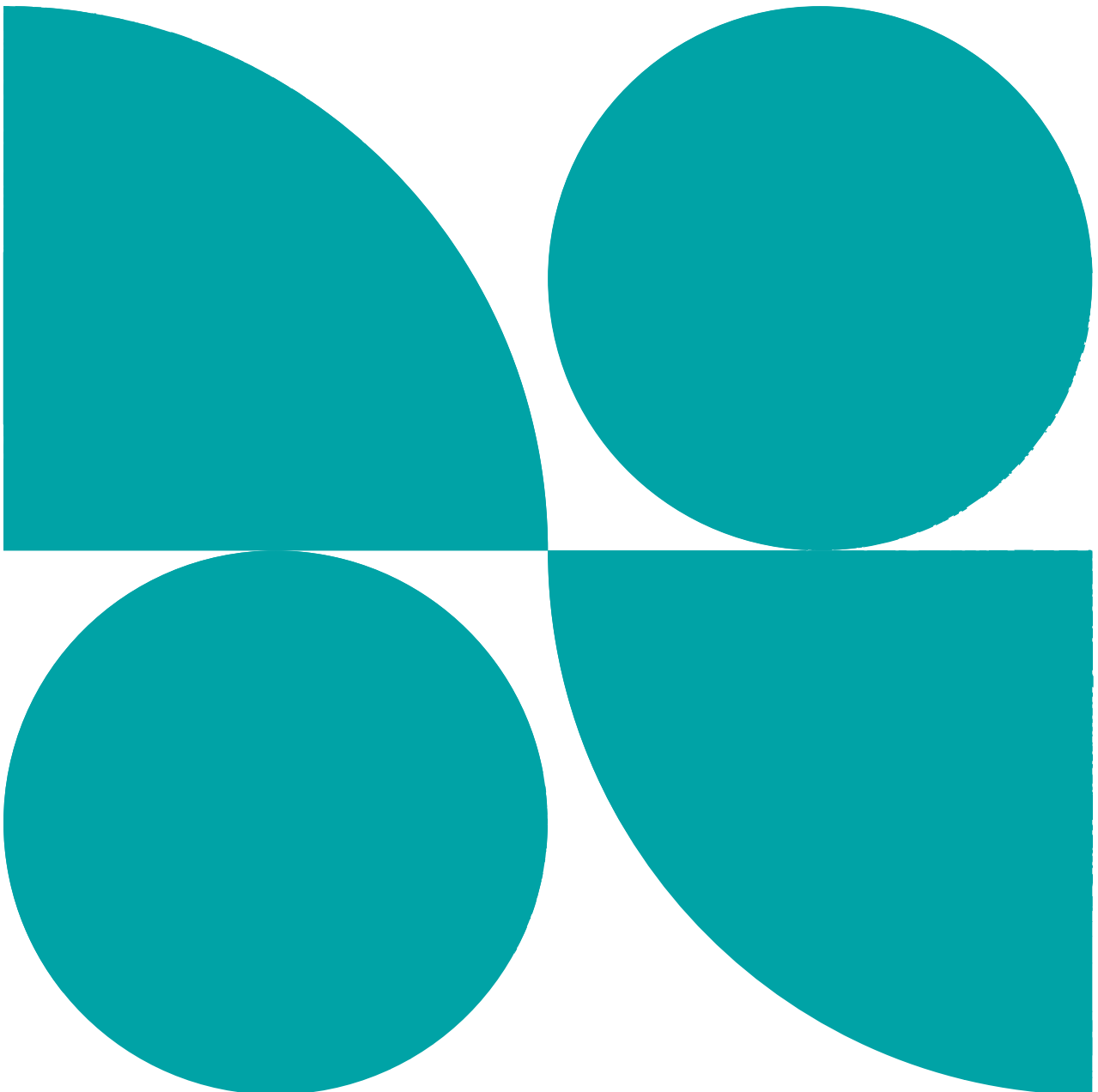


Bishops' Children & Youth Council Listening Report

What is prayer?



Introduction

How do we hear and respond to the voice of children and young people in the Diocese of Leicester?

To find some answers, we are facilitating a termly process of youth-led agenda setting, listening, sense making and reporting.

The Process

A group of young people set agenda and design a listening resource to distribute to listening groups.

