

Opportunities to Support your Local Schools

Prayer:

Often underestimated but hugely important. Spend time listening to God. Adopt a school(s) to pray for. How about going on a prayer walk around the school? Why not set up a 'Pray for schools' prayer group and join Pray for schools <https://www.prayforschools.org/>. There are lots of resources to help you pray for your school. Have a regular schools prayer slot in church services.

Staff:

Staff need support and often feel stressed. Pray for them, listen to them, offer practical help, send a card of appreciation, good wishes (e.g. for Ofsted etc). Make or buy a cake for the staff room.

Collective worship:

The vast majority of schools value support with assemblies and providing good quality and interesting collective worship is incredibly valuable. Please visit the following link to see lots of great resources for Bible Based Assemblies on our website. <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/what-we-doschools/connecting-schools>



Open the Book

Open the book project is an exciting way of sharing bible stories through dramatic storytelling. This national charity enables local church volunteers to share bible stories which can be presented as part of assemblies/acts of collective worship. Please see their website for more info: www.biblesociety.org.uk/get-involved/open-the-book/

Clubs:

Clubs are a great way of offering regular support to a school using gifts and talents and building strong links. There are a variety of different timings and purposes – after school, lunch time, breakfast clubs, homework clubs, extra curriculum groups – sports clubs, drama groups etc – all add breadth to the school community.

Christian groups: (e.g. the Christian Union etc).

It is sometimes the only distinctly Christian activity in schools and there will be opportunities within this group that your church will never have. There are great resources here for groups: <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/what-we-doschools/groups-schools>

SHINE in Schools is a great project which equips young people to live for God at school and create opportunities for them to explore the Christian faith for themselves. <https://www.shineinschools.com/>

Lessons:

Get involved in lessons – not only RE and PSHE but use the skills of members of the church to offer an added dimension to a variety of lessons e.g. be interviewed about the perspective of a Christian doctor/nurse, an artist, etc. Here are resources for lessons from YFC <http://request.org.uk/>

Workshops:

Churches are a useful resource in themselves – for class visits, concerts, services, festivals, workshops etc. It is a great way of building a strong link by opening the church and making a school welcome. There are lots of resources for workshops which you can find here <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/what-we-doschoolsconnecting-schools/seasonal-events>



Holiday clubs:

Parents are looking for safe activities for their children during the holidays – and these can reach a broad spectrum of the community. It is a fantastic way of building a strong bridge between the school and the church and the community. We have lots of holiday club resources at <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/holiday-clubs-0>

Prayer spaces in schools:

A prayer space is an amazing way of helping pupils to engage spiritually and reflectively with God through hands on prayer activities. For more information see Prayer spaces in school's website <https://www.prayerspacesinschools.com/>

Sixth form conferences:

Providing input into the RE curriculum in the sixth form by offering speakers and presentations on a given theme e.g. suffering, sex and relationships,

creation/evolution. Here are resources from Ethos Education
<https://ethoseducation.org/conferences/>

Detached work:

Building relationships by 'hanging out' in the playground, cafeteria, common room and staff room to chat, listen and get to know individuals and groups within the school community. It can be a good way of finding out what is needed before launching a project.

Excluded students: or 'at risk' students.

This is an increasing problem in many areas, and these are the students who tend to fall through the cracks of the system and are not likely to be reached through any of the activities above. Set up a project to help support these young people, to cut down on exclusion and truancy and to offer motivation, self-respect and hope.

Personal development:

Working with specific students on an issue such as self-esteem or bullying.

Chaplaincy or Pastoral care support:

There is a variety of ways of supporting the existing pastoral care system including providing or supporting a chaplain, counsellors, adult and peer mentors or simply someone to listen.



Mentors:

Schools are encouraged to link with individuals in the community to provide learning mentors for their students. Churches are ideally placed to provide good role models and adults who are prepared to listen to children and young people.

Voluntary helpers:

Offer to help in school as a voluntary helper. There are often a variety of different tasks and responsibilities – class support, trips, help at clubs, library, setting up displays, listening to readers etc.

Parent-teacher Associations or 'Friends of the School':

Attending meetings helps you find out more about the needs of the school. Vital link between parents and school and they need volunteers.

Raising funds:

Schools are often stretched for resources. Find out funding targets and help to achieve this with all sorts of fundraising events and activities.



Gifts:

A specific gift based within the development of a long-term relationship between the church and school can be a great way of blessing the school. This could be equipment, books, resources, money etc.

School events:

Go along to the school fairs, concerts, school plays etc and offer your help if you can. Churches are full of people who have appropriate skills that can be used in such events – publicity, music, art, drama, administration, electrician, stage management etc.

Parents:

Parents (like teachers!) need support and often feel stressed. Pray for them, listen to them, offer practical help (e.g. if they need support at a school meeting/interview etc), highlight school parents' evenings on your notice sheet, offer parenting skills courses etc.

School governors:

An excellent opportunity to get involved in the school community. Governors are involved in appointing staff, deciding policy, governing areas of the curriculum, and overseeing budgets and buildings.

Local schools' workers:

Work together! Support each other, share information, offer encouragement, prayer and practical support.

Gardens:

These can dramatically improve the school's environment and developing a garden fits in well with the curriculum but is one of the many things that gets side-lined by busy staff. But if a church offered to organise it in partnership with students and helped fund it too...!