

**FIRST STEP PRE-SCHOOL LTD**

Annual Report

To 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015

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 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees by:

Charlotte Summers, Chairperson

Date

The chairperson presents this report with the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 July 2015.

## **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 25<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and commenced trading on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2006.

The Pre-school's current constitution was formally adopted at the Annual General Meeting of 2012

## **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 visited toddler groups, taken children to see an infant school production, 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 and Easter Fayre. We also participate in community events such as the Thornbury Carnival.

### **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – Charlotte Summers**

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 team, 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.

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**

It has been another good year on the financial side, with the preschool ending the year with a surplus figure of £8246, excluding fundraising activities. The originally predicted end of year figure was £4207 in the positive. When one considers that the actual end of year figure includes a large fee to process a grant for improving the Christ The King site's garden, this is an even more impressive achievement. The committee has decided to split this surplus figure between boosting each site's long-term maintenance and/or replacement fund (£3000 was transferred to our Savings

account before the end of the year, making the official surplus £5496) and granting the staff an extra end-of-year payment, which was very well deserved – congratulations to the staff and leaders of both sites on a stellar year, thanks to their hard work and their dedication to the children.

This year has seen several improvements made to the preschool's financial system, including the introduction of PayPal as a payment route, the preparation for consolidating a number of staff allowances into an arrangement which should be simpler to process, and a committee-approved increase in funding for the leaders to better conduct 'non-contact' activities in the week. We have also shifted by a few months the decision point for the annual staff pay review – by delaying this, the committee are better able to make an informed decision as the financial picture for the current year is much clearer, and the implications of granting a rise in pay for the following year are also clearer. The committee has also approved the extra expenditure for staff to have extra time in the week to hold their staff meetings, which was necessary as the newly available and/or extended session times were preventing a formal weekly get-together for staff.

We are moving into next school year with a healthy-looking budget, which includes the slight raise in Nursery Education Grant funding level we've enjoyed since April. The budget includes timely replacements of some of the main IT equipment at both sites, and income includes a predicted level of funding from the Early Years Pupil Premium scheme, which amounts to an extra 53p per hour for eligible children – the money goes directly to improving the preschool experience for these children. As voted by the committee, the budget also includes a doubling of our monthly contributions to the preschool's Savings account, in order to further boost our funds designated for long-term maintenance and replacement. This account is currently in a good state, shown by the fact that the initial expenses incurred for the new building plans for the Crossways site have proved to be affordable so far (plans which are really now gaining momentum, thanks to the hard work and enthusiasm of the Buildings Sub-committee). There is also a sensibly-sized amount held in the preschool's General account, as per our Reserves policy, to act as a buffer for when no income is generated (i.e. August) and for any future years which prove to be particularly tight.

Finally, the current Treasury team is stepping down after three years of service. It has been so rewarding to have been part of this fantastic preschool and witness it go from strength to strength over this time. Our thanks go to Jenny and Penny and the three Chairs we've worked with as a close-knit team, the wonderful staff of both sites, the evolving committee over the three years, and a special thanks to Tiffany for administrating the preschool finances with hard work, diligence and tenacity, as well as putting up with our endless questions. Our warmest wishes to the preschool for the (no doubt) successful years ahead!

## **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 our second year of the Bristol Standard, a recognised Quality Assurance scheme, under which we continually evaluate our practise to identify anything that can be improved and plan how and when we can make changes.

We held another very successful Dad's Activity Day on a Saturday and most children were able to bring their Dads to preschool on a Saturday morning to show them what we do and have fun. We couldn't leave the Mums out so again held a Mum's Activity Day in May for the morning mums, especially those who work and are unable to visit preschool regularly. Both the dads and mums gave very positive feedback!

As usual we celebrated Grandparents, Harvest and Christmas – the morning children performed a Nativity called “The Baby's Coming” for family and friends at Christmas and then joined the Crossways children for a Christmas party at Cattle Country, which included a train ride to see Father Christmas.

Other learning experiences included a “Halloween” visit from Zoolab, who told a “Meg and Mog” story using all the creatures. Lots of children took part when Roz, the Road Safety Officer visited. 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 Crossways School 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 but they also got to hold small fish and taste a variety of fruits. We also walked to the Community Garden, enjoying a “caterpillar hunt,” a story and refreshments. The children learned about growing by planting seeds and watching our caterpillars develop and turn into butterflies. Our stick insects have also multiplied and we now have around twenty insects.

At Christmas we raised £37 for Help the Children by wearing our Christmas jumpers and later in the year we chose to support Comic Relief on Red Nose Day, raising £62. The children love dressing up so we dressed as book characters for World Book Day and ended the year dressing as princesses or pirates.

To support the children's transition to school we have continued to visit the school Reception Class to play 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 and the Thornbury Carnival, when we joined the parade dressed as pirates/princesses. Our End of Year Concert included a performance of “The Very Hungry Caterpillar” and our favourite songs from the year and finally we celebrated with the End of Year Parties. The morning children again joined with their friends at Crossways for a Leaver's Party complete with 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 were successful in obtaining a grant to replace the surfaces in our outside area and the work was done at Easter, creating a two tone bonded mulch surface which is much safer for the children to play on and is usable in wet weather too. We have used some of the money raised to replace our old sheds and purchase new resources, including a mud kitchen, to enhance the children's learning, so we are very grateful to all our families.

### **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 we walked to the community garden, 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 mums and dads, as well as younger brothers and sisters. The end of year Concert went really well, when parents and grandparents came to 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 many 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.