Listening groups are facilitated in schools and church groups, across a range of contexts. Children and young people are asked to share their thoughts, ideas, and stories, in response to a series of conversation prompts and interactive activities.

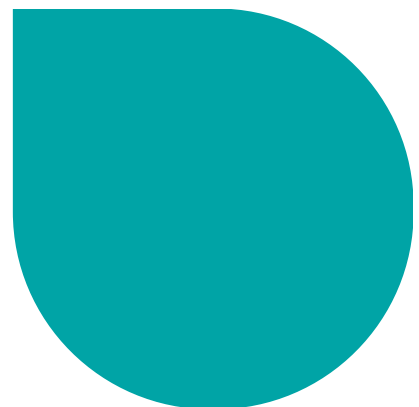
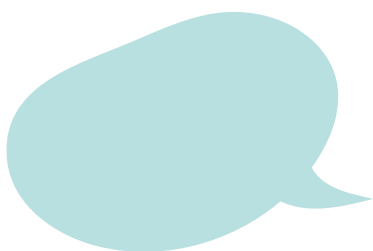
The Theme

The listening theme chosen by young people for Spring Term 2024 is **prayer**. This theme was inspired by the main findings from a previous listening exercise. In Spring 2023, we discovered **prayer** is an important faith practice for children and young people in school, church and at home. We wanted to find out more.

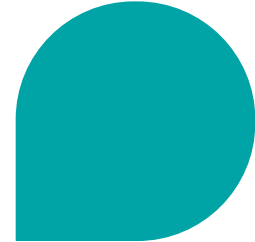
The Report

This report summarises and showcases the responses we received from children and young people.

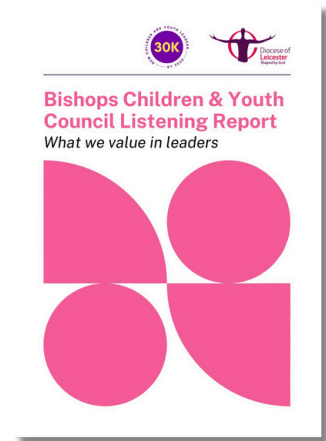
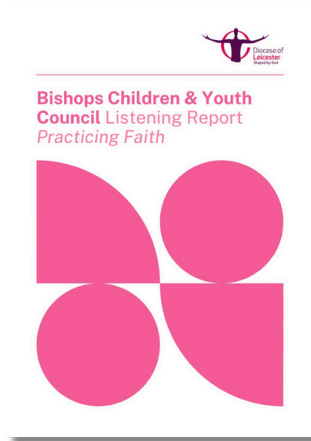
All quotes in this report are attributed to children and young people who participated in a listening group, unless stated.



LISTENING



In 2023 we heard from more than 375 young voices from across the city and county, via three termly listening exercises.



Read all three listening reports and watch Bishop Martyn's response videos on the Diocese of Leicester website >>

www.leicester.anglican.org/info-for-parishes/children-families-and-young-people/bishops-children-and-youth-council-bcyc

The Numbers



148

Young Voices

72

Girls

76

Boys

08

Primary Schools

03

Secondary Schools

05

Church Groups

11%

Special Educational
Needs and Disabilities
(SEND)

