



# Helmdon Acorns

## Newsletter

July 2019

### Activities

The last three weeks really have been action packed... our leavers enjoyed a trip to Stanwick Lakes on a coach and everyone did fantastically at the Sports Day. Our work experience student from Magdalen College School was hugely enthusiastic and developed a great relationship with the children. Today we have seen our leavers sing their hearts out at a very emotional presentation.

To those leaving us, we wish you a fantastic time at school whilst we look forward to seeing the younger children again from Wednesday 4th September; don't forget that our afternoon session will finish at 3pm from September.



### ...goodbye from Liz

When I moved to the village in 2006 with children aged 3 and 5, I would never have predicted becoming involved with Acorns in the way I did. It began with me being on the parent committee in 2008, first as a general member and then as Treasurer. At that time Acorns was struggling, with few children enrolled for the forthcoming year, mainly due to the fact that a traditional "playgroup" operating four mornings a week with no outside space in the village Reading Room just didn't meet the needs of the parents or children. At one rather sombre meeting, I suggested I could "have a go" at finding a site, getting planning permission and raising some money for a new building. It all happened rather quickly and in 2010 the bulldozers moved into Hinton Close.



Fast forward nine years and just look.... although we have grown in size (in numbers of children and staff) and our turnover is five times what it was, I still feel we are small enough to know all our children really well and therefore more able to meet their needs. Working as administrator at Acorns, I then ended up at university in 2014 doing a Level 6 Early Years Teacher course and unexpectedly was presented with the opportunity to manage the setting. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here and would like to thank all the families and members of staff I have worked with plus members of the Committee and especially past and present chairs for their support ... many of you won't know all of these names but several staff will ..... Rachel Wheeler, Jennie Hamilton, Laura Wilson, Lorna Clarke, Ros Spence and now Kat Carter.... all gave (and continue to give) their all for Acorns. For several reasons, it's now the right time for me to hand over the reins but I know it's in very safe hands and wish everyone all the best.



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## Committee News—manager appointment

As you will be aware Liz is leaving Acorns after 11 years of being such a huge part of the Pre-School and we are all very sad to see her go. We have advertised for her role both internally and externally and I'm pleased to now be able to tell you all that we will have **Sammie Vale** joining the team as Setting Manager from the start of the September term. Sammie is a Level 6 qualified teacher and is bringing to Acorns fresh knowledge and enthusiasm for the setting and we are all looking forward to working with her. I am sure you will all join me in wishing Liz the very best for the future and in welcoming Sammie to the role. ... *Kat*

## Introduction from Sammie



Some of you will know or recognise me already, but for those who don't, I wanted to introduce myself: I am Sammie and I will be the new manager of Helmdon Acorns from September. As a parent myself, I know sometimes change to the people working with our babies can be a bit scary, so I'd like to help you get to know me better before September.

After accepting that I was born with two left feet and so my childhood dreams of becoming a ballerina were over before they had even begun, I decided that I was going to be a Primary School Teacher. This ambition stayed with me from an early age, and after completing my undergraduate degree in Drama, I successfully qualified as a Primary Teacher in 2012. During this time, I discovered a passion for planning and delivering creative and innovative lessons which allowed children to reach their full potential in an engaging and nurturing environment. I feel extremely privileged to be a part of such a wonderful profession and know just how lucky I am to be able to shape and inspire young minds.

In 2014 my world turned on its head when I became a mummy for the first time to my beautiful daughter Grace and again in 2017 to Erin. Without a shadow of a doubt, it has been my most incredible and rewarding, (albeit exhausting!) job to date. My involvement with Acorns started when Grace joined in September 2017 and I was instantly signed up for the committee. Since then I have been involved in many fundraising events and have taken the role of Vice Chair over the past year.

In my spare time, I enjoy going to the theatre; spending time with my friends and family; arts and crafts; and singing... lots and lots of singing!

And that is me in a very brief nutshell! I am so very excited to be leading such a wonderful team from September and feel confident that Acorns will continue to flourish through the next chapter of our story. I hope you all have a wonderful summer and I will look forward to welcoming you back on the 4th September.

## General Committee News

The Committee have had another brilliant year supporting the Pre-school and staff. We've had some amazing Fundraisers raising over £3,500 for the Pre-school and had so much fun planning and making them happen.

I would personally like to thank all the staff, parents/carers, our brilliant children and of course my committee for their contributions to the setting and continued support.

The Pre-school is committee led and without a working committee the Pre-school would simply not be able to open. We are always on the look out for parents to come and join us and to help with the inner workings of Acorns, a charity and your child's Pre-school. If you would like to know more, please come and have a chat as we'd love to welcome you on board.

Our next Fundraisers will be at Sulgrave Manor on Sat 5th October in the evening and we will start planning the Annual fireworks display ( to be held on Saturday 9th November) once we're all back from the summer break so if you would like to volunteer some time to help with these then we'd very much appreciate it.

Have a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing the younger ones all back in September. .

**Kat - Chair of Committee**