

Her swim helped him learn to walk

KIND-HEARTED Lucia Hiscock helped to raise £1,100 to help a toddler from her church.

The caring eight-year-old, from St Matthew's Church, Blackmoor, swam 40 lengths to raise the cash for one-year-old George Parry.

George was born with a number of health problems, and needed to learn to walk before his eyesight deteriorated further.

His family spent £300 of the money raised on a new walking frame, and will spend the rest of it on therapy to help him to swallow solids.

Lucia, from St Matthew's C of E Primary School, knows George and his family from church. When she heard that the family needed funds raised, she sprang into action.

She set herself the challenge of swimming 1,000 metres in Mill Chase swimming pool in Bordon, and then asked church friends and others for sponsorship.

Her mum Sara said: "We've known the family for about a year, and Lucia adores George. They have a special bond and Lucia often tries to mother him. When she heard they needed this walking frame she said 'I'd like to help'.

"I said it has to be something that you can do, but it needs to be challenging. She could do 20 lengths already, so she decided to

try 40. She got sponsorship from people at church, from the soup café on Mondays and from the church holiday club.

"She was a bit nervous because she knew people were coming to watch and cheer her on. George and his family came too.

"But it was a really good day, and she was proud of herself for having done it. I was so proud as well – for her to want to help other people in this way is incredible. I'm sure this won't be the last time she does this kind of thing."

And George's mum Hannah Lindsey said: "George already has his walking frame and is zooming around on it. He was crawling beforehand, but would hold on to all sorts of things to try to walk, including the stools at church.

"He was coming up to two years old and we don't know how long he will have his eyesight as his vision is deteriorating.

"We mentioned to Lucia's mum that we needed to save up to buy the frame, and then Lucia wanted to help. We all thought she might raise £50 or so, but it went crazy!

"We are really grateful to Lucia, especially as she has had a difficult year herself.

"Hopefully we can spend the rest on a specialist speech and language therapist who can help him, as he only has a milk diet and can't tolerate solid food at the moment."



Lucia Hiscock and George Parry

Inspiring others to welcome strangers

OUR cathedral will be at the heart of efforts to inspire a greater sense of inclusion during One World Week.

It will be hosting an evening to look at how we should respond to issues such as migration and refugees, diversity and inclusion, extremism and Islamophobia.

The dean of the cathedral, the Very Rev David Brindley, will chair a discussion on November 26, from 7.30pm-9.30pm on these issues. The speakers will include Michael Woolley, from Friends Without Borders, Julia Thistleton-Smith, from the Rural Refugee Trust and Jess Gealer, from the Modern Slavery Partnership.

It's part of One World Week, an annual event which encourages Christians to think about global issues of social justice. This year's theme is 'Including You', and emphasises how all of us are affected by these kind of issues.

The idea is to consider how we as Christians can address people's concerns, confront myths and prejudices, and explore ways to make refugees and other newcomers welcome in our communities.

The week also includes a multicultural celebration at St John's Roman Catholic Cathedral, from 12noon-4pm on the same day. The afternoon will include world food, music and activities enabling people from across the world to meet.

For details, please email OWWcelebration@gmail.com.

Russian princess given final honour

SHE was a Russian princess who was buried in a Hayling Island churchyard.

Now her grave has been restored and a service will be held this month to honour the memory of Princess Catherine Yourievsky.

She was the daughter of Tsar Alexander II and died on Hayling Island in 1959. She was buried in the churchyard of St Peter's Church, Northney, but her gravestone needed cleaning and straightening.

Portsmouth's Russian Orthodox parish restored the grave as part of a campaign to keep alive the memory of distinguished Russians in

the UK. And on October 3, they'll hold a special service called Panikhida – a prayer service at the graveside which includes litanies and hymns in a mixture of English and Church Slavonic.

Dr John Newbury, who led the operation to restore the grave, said: "It had got very grubby and even posed a health and safety risk of falling down. Now it stands out."

Princess Catherine was born in St Petersburg in 1878, but fled Russia in the wake of the Communist revolution with her husband, Prince Serge Obolensky. She ended up in London,

an understudy of opera star Dame Nellie Melba.

She ended up destitute, jobless and alone, and moved to Hayling Island because it was cheap to live there.

She joined the Women's Institute and died in a care home. Her funeral at St Peter's was attended by only eight people, which is one reason why the Russian Orthodox parish is holding the Panikhida, a traditional Russian graveside service.

Members of the Russian Embassy will attend at 3.30pm on Sunday 3 October, alongside members of the parish. During the service, a plate of boiled wheat is

blessed and then distributed for people to eat at the end. This is called kolliva, and relates to John 12 verse 24.

Russian songs will also be sung by singers from the Orthodox Cathedral in London.

There are other Russian graves in the churchyard at St Peter's, including a noted artistic couple Afansy and Elena Nikolsky. Their son, Fr Maxim Nikolsky, will be one of two Russian Orthodox priests at the service.

The other is Fr Michael Gogoleff, rector of the Portsmouth Russian Orthodox parish of St Peter and St Paul.



Princess Catherine's restored grave