

**Do parachurch organisations inhibit or facilitate local church
involvement in primary schools? A critical investigation.**

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Mission (*Children & Youth Ministry*) in the Faculty of Humanities.

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the relationship between local churches and parachurch organisations and how/where they effectively deliver ministry in partnership into local primary schools. Also exploring the areas where the outside agencies may help or hinder the local churches ministry.

This will be underpinned with the rationale and motivation for engagement in schools, and how this can be best utilised to create an intentional journey of exploration for children to hear and respond to the call to follow Jesus for themselves.

The outcome of this dissertation will be to explore the possible routes going forward, to create a more effective ministry into schools, through the bringing together of churches and charities in thought, word, and deed, in order to make better use of the resources they hold between them. With the ultimate aim of bringing more children to a deeper understanding of faith and to help them transition into effective discipleship within a church setting.

Declaration:

I declare that the dissertation is my own original work unless referenced clearly to the contrary, and that no portion of the work referred to in the dissertation has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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Dedications

To my beautiful wife Bec, thank you for your encouragement, love, and support throughout this whole process. Without you, I would have been unable to keep going and finish this.

To my incredibly supportive family and friends, who have encouraged me, cheered me on, and spent plenty of time reading and rereading my essays, and for the valuable prayers they have prayed.

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As always, I am indebted to Christ, my saviour, friend, and Lord, without whom, none of this would have been possible.

Introduction

For the last two decades I have spent most of my working life in local schools, either on behalf of a charity/parachurch organisation or as a staff member of a local church. This has led to varying degrees of engagement and responses from the local schools. Throughout all of it, the desire was to share Jesus with children in a relevant and engaging way, and to enable them to continue their own journeys of faith outside of a school context. Whilst this remained my motive throughout, there is an interesting balance between holding together the relationships between local churches and charities and ensuring a united front within a school context.

To understand this, I will firstly explore some of the rationale and theology around ministry in school. The church as a whole has been given a mandate in the form of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.¹

It is out of this call to go, that the message of Jesus has continued to spread across the far reaches of the globe, into communities, schools, and homes. Interestingly, Wright shares ‘This task remains unfinished in our own day. If Christians around the world gave as much energy to it as they do to learning so many other things, worthy in themselves but none so important as this, we would make more headway with the gospel than we usually do.’² Thus explaining

¹ All Scripture references are from the New International Version unless stated otherwise.

² Tom Wright, *Matthew for Everyone* (London: SPCK Publishing, 2002), 209.

that our fundamental calling is to share the knowledge of Jesus to a world that does not yet know him.

It is with this in mind that this dissertation will explore the significant part to play that ministry into primary schools has. Whilst also aiming to understand that our call to mission is multi-faceted and 'must continually remind ourselves and our congregations that everything we do matters to God.'³ Saunders notes that 'Followers of Jesus are to be prepared to introduce others to God.'⁴ Although this will not necessarily be categorised by a singular approach to evangelism in schools, but more so the heart and vision behind it, and how and where partnerships across churches and charities may enhance or hinder the call to make disciples.

In exploring the reasoning behind engaging in schools, and sharing in any capacity, it is useful to understand some of the fundamentals, Bayes shares

Many Christians and many parish churches are suspicious of the word 'evangelism'. It comes to them with too many unpalatable overtones and implications. But almost everyone agrees in principle that community and 'fellowship' are necessary to any church.⁵

Fellowship, and sharing through a relational approach are a great place to start, and Singlehurst agrees with this by sharing 'It was through that friendship that they saw that God was good and that Christians were ok. Then at some point they came into contact with the

³ Bruce Riley Ashford, *Theology and Practice of Mission* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2022), 328.

⁴ Andy Saunders and Claire Saunders, *Top Tips on Inspiring all kinds of learners* (Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 2010), 6.

⁵ Paul Bayes, Tim Sledge, John Holbrook, Mark Rylands & Martin Seeley, *Mission-shaped parish – traditional church in a changing world* (London: Church House Publishing, 2006), 79.

content of the gospel and responded to it.’⁶ If there remains within ministry into schools a clear relational aspect, then the faith journey of a child can be nurtured and explored, creating a safe space to speak truth over their lives.

Borgman writes ‘effective ministry is letting God love and bless through us. It is God who has put the compassion and desire to care in our hearts.’⁷ With this as a firm basis, Ward also shares that ‘Jesus gives us the perfect model of relational ministry... our effectiveness will depend upon our relationships with them and with each other.’⁸ There would be an encouragement from this to be engaging relationally with schools, seeking to be Jesus’ hands and feet to an area where he may not already be known. As Erwin urges us to be ‘communicating the truths of God in context-to serve as incarnational witnesses-by recognizing the need to communicate the message of the gospel contextually.’⁹ It is within this call to go and share that ‘the Church only finds its true significance when it understands itself as chosen and sent by God, sharing in God’s mission’.¹⁰

Across the UK there are currently 20,832 primary schools¹¹ with over 10,000,000¹² children attending those institutions, with current curriculum and guidance supporting the delivery of

⁶ Laurence Singlehurst, *People-Sensitive Evangelism – Sowing reaping keeping* (Leicester: Crossway Books, 1995), 36.

⁷ Dean Borgman, *Foundations for Youth Ministry: Theological Engagement with Teen Life and Culture* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 3.

⁸ Pete Ward, *Youthwork and the Mission of God: Frameworks for Relational Outreach* (London: S.P.C.K., 1997), 27.

⁹ Pamela Erwin, *A Critical Approach to Youth Culture-Its influence and Implications for Ministry* (Grand Rapids: MI: Youth Specialities, 2010), 204.

¹⁰ Steven Croft, *Mission-Shaped Questions* (London: Church House Publishing, 2008), 20.

¹¹ BESA, ‘Key UK education statistics’ Available: <https://www.besa.org.uk/key-uk-education-statistics/> (accessed 25 June 2020).

¹² BESA, ‘Key UK education statistics’ Available: <https://www.besa.org.uk/key-uk-education-statistics/> accessed 25 June 2020).

faith based education, there seems to be an open door for which the church may help deliver relevant faith based material to enhance the schools education, as well as creating inroads to discussions of faith with children, in order to create active disciples.

The Church of England alone has over 16,000 churches¹³ in England, therefore the likelihood is that there will be at least one church within the locality of every primary school across Britain. Therefore, if we make a presumption that there is a church within close proximity of every primary school, should there not then be an active pursuit of ministry into those schools from each respective church, and a notable question is where do parachurch organisations fit into this process?

It is with this in mind, I have set out to explore throughout this dissertation whether parachurch organisations and local charities help or hinder the work of the local church within their local primary schools. For the purposes of this dissertation whenever ‘church’ is mentioned, it is in reference to local individual churches. References to ‘school’ refers to primary schools specifically, and ‘charity’ covers both parachurch organisations and local multi-church charities.

The dissertation will also take into account the openness and freedoms allowed to church and charities to actively engage with local primary schools from both a curriculum and faith based perspective, and how this may be best utilised to share aspects of the Christian faith from a clearly Christian viewpoint.

¹³ The Church of England, ‘Our Churches’ Available: <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/our-churches> (accessed 25 June 2020).

History of Schools' Work by the Church

Firstly, to gain a greater understanding of the freedoms and opportunities available within schools, it is important to consider the history of the church's involvement. Before the government was engaged in the provision of education for everyone in England, charities and churches were already offering education as they owned most of the schools in the 1800s.¹⁴ Therefore, most learning institutions at this point were church schools.

Currently, a significant proportion of schools in England are owned by faith-based organisations alongside charities. A 2017 report by the department of education from the school census revealed that there were 6,177 faith-based schools with around 37% being primary schools.¹⁵ The Church of England had 4,377 primary schools, followed by the Catholic Church with 1,645 schools and the Methodist Church having 25 schools, in comparison other minor Christian groups had 72 schools.

They were aimed at imparting Christian instructions to children by holding regular worship events. However, when the state started to offer mass education, the church schools were integrated with government schools and became part of the academic system. Hence, *the School Standards and Framework Act 1998* incorporated the expectations by the churches founding the schools and expectations from the government to provide a uniform way of learning.¹⁶ For instance, the Act stipulates collective worship as a mandatory activity across

¹⁴ St John's C of E Primary School, 'Being a Church School' Available: <https://www.st-johns-danbury.essex.sch.uk/being-a-church-school/> (accessed 28 June 2020).

¹⁵ Religion Media Centre, 'Faith Schools in the UK' Available: <https://religionmediacentre.org.uk/factsheets/faith-schools-in-the-uk/> (accessed 25 June 2020).

¹⁶ Melanie CM Ehren, Karen Jones and Jane Perryman, *Side Effects of School Inspection; Motivations and Contexts for Strategic Responses, Methods and Modalities of Effective School Inspections* (Cham: Springer, 2016), 88.

the schools in England for spiritual nourishment for the children, as well as to be equipped with additional knowledge to prepare them to become dependable law-abiding citizens as required by the state.

Churches continue to be a critical part of the education system in the UK forming part of the committees that design the academic curriculum used for syllabuses in schools.¹⁷ At least 25% of all primary schools in England are founded by churches.¹⁸ The schools allow students from all backgrounds and faiths to interact since they are viewed as a creation of God and religious differences are not considered when admitting them to these schools. For instance, the Church of England, the Methodist Church, and the Catholic Church have schools that follow government-sponsored curriculums to address the needs of all students, irrespective of their cultural, social, economic, religious, or political affiliations.

