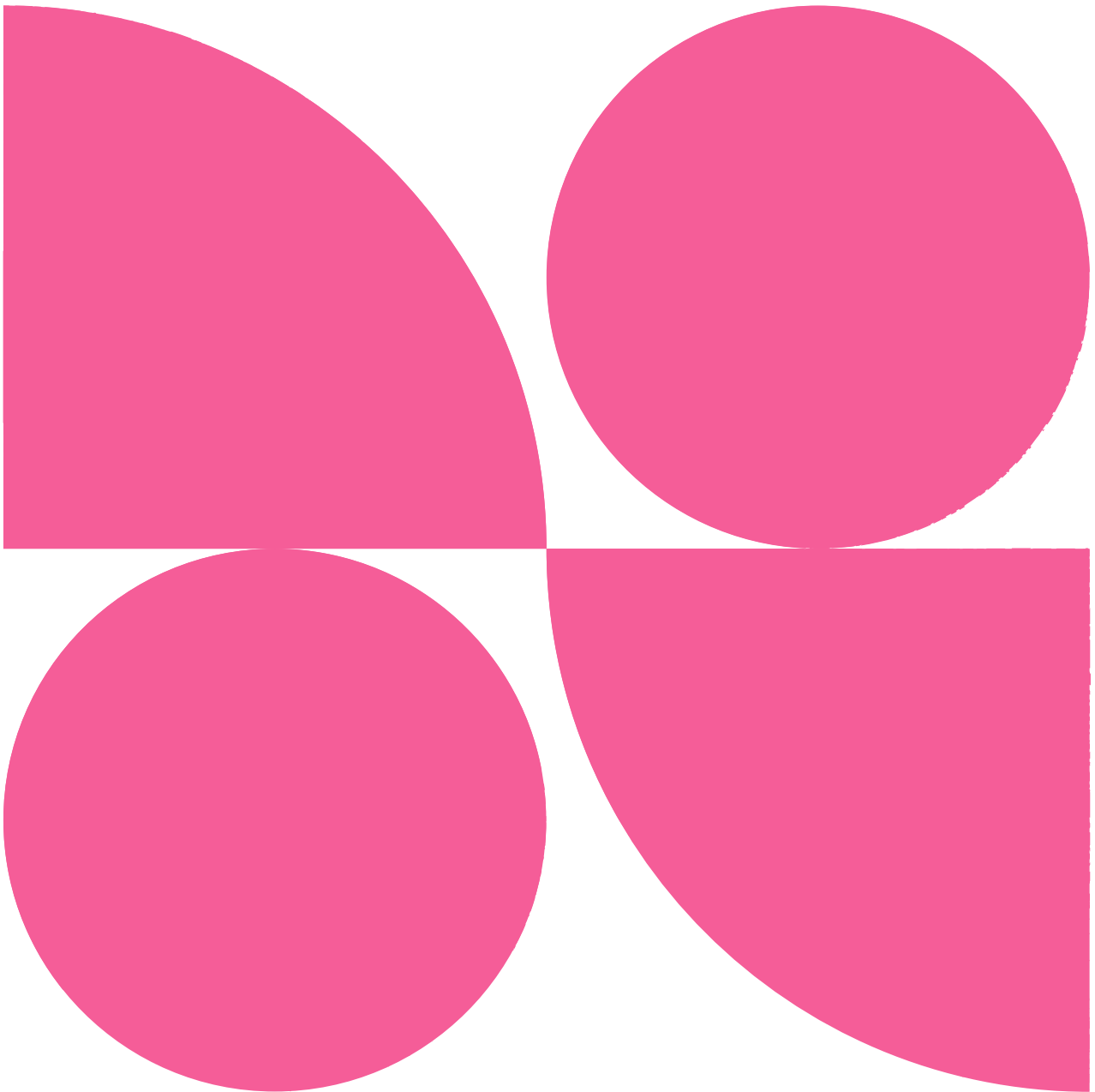


Bishops Children & Youth Council Listening Report *Practicing Faith*



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 experimenting with a termly process of child-and-youth-led agenda setting, listening, sense making and reporting.

