



The Ark Pre-School Chair Report 2021/22

The past academic year has been a crucial transitional year as we settled back into life on the High Street from the woodland location we had enjoyed at Wellington College. The staff worked extremely hard to move everything back in preparation for September and the year has been full of tweaks as we adjust to the new building and balancing a central village setting, convenient for families, with outdoor experiences in the natural environment. Without doubt, it has been a huge success and is only down to the commitment and passion of our whole staff team, the constant encouragement from the Ark Committee and the superb support from our parents. For all this, I thank every single one of you.

We are incredibly grateful to the leadership team and members of the church who have welcomed us back, are taking an active part in engaging with our activities or helping with our facility queries; in short, we are truly forming an even firmer partnership with Crowthorne Baptist Church than ever before. This is at the very heart of The Ark and enhances the fulfilment of our vision.

We also thank Wellington College for continuing to allow us to visit the site twice a week. They have been incredibly accommodating and flexible as we found a way to make this work to enrich the time at The Ark for our children, whilst still maintaining the safeguarding of their own students.

One highlight of this year was hearing about the multitude of parents who joined us to cheer on the children in their nativity performance. I heard that every single child did them proud! Another highlight must be the delight in being able to host an Ofsted Inspector and show off everything that our **'Outstanding'** setting has to offer young children and how we work incredibly well alongside our families.

I want to pause to give special thanks to Sue, who after 21 years with us, has decided that it is time for her to walk down the gang plank for the last time and enjoy her well-earned retirement. Sue, you have been committed for so many years and your sense of humour will be missed. Thank you and enjoy your badminton, gardening and holidays as well as time with your precious family.

Finally, I would like to re-iterate my joy at being able to celebrate a year which has brought us all to our knees at times but one that has been full to the brim with smiling and happy children – what more could a pre-school ask for? I repeat my thanks to Heather for her leadership and to her and Anna, Sue, Sumita and Anne for keeping the children running in for more each day they come and to Naomi for keeping everything so ship-shape and everyone well informed.