

There are Christmas celebrations aplenty, as we finish this year at Thrive! Trampolining, Nerf battles and meals to mark what has been a full up term and a year which has required much of us all.

One special celebration is the meal we are having with the Year 9 leaders from Totally Tuesday, who have been brilliant at leading upfront and getting alongside the group on a Tuesday night. We have been really encouraged to see them grow in confidence and see how what they bring really adds to our time together. As they continue with TT, we will be looking at the individual goals that they would like to achieve, so they can continue to develop over the year.

We had the opportunity to join in with the Living Advent calendar in Chapel Allerton again and the Thrive window was first lit on 3rd December. A beautiful creation by Helen and the chance to have conversations as people enjoy it.



It has been great to be back together at **Messy Church** since the summer, with one session outside in September and two back indoors in October and November. We have really enjoyed being able to be back inside and feel like 'normal' Messy Church, including eating a meal together. We have welcomed back lots of our old families, as well as some new ones. It has been fun and really busy. It feels like relationships are being built again and it is good!

We have been lucky to have two residentials this term and really enjoyed the opportunity to be away together again, after having a year off over lockdown. In October we took **Totally Tuesday** to the West End Centre and nearly filled it with 23 young people! It was a great chance to get to know one another and welcome new members at the start of the academic year and a really good foundation for the group to build on. We enjoyed exploring the local area around Thruscross reservoir and even adopted a local duck for some of the walk, who we named Dave! Our weekly sessions are full of fun and activity, and we are looking for opportunities to put into practice some of our learning about inclusion, so that the group can be a good and welcoming place for everyone who wants to come. Increasing the range of options and being more intentional about communicating the structure of the session have been really good starts.



We also went to the West End centre with **WOW** in November and had quite the adventure! A snowstorm resulted in a powercut, which meant we had to start the Saturday in an unexpected way – cold waffle, anyone?! We managed a good morning together till lunchtime, but had to head home to continue the rest of the day with heat and cooking facilities at Stainbeck church – amazing to see the grace and flexibility that the young people and team showed to find our way through that. It was really special to cook and eat together on Saturday night and see everyone getting stuck in. We have re-established a pattern of meeting all together every week, rather than splitting the group, which means that everyone has the chance to come along more frequently, which is great! Small groups are happening again, and they give an opportunity for conversation and chance to get to know one another on a deeper level.



It has been good to be back in **schools** this term and we've had a brilliant group of Year 7 girls to meet with each week at Carr Manor Community school. We gather to reflect on how they are settling in at school, give a chance to meet new people and have conversations about their wellbeing. To begin with, everyone decorated a bag and at the end of the sessions they were filled with everything that the girls had taken part in (as well as some treats!), so that they could take them home as a reminder of what we'd explored together. On the last session

the girls evaluated their time being in the group and some shared that they had been helped by the 'listening' they experienced, feeling 'less stress', with 'coming to school' and 'meeting new people', which we were encouraged by. We are reflecting with the school about how to follow up this support in the new year.

We are continuing to make steps with the **youth development** around Stainbeck and have a small group of young people who are meeting together to plan events for their peers, which will take place in 2022. The plans for a building are also progressing as we fundraise and take advice from an architect about how to move this forwards in the best way. We are excited about working alongside local partners InterAct and developing the work with Carr Manor and CATCH – there's lots of possibility to be hopeful about in the coming year.



Thank you for being alongside us and children and young people who are part of Thrive Leeds, through caring, giving time and money, praying and being open to taking new steps. We are proud to have been able to stay connected and try new things, as well as exploring new possibilities, as we come to the end of 2021. Thank you for your support as we do that!

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