The Process

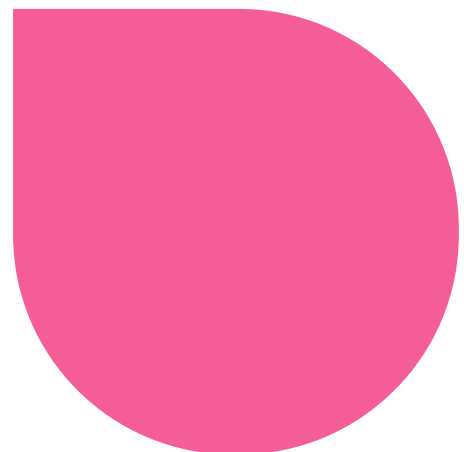
A group of young people set agenda and design a listening resource to distribute to listening groups.

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 Report

This report outlines the responses we received from children and young people, as we explored '*practicing faith*', through four rounds of questioning.

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



The Numbers

91

Young Voices

45

Girls

46

Boys

06

Primary Schools

01

Secondary School

05

Church Groups

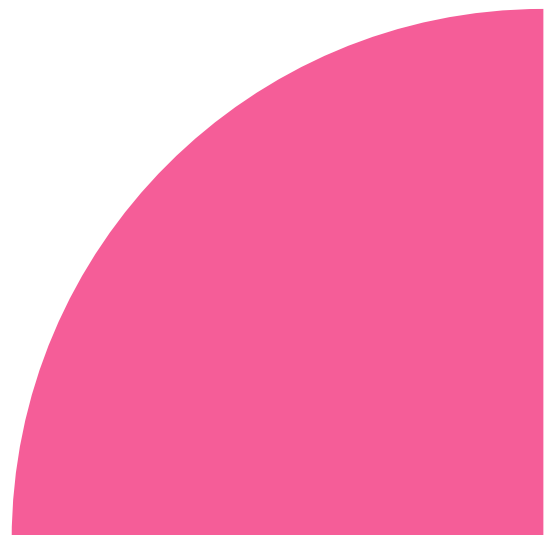
6-17

Age Range

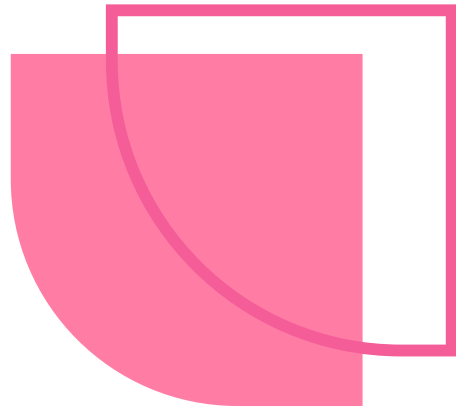
25%

UKME / GMH

03



Roll Call



St John's, Hinckley, Youth Group
Great Glen Youth Club
Swinford C of E Primary School
Houghton C of E Primary School
Brockington College
Cornerstone Youth
Richard Hill C of E Primary School
St Paul's, Oadby, Youth Group
Church Hill C of E Junior School, Thurmaston
Shine Squad, All Saints School, Coalville
Crossfire Youth, Groby & Ratby
Hope Hamilton CE Primary School

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

Rounds Design

Annabel Thames
Connie Gough
Greg Hill
Joel Plant
with Shayne Ardron
and Matt Long