36%

UK Minority Ethnic /
Global Majority
Heritage

6-17

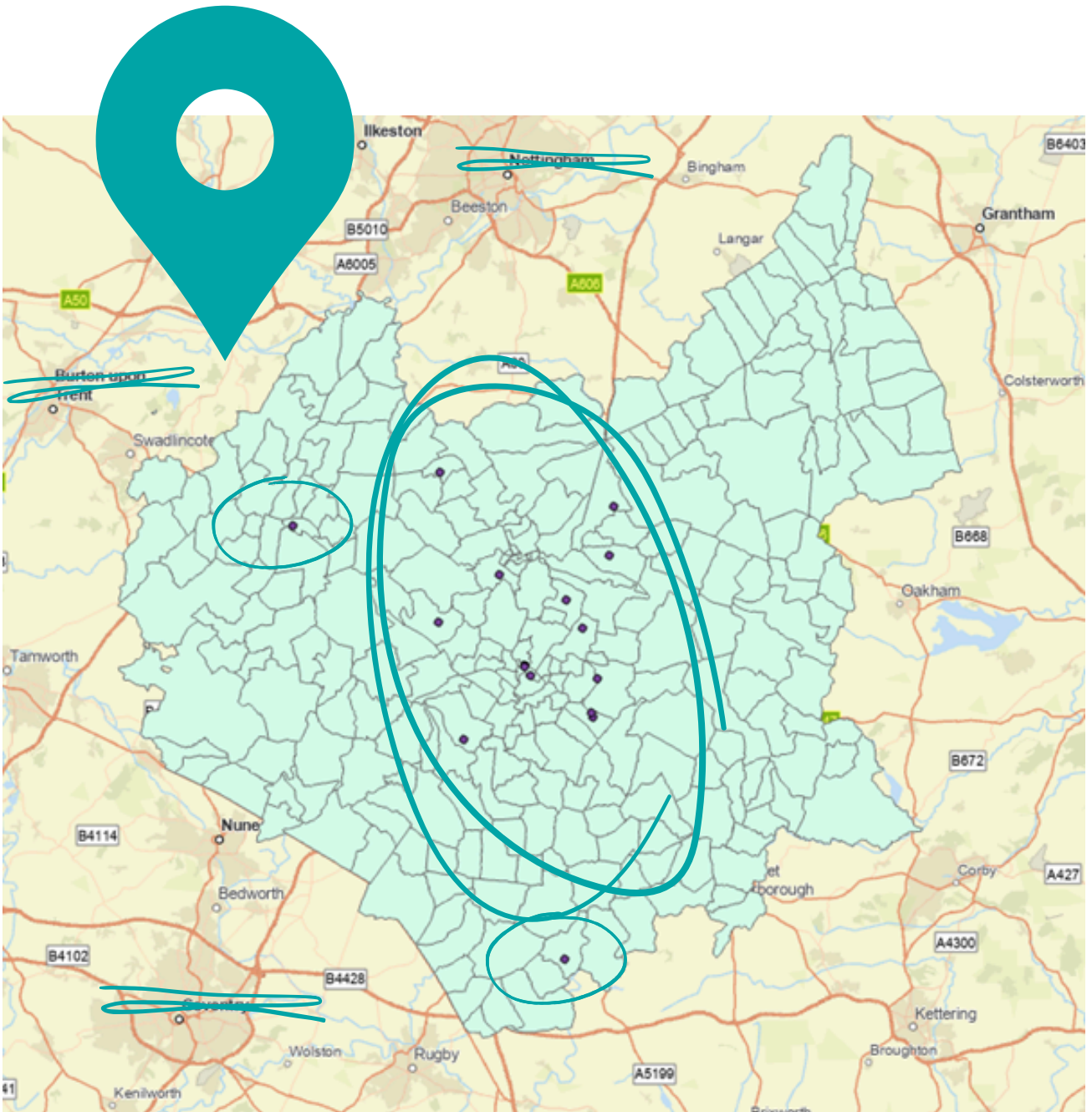
Age Range

Roll Call



Brockington College
Church Hill C of E Junior School, Thurmaston
Crossfire Youth, Groby & Ratby
Emmanuel Loughborough Youth
Fusion Lunch Club, Manor High School, Leicester
Glow Youth, Holy Trinity Leicester
Hope Hamilton CE Primary School
Leicester Cathedral Junior Church
Queniborough CE Primary School
Richard Hill C of E Primary School
Shine Squad, All Saints Primary, Coalville
St Andrews CE Primary School, North Kilworth
St Cuthberts CofE Primary, Great Glen
St Denys and the City of Leicester College
St Paul's, Oadby, Youth Group
Thrussington CE Primary School

A MASSIVE thank you to all children,
young people and facilitators for their
participation, enthusiasm and honesty!



Legend

- Schools and Churches
- Diocese Region

'Most of the big ones are to do with two-way communication'



'There's a lot to do with finding peace and quiet, and reflecting on life'

'Conversation is the biggest by a long way, this isn't surprising - prayer is about talking with God'

KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- Most frequent response was **conversation / talking with God**
- **Asking God for help** was second most frequent response
- **Calm, peaceful, quiet and listening** were common responses
- **Thankfulness** ranked fifth most common response

Contemplative prayer practices, such as *calm, quiet, listening & peaceful* ranked highly with children and young people.

