



Chairperson's Report 2006/7 Thursday 8th November 2007

This year has been one of managing projects and improvements.

We completed our main work on the new outdoor area in October with the laying of a safety surface by Nova Sport. This was at a cost of £2397 and so we continued to look for funding. We used £850 left from Consolidated Charities and received £200 from Newstart shop, £120 from South Derbyshire Bowling Club and £500 from Brizlincote Parish Council. We managed to fund the rest of the money ourselves by continuing with our regular fundraisers such as stalls at local Christmas and Summer Fayres, the Tulip Festival, raffles and sponsored events. In March we also tried out our first Easter Fayre to celebrate and of course raise more funds! This was mostly a success and a credit to a great team of people working together well.

Last year we began work on a project to enhance our quiet carpet area, incorporating more I.T. equipment and creating a library system. Unfortunately, our funding applications had all come back unsuccessful so we then applied to the Local Network Fund. We have since found out that this one has been granted and we hope to have this new area up and running by next year.

Having worked continuously this past year on improving our security, we were relieved to find a solution that suited both the church and ourselves. The two upstairs doors and kitchen door were fitted with press button security systems. This breakthrough came just at the right time as OFSTED decided to call on us a month later and thankfully were also satisfied with the new security!

Our new project began in January. It all started after a comment from Janet about how great it would be to have another indoor space for breaking down into groups to enhance the children's learning and me being in the right place at the right time. I managed to secure £13 000 from a Capital Fund relating to the Stapenhill Community and Learning Partnership in order to create a new room in the disused balcony area. Our biggest problem was then gaining approval from the Church PCC and making sure the work would be done before the September dead line. We entered into discussion with St Peter's Church, building advisors and the County Council. I would particularly like to say a special thank you to Sara Attwood who did a lot of the legwork, as these discussions continued for the rest of the school year!

The committee have worked hard this year by up dating some of our more complicated policies. We have reviewed our Behavior Management Policy, Non Collection of Children Policy, and Special Education Needs/Disability Policy. Janet and Jo Wyss also worked on an inventory of all our equipment and we decided to extend our contents insurance to £20 000, reflecting a truer value if we should ever need to replace it.

Sara Attwood took over as our fees coordinator and after much thought the committee decided to change the billing system to paying upfront and introducing a late fee of £10.00. Unfortunately, this was due to some large bills not being paid and we felt that as a small charity we could not afford to let this happen again.

As a committee, we have continued our efforts to keep parents well informed about the latest news and the general running of pre-school by updating the notice board and producing half-termly newsletters. We continue to update the welcome pack for new parents and have produced a leaflet to give out prior to a child starting.

We distributed leaflets within the Edgehill area in October to advertise ourselves and we are hoping to send out some newly designed fliers via local free papers. Our thanks go to Tamsin who freely gave her design expertise to the job.

In July we decided it would be good to begin termly coffee mornings which would be open to the whole community. The aim would just be to gather people together, give space to parent entrepreneurs and generally allowing time for people to get to know each other a little better.

We also held a family day at Rosliston Forestry Centre to thank everyone for their support this year – with pond dipping, nature trails, the birds of prey experience and soft play. We were grateful for the brilliant weather we had and of course the great company!

Obviously, I would like to thank everyone who has served on the committee this year – for all your hard work and enthusiasm. Special thanks go to Jo Turner who is stepping down as Secretary and Jo Wyss who is stepping down as Treasurer. The Pre School has definitely gained a lot from both of you.

Our staff have continued to be a credit to the Pre school with their ongoing enthusiasm to keep standards high. This was rewarded by the great OFSTED report in May. They gave us a glowing report and we moved up the scale from 'satisfactory' to 'good.' In the area of parental partnership, we were judged 'outstanding,' which is a credit to everyone involved in the running of the Pre school.

We increased our sessions from five to six in February to cope with the growing waiting list. Tanya took on extra hours as the number of children grew and we invited Joy Butcher to work with us after Christmas.

Sadly, we said "goodbye" to our Assistant Supervisor at the end of the summer term as she moved on to a new job. We said farewell to her at our end of year party – I'm not sure who was crying the most!

As a committee, we would also like to thank all the parents, grandparents and volunteers who have put in time over the year doing rotas, fundraising and generally getting involved. Without parents and carers' help the Pre School would not work.

So, it's been an extremely busy year, although that may not come across in this report. I feel that we've achieved a lot of behind the scenes grafting – what with the security, the library project and the development of the balcony area all moving forward. I hope that next year's report will show all the fruit of that hard work!

I have joked with Janet and said that she is not allowed to have any more bright ideas next year – that maybe I could have an easy last year as Chair person. I doubt it will happen somehow. This coming year sees us turn 40 and we have got to lay on a party. So, get your thinking caps on and let's have another good year.

With thanks Sue Garb