A £2,500 garden grant from Nat West will mean some much needed new flooring for our garden, which we are looking forward to seeing in place after the summer holidays. We have also benefited from the efforts of the fundraising team and have purchased our new sheds, multi lingual books, home corner resources and plenty more!

We were sad to say goodbye to Sally at the end of the year and happy to welcome Emma.

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 – Mandy Rees**

It's been another busy but successful year of fundraising in 2014/15. This could not have taken place without the fantastic support of the Aunties, Staff, Committee and Parents. The year began with Zoe Notley running the Fundraising with Kate Clifton and Kirsty Stossell supporting her. During early 2015, Zoe stepped down for personal reasons and Kate Clifton and Mandy Rees took over the role, supported by Kirsty Stossell.

### **Toy Sale**

Once again, we held our annual Toy Sale in November. We had a good number of good quality toys donated by parents. We also ran a cake stall, again generously donated by parents. The sale was well attended.

**Total raised £323.**

### **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 (organised by Zoe Notley) 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 Crossways site Nativity. Tea and coffee was offered (donations) at both sites by Kate Clifton and Mandy Rees.

**Total raised £392.**

### **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.

**Total raised £408.**

### **Easter Eggstavanza**

Our big fund raising event of the preschool year was the Easter Eggstravanza. The organisation of the event was taken on by Kate Clifton and Mandy Rees as Zoe Notley stepped down. Once again, this was held on the Saturday after term ended, 28<sup>th</sup> March, at Christ the King School. Donations are vital for this event and the number of chocolate and egg donations from parents was superb as in previous years. Many businesses, (Jungle Chums, Wyevale Garden Centre, Thornbury Leisure Centre, Mayhem, Cattle Country, Bryant & Co, Tesco and Hollywood Bowl) also donated a range of vouchers; these along with some smaller toys donated by parents allowed us to run a second tombola stall this year, which was also popular. Kirsty managed to arrange for Starbucks to come and supply tea and coffee free of charge – this proved very popular! Thank you also to Kirsty for her help with donations and advertising.

The weather was mixed (raining for at least half of the morning) so all of the stalls were inside. The two treasure hunts were outside and were very popular despite the rain. Inside we had, Hook a Duck, Chocolate Tombola, Children's Tombola, Easter Crafts, Hair Braiding, Pick-a-Card, Guess the name of the Bunny and a Treasure Map stall. Kirsty's Castles provided a bouncy castle and hoppers to us free of charge and this was also an activity on offer in the hall. The cake stall was very busy, with a huge array of cakes donated by parents. We also ran a juice and biscuit stall for the children. The event couldn't have taken place without the generosity and support provided by parents, carers, Aunties and many of the committee members who

donated prizes and cakes, turned by very early to help us set up, manned stalls and helped us pack away at the end. Thank you!!

**Total raised £705.**

### **Welly Wang**

We held our sponsored Welly Wang in July for all morning children on both sites. 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. **Total raised CTK - £325 Crossways - £164.**

### **Jelly Baby Jump**

Our sponsored Jelly Bean Jump run for 'Caterpillars'/afternoon children in July, was popular again this year. 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. Once again, we also included Gift Aid on the sponsor forms to boost fundraising.

**Total raised CTK - £349 Crossways - £45.**

### **Thornbury Carnival**

This year the Carnival was used as an excellent publicity opportunity for the pre-school in July. Many of our families turned up in fancy dress as "Pirates or Princesses" for the parade and it was great to see so much support for Pre-school. We decided not to run a stall this year as in previous years.

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

### **Net profit from our fundraising activities**

<b>Event</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2014</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Photographs	408	450
Canvas Bags	-	43
Xmas raffle	392	583
Toy sale	323	341
Easter fundraising	705	594
Welly Wang	489	381
Jelly Jump	394	479
Carnival	-	77
Uniform	-139	-37
Donations	10	450
Other fundraising	8	23
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£2590</b>	<b>£3384</b>

### **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 2014/15 were:

All the Trustees became effective following the AGM last year. i.e. from 15th October 2014. The Trustees are:

Charlotte Summers	Chairman
Malcolm Watson	Treasurer
Mandy Rees	Minutes Secretary

There were also the following committee members:

Aneta Krzan	Vice Chair
Emma Lewis	Vice Treasurer
Mandy Rees	Fundraising Team
Kate Clifton	Fundraising Team
Zoe Notley	Fundraising Team
Kirsty Stossel	Fundraising Team
Vicki Lansdown	IT/Website Co-ordinator
Sarah Lewis	Policies Committee CTK
Lucy Bolland	Policies Committee CW
Vicki Lansdown	Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator
Karl Simpson	Buildings subcommittee
Kelly Thornbur	Parents Representative
Mandy Rees	Parents Representative
Jennifer Darton	Parents Representative
Lucy Bolland	Parents Representative
Vicki Lansdown	Parents Representative
Caroline Bamford	Parents Representative
Sarah Lewis	Parents Representative
Carol Lawler	Committee Member
Jocelyn Gillard	Committee Member
Grant Coleby	Committee Member
Kate Coyle	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
Katie Hopwood	- Co-ordinator for Expressive Arts & Design,

	resigned July 2014
Nyssa Cocks	- Responsible for implementing Behaviour Management Programmes, Co-ordinator for Communication and Language, Co-ordinator for Literacy
Lorraine Remfry	- Co-ordinator for Physical Development
Jane Hill	- Co-ordinator for Expressive Arts & Design
Sally Compton	- Co-ordinator for Understanding of the World, resigned May 2015
Emma Jarvis	- Co-ordinator for Understanding of the World, joined June 2015
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 31<sup>st</sup> July 2015 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.