

# Church launches new pre-school for locals

**CHRISTIANS are working together to launch a new pre-school within their church complex.**

The Ark Pre-School, based in Liphook Church Centre, will open its doors in September in response to increasing local demand for nursery places.

And Helen Jackson, until recently the church's families pastor, has now been unveiled as the new head of the pre-school.

Worshippers from St Mary's, Bramshott, and Liphook Church Centre were approached last year by East Hampshire District Council with a view to the latter hosting a new pre-school.

Local Christians have worked together to modernise their church building and create a bright, child-friendly environment for the new venture.

The project has grown out of a desire for the local church to serve the community in meaningful, practical ways. The Ark will

provide much-needed places for three and four year old, as well as employment for experienced children's workers.

Mum-of-four Helen Jackson, who has seven years experience as a primary school teacher, said: "I'm so excited to be taking on this new role, in a community I already love being a part of."

"Children of all faiths and none will be warmly welcome at The Ark, and I'm looking forward to building a new team of passionate people to nurture and encourage them. We believe that every child is made in the image of God – and our desire is that The Ark is a place where they experience his abundant love and welcome."

"At The Ark, we'll be focusing on play-based activities to promote excitement about trying new things, and championing a culture of listening to each other, as we help the children to understand that their feelings and opinions truly matter."

And the vicar, the Rev

Valentine Inglis-Jones, who will be a trustee of the pre-school, said: "Our church is rooted in the centre of our community, and the launch of The Ark gives us a wonderful opportunity to support local families of all shapes and sizes."

"Over the last year, it's been wonderful to see people from across the church working together to make The Ark happen. And now, alongside the other brilliant pre-schools in Liphook, we want to help give children in this parish the very best start in life. As the Bible amply demonstrates, Jesus cares very deeply about children – and we do, too!"

The Ark will be holding Open Mornings on Wednesday 14th June and Saturday 24th June. Parents and carers can register their interest by emailing [info@thearkliphook.co.uk](mailto:info@thearkliphook.co.uk)



Helen Jackson, former families' pastor at Liphook Church Centre, will be the new head of The Ark Pre-School based there

## We learnt from Swedes

IN case your Swedish is a bit shaky, *Det Sista Ordet* translates as 'The Last Word', the usual heading for this section of the *Pompey Chimes*.

In April we welcomed Sofia Backsten and Lars Lifvendahl, curates from the Diocese of Stockholm, to parishes here, as two of our curates – Max Cross from Sheet and Janet Trevithick from Titchfield – set off to Sweden. The purpose was to learn from each other and see how our shared faith is expressed by the Church of England and the Church of Sweden.

We are often so much more comfortable in our own small corner of the Kingdom where we can enjoy the security of our own church tradition. When we feel safe and secure, we find it much easier to make our mark and pronounce the last word on the issues we face. The Church in Sweden and the Church of England are very different, and what has been most important has been the value of listening to other Christians who because of tradition and culture do things differently.

In election time our politicians love to have the last word. On TV or radio they



## det sista ordet

by the Ven Peter Sutton  
Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight

want to plant their strongly held beliefs in the mind of the viewer or listener. For Christians it should be different.

*Det sista ordet*, or the last word, demands of Christians that we speak and listen with generosity, that we aim to listen and to learn from others who are seeking to follow the way of Christ and do so in different circumstances.

During their time in the parishes of Titchfield and Sheet, Sofia and Lars experienced many aspects of English parish life and compared our church, which thrives on the volunteering work of many, with their own parishes, which are able to employ many more than we do. They were struck by the extent of different forms of lay ministry and the ways in

which we train clergy. When Sofia and Lars came to see me on the Isle of Wight we saw how Christians are involved in the hospice, hospital chaplaincies and prisons.

We visited churches and communities and even went bowling and played crazy golf on Sandown Pier! In every aspect of their visit there were questions to ask that helped us all to grow. Rarely did anyone take the risk of trying to have the last word as to the right way in which our faith is lived.

At a time when there are so many arguments and divisive issues to face we should approach the delicate territory of making *det sista ordet* or the last word with the generosity of being as willing to listen as we are to speak.

Come to me,  
all you who  
are weary and  
burdened, and  
I will give you  
rest.

Matthew 11:28