

# Clifton-upon-Teme Nursery Ltd

## Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 7.00 pm at Clifton Village Hall

**Present:** **Members:** Val Pardy (Trustee), Robin Dean (Chairman of Meeting and Trustee), Lesley Dean, Chris Hurley, Katy Williams, Matt Bennett-Tomlin, Katherine Poole, Alice Fletcher, Abi Pethybridge-Court (Nursery Manager), Rachel Cartwright (Deputy Manager), Tracey Dewis (Financial Controller),  
(11 present - quorum is 10)

### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Robin Dean opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the 21<sup>st</sup> AGM of the Nursery. He asked explained that Abi would be giving the Manager report and Tracey the Financial report.

### 2. Apologies for absence

Catherine Mawston (Chair of the Trustees) and Cecilia Dean (Trustee)

### 3. Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Robin Dean asked for any comments as to the accuracy of last year's AGM minutes, none made. All members present agreed. They were signed by Robin.

There were no matters arising.

### 4. Chair of Trustees' Annual Report

Robin Dean read the report which had been prepared by Catherine Mawston - this is attached to these minutes. There were no queries raised concerning this report.

### 5. Nursery Manager's Annual Report

Abi Pethybridge Court reviewed her report - the full report is attached to these minutes.

Robin thanked Abi and her staff on behalf the Trustees for their considerable efforts in making the Nursery a thriving concern. This concluded with unanimous acclamation.

### 6. Annual Financial Report

Tracey Dewis presented her report - this is attached to these minutes.

Robin thanked Tracey for all her hard work in support of the Nursery.

### 7. Election of Trustees

Val Pardy had asked to resign after some 6 years as a Trustee. Robin thanked Val for all her hard work on the Nursery's behalf. Abi presented Val with a bouquet and a card from the staff and children. The Trustees presented her with a signed card and a rose bush. Val thanked everyone for their kind thoughts.

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Katherine Poole, Alice Fletcher and Matt Bennett-Tomlin had attended previous Trustee meetings and had agreed to become Trustees. Robin asked each of them to briefly introduce themselves. They were duly elected.

### 8. Any Other Business

Chris Hurley who was a founder Trustee, asked whether parents were aware of the government tax support for Nursery parents. Both Katherine and Alice were and Abi had sent out information about it to all parents. Chris also mentioned that the Nursery Building was owned by the Nursery - the land belongs to Worcestershire County Council at a peppercorn rent. Chris also offered help to Katherine concerning possible grants or fund raising present.

There was no other business. The meeting was closed at 8.15pm.

## **Clifton upon Teme Nursery Ltd**

### **Report of the Chairperson for the AGM on Thursday 24 November 2022**

In my report last year, I concluded that the continued existence of the nursery after the challenges of a global pandemic was quite remarkable and a testament to the hard work of the staff and Trustees. I continue to feel that the survival of this small nursery, in a rural setting, is quite remarkable and, unfortunately, faces significant challenges in the year ahead. The evidence of the pressure on nurseries throughout the country are frequently reported in the press and many nurseries have been forced to close in the last year. The cost-of-living crisis, increase in fuel costs, inflation and underfunding of nursery places have placed considerable pressure on the setting.

The staff continue to work with dedication and commitment and are led by the manager, Abi, to address the observations of the OFSTED report of the inspection in February 2022. The report highlighted that the areas needing improvement included staff supervision to improve the quality of teaching and the educational programme for children's personal, social, and emotional development. The inspector, on her one-day visit, observed that new manager (Abi) "is highly motivated and diligent". The report, also, commented that the setting was a safe and inviting space and children were warmly welcomed. We were pleased that parents reported that "their children are happy and settled" and that the staff communicate effectively to keep them up to date with their children's progress. The inspector also observed that safeguarding measures were effective, and staff have a good understanding of child protection and safeguarding issues. Abi has produced a robust action plan to address the matters that require improvement, and she is supported in this by an educational consultant. We anticipate that there will be a return of OFSTED soon to check on the progress that has been made.

The nursery depends on the voluntary work of the Board of Trustees. It is with great sadness and gratitude that we say goodbye to Valerie Pardy after six years of service to the nursery and her expert contribution to the educational aspects of the nursery will be greatly missed. We have, also, said 'thank you and goodbye' to Ross May, a parent Trustee.

