



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

**Diocese of St Edmundsbury
and Ipswich**

ST EDMUNDSBURY AND IPSWICH DISCUSSION DOCUMENT FOR CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS TO WORK TOGETHER

Our vision for education is deeply Christian, with Jesus' promise of 'life in all its fullness' at its heart.

In line with the Church of England's role as the established Church, our vision is for the common good of the whole community.

Church of England Vision for Education

'Growing in God'

School

Our vision is:

It is good practice for schools and churches to work together in the best interests of all our children and adults. This is most successful where there is a co-ordinated approach to the Christian life of a school. We have identified five key areas through which schools and churches might work well together to offer more and deeper opportunities for symbiosis.

PRAYER, WORSHIP, ACTIVITIES, CHURCH BUILDINGS, MINISTRY

This document seeks to offer churches and schools in St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocese a way to further develop the best practices already established in many communities. It is a discussion document to aid communication for the leaders of church and school communities. How it is used is up to you but its aim is to keep to the forefront of everyone's mind the centrality of the relationship between school and church.

You could explore one area for ten minutes at each of your next five governor's meetings. That way school and church are represented. By choosing one action to move forward each time you meet you are reviewing and improving your link. At the start of next academic year you can briefly evaluate your progress using the chart at the end of the document.

PRAYER

How can the prayer life of the school and the church reflect their links?

IDEAS

Prayers of Intercession in services - knowing what the school's needs are. Creating an awareness of children and staff in church

Prayers for the congregation and leaders of the church in school

Prayer spaces – working together on the creation of prayer space activities in school

Empowering children to lead prayers in school or in church

Supporting the creation of a school prayer

School to display church prayer causes

Children's prayers or prayer topics as a display in the church

Prayer days together

Where children worship outside the parish church invite those churches to pray with you too

YOUR IDEAS?

ACTION:

WORSHIP

How might we ensure our worship reflects our strong links?

IDEAS

Regular – (monthly?) – school service in church with parents invited as a celebration

Monthly church led service in school – need not be priest!

Open the Book – establish one!

Breakfast in church an hour before a service which is flagged up to school families

Work with the church festivals – Harvest, Christmas, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost – either in Collective Worship or classes – and ask children to come to church and share what they have learned?

Jointly run holiday clubs

Messy church – and Messy school! Use school and resources for Messy church?

Invite children to lead worship

Involve other churches in the area – particularly those where children worship outside the parish – to lead collective worship

Use another church for worship for a group/class of children – maybe the home church of children living outside the parish

YOUR IDEAS ?

ACTION:

ACTIVITIES

How can we work in harmony across school and church to build cohesive experiences of Christianity?

IDEAS

Church and schools need to have two way conversations – so make a plan to achieve this When? Where? Who?

Link the PCC, and staff meetings - Reports to each other
Attendance at both?

Hold the PCC meetings in the school Pupils attend part of PCC?
Sometimes?

Worship together in a shared place – not church or school

A summer school/holiday club between church and school

Church members, lay preachers or clergy to attend worship in school and school celebrations

Support the RE teaching about Christianity (e.g teach about sacraments, liturgical year, Easter)

School to invite congregation to lunch for inter-generational engagement

Schools to create learning opportunities in churches other than the parish church – particularly where this is the home church of pupils

YOUR IDEAS?

ACTION:

CHURCH BUILDINGS

How can we work together so that children adults and families see the church as their spiritual home?

IDEAS

What is a spiritual home – Explain!

Use the history of the church for curriculum needs – family history, WW1, Art, Design and Technology etc are obvious but measure the length of the aisles for Maths, describe the church in a poem for English or dance in it for PE!

Invite schools into the buildings lots!

Involve affiliated local groups like scouts and school based clubs too

Teach the stories of the stained glass windows, the people commemorated there, the social history

Link school staff and church members so the priest and HT are not the only links.

Hold holiday clubs – or after school clubs – in church

Create a joint eco approach between church and school – involve the church in school garden development and the children in tidying the church grounds.

Support the curriculum with mock baptisms/weddings etc

Explore the home churches of out of catchment children where these provide different learning opportunities

YOUR IDEAS?

ACTION:

MINISTRY

What can we do to ensure the strong relationships needed for everyone to flourish?

IDEAS

Be open minded together to discuss, learn and engage – use this toolkit!

Engage ministers and church members in youth work

Open the Book – works even with only two people

Church to positively engage with their local school to offer support

Create ecumenical opportunities

Worship in the school

Key church members involved in school development and ethos – volunteers and governors too. 'supportively involved in the life of the school'.

What is the church learning from what happens in school? How does the school learn about what is happening in the church?

Strengthen all relationships whenever you can

Children as worship leads

Parish leaders to invite those from the home churches of children living out of the parish to celebrate festival services together

Schools to invite in leaders of home churches of pupils outside catchment

YOUR IDEAS?

ACTION:

Impact of actions 2020:

PRAYER

WORSHIP

ACTIVITIES

CHURCH BUILDINGS

MINISTRY