Collective Worship (CW)

Primary schools in England are currently obliged by law to arrange for collective worship daily.¹⁹ The schools are expected to provide some activities during the collective worship (maybe not always Christian); however, across the term, they have to be of a broadly Christian nature.²⁰ However, if the schools perceive that they are not interested in offering CW as required by law, they are free to apply for disapplication, and once approved, the school could

¹⁷ Flourish Itulua-Abumere, 'The Significance of Religious Education in Local Primary Schools (Specific Reference to Christianity)', *Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 6:6 (2013), 69-94 [73].

¹⁸ Wallsend St Peter's Church of England Primary School, 'Church School' Available: <https://www.wallsendstpeters.org.uk/church-school/> (accessed 28 June 2020).

¹⁹ Imran Mogra, 'Trainee Teachers' Learning about Collective Worship in Primary Schools', *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 43:7 (2018), 1-10 [1].

²⁰ Peter Cumper and Alison Mawhinney, *Collective Worship and Religious Observance in Schools: An Evaluation of Law and Policy in the UK* (Swindon: Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2015), 11.

apply alternative worshipping protocols. The age of students and expectations by parents have to be considered as well as the aptitude of students before launching an alternative CW. Additionally, the parents are allowed to withdraw their children from CW. The teachers are also allowed to withdraw their participation in the CW activities.²¹

Nevertheless, to avoid any objections, especially from non-Christian or non-religious persons, the term 'assembly' is usually used interchangeably with CW so that during the gathering, other activities may be conducted. For instance, during assemblies, achievements are celebrated, vital information is shared, among other activities.²²

Most of the primary schools in England consider CW as a critical part of forming their values and ethics such as courage, generosity, and friendship, among other traits, in pupils and in their staff. During CW, a leader from a local church or charity, or among the staff is appointed by the school to lead a session of singing and reading the bible to impart Christian knowledge to the students.²³ CW is attended by the entire school, except those who have requested not to attend as legally provided, this is seen as a unifier as it enables the school members to interact and bond, while in the process promoting spiritual development. Some teachers prefer not to lead CW for the need to remain neutral, which at times has raised the debate to consider abolishing CW in schools.

²¹ Lois MR Loudon, 'The Conscience Clause in Religious Education and Collective Worship: Conscientious Objection or Curriculum Choice?', *British Journal of Religious Education*, 26:3 (2004), 273-284 [275].

²² Graeme Smith and Susannah Smith, 'From Values to Virtues: An Investigation into the Ethical Content of English Primary School Assemblies', *British Journal of Religious Education* 35, no. 1 (2013), 5-19.

²³ Mogra, 'Trainee Teachers' Learning about Collective Worship in Primary Schools', 1.

The Church of England has been offering CW services to its schools for centuries and the respective activities where pupils are equipped with knowledge of Anglican traditions and practices. Many Church of England schools work with the local vicar and other church members to arrange the worship activities which are engaging, invitational, and reflective in nature. CW is usually flexible to enable all pupils to participate and benefit without compromising their beliefs.

According to the Church of England, CW is an opportunity for staff and pupils to participate in a communal activity, foster and intensify the spiritual awareness of children, share in each other's challenges and joy, and express gratitude and offer thanks to God.²⁴ It also allows the minister or other leaders to affirm the Christian values and attitudes, while also celebrating special events in the Christian calendar and reflecting on the character of God and the teachings of Christ. Furthermore, to ensure that the schools are operating accordingly, the Anglican Church also conducts regular inspections on CW to ensure that pupils are guided in the preferred Christian way of life. Moreover, the Ofsted inspectors are expected to comment on the contribution that worship offers in schools in terms of cultural, social, and moral development to the child.²⁵

The UK is predominantly a Christian country, as represented by almost 60% of its population, with a particular majority being Anglican and the rest shared by other denominations.²⁶

²⁴ The Church of England, 'Religious Education and Collective Worship' Available: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/religious-education-and-collective-worship> (accessed 28 June 2020).

²⁵ Amanda van Eck Duymaer van Twist, *Religion in England* (London: The London School of Economics and Political Science, 2014), 74-90.

²⁶ Fatima Baalla and Nadia Mansouri, *Margaret Thatcher's Ideology of the New Right and its Impact on the British* (Adrar: University of Adrar, 2019), 6.

Hence, it would seem that Christianity is widespread across the UK and has a tenuous connection with many people across the nation. Such links could help to form a sense of membership or a vague sense of belonging, which means the church has potential to have a tremendous influence on their lives. Similarly, the church sometimes perceives its obligation to provide social amenities, such as within more rural locations where the government may not have reached in the quest for providing education for all.

Most churches based in England, especially within rural regions, were established to cater to the poor who could not access the government schools either due to distance or associated fees.²⁷ Thus, the current CW seen in schools and as widely supported by parents and enjoyed by students reveals the interconnectedness between people and the church. The church is seen as a less controversial body and that is why CW is designed in a manner that pupils or teachers from all faiths can participate without feeling out of place.²⁸ In many parishes of the Church of England, their clergy are actively engaged in local primary schools in not only spiritual matters but also leadership where they sit on the board of governors.

Apart from complying with the government set regulations, the church has its guidelines on how CW in schools they sponsor should be conducted. For instance, the Anglican Church expects schools to organise CW every day and could be at any time of the day and in a group where all members will be able to participate. The Church of England defines collective worship as an act of gathering people from different religions, non-religious, and agnostic

²⁷ William K. Kay, Leslie J. Francis and Keith Watson, eds., *Religion in Education 4* (vol. 4) (Leominster: Gracewing Publishing, 2003), 114.

²⁸ Grace Davie and Per Pettersson, *Welfare and Religion in 21st Century Europe: Gendered Religious and Social Change* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2011), 97.

origins to share knowledge and information that would uplift the moral and social value of the participants. Thus, CW is not supposed to call participants into any form of religious commitment, since the activity has to be neutral.²⁹

However, those who wish to commit to a personal faith are allowed, as long as it is a personal decision. Survey research involving primary schools in England on the impact of CW on children revealed that 79% of parents believe the activity enabled the pupils to develop a sense of right and wrong.³⁰ Additionally, 75% indicated that CW enabled the children to be responsible members of society and 78% referenced that it develops good behaviours, respectively. Most parents expressed that church schools were better than other forms of learning institutions since they care for the children the same way parents would directly at home.

Building Infrastructure in Primary Schools

Apart from offering moral guidance to schools, the churches are involved in the active construction of school infrastructures which is a significant contribution to education in England and other parts of the UK. For instance, 1 million pupils attend Church of England schools.³¹ Approximately 15 million people alive today are alumni to the Church of England schools. Furthermore, more than a quarter of primary schools in England were built and

²⁹ Chester Diocesan Board of Education, 'Collective Worship Guidelines for the Primary School' Available: <http://www.chester.anglican.org/content/pages/documents/1489699927.pdf> (accessed 28 June 2020).

³⁰ Chester Diocesan Board of Education, 'Collective Worship Guidelines for the Primary School' <http://www.chester.anglican.org/content/pages/documents/1489699927.pdf>.

³¹ The Church of England, 'Church Schools and Academies' Available: <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies> (accessed 28 June 2020).

administered by the Church of England.³² There are 250 sponsored as well as 650 converted academies, with the Church of England being the biggest sponsor. Additionally, more than 500 independent schools have declared allegiance to the ethos applied by the Church of England.³³ More than 22,000 foundation governors have also been utilised from within churches across England.

Every Anglican diocese is responsible for a Diocesan board of education to support the church schools, and the Church of England. The rural schools are a significant part of the Church of England infrastructure, thus contributing tremendously to education considering that almost 60% of the Church of England schools are located in rural settings.³⁴

The Church of England schools constitute at least 20% of all state-funded schools across England. Almost 30% of the primary schools in England are run by the Church of England. Nevertheless, the Church of England has joint denomination establishment of schools such as 65 primary schools in England established alongside the Methodist church.³⁵ Statistics have shown that one in every four primary schools in England is run by the Church of England where it teaches one in every five pupils in the nation.

³² The Church of England, 'Church Schools and Academies'
<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies>.

³³ The Church of England, 'Church Schools and Academies'
<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies>.

³⁴ Church of England Archbishop's Council Education Division, 'Working Together the Future of Rural Church of England Schools' Available: <https://exeter.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Working-Together-The-Future-of-Rural-Schools-Report.pdf> (accessed 28 June 2020).

³⁵ The Church of England Education Office, 'Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good' Available: https://cofefoundation.contentfiles.net/media/assets/file/Church_of_England_Vision_for_Education_-_2016_jdYA7EO.pdf (accessed 28 June 2020).

