



Churches and Schools in Partnership

Introduction

‘The role of the church is to equip, support, encourage and walk with those involved in Education’

As a diocese, we are fully committed to supporting our Headteachers, staff, governors, incumbents and congregations in building effective links between the school and church community. Quality partnership working is key as we seek to serve our communities together and so a creative and strong relationship between a parish and school gives the very best opportunity to achieve this together.

Schools have a major place in the life of a community and a church working with a school can make a big difference. Partnership working isn't wholly about increasing numbers within our churches (although that would be a desirable outcome in itself) but rather it is about building a partnership based on mutual trust, being there for each other and developing a relationship of service to one another.

This booklet will hopefully give you plenty of ideas on how to develop the relationship your church can have with its school so that the children and young people of the parish flourish. The Education team are here to help, along with colleagues in the Children and Youth team, so please do be in touch with any questions or examples of good practice from within your own parish context that we can learn from and share.

Schools as part of Diocesan Mission: Generous Churches Making and Nurturing Disciples

Mutually Resourcing to build up the Body of Christ, to grow into Christ-likeness, Commitment Partnership, Influence and Numbers.

“We will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and build itself up in love, as each part does its work”. Ephesians 4:14 & 15

We are called to be salt and light in our communities. Churches and schools are at the heart.



‘I believe that when we, as God’s people, walk across the threshold of a school, we take Jesus into that school. Whether we are going to sit with a child and hear them read, or to be a governor involved in the decision-making; whether we are going to be a teacher with huge opportunities to influence young people; whatever we do, we take Jesus with us and the potential through that is enormous.’ Carol Dadswell, school governor, in *Renewal* magazine, February 1999

Relationship

Why build relationship with your local school?

Schools are often central to their community and provide an exciting opportunity for churches to engage with children and young people. Schools and churches serve the needs of the same local community. Consequently, for them to make strong links and work together in partnership often results in better community relationships

Where do we start?

Do you know what your local school wants and needs? Start with **relationship**. In primary schools what they may most need is someone to listen to readers or support the gardening club. In secondary schools it may be mentoring, it may be supporting a schools worker or family worker.

Find out what is needed, what is wanted. Beginning to support your local school often leads to new and creative ideas flowing and opportunities for more engagement.

Be a **presence** in the school. It may be that the first thing we do is take in some cake as a way of saying thank you to the staff for the work they do or for a particular event or occasion in the life of the school (e.g. a recent Ofsted)

- Is there a named person a regular contact you can make? Even if it is dropping in for a cup of tea: once a week, once a month.
- A change of staff particularly a change of Headteacher can be a good time to build new relationships with the school – How could you offer welcome?
- Are there local parish or deanery events taking place? Ask the school to speak, share music, art, a project they are working on.
- How can we offer pastoral support to children and adults alike?



What is the intent on engaging with your local school?

Churches and schools are often the two recognisable centres to any community. Often relationship with a local school is committing to a long relationship. It is about **presence** and about connection with the community.

How do we show **hospitality** and welcome in engaging with our local school? Who does it extend to? How do we engage with families of the pupils? Staff? What lasting impression of church do we give them? Do we go to them or wait for them to come to us?



Building relationship is about establishing **trust**. There should be openness and no hidden agenda. We need to be open-minded about how we can best serve our local school.

How do we engage with staff? How do we engage with parents? What do we offer? Through building relationship with schools and families, the church will know where they can help in the community.

Opportunities

Education Sunday

This is an annual opportunity for your church to hold a service or event involving one or more schools. A theme and resources are produced by a national steering group.



http://www.cte.org.uk/Groups/234838/Home/Resources/Education_Sunday/Education_Sunday.aspx

Working with families

- Could you support a school breakfast club and/or after school club?
- Could you consider opening a Lunch Kitchen in partnership with Make Lunch during the school holidays? During school holidays, the Make Lunch network of churches and community groups open Lunch Kitchens across the UK to provide free, healthy, cooked food for pupils who usually receive free school meals. <https://www.makelunch.org.uk/>
- Could you support families in the parish with parenting advice/classes?

National Parenting Initiative parenting courses:

<http://www.thenpi.org.uk/courses/>

Mothers' Union 'Passionate About Parenting'



<http://www.mothersunion.org/content/passionate-about-parenting>

Communication ideas

- Encourage a good flow of news through a school page in the parish magazine, church contribution to school newsletter etc.
- Place a notice board in a prominent place in both school and church, containing news from church and school.
- Include a regular 'school' item on the PCC agenda.
- Use social media as a partnership tool to share good news stories from church and school
- Share these good news stories with the Diocesan Communications Manager <http://dioceseofyork.org.uk/supporting-parishes/communications/sharing-our-stories/>
- Host regular drop-in sessions, to share news and events

Transitions

Supporting parents and children and young people through times of transition can be an important and valuable role that church members can offer and there are resources that can support this work.

