

## Chair's Report for 2009-2010

Thank you all for coming to our AGM

2009-2010 has been a very busy and successful 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 in which our children can play and learn. All staff continue to deliver the EYFS curriculum to our children to a very high standard whilst developing resources that suit the needs and preferences of each child. Activities lead by the children's interests and curiosity continue to be a strength of our small and friendly pre-school.

We have been fortunate enough to keep hold of our fantastic team of staff and I know all parents and children are ever thankful for the continuity of care that this provides.

All staff have regularly attended various training sessions this past year, further building on their expertise in nurturing our children, whatever their needs.

As well as the staff who work directly with the children, we have to extend huge thanks to our administrator, Natalie Fox, who has the task of organising funding, bills, pay slips and child registration amongst other things. She continues to ensure that pre-school runs efficiently from the outside! Natalie also keeps our website up-to-date ensuring that everyone is able to access necessary information about the pre-school.

### Committee

Having been Chair of the committee now for 2 years, I have to say - it's not that bad! I have been very lucky, once again, to have the support and commitment from the pre-school staff and the rest of the committee so that I have found that it is possible to run a family, a career and have the pre-school as my "hobby"! I have attended a couple of training and updating sessions run by the County this year so that we were in line with new developments in CRB and Vetting & Barring - these changes are on-going and is something we need to watch in future years.

At the beginning of the year Claire Clemas reluctantly resigned as Vice-Chair, although she continues to play a huge role helping with fundraising events. Other resignations within the committee over the past year included Lucy Atherton and Paul

Quinton, however both continue to be hugely supportive of the pre-school in everything that we do. Sheri Kingston took over the role of social secretary and has organised several good nights out. Gilly Jaffé stepped back up to her role as secretary and I must thank her for the work she puts in to write our agendas and minutes amongst her other tasks. Jonathan Kerr has continued in his role as treasurer and I am thankful to him for the expert way in which he runs our finances. Lavonne Pellow joined our committee and along with Ali McNee, they continue to remain a constant support. Also Ann-Marie Lawson has been a valuable liaison with the school PFA.

## OFSTED

As you are all aware, we were 'OFSTEDed' during the summer term. Contrary to expectations, our inspection was not carried out at the same time as the school's. Sharron and I spent a Bank Holiday Monday in May trawling through policies and procedures to make sure everything was in order...and then no one came - A little frustrating but at least we felt ready. And then it all came and went so quickly...one day an inspector arrived, spoke to Sharron, looked around. I had a phone-call from Sharron to let me know and to check something and then it was done.... Our report was written - we are officially a "Good" pre-school with a bit of "excellent" thrown in. I would like to share some of the comments from the report with you, just in case you haven't had a chance to read it:

"Overall the quality of the provision is good."

"Behaviour and social relationships are excellent and children receive a high standard of care."

"All staff and the committee are committed to ensuring that children receive a high standard of care and are able to experience a wide range of learning opportunities..."

"Links with the first school are good and children benefit from being able to use their facilities."

"A high priority is given to the welfare of children..."

"It is very clear that children really enjoy coming to the pre-school and take a full part in all the activities offered. There is a happy buzz as they play well together and behaviour and relationships are excellent."

"The extent to which children feel safe" was graded as excellent.

These comments really do show what a committed team we have here and now it is officially recognized. I have to thank everyone who made the pre-school the "good" place that it now is. Well done!

### Fundraising

We have had a variety of successful fundraising events this year, some new ideas and some not so new:

Firstly, we held our children's Activity Afternoon in the Autumn term which brought parents and children together with music and face-painting and other activities.

Christmas wreaths were made by Sheri and her mum in November to sell at the School Christmas fair. The earlier date of the fair meant that wreaths were made to order in the run up to Christmas and I know that everyone was very impressed with the quality of all that was produced. We also decided to sell homemade soup and fresh rolls this year to show off our culinary expertise and compliments were received! My thanks go to the cooks and Osborne's Fruit & Veg in Lopen who kindly donated the vegetables for the soup, as well as to the hardy soles who withstood the torrential rain and winds in order to pack everything away after the event - a night to be remembered!

As 2010 dawned we held a family photo morning and thanks go to Jo Hallett, who once again donated her time for us.

We decided, at very short notice, to run an Easter Egg Hunt this year and it was immensely successful - donations of eggs from a variety of supermarkets were gratefully received - thanks to all those involved.

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

We also discovered EcoArt cards and the pre-school children all designed their own cards for parents to buy. In return, pre-school received garden centre vouchers to improve our eco-area. We are hoping that the children will be designing Christmas cards during this coming term through the same scheme.

I ran a Pampered Chef/Phoenix Cards party at home in July - My thanks go to Natalie Quinton and another friend Helen, who came down from Bristol to show off her wares! Thank you to those who could come and buy something!

The main fundraising event this year came in the form of a Summer Fete and Dog Show for the village of Hinton St George. There are so many people to thank for being involved with organising, sponsoring and supporting the event that I apologise to not mention you all by name.... I must thank the following however (in no particular order), without whom the event would not have been such a huge success, surpassing all expectations: Isle Valley Vets, all parents and friends of the pre-school, the residents of Hinton St George, Osborne's Fruit & Veg, Barrett's Butchers, Peter & Sue at the Personal Stores, everyone who donated a prize for the fantastic raffle and Mr Carter for lending us his PA system. We raised well over £1000 and hope to do the same again next year. I have received so many positive comments from everyone who attended, so thank you to all who made it work! We did it!!

We have so many supporters for our pre-school throughout the year - thank you to everyone who contributes in whatever way.

### Fees

Fees this year remained at £3.47 per hour and will rise in the Autumn term to £3.49. At the beginning of 2010 the government reviewed the way children are funded for their pre-school places and now all pre-schools are assessed individually on their circumstances for how much they receive per child per hour. There are a variety of factors involved and we are not in total agreement of how the assessment is made. This is an ongoing issue that Jonathan Kerr and I have taken up with David Laws, as our local MP, and we hope to resolve during the coming year. We will obviously keep you informed.

### Charity Commission

Information regarding the pre-school as a charity is up-to-date with the charity commission and has been submitted on time again this year (before the end of June).

### Policies and Procedures

Many policies and procedures were updated this year in time for the aforementioned OFSTED inspection. I have put together a timetable for this year which hopefully the committee and staff will take on board in order to update these more regularly which makes the job a lot less of a burden on individuals.

### Recommendations for the future

1. To build on the successful OFSTED report by implementing the suggestions given - I believe this has already begun!
2. Build on successful fundraising ideas so that we can survive if central funding falls.
3. Encourage more parents to join our committee and become involved in order to keep the current stability in pre-school going. This coming year will have to be my last as chair due to the fact I will have completed my maximum of 3 years at the helm. More recruits will be needed in 2011!

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 enjoy the challenge and keeping busy keeps me out of mischief! I will continue to work hard over the coming year to help pre-school grow and develop.

Helen Harding

Chair of St George's Pre-school Committee