

**ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL)
TRUSTEES' REPORT AND
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL)
Contents

	Page
Reference and Administrative Details	1
Trustees' Report	2–3
Independent Examiner's Report	4
Receipts and Payments account	5
Statement of Assets and Liabilities	6
Notes to the Financial Statements	7–9

ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL)
Reference and Administrative Details
For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

Trustees

L Pope - Chair (appointed 30/09/2024)
K Cookes
S Mecrow
K Patefield-Smith (appointed 15/09/2025)
B Davis (appointed 15/09/2025)
A Ryan

Charity Number

1053824

Principal Address

St. Christophers Church Halls
1 Lincoln Avenue
Cheltenham
GL51 3DD

Independent Examiner

James Ebdon BA (hons) BFP FCA
BPC Partners Limited
Chartered Accountants
3 Royal Crescent
Cheltenham
GL50 3DA

The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Objectives and Activities

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Group is to enhance the development and education of children primarily under statutory school age by encouraging parents to understand and provide for the needs of their children through community groups and by:

- (a) offering appropriate play facilities and training courses, together with the right of parents to take responsibility for and to become involved in the activities of such groups, ensuring that such groups offer opportunities for all children, regardless of race, culture, religion, disability or means;
- (b) encouraging the study of the needs of such children and their families and promoting public interest in and recognition of such needs in the local area; and
- (c) instigating, adhering to and furthering the aims of Gloucestershire PATA.

Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

The Playgroup provides a community service which benefits local children by providing a safe, stimulating and happy environment for children to experience their early years where learning is reinforced through play. The Playgroup operates as a fully inclusive setting, supporting children and families from a wide range of backgrounds and needs.

Activities undertaken to achieve the objectives

St Christophers Playgroup strives to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage to children aged 2–4 years within a fully inclusive setting. Fully qualified childcare managers and practitioners undertake daily planning of activities to meet the needs and interests of each child. Staff use a key person approach so that progress and wellbeing are monitored, records are maintained, and appropriate "next steps" in learning can be planned. Cohort tracking supports effective planning and transition.

Staff undertake regular training to ensure they can meet children's needs and maintain compliance with safeguarding, health and safety and early years requirements. The Playgroup works closely with parents/carers and, where appropriate, external professionals and agencies (for example social workers and speech and language support) to help achieve the best outcomes for children.

The Playgroup has also forged links with the local primary school, including the use of one of its rooms each week for a dedicated pre-school session. This supports smoother transition to school through familiarisation activities such as visits to classrooms, lunch in the dinner hall and attending school productions.

The management of the Playgroup is undertaken by a committee made up predominantly of parents/local people, supporting community involvement and enabling parents to participate in their children's education from the earliest stages. Parents are also encouraged to support sessions and contribute to fundraising activities that build links with local businesses and the wider community. Children's learning journeys are now online, supporting engagement and communication between parents/carers and staff.

Policies and procedures are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure processes remain relevant and meet statutory obligations. Regular checks and risk assessments are undertaken in line with the Playgroup's responsibilities.

Achievements and Performance

Main achievements

St. Christophers Playgroup has provided a much-needed pre-school and playgroup facility for the local area for over 50 years. It continues to support children to learn and develop important social skills they will take into school and beyond. Staff help children to develop strong foundations in communication and language, staying safe, turn taking and conflict resolution, supporting each child in their early steps as a responsible member of the local community.

Positive relationships have been developed with parents, grandparents and carers who are invited into sessions regularly, whether as parent helpers or to "stay and play".

Key achievements and milestones during the year

Secured grant funding: The Playgroup successfully secured a grant from the County Council's *Build Back Better Community Fund*. This enabled the purchase of additional resources and equipment to enhance children's experiences, including a bouncy castle which proved particularly popular.

Fundraising and community events:

- The annual Christmas Bazaar brought families and the community together for a festive celebration and raised significant funds to support Playgroup activities.
- The Summer Teddy Bear's Picnic was successfully delivered despite a change of venue, using Bournside Secondary School sports hall, kindly provided free of charge, which supported fundraising.

Staffing and pay: Recognising the hard work and dedication of staff, the committee implemented wage increases to align with National Minimum Wage changes and to ensure staff continue to feel valued.