What are your reflections on this?

ROUND 02

Prayer Bingo

Description: Complete the prayer bingo card, deciding what helps you pray. Cross out / colour in the squares that DO NOT help you pray.

PRAYER BINGO
what helps you to pray?

Writing my prayers 	Using pictures or images 	Using a phone App 	Using the Bible or Holy Book 	Keeping Quiet (silence)
Reading written prayers 	Listening to music 	Singing 	Kneeling down 	Speaking prayers out loud
		★		
Closing my eyes 	Listening to God 	Putting my hands together 	Praying in my own language 	Sitting down
Saying prayers in my head 	Lighting a candle 	Drawing your prayers 	Saying the Lords Prayer 	Creative prayer activities

PRAYER BINGO

what helps you to pray?

Writing my prayers	Using pictures or images	Using a phone App	Using the Bible or Holy Book	Keeping Quiet (silence)
Reading written prayers	Listening to music	Singing	Knelling down	Speaking prayers out loud
Closing my eyes	Listening to God	Putting my hands together	Praying in my own language	Sitting down
Saying prayers in my head	Lighting a candle	Drawing your prayers	Saying the Lords Prayer	Creative prayer activities

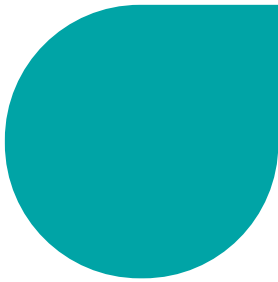
What is the most helpful and why?
None because I can think

PRAYER BINGO

what helps you to pray?

Writing my prayers	Using pictures or images	Using a phone App	Using the Bible or Holy Book	Keeping Quiet (silence)
Reading written prayers	Listening to music	Singing	Knelling down	Speaking prayers out loud
Closing my eyes	Listening to God	Putting my hands together	Praying in my own language	Sitting down
Saying prayers in my head	Lighting a candle	Drawing your prayers	Saying the Lords Prayer	Creative prayer activities

What is the most helpful and why?
None because I can think



PRAYER BINGO

what helps you to pray?

Writing my prayers	Using pictures or images	Using a phone App	Using the Bible or Holy Book	Keeping Quiet (silence)
Reading written prayers	Listening to music	Singing	Knelling down	Speaking prayers out loud
Laying in bed	Showing food with others	Being outside		
Closing my eyes	Listening to God	Putting my hands together	Praying in my own language	Sitting down
Saying prayers in my head	Lighting a candle	Drawing your prayers	Saying the Lords Prayer	Creative prayer activities

What is the most helpful and why?
Quiet listening outdoors.

PRAYER BINGO

what helps you to pray?

Writing my prayers	Using pictures or images	Using a phone App	Using the Bible or Holy Book	Keeping Quiet (silence)
Reading written prayers	Listening to music	Singing	Knelling down	Speaking prayers out loud
Laying in bed	Showing food with others	Being outside		
Closing my eyes	Listening to God	Putting my hands together	Praying in my own language	Sitting down
Saying prayers in my head	Lighting a candle	Drawing your prayers	Saying the Lords Prayer	Creative prayer activities

What is the most helpful and why?
Listening to music.

PRAYER BINGO

what helps you to pray?

Writing my prayers	Using pictures or images	Using a phone App	Using the Bible or Holy Book	Keeping Quiet (silence)
Reading written prayers	Listening to music	Singing	Knelling down	Speaking prayers out loud
Closing my eyes	Listening to God	Putting my hands together	Praying in my own language	Sitting down
Saying prayers in my head	Lighting a candle	Drawing your prayers	Saying the Lords Prayer	Creative prayer activities

What is the most helpful and why?
*- Bible / images / written prayers for inspiration
- Silence, eyes closed to relax*

