

## Little Fishes Playgroup

Tempted as I am just to say that Little Fishes is going swimmingly, I shall put away my 'Rob Cook Joke Book' and try to be a little more informative!

For those who do not know, Little Fishes provides learning through play for children from 2 ½ to 4 years old, based on the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance. It is often the first time children attend a group without a parent or carer and is usually seen as a stepping stone on the way to starting at a nursery class in school.



We have had an interesting and busy time since our last report to the church AGM! At the end of last year we said goodbye to Emma Friar as she moved to a job at Cooper & Jordan, having been a brilliant and enthusiastic team member at both Fishes and Noah's Ark. We spent the autumn term praying for the right person to replace Emma, and were very pleased to welcome two new people to join us in January, Jan Moss, an experienced nursery nurse who has recently moved back to the area and Sue Morris, whose three children have all been 'Little Fishes' at some time! Both have settled well into the team and are already very valued colleagues.

We have been especially grateful to the Assistant Supervisors this term as they have all been particularly cooperative and flexible in covering for Anna's absence due to ill health, and have also been very accommodating as we anticipate Rachel's absence while she recovers from her operation. Having such a loyal and supportive team is part of what makes Little Fishes so special to us.



Another special element is, of course, the children. We now have over 80 children attending each week and have sadly had to turn some families away as all 5 sessions are full. Numbers have never been so high at any point in the group's 12 year history and the waiting list for next year is pretty full too! Help! It is a real privilege to be able to reach out to the local community in this way and get to know so many families. It is also very special to look around church on Sundays and see so many current and former 'Little Fishes' there.

Please pray for the group, that we may continue to provide a caring yet professional approach, particularly with so many children and families involved and that we would get the balance right between paperwork and people! Pray too, that we would be able to show God's love to all we come into contact with and to serve Him in all we do.

Once again we would like to say a huge thank you for all the support we receive from our church family, the office staff and especially from our 'management team' who are always there to give help and advice, to pray and even to roll their sleeves up and get stuck in with the playdough, gloop and wiping of runny noses! We really do appreciate you all! Finally we offer up a heartfelt thank you to God for his patience, provision and love to us; we certainly need it!



With lots of love and sticky fingers..

Rachel, Anna, Annette, Eliza, Sue, Jan & Sue