Get Ready Go - for starting primary

<http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/29642.id>

It's your move - primary to secondary transition

<http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/ItsYourMove/112817.id>

Life Matters - end of year 11

<http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/SchoolTransition/LifeActually/29644.id>

Getting ready for University <http://www.fusion.uk.com/resources>



Collective Worship

What is Collective Worship?

School Assembly is a gathering of the school community; it is often used to celebrate and focus on the life and values of the community itself and is without religious content.

Collective worship is a gathering of a 'collection' of people of diverse religious, agnostic and non-religious backgrounds and does not pre-suppose any particular religious commitment. It is educational and inclusive in its nature, rather than being a gathering of believers.

The school community is a collection of people from different backgrounds and if school collective worship is to be meaningful, it must be sensitive to this.

The use of the term collective is important in that it recognises that pupils and staff will subscribe to a range of beliefs, and that there is a need to provide opportunities for all to share in collective worship in a way which make sense to them and is appropriate to their stage of development.

Collective Worship in different school contexts



All maintained schools and academies must provide an act of collective worship, for all children, every day. The act of collective worship can take place at any time of the school day, and in any regular school grouping e.g. whole school, key stage or class.

A key difference, however, lies in the form of that worship. In community schools, that worship must be "*wholly or mainly of a Christian character,*" reflecting the broad traditions of Christian belief without being

distinctive or any particular Christian denomination. The legal requirements for worship in voluntary (aided and controlled) schools, Church of England foundation schools and Church of England academies are different: the requirements include that collective worship in such schools must be in accordance with any provision of the trust deed relating to the school/academy and/or in accordance with the tenets and practices of the Church of England. The ethos statement in the Instrument of Government of a Church of England school reflects its status as a Church of England school and collective worship is a vital way in which the religious character of the school can be preserved and developed in accordance with that ethos statement.

Things to consider when offering to support Collective Worship in a school

- Contact the Headteacher in the first instance
- Most will welcome you into school. Where there is suspicion be clear and open about how you would like to support the school. Seek the Headteacher's guidance.
- If invited to lead worship, ask to meet the worship coordinator, to see policy documents/themes/any resources which they may wish you to use.
- Try to visit an act of Collective Worship before you lead one.



- As a visitor to the school, representing the local Christian community, you are given an opportunity to share but not indoctrinate or evangelise. It is important to use phrases such as: Christians believe, the Bible says, in our church, Jesus taught. This ensures everyone know whose ideas you are sharing.
- Good communication – always let the Headteacher know what you are going to do.
- Before you try something new check with the Headteacher.
- Ask for feedback if you feel it would help.

Resources and ideas

- Hold a service of commissioning for a new teacher in the parish.
<http://dioceseofyork.org.uk/uploads/attachment/3157/commissioning-service-booklet-for-new-headteachers.pdf>
- Hold a service of welcome for a new member of the school community.
- Consider giving new parents and staff to the school gifted with a gesture or symbol of welcome from the parish (A school prayer leaflet and/or bible, for example).
- Rotate worship between the school and the church
- Work with children to make liturgical cloths and banners for the school's collective worship. Make up boxes of Christian artefacts that the school can borrow – special times of the church year for example, an activity box could be made up for pupils to take home and share with family. Support pupils with reflection corners, Collective Worship boards, resources, and Collective Worship planning.
- Plan joint worship occasions between church and school, in both locations.
- Include the school in special services and festivals.
- Establish Education Sunday as a major opportunity for church and school to come together, using material circulated to parishes each year.
- Establish a core of hymns, song and liturgy that will be used in worship, in both church and school.
- Encourage parish musicians to share their expertise and knowledge, and support music in school, and school worship.



Diocesan Collective Worship Guidelines

<http://dioceseofyork.org.uk/supporting-schools/help-for-schools/collective-worship/>

Open the Book has over 100 stories to be used in a programme that can run for four consecutive years. Each story comes with a scripted introduction, conclusion, time of reflection and a final prayer. Volunteer Storytellers go into schools, build relationships with staff and bring the Bible to life through drama. Storytellers are part of a team formed from the local church or churches working together.