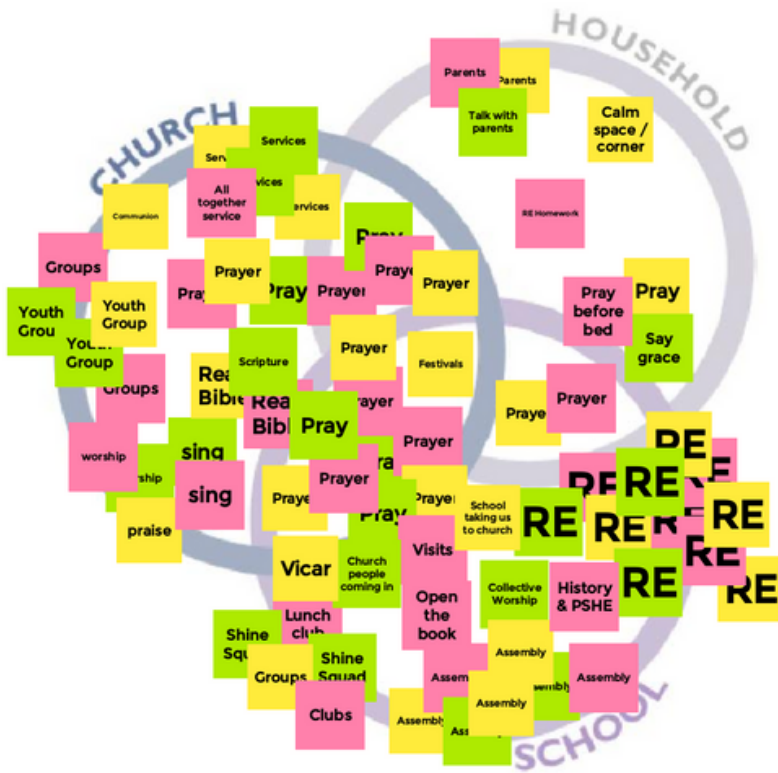
Sense-making

By Year 8-10 Students at
Brockington College
with Tracey Manns

Round One - Sticky Venn

Description: Stick post-it notes or write responses on a Venn diagram

Question: How do you practice faith at school, church, and home?



“Prayer is about connection – connection to God or to yourself”

“Non-religious form of prayer is wishing”

