

## Chair's Report – Little Cuckoos Pre-School AGM 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Welcome to Little Cuckoos Pre-School's 2017 AGM and thank you all for attending.

2016 has been a significant year at Little Cuckoos. Firstly, we began the year with a strong number of children on roll which Hayley will go through in more detail. We continue to recruit new families through word of mouth and personal recommendations. Our website – which has been improved over the past year with more regularly updated news and information – has also proven to be an effective tool to help raise awareness of the pre-school and drive interest. Our Facebook page remains active and popular, and the monthly article in the local "Bridge" magazine helps to maintain Little Cuckoos' positive reputation.

Just before the start of May half term, an unexpected visit from Ofsted was received. Under the leadership of Hayley, the team of staff went through a very challenging day of observations and on-the-spot questioning. The result – Little Cuckoos is rated "Good" in all areas which we are all extremely proud of as it underlines the dedication, passion and commitment shown by all staff. In their results, Ofsted included statements that **"the management team works hard to provide high-quality care and learning for children. It uses the views of staff, children, parents and carers to implement ambitious plans that benefit all the children."** Well done to Hayley, Vi, Sam, Andrea and Hilary for maintaining Little Cuckoos' well-deserved Ofsted rating.

At the end of the 2015/2016 academic year, Corsley Parish Council amended our existing lease to incorporate part of the Old School Playing Field. This fenced off area has become one of the staff and committee's most exciting projects to work on, creating an opportunity to work together and develop a fantastic outdoor space for the children to learn through play. After many creative meetings and kind input from parent volunteers, the wonderful Willow Wonderland has been developed. This tree-shaped pathway has "branches" leading off into different activity zones to capture the imagination of the children. It also includes a beautiful willow den as its focal point. This project remains a work-in-progress and will need further resources to help its completion. A series of events over the next year will help fundraise towards this.

We have held some successful events over the past year which can only come together with the amazing amount of support and enthusiasm shown by our committee members who give up so much of their time to make these events a success. Our Christmas Fair was very popular as always, as was the Easter Egg Hunt which raised a fantastic amount of money for the pre-school. We also created a Mini Monsters Ball for Halloween and a summer party towards the end of term. Hayley and her team organised a lovely Stories by Starlight evening to highlight World Book Day. As we start to focus on new events for the coming year, I would like to take this opportunity to say a special thank you to Rachel Hanney who will be stepping down from her event manager role within the committee. For over 4 years, Rachel has guided the committee through a series of successful events, putting in time to cover every detail to ensure each event is well-attended and enjoyed by all. Thank you, Rachel.

The success of our fundraising efforts has helped to finance some essential maintenance work to the building, including a new heating system which was recently installed during the summer holidays. We also have a new hot water system being installed, as well as repair work to the wooden steps leading to the outside play area.

There have been some staff adjustments over the past year. Firstly, we recruited a temporary one-to-one key person to assist a child for one term. We have also recruited a key person, Brenda Shelbourne, to assist Hayley on a supply basis when staff cover is needed. Brenda has also started running the Tuesday Toddler Group to replace Emily Edwards. Brenda brings with her lots of creativity and experience in working with children, making her an asset to the group, which is a great pipeline for new families signing up their children to the pre-school. Another staff adjustment is the promotion of Sam Keller to Senior Key Person who will have a particular focus on planning activities at Little Cuckoos.

On behalf of all committee members, I would like to thank Hayley and every member of staff for working so hard throughout the year in caring for our children. Our annual Parent Questionnaire shows that parents are overwhelmingly positive about the pre-school, with 100% of parents that completed the form agreeing that their child is happy, safe, well looked after and making good progress.

I would like to thank all our committee members for their hard work and dedication over the last year and more. We are extremely fortunate to retain the skills of some of our members to help shape the future of the pre-school for the next academic year and beyond. Laura Lockwood has volunteered to step into the Secretary role which she is already carrying out brilliantly; Samantha Osment brings her marketing expertise to the committee and is doing a great job at keeping our newsletter, website and Facebook page updated. Having an experienced accountant as our Treasurer makes Aimee Emden a real asset to the team – Aimee has made a fantastic contribution towards the financial stability of the pre-school over the past year. I also look forward to staying on the committee. We really look forward to recruiting new faces to the committee to help us make decisions for the future of Little Cuckoos and to support our fundraising efforts. For now, I am delighted to hand the reins over to Susie Stafford, our new Chair, who I am confident will lead Little Cuckoos through another successful and prosperous year. Thank you.