Challenges faced

Staff recruitment: The Playgroup continued to experience difficulty recruiting to fully staff the setting. Existing staff have supported the Playgroup by covering shortfalls where possible. The committee also recruited a new Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who is expected to begin as soon as possible.

Facility use for fundraising events: The church's decision to charge a considerable rent for weekend use of the church halls would have reduced fundraising capacity, so the committee sought alternative venues. The Playgroup secured support from Bournside Secondary School, including free-of-charge facilities, enabling events to proceed successfully.

Financial Review

The principal source of funding continued to be Gloucestershire County Council funding for eligible children attending the setting. Non-funded children's fees also contributed to income, together with an optional snack charge each session. Fundraising income also supported activities and improvements (as outlined above).

Expenditure has been closely managed and limited to essential items only, and this discipline will need to continue into future years. Wages continue to be the largest area of expenditure and staffing levels will be monitored closely to ensure that legal ratios and service levels are maintained.

Reserves policy

The trustees aim to maintain unrestricted reserves sufficient to cover approximately 6 months of core operating costs, to provide stability in the event of unexpected reductions in income or increases in costs. At 31 March 2025 the charity held unrestricted funds of £100,316 (2024: £109,346). The trustees will keep this level under review in light of staffing and premises cost pressures and planned expenditure on resources and equipment.

Structure, Governance and Management

St Christophers Playgroup (Warden Hill) is an unincorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission.

The charity is governed by its constitution dated 9 June 1995 as amended on 9 June 2006, 26 April 2019 and 8 December 2022, which sets out the charity's objects and powers and the rules for administration of the charity, including the appointment and retirement of trustees. Trustees are responsible for ensuring the charity is administered in accordance with the governing document and charity law, and that the charity's assets are applied solely in furtherance of its charitable purposes.

St. Christophers Playgroup is overseen by a committee of up to 12 parents/local people, including three officer roles (Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary) and up to nine trustee roles. Trustees volunteer their time and receive no financial benefit. This year there were five parents on the committee and one staff member.

The Playgroup management structure consists of a Playgroup Manager and a Playgroup Deputy Manager, supported by permanent staff including play workers. The Playgroup is a member of PATA which offers support and training to local settings and provides a payroll service to ensure tax and wage obligations are met.

Trustee and indemnity insurance is in place. All permanent staff hold at least an appropriate Level 3 qualification, are trained in paediatric first aid and health and safety, have up-to-date knowledge of EYFS, and hold enhanced DBS checks as required. Designated staff lead in key areas (including safeguarding, health and safety, food hygiene, SENCO, safer recruitment and data protection) and share knowledge with the wider team.

Trustees undergo DBS checks in line with statutory requirements and are also required to complete an EY2 with Ofsted to confirm their suitability.

Trustee meetings are held at least once a term, with trustees working collaboratively and maintaining contact between meetings. Conflicts of Interest are declared at meetings and confidentiality is confirmed annually. Policies and procedures are reviewed at least annually (or sooner when legislation changes), and updates are agreed and minuted at committee meetings. Committee members and staff are required to read and understand relevant policies.

Plans for future periods

The committee continues to identify opportunities to improve the Playgroup and enhance children's experiences. Plans include:

- Fundraising and community engagement: Continued development of major fundraising events, including the Christmas Bazaar at Bournside Secondary School, and building that relationship into 2026.
- Committee capacity: The committee aims to start the new academic year with a fully staffed committee to support ongoing improvements and sustainability.
- Staffing: Continued focus on recruitment and retention, including filling vacancies and maintaining required ratios and quality of provision.

The trustees' report was approved by the board of trustees and signed on its behalf by:



L Pope
Trustee

Date: 11th March 2026

ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL)
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL)
For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

I report to the trustees on my examination of the receipts and payments accounts of ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL) (the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").


