

Hermitage Pre School 2022

This time last year I spoke about the many changes and uncertainties we had faced over the previous 12 months hopeful that we were emerging from the COVID bubble, and for a while it seemed that things were beginning to return to a "new normal".

At the end of the Summer Term, we were fortunate to have been able to hold our Sports day and graduation assembly for children and parents ever, confident that when we returned in September we would be back to normal.

We waved goodbye to one cohort of children as they moved up to Primary school and said hello to a whole new group of children and a bright new space in Furze Hall.

The children loved the bright new space and the staff were grateful that the resource cupboard was now in the same room!

October saw us finally able to hold our community Halloween event. This was extremely well received by all that attended, possibly due to the prosecco and beer that was available and the threat of another lockdown.

In December COVID had begun to take it hold across the country again. Twice weekly testing for staff became daily testing in order to ensure the safety of my staff and their families and the safety of the children and families who rely on us.

We were however, able to put on our Christmas Production and the children performed to a sea of masked faced parents, and can still occasionally be heard singing Mary, Mary, Mary you will have a baby!

With a fresh New Year upon us it seemed that our old friend COVID was determined to spoil another year for everyone, and although we were fortunate to have a very small number of cases many settings and schools were seeing vast numbers of cases raging through them and for some it was the second time around.

Sadly, not all Early year's settings have survived the difficulties that the pandemic threw at them and more than 2500 have closed their doors permanently.

We at Hermitage Pre School continue to laugh at jokes that we don't understand, distribute hugs as required, respond to a high level of personal

questioning, pretend to eat playdough creations realistically (which is a skill that develops with time and experience) have expert knowledge of Frozen, Peppa Pig, Paw Patrol, Spiderman and know you never ever talk about Bruno !

The money received from last year's grant was used to provide temporary fencing for a Free Flow system, comfortable sleeping area for our younger children. Height appropriate tables and chairs for the younger children which we were able to purchase from other local settings that were having to close down.

This year's grant has been used to upgrade our reading area, the space has been completely transformed into an area that is inviting to all the children and in the words of one of the children "Wow its amazing, I love it !" it has become the most used space in the room and to the Parish Council we thank you for your generosity and support once again.

Finally, I would like to thank my staff who continue to adapt and get on with everything that is thrown at them! The Pre School committee for their support and hard work raising much needed funds, The food Bank who helped many of our families, The hermitage hardship fund, Co-op Food Hermitage who help us to continue to support our families in need, all of you for listening to me and most of all the wonderful children at Pre School because there simply is not other job like mine !