Additionally, in England, there are church school review groups that focus on the quality of education and infrastructures offered by schools founded by faith-based organisation.³⁶ The review group (composed of members from both church and government) ensures that the church schools abide by the regulations predetermined by the government, to create not only a conducive, but an equitable learning environment for all students across England or other regions the church schools operate. For instance, a report by the review group indicated that while the demand for Anglican faith primary schools is on the rise, their presence is limited in various places across England. Thus, as the review group proposed, it would be appropriate for the Church of England to consider increasing the number of their schools in regions they might have a minimal presence. The Church of England has been seen increasing the number of its schools as shown between 2012 and 2017 where it targeted to create 200 more schools.³⁷

The remaining schools are not offered by Christian groups such as the non-faith, Jewish, Sikh, and Hindu. However, despite the cooperation with the government to construct schools and administer them the law allows the faith-based schools to conduct some activities in their preferred manners. For instance, while all schools were guided by a national curriculum. They can, however, decide what they could teach in their religious studies. Additionally, Christian schools can have their own admission criteria as well as staffing policies. Nevertheless, the process must be fair without discrimination by allowing teachers or staff from a different faith to apply as employees in their schools. Moreover, despite the churches being the owners of

³⁶ Priscilla Chadwick, 'The Anglican Perspective on Church Schools', *Oxford Review of Education* 27:4 (2001), 475-487 [477].

³⁷ Katherine Sellgren, 'Church of England Reaffirms Its Commitment to Education' Available: <https://www.bbc.com/news/education-17458376> (accessed 28 June 2020).

the school, the law requires that at least 50% of the places at the schools should be offered to people of a different faith. This law has been opposed, such as in 2018 where the Catholic Church asked the 50% to be removed since they perceived that the legislation prompts them to turn away a catholic child seeking to learn based on the threshold which is not supported by their canon law.³⁸ Their issues were not adhered to since the state perceived it may cause discrimination cases based on religious affiliations.

Lunch and Afternoon Clubs

The lunch and afternoon clubs at primary schools can be utilised as opportunities for the students to engage in various activities such as for fun, personal development, and to further explore faith. During those clubs, there can be flexibility to explore further Christian teaching, worship and prayer. This has allowed flexibility for Christian charities to provide relevant and engaging materials to aid those running the club. Resources such as Messy Church³⁹, Prayer Spaces⁴⁰, SupaClubs⁴¹ and Energize⁴² have all been used to help churches engage children with the Gospel.

However, the law requires that the songs and the stories DO not reflect the beliefs of a particular Christian denomination to make it easier for the pupils and teachers to participate

³⁸ Pamela Louise Graham, Riccardo Russo and Margaret Anne Defeyter, 'The Advantages and Disadvantages of Breakfast Clubs According to Parents, Children, and School Staff in the North East of England, UK' Available: <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2015.00156/full> (accessed 28 June 2020).

³⁹ Messy Church, 'Messy Churches in Schools' Available: <https://www.messychurch.org.uk/tags/schools> (accessed 28 June 2020).

⁴⁰ Prayer Spaces in Schools, 'About Us' Available: <https://www.prayerspacesinschools.com/about-us> (accessed 28 June 2020).

⁴¹ Scripture Union, 'Supa Club Syllabus' Available: <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/schools-free-resources?f%5B0%5D=age%3A1249> (accessed 28 June 2020).

⁴² Urban Saints Energize, 'Schools: Unpacking life's big issues' Available: <https://www.energize.uk.net/series/4> (accessed 28 June 2020).

as well as the parents to allow their children to be taught from a common Christian perspective.⁴³

The Design of Curriculum

The church is a significant contributor to the learning process in England, as it engages in the design of curriculum in consultation with the government. The commission led by Reverend John Hall, the Dean of Westminster, ensures that the religious education curriculum is implemented in line with the Christian values and that no concepts from a particular denomination have been over-represented.⁴⁴

The Church of England issues reports once an adjustment has been determined by the commission, to show the areas that it recommends for changes. The goal of the church is to ensure that religious education is provided on a balanced curriculum that will enable the pupils and teachers to hold well-informed conversations concerning belief systems, world views, and religion. Across the UK, *the Education Reform Act of 1988*⁴⁵ and the Framework Act of 1998⁴⁶ are two laws that make the teaching of religious education in schools mandatory in all schools funded by the state. However, pupils are reserved the right to not partake from a certain age. Due to the partnership to provide education both the state and the church collaborate to provide a curriculum that meets both parties need for the students. For

⁴³ Moderngov, 'Collective Worship Guidance and Sample Policy 2017' Available: <https://rbwm.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s14161/CWguidance2017.pdf> (accessed 28 June 2020).

⁴⁴ The Church of England, 'Religious Education and Collective Worship' <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/religious-education-and-collective-worship>.

⁴⁵ Legislation, 'Education Reform Act 1988' Available: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/contents> (accessed 28 June 2020).

⁴⁶ Legislation, 'School Standards and Framework Act 1998' Available: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/contents> (accessed 28 June 2020).

instance, while the state encourages obedience and high discipline among the children as a moral value. The church is responsible for ensuring that the religious education curriculum is not only academically challenging but personally transformative. With this in mind, how can churches see lives changed? This could be by introducing them to the transformative power that is only available in Jesus.

Why do Schools Ministry?

Therefore, with such an openness from schools, as well as various possibilities within which to engage in schools, why should churches and/or charities engage within them? Not only is it because 'School is the most significant place of influence for young people. They spend more time there than in any other place.'⁴⁷ With regulations stating that children need to spend a minimum of 190 days per year in school,⁴⁸ which shows that schools are a prime location to reach children where they are at. Apart from the home environment, schools will play a significant part in the lives of those children, helping to shape and determine their future, instilling values, structures and skills that will mould their entire life.

Churches and/or charities also play a significant part as role models to these children, 'Research tells us that the top reason why people (including children) start reading the Bible is that someone else raves about it. Their enthusiasm and authentic experience are catching.'⁴⁹ Therefore, 'If the young people you seek to serve are to engage with God, you first need to engage with them.'⁵⁰

The chance to serve schools and engage children with faith-based exploration can also be found to fulfil part of the mission placed on the church, and as the Anglican Communion have

⁴⁷ Terry Clutterham and John Stephenson, *Top tips on Exploring the Bible with young people* (Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 2009), 14.

⁴⁸ Robert Long, 'The School Day and Year (England)' Available: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN07148/SN07148.pdf> (accessed 28 June 2020).

⁴⁹ Terry Clutterham and John Stephenson, *Top tips on Discovering the Bible with children* (Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 2009), 9.

⁵⁰ Danny Brierley, *What Every Volunteer Youth Worker Should Know* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2003), 102.

a commitment to the 'Five Marks of Mission'⁵¹ of which, serving children and staff in schools would certainly seek to fulfil this call.⁵² Bailey shares about being salt and light⁵³, and that

Salt is something that permeates its environment: in cooking it is more often noticed by its absence than its presence. Light, on the other hand is something that is apparent straightaway. A school Christian club offers the opportunity to be both salt and light. The role of light can be discerned in the teaching aspect of the club, where the children are told directly about God. But the salt role takes effect during the time spent in building relationships with the children and letting them see the Christian faith lived out.⁵⁴

This is also shared by Griffiths who says, 'Simply because a Christian is there the light begins to shine...Going into schools to bring salt and light is a worthwhile investment.'⁵⁵ Adding into that there could be a real possibility that the only Christians these children may encounter, is if Christians go into the school on a regular basis. With this in mind, there should be a deep value and respect of that responsibility and also the privilege that it holds.

It is with this desire to share biblical truths, but also to build relationships with children, families and staff that leads to engaging in ministry in schools. Children play a very important part and as evidenced in Luke 18:15-17 when Jesus sought to bring every child to himself, highlighting that every one of them matters to him.

⁵¹ Anglican Communion, 'Marks of Mission' Available: <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx> (accessed 28 June 2020).

⁵² The Five Marks of Mission:

The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ 1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom 2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers 3. To respond to human need by loving service 4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation 5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

⁵³ Matthew 5:13-14.

⁵⁴ Esther Bailey, *Running Christian Groups in School* (Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 1998), 8.

⁵⁵ Mark Griffiths, *Don't Tell Cute Stories -Change Lives!* (London: Monarch Books, 2003), 65.

Marchant and Charter helpfully unpack some of the thinking behind engaging in schools, as well as the encouragement not to rely on the way things have always been delivered, but to 'also accept the challenge to see if what they offer to schools still supports what is needed. Maybe God is calling churches to do something different or in a different way.'⁵⁶

There does need to be a balance created, because as Naish shares 'Many readers will know churches which, often for honourable reasons, try to take on too much across a wide spectrum, and would benefit from concentrating on their missional engagement more realistically.'⁵⁷ This could be an ideal space within which charities may be able to serve and partner within schools on behalf of churches.

There should be some consideration as to the why behind delivering ministry in schools in the first place, exploring our own theology and understanding of why we do what we do. Nash rightly states

Identifying and developing a theology for our work is important because it: Enables us to understand what we believe and why...Affects our practice...Shapes our heart...Forms our mind...Gives focus...Gives a vision that we can communicate with others...Sustains us in our ongoing ministry. ⁵⁸

Therefore, as our heart and theology match up, it means that 'Our words and our actions alike will bear passionate witness to the love of Jesus which compels us, flowing together from the discovery that in him God was reconciling the world to God's own self.'⁵⁹ Because, 'Just as a

⁵⁶ Alan Charter and Gill Marchant, *Developing Partnerships between Church and School* (Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 2008), 9.

