

FIRST STEP PRE-SCHOOL LTD

Annual Report

To 31st July 2014

This report covered by pages 1 to 10, along with the attached financial statements, was approved by the Trustees for presentation at the Annual General Meeting of First Step Pre-School Ltd on 15th October 2014.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees by:

Sarah Lewis, Chairperson

Date

The chairperson presents this report with the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 July 2014.

INCORPORATION AND CONSTITUTION

First Step Pre-School Ltd is a registered charity (No 1022996) and is registered in England as a company (No 5885935). The company was incorporated on 25th July 2006 and commenced trading on 1st August 2006.

The Pre-school's current constitution was formally adopted at the Annual General Meeting of 2002

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY AND OBJECT OF THE CHARITY

The principal activity and object of the company and charity, in the period under review, was to advance the education of children below compulsory school age. The Pre-school owns a building situated on leased land at Christ the King School in Thornbury and rents a second building at Crossways Infant School, also in Thornbury. Sessions run concurrently at both sites, where qualified and friendly staff provide stimulating and creative play, that enables learning to take place in a fun and secure environment. We look upon pre-school as the first stepping-stone to school and school life.

MISSION STATEMENT

Working together to provide quality care and a foundation for life long learning.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

First step pre-school has been educating children and benefitting the community of Thornbury for the last thirty years. We welcome all children in the local community from every background.

Our work with children from 2 years to school age means we help children learn and develop important social skills they will take with them into school and beyond. We lay important foundations in skills such as turn taking, staying safe, communication and language development, teamwork and conflict resolution. All these skills enable our children to be a responsible member of their local community.

Our work means we work closely with all the local primary schools and the local SureStart Children's Centre. This work is of benefit to our children and to the schools themselves as well as the wider community. We often visit local schools and this year we have taken children to see an infant school production, and have stalls at local summer fayres, as well as other events. We also work closely with our local schools to prepare our children for starting school by visiting the reception class and using school facilities for PE and other sessions.

The work we do with the children in our care is of great benefit to the wider community as our staff are a source of information and expert knowledge on many aspects of childcare and we impart this knowledge to our families. Our staff are always willing to advise and discuss such issues as potty training, diet and mealtimes, sleep and behaviour management. This is a real source of support to local families and so the wider community.

Our pre-school is run by a management committee made up of parent volunteers. This is another way in which we benefit the community as we provide our parents with the opportunity to contribute to the development and running of our pre-school through this voluntary work. An important aspect of the committee's work is in fundraising for pre-school and in doing this we work a lot within the local community. For example we have links to our local community garden project, local businesses who donate to our events and we have run a number of events including a toy sale, Easter Fayre and Quiz night. We also participate in community events such as the Thornbury Carnival.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – Sarah Lewis

The new committee was elected at our AGM in October. We were lucky to have a good combination of familiar faces and some valuable new additions.

I would like to thank everyone on the Committee for all their help, support, ideas and contributions throughout the year. We continue to work well as a team and I really value the commitment people have made. A huge thank you to each one of you! A special mention must go to our Fundraising Co-ordinator, Suzie Adams, your support this year has been invaluable and very much appreciated! Thanks should also go to the parents who continue to be great supporters of our fundraising events. I would also like to thank Malcolm and Emma who have continued in their Treasurer roles, ably supported by Tiffany, with great enthusiasm and dedication. This year has been particularly tough for the Treasury team and they have come through smiling.

I would like to thank the leaders for their work this year. It is a privilege to work with such dedicated professionals who care so much about what they do. The results of our parent/carer questionnaires were again full of very positive comments about Pre-School and the staff and they should feel rightly proud of all they have achieved. The Leaders and I continue to work closely together and I thank them for all the extra time and commitment they have given this year.

I look forward to welcoming some new faces onto the committee in our AGM in October!

TREASURER'S REPORT – Malcolm Watson and Emma Lewis

I am delighted to report that First Step preschool has ended the year with a financial surplus of £3154, excluding fundraising activities, which represents a fantastic achievement given the originally budgeted forecast of -£3371. The treasury team would like to thank the First Step leaders and all the Aunties for taking on ever more flexible arrangements and roles, in order to ensure that income for the preschool

remains as high as possible whilst increasing the quality of care the children receive. We would also like to thank Tiffany for managing all transactions and administration with her usual diligence, and Sarah Lewis and the rest of the committee for their support. The end of year surplus will, first and foremost, be used to pay current and former staff the holiday pay they are owed from previous years; a special thanks to Tiffany for compiling these figures – not a straightforward task! The remaining surplus will be justly awarded to the staff of both sites, in recognition of their hard work and commitment to the preschool and, of course, the children.

