



# Chepstow Methodist Church Parent and Toddler Groups

## Welcome Letter



**Welcome** to Chepstow Methodist Church Parent and Toddler groups. We hope you and your child(ren) have an enjoyable time with us. Our groups are open to anyone with children under school age.

The groups are run by Cheryl Hay (the leader) and her team of volunteers, some or all of whom are members of Chepstow Methodist Church. Together we aim to provide a safe, secure, happy environment in which children can play and interact with one another and parents/grandparents/carers can relax, play with their child(ren) and enjoy a drink and a chat.

We are currently running four sessions a week, on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, during term-time. You are welcome to turn up on any of these days but we would, in the first instance, ask you please to limit your attendance to once a week so that we can fit everyone in. However, coming more than once a week might be possible depending on the numbers attending – please check with Cheryl first.

We offer a skeleton service during school holidays but **please note we are unable to admit older, school age siblings.**

The following notes explain how the groups operate:

## Structure

Our groups start at 10am and finish at approximately 11.15/30 am. The structure of each session is roughly as follows:

- 🧩 Play time -approx. 45mins; children play, adults socialise
- 🧩 Tidy up time -children and adults help to tidy away the toys.
- 🧩 Snack time -drinks and snacks for those children old enough to sit at a table
- 🧩 Song/story time -including “happy birthday” for birthday boys and girls

## Registration and charges

Please complete the accompanying Registration Form at your earliest convenience and return it to the Group Leader. We operate a daily DIY registration system. On the table just inside the hall door you will find the Register and a tub for subs. When you arrive please tick your child(ren) off on the Register and put your subs in the tub.

Our charge is £2 per family per session – as the group is a Church group we do not have to pay rental on the hall and this keeps our costs down. The £2 charge covers our costs including refreshments for both adults and children.

**If you should leave before the end of the session please put a cross through your tick(s) on the Register so that we know you have left. The Register would be used to do a roll call in the event of an emergency.**

## Number Limit

It is important that every member of the group feels relaxed, supported, safe and secure – and has fun - while they are here. For that reason we have a maximum number limit of 30 children (including babies) attending each session.

If we reach our maximum of 30 children a notice will be displayed downstairs saying “Sorry, Toddlers is full”. Please look out for this notice. It will save you a walk up the stairs and us having to turn you away!

## Responsibilities

The Toddler team will endeavour to provide a safe, secure environment for you and your child(ren). However, your child(ren)’s safety, the way he/she/they relate(s) to and play(s) with other children, are ultimately your responsibility.

In particular

- ❖ Please intervene if your child is behaving in an inappropriate manner, this includes mistreating other children, toys and equipment.

- ❖ If we see a child behaving in an inappropriate manner we will bring it to the parent/carer's attention. Please do the same if you feel comfortable doing so, otherwise talk to one of the Toddler Team and we will pass on the concerns.
- ❖ If a child persists in acting in an inappropriate manner or is upset for any reason, so as not to cause anxiety to the rest of the children, we may recommend removing him/her from the room for a short time-out. (If necessary we are happy to provide a quiet and secure space for this.) Please feel free to rejoin us when your child is happy to do so.
- ❖ Please discourage your child(ren) from running around during a session as this can lead to accidents. (It can also be distracting and unfair for the other children and/or the leader if this behaviour occurs during snack time or story/song time.)
- ❖ Please be careful with hot drinks and don't leave them unattended. (Did you know a hot drink can still scald a child 15mins after it has been poured!) If we do see an unattended hot drink it will be moved to a safe place.
- ❖ Please be careful when opening and closing the hall door and ensure that a child does not leave the room unattended. If the stairgate is in operation then we would ask that you close it behind you.
- ❖ We understand that you may on occasion want to take photographs of your child(ren). Please refrain from taking photographs of children **other than your own** (unless permission has been obtained from the child's carer) and under no circumstances should images of other children be posted on the internet.
- ❖ Fire exits are clearly marked at each end of the room. In the unlikely event of a fire and the sounding of the fire alarm, gather up your own child(ren) and leave the building immediately, descending the staircase and congregating on the patio area, outside of M&S, where a roll call will be taken. Please do not stop to gather up belongings or prams/pushchairs.

## Changing facilities

Toileting and changing facilities are provided in the toilet just outside the hall. There are operation instructions for the nappy bin on the wall, but if you are having difficulty with it please ask one of the Toddler Team for help.

## Lending library

As part of the church's ministry to support young families we operate a lending library of Parenting books. These may be borrowed and taken home for reading. We ask that you sign the books out, and again on return, in the notebook provided.

## **Family Room**

The church runs a café called The Beacon, from 10.00am - lunchtime, every weekday morning (with the exception of Thursday). We extend a warm welcome to you and your child(ren) in The Beacon Family Room, a designated, secure room with toys and highchairs. Debbie and her team would be happy to serve you with children's light meals or Picnic boxes, at a very reasonable price!

## **End of attendance**

If you won't be attending the group again please can you let Cheryl know, this will enable us to allocate your place to someone else if the groups are full.

If you haven't been to a session for six weeks then, **unless you inform us otherwise**, we will assume that you won't be attending again and remove your name from the Register. Should you wish to come again in the future and the groups are full then your name will be added to the waiting list.

## **Finally**

Cheryl and the Toddler Team who are church members, would be happy to talk with you about what goes on here, in Chepstow Methodist Church, or about their Christian faith.

There will also be opportunities and invitations to join us in our church celebrations and to explore the Christian faith. Details can also be found on our church website [www.chepstowmethodist.org.uk](http://www.chepstowmethodist.org.uk)

If you require support in any way then please be aware that the church employs a Family Worker, who will help personally or direct you to the appropriate agencies for help.

We value your feedback on the group. If you have any comments or suggestions then please let us know.

If you require any further information then please speak to Cheryl or one of the Toddler Team.

## **We do hope you and your child(ren) enjoy your time with us.**

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