



Minutes AGM 14th July 2017 at 11.45am
Held at Crowthorne Baptist Church.

There were 10 people present, including 5 parents.

Chair's Welcome

Phyllida Dewes, Chair Person, started the meeting by introducing herself, as helping to start The Ark 19 years ago. It is run by a Voluntary Management Committee, 60% of whom must be Church Members. Phyllida introduced the committee members present: Justine Wells (Treasurer), Avril Doyle (Church Rep) and our Parent Representative (Katherine Bond-Smith). Katherine has to step down as her child is leaving The Ark Pre-school to go to school in September. Child Protection and Safeguarding are very important so Parent Reps. undergo DBS clearance.

Apologies for Absence

Emma Frost (Secretary)

Minutes of 2016 AGM

The minutes from the AGM last year are on the website. No queries were raised, so last years' AGM minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.

Chair's Report

A full report was issued before the meeting (see attached document).

- Staffing Update: Sumita has been off long term due to ill health this year. Thanks were given to Avril and Clare for stepping in to cover on an ongoing basis. We are grateful to everyone for flexibility and understanding during this unusual situation over a prolonged period.
- We have recruited Helen who is now going to be permanent from next term.
- It was asked if Anne would be staying on. Phyllida confirmed that she will continue as a reserve member of staff, starting with 2 days in September and if admissions increase we hope she will also be able to increase her days with us. Parental feedback has been that Anne has been a great addition to the team and very quickly settled in to cover Sumita's absence. She has also said that she has enjoyed her time at The Ark.
- Ofsted visited in September, and gave an amazing report. We were ready for the visit, but huge congratulations go to staff for their contributions to deserve an Outstanding rating.

Manager's Report

A full report was issued before the meeting (see attached document).

- There have been fewer changes this year after many changes to adapt to new 2 year old intake, and after 1 year with the wider age range things are now more structured. The routine has remained the same and is more consistent, after lots of tweaks last year.
- This term (Summer) there is work with the more able children to help them progress in preparation for school, including doing letters and sounds. Others are welcome to join in if want to. Also extending maths and language skills.
- 'Fun in the Forest' has gone very well, and the older children all got two visits so could see seasonal changes. This will re-commence after October half-term, to allow children to settle during the first half-term.
- We had Harvest and Christmas assemblies (with leavers assembly next week). Trips included Fire Station and Sandhurst Park. There was an additional trip to Crowthorne Fire Station to meet fire fighters and paramedics, which was organised by our parent reps – Carl Mansell and Chrissi Frewer.

Treasurer's Report

- A Summary of accounts was issued before the meeting, along with the full report (see attached document).
- The accounts have been made up to 31st December 2016 and have been independently audited.
- There was an overspend during the past year (up to end of December 2016), but there were clear extenuating circumstances for this, such as first aid training which is a large expense that is required every 3 years, and staffing issues. It is being monitored.
- Reserves are in place to cover the situation and it is overall very healthy.
- Huge thanks to Justine for the very good job work of keeping accounts in check.
- This year we also applied for grants for the first time, and were awarded a grant from Crowthorne Educational Trust, which was spent on ICT resources. We are also a chosen charity for 6 months, until October, for the Co-op Community Charities.

Election of Officers

Phyllida Dewes is happy to continue as Chair
Emma Frost continues as Secretary
Justine Wells continues as Treasurer
Avril Doyle continues as Church Representative
All these renewal of posts were agreed unanimously.

Katherine was formally thanked for her time on the committee.

Carl Mansell (aided by Chrissi Frewer) will continue as Parent Reps, and Naomi Page has agreed to stand as Parent Representative. These appointments were proposed and agreed unanimously.

Adoption of Policies

Policies are necessary documents to be clear on all procedures within the setting. They are working documents, so are regularly reviewed. If there is an incident in the pre-school we refer to the policy. Any Bracknell Forest briefings of policy changes, or legislative changes, are reflected in the policies and they are updated.

This year quite a few changes, and the expected Ofsted visit gave reason for thorough review of all policies over the summer last year. In particular, revisions and additions were made to the Mobile Phone policy, Policy for Immobile Infants, British Values and PREVENT strategy (which are included in the safeguarding policy).

We continue to review and amend policies as required and will highlight these changes to parents.

Parents are asked to sign to say these policies have been read.

There were no questions on the policies. They are all on the website for reference. Please do ask if anyone has a query with any policy. These were agreed to be adopted for the coming year.

Any other business

A parent questioned what the new 30 hours funding would mean for The Ark.

The Committee have had lots of conversations but there is still lots of uncertainty about this change. We did put ourselves forward for the pilot scheme but the Local Authority were not successful in the bid to take part in the pilot scheme last year. After questionnaires to parents there would not seem to be enough interest to make it viable to extend our opening hours at present. We plan to delay and see how it works in other settings. We will continue to survey parents and if demand increases we will look at offering 30 hours.

Thanks to fundraising contributions by parents we have raised £207.50 for first ever sponsored event – the Mini-Marathon. We are hoping to put this towards chargeable headphones for the children, along with other grants due to be awarded.

There being no other business, Phyllida thanked all for coming, and support of The Ark in general, and the meeting closed at 12.10pm.