There has been a concerted effort to recruit new Trustees and we are optimistic that this may have positive results. Hopefully, this evening we will be

welcoming our latest volunteers to join the Board and I am pleased to see that they are local people.

Without more Trustees the nursery is in a very vulnerable position. There are three trustees continuing next year Robin Dean, Cecilia Dean and myself. We would still benefit from more Trustees joining the Board. As a charity, registered with the Charity Commission, the Trustees are responsible for the meeting the requirements for the efficient running of the nursery. The Board desperately need to have more Trustees, especially people with skills in accountancy, health and safety, marketing and early years education. We, continue to be grateful to Tracey Dewis for her support and expertise in keeping the accounts in an orderly manner.

At present we have 26 children on roll with the expectation of 3 more joining in January. Abi reports that there have been visitors looking for places and there may be a possibility of more registrations.

The staff at the Nursery have continued to work with great loyalty during this challenging period. We have welcomed Carla to the staff, and she is working towards her level 3 qualification. Tabitha has joined the bank staff team and we anticipate the return of Lottie, following her maternity leave. A staff member who worked during the holidays has left to a permanent job.

Developments over the year have included: changes to the environment to make it more calming and natural space for the children, the introduction of more open ended and authentic resources to allow the children to be curious and creative, the outside space has become a Forest School and sessions have been run for pre-school children, the sleep room has been moved and made more suitable for the purpose.

Abi has had support from Early Years Leadership and Worcestershire Children First to develop staff training and coaching. All staff are up to date on First Aid and Safeguarding training.

Now, more than ever, the future of this marvellous nursery will be dependent on the local community to galvanise itself if the nursery is still to be operational this time next year.

Catherine Mawston  
Chairperson of the Trustees

## **Annual General Meeting – Clifton Upon Teme Nursery and Forest School**

**Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

### **Managers' Report**

**I was appointed as manager in January 2022.**

**I started off by having 1:1 with the staff and doing observations to see where we were and how we could move forward, 5 weeks after my start date Ofsted came to do a routine inspection.**

**Unfortunately, we were given a 'Requires Improvement'. Safeguarding was not an issue and the staff answered all questions confidently that the inspector asked. We were issued with an action plan from Ofsted that focused on:**

- Having robust systems in place that tackles staff under performance**
- Have systems in place that support staff with their own continuous professional development to raise the quality of teaching.**
- Improvement of educational programmes for children to develop their personal, social and emotional development.**

**When a setting has a 'Requires Improvement', Ofsted will return to do another inspection within 12 months. This visit is still pending.**

**We started off by evaluating the environment at nursery. It was very bright, cluttered and had many closed resources, (toys that have 1 purpose). We wanted the environment to be calm, relaxed with a lot more open ended resources, (resources that can be used for anything with a bit of imagination!)**

**We had a massive clear out and sold lots of items, which meant we were able to buy new resources that were more engaging and gave the environment a softer and calm atmosphere, using more authentic resources.**

**We turned the outside garden area into a Forest School and have weekly sessions. This is still an ongoing project but we have future plans to keep developing this area.**

**In May, Lottie went on Maternity leave and we welcomed Carla Roberts to the team. Carla is Level 2 qualified and quickly signed up to do her Level 3, which is ongoing. We, also, had a move around with staff roles. Deb took on the role as Pre-school leader, Mina moved into Toddlers and Rachel went into the Baby Room to cover Lottie's maternity. As Lottie is due to return in February 2023, these roles are being reviewed again.**

**After advice from the inspector we also reviewed the planning. We scrapped 'In the Moment Planning' and now do theme planning that follows the children's interest and next steps. Every child has a key worker and they ensure that every child has a focus observation every 2 weeks for their learning Journey.**

**We decided to move away from Tapestry Online Learning Journal and we now use Eylog and Eyman. This platform is more usable for both staff and families and we are now able to reduce paperwork. We can do sessions on the platform, as well as accident form, medicine forms, daily diaries and daily registers. This saves time for the practitioners as well as paper and printer ink.**