PRAYER BINGO

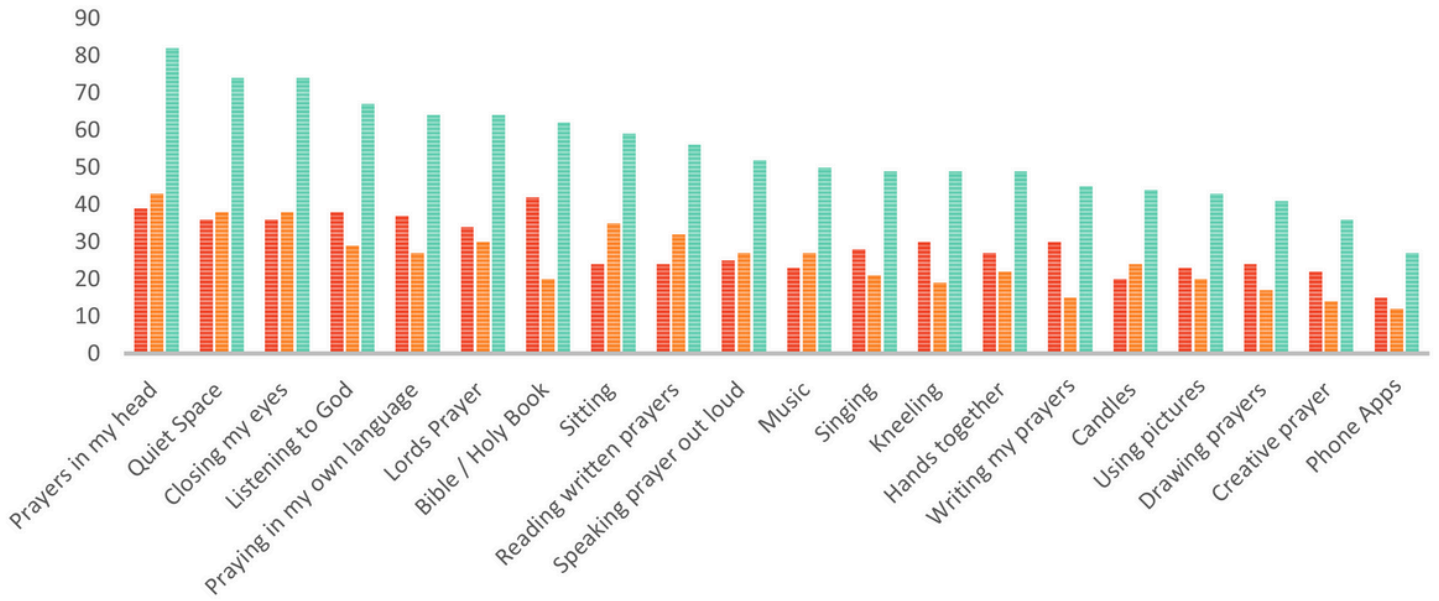
what helps you to pray?

