



## Annual report 22-23

As we head towards the summer holidays, we have had the joy of hosting our first young volunteers' awards event, where we celebrated the commitment and growth of young leaders this year. It has been so encouraging to see young people giving their time, gifts and energy across our groups; for the benefit of their peers and community – more details below! It was great to join up with local community organisation InterACT for the awards event and see 15 local young people, who came from different groups, but were connected by their volunteering achievement. These events will become a regular part of our rhythm at Thrive, as we see young people having the opportunity to lead and volunteer in a way that nurtures and grows the gifts that they bring.



We've had a year full of life at **Messy Church**, building on our friendships with the regular families, and also welcoming new families who have become frequent attenders. During the autumn and winter terms we have looked at some of the characters of the Old Testament. At Christmas we had our first Nativity, which was a great success and enjoyed by everyone. There were a lot of funny moments, but it was wonderful to join and celebrate the real meaning of Christmas together. This spring and summer we've been finding out about things Jesus teaches us through his parables, and we ended the year with our Family Fun day which was really well attended with lots of new faces, and the rain held off for us for just long enough!



It has been great to develop our relationships with the families who come and to support people in different ways. We've also welcomed some young leaders who have started with helping on the worship, kitchen and activity teams – it's fantastic to see young people stepping up into these positions. In the autumn we hope to develop a small group, and also increase the number of our parents who are involved with helping out at Messy Church.

Our summer social at **Totally Tuesday** this year was a water fight, which was a great representation of the group – full of fun, play and laughter! This year we have explored many topics – friendship, poverty, people who encountered Jesus, wellbeing – there is always a range of opinions, which is a strength of this group. This has been nurtured by our four young leaders, who completed the whole year volunteering at TT and received our gold recognition badge. We have so appreciated each one of them and what they bring to TT, by being themselves and offering what they have. We encourage each person to lead and contribute in their own way, and that it is ok for that to be different, depending on their gifts and how they want to be involved. The group benefits from seeing these role models being themselves and being a great positive example. The young leaders have had such a positive time, that they will be staying on for another year and working towards our iridescent badge for long service!





We have had a lot of fun and great discussion this year at **WOW**. We have discussed mental health, exam pressures and wellbeing. We spent a half term exploring social justice through a Tearfund series and finished the year exploring relationships, consent and Christianity which included a visit from Charlotte Naylor Davies. Over some of the summer sessions we have been out to the local woods to relax with a mindfulness walk and enjoyed pizza and games in the park as one of our socials. This social was also 'bring a friend' and we are delighted that

one of the friends is now regularly attending WOW. Our academic year finished with a couple of WOW young people visiting Totally Tuesday's water fight end of year social, answering questions about moving up to WOW from TT. Our own end of year social was home topped pizzas and The Truman Show. It has been a delight to see the young people grow over the year, to see their curiosity and questioning of social issues and faith and being able to support them through difficulties faced and exam pressures. Next year's sessions are already in the early stages of planning as well as looking forward to our annual residential in November.

We have been in Carr Manor Community School twice this year to run a small **wellbeing support group** for girls, where we have space to talk about things that matter to them. It is wonderful to see the group flourish, share and develop relationships that we hope will continue long after the group is finished. When evaluating our time together, the girls shared that the group had helped with..."my mental health"..."my confidence"..."talking to girls my age/making new friends" and "talking about feelings", which exactly what the group is meant to do!



Seeing young leaders open an after school **drop in** for their younger peers has been a real highlight this year, and they all received their silver badges at the awards ceremony! They designed the advertising, planned the programme, risk assessed the activities and are now serving food and engaging with young people who come along. It has been exciting to see them involved all the way through the development of the work and see how much that adds to what is happening – young people leading youth work for young people! We really appreciate working with InterACT on this and having the support of a staff member from Carr Manor, which helps to embed the work in the local community. We look forward to what next term brings with the drop, as our young leaders pass on all they have learnt to new young people who will join the volunteer team.



We continue to wait for the outcome of our planning application to place a modular building on the land at Stainbeck Church, which we are hopeful of hearing back from soon. This will bring increased opportunities for young people to get hands on with the practicalities of the building, as well as develop their ideas for how the space will be used for the community.

Thank you for your interest in the work of Thrive and the encouragement and support you offer – we really appreciate you. It's good to come to the end of the year and be able to share these stories of the work and celebrate what our commitment together looks like amongst children, young people and families!

**Hannah, Helen and Sarah, Thrive staff team**