffing has undergone some change; however, we remain as committed as ever to fostering strong relationships with our families and the wider community. Continuing professional development (CPD) is a key priority and, while it contributes to our financial pressures, we view it as a crucial investment in delivering high-calibre care and education for the children.</p>
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**Additional information (optional)**

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	In order to help mitigate our financial losses and enable us to maintain our exacting standards, we have placed significant emphasis on fundraising initiatives. This has involved extending our efforts beyond internal events with families to include larger, community-wide initiatives, thereby fostering greater support and engagement from the broader community

Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	
Other		

## Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	Due to losses incurred this year, regrettably, it has been necessary to draw upon a portion of our ring-fenced reserves in order to manage and withstand some of the operational pressures placed upon us, particularly in respect of maintaining SEN support.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	We always aim to hold the required amount to cover redundancies, should this ever be necessary, as a minimum amount.  We have undertaken a review of this matter and are now actively working towards the restoration of these reserves.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	£700.00
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	We always aim to hold the required amount to cover redundancies, should this ever be necessary, as a minimum amount.
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	We have observed, and continue to experience, a decline in birth rates across Cheshire West and Chester, which has inevitably had an impact on our attendance figures. In response to this trend, it will be necessary to review and adapt our business model to ensure continued viability with reduced enrolment. However, we remain confident in both our strategic options and our capacity to navigate these challenges effectively.

### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	Local Authority Early Years funding from both Cheshire West & Chester and Flintshire (Childcare Offer Wales). Parental fees. Program of fundraising
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	Insufficient EY funding Ongoing low birth rates
Other		

## Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document ( <a href="#">trust deed</a> , <a href="#">royal charter</a> )	Para 1.25	Early Years Alliance Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g. <a href="#">unincorporated association</a> , <a href="#">CIO</a> )	Para 1.25	A committee of Trustees forming an Unincorporated Charity. We are in the process of transferring over to a CIO structure.
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	Our Annual General Meeting allows for Trustees to put themselves forward for re-election or stand down. If this is required mid-term a Trustee can be replaced with interested family or affiliate members until the next AGM. Once all Trustees are voted in, roles are then appointed through proposal and agreement.

### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	Safeguarding remains a fundamental aspect of our operational procedures. All staff members, committee members, and volunteers are required to hold an enhanced DBS certificate, including a check against the children's barred list. We are committed to ensuring a supported and seamless transition between outgoing and incoming Trustees, with handover transitions throughout the first term in office, or sometimes longer.
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The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	Dodlestone Pre-School is a community-based, Trustee governed charitable early years setting, providing care and education for children aged between 2 and 4 years, in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework. The provision is governed and inspected by Ofsted. Our approach is designed to support both the physical and emotional well-being of the children in our care, while also offering assistance to wider family members where appropriate.
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	The Pre-School is well established within the village and represents a fundamental part of community life. We actively participate in a variety of local events, both as guests and organisers, which strengthens our presence within the community. This engagement also fosters strong relationships with our feeder primary schools, thereby supporting a smoother and more positive transition to school for both children and their families.
Other		Our Trustees generously volunteer their time in support of the Pre-School. Their contributions include attending meetings, undertaking managerial responsibilities, organising fundraising activities, and participating in village events. These efforts are instrumental in maintaining our visibility and engagement both within the village and the wider community.

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Dodlestone Pre-school
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1035994
Charity's principal address	Village Hall, Pulford Lane, Dodlestone Chester CH4 9NN

**Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity**

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Andrew Barnett	Co-Chair	Oct 2015 – Nov 2023	Pre-school Committee
2	Rhian Wayte	Secretary	Oct 2021 – Nov 2023	
3	Amy Dilworth	Co-Chair	Oct 2022 – Nov 2023	
4	Emma Hutt	Chair	Nov 2023 - Present	
5	Jenny Bowle	Vice-Chair	Nov 2023 - Present	
6	Melanie Hughes	Secretary	Nov 2023 - Present	
7	Sarah Macklin	Treasurer	Nov 2023 - Present	
8	Laura Brierley	Nominated Person	Nov 2023 - Present	
9	Chris Ward		Nov 2023 - Present	
10	Anne Tunnicliffe		Nov 2023 - Present	
11				
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20				

**Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved**

Director name		
N/A		

**Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity**

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	



## Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

### Additional information (optional)

#### Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

	Type of adviser	Name	Address
<b>Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)</b>			

### Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

### Other optional information

## Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

	<b>Signature(s)</b>	<i>E. Hutt.</i>	
	<b>Full name(s)</b>	Emma Hutt	
	<b>Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)</b>	Chair	
	<b>Date</b>	30/6/2025	

**Declarations**

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

<b>Signature(s)</b>	<i>Sman</i>	
<b>Full name(s)</b>	<i>Sarah macklin</i>	
<b>Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)</b>	<i>Treasurer</i>	
<b>Date</b>	<i>28 / 06 / 2025</i>	

**DODLESTON PRE-SCHOOL**

**Financial Statements**

**31 August 2024**

**Charity number 1035994**

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- 2 Receipts and Payments account/  
Balance Sheet

# **DODLESTON PRE-SCHOOL**

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT**

I report on the financial statements of the Charity for the year ended 31 August 2024 set out on pages 3 to 9

### **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 Charities 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)(b) of the Charities 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 Commissioners. 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 unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all 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 examiners statement**

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

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in material respect, the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and

- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or

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

### **AC Accountants**

27-Jun-25

## DODLESTON PRE-SCHOOL

### RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

Year end 31 August 2024

<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
CWAC Funding	32093	42397
Flintshire funding	563	2284
Welsh Government funding		620
On line fees	14155	15884
Cash fees	307	712
Childcare vouchers		1668
Fundraising	824	183
Donations	1125	143
Uniform	20	87
Spooky Doo	588	
Miscellaneous / Refunds	159	
Savings acc interest	126	50

<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>49960</b>	<b>64028</b>
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### PAYMENTS

Wages	54843	53465
Pension Nest	1384	1518
PAYE	449	665
Gross wages	56676	55648
Catering costs	267	241
Premises (Rent)	3981	3361
Ofsted fees	50	
Administration	70	250
Fundraising	938	
Training Costs	880	252
Job adverts	2529	75
Skip hire/repairs		299
Laptop		479
Insurance	782	859
Accountancy	450	450
Equipment	748	1223
Consumables	373	557
Subscriptions	135	220
Donations		23
Uniform	150	719
Phone	954	900
Stationery	215	358
Trips	112	
Event Expenses		78
Miscellaneous expenses	959	115
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>70269</b>	<b>66107</b>

<b>Excess of payments over receipts</b>	<b>20309</b>	<b>2079</b>
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### BALANCE SHEET

31 August 2024

Bank current account	158	8818
Bank savings account	700	12078
Petty cash	38	309
Creditor	-450	-450
	<b>446</b>	<b>20755</b>

### Capital account

Balance B/F	20755	22834
Loss for year	20309	2079
Balance C/F	<b>446</b>	<b>20755</b>

Signed 27th June 2025

**CHAIRMAN**

**TREASURER**

# **DODLESTON PRE-SCHOOL**

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**DODLESTON PRE-SCHOOL**  
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**Year end 31 August 2024**

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**BALANCE SHEET**

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Signed 27th June 2025

**CHAIRMAN**

*E. Hutt*

Emma Hutt

*Sarah Macklin*

**TREASURER**

Sarah Macklin