

Twelve Ways Your Parish Church Can Engage with the Local School Community

1. **Relationships** – connect with the Headteacher, staff and school through service e.g. homemade cakes for the staff room. Offer to listen to children read.
2. **Prayer** – ask the school what they would like prayer for e.g. exam times, school trips and events. Let them know that they are prayed for as part of your intercessions.
3. **Assemblies and Collective Worship** – these are a great way to engage children with the Christian faith. They can be led by paid CYF Workers, volunteers or Vicars. There are a number of resources available e.g. [Open the Book](#), [assemblies.org](#), [Pop Box from iSingPop](#). Consider working with the school to create a [prayer and reflective space](#) for pupils.
4. **Get on board** – serving as a school governor will make a difference to any local school.
5. **Musical connections** – invite pupils to join a Children's or Youth Choir. Encourage parish musicians to support music in school and invite pupils who are learning instruments to play them in church.
6. **Work collaboratively in caring for God's creation** – volunteer to help with the school garden or eco projects, set up an eco-club at church and invite pupils to join.
7. **Work experience** – encourage your congregation to think about opportunities they could offer as work experience for older students. It can help young people make future career choices. Offer volunteering opportunities for students taking part in [Duke of Edinburgh awards](#).
8. **Church visits** – part of the RE curriculum may include visits to places of worship. Invite them to your church, offer activities and refreshments as well as supporting the lesson aims. Run a [CSI Easter workshop](#), [Easter Journey](#) or [Christmas Journey](#) for KS2 or a [prayer space](#).
9. **Invitations to church events** – make or find appropriate opportunities in the church event diary to which pupils and their families may be sent special invitations, e.g. Holiday Clubs, Messy Church, Christingle, Harvest time etc.
10. **Celebrate the school/a teacher** – '[Education Sunday](#)' is the second Sunday in September. Use the church services to celebrate and pray for all those in your congregation who work in schools. Take part in '[Thank a Teacher day](#)' each year
11. **Informal visits** – consider starting an after-school drop-in, offering a safe space for young people to meet, enjoy food and activities, or space to do homework or revision.
12. **Partner with Christian organisations** to support your local school e.g. [KICK](#) (sport with Christian values), [TLG](#) (Make Lunch and Mentoring) or other local charities.

Twelve Ways Your School Can Engage With Your Parish Church

1. **Relationships** – partner with a church on local issues of social justice and courageous advocacy, such as Food Banks, homelessness or environmental projects, harnessing eco church/school/diocese opportunities, etc. This may also be part of the [Archbishop's Young Leaders Award](#).
2. **Pray** for the local clergy, church and parish in school Collective Worship.
3. **Collective worship** – invite the church to lead collective worship either on specific occasions or regularly throughout the year. Or hold regular 'open' Collective Worship occasions in school, to which adults from the parish are invited. Invite a speaker from the church or to presentation evenings. ([Make sure you give them clear guidelines.](#))
4. **Governors** – advertise vacant positions on your governing board to the local church.
5. **Use the church building** – consider holding regular special services or concerts in the Parish church building, such as Christmas Carol services, Easter celebrations or the Patronal Festival of the Saint your school is dedicated to.
6. **Offer to provide an item** for a church service, such as a drama sketch, liturgical dance, musical item or offering for Harvest Festival. Or to do an artwork or RE work display.
7. **Church visits** – ensure regular class visits for all year groups to your Parish church to explore the symbolism and functionality of the building along with the life of the Parish. Or ask the church to host a [prayer space](#).
8. **Send a curriculum overview** to the Parish church to invite them to consider how they could support the teaching – this could include religious education (RE) and the wider curriculum.
9. **Ask about events** – invite church members to parents evenings or open evenings for reception children to provide pastoral support to parents and build relationships.
10. **Take part in 'Thank your Vicar week'** each year: www.stlukeshealthcare.org.uk
11. **Share your stories** – Find out who edits the Parish magazine, website or social media accounts or newsletter and send them 'good news' items from your school to share.
12. **Plan an annual Parish/School Day** on which parish members visit, and plan activities in school.