

## Chair's Report for 2008-2009

Thank you all for coming to our AGM

2008-2009 has been a very busy, eventful and productive year.

### Staff

First and foremost I would like to thank all of the staff for their relentless hard work throughout the year to keep the pre-school a happy, warm and safe environment for our children to learn and play in. This year they have successfully implemented the EYFS and are continuing to develop pre-school in lines with the aims of the document always ensuring that our children are the central concern of everything that we do.

Once again this year we have been fortunate enough to keep hold of our fantastic team of staff and since last September we have included Lotty Langdon as a paid and contracted pre-school assistant.

Our congratulations go to Lotty who, having completed her work experience with us, has now qualified at NVQ Level 2. Sharon Vickery has also managed to complete her SENCO training and now relieves Sharron Ricketts of this role at last! My congratulations also go out to Ali Pike who has worked hard to pass her driving test this year! Well done!

Whilst thanking the staff, I must also mention the pre-school administrator, Natalie Fox, who has the task of organising funding, bills, pay slips and child registration amongst other things. We are still ever thankful to her for taking on this role and continuing to keep things running efficiently. Natalie has also completely designed the pre-school's new website which looks fabulous, professional and modern. It shows all aspects of the pre-school at work and explains about how we are run as a charity organisation. If you haven't taken a look yet, then please do so soon!

### Committee

The beginning of this year was to be a very steep learning curve for Claire Clemas and myself, who volunteered to take on the role of Vice-Chair and Chair of this committee. We enrolled on a taster session for committee training and then embarked on several evenings of full committee training that took place in Taunton. The experience was enlightening - we realised that there was plenty to do in order to

keep things running efficiently and smoothly in a voluntary charitable organisation. We decided that our main aim this year, apart from keeping everyone happy, was to get paperwork in order...OFSTED is looming for this next academic year. Following on from our training several members of the committee also spent an evening on committee training which everyone agreed was very beneficial.

In response to this the whole committee has worked harder than ever this year and I would like to extend a huge thank you to the entire team. In particular, I would like to thank Claire Clemas for being an excellent vice-chair offering support to us all throughout the year, especially as she had to take on the reins almost immediately that the school year started when I was taken ill with pneumonia. I would also like to say a huge thank you to Jonathan Kerr for his invaluable expertise with the accounts this year and Ali McNee for her efficiency as pre-school secretary. Paul Quinton also deserves a particular mention and my thanks go out to him, for single-handedly, getting us organised in rewriting and adopting all our policies and procedures during the course of the year - a job that seems to have been hanging over us for ever! Sheri Kingston took on the role of newsletter writer this year and Lucy Atherton became social secretary - always an essential position!

Our pre-school committee has remained mostly in place for the whole of this academic year, which has led to welcome stability for us as an organisation and also for the staff whom we employ. Congratulations have to go to Gilly Jaffe, who resigned her position as secretary, for the birth of her 3<sup>rd</sup> child, Emma, in December last year. Jo Kerr who was initially on our committee at the beginning of the year also gallantly gave away her place so that her husband Jon could become our treasurer. Emma Sherwood also was with us temporarily until she was thwarted by the paperwork of the CRB and of having lived in New Zealand...She hopes to be with us again as a committee member one day! Kelly Millett who has been part of the committee for many years also resigned due to other commitments.

### Fundraising

We have had an excellent year of fundraising, which has included the following:

A children's Activity Afternoon last Autumn term which served to bring new children and parents together as well as raising money and testing our cake baking skills. Many thanks go to Lucy Atherton for her donation of time and enthusiasm.

A joint venture with the school PFA for a Family Photo evening, which produced some lovely photographs and raised some money. Thanks go to Jo Hallett for her expertise that night.

Once again our efforts and skills were tested to the limit to produce our Christmas wreaths to sell at the School Christmas fair. I think we impressed ourselves with the quality of decorations that we produced! No doubt this tradition will continue!

Bag2School - we have had 2 very successful collections organised this year and hopefully there is still more to collect over the coming months.

Our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Jail Break, which should raise over £1000, once all the money has come in! Thanks go to the fancy-dress participants who help make the day so successful as well as the barbeque organisers and raffle prize donors. The money raised from this year's venture will be put towards developing an eco-area in a joint venture with the Laura Osborne and the eco-club from the first-school. This year we have also made a donation to the 'Freewheelers' charity as a 'thank you' to Dinnington Docks who very kindly have handed over their pub garden to us each year.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the rest of the parents, friends, grandparents, staff and committee members who have all contributed at some point towards our fundraising events throughout the year.

### Fees

From June 2009, the pre-school fees rose to £3.47 per hour. This is to keep the amount we charge in line with the amount we receive from Nursery Education Funding. It is intended to review fees as the government funding increases, usually around Easter.

### Charity Commission

Contact with the charity commission has become easier this year, as we are now able to access and change information online. This should enable us to inform the commission of any immediate changes in the committee as well as complete our annual reports with more efficiency. I have also had to send off various copies of AGM minutes from previous years since 1993 in order that the commission have records of

when our pre-school constitution has changed or been up-dated. I believe records are now up-to-date!

### Policies and Procedures

As already mentioned our policies and procedures have been completely reviewed thanks to the efforts of staff and committee under the guidance of Paul Quinton. Hopefully we should now be able to keep these up to date on a regular basis.

### Recommendations for the future

1. To develop a timetable to review policies and procedures so that all are looked at on a yearly basis and kept up-to-date.
2. Following on from our committee training, it should be ensured that all future committee members are made aware of their responsibilities and roles in order to keep up-to-date with both the Charity Commision and OFSTED.
3. Staff job descriptions should be reviewed annually to keep up with the EYFS.
4. Staff appraisals should be given more prominence in order that staff skills and needs are reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to you all for helping me with the responsibility of being Chair of pre-school over the last year. I have enjoyed the challenge and will continue to work hard over the coming years to help pre-school grow and develop.

Helen Harding

Chair of St George's Pre-school Committee