<http://www.openthebook.net/>



Worship Workshop is a website from Transforming Worship and The Church of England that will help you to create your own patterns of worship around your own



themes. Worship Workshop provides prayers, songs, Bible readings and other useful words and ideas which are taken from the liturgy of the Church of England. www.worshipworkshop.org.uk

Bibles for children is a charity offering to present free Bibles to all children in a primary school. There is no catch! <http://www.biblesforchildren.org.uk/content/>

Imaginer provides a range of resources to support collective worship planning and spiritual development in primary schools <http://www.imaginer.co.uk/>



Flippin' Praise



Flippin Praise is a simple A4 flip-book intended to help groups of children plan acts of worship in relation to a given theme for the day. It also helps them become clearer about what Collective Worship is about.

http://www.cofesuffolk.org/uploads/Flippin_Praise_Order_Form.pdf

The Role of Clergy in Collective Worship

Ideally, clergy should seek to lead worship prayerfully, reliably and regularly, with creativity and inspiration. Incomprehensible, boring, irrelevant or banal approaches to worship can do enormous harm to children's developing sense of God and his place in their lives. Realistically, committing to one act of worship a week will be for many clergy simply impossible, particularly those with more than one parish or more than one school in their parish, so the extent of clergy involvement will vary from clergy to clergy. Whilst reliability is important, it is the clergy person themselves schools value hugely, above all their approachability and warmth. Whatever pattern of involvement is agreed should be one that enables the clergy person to become a regular and welcome part of the school's life.

Making the most of other opportunities to connect with children and staff outside of collective worship is a significant way to foster their engagement more effectively with the collective worship element of clergy involvement, for example, attending school events such as sports days and school productions. Having lunch with the pupils on a regular basis is an excellent way of coming alongside the children in a natural and accessible way. Making a personal connection with the children by chatting together over spag bol, treacle sponge and custard will mean they are more likely to be receptive and willing to engage when they encounter clergy more "formally" when they're leading collective worship.



Preparation and practice

Offering meaningful and engaging experiences of worship obviously takes thought and can be more challenging for someone leading worship when they are not with the children day by day as teachers are. For those who have little experience of working with children and young people leading collective worship can be especially challenging, indeed daunting! It is important that clergy are open with Headteachers about their lack of confidence or experience and seek advice and help from them and other experienced staff. In addition other clergy and Readers who are experienced in leading collective worship can also be a valuable resource.

There are particular skills required in planning and leading effective worship with schoolchildren. Some are theatrical:

- being able to tell a good story
- to play things a bit larger than life
- to engage and hold the audience
- to shape ten minutes so that there is a beginning and an end

Others are intellectual and theological, and the younger the children the more demanding the task is. Most important is to develop the ability to distil the essence of theological truth from the biblical record or other Christian revelation and convey it in terms that are accessible to the children involved. The dictum "less is more" is important here i.e. rather than trying to make several points, identify one "Big Idea" for a particular worship time, stick to that and do it well.

To communicate effectively whatever “Big Idea” has been identified requires awareness of the vocabulary that Christian adults use but which will bamboozle children. Being alert to what needs explaining and what background knowledge is required, and being able to understand off-the-wall questions or answers, and to spot the missed connections, are all part of the well prepared worship leader's toolkit. But all of this comes with experience and practice, so having realistic expectations of yourself is critical to avoid discouragement.

It is daunting for anyone to consider a whole school act of collective worship. To keep three to eleven-year-olds engaged is probably the most difficult thing anyone ever does in a primary school. Disruption can be minimised by being aware of and using the usual conventions and habits of the school:

- ways of starting and finishing;
- verbal cues for prayers, standing and sitting;
- general pattern/balance of singing, listening, answering questions;
- what prayers are regularly used.

With confidence these elements can be altered, but making use of an established pattern at first is easier for clergy and the children. As well as seeking advice and help from the Headteacher, especially for clergy lacking experience and confidence in working with young people, it is enormously worthwhile taking the time to observe a variety of school staff leading worship, especially the head, and other experienced clergy and Readers too. When observing in this way, look out for answers to the following questions:

- How do they speak to the whole school? (Avoid having a special voice for addressing younger children.)
- What is the attention span of the youngest children? How is their interest and attention maintained beyond that?
- How do you engage infants and juniors at the same time? How is the trap of talking only to the four-year-olds and losing Year 6 after three minutes avoided in practice?
- What happens when it goes wrong and everyone's interest is lost? What strategies are there for rescuing that situation?
- What is a good act of collective worship from the children's point of view?
- What do they enjoy or recognise as the real thing?

Worship that involves use of ICT such as Power Point can be effective and is very familiar to children. Worship that involves children being physically active in some way for part of the time is also hugely effective with children generally responding well to a more active time of worship rather than one which sees them seated throughout. For example, asking for volunteers to help with a drama, mimes, games, and injecting some light hearted competition into the proceedings can all make for collective worship that is fun and memorable. It also lends itself to using different age groups for different tasks so that the whole age range can be kept engaged. Clergy will need to test the waters in terms of the capacity of a particular school's children to cope with more energetic worship, and gradually building towards a more lively time of worship may be appropriate, however, the rewards can be great in terms of increasing the engagement of children in matters of faith and enhancing their relationship with clergy.