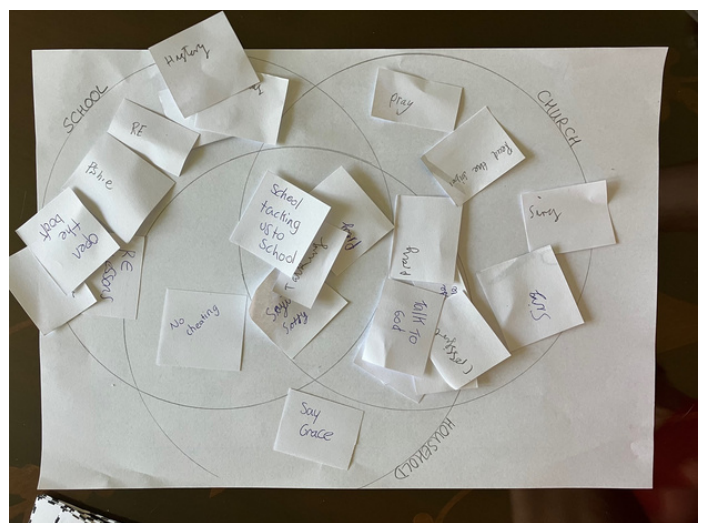
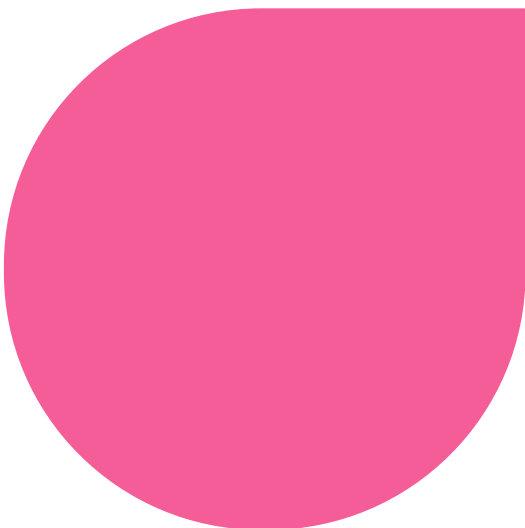
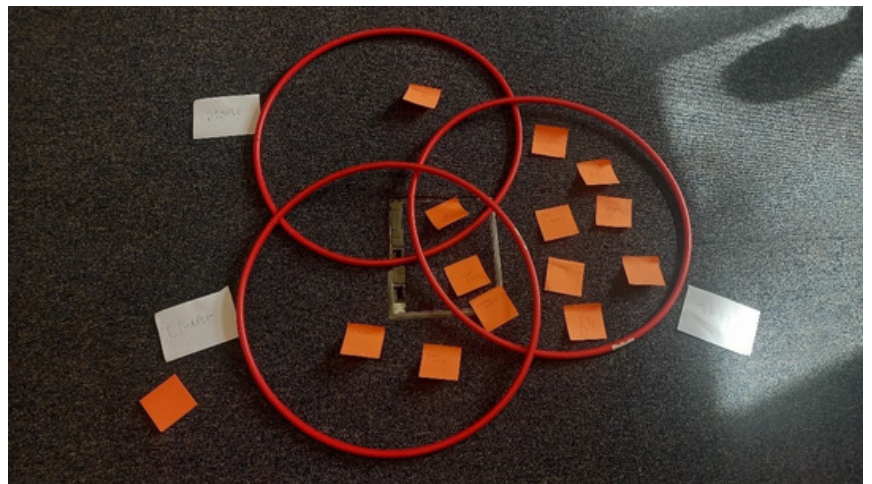
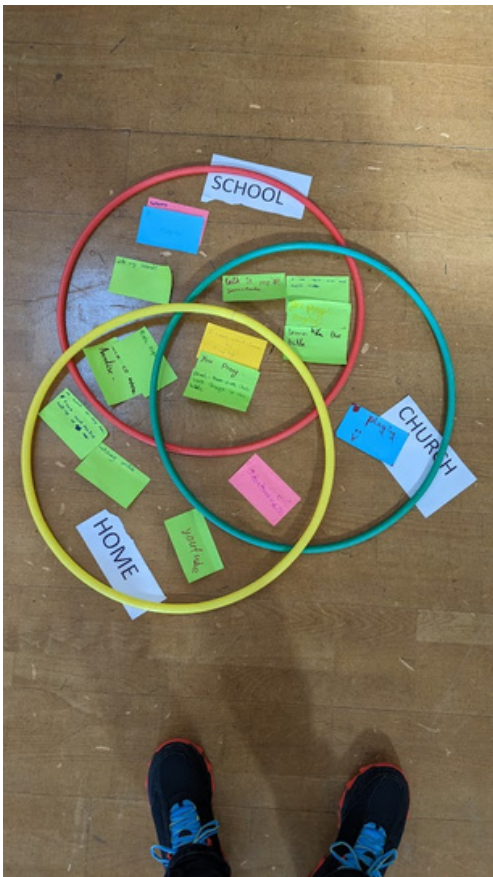
