Little Berries Pre-School AGM
Tuesday 17th January 2023 at 7:00pm
AGENDA

PRESENT: Mary, Emma F, Lauren, Paula, Emma R, Lucy, Zoe, Kat

APOLOGIES: Graham, Nicky

1. Annual Report from Mary Elia (Manager)
2. Previous Financial Year Accounts Summary
3. Elect the Trustees of the Charity for the next year

   Registered person to phone Ofsted and inform them of any changes
4. Elect the Fundraising Committee
5. A.O.B.

Agree Committee Meetings Dates for the next year:

March: (Summer planning) - Tuesday 7th March 2023 at 6pm
May: (Autumn planning) - TBC
September (Winter planning) - TBC

Manager report for AGM 2023

Covid & outcomes on children

The last few years have felt very surreal! Its unbelievable to think that our first lockdown was a little under 3 years ago!

The pandemic has undoubtedly presented many challenges; the main being the impact it's had on children. Sadly, we are now seeing a greater number of children with speech and language delay and who present with more challenging behaviours; some children do not have the skills to interact and/or engage with their peers and sharing and turn taking is something we're regularly having to reinforce. Some children became so reliant on screentime that we're having to teach them how to play with toys. Local authority resources have been scaled right back, a speech and language referral for example can take as much as 13 weeks for an initial appointment and due to under staffing and lack of resources, our children are being discharged way too early. As a result, more pressure is placed on us to put interventions in place.

So, I want to give huge thanks to both my teams who despite all the obstacles they face, continue to rise to the many challenges that working with young children presents!

Intake

We were at full capacity last year for both preschools, with waiting lists for both, and in the very same situation this year; we have an extensive waiting list for both preschools, so it's highly unlikely that the children currently sat on our waiting list will get a space before September, and even then, we won't be able to accommodate all the children waiting for a space.

Projects

LB1

Continuing to develop the sensory room, which is used as a quiet space, for mindfulness, children with additional needs and for delivering our communication and language interventions.
Fundraising for an 'all purpose' garden so it can be used feely by the children all year round.

LB2

Storage solutions
Create a sensory room, predominantly for our children with additional needs, so they have a space for sensory exploration.

Holiday club

We have been fully subscribed during the past academic year; more and more children are beginning to access it and we have a significant number of returning children who use the service. Just a reminder that we can accept siblings until they reach 8 years old.

Communication

Due to some parents not receiving our emails and, in a bid, to reduce my workload, we've decided this year to trial Tapestry as the main source of communication. We hope this is working, if not please let myself or Emma know. You should be receiving our monthly newsletters, diary dates and parent questionnaires; this is in addition to any photographs, videos, or observations that your child's key person uploads. Don't forget to 'Like' our Facebook page for details on all upcoming events as well as our website
Also, with regards to observations etc, changes made by the DfE in 2021 to the Early Years curriculum states that practitioners should spend less time uploading observations and producing written records and more time interacting face to face with the children. Therefore, the setting expectation is for practitioners to upload your child's developmental next step at the start of each half term, an update throughout that half term, followed by an evaluation at the end of the half term.

Ofsted

We have no idea where Ofsted are in their inspection cycle. Due to the pandemic, routine inspections were extended from 4 to 6 years. If we go by our last inspections, LB1 is due in November of this year & LB2 in 2025. Regardless, we will continue to deliver outstanding practice to our children and their families.

Staffing

Since September we have taken on 3 new members of staff at LB1; 2 are teaching staff (one full and one part time) and the 3rd is a SEND teacher who delivers the settings 1:1 support for children with additional needs. After half term, we have a qualified ELSA starting with us; she will be based predominantly at LB1 but will offer support to both settings.

Recruiting good quality staff is virtually impossible at the moment due to the sector being massively under-funded; however, my recruitment criteria remains as stringent as ever as good quality staff is of paramount importance, particularly with the knock on effects of the pandemic.

Training

Individual training is undertaken in line with practitioner's professional development.