The clergy are in school to work alongside staff, governors, pupils and parents rather than dictating the terms, though sometimes firm advice and direction is needed, for example, clergy should not find themselves leading collective worship with no member of staff present. Indeed, ideally, Headteachers should be encouraged to be present at clergy led worship and to encourage all, or at least the bulk, of their teaching staff to be present. The pressure to find non-contact time for teaching staff can make this a difficult issue, however, the more staff there are present at collective worship the more effectively the message is conveyed to the children that collective worship is something of value and a fundamental part of their common life.

Conclusion

Worship in schools is about facilitating children's and staff's spiritual search, a means to explore faith and above all God's love for them and his purpose for them and the world. Church Schools especially, though not exclusively, are often the place of catalyst for this for many associated with the school community. Clergy contribute to that process first and foremost as Christians and then as representatives of the Church, resourcing the faith journey of the school creatively, dynamically and thoughtfully from the Christian tradition. They are there to enable children to encounter with joyful curiosity the Christian faith, to tell warmly the story of their own faith journey and life with Jesus, to offer with enthusiasm something they feel is of profound value. Clergy embody the credibility and attractiveness of the Gospel, enabling the whole school community to see itself reflected in the light of God's love in Jesus. It's an amazing opportunity, it's a joy and it's a challenge!



The Spiritual Life of the School and Prayer

Where do we start?

Are we praying for our schools? How do we support and show we value those who work in education within our parish and deanery?

The spiritual life of the school

Schools are now expected to show how they support Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Education (SMSC) and British Values

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf

There are interesting models of support developing in both primary and secondary contexts. What could you offer?

This could be:

- Finding out the prayer needs of the school and support in prayer
- Offering to create quiet corners or a focal area
- Supporting SMSC through opportunities such as prayer spaces in schools
- Being a listening ear. Offering pastoral care and support to staff and pupils
- Supporting in particular situations / times of crisis / times of celebration
- Are there opportunities through charity work / social action? Christian Aid week, the local foodbank? Do you know what links with charity work / projects your schools are taking on? Supporting this or encouraging them to get involved with a parish project may be a way of building relationship.
- Church and school to pray for each other regularly
- Offer prayers written by pupils in school to the church for use in its worship, e.g. a book of prayers produced, and for the Church to offer prayers written by the parish for the school.
- Supporting family prayer life with booklets, suggestions, and ideas.
- Establish a prayer / support group, which welcomes members from both the school and church communities.



Norwich Diocese produces a helpful resource called SMSC: A Christian Perspective
https://www.dioceseofnorwich.org/files/8914/4352/6473/SMSC_2015_web.pdf



Prayer Spaces in Schools

'Prayer Spaces in Schools enable children and young people, of all faiths and none, to explore these life questions, spirituality and faith in a safe, creative and interactive way. Taking a broadly Christian perspective as a starting point, prayer spaces give children and young people an opportunity to develop skills of personal reflection and to explore prayer in an open, inclusive and safe environment. A prayer space is usually a classroom sized area that has been transformed for a few days or a week with a range of creative activities that encourage personal reflection on issues such as forgiveness, injustice, thankfulness, big questions, identity and stillness.'

In the Diocese of York, Olivia Seymour, is a regional networker for Prayer Spaces in Schools and can support parishes in developing prayer spaces.

oseymour@yorkdiocese.org

Visit the website at www.prayerspacesinschools.com



Curriculum

Religious Education

Background to RE in schools

- RE is not part of the National Curriculum, but is part of the basic curriculum. It is a statutory subject in schools.
- Community schools follow the local agreed syllabus, as do voluntary controlled. Voluntary aided schools usually follow the diocesan syllabus.
- RE is monitored by the local SACRE (standing advisory council of Religious Education). To find out more about SACREs and potentially how you could be involved go to http://www.christian-teachers.org.uk/data/act/downloads/actnow/p18_Spring_08.pdf
- Inspection – RE standards and RE as an academic subject is inspected by Ofsted in community and Voluntary Controlled schools and by SIAMS (statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) in VA church schools, however SIAMS inspections look at the resourcing and value placed on RE and its contribution to the Christian character of the school in both VC and VA Schools. Ofsted also reports on SMSC as part of a full school inspection. RE contributes to this.

Multifaith RE

- Schools develop a scheme of work based on the local agreed syllabus. (VA schools use the Diocesan Syllabus)
- Good schemes of work whether in a small rural school or large multi faith inner city school should give opportunity for exploring the main religious faiths in Britain today. They should also take account of local faith communities.
- This also applies to VA schools but there will also be a particular emphasis on the teaching of Christianity.

Themes in RE

Things to think about:

- Do you know what your schools teach in Religious Education / Religious Studies? Look at the schools website. What can you offer?
- Can you offer "Myth busting": enabling teachers to deliver accurate, academic and challenging Christianity which will equip students for the 21st Century & beyond school.