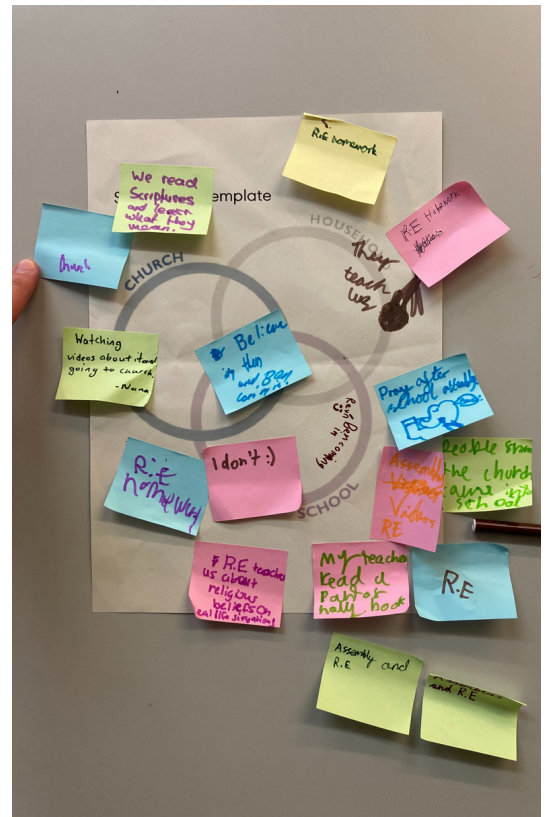
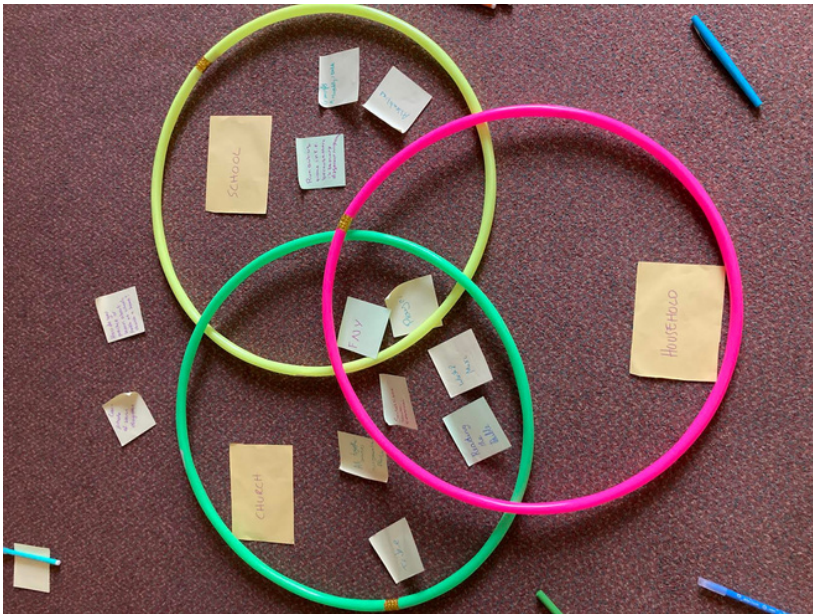
“Having a safe space is important – this could be a person or a place”

