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Toolkit 8

Inspiration and Guidance for developing and nurturing relationships between church and school communities

Sept 2019

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CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Church supporting school	
○ In worship, faith & spirituality	4
○ Christian Unions	5
○ Prayer Spaces in Schools	5
○ Christmas, Easter and other specials occasions	5
○ School visits to Church	6
○ School Services in Church	6
○ Church into School	7
○ Supporting RE	8
○ Recognise Mission Opportunities	9
○ Chaplaincy	10
Working together	
○ Resources Share	10
○ Serving in Structures & Governance	10
○ Collective Worship	11
○ Transitions	12
○ Takeover Challenge	13
Useful resources	14



Supporting your local school

Schools serve at the heart of their communities and the local Mission Areas and Churches have a valuable role to play in supporting them. This can be in practical ways such as volunteering in school to listen to readers or help with administration, tidy the grounds or offering to help to run an after-school club, sharing hobbies and interests. Volunteering can be on a one-off basis or more regular support depending on your time, skills and experience. The spiritual support that you can offer a school is so important, letting the school know that you are praying for them, inviting the school community into Church to share in its life, offering a quiet place for reflection for staff and pupils, inviting them to services. Church members can work with governors and teachers to develop relationships and links between churches and schools, becoming a governor or active member of the Parent Teacher Association.

There are many initiatives that can be taken into schools such as Open the Book, Godly Play, Transforming Lives for Good, and Care for the Family. You could hold a Thanksgiving service for the school, inviting parents, staff, governors and children to a service especially for them. Schools and their church community have so much to offer each other in a rewarding and enriching way. As Christians we serve the people of Wales; we are for everyone, and we can support our schools and communities by expressing our mission, and our faith. It is more important than ever that we find ways of working together to maintain the powerful connection between faith and learning, which is central to our vision.

This resource offers Mission Areas and schools a starting point for developing and nurturing relationships that will benefit the whole community. We have included ideas, signposts to resources, and wisdom shared from schools and parishes.

Here are some important points;

- Church and school links are stronger and live longer when they are not solely reliant on the Head Teacher and the clergy person.
- Nurturing church and school links is a two-way process.
- The majority of these ideas are appropriate for Primary and Secondary schools.
- Developing relationships is ultimately for the benefit and nurture of children and young people.

In all situations, ensure that everything is done within the school's safeguarding policy/protocol.



CHURCH SUPPORTING SCHOOL

In worship, faith & spirituality

1. Find out prayer needs of the school and support in prayer.
2. Gather a team who can create 'Prayer Spaces in Schools' ~ www.prayerspacesinschools.com
3. Offer Godly Play sessions in school. Cass Meurig is a Godly Play Trainer based in our Diocese ~ www.godlyplay.uk/ Please contact Cass for further details: cass.meurig@gmail.com
4. Support the school in the use of liturgy in worship, the church calendar, saints & special days and seasons ~ www.worshipworkshop.org.uk
5. Work with children so they can plan and lead worship ~ www.worshipworkshop.org.uk
6. Find a team to offer 'Open the Book' ~ www.openthebook.net
7. Share worship songs & music ~ www.fischy.com and ~ www.outoftheark.co.uk/
8. Invite schools to take part in/lead special services, and monthly services on a Sunday.
9. Set up a prayer walk around school & grounds to enable children to pray for their school and community.
10. Develop a group who will visit school and speak about their faith story.
11. Help set up and run projects like 'Labyrinth' ~ www.pilgrimpaths.co.uk (we have a Labyrinth available in the Diocesan Office for anyone to borrow).
12. Help meet the needs of the RE curriculum creatively and appropriately (see page 8 for more on this). Work with schools to develop an improving community approach to worship ~ www.request.org.uk/
13. Develop Eucharistic services for the school or staff.





Christian Unions

14. Offer a lunch time meeting for Christian children or young people.
15. Youthwork 'ready-to-use' meeting guides — There are so many different resources out there for young people and each group is different. Have a look at the following websites, perhaps with the Young People you work with and choose something that appeals to them.

content.scriptureunion.org.uk/resources-activities

www.brf.org.uk/

www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved-locally/wales

Prayer Spaces in Schools

"Prayer Spaces in Schools enable children and young people to explore faith and spirituality from a broadly Christian perspective in a safe, creative and interactive way. A range of flexible resources can be adapted to work for participants aged 5 to 18 bringing an experiential dimension to a variety of subject areas and to pastoral aspects of school life."



"The Prayer Room is a great opportunity for students to have an experience of prayer rather than solely learning about prayer in RE lessons."
(Head teacher)

Prayer Spaces in Schools is an initiative of 24-7 Prayer.

