

Young Children and Family Leader Report 2024.

Having started my new role as Young Children and Families Worker (CFL) on Monday 29th February 2024, I have been involved in a process of giving order and a new shape to our work with young children within the parishes. The Sunday Club has a liturgical and administration pattern that follows the Church's Calendar and integrates SC with regular Sunday worship. In my role as CFL we have now been able to dedicate a specific leader to each of the churches. The leaders are all using the same resource material, Living Stones, by Susan Sayers. This enables the children to follow the liturgical year in their formation as well as incorporating specific solemnities and celebrations. It is a real blessing to have five different leaders willing to give their time and energy to this important work. The leaders are all DBS checked and have completed their diocesan safeguarding training. I would like to thank Estlyn, Verity, Benedict, Avegayle and Liz for all they have done for our children throughout 2024.

On October 20th we had a pyjama party in All SAINTS church hall where there was party games and an opportunity for parents to discuss Sunday Club as well as supporting the Children Hospital Pyjamas Charity. Each child brought a new pair of pyjamas for this charity who in turn give pyjamas to children in hospital who need night clothes.

Messy Church has been reshaped through this year, we moved from 6 weeks to four weeks. Having tried this for a number of months we reverted to roughly every 6 weeks as we found the turnaround time was putting pressure on our ability to deliver a service that had enough preparation. On average we have around 13 children attending MC. We have celebrated Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and the Olympics to name a few. I would like to thank our parishioners who help the children in the church as well as our parishioners who help in the kitchen and hall to provide a meal for all who attend.

As a part of my brief 'outreach' to schools yet unvisited is a particular priority. To that end I visited the Headteacher of Oakfield First School the 5th of March and the Lead Subject Teacher for Religious Education on the 14th of March. As a result of both meetings, I was able to lead assemblies once a term as well as teaching classes on Baptism, Creation and Mary. In November I led a Remembrance Day Service accompanied by Major Fry who shared some of the history of his medals and service history. The School now has a new head and I have had regular contact with Mr Howard Seymour as we look to my involvement in the school.

On November 5th I launched Our Toddlers group, Toddlers @ 10. Meeting each week it has become well established with around 9 children attending. There is a growing sense of community amongst the parents who share with each other things that they are both celebrating and struggling with. Kate McQuillan took the lead in setting up a Christmas tree for the Christmas tree festival and children made sheep to decorate it. I am deeply

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grateful for the support of Estlyn Davies and Caroline Ash who are a part of the team as well as Betty, a mother from Trinity St Stephens School.

At the end of the year, I started planning a Holiday Club for Feb 2025 using resources from The Scripture Union that focuses on three stories from St Matthew's Gospel. These are the birth and baptism of Jesus, the healing of a man who couldn't walk and the resurrection.

This year has seen many ventures tried anew and they have been blessed. I would like to thank Rev Sally for her guidance and support throughout the year and to all who have enabled this important work to flourish.

With faith, hope and love,

Fr Richard.