We've paid particular attention this year to streamlining and updating the various processes used to run the preschool finances. The way we handle holiday entitlement and statutory sick pay (which we are now required to pay, as of this year), and budget predictions based on child intake have all been improved. The preschool now has its own business debit card and a mobile phone service – used mainly for taking messages from parents – both of which should lead to more efficient running.

Finally, a big congratulations to Suzie and the fundraising team, plus all who participated in the various fundraising activities to raise an extra £3760 (plus Gift Aid) which will directly benefit the children, marking another stellar year.

LEADERS' REPORTS – Jenny Harris with news from Christ the King site

The past year has again been busy and successful as we have started lots of two and three year olds on their Learning Journey and prepared another group of children to be ready for starting school. We have the same staff team who work well together and as a group we have completed The Bristol Standard, which is a recognised Quality Assurance scheme, under which we regularly look to evaluate our practise to identify anything that can be improved and plan how and when we can make changes.

Last year we held a very successful Dad's Activity Day on a Saturday and repeated it this year. Almost all children brought their Dad's to preschool on a Saturday morning to show them what we do and have fun. Again this was very successful so we held a Mum's Activity Day in the Spring for all the morning mums, but especially those who work and are unable to visit preschool. We have built a good relationship with the Community Garden and in October we were invited to go and plant daffodil bulbs in the garden and some to take home. Later in the year this activity was repeated and the children planted sunflower seeds to celebrate 50 years of the RHS.

As usual we celebrated Grandparents, Harvest and Christmas – the morning children performed a modern and original nativity for family and friends at Christmas. The morning children joined the Crossways children for a Christmas party and visit to Father Christmas at Cattle Country.

Other learning experiences included lots of children taking part when Roz the Road Safety Officer visited, a dad who is a policeman came to visit and a mum who is a nurse did too. Then we had an adventure when the paramedics came with both an ambulance and emergency car. We celebrated Chinese New Year by doing Tai Chi, dragon dancing, tasting Chinese food and making Chinese crafts. We held our annual Bedtime Stories evening, when the children and Aunties came back to preschool in their pyjamas for stories and hot chocolate. The police, as usual, brought their police car for a visit which the children always enjoy.

During the year we walked to the library to hear some stories and collect the children's Treasure bags. We also walked to the local shops and to Crossways School several times to join the Reception Class for Wiggle Time (music and movement). Our visit to Tesco was another success and the children really enjoyed having a go on the till, though when asked what they liked best, most said "the doughnut" they had in the staff canteen. The Charity we chose to support this year was Sport Relief and we did this by wearing sports clothes and having our own "Mini Olympics" which raised over £56. The children love dressing up so we dressed as book characters for World Book Day and ended the year dressing as super-heroes, princesses or pirates.

We have had some unusual items for Show and tell, which include a dog and a chicken! On the subject of animals we had a visit from Zoolab, who brought a snake, tarantula, giant millipede among other things and we also learned from observing the development of stick insects, frogs and butterflies.

To support the children's transition to school we have continued to visit the school Reception Class in their classroom, garden or woodland and play with the infants in their playground weekly for most of the year. We use the school hall for P.E. and have been very lucky to use their purpose built kitchen for cookery each term.

The last term has been very busy with a super Sports Day and family Picnic, Big Box day, sponsored Welly Wang and Jelly Baby Jumps, Summer Trip to Cattle Country, Thornbury Carnival, End of Year Concert which included a performance of "Dear Zoo" and our favourite songs from the year and finally the End of Year Parties. The morning children again joined with their friends at Crossways for a Leaver's Party complete with celebratory cake and entertainment from Chrisptee, a children's entertainer.

Since January we have held Lunch Clubs on Tuesdays and Thursdays, when some afternoon children have joined some morning children for lunch, in addition to the regular Friday Lunch Clubs. This seems to work well so we plan to assess demand in September.

We have been very lucky this year because our parents have been incredibly supportive both by attending events and raising lots of money for us to spend on the children at preschool. We have applied for a grant to replace the surfaces in our outside area and if we are successful we will be able to replace old resources or purchase new things to enhance the children's learning, so we are very grateful.

LEADERS' REPORTS – Penny Smith with news from Crossways site

During the course of the year the morning children have taken part in a wide range of activities to help prepare them for school, including visiting the reception classes and playing with reception children in their playground. They have also had many visitors and we have had students on work experience or college placements also with us. As Jenny has mentioned, Zoolab returned again with their collection of snakes, gerbils, snails and other small creatures. We celebrated safety week by inviting the police who brought their car and the children were able to sit inside it, use the flashing lights. In addition for road safety week we had a visit from a South Gloucestershire traffic warden, who showed the children the correct way to cross the road. and SITA came to talk about recycling.