⁵⁷ Tim Naish, *Mission and Evangelism: a Theological Introduction* (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2016), 10.

⁵⁸ Paul Nash, *What Theology for Youth Work?* (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2007), 3.

⁵⁹ Naish, *Mission and Evangelism: a Theological Introduction*, 17.

person's character is, by and large, only available to us through his or her behaviour, so the church's missional existence is only a reality if it issues forth in ways of doing things that faithfully reflect its longing for the reconciliation of all to God and to one another.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Naish, *Mission and Evangelism: a Theological Introduction*, 17.

Research Methodology

The research conducted took the form of an online anonymous survey of 100 people who work in schools on behalf of either a church or a charity. There was good representation from a cross section of engagement within schools.

There were 63 responses from church-based workers or volunteers, and the remaining 37 were from those actively engaged in schools from a charity or parachurch organisation, either serving locally, or as part of a larger umbrella organisation.

The first survey set out to explore the nature of the participants involvement, exploring within which areas they were able to deliver ministry, in addition to whether other churches or charities were actively engaged within the same school.⁶¹ Also exploring the receptiveness of the school's they went into, the benefits that they believed they brought to the school, and importantly, what was their motivation for engaging with schools.

This was then followed up by a second survey to a smaller cross section of the original participants, with 13 individuals across church and charity chosen to respond. Of those 13, 7 were church based, and 6 were charity based. I utilised this second anonymous survey to explore further their reasoning behind ministry in their local schools, and to what extent they believe their work in schools helps children to explore the Bible, respond to Jesus and grow in faith. Also asking in what ways they help to create intentional follow up outside of the school context to help nurture and disciple those who may come to faith. Finally, the survey

⁶¹ Appendix 1 – Survey 1

sought to question the effectiveness of charities engaged in schools, and in what ways charities either help or hinder a possibly more intentional ministry of the local church⁶².

⁶² Appendix 2 - Survey 2

Survey 1

The Importance of Engagement with Local Schools

Whilst there may be a presumption that working in schools would be a key part of the ministry of the local church, the first question posed was, 'How important do you believe it is to engage in your local primary school?'. Unsurprisingly, given the nature of the participants that were asked, this came out as a clear priority with the church responding at 9.83/10 and charities at 9.86/10. Due to the survey specifically targeting those already engaged in active ministry within a school setting, I wonder how much of a priority this would be had we also surveyed those in churches where they do not currently deliver anything within schools.

Initially it seems that both are seeking to establish working with children as a key part of their ministry. This has been highlighted over the years by organisations such as Scripture Union who out of their research showing 95%⁶³ of children and young people are not actively engaged in our churches and in response, they repositioned themselves to 'Go where children and young people are, but the Gospel isn't'⁶⁴.

If this is the case, then to what extent is the involvement Christian based, or is there clearly a desire to work in schools as Christians, rather than to actively seek to share faith. Those from within the church shared that 75% of their ministry was Christian based, compared to 84% of the charity's engagement. This could be the case due to most charities who responded were specifically set up to work in primary schools and that was their primary objective, therefore they may seek to be more intentional in delivering faith-based content.

⁶³ Peter Brierley, *UK Church Statistics 2, 2010–2020* (Tonbridge: ADBC Publishers, 2014).

⁶⁴ Scripture Union, '95 Campaign' Available: <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/what-we-donew-initiatives95-campaign/95-campaign-more-information> (accessed 28 June 2020).

There is certainly a real strength to engaging in schools to build relationships, to serve the school, and to help shift the culture of the environment by the mere presence of Christians engaging. However, there must come a time when faith is able to be explicitly shared, and to give children an opportunity to explore Jesus for themselves, whilst creating opportunities for intentional discipleship outside of the school.

Motivation for Engagement

Probing this further, I asked around their motivation for engaging in their local schools, with church-based ministries coming back to say 'To support the school, its children, and staff as an outpouring of Jesus's love. To show we are trustworthy with a view to building better relationships and being allowed to express our faith.'⁶⁵ and 'Making sure the children, and their families know that they can have the support of the church and it is here always,'⁶⁶ Simply building relationships and exploring the holistic care for the whole school and community is certainly a key aspect for the local church.

Seeking to serve the local school rather than simply to express faith is also a high priority, with other responses sharing 'It is a Church of England school and they are really open to the church being a strong partner with them. I have opportunities to share the gospel and help to grow the Christian ethos of the school'⁶⁷ and 'It is part of the community in the Parish for the church that I work for. I am there to serve the schools as I best can and a great way to build relationships with local children'⁶⁸.

⁶⁵ Survey Response 29

⁶⁶ Survey Response 45

⁶⁷ Survey Response 60

⁶⁸ Survey Response 39

Therefore, I wonder on the strengths and weaknesses around long term intentional engagement in one school over multi school ministry. There is strength in being a consistent constant presence within the school, being able to 'placeshare'⁶⁹ and walk alongside the staff and students. To placeshare means more than just building a relationship, but when we share parts of our lives together, taking a holistic view of the child, rather than relationship simply being a means to share faith. Yet this type of engagement only shows one version of faith, in comparison to a more multi-denominational approach. Williams shares 'It is much better to develop ongoing links...this is a particularly important issue for people who work on an itinerant basis...because there is no one to follow through what you have done'⁷⁰. Also going on to share the importance of relationship 'Spending time with people becomes more important to us in the long run than simply holding lots of meetings or leading as many assemblies as possible'⁷¹.

Whilst in comparison to charity engagement, who see sharing faith explicitly as a fundamental part of their delivery. With responses such as 'Give children a chance to choose faith'⁷² and 'At the moment there is a great opportunity to share what Christians believe with those who are open to learning'⁷³. Shepherd writes 'Our vocational motivations often mean we are passionate about our particular involvement in schools and perhaps tend to see that as being central to school life'⁷⁴. Does this mean that we should only work with likeminded individuals

⁶⁹ Andrew Root, *Revisiting Relational Youth Ministry: from a Strategy of Influence to a Theology of Incarnation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2007), 57.

⁷⁰ Emlyn Williams, *The Schools Work Handbook: Serving God in Your Local School* (Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 1996), 97.

⁷¹ Williams, *The Schools Work Handbook: Serving God in Your Local School*, 136.

⁷² Survey Response 15

⁷³ Survey Response 80

⁷⁴ Shepherd, *Schools' Ministry as Mission*, 4.

engaged in exactly the same ministry, or by broadening our work with others, this has potential to create a more unified approach across a broader spectrum of delivery.

Although interestingly one charity response that came back said that 'Sharing God with children who would not otherwise hear about Him'⁷⁵ was their motivation, although they were working in a school within which the local church was also working, they do not work in partnership with them. This raises a question of, are the children not hearing the gospel through the church's ministry, or do the charity believe that they have a greater voice with which to share?

This does highlight some of the specific concerns around charities being a hindrance when the work is done irrespective of the church's involvement. Although the overarching motivation is to share Jesus, they may not always choose to, or may not have thought of working with others, which may prevent the partnership, which has potential to make it a stronger and more united front. This does have potential for varying degrees of theology and views that could be expressed in the same school, but from different sources, creating confusion.

Receptiveness of Schools

Although it may be seen as a priority from a church and charity perspective, it was important to ask the question of how receptive schools are to their engagement. I recognise that this data may be slightly skewed as the response is solely from their perspective rather than the

⁷⁵ Survey Response 78

schools. Church engagement received an 8.79/10, whilst charity engagement was slightly lower at 8.76/10 which shows that both churches and charities are widely accepted and highlights that schools are very much open to outside involvement.

Again, it would be interesting to follow up with some of the schools to probe their response to outside involvement from the church and charities. That whilst they may be receptive, they may also have questions around their engagement, and in the cases where both are involved, how they see that tension working out within the school setting.

Extent of Involvement

So far from the results it shows that there is certainly a receptiveness in schools for Christian engagement, but to what extent do charities and churches engage in those schools? The next part of the survey sought to understand the consistency and breadth of delivery in schools.

Assemblies/Collective Worship

Assemblies and/or collective worship came out as the most delivered piece of ministry within schools, with 89% of churches, as well as 89% of charities delivering these in the school. Although the survey did not seek to ask the frequency of the assemblies and future research could seek to investigate the frequency of delivery further. There could possibly be a wide variance from one assembly a week, through to once a year, the likelihood is that churches will be likely to lead more assemblies in a school per year compared to charities who may deliver less assemblies, but across a larger amount of schools.

It remains a key aspect for the life of the school, and an open door within which for the church to walk through, as 'Collective worship remains compulsory (unless a parent has exercised the right of withdrawal).'⁷⁶ Elbourne shares that 'Collective worship must attempt to connect with each participant, usually across a wide spectrum of ages and background.'⁷⁷ With such possibilities through assemblies, there would need to be consideration as to how to create an invitational approach to those assemblies, to allow children opportunities outside of that setting to reflect further, whether this be in school through clubs, or events outside of the school environment.

⁷⁶ Tim Elbourne, *How to Craft Collective Worship* (Cambridge: Grove Booklets, 2016), 8.

⁷⁷ Elbourne, *How to Craft Collective Worship*, 5.

