

Newsletter

Autumn Term 2023



www.prayforschools.org

I have been greatly encouraged by the numerous schools' work stories from around the country: From large academic, Christian-led debates in secondary schools to individual mentoring of struggling pupils; from community light parties to Open the Book assemblies. All of them touching the lives of children or young people in our schools.

Zechariah 4 v10 (NLT) Do not despise these small beginnings, for the Lord rejoices to see the work begin.

We pray that God will multiply all these initiatives. Want to know more? Sign up for the Youth for Christ/free Churches Group webinar (details on page 7)

We can all be beacons of light shining around the country. When it starts to get dark earlier in the afternoon, we realise the importance of lights and the huge effect they have shining in the darkness. Matthew 5 v 16 *Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. (NLT)*

This November we are focusing on praying for the Christian pupils in our schools, that they will have the strength and courage to stand up for their faith. Many of the young people share the excellent resources, from SU and partners, called **Shine in Schools**. (Pages 2 and 3 explains more)

Shine Your Light is a new nationwide Christmas campaign (16th/17th December) which we have included on page 6

We are also looking at issues including anti-bullying and keeping children safe online (pages 4 and 5) and have put this year's National Day of Prayer Resources on our website for even more [prayer topics](#).

PFS Wales have fixed the dates for the next few Prayer Zooms. Sign up today for the November 21st [lunchtime](#) one and put next year's dates in your diary (page 4)

Let's continue to make a difference in our towns, cities and villages, and encourage all those working in our local schools. Do link up with others in your area, share stories of what God's been doing and keep on encouraging and praying for each other.



Jane

Jane Newey & Andy Hughes

PFS England & PFS Wales

england@prayforschools.org wales@prayforschools.org

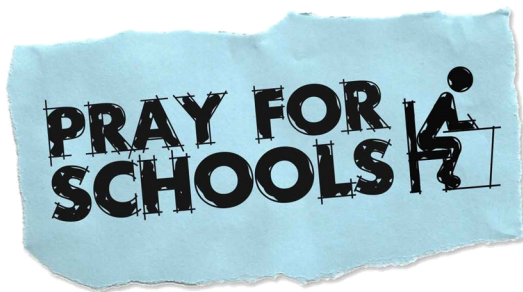
For Scotland email: prayer@suscotland.org.uk

Tuesday 21st November at 12.30pm

PFS Wales Prayer Zoom

[Eventbrite Link](#)





Shine in Schools is all about two things:

EQUIPPING Christian young people to live for God at school and providing opportunities to **EXPLORE** the Christian faith at school.

SHINE is a 3-week video resource designed to help do this. This year's theme is KNOWN. There are additional new videos in their Equip Series on How and Why to share your faith. (See the [website](#) or information on page 3)

SHINE is a partnership between Crown Jesus Ministries, Scripture Union NI, Logos Ministries International, Scripture Union England and Wales, Scripture Union Ireland and Scripture Union Scotland.

Having been inspired myself by this year's videos I asked Geoff Brown (SU) what his prayer requests for this year's Shine in Schools were.

- **Let's pray that more people right across England and Wales get to hear about Shine and consider how they could use it either in a church youth group or as an opportunity to explore faith in a school group.**
- **We pray that Christian young people would be challenged and inspired by the 2 new Equip Series videos ('Why?' share your faith and 'How?' to share your faith).**
- **We lift up all the schools using Shine this year and pray that young people who are not yet Christians would be interested to know more about the God who knows them and who they can know.**
- **We also ask God for wisdom for the Shine partners as they make plans for next year's theme, write scripts and record videos in the Spring.**

Please join us and pray for Shine in Schools. We have prepared a simple prayer sheet to share with your prayer group, team, church or perhaps you would pray through in your own quiet times. Find it on our website under [PrayDay](#)

November is also an important time to **pray for all the Advent and Christmas events.**

You are invited to join Christian Connections in Schools who are holding an open Zoom on **Tuesday 14 November 8.00-9.00pm** to PRAY for those involved behind the scenes and upfront in the variety of Christmas presentations taking place in different churches and schools. For zoom link contact <https://ccschools.org.uk/contact>

Alternatively host your own for local Christians, either in person, or on Zoom.



what are you known for?

We'd like to invite you to join with Christian Groups in schools and churches right across the UK & Ireland in running **SHINE** in your secondary school!

What is SHINE IN SCHOOLS?