“Prayer is easy if you have an open mind to it”.

Key Observations:

- **School** most populated with RE, assemblies, faith groups & visits.
- **Church** second-most populated with services, prayer, worship & faith groups.
- **Household** least populated with parents and prayer mentioned.
- Only common faith practice to appear in each of the three spheres, and all the intersections (including the central intersection) is **PRAYER!**

“School and Church are more structured and so you are more likely to observe and engage with what is going on and happening around you”



Round Two - Bishops Question

Description: Answer the question

The Question: How can the Church help you to follow Jesus and grow in faith?

“Church needs to be open before and after school for drop ins and snacks”

“Make Church interactive with lots of activities like crafts and baking”

“I would appreciate someone to help me pray and to pray for me”

“Church just talks at you and not individually”

“Church should be open all the time”

“Church is just done to you and boring, you don’t get a say”

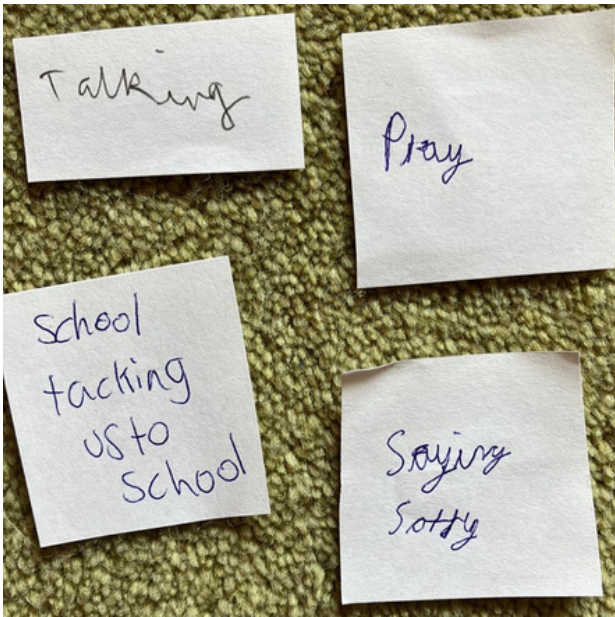
“We would like to see vicars in schools more often and more school chaplains”

Key Observations:

- **Most frequent response...** for the church to **share and explore Bible** stories, teaching children and young people more about Christian faith.
- **Second most frequent response...** for the church to create **safe spaces** to talk with others about faith and **ask questions**.
- **Third most frequent response...** for church to be **less boring** and more **interactive**, with **fun** activities that are relevant.
- Other popular responses include... help with prayer, collective worship, school visits and change of service times.

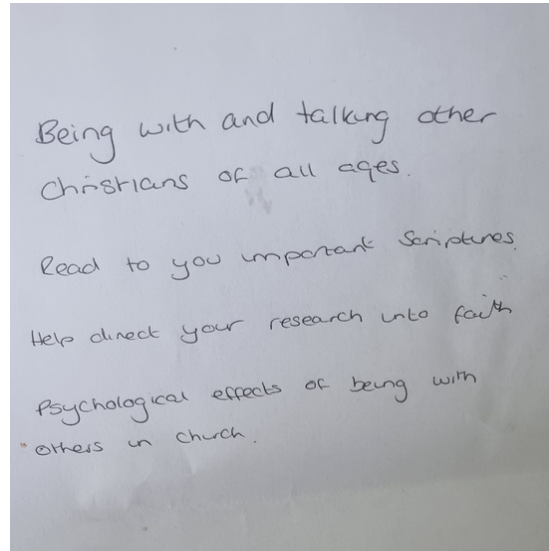
“If Church was more like this (gesturing to the discussion group) I would go”

~ student, Brockington College



2. How can church help?

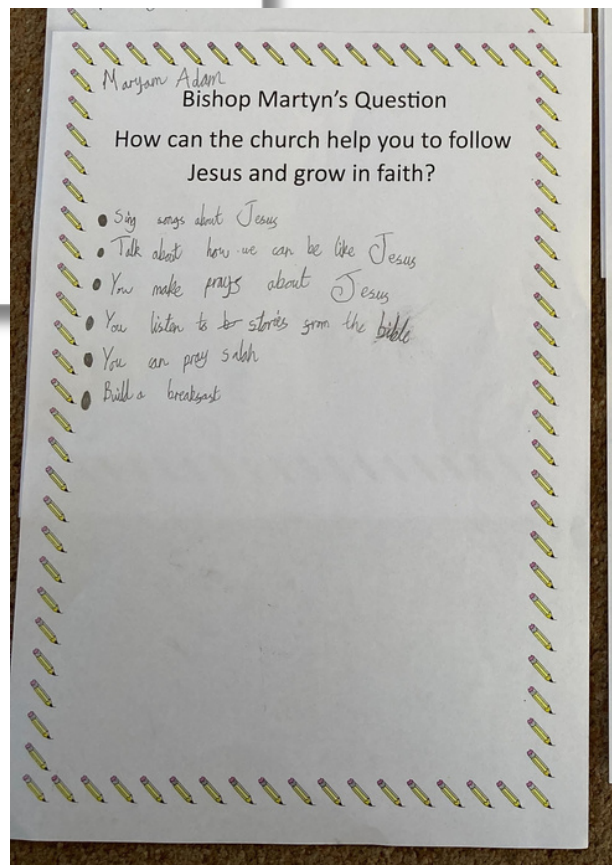
- Share bible stories
- Give you reasons to!
- Share knowledge
- Tell us about Jesus



Round 2

How can the church help you to follow Jesus and grow in faith?

