

## Chair's Report for the AGM 10<sup>th</sup> October 2007

It's been a very busy year at Roundabout, with all of our normal activities as a committee going on alongside the incredibly intense relocation project. David will give an up-date on 'Roundabout to Mayfield' later.

First of all, a huge thanks to our excellent staff team for continuing to give more than 100% all of the time. Ofsted inspected the pre-school and playgroup in March and we were awarded the overall grade of 'Good'. This was a great achievement by all the pre-school and playgroup staff. That on the day Ofsted arrived pre-school was running with only one usual member of staff due to illness and study leave was extra testament to how high our standards are on all days.

Thanks also to a supportive committee and parents, and in particular to Mel Hale, Caroline Potter and Regina Lawrence who are standing down from committee this year. And thank you to all our parents who have also been a great support over the year.

The highlights of the year:

We held a music week back in February. Gill Learmond of Tell Tale Tots came to visit and led singing and story-telling sessions in all of our groups. We used some of the training funds from the Foundation Stage Transformation Fund to have inhouse training by Musikgarten, and a recent grant of £250 from the Love Cambridge Shopping consortium has paid for good quality percussion instruments so that we can build on that training. Transformation Fund: This fund administered by the County Council Early Years team meant we had £500 to spend on training. Almost all the staff attended a Musikgarten Course in February and some staff attended an inhouse course on positive behaviour management (the notes for which are in the OP incase any parents would like some suggestions!). All staff are now trained in child protection, and Karen as an equal ops rep attended courses on the Disability Discrimination Act and English as a Second Language, while Liz added a course on Fire Safety.

Music Week: We had a music week back in February. This linked with the Musikgarten course and eventually the grant for musical instruments from Love Cambridge Shopping. We used proceeds of last year's summer fair to pay for Gill Learmond of Tell Tale Tots led singing and story-telling sessions in all of our groups over one week.

Recruitment: We were sorry to lose Katy Nemcovska but we welcomed Ronit Niam for one term, and have also welcomed Leanne March and, most recently, Claire Arnold as assistants in the pre-school. We had 5 regular volunteers at different times up until the summer for whom we have been very grateful, and this term Rod Singles is now a student volunteer in pre-school, studying towards his NVQ Level 2.

Communications: Lisa Bailey and David Hargreaves have set up Google Groups and have managed to enlist more than 75% of parents on to the groups, receiving regular email up-dates. This seems especially important for toddler group where in the past people have said they felt 'out of the loop' but this year our questionnaire results showed

that the majority felt communications were good. Celia is also doing a grand job of the half-termly newsletters.

Fundraising: Roundabout relies on fundraising as the fees we receive only cover a little more than the rent and staff costs. Both the Winter and the Summer Fairs raised record amounts, which in the summer was despite torrential rain! In particular, the raffle for the summer fair, with donations sourced by Mel Hale, raised about £400 on its own, reflecting the value of the great list of prizes – well done to Mel and Lisa Bailey for managing to increase sales of tickets about fourfold. Thanks also to Monika Umba for donating a painting for a separate raffle for the second year running; that raffle alone raised more than £100.

There have been lots of innovative fundraising activities over the year, in addition to our traditional cake sales. Special mention needs to go to Mel Hale who devised, gathered materials for, typed and printed Roundabout's very own recipe book and virtually single-handedly raised about (£ ....). We have two online shopping sites, easyfundraising and buy.at, between which we have raised more than £400 over the year with no extra effort and no extra expense. If you want to know more, ask me later because I'm addicted! We ran a stall at the Mayfield School summer fair, Lisa Bailey ran a Wine Tasting Evening (with another planned for this November), we are signed up on Ebay through Missionfish so that our members can choose for their sale to benefit Roundabout, Lisa Bailey ran a Eurovision sweepstake, and leftovers from the summer fair nearly new stall were recently sold at the NCT sale in Comberton – results still be received but we sold lots.

We have also received 3 major grants for which we are very grateful. The Co-op Dividend Scheme has given us £XXX which has been spent on the toddler group for various bits and pieces of equipment. The County Council Development Grant Scheme gave us £XXXX. £120 of this went towards the coach to take the pre-school to the Botanic in the summer, which was a great success. The rest has gone on various pieces of equipment, including the new mats in toddlers, a new safety gate for playgroup and a new book stand for pre-school. We managed to get great value for money as there was 60% off on some of the pre-listed items! And finally we received £250 from Love Cambridge Shopping, a consortium to do with the shopping developments in the city centre, which has gone on buying some good quality musical instruments such as claves, chime bars, etc.

The down-points in the year:

We had hoped to set up a lunch club for our pre-school and playgroup children, but unfortunately, having received funding to support this, we were unable to book the room for the extra time and so had to withdraw the plans.

Our toddler group was rather stretched over 4 days all year and despite mid-year endeavours with lots of advertising, we had to take the decision to close one day at the

end of the year. The Friday was chosen because it had the lowest numbers during the final term, and with the start of a new toddler group on the premises at the same time, it seemed unlikely that it would recover numbers. We lost a considerable amount of money by keeping the four days open all year and are keeping a constant eye on numbers this term incase more action is required. If you feel able to put up some posters near your house or even pop some leaflets through doors, please speak to Lisa Bailey.

And of course we were served notice on our tenancy here at St Luke's. This is due to a change in ministry aims for the use of the church centre. We were already working towards having our own building and this has made us work a lot harder towards that aim, but it was a shock nevertheless. We have been at St Luke's since 1994 but it is only in recent years that we have occupied the upstairs hall as well as the ground floor rooms.

And for 2008:

We will be working towards Pre-school Learning Alliance Quality Assurance Accrediation, which means that what we have already improved over the last 5 years or so will be recognised, and we will be able to recognise other areas requiring improvement.

And, of course, we will be moving! David, as vice-chair and in charge of the Roundabout to Mayfield project, will give more information on how the project is coming along in just a moment. Just to say that this project is extremely hardwork but will ultimately be both rewarding and exciting. If you would like to be more involved, particularly in writing off for funding or approaching local companies for support, we on the sub-committee would love to hear from you.