



Report for Warwick Town Council

Monday 3 April 2023

Firstly, the settings Parent Management Committee and staff would like to thank Linda Butler and the town council for their support with this project.

We applied for the grant to help us to provide a more well rounded setting that catered for all its users needs. We have discussed over many years what an advantage to many families it would be if we could offer a warm, nutritional meal everyday. But due to restrictions on income (many of our children are funded by government schemes) we couldn't find a way forward for many years.

Then Covid and the economic crisis happened – we felt then it was time for us to do more to help our families. Many of our families had hours reduced at work or lost work throughout Covid and began to struggle due to increasing prices in all areas of their lives and unfortunately still do. We felt the quality of some foods on offer in lunch boxes were really not ideal for children to continue their learning throughout the day and to stay focused but realised quickly this wasn't from parents neglect or laziness it was for financial reasons.

It was back in April 2022 that we forged forward with our plans. We felt the best way forward was to completely refurbish the kitchen area that was present as this would not have reached food hygiene standards for cooking purposes – we liaised with Warwickspace and Warwickshire Food Hygiene to put a plan together and try and figure out an idea that would continue to offer high quality childcare for our under 5s, include a kitchen without building on any other land. We managed it and the kitchen is a fair size and has everything a small catering kitchen will need.

The project will take place at Warwickspace within the area that the preschool has sole use of.

The opportunity to be able to offer all children that attend our setting a warm and nutritional lunch has been a dream for many years – but as from 17 April 2023 it will be a reality.

The project wasn't highly advertised, as it is for the sole use of the setting – we placed feeds on face book and within our internal app, asking for persons to recommend kitchen fitters and suppliers.

We had a member of the committee and her mother help to find funding and help with completing application forms– this can be a lengthy process and managing a Early Years setting alone takes time and energy. Warwickspace directors were also involved in the planning of the area.

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This organisation is committed to safe guarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

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For this project to be completed we have had support from the directors at Warwickspace and we have received various amounts of funding/grants from the following:

- Evelyns Wish – 1 refrigerator
- Warwick Lions – 1 refrigerator
- Warwick Round Table – 1 freezer
- Wickes of Warwick – 1 halogen hob
- King Henry viii Endowment - £2242.00
- Tesco - £1000
- Warwick County Councillors Grant – Councillor Cllr Parminder Singh Birdi - £2310
- Warwick Court Leet - £385.00
- Warwick Town Council – Town Councillor Linda Butler - £1829.70

The total cost for the units, fitting and electrics rose to £10,213.57 (costs were kept down by negotiating discounts with Wicks of Warwick). This meant that there was a shortfall of £2446.87, that the settings management committee decided to spend to ensure that the project was complete, and ready to offer hot meals this summer term

The setting has spent over £1000 of its own money also to purchase new equipment for the kitchen.

We will offer parents the choice of purchasing a meal or continue to provide a packed lunch – so far we have had 1/3 of parents book hot lunches for the summer term – the closing date for bookings to be received at the setting is after this report is to be presented so I will update these numbers at the presentation.

All children that we receive extra funding for – due to their economic circumstances will receive a free hot meal. All meals are vegetarian based. A hot meal will cost £2.20 per child per meal. We have kept the cost of each meal down as low as we can to ensure we reach as many families as possible with this new incentive

The success will be determined by the end of the first term – we will see if parents/guardians rebook for the autumn term or return to packed lunches. If the meals that are on the menu presently do not meet the childrens needs/tastes we will obviously change the menu as and when.

We have employed a new member of staff – who will be solely responsible for the management of the kitchen, cooking of the meals and ensuring those children with allergies and intolerances are catered for and in the future compiling new and exciting menus for the children.

Regards
Hazel Jones
Preschool Manager