This could be:

- Speakers for schools / 6th form debates. Some schools invite a group of people from a variety of religions to contribute to a 'Face the panel' type of lesson and answer questions about their faith. This is a challenging opportunity to be involved, as the pupils can ask some very searching questions.
- Offering a Christian perspective as a visitor to an RE lesson. The religious education syllabus include topics such as 'What do Christians believe', 'Sacred texts', 'What Christians believe and how that informs ethical and moral choices, including forgiveness and issues of good and evil', 'What Christianity says about human rights and responsibilities, social justice and citizenship' and 'What Christians think or believe about global issues, including health, wealth, war, animal rights and the environment'.
- How can you support schools in their understanding of the church seasons and festivals?

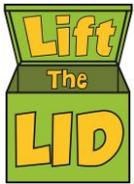


RE:Quest

The RE:Quest website offers creative resources for the teaching of Christianity for Primary and secondary RE. www.request.org.uk



Lift the Lid



The Lift the Lid team design resources to support teachers to create lessons that inspire and enthuse pupils from KS1 through to KS3. They have a library of resource boxes which cover different topics of Christianity such as Puzzling Questions, Values and Christianity, also boxes exploring Christmas and Easter. The variety of resources vary from artefacts, information cards, role play costumes, books, Bibles, games, discussions starters and story boxes. They aim to supply schools with resources through the local church, partnering with them to support their local school/schools.

For more information on their resources go to liftthelid.org.uk or for further information on how partnering email office@liftthelid.org.uk or call 01653 228060

The wider curriculum

People as lesson resources

Schools welcome the input from external sources to enhance the curriculum, and church congregations have a lot to offer. There is scope for the church to **'think outside of the box'**. Often members of the church congregation will have interests, expertise and knowledge in other areas of the curriculum and they are then able to contribute and help to bring the subject alive.

History is often an area where older members of the congregation can share their life experiences and show pupils relevant artefacts.

If your church members originate from, or have travelled to, other parts of the globe, they, together with visiting missionary links to the church, can also enrich the pupils' learning. Offer to the school for them to visit to talk about where they work or were born and live. Some schools will be willing to make a link with a Christian missionary as a focus for their charitable projects. For older pupils, this may open up opportunities to travel to work with a Christian aid or relief agency.

Doctors, nurses, health professionals, engineers and scientists may all have things they can contribute to science lessons. Church members may also have expertise that can be of use in art, music, sport and design lessons.

Other ideas to think about

- Offer the church and grounds for Design and Technology, Art, History, Geography projects and learning
- Are there other adults who could offer spare time to the school, from classroom support, to painting, to hearing children read?
- Have regular displays of school children's work across the curriculum in church. Invite them in with their families to see these in place.



Christian Aid Accreditation for Schools

Christian Aid is preparing to launch a brand new accreditation scheme for primary schools, in partnership with the Church of England Education Office. Our aim is to help church schools inspire their pupils to make a difference in a challenging world.

This scheme will:

- increase knowledge and understanding about why and how Christians want to change the world to one where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty
- increase understanding of the root causes of poverty and injustice
- engage and empower pupils as agents of change in the transformation of our world.



Many church schools are already deeply engaged with global learning, while others would like to do more. Wherever you are on the global learning journey, Christian Aid will help you to explore, strengthen and celebrate your school's potential to respond to global injustice in a distinctively Christian way. This accreditation scheme, launching in January 2018, will help you showcase the wonderful work you are doing to support pupils' development as courageous advocates.

If you are a teacher or an education adviser and think this scheme might suit your school(s), let us know and we will add you to our mailing list. We would also love to hear from you if you have teaching experience and are interested in supporting this scheme through volunteering.

For more information, email: schools@christian-aid.org

Further resources from Christian Aid can be found at <http://learn.christianaid.org.uk/>

The Archbishop of York Youth Trust Young Leaders Award

The Young Leaders Award is a unique active citizenship programme which empowers young people to make a difference in their local community. Designed to form part of the school curriculum, the Young Leaders Award offers an exciting opportunity for young people to engage in new learning experiences, discover the benefits of volunteering, and grow in leadership, character, and key life skills.

The Award is available for:

- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 3
- Key Stage 4
- Post 16



To find out more: <https://www.archbishopofyorkyouthtrust.co.uk/young-leaders-award/>

LifeSavers

LifeSavers is a financial education programme for primary schools, helping children and their families manage money wisely.

We provide training and resources for teachers, offer support for school savings clubs, and encourage parental and wider community engagement. LifeSavers is a partnership between the Archbishop of Canterbury's Just Finance Foundation and Young Enterprise, with financial support from Virgin Money and the Government.



The Church Building

Church visits: welcoming children into your church

Does your church feel welcoming when children arrive? Is yours a child friendly church? What experience of God will the children take away from your church?