Staff from the library brought treasure chests for the children and in July we walked to the library where we were read a story and had biscuits and squash. As usual we walked to the local shops and to visit Tesco, where the children were able to use the tills. We also had a pyjama evening with bedtime stories, torches and milkshakes. We all enjoyed Sports Day where there were races for younger brothers and sisters. The end of year Open Day and Concert went really well, when parents and grandparents came to play with their children and listen to the children sing.

A great deal of excitement and interest was generated by the emergence of our butterflies from their chrysalises – some of which actually happened during session times! We successfully grew lettuce, beans, strawberries, potatoes and lots of herbs which we ate at snack time, and the children also planted marigolds, busy lizzies and many other flowers.

At Christmas all the children enjoyed the parties and the morning children performed a Christmas play for their families. Our Christmas party was in Cattle Country and we all went on a train to meet Father Christmas. We also ended the year with a performance to families about our activities through the year and invited them in for an open morning.

We have also benefited from the efforts of the fundraising team and have purchased a set of story headphones for the children to listen to, a startboard and lots of new games for the children to play with. We also purchased new cameras, waterproofs, a snowman costume, lots of books, plants for the garden and plenty more!

We were sad to say goodbye to Katie at the end of the year.

Both leaders would like to thank all volunteers who have done rota duty through the year. It really does make a difference.

FUNDRAISER'S REPORT – Suzi Adams

It's been another busy but successful year of fundraising in 2013/14. This could not have taken place without the fantastic support of the Aunties, Staff, Committee, Parents, and Carers, and especially to Rachel Harrison (Committee Member) who has provided me with endless support with the Crossways Site and events, and a continual source of ideas and feedback, so a huge thank you.

Toy Sale

Once again, we held our annual Toy Sale in November. We had a good number of good quality toys donated by parents (there were about 16 main sellers with a large amount of toys). We also ran a cake stall, again generously donated by parents. The sale was well attended and was helped by handing out flyers to passers by (for a free cup of tea when you buy a piece of cake) to increase footfall. **Total raised £341.**

Christmas Raffle

We held a very successful Christmas Raffle which benefited from the huge generosity of our parents, local businesses and friends of the preschool. Attractive hampers (with the kind help of Jane Hill and Iveta Simpson) were made up with the items donated by the parents. Tickets sold very well both before the event and on the day and the draw took place at the Christ the King site Nativity. **Total raised £583.**

Canvas Bags

This was a new venture for this year based on last year's successful sale of personalised Pre-School tea towels. The Canvas Bags featured all the children's self portraits (one site on each side) and were popular as Christmas gifts. There was a large cost at the outset of **£423** to produce the bags which impacted money raised. Any remaining bags were sold at a discounted price at the end of the year. **Total raised £466.**

Photonix Photographers

As in previous years, Photonix Photographers came in during November to take individual pictures and again in July to take individual pictures of the older children and group shots of all children. These were really popular as usual, and in July we also had a large number of sibling photographs, which resulted in the biggest order in 2 years. **Total raised £450 (£190 in Nov & £260 in July).**

Easter Eggstavanza

Our big fund raising event of the preschool year was the Easter Eggstravanza. Once again, this was held on the Saturday after term ended at Christ the King School (this is ideal timing for the fair as more families are around, there's not so much going on elsewhere, and businesses are more willing to make donations of eggs/ prizes). The weather was mixed so most of the stalls were inside and we had a Hook a Duck, Penalty Shoot Out, and tables & chairs for the refreshments outside. We had several stalls including a Chocolate Tombola, Easter Egg Hunt, Hook-a-Duck, Nail Painting, Tattoos, Hair Braiding, Easter Crafts, Name the Chick, and new this year was Hollywood Bowls mobile Bowling Alley (Hollywood Bowl kindly donated the equipment, staff and the prizes). The Cake stall and teas and coffees were also very popular as usual. The event couldn't have taken place without the generosity and support of the Parents, Carers, Aunties, and Committee who manned the stalls and donated prizes and fabulous homemade cakes. Also, a big thank you to Kate Coyle, Rachel Harrison, and Iveta Simpson for their support organising the event. **Total raised £595.**

Welly Wang

We held our sponsored Welly Wang in July. This was, as ever, popular with children and parents. Once again, we used sponsor forms to do 'Gift Aid' donations which should hopefully should boost the final amounts. The weather was very wet at the Crossways event but thanks to Rachel Harrison, the Aunties, and some waterproof ponchos, the event still took place. **Total raised £381.**

Jelly Baby Jump

This was the second year of this new event for the 'Caterpillars'/afternoon children held in July. The children came dressed in one colour to look like a Jelly Baby and were sponsored to jump as many times as they could in 30 seconds. This is a lovely event as it's usually the children's first ever sponsored event and they had lots of fun. One family (Melissa Hardwick) raised £143 just on their own which was fabulous. Once again, we also included Gift Aid on the sponsor forms to boost fundraising. **Total raised £479.**