Lessons

The delivery of lessons came in second as the most delivered form of ministry in schools with 49% of churches and 62% of charities seeking to share their faith whilst engaging within the boundaries of curriculum. Interestingly charities scored much higher in this field, which may be as a result of more active training and resourcing within the parachurch sphere based on curriculum engagement, as well as lessons being a greater time consumption for those utilising it.

With resources to support lessons becoming more widely available due to a more digitally connected world, then this may also attribute as to how churches are more active in this area. There are also specific parts of the curriculum better suited to churches due to their buildings, and denominational links, helping to explore areas such as religious symbolism, and church buildings as part of the curriculum.⁷⁸

Special events/Festivals

Churches seem to take the lead on engaging schools with special events and festivals, which is likely due to their locality to the schools, and use as a place of worship, as well as specific church calendars which highlight key areas of engagement. This was shown in the results with 59% of churches delivering in this area, with only 38% of charities.

⁷⁸ GOV.UK, 'Religious education in English schools' Available: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/religious-education-guidance-in-english-schools-non-statutory-guidance-2010> (accessed 28 June 2020).

Prayer Spaces

In the last few years, thanks to Prayer Spaces in Schools, which is an initiative of the 24-7 movement⁷⁹, there has been a surge in popularity for Prayer Spaces. The purpose is to

Enable children and young people, of all faiths and none, to explore these life questions, spirituality, and faith in a safe, creative, and interactive way. Taking a broadly Christian perspective as a starting point, prayer spaces give children and young people an opportunity to develop skills of personal reflection and to explore prayer in an open, inclusive, and safe environment.⁸⁰

With these often taking place in classrooms or halls, they use creative means to help children explore prayer for themselves. The survey shows that 51% of charities and 41% of churches utilise this method, which due to this method being resource heavy per session, charities are able to repeat this method over many schools without having to rewrite new material every time in the way a church would.

Lunch time or After School Clubs

There is a such a wide variance in what style of club may be delivered, from craft, music, play, messy, sport, all with possibilities to create opportunities for children to explore faith for themselves. These are also great opportunities to build relationships with a smaller group of children and creates a more intentional journey of faith exploration. The survey shows that 51% of charities deliver clubs on a regular basis compared to only 40% of churches. This could potentially be because of the time investment needed from a small group of individuals to lead these clubs, which may be more difficult to maintain if you need to rely on volunteers to deliver on a regular basis.

⁷⁹ 24-7 Prayer, 'Youth and Schools' Available: <https://www.24-7prayer.com/youthandschools> (accessed 28 June 2020).

⁸⁰ Prayer Spaces in Schools, 'About Us' Available: <https://www.prayerspacesinschools.com/about-us> (accessed 28 June 2020).

General Support

This could be a wide range of support, from helping at lunchtime, assisting on visits, being available for pastoral support, however, through all of it, whilst general support may not be specifically evangelical in nature, it shows a clear investment into the school, and creates stronger relationships within which to speak more openly about faith. The survey showed that churches were able to assist more at 32% compared to 24% of charities, this again could be due to the closer proximity and more intentional investment into one school. A simple initiative launched a few years ago by Lichfield Diocese, that has been used to great effect called 'Pray, Bake, Read'⁸¹ has seemingly helped several churches effectively offer general support, whilst also creating a clear Christian ethos to underpin it, leading to great conversations about Jesus. The concept was simple, to pray for your local school, with some churches choosing to share with the school that they were praying, with some requesting prayer points from the school, which could help to strengthen the relationship with the school. Take a cake in and engage in conversation with staff in the staff room, whilst eating and supporting, and as we will consider later, to listen to readers.

School Governor

This again follows on from the longer-term investment into the local area within which the local church is able to operate more efficiently and to enable this to be seen as a great opportunity. Being able to be in a position of leadership and influence within the school, supporting the bigger picture of the entire school, and speaking into the ethos of the school is an excellent position to be in. With 21% of church responses acting as Governors in their

⁸¹ Diocese of Salisbury, 'Pray, Bake, Read/Listen' Available: <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/schools/pray-bake-read> (accessed 28 June 2020).

local school compared to only 8% of charities. This is an excellent opportunity to truly help shape the school, and to hold the headteacher to account for the school, ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction. A few years ago, I was a governor in a school, and saw the removal of Halloween as part of the school's calendar, which created a brighter, and more friendly environment for pupils to be within.

Listening to Children Reading

Finally, an easy access route to be able to assist schools and build relationships with children, is by listening to children reading in schools, which not only helps schools to achieve their targets, but is also easily accessible. Again, this was something utilised by churches more at 17% compared to charities at only 3%. The charity Schoolreaders shares on the benefits across the spectrum that listening to children read may be, in that 'Seeing what a difference a little of their time makes to a child's reading ability, confidence and enjoyment.'⁸² Helping once more towards the intentional holistic view of ministering with children.

Average Engagement

Taking into account all of the engagement delivered by both churches and charities, the survey results highlight that on the whole churches are more engaged with their local schools, with an average delivery of 3.48 differing engagements, such as assemblies, lessons and clubs, with charities engaging in 3.27 different methods of delivery.

⁸² Schoolreaders, 'Why Schoolreaders?' Available: <https://www.schoolreaders.org/> (accessed 28 June 2020).

Figure 1 – Survey Responses

Churches			Charities	
Responses	Percentage		Responses	Percentage
56	89	Assemblies	33	89
31	49	Lessons	23	62
25	40	Lunch time or after school clubs	19	51
13	21	Governor	3	8
37	59	Special events - Festivals	14	38
23	41	Prayer Spaces	19	51
11	17	Listening to readers	1	3
20	32	General school support	9	24

Summary

There appears to be areas which need a greater amount of resource, such as time and volunteers, within which sharing faith explicitly is a higher priority, that charities utilise those methods to a much higher extent. Whilst specialist events surrounding the church calendar, such as festivals, which can sometimes be more denominationally specific are utilised by the church, as the church also seems to be well placed to engage with more generic support of the school, helping to shape the culture and ethos without being overtly Christian in nature.

Benefits of Partnership in Schools

Given the breadth of ministry being delivered in schools on behalf of churches and charities, it seemed wise to start to investigate how much is delivered in partnership, if this is truly a God-given missional imperative, then surely working in partnership should be essential where possible.

First, let us explore the work delivered by churches. The questions were asked, are there other churches or parachurch organisations working in the same school? The response was that 67% of those churches working in schools, also had a charity engaging in that same school. So, to explore this further, I went on to ask only those who answered yes to the question, 'is this work done in partnership?' The response revealed that 36% said that they worked in partnership, 29% said that their ministry was separate to that of the charity, and 36% said that some was in partnership, but some aspects were separate. Although it is interesting to note that one respondent did comment that they were not aware of a charity engaging in the school they worked in, until they looked into it following this survey, so I wonder if there are charities operating unbeknownst to the local church? This has the potential to lead to a conflicting ministry being delivered, and certainly a missed opportunity at best. Which in time could lead to a confusing set of mixed messages relating to faith for those young people.

The same questions were asked of those working for charities, around the church's engagement in the same schools that they were involved with. The results were much higher, with 81% saying that they worked in schools where churches were also involved. Although only 10% of the ministry is done in partnership with the church, with 63% delivered in partial partnership, and 27% delivered completely separately.

This shows an average of 28% of ministry delivered in schools where both church and charity engagement is taking place separately to one another. This poses the question, why would they not work in partnership?

From this the majority of ministry is delivered in partial partnership, which could be explored further to see whether this is the more overtly Christian delivery in schools, or whether this is more due to charities being able to enhance their own ministry due to the work of volunteers from the local church. Whilst I understand the need for some ministry to be delivered separately, it would be interesting to discover the boundary lines between a church's ministry and a charity's ministry within the same school, and how the relationship between the church and the charity could be affected by crossing those lines.

Greater Impact

The survey then moved on to pose the question, which do you believe has the greater impact, is it church or charity engagement in schools? When the local church was asked, they came back with 54% agreeing a mix of them both would have the greater impact, whilst 46% believed the local church alone.

Unsurprisingly, the response from charities, was that 84% believed the greatest impact would come from working together, although 11% admitted the local church are in the better position, whilst 5% believed that a charity alone would have the greater impact.

Whilst I understand this from a charity perspective, in terms of them having greater access to resources, and possibly funding. To then believe that they would have a stronger impact in

comparison to working alongside the local church in intentional partnership. This seems somewhat misguided from a long-term relational perspective. This can be evidenced by charities such as GenR8 who through partnership are able to reach 40,000 children every term, with their vision being 'to establish a strong and sustainable children's ministry in both churches and primary schools. Key to achieving this is the enabling and equipping of volunteers to communicate Christian beliefs and values.'⁸³

It would be intriguing to map out the faith journey of a child working in a school solely supported by a charity, and the difference there would be compared to the journey from a church engagement.

It is also interesting to note, that one of the respondents commented 'For the pupils to establish a connection with us (a Christian organisation) that will continue and develop when they encounter us in their secondary schools'.⁸⁴ This highlighted that some schools ministry is aimed primarily at primary school, yet within a parachurch organisation there can be much more of a continuation into secondary schools. Which could be seen as a strength in maintaining relationships, especially if there has been no clear way to transition from a solely school engagement with faith for those children, to being able to be rooted and established within a church context.

