

TOTS AND TODDLERS REPORT 2013/14

Our weekly session of Tots and Toddlers continues to grow in popularity, and the number of children bringing their parents and carers along with them can sometimes be in the region of 30 to 35. When we reach this maximum number consistently for a week or two we have to close our list, for health and safety reasons. We hate to do this, and indeed no one is turned away on their first visit, but are then put on a waiting list and notified when numbers calm down again! We open every Monday during the year, including during holiday times, only closing for Bank Holidays and the week before Easter and Christmas. This is much appreciated by those parents/carers who only have very young children, as we are one of the few groups who do this, most working to term times.

Our team of volunteer helpers work together extremely well, and our aim is to provide a welcoming and safe environment for children and carers alike. Although the parents/carers are ultimately responsible for the welfare of their children whilst they are with us, we always keep a weather eye open to ensure that both adults and children are safe and happy. Each family pays £1.00 a session, and this entitles them to as many cups of tea, cold drinks, biscuits etc. as they desire. We also cook pancakes the Monday before Shrove Tuesday, provide hot cross buns and Easter egg treats to celebrate Easter, and our pre-Christmas activities involve singing carols (accompanied by Janet on the piano), decorating a nativity board for display in the church, making decorations for our tree for the Christmas Tree Festival, and eating copious amounts of mince pies! These festival sessions are given without charge. After paying our expenses (craft materials, new toys, refreshments etc.) our surplus funds are paid into church funds, and we also collect for The Children's Society.

We provide an interesting selection of toys suitable for the age range of the children we cater for, and ensure these are always clean and well maintained. Every week we have some sort of craft activity available, and although techniques and materials have to be very much geared to the young age of the participants, the children love taking home something they have made with their own hands. We finish the session each week with a rousing sing-song, and we are most unpopular if we try to dodge it! The musical instruments are particularly popular.

All of us at Tots and Toddlers feel privileged to serve the wonderful selection of children and carers who come through our doors week by week. Long may it continue!

The Team