- "Help me pray"
- "Give me good words"
- "Sing?"
- "Collective worship"
- "Bring me more sweets"
- "Go to the church more with school"
- "I don't believe in God"



Round Three - Yes or No?

Description: Quickfire, yes or no, answers.

The Question: Do you use social media? Do you explore faith on social media?

Youth / Secondary	% Use	% Faith Content
TV / Netflix	100%	9%
YouTube	89%	20%
Snapchat	51%	6%
TikTok	49%	34%
Instagram	34%	9%

Children / Primary	% Use	% Faith Content
TV / Netflix	100%	39%
Books	100%	44%
YouTube	89%	47%
Computer Games	75%	28%
Parents Phone	28%	14%

89%

of children & young people surveyed use YouTube

47%

of children surveyed watch faith content on YouTube. This decreases to...

20%

for young people / secondary school students.

I watch sitcoms about faith, like Young Sheldon & Friday Night Dinner"

39%

of children surveyed watch faith content on TV / Netflix. This decreases to...

9%

for young people / secondary school students.

100%

of children & young people surveyed watch TV and/or Netflix

"TikTok pops up on 'for you' page so you watch a bigger variety of videos"

"Youth choose their social media content as opposed to parents choosing it for younger children and so they are less likely to choose faith content"

Key Observations:

- 100% of children & young people watch TV / YouTube.
- 100% of children read books. Only 44% read faith books.
- Young people use social media more than children.
- Children engage with faith content on social media more than young people.

*"Young people might see faith content on social media but are not going to engage in it. They need **relationships** with people to engage in faith conversations" - Young Person*


Round Four - Tier List

Description: Order responses in tiers from most to least

Question: What are the issues the Church should be engaged with?

Order from most important to least important...

Christian Prayer & worship	Education / Helping people to learn	Politics / Helping government to make decisions
Environment / Climate Crisis	Immigration / Helping refugees & asylum seekers	Health care / Helping the sick
Poverty / Helping the poor	Inclusion / Making people feel safe & welcome	Reconciliation / Peace making & helping with conflicts



"Religion is the main driver of war and so it should not be involved in politics"

"It's the governments job to decide things"

"If we don't put prayer & worship first, how can we get God's help and advice to do everything else?"

"The Church being involved in politics is the way to fix morals in politics"

Key Observations:

- Health care, poverty & environment where in top three the most.
- Followed by Christian Prayer & Worship
- It was clear, politics was in the bottom three the most.

Combined Tier List Order:

Health care
 Environment
 Poverty
 Prayer & Worship
 Immigration
 Reconciliation
 Inclusion
 Education
 Politics

*"I'm surprised prayer and worship is not higher on the list. Isn't that the whole point of Church?"
 - Young Person*

Key Questions

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

Question 1

Prayer seems to be an important faith practice for children and young people in school, church and at home.

How do you practice prayer? What difference does prayer make to your faith?

Question 2

In your experience, what do churches who have created safe spaces for children & young people to explore faith, have in common?

Question 3

How is the Diocese currently engaged in health care, the environment and poverty? How may children and young people get involved?

Responding to the voice

So what actually happens next?

This report will be shared with Bishops Leadership Team, listening group participants and facilitators, 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.

Autumn Term 2023

In partnership with a national church board, chaired by Bishop Martyn, we will run a special cycle of listening, sense-making, and reporting in the autumn term. The church board are leading on the Church of England's aim to have 30,000 new children and youth workers. The board would like to explore and understand what children and young people value in leaders.

Get Involved

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?

Contact

Matt Long, Youth Engagement & Intergenerational Communities Enabler
Matt.Long@leicestercofe.org

Tracey Manns, Diocesan Deputy Director of Education
Tracey.Manns@leicesterdbe.org