⁸³ GenR8, 'Volunteering with GenR8' Available: <https://genr8.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Volunteering-with-GenR8-2019.pdf> (accessed 28 June 2020).

⁸⁴ Survey Response 8

Could there then be a more cohesive approach to working across the spectrum of primary and secondary which could be delivered in partnership, or is this better suited to the work of a charity?

Local Church Responses

To help understand more of the heart and drive behind their respective ministries in schools, it was then posed to them, 'What benefits do you believe you bring to your local primary school compared to either a local church if you are a parachurch organisation, or vice versa?'

Below are a few of the responses from the survey, which help to highlight the benefits of local church engagement in their local school, such as relationship, continuity, and locality.

- I think because we are on the ground it gives them a friendly face they can see on the street or in a shop and connect with rather than someone they only see in school. They turn up on our church door and I am there ready to welcome them in and they know me so feel safe.⁸⁵

- As an Anglican church we have the relationship with civic and personal, as well as being able to connect to regular and contextual expressions of festivals in calendar (e.g. Easter, Christmas, harvest etc) that parachurch cannot offer.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Survey Response 8

⁸⁶ Survey Response 23

- Flexibility to fit around what the school needs. Responsible for my own actions and not dependant on someone else's reputation. Able to invite the schools into my church as opposed to having to negotiate with several denominations.⁸⁷

- We are easily available to them and able to be flexible about our involvement in the school. We have developed a close relationship with them, so the pupils and the staff know who we are, they trust us and are willing to engage with us.⁸⁸

- As a local church I think we are there for the long term and we my team and I are familiar to those that then go on to attend community events with their family. Relationship building with the school staff really helps when promoting events as you are known as safe hands. Also provides very local pastoral support for the school when needed. I sometimes find with parachurch organisations they fly in and out so quickly but long term not much difference is made. Local church should always be brought in alongside for far reaching results.⁸⁹

There seems to be a real emphasis towards the local churches ability to be available and adaptable to fit the needs of the local school, being able to serve in any areas as needed. This again was shown by the higher percentage of engagement from the church, not necessarily linked in with specific Gospel sharing ministry, but in longer term intentional investment into pastoral relationships, which lead to openness to share.

⁸⁷ Survey Response 24

⁸⁸ Survey Response 34

⁸⁹ Survey Response 56

Charity Responses

Below are some of the charity responses, which starts to highlight the strength in resources and expertise on a wider scale, creating a united church front into a wider region, as well as the continuation of the work.

- I believe we give a clear and united message. My organisation works closely with many local churches from lots of different denominations, which also funds the organisation.⁹⁰

- As a separate organisation, we are able to offer a range of resources aimed specifically at each age group, which also meets local RE curriculum requirements. We work to build relationships between church and school, with local church volunteers within our organisation. We have the time and expertise to dedicate to this specific area of ministry which churches often do not.⁹¹

- We are known across nearly 30 schools and so our name is respected and trusted over 25 years! There is strength in them receiving a service that all the other schools receive as well!⁹²

- Our schools work is already established in many of the secondary schools that the pupils will move onto, so we can offer those pupils reassurance, continuity, practical support and a sense of familiarity at a potentially anxiety-inducing time in their school journey.

⁹⁰ Survey Response 18

⁹¹ Survey Response 17

⁹² Survey Response 3

It is interesting to note that it was only in the responses from charities that the progression of work into secondary schools was a key emphasis for them, especially in terms of long-term contact and effectiveness. Does this mean that churches do not necessarily consider secondary schools to be a key ministry area, or is it due to it being more specialised that they prefer to leave it to charities to deliver it on their behalf? Therefore, if secondary work is best suited to charities rather than the church, why does this differ to primary schools?

I wonder with the strong desire to be ecumenical and work alongside churches, how much this does truly happen, with such diverse churchmanship, how does one decide what basis of faith they subscribe to, and how would you then share Jesus across denomination to an unchurched child. This can be evidenced on a larger scale with organisations such as the Evangelical Alliance, who seek to work ecumenically, yet have resistance from some denominations and organisations due to a difference of opinion on doctrinal belief,⁹³ which if this is a struggle on a larger scale may well reflect itself into local ecumenical partnership looking to work in schools.

Church and Charity Benefits

Mixed in with the responses were several which advocated the strength that could be brought by partnership between church and charity and even advocated for a different possibility.

- I think that the benefits to the school would be the same - I used to go as a representative of the church - but I think that benefits to the local church can be

⁹³ Baptist Times, 'Evangelical Alliance discontinues Oasis membership' Available: https://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/401753/EA_discontinues_Oasis.aspx (accessed 28 June 2020).

greater if one goes as a representative of the local church. You can then build a relationship with the school - and get permission to invite children to your church-based clubs.⁹⁴

- As the church Kids and Youth Pastor, my church often releases me to work with para church organisations. I think schools benefit most when we work together. The para church organisations often have the programs and structures that work well for schools, while churches have the local community relational benefit.⁹⁵

There could be a really exciting work delivered in partnership, which looks to create intentional follow on from ministry delivered in schools, helping children to continue their faith exploration. This could be the middle ground between, building credible long-term relationships within a local community, whilst also having greater resources and potential by working in partnership, which can then be utilised across a wider area.

⁹⁴ Survey Response 28

⁹⁵ Survey Response 5

Survey 2

After the initial 100 survey responses, a second survey was then sent out to a smaller group of individuals to help glean further insight into the possible strengths and weaknesses in partnership between church and charity. This survey had 13 responses, with 6 from charities and 7 from local churches.

Serving to What Extent?

Within the additional survey, we explored to what extent do they feel they help children explore the bible, respond to Jesus, and grow in faith within a school context? This received a mixed response, with most emphasis being around fun and engaging ways of talking about Jesus, and how excited and responsive children are in schools. One respondent says

Over ten lessons I cover 80 bible stories going from Genesis to Revelation. There are opportunities throughout for children to hear the gentle challenge of the Bible message. They often tell me I did not believe in God before but now I do', 'how do I get baptised'? They are always desperate to get their own bible at the end. A school context limits any opportunity for a first challenge to respond to Jesus, but the children hear it throughout the lessons and the response is always amazing!⁹⁶

One respondent shared that 'Going into school promotes a familiar face and connection between schools and churches. It helps to demystify for many children the idea of church and helps to give an idea of what Church is like'.⁹⁷ This is great, but a significant way to share what church is like, is through creating opportunities for children to connect into church themselves. But only two of the respondents shared how they actively encourage connection to events to learn more and grow outside of the assigned school context. This is especially interesting, given that there can be no call to make a decisive decision to follow Jesus within

⁹⁶ Survey Response 2:2

⁹⁷ Survey Response 2:10

school, they can only encourage children to explore for themselves. It seems if they opened up invitations outside of schools, there may be further opportunity for children to become Christians for themselves. If this is the case, then it would call into the question as to why we should do schools ministry, if we cannot create opportunities for them to respond to Jesus.

Hutchinson helpfully answers some of the question as he shares about the difference that doing things in a new way can open new opportunities to share faith, by creating 'Stepping stones of faith'⁹⁸ to encourage discovery of Jesus for themselves. Whilst schools ministry is not the only way to create this stepping stone journey for children, it certainly helps. Therefore, how are we creating a journey for children to explore and respond for themselves, when they are unable to truly do that within schools? Although, this does need to be held in balance, Hutchinson again shares

Relationships are key. Most people's journey to faith is supported by knowing a Christian, who helps to show them the way. All too often, churches put on activities that people come to, but there is no time or opportunity for relationships to grow. Maybe those running the activities are so busy with everything that they have no time to sit and chat? Maybe those who come feel they are just consumers of the activities on offer, and there is no spiritual connection.⁹⁹

Continuing the Journey

But what does it mean to help children to continue to explore Jesus outside of the school context, and are there hinderances when ministry is delivered by charities, rather than the local church, and how can that gap be bridged? The next question asked was, do you have any ways for children to engage with the Bible, and church outside of school?

⁹⁸ Scripture Union, 'Relationships: Stepping Stones to Faith' Available: <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/story/relationships-stepping-stones-faith> (accessed 28 June 2020).

⁹⁹ Scripture Union, 'Stepping Stones to Faith' Available: <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/story/stepping-stones-faith> (accessed 28 June 2020).

This was met with a wide mixture of responses, most of which signposted to events held within the school, or special one-off events such as holiday clubs and parties with a Christian message. These in themselves are incredible opportunities to explore faith, and that whilst the charities sought to run evangelistic events, one respondent did share that it was difficult to then share about a specific church event due to the ecumenical nature of their ministry and the difficulty that arises from not wanting to push one specific church, as this has caused upset in the past with the other churches that they serve.

There was one respondent who shared that each project they delivered inside and outside of a school setting was always in partnership with the specific churches in the vicinity of the school, and therefore they merely acted as a bridge between the two, providing resource and expertise, but with the follow up held by the church. This creates strong partnerships and a greater focus on follow up and long-term investment, but it does require multiple relationships being held by the charity for every individual school and clear communication with each church as to the ongoing ministry, whilst navigating the correct policies and safeguards held by multiple agencies. That being said, it is achievable to hold this balance, and has real potential should others follow this example.

