



# CHILDREN CHANGING PLACES PROJECT

Update March/April 2019

## WE'RE SPRINGING INTO ACTION!

Since the project started in January, our Deanery Children and Family Workers have had the great pleasure of working in the 30 CE Bolton Primary Schools.

We are grateful for the warm welcome that we have received, from both staff and pupils, as we all work together to support and develop Christian discipleship activities. Activities have included Ethos/worship groups, Collective Worship, Church visits, Easter Art Projects, Café Churches, a kid's café and a choir!

We have particularly enjoyed all of the Easter Experiences, in both churches and schools; volunteers and pupils involved have done an outstanding job. As a team, we have been impressed with the way in which schools are so actively and creatively embedding and expressing Christian values in the daily life and routine of the school week. It is encouraging to see the strong links between church and school.

Steph (Early Years Worker) has visited the majority of church/school toddler groups, within the scope of this project. She has been encouraged to see the fantastic job that toddler group leaders do, week in week out, to engage with young children and their 'grown ups'.

A strategy has been developed for our work with toddler groups, identifying groups who would like support in developing a more 'distinctively Christian' approach. Two new toddler groups will launch in September, with further groups planned for launch in 2020.



Messy Church, Café Church, World Café, Church-in-School and Easter Experiences.

We attended the 'Starting Well Conference' at the UOB Stadium on 02 April. Hosted by the Passion for Bolton 2030 team, this event aimed to inspire and equip all churches involved in children, schools and youth work in Bolton. Steph was asked to speak at the event and communicated her vision for Early Years work with energy and passion. The opportunity to build further connections in Bolton was valuable and we are encouraged by the commitment shown by so many churches and organisations to the people of Bolton.

Rachel Eden - [racheleden@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:racheleden@manchester.anglican.org)



## What does the Summer term look like for the team



- ◆ A regular discipleship group in every primary school
- ◆ Ethos Explorers groups
- ◆ Further projects including '40 Acts', 'Let Your Light Shine Festival' and choir performances
- ◆ Development of a programme of transition activities for Y6 pupils in the 30 schools
- ◆ Support of toddler groups and preparation for launch of new groups
- ◆ Development of joint worship activities for toddlers and Early Years in schools
- ◆ Support of the development of Fresh Expressions of Church

# WALMSLEY IS ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF MUSIC

**Nicola Witter our Deanery Children and Families Worker for Walmsley has spent some of her time with Walmsley CE Primary School working with pupils to develop a Gospel choir.**



This exciting new workshop creates a safe space for pupils to not only be trained in new ways of singing, but also gives opportunity to learn about the Christian faith, using music. This, of course, is just one of the fantastic ways in which Nicola is developing discipleship pathways in the schools for the project.

Walmsley CE Primary School is a vibrant place in the heart of the village and the headteacher, Ms Carr, is delighted about this new opportunity for the pupils. The Gospel choir workshop allows pupils to work with their class in a more informal setting within the church, giving them chance to relax, use their voices, support one another and work as a team. This is clearly evident when the choir sing and their voices come together. As well as musical training the pupils continue to look at different bible verses this term looking at the way God rejoices when His children worship Him through singing. Nicola can see that their knowledge of the bible is developing through these activities.

Walmsley Gospel Choir are preparing for future performances in the Summer term and Nicola looks forward to creating more discipleship activities in many more of her schools.

"Singing has so many ways of building self confidence, learning new skills, team work and breaking down barriers. When you add the aspect of worshipping God it generates a beautiful sound as the connection with God is amplified. My passion is to see children unearth talent they never knew they had and to support them on their faith journey." Nicola.

## MESSY ARRIVES IN BLACKROD

St Katharine's first Messy Church on Saturday 02 March saw the first 'Fresh Expression' to come under the umbrella of the Children's Changing Places Project.



It was such a privilege to work alongside a special team of people whose vision, love, commitment, hard work and prayers made this a Messy to remember. There was so much excitement in the build up to the big day – crafts and food to

prepare and a church to get ready.

4pm sharp and it began! A continual, wonderful stream of children and their families walked into church throughout the whole afternoon. The theme was 'All Things Bright and Beautiful', helping families to think about God's creation. We explored through various craft activities, including making a marshmallow bug, decorating biscuits with flowers and butterflies, making owl finger puppets, making nature themed cards and pinecone creatures. There was a real buzz about the place as children and their grown-ups enjoyed a fun-filled time, having a go at creating and letting their imaginations run wild!

Before stopping for tea, everyone came together for a short time of celebration praise to hear the creation story and sing songs, all led by Revd Angela Wynne.

Then it was a mad dash to the local corner shop to buy hot dog sausages, to help the food for tea go further as so many families had come along to 'get messy' at St Katharine's.

God 'blessed in abundance' as St Katharine's church family stepped out in faith to go where He is leading and to be church for a different world. The 'Places' team are very much looking forward to being able to continue to support this new initiative in the heart of Blackrod.

(pictures from the event are on the front page)

**Steph Openshaw Early Years Worker**

**To find out more information about the Children Changing Places Project, or to have a conversation with a member of the team, please contact:**

**Project Support Worker-Laura Tebay**  
0161 828 1460/ [lauratebay@manchester.anglican.org](mailto:lauratebay@manchester.anglican.org)

**We are also on Twitter: @PlacesProject**