We continue to support our two apprentices as well as all other practitioners in workplace training. Our Development Plan is reviewed regularly, and we welcome any feedback, suggestions, or ideas from you. Outcomes from parent & staff questionnaires are fed into our provision and practice is regularly reviewed.

Meetings

Staff & planning meetings continue every 2 weeks; these provide us with a great opportunity to gather and discuss any uprising issues and developments.

They also allow us to plan for our children and arrange trips, workshops, end of term parties etc.

Lauren, Paula & I continue to attend Early Years Childcare Briefings, Early Years conferences and any other meetings/conferences we feel are beneficial to the smooth running of the preschools.

Paula & Lauren who are the settings Special Educational Needs Coordinators, continue to attend 'Every Child a Talker' (ECAT) & SENCo meetings/conferences to help shape practice for all children.

Trips/Visits/Events

During the last year we have enjoyed:

Nativity performances

Christmas Craft workshop (fundraising event)

Christmas party

Photographers

Music with Miranda

Mums in for Mother's Day

Dads in for Father's Day

Grandparents in for Grandparent's day

Parents sharing their religious festivals with us

Easter Craft workshop (fundraising event)

Easter bonnet parade

Trip to Longdown

Walks to the Common

Visits to schools (transitions)

Visits from teachers

Sports day

Graduation ceremony

End of year party

Fundraising (across both preschools)

Fundraising has been down on previous years because of the pandemic and now the cost-of-living crisis; the money raised from fundraising helps subsidise preschool trips, parties, and our weekly peripatetic music teacher.

Any ideas or suggestions for fundraising events will be gratefully received!

Parent feedback

The feedback gained from parents through our 'Parent Feedback Questionnaires' has been very positive towards all areas of practice!

Parents love the reassurance of Tapestry; seeing that their child is happy & settled if they've left them upset!

I have revised the parent feedback questionnaires this year to make them more child centred and streamlined the questions bringing them in line with Ofsted's expectations of provision delivery.

FYI: We also promote parents coming in and joining us for an hour or longer should they wish and partake in the children's activities/learning.

Future projects

More fundraising ideas to fund snack, children's parties & outings.

Ongoing training for all practitioners to ensure we continue to improve outcomes for all children.

Complete the bronze physical activity section of the 'Healthy Early Years Award' for both preschools.

Conclusion

I'd like to say a HUGE "thank you" to all staff for their continued hard work, dedication and commitment & also to you the parents & Committee for helping, volunteering, supporting decisions which have allowed us to move the preschools forward! Here's to another successful year!

Input from attendees on Manager report

Zoe may be able to find out information for a cheaper garden surface for LB1.

Suggestions requested for high storage solutions at LB2.

Feedback from parents on preference for Holiday Club being based in the setting.

Emma F to investigate why Tapestry is not pushing notifications to parents from the app.

More encouragement to parents to visit Tapestry to be added to newsletter.

Add to newsletter about next steps each half term, above the 3 areas is at the key worker's discretion.

Facebook page reminder - add link

Christmas craft - sadly this wasn't well attended - possibly do this earlier in December next year?

Parental feedback on Newsletter - share, don't wait for questionnaires

Shawn to add new members to the Facebook fundraising group

Suggestion of chocolate based tombola's at key points as fundraisers

Match funding, supermarket tokens

Tesco charity scheme where they donate food near end dates - lots of families struggling and this can help

Accounts not finalised - can be shared once received

Charity right off - when self-employed give donations

Elect the Trustees of the Charity for the next year

Registered person to phone Ofsted and inform them of any changes

Chairpersons: Cath Dixon & Emma Ridley

Secretary: Emma Fay

Treasurer: Shawn Turner

Other Parent Trustees: Lucy, Kat, Weronika

Elect the Fundraising Committee

Any parents/carers can join this committee and subsequent meetings.
Next meeting Tuesday 7th March at 6:00pm.

A.O.B.

None