Check out your church. Is it:

- warm, bright and hospitable or cold, dark and unwelcoming?
- accessible or locked?
- full of information about its activities?
- signposting how it is involved in the community?
- A place to be quiet and a place to celebrate?
- A place where you can explore or full of things you mustn't touch?



How do you show 'church' as a living community not a dead relic?

Remember to:

- be hospitable and generous
- use symbols in your building to open up the mystery of God
- give children time and space to reflect
- be creative
- invite families / staff to visit and see what the children have done at the end of the day

Resources

Reading the Past, Writing the Future is an educational project, devised by The Laurence Sterne Trust, which aims to encourage primary schools to visit their local church and to stimulate creative work inspired by the stories that can be found there.

<https://www.laurencesternetrust.org.uk/wp/reading-the-past/about/>



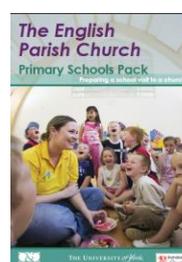
It's Your Church is a booklet created by Scripture Union aimed at helping pupils make the most of a visit to a local church. Aimed at 8- to 11-year-olds who are visiting a church as part of their RE syllabus. It offers an opportunity for churches to connect with their local schools as they invite children to visit their building and community.



<http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/YourChurch/ItsYourChurch/3597664.id>

The English Parish Church Primary Schools pack has been created by Barnabas in Schools and the Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture. This free, downloadable pack is a ready-to-use toolkit to help you use your local parish church as an exciting learning resource both inside and outside the classroom.

http://www.christianityandculture.org.uk/sites/christianityandculture.org.uk/files/schoolspack/candc_psp_visits.pdf



Caring for God's Acre churchyard and burial ground education pack is a resource to support primary aged pupils engaging with the church grounds as a part of the curriculum.

<http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/index.php/useful-information/downloads/education-pack-english/entire-teachers-pack/teachers-leaders-notes.html>



Experience Journeys is a series of resources created by Jumping Fish for the main seasons and festivals of the Christian year.

<http://www.gloucester.anglican.org/education/jumping-fish-publications/>

This is an imaginative approach to help children experience the Christian festivals through the year using, on each occasion, easy to assemble, interactive stations set up in different parts of the church. In the series are Experience Easter, Experience Easter Outside, Experience Pentecost, Experience Harvest, Experience Christmas and Experience Church.

The pack gives detailed instructions to church members to enable them to create the stations. Each pack also includes detailed instructions to help the school group leaders introduce and reflect on each part of the story. These resources offer a superb opportunity to strengthen church-school links.



Governance

Christian governors are in a unique position to encourage the development of productive and supportive links between church and school. Governors have collective responsibility making a difference to the school community, adults and children alike. Governors sit between the school and the community that it serves, with the task of ensuring that the young people of that community are provided with the best possible education within the limits of the available resources. Governance is a one way the church can serve the local community and contribute to vision and wise leadership of their local school.

Principles of good governance

Good and effective governance requires that all governors have a clear and shared view of:

- what good practice looks like
- where the school is going (vision and values)
- what their role is in achieving both of the above.

Being effective as a governor involves:

- being prepared to ask questions;
- being sufficiently well-informed to know the questions that should be asked;
- having a good idea of what the answers should look like;
- being known as someone who is a committed supporter of the school but:
- not being afraid to act as a 'critical friend' of the school – i.e. providing challenge where weaknesses are evident and support for all those involved in working for the school's improvement;
- accessing the training, support and information to will enable them to operate effectively.

Christians serving as governors in community schools can almost certainly do a lot more than they may think they can. Simply by making the case for the school to operate in line with its statutory duties can open the door to a significant improvement in the spiritual life of the school – so long as you and your partners in the local church(es) are prepared to support any gaps that may appear.

Knowing the boundaries

- Act within the law – therefore know what the law actually requires!
- Act according to your conscience in the light of the Biblical teaching about the worth of each person – develop a Christian view of education.
- Don't be afraid to raise questions about aspects of the 'spiritual' life of the school that concern you – such as celebrations of Hallowe'en or the school's provision for SRE (Sex and Relationships Education). You may not win other governors over but you may be surprised at how many others are concerned but are afraid to speak up for fear of being seen as 'unhelpful'.
- Having raised an area of concern, be prepared to withdraw graciously when it becomes clear that you are the only dissenting voice!
- Be aware that it is perfectly legal to present a Christian perspective in community schools but not to proselytize.



- When considering the provision for RE and collective worship, be aware that it is unacceptable to require non-practising members of any faith to participate actively in the rites of that faith, e.g. to receive Holy Communion or to kneel and pray on an Islamic prayer mat. Observation is fine but participation is not. It is of some concern that RE in schools often transgresses these boundaries without anyone being aware of how inappropriate it is.
- Don't be afraid to say what you think but always seek to do so in a gracious and constructive way.

