

LITTLE FISHES REPORT

Parents and Toddlers Group run by The Church of the Living Hope

Report for 2022-23

We run Little Fishes Parents and Toddlers Group in the top hall of Hubberston and Hakin Community Centre on Tuesday mornings during term time from 10 am - 11.30 am, having started it in the Community Centre in January 2022.. When they ask how much it is, it is good to be able to tell the parents this is a free gift to them from the church.

We have welcomed newborns as well as children up to full-time school age, although quite a few now leave for nursery at 2, or when their parents return to work, but some come with grandparents. During the last year we have had about 40 children attending at some point, with a weekly attendance of between 6-20 children, and about 25 on the waiting list, due to the group's good reputation which is mostly spread by word of mouth. Occasionally we give priority if we are aware of special circumstances.

Our small but committed team work to provide a clean, safe environment with a lovely range of toys and equipment for babies and toddlers to play under their guardians' supervision. We offer the adults light refreshments, and a friendly listening ear, sometimes offering to pray for needs when we have our team prayertime after the session. A health visitor has recently been making monthly visits, which has been helpful. After an hour of free play, we all pack away and everyone is encouraged to sit in a semi circle for the children to have their own drinks and snacks, singing a thanksgiving prayer, then there is a simple interactive Bible story time. We celebrate birthdays, then round off the session singing nursery rhymes and our special song, ending with inviting them to any special church events. At least one parent has come to church and other church events with his children.

Thankyou to the team of regular helpers - Cheryl, Helen, Janet and Eraine, and also Shirley who helps out when we are short. It would be good to have more help especially to cover holidays or sickness.

Please pray that Little Fishes will be a stepping stone towards families finding out more about Jesus and becoming part of the church family