I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



James Ebdon BA(hons) BFP FCA
Date: 11th March 2026
3 Royal Crescent
Cheltenham
GL50 3DA

ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL)
Receipts and Payments Account
For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Unrestricted funds £
RECEIPTS FROM:			
Donations and legacies	3	-	1,068
Charitable activities	4	133,327	121,074
Other trading activities	5	3,476	2,507
Investments	6	452	427
Other	7	1	43
		137,257	125,119
PAYMENTS FOR:			
Charitable activities	8	(143,479)	(118,922)
		(143,479)	(118,922)
NET RECEIPTS/(PAYMENTS)		(6,222)	6,197
NET MOVEMENT IN CASH FUNDS		(6,222)	6,197
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:			
Cash funds brought forward		110,036	103,839
CASH FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		103,814	110,036

ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL)
Statement of Assets and Liabilities
At 31 March 2025

	2025	2024
	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£
Cash Funds		
Treasurer's account	62,808	69,482
Reserve account	41,006	40,554
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	103,814	110,036
Liabilities		
PAYE and Pension Liabilities	(3,498)	(690)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	(3,498)	(690)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net assets after liabilities	100,316	109,346
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Assets retained for the charity's own use

Play equipment, toys and other resources are held for use in the day-to-day activities of the charity. Due to the nature of these items and their extensive use, the trustees consider that they have no material resale value at the year end.

On behalf of the board of trustees



L Pope
Trustee

Date: 11th March 2026

ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL)
Notes to the Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

1. General Information

St Christophers Playgroup (Warden Hill) is an unincorporated charity registered with the Charity Commission, registered charity number 1053824. The principal address is St. Christophers Church Halls, 1 Lincoln Avenue, Cheltenham, GL51 3DD.

2. Accounting Policies

2.1. Basis of Preparation of Financial Statements

The financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. They are a summary of cash received and cash paid during the year and therefore do not include accruals for income or expenditure.

2.2. Incoming Resources

Incoming resources are recognised when the funds are received, not when they are earned or when entitlement arises. This includes donations, grants, fundraising income, fees/charges (e.g., session fees), and other receipts. Bank interest is recognised when credited to the bank account. Income is shown gross (before any related costs) in the Receipts and Payments Account.

Where receipts relate to restricted funds, they are separately identified and applied only for the purposes specified by the donor or funder. Any receipts received in advance for a future period are included as receipts when received.

2.3. Resources Expended

Resources expended are recognised when payments are made, not when the liability is incurred. Payments include all operating costs and support costs (e.g., staffing, rent, utilities, insurance, supplies, administration), governance costs (e.g., independent examination/accountancy fees), and any capital payments. Payments are shown gross in the Receipts and Payments Account.

Payments that relate to restricted funds are identified separately and applied only in accordance with the relevant restriction. Payments made in advance (prepayments) are included as payments when paid.

3. Income from Donations and Legacies

	2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	£	£
Donations and gifts	-	76
Grants	-	992
	-	1,068
	-	1,068

4. Income from Charitable Activities

	2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	£	£
Playgroup provision:		
Local Authority Funding	115,469	84,237
Fees received	17,858	36,837
	133,327	121,074
	133,327	121,074

ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL)
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

5. Income from Other Trading Activities

	2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	£	£
Fundraising events	3,476	2,507

6. Investment Income

	2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	£	£
Bank interest receivable	452	427

7. Other Income

	2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	£	£
Other income	1	43

8. Charitable Activities

	2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Unrestricted funds
	£	£
Fundraising activities:		
Staging fundraising events	787	650
Employee costs:		
Wages and salaries	113,725	94,097
Expenses	1,238	1,167
Training	558	602
Premises expenses:		
Premises costs	14,882	13,233
General administration:		
Support and administration costs	2,842	1,287
Perishable/consumables /sundries	577	1,375
Insurance	1,284	1,235
Subscriptions	857	970
Other office costs	678	772
Sundry expenses	2,111	1,202
Toys/equipment	3,940	2,332
Total Charitable Activities	143,479	118,922

ST CHRISTOPHERS PLAYGROUP (WARDEN HILL)
Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)
For The Year Ended 31 March 2025

9. Transactions with Trustees

None of the trustees received any remuneration or any other benefits from an employment with the charity or a related entity during the current or previous year.

No trustee expenses have been incurred.

10. Related Party Disclosures

There have been no related party transactions in the reporting period that require disclosure.