

**ST MARY THE VIRGIN RIVERHEAD WITH DUNTON GREEN**  
**TOTS AND TODDLERS ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21**

Unbelievably, a year has passed since the group last met in March last year and we still seem to be wondering when it will be safe to start meeting again. We are hopeful it won't be too much longer, as we know that our weekly sessions are very much missed by the mothers and toddlers who usually come along.

Our Tots and Toddlers group has always been a place of welcome and fun for children up to 4 years of age. Mothers and carers are able to enjoy social interaction together, with a hot drink and biscuits, while the children play with the numerous toys and make various craft items, often relating to annual events such as Mothering Sunday, Easter, etc. It seems extraordinary that we have missed two Mothering Sundays and two Easter celebrations in the group because of lockdown. We did just manage Pancake Day before lockdown last year, when Diane made some delicious pancakes for the group and set about tossing them in the frying pan; very professional!

Over the years, since the group started, it has been lovely to watch the children in their various stages of growth, from babyhood, to toddlers learning to walk and then on to pre-school. We quite often see the younger siblings doing likewise.

We always hope that we may see some of the families coming into church, maybe just to the monthly family service. In the past, we have seen some of the children joining the Sunday Club group to learn more about the story of Jesus and we have also seen baptisms resulting from our weekly sessions. We continue to pray that more families will learn about God's love as a result of the group.

Our willing volunteers, who prepare the hall with toys and craft for the various age groups and give out refreshments, have also missed the weekly meetings; seeing the children enjoying themselves and chatting to the parents/carers.

Even though the children are never left alone with any of our volunteers (parents and carers are always in attendance), we duly follow safeguarding procedures and guidelines given by the Diocese at all times and always have due regard to abide by these safeguarding guidelines.

It goes without saying that we are always in need of more pairs of willing hands, so if anyone has a couple of hours to spare on a Monday afternoon, between 1.00 and 3.45pm, do let one of us know. You will be very welcome!

As mentioned at the beginning of the report, with God's help, we hope to continue to offer our outreach to the communities of Riverhead, Dunton Green and beyond, when it is safe to do so.

The Tots and Toddlers Team, March 2021

(Diane Williams, Margaret Holman, Ronnie Todd, Helen Best, Sarah Allison, Lynn Wilson, Daphne Harrison)