

# **First Steps Playgroup AGM**

**4th October 2018**

## **Attendees**

Alison, Beth, Cathie, John, Lorna, Gemma, Vicky, Glynn, Mark, Alicia.

## **Apolpgies**

Rachel Raines, Chloe Carrington (currently on maternity leave), Hannah Costello.

## **Manager Update**

### **Staffing**

It has been another busy year at First Steps. For personal reasons we said goodbye to Kim Nutting in February 2018 as a permanent member of the team but welcomed her to join the bank staff team with Gillian Henman. We welcomed Angela English to the staff team in March 2018. We took on two temporary staff Lisa Gillard & Joanne Lightbown until the summer 2018 and now they have both joined the bank staff team cover sickness.

Courtney Green continues to do her college placement with us for two days a week. Kelly Giffin has recently started to do two days a week with us for her college placement.

### **Training**

Myself - Alison Blackery completed my level 5 in Management and leadership in March 2018. Jessie Williams completed her level 2 in childcare in July 2018 & has now started her level 3 in childcare. Emma Walker now doing her level 3 training in childcare. Several members of the staff team are doing their level 2 in autism through Stephenson College for the next 12 weeks. Well done everyone on your efforts ladies, to continually improve your knowledge and skills.

The staff group continue to be encouraged by short training courses which enhance their skills to provide more and more great childcare ideas at First Steps. We celebrated 50 years of a playgroup in the village in June 2018 where we buried a

time capsule with memories of the playgroup in it. This will be opened again in another 50 years 2068! As a team we at First Steps are motivated and continue to strive to work together to provide an environment that children are really flourishing, learning and developing new skills. Thank you!!

### **Outgoings and fundraising**

This year we have been on a variety of trips including St. Giles Church and a visits to St. Giles Day Centre. Due to the very cold and icy whether we didn't manage to make our usual visit to the Baptist chapel this year. We had a summer trip to Twycross zoo which everyone enjoyed despite the rain! All these visits have given the children learning opportunities and to have fun! We would like to thank the parents who keep volunteering to support the trips we arrange as without this we wouldn't be able to give your children these fantastic experiences. We have had a lot of various fundraising activities this year which have proved to be a big success.

### **The Setting**

We have just had 33 children transfer to local schools (July 2018) and now have 54 children on role this term. We do have some available spaces but have children on the waiting list to start once they are 2 years old. We have had very successful stay and play days / evenings, where the feedback has been very positive!!

Looking ahead to the next year we aim to keep improving the setting by implementing new ideas and activities from the parents and children. The other area we are developing in is by using more peered and paired observations so we can closely monitor our own development including our teaching skills and professional development at work. This will only enhance the quality of First Steps further so we can provide the best safe learning environment we can for all the children we care for at the setting.

We are very excited to be nearly ready to be accredited as a started the healthy tots setting. This has been based on more physical play activities, healthy eating and emotional wellbeing.

Looking forward to the next twelve months. I would like to thank all the staff for their continued hard work and support & volunteering their time to support fundraising events, because without these events we would struggle to keep sustainable. Also the time given to buying resources, making play dough and researching ideas for interesting learning opportunities for the children. It is all really appreciated!

Thank you to the committee for volunteering their time to run First Steps, because without you there wouldn't be this excellent facility for us staff, the children and their families of the local areas. A big thank you to our committee leavers for their dedication to playgroup Hannah Costello, Lorna Beasley.

## **Chairs Update**

Thank you all for coming... Our time as a committee started quite eventfully, with the Christmas Fete. It was more like a baptism of snow and ice than a baptism of fire. But I think it really galvanised us as a team. Thank you to everyone that stepped up and made sure that it was still an amazing event.

A couple of the members that joined last year have left us, Phil and Sarah. But I would like to thank them for their continued support. Especially Phil who continues to provide food for our events and also donates his profits to First Steps.

There has been a lot of change behind the scenes this year with lots of policy changes and the big change to data protection legislation. A big thank you to Alison and Alicia for working tirelessly to get everything in place for the deadline.