One of the churches also shared that 'I regularly give out resources to children/families, booklets, bibles, devotionals, prayer packs, to help children explore faith at home too!' ¹⁰⁰ This pushes the focus not just on the school and individual children, but recognising the importance of the family unit too, how do they create opportunities for faith to be shared and

¹⁰⁰ Survey Response 2:11

outworked within the home environment, rather than just corporately? The same respondent also majored on Prayer Spaces, general support and being a Governor within the school as their main areas of ministry, again showing the value in relationship and helping to shape the culture and ethos of the school.

There continues to be exploration as to how to best serve families and to bring faith into the home experience more cohesively. Which it could be argued would be easier within an already established Christian environment but can be a difficult narrative to explore when faith is a relatively fresh experience for them. As Wright and Mackenzie share

Families are, in fact, the primary network for building the faith of young people. This does not mean that young people do not become Christians in Non-Christian homes but rather that families typically play the crucial role in the formation of young people's faith. ¹⁰¹

So there needs to be a clear journey within which children can continue their exploration of faith, which can be inclusive of the rest of their family where appropriate. It is important to recognise when ministry is delivered in partnership, there can be tension as to which specific church or event you are able to publicise. How then do we create a stepping stone journey for them to continue their exploration of faith? This could be done by creating an invitational culture, that when one event finishes, there is already a next event for them to attend. Interestingly, out of conversations I have had with churches where they saw a dramatic increase in attendance at Christmas, yet they missed the opportunity to invite them to something post-Christmas, to help them continue their own personal journey. Relationships flourish on continuity and regular contact, and the aim should be for that to continue.

¹⁰¹ Steven Emery-Wright and Ed Mackenzie, *Networks for Faith Formation – Relational Bands and the Spiritual Growth of Youth* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017), 36.

Ways to Help

The next two questions were designed to help understand in what ways do charities enhance ministry in schools, as well as exploring the potential negative impact that this may have instead.

Charity Enhancements

On the whole the responses showed great enthusiasm for the role that charities could play in enhancing the ministry of the local church, with most respondents sharing along the lines of 'The quality of their presentations is very high and they are greatly appreciated and work well with the schools.'¹⁰² Highlighting that charities can sometimes have more niche skills with which to serve that the church may not have, being able to support areas such as mental health, and bereavement. They can also be seen to -

Have the benefit of being dedicated to providing a specific service to schools, offering expertise, and developing to meet requirements within the school. Often have more resources, capacity, and time to dedicate to schools, with this being their primary objective. By working together with churches, they can create opportunities for schools and churches to form closer links. They can work well to enhance relationships between church and school, with church members choosing to volunteer within the organisation.¹⁰³

There seems to be great positives in being able to provide something of a greater quality and consistency, which serves the local school as well as supporting the church in its ministry. Bringing together an effective ministry under a recognised umbrella, and being able to utilise the skills of volunteers, whether that be an hour a month, or 6 hours a week. Because of the regular breadth of the ministry delivered, there were ample opportunities for engagement.

¹⁰² Survey Response 2:5

¹⁰³ Survey Response 2:13

Link this with the consistency of oversight and management, of which, some churches do not have the time or capacity to delegate responsibility and manage such a wide range of possible voluntary positions.

The Opposite Effect

But with every positive, there are often negative impacts to the ministry too, so the question was then asked, in what ways do you feel that parachurch organisations may have a negative impact on the work in local primary schools?

There was a wider variance of answer to this question, such as 'Sometimes they can disempower churches as they feel like they do not need to engage with schools because the parachurch organisations are doing it'.¹⁰⁴ Although, there was a general feeling of disengagement with community, follow up and discipleship, with one respondent saying

In a term, they will visit maybe 40 primary schools. But they do not live here, they do not really know the community, and will always feel like visiting preachers - which admittedly does have some benefits. On the other hand, we are here 24/7, embrace the whole family with our parenting/family support work/foodbank/debt advice and can support the school and its families more holistically.¹⁰⁵

Whilst it seems many charities do try to work purposely with churches in the locality, this may not necessarily always happen, and as one respondent shared

Where the parachurch organisation does not use the local Church volunteers as part of its work in a particular school it means schools are unaware of the local church and what they can offer. Schools may already believe they have a "Christian voice" coming into the school and may feel they therefore do not need to engage with the local church.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Survey Response 2:9

¹⁰⁵ Survey Response 2:5

¹⁰⁶ Survey Response 2:7

Finally, there was a question raised on the longevity of certain staff members, such as where year out volunteers are used within a charity, who may serve the local schools really well, but after a year the relationship has to be rebuilt from scratch as a new volunteer comes in instead, and the process continues annually.

So, it seems that there is a real desire for long-term engagement within individual schools to be able to have the greatest impact within the school, and even when charities are involved, the church needs to ensure that it does not disengage under the expectation that they are not required. The strength comes from clear and decisive partnerships, not from placing all of the ministry onto one particular church or charity.

What Changes Could be Made?

Having explored the positives and negatives of charity engagement, the question is then asked if they could change three things about the ministry currently happening in their local primary school, what would they change? Whilst this did not necessarily raise anything particularly pertinent, it did help to process a little more of the participants heart for ministry in schools, with one sharing 'I would love it if every church saw the local primary school as their mission field! (although many do already!).'¹⁰⁷ With one also sharing

It would be great to focus less on denominational traits and customs, and instead focus on introducing the children to Jesus in a way that they are comfortable with. Where possible having a variety of church representatives involved, not just the church leader/worker, especially spanning across the age and nationality bridges will help the children to understand that Jesus is for all.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Survey Response 2:2

¹⁰⁸ Survey Response 2:4

Most notably, was the response ‘A more cohesive joined up approach with parachurch groups and the local churches of the area to model best practice and present a united ministry.’¹⁰⁹ This seeks to highlight the real need for a collaborative approach to ministry in schools, seeking to share the positives that both church and charities can bring to the table.

Could there be a greater emphasis placed on denominations from their national leadership, highlighting the potential, and the strengths behind engaging in local schools as a key part of ministry. Whilst there seems to be encouragement to engage across all ages, and recently a drive towards more family engagement, what would be the more national approach to school’s ministry? Whether this is through a more intentional approach to training, envisioning, and resourcing, or just encouraging a greater emphasis towards the value of school engagement. The picture seems to be clearer when the church and charities are able to minister using the strengths that they each have and working in close collaboration in those areas of weakness. A shared approach to school’s ministry has the potential to see a greater number of children’s lives changed, rather than working separately to see a smaller smattering of positive outcomes.

Help or Hinder?

The final two questions posed in the survey were firstly, do they agree with the statement that school’s ministry is best served by the local church working within its local primary school? This question received quite a mixed response, with 46% agreeing yes, 31% thought

¹⁰⁹ Survey Response 2:5

maybe, with 23% saying no. Some of their reasoning helped to unpack this more, with one of the respondents who said yes sharing:

There is something about the parachurch movement which tends towards a fly in-fly out mentality. That might be a bit unfair, as they do a good job, but they only do a very small part of that job. Community leadership, ongoing support, faithful presence, all of which are central to missional ministry is not always high on the parachurch's agenda. More collaboration/training/ resourcing of the local church by the parachurch group might be a helpful way forward.¹¹⁰

With another one sharing that 'It then becomes a missional journey of transformation for the whole community with Jesus at the centre. The local church does however need to be resourced and equipped to do this well with the support of children's workers.'¹¹¹

Whilst again, those in favour of church engagement as priority keep emphasising the need for community and investment, interestingly though, one of those who answered no, shared that 'So much depends on what the local church can provide and how well they can relate to the school context. Sometimes it can be amazingly successful, other times not so!'¹¹² With one even going on to say that:

Not all local churches have a local school...Not all churches have sufficient volunteers who feel able or called to go into a local school. Parachurch organisations often have specialised skills and full or part time workers who can spend more time in a school ... I believe that there should be more partnership between parachurch organisations and local churches working together to reach out to schools. Some parachurch organisations are able to produce resources which would be beyond the capacity of the local church to produce but which can be used by churches. In summary therefore I think churches and parachurch organisations working together best serve schools.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Survey Response 2:5

¹¹¹ Survey Response 2:3

¹¹² Survey Response 2:9

¹¹³ Survey Response 2:7

Honest Opinion

Finally, they were asked, do they believe that parachurch organisations hinder or help the local churches ministry into schools? Or are they delivering ministry irrespective of local church engagement?

Unsurprisingly the results were clear, with 77% believing that they were a help to the ministry of the local church, and 23% believing that charities act on their own behalf and engage irrespective of the local churches engagement.

Is there a way to help bridge that gap, and for charities to bring churches more into the journey with them, especially when funding for most charities tends to be from individuals and churches local to it. Therefore you would hope that there would be a desire to share and join together to create the most effective ministry possible.

Conclusion

Across the course of this dissertation I have explored 100 survey results from a breadth of church and charity respondents, to explore whether parachurch organisations inhibit or facilitate local church involvement in primary schools. Whilst most respondents were favourable towards the ministry of charities engaging in schools, it was deemed they could be of greater benefit to the local church, by ensuring that partnership was a high priority on their agenda. That through creating an intentional joined up approach to ministry, a greater Kingdom impact may take place.