Christian governors in schools should speak with grace, with a sound knowledge of our legal basis and being prepared to challenge when it is not being met; but also an equally sound knowledge of those truly Biblical Christian values that underpin and support a healthy society.

Some ideas as a governor for building links between church and school

- Consider a locally agreed way to link school and PCC.
- Include 'Church' as part of the welcome/induction of a new Head-teacher and their commissioning/ affirmation service
- Involve the school to some extent in clergy appointments.
- Invite the school to be part of the welcome for a new incumbent.
- Invite the Head-teacher to PCC to report on school and community issues.
- Consider including school links as an item on PCC meetings.
- Fill Governor & Foundation Governor (where appropriate) places.
- Recognise and applaud governance as part of Christian service.
- Organise a meeting between the church and Headteachers of local schools, to discuss key issues and share best practice together as a local area. Establish a school-parish action plan.
- include the school in the parish Mission Statement and action planning.
- Consider parish members / clergy meeting parents in school during parents evenings and events, and for the Headteacher to meet members of the parish at key meetings/events.

The role of Governors in Church schools

All governors in a church school have a duty to uphold the foundation trust of their school as expressed in the instrument of government of the school. All governors should be given a copy of the instrument of government as soon as they take their place on the governing body. In an Aided School they also have additional responsibilities for buildings, admissions, health and safety and the employment and dismissal of staff.

The distinctive role of Foundation Governors

Foundation Governors have a special role in, and responsibility for, ensuring that the Christian character of a Church of England school/academy is secured, preserved and developed and that the school/academy is run in accordance with any trust deed relating to the school.

Foundation Governors are representatives of the Church of England on the Governing Body. They should endeavour to cultivate respect for the spiritual and moral beliefs of

the Christian tradition, and to create a community in which pupils, cared for as individuals, are helped to find fulfilment as they grow towards adulthood. As an active Christian presence within the school, they are a vital link between parish and school, playing a unique role in strengthening and enriching the dynamic relationship between school, Church and the wider community.

Foundation Governors have certain specific roles and responsibilities over and above other governors, which will depend on the type of school in which they operate. However, they will all need to work with the PCC and local parish church, the Incumbent and other members of the school's Governing Body in upholding the school's ethos statement and making sure that the school is distinctively Christian.

Transforming Governing is a website for Christians who are school governors in England. It encourages Christians to become governors and aims to enable them to be more effective, contributing usefully to the life of primary and secondary schools



http://www.transforminggoverning.org.uk/?doing_wp_cron=1502444629.5610940456390380859375



A list of further ideas!

- Help with 'Golden time' activities.
- Support the school in following the church calendar, seasons and festivals - be creative, invite families.
- Find a team to offer Open the Book - link this to opportunities for families in church
- Make the most of Education Sunday
- Invite schools to take part in / lead special services, monthly services on a Sunday. Involve families
- Open early and offer refreshments to parents / carers / supporters attending services
- Accompany groups on school trips.
- Cheerlead at sports day.
- Put a geocache in church to attract younger visitors
- Bake and take in cakes and offer prayer and support through key times eg Ofsted and SIAMS inspections, Exam times.
- Share a Bible story in book week.
- Serve refreshments for those organising the school fete.
- Be a lifeguard for school swimming.
- Listen to readers.
- Help school develop 'wild', 'spiritual' or 'food' gardens in their grounds or offer parts of church grounds/gardens for this.
- Offer a lunchtime or after school club for any children.
- Have a notice board in church about school.
- Invite the school onto the flower or cleaning rota once a year
- Invite the school to talk to the PCC
- Let school staff know about 'Alpha', 'The Pilgrim Course' or other courses on offer at the church.
- Support or coach sports clubs.
- Get involved in mentoring young people.
- Adopt a chaplaincy type model of "hanging around" - being there for young people in the young people's space at breaks, lunchtime or after school.
- Offer a work experience placement in church. An example of this by Trinity Learning in Abingdon can be found at <http://www.trinityabingdon.org.uk/learning/workexperience.htm>
- Where appropriate, encourage church members to offer work experience at their business.
- Run a Holiday Club. A wide variety of material is available from amongst others BRF Barnabas and Scripture Union.
- Host activity mornings/ afternoon/ days for children and families.
- Offer after school clubs depending on the expertise you have available. For example, gardening, Bible stories, art & craft, dance, music, drama, sport/games.
- Help with breakfast clubs.
- Harvest - foodbank / hampers locally
- Are there local parish or deanery events taking place? Ask the school to speak, share music, art, a project they are working on.