Further information can be found at
www.prayerspacesinschools.com



Christmas, Easter and other Special Occasions

16. *Experience Christmas and Experience Easter* ~
www.gloucester.anglican.org/parish-life/jumping-fish
17. Godly Play includes *Holy Family* and *Advent, Mystery of Easter* and *Faces of Easter* stories. Cass Meurig is a Godly Play Trainer based in our Diocese - www.godlyplay.uk/ Please contact Cass for further details:
cass.meurig@gmail.com
18. *Barnabas RE Day* is a useful resource for Christmas, Easter and other themes ~ www.barnabasinschools.org.uk/barnabas-re-day-themes/



19. *Christingle*—There are many resources for offering Christingle themed services, assemblies and workshops in Church, after-school and youth clubs, primary and secondary school assemblies & classroom workshops and worship. Christingle is a key fundraiser for the Children's Society and an opportunity to talk with children & young people about a range of issues concerning their peers. Further Information at www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do/fundraising-and-appeals

School visits to churches

20. Liaise with the school over exactly what the visit is intended to achieve.
21. Unlock and open the door, turn on the lights and heating, and have welcomers present.
22. Be hospitable and generous.
23. Show 'church' as a living community; let pupils see the work of faith - prayer lists, charitable work, Mission Area/Diocesan connections, community events, mission links - anything including the worldwide church will be especially helpful.
24. Use symbols in your building to open up the mystery of God. Encourage wondering about God in the colours, light, icons, crosses and other features.
25. Use understandable and appropriate language. Beware of assuming knowledge, being 'churchy' or appearing patronising.
26. Use 'Crossing the Bridges' materials ~ www.discoveryschemeofwork.com/crossing-the-bridges and www.sacredsiteswales.co.uk/
27. Give the children time and space to **THINK**
28. Make sure everyone can hear you.
29. Give warm goodbyes.



School Services in Church

30. Work with school on this as an act of worship rather than a performance or 'show and tell'.
31. Communicate with school about role of clergy/church workers in leading, speaking and hosting services in church.



32. Include members of the congregation in welcome and worship.
33. Offer quality refreshments – good coffee and cakes – to parents/carers/supporters while they wait for children to arrive from school or at the end of the service.
34. Be aware of how the practicalities of the building will impact on children's ability to participate. For example, the time it takes getting in and out of pews, gathering at the front, sight lines behind pillars and so on.
35. Where possible, ensure microphones and sound amplification equipment are available and properly used.

Church into School

36. Recognise opportunities for church members to serve.
37. Seek opportunities to engage with community learning initiatives, such as family literacy or Care for the Family ~ www.careforthefamily.org.uk/courses
38. Offer resources for your school to visit to a special place of faith, or access a faith group such as 'Barnabas RE' Day ~ www.barnabasinschools.org.uk or Urban Saints ~ www.urbansaints.org/campaign/wales
39. Include information about the school in church through notices, notice boards, parish magazine...
40. Keep the school events in church.
41. Offer to volunteer in schools – speak with staff in the first instance. Ask what the school needs - don't presume you know!
42. Help with 'Golden time' activities.
43. Accompany groups on school trips.
44. Cheerlead at sports day.
45. Bake and take in cakes and offer prayer and support through times of ESTYN and Section 50 inspections.
46. Share a Bible story in book week.
47. Serve refreshments for those organising the school fete.
48. Be a lifeguard for school swimming.
49. Listen to readers.



52. Let school staff know about 'Alpha' LYCiG or other courses on offer at the church.

SPORT

Good ~ <https://www.tlg.org.uk/>)

55. Where appropriate, encourage church members to offer work experience at their businesses.



When working with RE, always begin with a dialogue with the school about what their needs are.

56. Hwb ~ hwb.gov.wales provides a range of bilingual, digital tools and resources. The resource section includes RE resources for primary and secondary schools.

57. *REinspired* ~ www.reinspired.org.uk is a Christian charity based in Reading working with 20 local churches, 11 primary schools and 2 secondary schools. Their vision is to see churches fully engaged in supporting their local schools in Religious Education and the spiritual development of pupils.

58. *Culham St Gabriel's Institute* can provide funding and advice ~ www.cstg.org.uk

59. *Energize* from Urban Saints offers a wealth of material on a variety of topics ~ www.energize.uk.net



Recognise Mission Opportunities

60. Run a Holiday Club. A wide variety of material is available from BRF Barnabas and Scripture Union, amongst others. A number of churches are often willing to share expertise and resources and we at the Diocese offer to pray for Holiday clubs, big & small, every year. The Diocese offers small amounts of money to help with holiday clubs. For more

information please contact Tim Feak ~ timfeak@cinw.org.uk

61. Host activity mornings/afternoon/days for children and families. Run a small-scale pilot project over Christmas / Easter to learn about running Summer Schemes. Remember you don't have to run a scheme every day of the holidays!

62. Provide meals for those who normally receive free school dinners. (Holiday Hunger Project)

63. Run 'Messy Church' or similar with or in school.



64. Offer afterschool clubs depending on the expertise you have available. For example, gardening, Bible stories, art & craft, dance, music, drama, sport/games.