**To support staff development, I have ensured that everyone is having a 1:1 meeting at least every 3 month. These are in depth discussions that allow us to discuss strengths, weaknesses, wellbeing and safeguarding. Following this, staff are issued with an action plan with the agreed actions and have target dates so I can check in with them, review and hold them accountable for their own development. We have, also, been having staff meetings every 1-2 months where we have discussed child development, behaviour management and our curriculum and pedagogy.**

**With everyone's input we have put together a new curriculum and ethos of the nursery and each room has focus points for their children to meet before they transition though to the next room. These focus points will be reviewed termly depending on the individual children in the group.**

To assist with coaching and mentoring we asked Early Years Leadership to come on board. This has been amazing. Bev visits the setting once a month, spends some time with me and Rachel, looking at our leadership styles and how we can support the staff and the setting. She also spends time with the staff coaching and mentoring whilst they are in their rooms. Next week Bev is coming to the setting to do a mock inspection, this will be followed by a staff meeting and feedback.

Taking the nursery back to Clifton Upon Teme Nursery and dropping Doodlebugs was really important for all of us. Everyone wanted a fresh start and a new beginning. We were set up by the community, for the community and wanted to go back to our roots.

Building relationships with the neighboring primary school is also an important focus for now and the future. I have attended a catch-up meeting with the Head, as well as having a meeting with the new reception teacher, Gemma, to discuss the children that transitioned in September. We can support our preschool children now ready for their move next September. We will continue to get together and review throughout the year and Gemma has kindly offered support and advice if needed.

We have given a focus on children that are displaying the need for intervention and our SECO, Rachel, now has a morning a week out of numbers where she is able to focus time with these children, putting Individual Support Plans in place. Rachel is having meetings with parents to build the partnership and making referrals to outside professionals for more specialist support.

Future focus – We will continue to support staff through there Continuous Professional Development as well as ensuring that the children are developing, learning and thriving through the new systems that have been put in place.

There are plans for a fundraising drive over the next 12 months, so we are able to make changes to the environment outside and make improvements like we have done in the inside environment.

Continuing to develop the Forest School area is an ongoing focus as this features heavily in our curriculum. We plan to increase the

**sessions per week as well as take the children to a local woodland area regularly for new experiences and opportunities.**

**With this fundraising we would, also, like to review the heating systems in the setting to ensure they are efficient and sustainable.**

**On roll at the moment we have 26 children and 9 staff, this includes bank staff.**

**To be able to ensure that the setting continues to serve the community and retain employment in the local area it is vital that we can enroll more children into the setting. As well as driving marketing, I believe that by ensuring we are implementing our plans with a focus intent then the impact will be great!**

**We will continue to support our local children to become curious, confident and independent learners**



## **Financial review for Clifton upon Teme Nursery Ltd - 24th November 2022 AGM**

The accounts for the year end June 2022 are in draft form and are yet to be submitted to Companies House and could be subject to minor amendments.

We receive income from Parents and Government – this is called Nursery Education Funding (NEF). The NEF does not cover the full cost of providing care for the children and therefore we have asked parents who receive NEF to make a voluntary contribution (not invoiced) of £10 per month by standing order. If the parent pays tax then we are able as a charity to claim an additional £2.50 from HMRC as Gift Aid. NEF only applies during the school terms.

During the year, the number of children has been steady throughout and as a result the NEF has remained similar month on month along with parent funding.

The amount of NEF we received in 2021/2022 was £35,861 compared to 2020/2021 where it was £41,424 and together with parent funding resulted in the total income of £119,840 compared to £86,942 the previous year.

We also received a grant from Malvern Hills Council for £1500.00 for Covid lockdown compensation.

The total expenditure was £132K which resulted in a loss for the year of £12K.

We also took advantage of a Government backed bounce back loan (repayable over 5 years with a very low rate of interest) during the Covid pandemic of £15k although we have paid back £5k at the start of the loan period and we continue to pay the remainder monthly.

Looking at the first quarter of the current year July-Sept, we are showing a loss of £4.5k but this is due to less NEF in these particular months.

Numbers of children are due to increase at the start of the year and this should show a positive reflection on the finances going forward.

Tracey Dewis  
Accountant