According to the research, charities were seen to be able to offer a more engaging and professional delivery of biblical content to schools on a regular basis, and with a more widespread delivery across multiple schools, enhancing the reach. They are able to engage within curriculum guidelines to fulfil a wider scale of possible resources to schools due to their sole focus being primarily aimed at supporting schools. Whilst taking into consideration that due to their own time and budgets, charities were able to invest into larger scale ministry areas such as Prayer Spaces and town wide holiday clubs. Although there would be a more cohesive approach across the ministry if those events utilised the strengths of the local church, such as buildings, volunteers, and regular clubs and events to create greater opportunities for follow on ministry outside of the school context.

There is strength in being a known brand recognised across schools, which makes access to new schools easier, which in turn, allows for a wider audience of children to be able to hear about Jesus for themselves. As one respondent shared

The backing of all the churches gives credibility when approaching a new school. There is continuity if I move on. There is more than one worker, so it gives more scope to do extra activities such as Prayer spaces and gives different opinions and viewpoints especially if other workers are from different denominations.¹¹⁴

In order for this to be achieved, there must be clearer communication with local churches, bringing them into the ministry that the charity delivers. Some respondents shared how effective it is to hear, and understand the vision and heart of the charity, rather than it just being put onto the local church. This could be enhanced by having regular prayer letters, visiting, and sharing at churches, having church representatives who are able to spread news across their respective churches, and being open and adaptable to critique and challenge from those churches they seek to serve.

This does come at a cost, with some churches feeling like they are a side note to what is delivered by the charities. Therefore, how can there be a greater cohesion between what is delivered by both sides and could there be a factoring in ensuring that anything that is delivered is known and possibly is led by both the church and the charity in tandem. As shared earlier, 'A more cohesive joined up approach with parachurch groups and the local churches of the area to model best practice and present a united ministry.'¹¹⁵

There are certain areas within which the church has a greater potential to effectively work, such as being a governor, listening to readers, and general school support. They are able to be a regular presence within the school, building relationships, helping to shape the culture and ethos of the school, and being a credible witness in thought, word, and deed. This also

¹¹⁴ Survey Response 37

¹¹⁵ Survey Response 2:5

creates greater potential in advertising community-based events aimed specifically at the children and families associated with a particular school.

Also due to the building provisions afforded by having the church within the locality of the school, it means as one respondent says 'The proximity of the school to the church is key, as well as the fact that we have a space for them to use for events, and PE when it is wet.'¹¹⁶ This also means that when follow up events and specials are conducted outside of the school context, this is done within a smaller area, hence cutting down the need for travel across an area, and therefore seeing a possible higher rate of attendance. One of the respondents said 'The schools are part of the same community we are, and the children feel they 'know' us so can enable other conversations with families when we see them out of school.'¹¹⁷

This does not just equate to ministry with children, but can have an active engagement with the wider family, such as 'able to offer wide support to families e.g. food parcels, working towards employment, parenting classes, relationship building, link to programmes within our church.'¹¹⁸ Something with which charities would struggle to create and maintain given the breadth of area that they would normally cover.

Also being in the same locality as the school can create strong relationships with the staff, as one shared 'For the staff I can be called upon for support, expertise in a particular area,

¹¹⁶ Survey Response 15

¹¹⁷ Survey Response 6

¹¹⁸ Survey Response 58

offering my time to free up some of theirs particularly with prayer days and seasonal celebrations.¹¹⁹

There are certainly areas where partnership could truly enhance the ministry of both churches and charities into schools, with possible joined up options surrounding the area of training, resourcing, and delivery of professional, quality content across a broad spectrum of possibilities. There was widespread recognition that charities have greater access to relevant training, which could very easily be offered to individuals within churches to be able to upskill and enhance the churches ministry, as well as providing strength and credibility to the churches view of the charity. Could there be possibilities of area wide training and resourcing, as often the sharing of ideas and resource can lead to a greater capacity and influence to share faith.

Because of the charity's primary focus for all of its resource being on supporting ministry into schools, they are in a more privileged position to create a more professional, engaging and curriculum linked package for schools. With the addition of these newly upskilled church volunteers, creates a more relevant and engaging delivery into schools. Linking into that the churches own knowledge and understanding of specific festivals and special events linked to the church calendar, there could be great strength in working together to create content.

Having local churches involved in lunch time or after school clubs, again enhanced by working in partnership with the local charity can create not only a great experience for the children,

¹¹⁹ Survey Response 45

but can also help facilitate the intentional follow through into the local churches ministry outside of the school. Also due to the churches intentional investment in one or two schools, there could be greater availability of regular weekly volunteers able to give of their time, and with the right training, oversight and encouragement from the charity, this could easily create a powerful ministry in to the school.

This can also help to alleviate the concerns around long-term engagement, as when workers, or year out volunteers from the charity or church move on, there has been relationship built with a more widespread spectrum of individuals. With some concerns around a ministry being built around a specific individual but creates a partnership where the focus is on Jesus. Whilst longevity, and intentionality of those working in the school is important, the heart of the leader should also be a key part to a truly effective engagement with children in those schools. Draper helps us consider this, and the effectiveness of heart over professional delivery by sharing that:

If children will remember their leaders more than what they are actually taught, then it is essential that the leaders are as Christ to them. If a person's heart is right with God, then many of the skills and much of the knowledge that is needed to work with this age group can be learnt or acquired at a later date.¹²⁰

As shown in the research, there is a greater importance placed on the long-term view of school's ministry, with only the charity respondents sharing about the continued ministry as children move through the school system and into secondary school. This would be an interesting area to research and to reconsider if charities are more of a help within a secondary setting rather than a primary setting, due to it being a more specialised and

¹²⁰ Colin Draper, Helen Franklin & Sara O'Shea, *Pretty much everything you need to know about Working with 5-7s* (Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 2007), 108.

resource heavy area of ministry. Yet, again if there could be a cohesive and intentional approach of the charity working on behalf of, and supported by local churches, then there could be a real strength within their ministry.

Although, as it stands it seems that there are large swathes of ministry currently being delivered either in isolation from one another, or not showing enough credibility in support of one another's ministry into school. With a more intentional approach on behalf of both parties, then the research shows that there is incredible potential in areas where a charity is operating in a school, where a local church is also actively engaged.

If they pray, support, equip and have a joint vision for the ministry into that school, and where possible ensure the work that is delivered utilises the strengths from both organisations. That the church creates intentional possibilities for children, and their families to continue to explore faith for themselves outside of the school context, then we could see a huge increase in seeing children, as well as their families come to faith. Working together as a unified presence, utilising the strengths of the local church, and the strengths of the charity to create a 'stepping stone' journey of faith for every child to explore the Bible, be able to respond to Jesus, and to grow in their faith.

Therefore, do parachurch organisations inhibit or facilitate the local church ministry in primary schools? It would seem that at times, they do both, but with small adjustments, and with a focus on Kingdom ministry rather than individualised ministry, then they truly could facilitate an exciting, engaging and purposeful ministry to see children's lives changed by Jesus.

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All Scripture references are from the New International Version unless stated otherwise.

Appendix 1 – Survey 1

1.What is your current link to your local primary schools?

- I go into my local primary school on behalf of my church
- I go into primary schools on behalf of a local charity or parachurch organisation
- I do not go into primary schools, but a local charity or parachurch organisation goes in on behalf of my church

2.To what extent is that involvement within the school? (tick all that apply)

- Assemblies / collective worship
- Lessons
- Lunch time or after school clubs
- Governor
- Special events - festivals, services etc
- Prayer Spaces
- Listening to readers
- General school support

3.How receptive are the school/s to your involvement? (10 being very receptive)

4.Is the involvement Christian based?

- Yes
- Some of the involvement
- No, the involvement is as Christians, but delivering regular content

5. Are there other churches or parachurch organisations working in the same school?

- Yes

- No

6. If the answer is yes, is this done in partnership with you, or completely separate?

- Partnership

- Separate

- Both, it depends on the involvement

7. What is your biggest motivation for being involved in your local primary school?

8. What benefits do you believe you bring to your local primary school compared to either a local church if you are a parachurch organisation, or vice versa?

9. Which of these do you believe has the greater impact in local primary schools?

- Local church

- local charity or parachurch organisation

- A mix of both

10. How important do you believe it is to engage with local primary schools? (10 being the most important)

Appendix 2 - Survey 2

1. Tell me more about how you are involved within a missional context in your local primary schools?

2. To what extent do you feel you help children explore the bible, respond to Jesus and grow in faith within a school context?

3. Do you have any ways for children to engage with the bible, and church outside of school? If so, please briefly summarise what you do.

4. In what ways do you feel that parachurch organisations may enhance the work in local primary schools?

5. In what ways do you feel that parachurch organisations may have a negative impact on the work in local primary schools?

6. Would you agree with the statement "Schools ministry is best served by the local church working within its local primary school"

- Yes

- No

- Maybe

7. Please tell me why

8. How effective do you believe your ministry into your local primary school has been in introducing children to Jesus? (10 being very effective)

9. If you could change 3 things about the ministry currently happening in your local primary school, what would you change?

10. In your honest opinion, do you believe that parachurch organisations hinder or help the local churches ministry into schools? Or are they delivering ministry irrespective of local church engagement?

- Hinder

- Help

- They engage irrespective