Writing my prayers	Using pictures or images	Using a phone App	Using the Bible or Holy Book	Keeping Quiet (silence)
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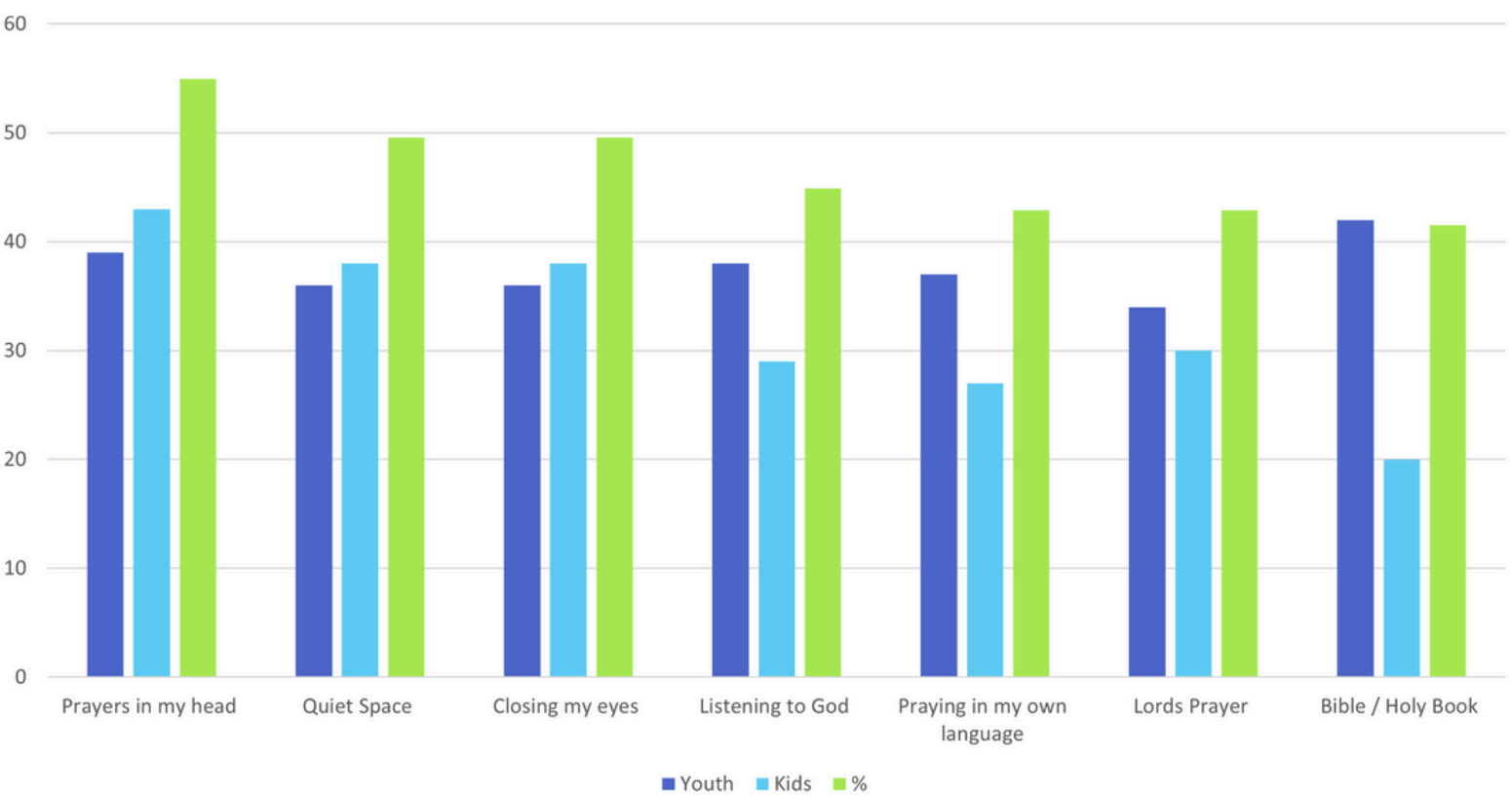
What is the most helpful and why?
None because I can think

PRAYER BINGO

■ Youth ■ Kids ■ Total



Prayer Bingo Top 6



'we (young people) need our own space to pray - away from noise and society'

'Prayer is conversation with God. Phones are conversations with others'

'I want to disconnect to pray. I turn off my phone & get rid of distractions'

'Most of my phone apps are games and messages! If I'm gonna pray, I switch my phone off as it distracts me'

'I only say prayers in my head! Prayer is personal'

'kids aren't gonna lead a prayer out loud. If they're gonna pray, they're gonna pray on their own and in their heads... praying out loud is embarrassing'

'Reading the Bible is more helpful for young people than kids... maybe to do with their ability to read?'

KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- **Prayers in my head** was most helpful for both children & young people
- **Phone Apps** least helpful for both children & young people
- **Contemplative prayer** (*quiet, closed eyes, listening*) really helpful for all
- **Bible & writing prayers** much more helpful for young people
- **Praying in my own language** fifth most helpful prayer practice

What do you find most helps you pray?

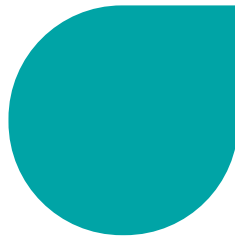
ROUND 03

When, where & with who?

Description: Move on the scale where you best fit the statement.
Scale: never, sometimes, once a week, 2-3 times a week, every day.

Statements:

- I pray at school.
- I pray at home.
- I pray in the morning.
- I pray before meals.
- I pray at bedtime.
- I pray on my own.
- I pray with my parents.
- I pray with other people.
- I pray during church services.
- I pray at special occasions.
(Christmas, Diwali, Eid, or Easter).