Thornbury Carnival

This was partly a fundraiser but mostly an excellent publicity opportunity for pre-school in July. Many of our families turned up in fancy dress as "Superhero's or Princesses" for the parade and it was great to see so much support for Pre-school, despite a torrential downpour at the start of the parade. We also ran a stall on the Mundy playing fields which was decorated with Pre School photos and artwork and had 'Hook-a-Duck' (50p a go), Dolly Peg superhero/ Princess making (Free) and

Animal Hoppers (Free) which were kindly donated by a parent at Crossways (Kirsty Fitzgerald). We had a continual stream of visitors throughout the carnival and also handed out leaflets to prospective parents. **Total raised £77.**

Gift Aid

Gift Aid was requested for the Welly Wang and Jelly Baby Jump events, so the total raised is a guesstimate based on sponsorship forms completed. **Total Gift Aid raised is approx £158.**

Thank you again to everyone for their ongoing support for Fundraising.

Net profit from our fundraising activities

| Event | 2014 | 2013 |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Photographs | 450 | 418 |
| Canvas Bags | 43 | - |
| Tea Towels | - | 178 |
| Xmas raffle | 583 | 515 |
| Toy sale | 341 | 375 |
| Easter fundraising | 594 | 609 |
| Welly Wang | 381 | 472 |
| Jelly Jump | 479 | 352 |
| Carnival | 77 | 82 |
| Uniform | -37 | 120 |
| Donations | 450 | 32 |
| Quiz Night | - | 100 |
| Other fundraising | 23 | 48 |
| | | |
| TOTAL: | £3384 | £3301 |

TRUSTEES

Trustees for the Charity are elected each year at the Annual General Meeting and are known as 'the committee'. Candidates are proposed and seconded by the AGM attendees; election is by a show of hands or a written vote. Trustees for the year 2013/14 were:

All the Trustees became effective following the AGM last year. i.e. from 16th October 2013. The Trustees are:

| | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Sarah Lewis | Chairman |
| Malcolm Watson | Treasurer |
| Rachel Harrison | Minutes Secretary |

There were also the following committee members:

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Emma Lewis | Vice Treasurer |
| Suzi Adams | Fundraising Co-ordinator |
| Lucy Bolland | Fundraising Vice Co-ordinator |
| Vicki Lansdown | IT/Website Co-ordinator |
| Sarah Lewis | Policies Co-ordinator |
| Vicki Lansdown | Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator |
| Karl Simpson | Buildings subcommittee |
| Kate Coyle | Parents Representative |
| Rachel Harrison | Parents Representative |
| Lucy Bolland | Parents Representative |
| Vicki Lansdown | Parents Representative |
| Caroline Bamford | Parents Representative |
| Kate Clifton | Parents Representative |
| Kelly Thornbur | Parents Representative |
| Carol Lawler | Committee Member |
| Jocelyn Gillard | Committee Member |
| George Todd | Committee Member |
| Grant Coleby | Committee Member |
| Aneta Krzan | Committee Member |
| Lisa Phillips | Committee Member |

STAFF

Staff employed by the Charity during the past year are detailed below, along with their curriculum responsibilities:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Jenny Harris | - Leader, Christ the King and Co-ordinator for Understanding of the World |
| Penny Smith | - Leader, Crossways and Co-ordinator for Mathematics |
| Crossways Site- Suzanne Golledge | - Co-ordinator for Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World |
| Katie Hopwood | - Co-ordinator for Expressive Arts & Design, resigned July 2014 |
| Helen Stolliday | - Responsible for implementing Behaviour Management Programmes, Co-ordinator for Communication and Language, Co-ordinator for Literacy and Co-ordinator for Personal, Social and Emotional Development |
| Lorraine Remfry | - Co-ordinator for Physical Development |
| Christ the King Site- Karen Watola | - Co-ordinator for Expressive Arts & Design, Co-ordinator for Mathematics |
| Amanda Starr | - Co-ordinator for Communication and Language, and Co-ordinator for Literacy |
| Lisa French | - Responsible for implementing Behaviour Management Programmes, Co-ordinator Personal, |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| | Social and Emotional Development |
| Vicky Filer | - Co-ordinator for Physical Development |
| Both Sites- | |
| Tiffany Needham | - Book-keeper and Administrator |

IMPROVEMENTS/ BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2014/15

1. Ensure financial stability for the Pre-School
2. Improve Pre-School facilities and resources we provide for the children, their families and the community.
3. To build on relationships with parents and their involvement in their children's learning and development.
4. Improve the sharing of information with other settings/carers.
5. Look at the needs of the community to establish whether we need to extend our care.
6. Extend the Buildings Sub-Committee working towards a new building for the Crossways site.

UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31st July 2014 form part of this report and are attached to the end of it. The Reserves Policy of the Pre-school is outlined on the following page.