

Action Plan for the successful delivery of the Happiness School Club



Planning for entry into the school

The training for this project is available through Peterborough Diocese, Hope and in partnership with Action for Happiness Planning for entry into school (to be implemented in the term ahead of the term you hope to run the club)

Here is a handy checklist to make sure you are communicating well with school, church, home, and children. Read on and find templates and resources to help you do this.

- Agreement of incumbent
- Do you have a partner?
- Introductory letter & phone call to the school, with accompanying explanatory flyer from Action for Happiness
- Agreement of school
- Agree times, day of week, duration (5/6 or up to 12 sessions), school's choice of which cohort of children, sharing template of a session
- DBS for school
- Risk Assessment & Safeguarding
- Leaflets sent out for parents/children (These could be distributed in the first week of the term in which you are delivering the club) Leaflets for school staff could be delivered with the introductory letter.

1) Agreement of Incumbent

Ensure you have shared the vision for this pilot venture with your incumbent and have their blessing, as you will be representing the church.

So what does the incumbent need to know about this project?

The purpose of this after school club is for the church to partner with the school to promote the wellbeing of their pupils.

- This is a project designed to run during the summer term
- The facilitators for the Happiness Clubs are provided with about an hour and a half's online training. This is in the form of short films from Action for Happiness that cover what are the 10 keys for happiness. A short film from Peterborough Diocese and Hope drills down on how these keys can be implemented to create a happiness club in school
- This project is only possible with the agreement and blessing of the local school.
- It is delivered by volunteers from the local church to a group of children chosen by the school, for up to 11/12 sessions.
- The focus is on being a positive support to the children and the life of the school, promoting tools for wellbeing, being good role models, building relationship with the children and the school. If you want to develop this into a Bible club, or prayer club, we suggest that this follows as it is something different from this initial vision. (Watch this space as Hope and Peterborough Diocese will be developing some material that you can use for this next step)

2) Do you have a partner?

The best scenario is for you to have a partner to help run the club. They do not necessarily have to complete the official training, and if not, it will be up to the facilitator to take the overall lead and responsibility for running that group.

Top tips for choosing a partner

- Pray and ask God who this might be. Invite your incumbent or ask him/her for ideas about others to ask.
- Share your vision for this club with them, and be clear about what you expect from them. Why not watch the training films together?
- You are responsible for leading the group, as you have the training, but it is best if you give some time sharing your ideas, planning sessions together, and thinking about who is going to do what.
- Share that this is a commitment for up to 11/12 sessions. It is not for life!
- Encourage your partner to buy '50 Ways To Feel Happy' so you can plan easily. You also purchase this book at York Book Shop

3) How do I offer this project to school?

- Phone the school
- Send an email outlining the project, with accompanying flyer
- More conversations

What do I say when I ring the school?

- Be friendly, polite and a blessing
- Explain briefly who you are, and what you are offering
- Ask who it is that you should send an email to that summarizes your proposal

What do I say in the email?

It depends on how well you know the school, but some schools will need to take this proposal to the Senior Leadership Team, or even the Governors, rather than just saying 'Yes'. So make sure you are clear and brief, with an expectation that you are awaiting a reply. (See example letter on the next page **and please edit as this letter is too long, but it gives you the information that you can choose if it is necessary to share or not**)

Leave the email with the school for a week, but do follow up if you hear no more, by ringing the school, and asking if the email arrived. Use this as an opportunity to bless, be encouraging and good news.

An example of an email to school outlining the Happiness School Club proposal:

Subject: Happiness After School Club

Dear...

I hope this finds you and your wonderful staff well, and that it has been a smooth transition for you all as you welcome the children back into school. We, at church are so grateful to you for all you do to invest in our children. You are wonderful. Thank you.

Our church is wondering if you might be interested in a pilot project that invests in children's wellbeing. Our proposal is to offer a Happiness school club for up to 12 sessions, this next term, for a group of children who might benefit from finding ways to unlock happiness, with fun activities to boost a positive sense of wellbeing.