Scale Scoresheet	Never	Someti mes	Once a week	2-3 Times a week	Everyd ay (or mor...
Example scores for group of 10 participants	6	0	0	3	
1. I pray at school		2		1	4
2. I pray at home	4	2			1
3. I pray in the morning	1	5			1
4. I pray before meals		3	1		3
5. I pray at bedtime	4	1			2
6. I pray on my own		5	1	1	
7. I pray with my parents	5	2			
8. I pray with other people		3	2	2	
9. I pray during church services		5	2		
10. I pray at special occasions...	2	3	2		

Space to capture thoughts, comments...



KEY OBSERVATIONS:

- Primary aged children tend to pray more in the **morning** and at **school**
- Young people tend to pray more often at **home** and at **bedtime**
- Prayer **before meals** and prayer with **parents** rarely happens
- 40% of children & young people pray at **special occasions**
- Prayer is either an **everyday** habit or **sometimes** happens (when needed)

How can the church support children, young people and families develop an everyday habit of prayer?

A **heat map** is a representation of data - values are represented by colours.

Green is 'cold' - less frequent response.

Red is 'hot' - most frequent response.

'we (young people) pray when we want or need to. That's usually at home and at night'

'Lots of primary schools pray everyday. There's not much prayer in secondary schools'

How often children...	never	sometimes	once	2 to 3	everyday
Pray at school	9	20	1	4	40
Pray at home	18	23	7	7	19
Pray in the morning	26	27	3	2	16
Pray before meals	27	20	6	2	19
Pray at bedtime	24	23	3	2	22
Pray on my own	15	20	5	11	21
Pray with parents	39	19	5	2	9
Pray with others	13	20	12	13	16
Pray at church	9	20	25	8	12
Pray at occasions	14	43	4	2	10
How often youth...	never	sometimes	once	2 to 3	everyday
Pray at school	19	18	1	11	13
Pray at home	10	14	5	5	28
Pray in the morning	15	18	1	12	13
Pray before meals	10	13	1	9	8
Pray at bedtime	12	15	4	1	27
Pray on my own	13	9	5	13	19
Pray with parents	24	18	4	3	10
Pray with others	9	19	9	12	10
Pray at church	16	21	13	5	2
Pray at occasions	14	19	3	7	15

'Praying with parents is the least common prayer'

'We only say grace when we have guests for dinner'

'If I can't sleep I pray!'

'I pray at bedtime... looking back at my day to say thanks and looking to tomorrow, asking for God's help'

'The world has changed. Praying before meals is not something we do anymore'

'It's quieter, more peaceful at bedtime. It's just you and your mind'

Children & Youth...	never	sometimes	once	2 to 3	everyday
Pray at school	28	38	2	15	53
Pray at home	28	37	12	12	47
Pray in the morning	41	45	4	14	29
Pray before meals	47	33	7	11	27
Pray at bedtime	35	38	7	3	49
Pray on my own	28	29	10	24	49
Pray with parents	63	37	9	5	19
Pray with others	22	39	21	25	26
Pray at church	25	41	38	13	14
Pray at occasions	28	62	7	9	25

'Praying with parents is the least common type of prayer'

'You either pray a lot or not. So it's 'everyday' or 'never''

'Those people who go to church on Sunday - pray at church once a week'

Key Questions

Reflecting on the responses from listening groups, Bishops Children & Youth Council identified the following key questions to ask Bishop Martyn:

Question 1

What is prayer?

Contemplative prayer practices, such as *calm, quiet, listening & peaceful* ranked highly with children and young people.

What are your reflections on this?

Question 2

Prayer Bingo

What do you find most helps you pray?

Question 3

When, where and with who?

How can the church support children, young people and families develop an everyday habit of prayer?

Responding to the voice

So what actually happens next?

This report will be shared with Bishops Leadership Team, listening groups, and published on Leicester Diocese website.

- www.leicester.anglican.org/info-for-parishes/children-families-and-young-people/bishops-children-and-youth-council-bcyc

Bishop Martyn will be invited to respond to the key questions raised in the report via video. Bishop Martyn's video response will be shared with participants and published on Leicester Diocese website.

Summer Term 2024

We want to hear more young voices from across the Diocese! Could you facilitate a listening group with children or young people in your context in Summer Term?

Email Matt.Long@leicestercofe.org - for more info and resources.

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