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 **Baby & Toddler Group**

**Report of Hulland Hippos in 2018 to Christ Church APCM**

**Families**

The average number of children attending each session in 2018 was 34 (31 in 2017, 29 in 2016 and 24 in 2015). Fortunately from May to mid-October the sunny, dry weather enabled us to set up outside play every session. As usual we enjoyed having some older children and new families in the holidays. Families come from up to 10 miles away.

**Team**

We had valuable new help to the team during 2018:

* Shirley Gage
* Husbands who help with setting up and putting away equipment
* Dishwasher!

**Training**

Penny updated her ‘Safeguarding for Leaders’ training in October.

**Visitors**

We had a visit from the M.U. Diocesan president Wendy Fitch and Beryl Murdy in June. They asked parents / carers what they liked about the group.

**Finance**

At the start of 2018 we had £444.39 in the bank which increased to £608.08 by the end of 2018. We had no major purchases during the year.

**Community Involvement**

Hippos raised £143.60 for Children in Need, donated Hulland Show Junior Champion prizes and created a display for Hulland Flower Festival.

**Christian Ethos**

We celebrated Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival and Christmas (all on Wednesdays!) with visits to Hulland Church for toddler-friendly services led by Rev. Phil. Rev. Linda too has supported the group, coming to many of the 2018 sessions.

We wrote a Hippo Christian Mission Statement in 2018 which is attached.

**Penny Northall**, Hippos Team Leader

March 2019

***Hulland Hippos’ Christian Mission Statement:***

***To share God's love with all who come***

*Thereby enabling and encouraging:*

* **people to feel they belong and are valued**
* **spiritual wonder, love and trust to flourish**
* **a space for children and adults to discover more of who they are**
* **an encounter with the love and hope of Jesus**

***This is done in a variety of ways, such as:***

* Giving families a warm and personal welcome on arrival
* Showing care and concern for all families during the session
* Responding to needs as best we can
* Engaging in conversations with carers and children
* Providing high quality play experiences
* Celebrating birthdays and other special occasions
* Supporting each other in the team
* Through songs and stories during 'Hippo Time'

***Aims of Hippo Time:***

* To make it evident that Hulland Hippos is run by Christian volunteers
* To tell stories from the Bible
* To sing some Christian praise songs
* To pray simple prayers relevant to families, e.g. having a Prayer Request Teddy
* To link the story with activities provided at the session
* To encourage but not insist that families join in with Hippo Time
* To demonstrate its importance to us by all the team being involved as leaders or observers
* To make Hippo time fun and interactive
* To act as a 'together time' for the group

 