

In 2023, I applied for and received a grant of £400 from Halstead Town Council for the toddler group Wonderkids. Wonderkids is run by the Gateway Project, part of St Andrew's Church Outreach and community work. We meet weekly during term time and are a free resource within the community for parents/carers and children up to school age.

On the application form I stated that the grant would be used to support role play and imaginative play within the group and would be used to help with storage of our equipment. Over the summer of 2023 I bought new toys including: play food, a shop till, dressing up clothes (and clothes rail to help the children access the clothes), a tea set, pots and pans and a wooden train set.

The children love the new toys. The dressing up clothes are a firm favourite and you often see a policeman running around chasing after a super hero. The children enjoy pretending to be different people, characters and animals using the resources. The uniforms are a great source of imaginative play as children love to pretend to be firefighters and police officers in particular. The food, pans and tea set have helped to encourage the children to use the play kitchen for cooking. We often see pots full of different culinary creations and placed carefully in the oven. They were a great source of entertainment on Shrove Tuesday when the children made playdough pancakes.

The storage containers purchased have a much more practical benefit, appreciated more by our volunteers than the children who attend. They are much needed to increase the life of our toys and have helped us to theme our areas when setting up.

Below are some pictures of the resources purchased and the children enjoying them. (All images with children's faces have been provided by parents for the purpose of this report. Any further use outside this report needs further permission from the parents.)