The change of bank account has also been another major change. Thank you to Cathie for trawling through page after page of paperwork and for the many many phone calls that you've made on our behalf. We are almost there.

What a wonderful year it has been to start as Chairperson, with First Steps turning 50. Everybodies enthusiasm and support for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event and for First Steps itself has been quite overwhelming. It really makes it clear how well thought of First Steps is within the community. This is down to the staff and the committee, past and present. Thank you so much for your efforts and for always going the extra mile.

Fundraising has continued to go well. The Valentines disco was a particular success, and went down extremely well with both the children and parents. Thank you to St Giles Football club for their continued support and for allowing us to use their room free of charge.

It is great that we have been able to welcome some new members of staff, and that we now have 4 members of bank staff for Alison to call upon when needed. This really helps the setting to continue to run smoothly during times of illness.

It is fantastic that the wall repair has now been carried out. This means that we can now start to think about how to spend the garden fund. The committee is looking to hearing the staff's feedback on how they believe the money would be best spent to enhance the setting.

Finally, how amazing does the hall look? It is terrific that all the new starters and all of the returning children have been able to start this new year at First Steps in such a bright and amazing environment. Plus, I am sure that it is a much nicer place to work too. A huge thank you to John for all your hard work.

## **Treasurers Update**

A big thanks to Alicia again, not only has she been doing practically all of the work but this year she has had the additional job of teaching me how to do the payroll ready for her maternity leave.

The 30 hour Government funding has proved to be our saviour, whilst other playgroups have been complaining about the level of funding (mainly because they get much less for a funded hour than their standard fees), for us our fees are the same as a funded hour but now we have more children for more hours.

We were concerned at the last AGM about a potential rise in minimum wage which may badly affect us again. Whilst minimum wage did increase, it wasn't anything like the levels that the press were speculating. This meant that we could adhere to the minimum wage (as we have to legally) but also re-introduce the top up payments which reflect qualifications and experience.

We have also been able to purchase other items such as new uniforms, computing kit such as the printers and new telephones. We have also found a new accountant and paid her initial fee which was quite high. This will be less in the future now she understands how we work and what we need to provide.

Getting a new bank has proved a lengthy experience but we are almost there, this was necessary as HSBC wanted to introduce charges which they believed we should have been paying since we became a CIO. Currently payments are being made from the HSBC account but fees are being paid into the new Yorkshire Bank account. Once we are ready, we will begin a true transition to use Yorkshire Bank as our main bank whilst keeping HSBC to ensure we have captured everything. We will have three accounts with Yorkshire Bank, the main current account and two savings accounts, one for our "reserve" and one for the Garden Project to keep that money separate as it can only be used for that purpose.

## **Resignations**

Alison has received letters of resignation from Lorna Beasley and Hannah Costello. These have been accepted and we thank both ladies for their hard work and dedication towards First Steps Playgroup.

## **Applications**

Chair: Beth Binns (Nom:Cathie, 2nd: Vicky)

Treasurer: Cathie Watkins (Nom:Beth, 2nd: Gemma)

Secretary: Chloe Carrington to continue role after returning from her maternity leave.

Covered until then by Gemma Kendrick (Nom: Alison, 2nd: Beth)

### Committee Members 2018

Alison Blackery (Nom: Beth, 2nd: Gemma)

John Watkins (Nom: Vicky, 2nd: Beth)

Gemma Kendrick (Nom: Alison, 2nd: Cathie)

Mark Lickess (Nom: Alison, 2nd: Beth)

Vicky Stoddart (Nom: Alison, 2nd: Beth)

Chloe Carrington (Nom: Beth, 2nd: Alison)- currently on maternity leave.

### AOB

Mark to complete DBS/EY2 forms ASAP and get a photograph/mini statement to Vicky for the notice board.

All committee members to read the code of conduct/ roles and responsibilities.

Notify Ofsted of change in committee members.

### Date and time of next meeting

Tuesday 6th November, 7:15 at St Giles Church.