



Minutes of Annual General Meeting of The Ark Pre-school

Held on 31st July 2020 at 19.30. Due to COVID-19, the meeting was held virtually.

The meeting was chaired by Emma Frost (Committee Chairperson)

There 4 parents present, including 1 parent representative from the committee, Church Rep, Treasurer, Chair, Manager and Administrator.

Apologies were given by the Julianty Noble (Secretary), Sumita Mohanty and Anna Forbes (Staff members), Katherine Bond-Smith (Outgoing Parent Rep) and Millie Foyle (Proposed incoming Parent Rep.)

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th July 2019 were shared, and approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

Manager Report (See detailed report attached)

- The Chair read the report to the meeting. The report gave a review of the academic year just gone, which involved a move to temporary premises at Christmas for the building project at Crowthorne Baptist Church, and then enforced closure, due to COVID-19, and subsequent cautious re-opening on 1st June.
- Thanks was given to Avril for her talk at Christmas, and thanks to many staff and volunteers for assisting in the move to Wellington. We have made the most of the outside space, covering all areas of the EYFS. Time is initially spent outside and then the session moves inside.
- When we re-opened on 1st June, the session was wholly run outside to limit spread of infection, and were fortunate in the mainly good weather. We staggered the return of children as we re-opened and all ran very smoothly. Children adapted very well and understood that some resources were not allowed. We were at an advantage of being able to use the whole site with Wellington closed to students; children were free to take risks and explore the site.
- Fun in the Forest has run in Chaucer Woods in Autumn term, and then in Wellington until the COVID closure. Thanks to Liz for helping to allow the 1:2 ratio.
- St Brendan's requested our visits every half-term, and we managed 3 before lockdown.
- Caterpillars were a great hit, with related songs, stories and activities, and looking at life cycles.
- We were delighted that Sports Day could take place (without the parental fan base).
- During lockdown, staff continued contact with children through Tapestry, making comments and suggestions for next steps.
- Many thanks to parents for their understanding and continued support in this challenging year. Thanks for those who brought in pets, including childminders. The positive feedback and word of mouth recommendations are a top selling point and we are so grateful. We look forward to the continued partnership with parents in the coming year.

Chair Report (See detailed report attached)

- The Chair again referenced the challenges this year with the move of premises and the enforced closure. She was most grateful for the dedication of the staff. She thanked staff, and families, committee members and people from church for help during move. Thanks to Liz and Avril for volunteering at the pre-school, thanks to parents for support and participation.

- All staff and Heather, the Manager, were thanked for additional work to plan and implement and prepare for the setting's return after the enforced closure, giving of their own time.
- Huge thanks was also given to Sarah, the administrator, who is leaving the role after 9 years in post, although will continue to be involved in the committee.

There were no questions or comments following these reports.

Treasurer's Report (See detailed report attached)

The accounts are reported up to 31st December 2019, as the financial year is not in line with the academic year.

- There is currently £19k in the current account and £25k in the deposit account.
- A total of £53k came in, and £48k was paid out.
- Salary costs were maintained, and a large expense was for staff first aid training, which happens every 3 years.
- A donation was made to the church, as a gift of thanks for the use of premises without rental costs.
- Some 2019 expenses were not received in this financial year and therefore will be carried into next year.
- Reserves policy is to hold £20k. £10k to cover staff costs in the event of closure, and the rest is set aside for relocation costs, which is being spent accordingly through this year.
- Huge thanks were given to Justine for a tremendous job that she does keeping our accounts in order.

There were no questions or comments for the treasurer.

Election of Officers

Thanks were given to Katherine Bond-Smith and Naomi Page for standing as parent representatives for the last 2 years. They have done a great job in attending all committee meetings, and giving feedback. They now move on as their children have left the setting.

The Chair proposed the following committee posts be taken for the following year:

Co-Chairs – Emma Frost and Sarah Webb*

Secretary – Julianty Noble

Treasurer – Justine Wells

Church Rep – Avril Doyle

Parent Rep – Millie Foyle

There is still a vacancy for a further parent rep to be appointed.

*(Sarah will take post when her employment as administrator ceases – expected to be on 31st August)

These were duly appointed unanimously by the meeting (no voting rights for manager and administrator).

Adoption of Policies

Policy documents are regularly reviewed and revised to ensure that they reflect our practice. They are working documents and we refer to them and amend if our practice changes at any time.

Some minor amendments are being made to the policies, but they were adopted for the next academic year, pending these changes.

All policies are to be signed by the Chair and uploaded onto website. Parents and staff will be asked to read them and sign to say that they agree to them.

Any Other Business

We are unsure how we will be operating in September specifically, as the guidelines are constantly changing with the changing picture in the pandemic. We will review our operations close to when we re-open in September and communicate to all parents. We are sure we will continue to be outside as much as possible, but with limitations as the students will have returned to Wellington so we will remain more in our area of the site.

Q: When will we know who will take on the role of administrator?

A: When the person is appointed, it will be communicated to the committee, staff and parents.

There being no further questions, or further business, the meeting closed at 20.00.

Minutes of meeting held on 31.7.20 were approved by Committee Chair on 01.08.20