65. Attend and help at 'grounds' days.

66. Help with breakfast clubs

including financial if possible, from the Church.

67. 'Sponsor a school sweater' – ask congregants to contribute towards the cost of an embroidered school jumper for families in need.

68. Offer appropriate Christian books, bible storybooks and suitable full bibles for school libraries. The charity 'Bibles for Children' provides children's Bibles ~ www.biblesforchildren.org.uk/

69. Encourage and support children and young people to attend Christian holidays or camps, such as the Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage and the Big Weekend Away. For more information, contact Tim Feak (Under 25's officer): timfeak@cinw.org.uk

70. Enable teenage Christians to serve on holidays and camps as young leaders.





Chaplaincy

Chaplaincy in secondary schools can be a great source of support both pastorally and spiritually. If you would like to know more about what would be needed to set up a Chaplaincy in a school, and to visit an exciting chaplaincy, please contact Tim Feak Under 25's officer.

timfeak@cinw.org.uk

WORKING TOGETHER

Resources Share

71. Share newsletters or magazines.
72. Share expertise across a range of topics, needs and age groups. For example, ICT, gardening, etc.
73. Share training in appropriate topics.
74. Share buildings and car parking.
75. Share time and cost of youth or children's workers.
76. Joint school and church choir.
77. Shared charitable and community projects.
78. Vicar and Head Teacher book in some pastoral interaction time for each other.



Serving in structures & Governance

79. Develop a locally agreed protocol to link school, congregation and Mission Area.
80. Include regular items on worship and church links in Head Teacher reports to governors, and in school improvement plans.
81. Include 'Church' as part of the welcome/induction of a new Head



issues.

- Teacher and their commissioning/affirmation service.
82. School involved in clergy appointments. Children part of the interview process.
83. School to be part of welcome for new incumbent.
84. Invite the Head Teacher or a governor to MAC to report on school and community



- 85. MAC meetings include item on school links.
- 86. Fill Governor & Foundation Governor places.
- 87. Recognise and applaud governance as part of Christian service or vocation.

Collective Worship (In Church)

- 88. Lead engaging and creative collective worship regularly in school and church, for and with children and staff.
- 89. Wherever possible involve the children in what you do, get them to lead and to advise you.
- 90. Gather a team who will regularly create and lead collective worship in school. Ask school for feedback about collective worship in order to learn and improve. (a two year programme of collective worship "Roots and Fruits" ISBN 978-0-9573429-5-8 is a resource used by many church schools).
- 91. Ask school for feedback about collective worship in order to learn and improve.
- 92. Offer conversation with staff on worship in the Church in Wales.
- 93. Use appropriate delivery techniques; be aware of language, themes, choosing stories, agenda/values of person delivering and how appropriate these are in whole school, learning phase or classroom settings. Be aware of the Welsh Speaking context and deliver appropriate content bilingually.
- 94. Refer to idea 15

(In School)

- 95. Ensure that visitors to collective worship are fully aware their role and how worship plays a part in the school community.
- 96. Communicate your needs, hopes and expectations to visiting speakers, listeners and storytellers.

Evaluate and feedback to visitors on collective worship or other

contributions. (example evaluation forms can be accessed from the Education Team – Contact jenniedownes@cinw.org.uk





USEFUL RESOURCES



Barnabas in Churches www.barnabasinchurches.org.uk

Barnabas in Schools www.barnabasinschools.org.uk

Godly Play www.godlyplay.org.uk Cass Meurig is a Godly Play Trainer based in our Diocese. Please contact Cass for further details: cass.meurig@gmail.com

Going for Growth www.going4growth.com/home

Care for the Family www.careforthefamily.org.uk/

National Society www.churchofengland.org/education.aspx

Guardians of Ancora <https://guardiansofancora.com/>

Church in Wales churchinwales.org.uk/life/schools/

Schoolswork www.schoolswork.co.uk

Scripture Union www.scriptureunion.org.uk/YourCommunity/Schools

Worship Workshop www.worshipworkshop.org.uk

Diocese of St Asaph School Pages dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/st-asaph-diocese-church-schools/

Christian Values for Schools www.christianvalues4schools.org.uk

Christian Aid Wales including Welsh Resources -
www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved-locally/wales

Care for the Family www.careforthefamily.org.uk/

Roots, Welsh and English Resources www.rootsontheweb.com/

Bible Reading Fellowship www.brf.org.uk/

Transforming Lives for Good www.tlg.org.uk/

Collective Worship Resource "Roots and Fruits"

<https://www.imaginer.co.uk/roots-fruits/>

Side by Side with God in Everyday Life and **'Exploring God's Love in Everyday Life'** by Yvonne Morris, both published by BRF.

Children's Rights Approach:

www.childcomwales.org.uk/resources/childrens-rights-approach/



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