

## **Report for Stowupland Parish Council Meeting – 10 April 2024**

It has been a busy start to 2024 with lots going on at the Pre-School.

We continue to operate at capacity, offering places to 56 two -five-year-olds over the course of a week. We are still operating a waiting list for the next two years, with contact constantly being made by parents in the local area for placements.

Over the last 12 months, work has continued to look at ways of improving our setting. The inside and outside spaces haven't had any refurbishment since the setting opened its doors – so there has been lots to work on.

Thanks to a successful capital grant from Mid Suffolk District Council, and to Cllr Keith Wellham for his locality grant, we have been able to transform our outdoor space along the back of the building. We had been experiencing a big problem with cat fouling in the garden, which was becoming unmanageable. With the grants given to us, we have removed the dirt/bark area and laid astro-turf. The area has been transformed and the children are really enjoying have full access to the space again. It is lovely to see them playing, using their imaginations and creativity in this space. We are excited to be installing a sensory wall along the back of our building after the Easter break, which we are sure the children will love to explore and further support children in their exploration and learning.

We installed a new heating system, removing the old under floor heating with a much more energy efficient system. This is saving the setting some money and ensuring the heating is only used when needed.

We want to say a big thank you to Stowupland Parish Council for the CIL grant we were awarded in December 2023. The grant was used to install a secure gate at the front of the setting and improve the much-needed lighting on the path leading to the preschool building.

We have just two projects that we would like to complete over the Summer Holidays; our outdoor wet pour surface is worn and slippery when wet, so needs replacing, and we need to replace the front door at the setting to improve the thermal comfort and security of the building.

Within the setting itself, the children have really been enjoying some of our special celebrations and events. We have been busy with experiments during Science Week, dressed up and explored our favourite characters for World Book Day and have had visitors to the setting such as a hairdresser and Emily's Exotic Encounters. We continue to look at ways to spark play and imaginations in all the little ones who attend.

As we approach the Summer Term, we are preparing for more outdoor fun and learning opportunities. We will be saying goodbye to 33 children who will be leaving to start their learning journey at school.

We'd like to end by saying a big thank you to the local community and our parents for continuing to support us, through donations and fundraising. As a small charity, we really do appreciate every penny to enable us to continue to thrive, particularly when we have seen so many settings in Suffolk having to close.

