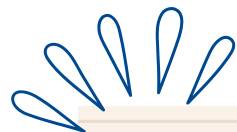




Prayer

The first and best thing you can do for your local schools is to PRAY! Try to include your school in your regular intercessions, as well as encouraging your congregation to pray for them.

If you are praying for your local schools, let them know! You could even ask them if there's things they'd like you to pray for. Read their newsletter and find out what's happening, to inform your prayers.



Many parishes in our Diocese have a variety of schools. How well do you know your local schools, and how well do they know you? This guide aims to help you consider the ways you can support and work positively to develop a relationship with your nearby schools.

How to engage with your local school

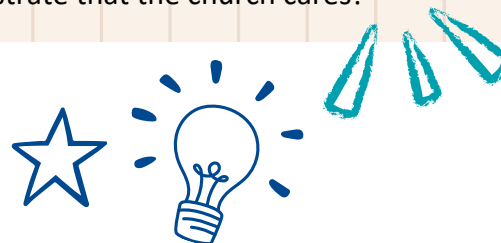
Visiting schools

Key things to consider when visiting schools:

- Be on time
- Be honest about why you are there and what you are doing
- Look to build relationships with staff, students and parents wherever possible
- Set high standards
- Communicate effectively
- Be polite and positive and follow the rules of the school
- Remember you are a visitor!

Baking and blessing

Consider how you can bless your schools. Once a term, ask your congregation to do something nice for the staff, such as taking them a box of chocolates or some cake for the staff room. It doesn't need to be complicated or expensive, but a small gesture like a thank you card will be appreciated, and demonstrate that the church cares!



Be realistic about what the church can offer and honest about your limitations.

Volunteering

Collective Worship is not the only area where schools might want your help. And vicars are not the only ones able to offer help to schools. Who has time and skills to offer school?

Here are some ideas you could approach your school to offer:

- Listening to children read
- Open the Book
(<https://www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/open-the-book/>)
- Gardening
- Subject/lesson support
- Presence on a school trip
- Church visits
- Collective Worship





Other ideas

- Prayer Spaces in Schools
<https://prayerspacesinschools.com/>
Giving students the chance to reflect, learn and pray. Suitable for both primary and secondary schools
- Experience Days: Helping Primary school children to learn more about Christian festivals and aspects of church life.
<https://jumpingfishpublications.co.uk/>

Buildings

Some schools struggle with a lack of space. Does your church have any space they could allow the school to use? Maybe some outdoor space, or an extra room that could be used.

Churches can also be a great asset for collective worship or special celebrations, allowing the whole school to gather to mark Christian festivals such as Easter, Christmas or Harvest. Classes may also benefit from visiting your church as part of an RE or history lesson. Check out www.inspiredclassrooms.org for resources to help make church visits interesting and meaningful.

Partnerships

- How can your church partner with the school to serve the local community? Perhaps a joint summer fete. Or a community harvest or carol service? Are there special events happening in your community or in the world that you could celebrate together?
- Could you set up a joint meeting between the School Council and your PCC to share ideas?
- Think outside the box, collaborate and look for opportunities to build community.

How to engage with your local school

Pray for your local schools!



Becoming a school governor

All church schools need Foundation Governors. They have a special responsibility to ensure that the guiding principles of the church are incorporated into all aspects of school governance, and ensure the terms of the trust deed governing the school are adhered to. School governors are the strategic leaders of the school, they bring expertise from different areas of life to help the school and its pupils, teachers and wider community to thrive. For more information visit: <https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/schools/school-trust-governance/>

Collective worship

- Only offer to take part in Collective worship if you are comfortable presenting in front of a large group of children or young people! Make sure you understand how assemblies work in the school, and remember that not everyone is necessarily a Christian, so don't assume knowledge or use language they won't understand.
- For more guidance on this, see our 'How to lead Collective Worship' guide.

Scan the QR code for more advice and guidance from the Go Team