It's all about two things:

- Equipping Christian young people to live for God at school
- Providing opportunities for others to explore the Christian faith for themselves

Upon registration, you'll be given access to three video resources to lead your young people to explore this year's theme which is all about being known by others and what it means to be known by God. And you can of course still sign up for the 2 other brilliant series: **Influencers** and **Happy?**

How does SHINE work?

Running **SHINE** is actually really easy.

1. Register your details and access the full digital package.
2. Meet as a team and plan how to make the 3 weeks as interesting as possible.
3. Invite friends to be part of the 3-week experience.

There is also a **SHINE** guide with session outlines to accompany each video.



You will also get access to the second video in our **SHINE** Equip Series - **HOW** we share our faith. This is a great follow on from Video 1 in the series (**WHY** share our faith?) These videos are designed to help inspire young people who will be using **SHINE** to share their faith with their friends.

 Scripture Union

www.shineinschools.com



Let's pray together
Issue: Anti-bullying



'The Lord is a shelter for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble. Those who know your name trust in you, for you, O Lord, do not abandon those who search for you.' PSALM 9:9,10 (NLT)

This year's Anti-Bullying Week is Monday 13th to Friday 17th November. It would be good to pray about this disturbing issue which is possibly happening in our own local schools.

<https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk> defines bullying like this:

'The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.'

It can be physical, verbal and psychological and can happen face-to-face or online.

Impacts of bullying on children include:

- Facing barriers to learning
- Missing school
- Being excluded
- Strain on families/carers
- Self-harm and depression

Department of Education research looking at pupils in Year 10 found that:-

40% of young people were bullied in the last 12 months

6% had experienced bullying daily.

Most common form of bullying was name calling (including via text and email) at 26%, followed by exclusion from social groups at 18%

21% who had experienced bullying daily had truanted in the last 12 months

1 in 4 with SEN (special educational needs) experienced violence (actual or threatened)

Merciful Father, we know You care for everyone who is bullied. Please draw close to victims and perpetrators and help them to put their trust in You to see change, freedom and peace. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Save the dates 2024

Chaplaincy Prayer Zoom

with Centre for Chaplaincy in Education

NDOPFS Prayer Zoom

Love Our Schools Fortnight

PFS Wales Prayer Zoom

PFS Wales Prayer Zoom

Wednesday 24th January at 1pm on Zoom

Friday 26th January time to be confirmed

February 4th to 18th February

Monday February 5th, 7.30pm on Zoom

Tuesday March 12th, 12.30pm on Zoom



Thy Kingdom Come

May 9th to May 19th

Education Sunday

Sunday 8th September

National Day of Prayer for Schools

Friday 27th September



KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE ONLINE

We asked Rev Celia Bowring, Chair of Pray for Schools and CARE Prayer Champion to update us:

It seems pretty obvious that we must do everything possible to protect our children. In recent years schools and other institutions have been required to create safeguarding policies and make sure they're followed. Risk assessments surround every activity. We are all more vigilant than ever before – and yet children's online lives remain open to danger. Even though the 2017 Digital Economy Act required much tighter security to prevent young people from accessing 'adult material' on the internet through age verification checks this never happened. In October 2019 the government ditched their commitment to the scheme and as a result children are being increasingly exposed to pornography on the devices they use.

CARE has always been committed to protecting the innocence of childhood and campaigning for young people are as well protected online as they are offline. In 2020, the British Board of Film Classification's 2020 survey revealed that more than half of children had encountered pornography by 11-13 years old, rising to 79% by age 17 and although this often happens unintentionally it is becoming normalised amongst young people. The report found that many children had stumbled across upsetting or disturbing 'aggressive' or 'violent' pornography, including content they felt normalised rape. Through videos appearing on home pages of pornography sites some reported getting lost in 'rabbit holes' leading them to increasingly graphic content.

Thank God that at the end of October the government's Online Safety Act received Royal Assent and has now become law because it does place a new duty of care on tech companies to take more responsibility for the content shown on their platforms. They will need to prove they are taking steps to remove illegal content, including:

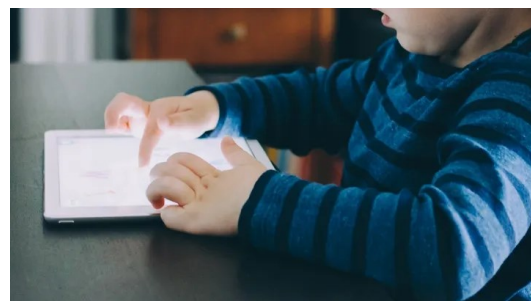
- child sexual abuse
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- extreme sexual violence
- promoting self-harm

They must protect children from harmful material (even if it is legal) and Ofcom has been given powers to make sure this is enforced. For more than seven years we've been asking for age verification on commercial porn sites like Porn Hub and also social media platforms where adult material is accessed. Breaking the rules could result in massive fines and bosses could face prison!

