

# Kingsway Primary School and the Beacon Children's Centre



Head teacher Paula Needham and her staff are extremely ambitious for their school, Kingsway Primary, which is situated in a very new area of Gloucester with a challenging community. 40% of the 400 pupils are entitled to Pupil Premium. They had been interested in the Beacon Children's Centre next door for some time, seeing it as a natural extension of the school's activities and an opportunity to widen their experience of and influence in the community, creating and driving community cohesion in an area with no traditional networks.

With support from GRCC, Paula and the team took to business plan writing with ease and were ready to present their plan to the County Council well ahead of the 31 March 2017 deadline. Having analysed their "markets", and checked that they would continue to use the children's centre after the transfer, the team identified available gaps in the use of the buildings and came up with the idea of getting local companies to sponsor time slots. In this way, local parent groups and others with little or no funding can benefit from free use of the Beacon. Gloucester Lottery also ensures a small but steady stream of income which should raise £1,000 by the end of the year.

**"TO EVEN CONSIDER TAKING THIS PROJECT ON WOULD HAVE APPEARED DAUNTING WITHOUT THE HELP OF GRCC." – PAULA NEEDHAM, HEAD TEACHER**

"Having a central person to provide a link and information source between all schools undertaking this ambitious project has been invaluable for keeping us all in a necessary loop," said Steph Lang, Kingsway School's Business Manager.

This sentiment was echoed by the Head Teacher, Paula Needham, who said: "Schools are typically very busy places and to even consider taking this project on would have appeared daunting without the help of GRCC. The scaffolding was vital to ensuring we remained within timescales and had thought through every aspect of the children's centre's work, both in the past and into the future. The sounding board enabled us to think even bigger than our original plans and aim high."

## WHAT IS PCSS?

As schools and community organisations take over children's centre assets from the County Council GRCC is supporting them through the Parent & Community Support Service (PCSS) to put in place sound business practices to ensure these new community facilities are financially viable and well-managed.

Our partner, PATA, is working with parents and volunteers in the community to help them and train them to run activity sessions like Stay and Play, Play and Learn, and others in the centres.

## CONTACT US

If you're interested in finding out more about the Parent and Community Support Service, make your initial contact with the PCSS team through:

**Max Comfort**  
[maxc@grcc.org.uk](mailto:maxc@grcc.org.uk)

**Andrew Ruff**  
[andrewr@grcc.org.uk](mailto:andrewr@grcc.org.uk)

or call GRCC on **01452 528491**.

## About GRCC

---

GRCC is an independent, Charitable Company, limited by guarantee. We are committed to strengthening and working with Gloucestershire's communities and representing them at local and national level to make sure they are heard.

We work in partnership with local and national organisations and with the communities we serve, and are part of a network of 38 Rural Community Councils across England, working under the umbrella of ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England).

Our mission, "to enrich the lives of people in Gloucestershire by supporting them through change and enabling them to determine, shape and develop their own communities", is at the heart of everything we do – ensuring that we remain a neutral source of expert knowledge and a useful link between communities and the agencies involved in community life.

GRCC, Community House, 15 College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LZ

[info@grcc.org.uk](mailto:info@grcc.org.uk)

01452 528491

[www.grcc.org.uk](http://www.grcc.org.uk)