



Report to Ashby St. Mary Parish Council  
Annual Parish Meeting  
Thursday 21st April, 2016

Thurton & Ashby St. Mary Pre-school continues to offer good quality care and education for children aged two to school age. We now have twenty-two children registered with three permanent staff offering up to fifteen hours a week over four days. The children access the early years curriculum both indoors and outside in a range of activities both led by adults and initiated by children's from their own interests.

Two members of staff undertook Level 1 Forest School Training in June and have recently received their certificates. The training gave us ideas and practical advice in outdoor games, den building, weaving and threading using natural items and lots of new skills to pass on to the children. We bought a large Elf puppet and named her Emmie who introduces outdoor crafts and activities to the children and on cold days we all enjoy hot chocolate sitting in a log circle.

The children choose to go outside all year round now even if it's just for an hour as they can go into Foxes Den and sit in a cosy sleeping bag to read a book or do a puzzle, or they can run around and jump off the wooden crates to keep warm. As we look forward to the summer term we will spend more and more time outside and spend the whole session learning and discovering in the natural world.

Parents and carers are given the chance to come and see what we do through themed lunch clubs. We recently held a Hand Gym session with simple activities designed to strengthen childrens hand muscles and improve their co-ordination. We challenged the adults to do the activities using their 'wrong' hand to experience how difficult it is for their child to gain the skills ready to hold a pencil and write letters and numbers.

We rely on parents and carers to form a committee each year and help to fundraise, which is vital to keep our group going. We receive Grant Funding for our three and four year olds and a few eligible two year olds but this does not cover our expenses. We again held a very successful Auto Jumble, Classic Cars and Craft Fayre in May and our popular Christmas Bazaar and Winter Wonderland with smaller events through the year.

We are very grateful for the help and support we receive from Thurton and Ashby St. Mary and the surrounding community and in turn we are very proud of the provision we offer families with young children before they start school.

Sandra Rennie  
Playleader

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