For more than seven years, CARE's been campaigning for this with a range of politicians and although age-verification will by no means cure the problem it sends a huge message.

Let's pray that this will mark a radical change of attitude in society towards pornography, taking seriously the immense harm it can do to children. And please remember teachers and other pastoral staff as they encounter young people who are struggling with this issue.

See the Ten Ways to Pray for Children and the Internet on the CARE [website](#). (A4 fold up leaflet available too)
Order from CARE (020 7233 0455) or mail@care.org.uk





National Day of Prayer for Schools Feedback

It was great working with Pais, Youthscape, Prayer Spaces in Schools, Scripture Union, and Youth for Christ and hundreds of individuals, groups and schoolwork organisations for the 4th National Day of Prayer for Schools. We had a busy day with prayer zooms, social media posts and prayer meetings happening around the country.

Gemma from Youthscape said "although we pray together as a team for the schools work we do and the schools we work in already, it was **really powerful** to gather with other Christians from across the country to do this via Zoom and it reminded us afresh that we're part of a bigger mission"

Lisa from Scripture Union comments " it was a really **significant day of prayer for schools** across England and Wales. It is an initiative that will grow each year and hopefully lead to more prayer for schools throughout the year too.

Sammy Jordan from Hope for every Home writes:

"At Hope For Every Home we want to pray for every street, road and lane in the country. Not as a tick box, transactional exercise but because we believe prayer changes things, breaking up the ground as we partner with God to see his kingdom, 'on earth as it is in heaven.' Praying for schools is a massive part of this because if we pray for every street we will pray for every school. So it's always a privilege to be part of the National Day of Prayer for Schools and **intentionally set time aside to pray**. When I do, I'm always reminded of the reach of schools as we pray for students, teachers, other staff and families. The ground being broken up as we pray for schools reaches far and wide into communities. A few years ago I did a 'back of the envelope' estimate of how many households might be connected to a school through work/volunteer roles and relationships as family, friends and neighbours. I estimated 75%...wow! That's why, for me, **praying for schools is one of the most strategic and spiritually impactful things I think I can do as I break up ground through prayer seeking to join in with what God is doing to see his 'kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven'.**"

Save the Date: National Day of Prayer for Schools 2024: Friday 27th September

Shine your Light is a new nationwide Christmas campaign calling hundreds of thousands to unite in towns, villages and cities this Christmas to take the message outdoors on the **16th/17th December**

The vision for Shine Your Light is that the whole church across the family of nations stand united to share the Gospel to the whole of society this Christmas.



Dr Jonathan Oloyede
Convenor of the
National Day of Prayer & Worship



"We are inviting Christians from the North, East, South and West of these Isles to **join us in Shining Their Light** in their communities this Christmas. Imagine the **impact of hundreds of thousands** of Christians taking the **message of Jesus** into all public places and spaces..."

shineyourlight.org.uk



Pray for Schools' Partners:



CARE
FOR WHAT
YOU BELIEVE



**YOUTH
FOR CHRIST**



Scripture Union



ACT



Our Vision—Every School a prayed-for School.

Pray for Schools c/o CARE, 53 Romney Street, London SW1P 3RF

ALL YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT SCHOOLS BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK ...

A webinar with Bev Smith, Youth for Christ,
and Sarah Lane Cawte,
Free Churches Group

**TUESDAY 14 NOVEMBER,
7 - 8.30 P.M.**

Book your free tickets here:

[https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/all
-you-wanted-to-know-about-
schools-but-were-afraid-to-ask-
tickets-733418714117?
aff=oddtcreator](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/all-you-wanted-to-know-about-schools-but-were-afraid-to-ask-tickets-733418714117?aff=oddtcreator)

About the webinar

Do you want to find out about what goes on in schools? Do you want to know more about the opportunities and challenges for pupils and staff? In this webinar, we'll explore the reality of life in schools today and look at opportunities for local churches to build supportive relationships with schools in their community.