Further Resources

Reading:

- Celebrating Difference, Staying Faithful by Andrew Wingate
- Linking Churches and Schools by Gillian Wood [Churches Together in England]
- Local Church, Local School: practical and creative ways for churches to serve local primary schools by Margaret Withers
- The Schools Work Handbook: serving God in your local school by Emlyn Williams
- Thirst ('Encounters on the Edge' series – Church Army). The story of a fresh expression of church that serves the parents and staff of the local Church of England primary

Grove Education Books:

- eD 1 Church Schools: A Mission-Shaped Vision
- eD 2 Churches Linking with Schools
- eD 3 Called to Teach: Teaching as a Mission Vocation
- eD 4 Church Schools in a Multi-faith Community
- eD 5 Called to Serve as a School Governor
- eD 6 Fresh Experiences of School Chaplaincy
- eD 7 Reassessing the Culture of Assessment: Weighing Pigs Does Not Make Them Heavier
- eD 8 Churches and Dioceses Resourcing Community Schools
- eD 9 Journeying Through Bereavement in Schools
- eD 10 Understanding Church Schools: Ideas for Today from Joshua Watson's Founding Vision
- eD 11 Prayer in Schools
- eD 12 The Gospel and Educational Values: The Church of England's Contribution
- eD 13 What are Universities Good For?
- eD 14 Religious Education at the Heart of the Curriculum?
- eD 15 Distinctively Christian Learning?
- eD 16 Help, There's a School in my Parish!
- eD 17 What Motivates Christian Educational Practitioners?: Theology as a School Resource
- eD 18 Exploring the Role of Godly Play in the Church Primary School
- eD 19 Mission in Schools
- eD 20 A Theology of Hospitality for Anglican Schools
- eD 21 Christian Values for Church Schools: Making Them Count
- eD 22 Sustaining Hope in School Leadership
- eD 23 Living the Lord's Prayer: Turning the School Upside Down
- eD 24 Changing the Climate
- eD25 Head Teachers as Community Pastors
- eD26 Journeys of Faith Personal Stories and Faith Development in Church Schools
- eD27 Spirituality in a Church School within a Performance-Driven Culture
- eD28 How to Craft Collective Worship
- eD29 British Values in Church Schools
- eD30 How to see Collective Worship Anew
- eD31 Church School Governance



Y 5 Reaching and Keeping Volunteers
Y 12 Schools' Ministry as Mission
Y 21 Supporting Young People Through Parental Break-up
Y 30 Journey into Youth Work: Discovering Your Call to Work with Young People
Y 39 A Model for Christian Youth Work
Y 40 Ten Essential Concepts for Christian Youth Work
Y 43 Chaplaincy with Children and Young People
Y 45 Youth Ministry in a Digital Age: Understanding and Reaching a Generation of Digital Natives

Websites:

- **Diocese of York Website** <http://dioceseofyork.org.uk/supporting-schools>
<http://dioceseofyork.org.uk/children-and-youth>
- **Local Church, Local School** is a website and book created by the Bible Reading Fellowship supporting the development of links between church and school
www.localchurchlocalschool.org.uk
- **Barnabas in Schools** www.barnabasinschools.org.uk
- **Schoolswork** is a project that seeks to support, connect and resource Christian visitors to schools across the UK. <http://www.schoolswork.co.uk/>
- **Ventures** – information on holiday camps: <http://www.ventures.org.uk/falcon-camps>

Training

The **Training in Schools Work** residential course is designed for those new to school work, as well as those with some experience. It is suitable for schools workers and church-based youth and children's workers - both paid and unpaid. The course is applicable to both primary and secondary schools. As well as thinking about the theological underpinning of schools work, there will be practical sessions and the opportunity to gain new ideas and insights.

Find out more at

<http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk/Helpingyousharethegoodnewsinyourcommunity/Schools/Training-SchoolsWork/1803226.id>

Church of England reports and documents relating to education and children and youth ministry

- **Going for Growth: Transformation for children, young people and the Church**
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2554345/goingforgrowth.pdf>
- **Church of England Vision for Education**
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2532839/2016-church-of-england-vision-for-education-web-final.pdf>
- **Church School of the future review**
[https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1418393/the%20church%20school%20of%20the%20future%20review%20-%20march%202012\[1\].pdf](https://www.churchofengland.org/media/1418393/the%20church%20school%20of%20the%20future%20review%20-%20march%202012[1].pdf)
- **The Fruits of the Spirit**
https://churchofengland.org/media/2386307/fruits_of_the_spirit.pdf



- Making a Difference: A review of Religious Education in Church of England Schools
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2076944/making%20a%20difference%20a%20review%20of%20religious%20education%20in%20church%20of%20engl%20and%20schools.pdf>
- The Public Face of God Chaplaincy in Anglican Secondary Schools and Academies in England and Wales
<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2063650/nschaplaincyreport.pdf>