

## **APCM Presentation on Children's & Families Ministry**

### Children's Church

Seeing growth in numbers of children attending Children's Church on Sunday mornings. Our vision is:

To be a place where children have fun, develop relationship with each other and adult volunteers, learn about Jesus and have an opportunity to encounter the Holy Spirit.

Church Times (19th October 2017) quote:

**THE** average C of E church has just three children attending, and the smallest 25 per cent have, on average, none at all, according to the latest Statistics for Mission.

The data, collected by parishes a year ago, shows the overall decline in attendance to be almost twice as pronounced among children. The average attendance by children, defined as being under 16, fell by 22 per cent between 2006 and 2016, compared with a 13-per-cent fall among adults.

In the smallest 25 per cent of churches, **the average weekly attendance by children** — at church services or Fresh Expressions on Sundays or weekdays — was zero. In the largest 25 per cent it rose to 11; **and in the largest five per cent it was 35**. The median is just three.

*This time last year we had 40-50 children, this year we usually have between 50 -60 children. With approx. 80 children attending regularly (at least once a month – usually more often)*

Has driven need to duplicate Children's work at both services to try and spread out numbers of families attending, to accommodate numbers. A survey of current families attending indicates that families will roughly split evenly across both 9.30am & 11.15am services. This means we can split the children's work into 4 groups as follows, and the 0-2s won't need to be in the church anymore.

Sparks: 0-2 years meeting in Ridley Room Church Centre

Ignite: 3-5 years – meeting in Cranmer room Church Centre

Flames: school years 1-3 (6-8 years) meeting in Latimer Room Church Centre

Blaze: school years 4-6 (8-11 years) meeting at Hub

The volunteers have stepped up to the challenge of providing children's work at both services, with many of the offering to serve at two services a month, either both on the same Sunday or one time two Sundays a month. However, this cannot continue long term, so please pray for more volunteers or consider if you could serve as a volunteer helper on Sunday mornings.

Moving to children's work at both services enables us to have less groups, however, our older group is still meeting at the Hub so a longer term solution will be needed.

However, it's great to see so many children in church on a Sunday morning. The children are making really good friendships and generally engaging with the topics we are looking at, as well as having fun.

## Coggllets

Coggllets at Madley Park is continuing to provide a great outreach to the local community and an opportunity for us to care for and be a witness to local families.

We regularly have 80 plus people attending Coggllets, sometimes more. A few time towards the end of 2017 we had over 100 people attending.

Great team, distinctive about group is that it is prayed for, people feel cared for and looked after and really enjoy the singing with musical accompaniment at the end of the session.

This is a message from someone who came for the first time the week before half term:

Good evening I would just like to say how nice it was today. We attended our first Coggllets and our two little people loved it .Thank you for making us feel welcome 😊

This is a real testament to Jo and the team. A prayer point is that we are losing Jess K who has been able to help us on Thursdays until she got a job, which she now does (great answer to prayer!) however, we could do with another able bodied helper to set up and pack away.

Great team – chat to any of them about what’s involved and what they enjoy about helping at the group.

## JAM Club

This is an after school club for Year 6s at Blake School. It is run by Naomi Rowlands, a teacher at Blake School and Kirsty, helped by Carina Bonten, one of the Reign Ministry interns.

Since starting in October we have had some great times and conversations about faith with the children. From an initial 5 attending, we now have 14 coming along. All are at different stage on their faith journeys and we continue to have some great conversations. Recently the church purchased 6 bibles for the children who didn’t have one at home.