This is a bit of background, but obviously, if you think it might work in school for class group, it would be good to talk further.

We are working in partnership with Action for Happiness, a leading not-for-profit organisation, who have given us training. Our aim is to encourage the children to become 'Happiness Detectives' who investigate some simple keys to happiness – such as doing kind things, exercising, trying out new things, finding ways to bounce back, being comfortable with who you are, etc. For further details click here: www.actionforhappiness.org/10-keys

So what would a 'Happiness School Club' look like? The basic pattern would be: icebreaker, then a game/activity/challenge that promoted that week's key, ending with an encouragement to practise this key during the week in between.

Here is a link for our source book '50 Ways to Feel Happy', to give you a feel for the type of things we hope to cover (link) If you would like me to lend you have a copy of the book, please let me know and I will drop one in to the school.

Let me know if you think this might have some mileage for your children in the summer term. (Just to be clear, the after school club comes with no charge as it is run by trained volunteers from church. Action for Happiness provide all sorts of materials for schools that come at a charge, but not in this instance. It is a gift from the church and from them). All our volunteers have DBS checks but we will obviously comply with your safeguarding policy.

I have attached a [flyer from Action for Happiness](#) describing this project.

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Signature

4) Agreement of the School and planning practicalities:

If the school says 'Yes', they and you will need to set up the practical arrangements:

- School DBS's of volunteers to be submitted
- Day of the week the club will run on (work out ahead of time what days you can offer!)
- The duration of each session
- Where the session will take place in school
- The school's choice of children
- Sharing a template of the session and checking it is agreeable with the school. (Templates of sessions can be found on the Padlet board please adapt for your example from here ['Padlet Board'](#))
- Ask how the school would like to invite the children to the clubs. Offer these 2 leaflets if they would help. One is for the children to consider if they want to come to the club. The other is for parents/carers that might be sent home by the school with an accompanying letter from the school at the beginning of the term that the club is going to run.

5) Getting a DBS for School

I already have a DBS, why do I need another one?

- Your DBS for a church setting may not cover the school setting, so you will need to be registered through the school. Check with the school to see if this is the case.
- (The school is likely to send a covering letter to endorse the invitation at the beginning of the Autumn term and collect names of children who would like to attend) Attached is the flyer for:
other staff, other children, and other parents

6) Risk Assessment and Safeguarding

As mentioned earlier, it is best practice for you to have a partner with you when you are doing children's work. This protects you and the children. Do your utmost to find a partner. A school may offer a member of staff to help you, but it is really helpful if you can come with someone from your church who can support you and the children, talk through the sessions and plan together.

Furthermore, if a child needs extra help during a session, it means you can offer appropriate support with the other person looking out for the group/helping that particular child.

Do I need to draw up a risk assessment?

Yes – even if it is basic, you should ask the school to look through it and to feedback anything else they might want to include.

You can find an example of a simple risk assessment template on the Padlet notice board under the heading 'Getting Started' ['Padlet Board](#)

6) Risk Assessment and Safeguarding

Check in when the beginning of the term arrives with an email/phone call

Contact the member of staff you have contact with, and just check they are ready for you to go. Perhaps you could send the flyers in again to remind them that these could go into the book bags of the children they are inviting, with the school one for the teacher to share with the class.

- Ask if there is anything else they need.
- Ask if there is anything you need to know.
- Check you know when you are going in, the location of the club, and any further protocols the school needs to share with you.

Meanwhile...

You will:

- Purchase '50 Ways To Feel Happy' at [Action for Happiness](#) or [York Book Shop](#)
- Browse through '50 Ways To Feel Happy'
- Watch the Action For Happiness films ([link](#)) & Watch our film on How to run a club ([link](#))
- Start praying for your school's welcome of this project
- By the end of the training, you will have a template of what a session will look like, and be able to plan your own sessions to fit your context, and be introduced to all the resources you can draw upon
- If you want any further support or to join our online support sessions, please contact Charlotte Nobbs charlotte.nobbs@peterborough-diocese.org.uk

