

Parish - School Covenant



The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

How will we work together?



Booklet 2



Parish - School Covenant Commitments

Schools and parishes will honour their jointly expressed ambition by planning a series of commitments in school and church, the success of which can be reflected upon at the end of the year. This could also be celebrated in a joint service between church and school if practical. Below is a set of activities and commitments that could be the outworking of your partnership together. The list is not exhaustive, neither is it prescriptive. However, it may be a useful audit tool as you develop your working partnership year on year.

Next Steps

- Each of the four areas below is divided into two parts with a set of ideal statements followed by some practical examples of how these might be seen in parish and school.
- You may wish to discuss these in your previously set up working group and decide what you **currently do** and what you would **like to develop**.
- Please don't feel you have to develop every single point all at once. Over time (years), hopefully you will develop more things as your partnership grows. However, it may well be enough to concentrate on a few things for year 1 and do them well, then you can evaluate for year 2 and so on.
- After discussion and deciding on priorities, complete the PSC plan to use as a living document to monitor and evaluate your jointly expressed partnership.



Love - 'Agape' (self giving love)

Joint relationships and professional behaviours

1. Welcoming all members of the school and church into our respective institutions.
2. Developing mechanisms which promote equity, diversity and inclusion of all young people and their families in the parish, church and school.
3. Complying with all safeguarding protocols to ensure both institutions are a 'safe space' for all.
4. Providing chaplaincy and pastoral support for staff, students and families.

Some of the things that may be happening or could be developed in this area are:

- Notices of welcome and affirmation.
- Inclusive language used in public and written communications.
- Church and school safeguarding procedures are fully in place and both institutions know how they operate.
- Safeguarding notices are obviously displayed.
- Exploring chaplaincy models and/or the possibility of a School Chaplain working in the school who is based in the parish.



Community - 'Koinonia'

Engagement, belonging and servant heartedness

1. Serving both school and parish communities in practical ways.
2. Active support of church and school initiatives that emphasise both church and school family integrally working together.
3. School life and Church life are embraced as an integral part of working together.
4. The school and parish work together on the *Vision and Values* to ensure children, young people and families are fully welcomed in both places.
5. The decision making of responsible bodies takes account of the work, and voices, of children, families and schools as part of the whole community.
6. Other community groups such as parent and toddler, uniformed organisations and others, are affirmed, supported and helped to develop as a valuable part of our mission to children, young people and families.



Community - 'Koinonia'

Some of the things that may be happening or could be developed in this area are:

- **School in church** – regular services held in church, with the support and presence of the church community, and diarised.
- **Church in school** – are there times when this happens, or could be described as this?
- Shared liturgy.
- Attend each other's significant events – e.g. School Fete, Church Christmas Fair, Remembrance Service, Carol Service.
- Church and school come together to assess the local church's welcome to children, young people and families. This could be a simple audit of what happens already and what could be developed.
- PCC and governing body share agenda items on topics that affect them both.
- Invitation to PCC members and Governors to attend each other's meetings where appropriate.
- Consider having a joint celebration meeting/social event to affirm your partnership.
- PCC and governing body regularly discuss their shared *Vision and Values* (after completing their covenant statement) and how this is seen in their community.
- Make links with other community groups and attend or share their events.



‘Christian Distinctiveness’

Celebrating belonging to the Church of England family

1. Church schools explore their distinctively Christian focus through exploring their *Foundation Deeds* and working with their local church to affirm this in their working practices.
2. Reaffirming the founding principle of Church of England schools to provide **Christian education for all** from a time when there was no state provided education.
3. Taking responsibility to ensure that our institutions respect all views and have a mutual respect of all faiths and those with no faith.
4. Beliefs and practices that affirm the moral and spiritual education of children which is as important as other learning.

Some of the things that may be happening or could be developed in this area are:

- Clergy and their leadership help with and support the formulation of a *School Vision* and its Christian distinctiveness.
- The Church (its members and/or clergy) lead **Collective Worship** regularly (once a week).
- Anglican elements are incorporated into worship (e.g. blessing, response), including developing a shared liturgy between school and church.
- Exploration of and learning about the Eucharist/ Holy Communion in order to help children understand this part of Christian worship.
- Clergy and/or church leaders provide theologically driven *ex officio* leadership on the governing body.
- The local church supports the RE Curriculum by contributing to RE lessons where appropriate.
- The church building is used to facilitate RE teaching.



