

## **Toddler Group – Annual Report**

The Toddler Group has continued to meet every Thursday in term-time with an average of 15 families coming along each week to enjoy fun, games and friendship.

We have a core team of weekly helpers, May Muhr, Sue Mulligan, Debbie Ledsam and myself. This year we have welcomed Lindsey to the team.

We are also hugely grateful to all those on the rota who come along and serve refreshments, Sue Coe, Frances Wilby, Jane Chaplin, Laura Ramsey, Lesley Self and Doreen Spielman. Thank you all.

On a Thursday morning the centre is a hive of activity with the under 5s taking full advantage of our stock of toys whilst parents, grandparents and carers catch up with each other. We start each week with general play and an open hatch for everyone to have access to refreshments. Popular toys are the kitchen and toy food, the railway, and the slide - learning to take turns is very important!

In the Summer, we enjoy being outside in the garden, we spread out the noise, and the children! There is less danger of the bigger children running into the smaller ones on the ride on toys! The children and adults enjoy using the art room, it limits the glue, glitter and paint to one place, and makes it easier to clean up. We have made Christmas angels, cards for mother's day and valentine's day, crowns, and the ever-popular play doh. We also decorated pancakes with yoghurt, blueberries and strawberries on the nearest Thursday to Shrove Tuesday.

At 11am we play the tidy up song and encourage the children to put away their toys. The wiggle song is next where we burn off excess energy before we sit down quietly to listen to a story, celebrate birthdays and choose songs by selecting a toy from the special bag. We end with the teddy bear song, waving goodbye.

We have celebrated with our families as we acknowledge various life events including new babies, baptisms and weddings.

Our last meeting each term involves a party with special food and games. Just before Christmas we are visited by Santa Claus (thanks Bill!) and hear the Christmas story, for Easter we enjoy an Easter egg hunt and hear the Easter story (thanks Alan) and we end the summer term with fun and games in the garden, weather permitting.

The Group ran the pre-Christmas coffee morning with families donating Christmas goods for raffle prizes. £478 was raised which was split between the church and Great Ormond Street Hospital.

We always have a few families on our waiting list, many of whom have heard good things about the group and would like to come along. When children move on to nursery/school, we are always able to fill the space from the list. Demand for places is always exceeding supply!

Judy Sharman – April 2025