

## St Michaels Playgroup

### Minutes of the Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016

#### **1. Apologies for absence/all present to sign in**

Apologies for absence were received from Jay Long and Claire Walsh.

Those present at the meeting were Sharon Jackson (Manager), Julia Paton (Deputy), Chloe Fitzgerald, Gina Kellett, Suzanne Long, Alison Perrin, Annette Adkins, Jenni Blackford (Chair), Sandra Westrope (Treasurer), Gail Healey (Secretary), Navdeep Shah and Anayat Choudhury.

#### **2. Chair's welcome**

Jenni opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for coming. The committee members were very pleased to meet new member of staff Annette Adkins and current parent Anayat Choudhury and welcomed them both warmly to the meeting.

#### **3. Matters/updates arising from last minutes**

All matters arising were covered in the Manager's report, see no. 4 below.

#### **4. Manager's report**

Sharon thanked all the staff for their continued hard work, especially appreciating the fact that they always go the extra mile and do certain things in their own time (for example; attending courses, extra work on the children's learning journals, etc).

##### Playgroup report

It was reported that there are now 28 families on role (31 children) which is a good number. Of these, 13 are 2 year old funded children and 10 are 3 year old funded children, the remainder are paying families. There will be 10 children leaving at Christmas who are going to Margaret Wix nursery in January 2017. The weekly visits will start after half term. 14 new families will be invited to start in January 2017 and the visit day is Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016. Stay and play sessions will be offered on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December and Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016 from 12.30pm to 1.30pm.

##### Staffing/Training

Sharon clarified that staffing at playgroup now consists of the manager (Sharon Jackson), 4 core staff working with key children allocated to each of them (Julia Paton, Chloe Fitzgerald, Suzanne Long, Gina Kellett), and a cover assistant (Alison Perrin). Alison continues to work 3 sessions per week, Sharon continues to be in ratio on the other two mornings. Annette Adkins has now joined the team 3 mornings each week working one to one with a child and

she will continue with us in January 2017 with another child who will be starting and requiring one to one.

It was reported that, since September 2016, the way key groups run has been changed so that the children are now split into 4 groups (2 x 3year olds {Gina and Chloe} and 2x 2year olds {Julia and Suzanne} ). This seems to be working well, and although it now means that the children will have more than 1 key worker during their time with the playgroup, it also means that the group's activities can now be more age and stage related.

The half-termly staff meetings continue to take place.

#### Courses attended

Julia attended the 'PVI' (private, voluntary, independent) briefing.

The staff team attended the 'pre-school learning alliance conference' on a Saturday morning which was reported to be very informative, generating many thoughts on how the environment and outcomes for the children can be improved. Plans are in hand for some changes to be made - hopefully before the beginning of next term.

#### Courses to be attended

Sharon will be renewing her 'senco' (special educational needs coordinator) training over a 4-week time span, consisting of 4 afternoon sessions plus 10 hours of independent study.

Julia and Sharon will be attending the termly 'senco' briefing and are also attending their designated safeguarding training refresher course.

All staff have been asked to complete an online 'prevent duty training' course which takes about 45 minutes.

Annette will be completing the 'steps training' in December and all the other staff will be completing their refresher course for this in January 2017.

#### Policies

The updated 'behaviour policy' and the new 'touch policy' were sent to all committee members with the agenda and it was confirmed that these should be adopted. The chair will sign and date them for the record.

Julia will look at the 'safeguarding policy' over half term to add in the 'prevent duty'.

#### Other News

Sharon reported that she remains on the advisory board for the children's centre and has recently completed a learning walk at one of their stay and play sessions, she also plans to

visit the stay and play session which is held at Christ church in order to promote the playgroup.

The new 'toolkit tracker' is now ready to be used. After a few issues, county have now sent through the updated kit which Julia will be monitoring and in-putting the information on a termly bases.

The 'wellcomm pack' (screening system that focusses on speech and language development) is now ready to be used once it has been agreed when the best time to implement it would be. Suzanne and Sharon confirmed that they will progress this.

### Health and Safety

Parking around the playgroup setting has improved at the moment, especially as Margaret Wix Primary school have started to close the gates at drop off and pick up times.

Playgroup recently had some plants removed from the garden that were a potential health hazard.

Playgroup have had all the strip lights replaced in the room over the summer holidays by Margaret Wix school which has resulted in a much improved environment.

Playgroup's banking and a new payroll system which is run by the 'preschool learning alliance' and called 'Bedfordshire Payroll' have been set up and are running well.

### **5.Treasurer's report**

It was reported that after three and a half years, Sandra Westrope will be standing down as Treasurer. It was proposed by Jenni Blackford that Mr Jay Long take on this role, this was seconded by Sharon Jackson and agreed by all the committee members.

It was reported that playgroup's bank accounts remain healthy and that, once completed, Sandra will pass the end of year accounts onto the new treasurer. Actual figures will be available to look at during the AGM early next year when all will be ready to submit to the charity commission.

Sandra proposed a staff wage increase again starting from 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016 and the usual thank you gift vouchers for all staff. Both these proposals were agreed by all the committee members.

Sandra added that she will always make herself available to help should Sharon or the new treasurer need her. She was thanked by all the committee who will miss her and have valued all of her continued support of playgroup.

### **6.Fundraising/events report**

It was reported that:

- Sports day raised £466. Two 'Little Tikes' cars and the entertainer for the Christmas party were paid for with this money.
- A mud kitchen for the outdoor area was purchased with the money raised at Easter.
- The playgroup DVD in June raised £36

It was announced that the upcoming events are:

- Photographer and cake sale this week. The money raised will go towards journals, photos, paper etc.
- Children in Need, Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November – wear something spotty pay £1.
- Christmas raffle during December, parents will be asked for donations of prizes suitable for adults and children. Tickets will be sent home for families to buy if they wish to.
- Christmas cake sale from Monday 12<sup>th</sup> to Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December
- Christmas party, Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December – every child will be invited; they will all receive a gift (already purchased) and parents will be invited to come along and join in with some Christmas songs at the end of the session. The raffle will be drawn at the party.

Julia thanked all those involved for their continued support in fundraising for playgroup.

### **7.Safeguarding/health and safety information**

All matters for this item were covered in the Manager's report, see no. 4 above.

### **8.Any other business**

#### Website

It was reported that playgroup's website gets between 5-12 users a day, which is a good amount. Various updates need to be made including staffing, dates, photos and a mention of new equipment such as the mud kitchen. The new and updated policies will be added. A link to a secret and closed group facebook page for just current staff and parents will be considered. It would be possible for just Sharon and Julia to post to it about once a month but they would need to request permission first.

### **9.Date of next meeting**

The next committee meeting, incorporating the AGM, will take place on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at the new time of 7.45pm for an 8pm start.