‘Live a life in all its fullness’

Through wisdom, hope, community and respect

1. Live out the Church of England’s vision for education in supporting children, families and young people to lead full and flourishing lives.
2. Work for the common good of the whole community.
3. Enable those in school and parish to guide wisely and to be proactive in healing, repair and renewal when things go wrong.
4. Generously participate in community life.
5. Respect and value the worth and preciousness of each person in our institutions and community.

Some of the things that may be happening or could be developed in this area are:

- Work on setting the school vision in relation to the foundation documents.
- Define and monitor Christian distinctiveness in relation to the school’s vision and values.
- Perform regular governor duties.
- Provide space, opportunity and use appropriate methods in church services and in school, for children, young people and their families to encounter God and grow in their spirituality.
- Pray regularly and obviously for each other.
- Explore a wellbeing agenda for those who take on significant roles in church and school, whether voluntary or paid.
- Encourage people to volunteer in school, where able.
- Support school and parish events.
- Share church and school activity through regular communications.
- Regularly communicate that **everyone** in church and school plays a part in welcoming and accepting people.
- Look at training and supervision for those directly working with young people.



The 'PSC Plan'

How can we measure our success in these areas?

Area to reflect on:

Love ('Agape' – self giving love) - Joint relationships and professional behaviours

Actions and work done in this area

Evaluations and next steps

Area to reflect on:

Community ('Koinonia') - Engagement, belonging and servant heartedness

Actions and work done in this area

Evaluations and next steps



The 'PSC Plan'

How can we measure our success in these areas?

Area to reflect on:

'Christian Distinctiveness' - Celebrating belonging to the Church of England family

Actions and work done in this area

Evaluations and next steps

Area to reflect on:

'Live a life in all its fullness' - Through wisdom, hope, community and respect

Actions and work done in this area

Evaluations and next steps



In conclusion...

We hope that these two booklets are useful in helping schools and parishes develop their relationships with each other. We recognise that starting points are different and so are contexts, so please use these documents as templates to fit your own context and stage on your journey.

We are available to help and support as you seek to develop a partnership and we envisage having an active programme of engaging with our schools and parishes over the coming year. We look forward to hearing about how you are developing your Parish-School covenant and being involved in celebrating it with you.

With every good wish,

The Education, Mission and Ministry Team



FAQs

Q. What is the deadline for creating the Parish-School Covenant statement?

A. We have asked you to send in your PSC statements by **3rd June 2024** at the latest, but you are welcome to send them to us whenever they are ready.

Q. How can I edit the Parish-School Covenant statement in Booklet 1?

A. We will email an editable version of the PSC statement template so that you can craft your PSC statement.

Q. How do I get a version of the Parish-School Covenant statement ready to display in our schools and parishes?

A. When you send in your PSC statement, please also send in any logos that you would like displayed on the statement, and tell us how many copies you would like for display.

We will then create display versions for you and send them back to schools and Incumbents.

Q. How can I edit the Parish-School Covenant plan in Booklet 2?

A. We will email an editable version of the Parish-School Covenant plan template so that you can work on it in your contexts and collate for your own reference and purposes in school and parish.

Q. Is support available if we need help?

A. Yes, depending on what kind of support you need, you can contact anyone listed on the following page.



Support

Our **Education, Mission and Ministry Team**, and the **Ely Diocese Regional Advisers** (EDRAs) are available to offer support during the process:

- **Reverend Mandy Flaherty** Development Officer for School Mission
 - mandy.flaherty@elydiocese.org / 07944 091 812
 - **Peter Leech** Diocesan Deputy Director of Mission and Ministry
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 - **Ruth New** Development Officer for Children and Families
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 - **Holli Bielby** Development Officer for Communications
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 - **Sarah Conant** Diocesan Deputy Director of Education
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 - **Annabelle Evans** Legal and Educational Trusts Officer
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 - **Lucy Brock** Education Administrator
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 - **Jemma Coulson** RE Advisor
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