



PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MAJORITY OF RESOURCES AND WEBSITES LISTED THROUGHOUT THIS RESOURCE ARE NOT PROVIDED OR MAINTAINED BY THE DIOCESE OF DERBY. YOU ARE THEREFORE ADVISED TO CHECK SITES AND RESOURCES CAREFULLY BEFORE USING THEM WITH SCHOOLS OR CHURCHES

E) CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS: LINKS AND WELCOMES

E) 1. REACHING HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

Listen and respond to local needs.

- Is there a need for a Toddler group?
- An older persons get together?
- Breakfast in the school holidays?
- Toast and homework club after school?



One church realised that many children and carers walked past their church to drop off at school. They had some land and raised finance for a small play area outside the church. They then offered coffee/company to carers who came with pre-schoolers after the school drop off.

Special and seasonal events to invite households to.

Aim to do this out of love for your community – not just as a means of increasing church attendance!

- Seasonal - Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest, Christmas, Bonfire Night etc.
- Messy Church, Muddy Church, Sweaty Church, Forest Church

There are many available resources for Outdoor Church. Have a look at these.



<https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/churchcare/advice-and-guidance-church-buildings/outdoor-worship>

[Engage Worship](#) – ideas and resources for outside worship.

Books around this subject can be found [here](#)

Activity ideas for work on nature in churchyards can be found [here](#) (Wildlife Watch) and [here](#) (Caring for God's Acre)

Community Events in the church grounds

It doesn't have to be complicated. One church organised a local fish and chip shop to visit and held a chips in the churchyard evening. It was very popular!

PLEASE ENSURE THAT FOR ANY OF THESE THAT YOU COMPLETE A RISK ASSESSMENT FOR THESE, ARE AWARE OF HEALTH AND SAFETY AND SAFE-GUARDING REGULATIONS.

You will need to consider dangers from nearby roads and tracks (bikes and motorbikes), the possibility of a child or group “wandering off” and also how you will welcome newcomers whilst ensuring everyone is safe.

See the [Parish Safeguarding Handbook](#)

See [Diocese of Derby Advice](#)



Supporting households

Recent research, by the **Nurturing Young Faith** project by Liverpool Hope University and others, found what it described as “a huge disconnect” between what families wanted from the Church and what churches thought they families wanted.

“Our research showed that families appreciate relational contact much more from churches than activities and events. In the season ahead, it will be beneficial for local churches to embed into their ethos and activities an intentionality to support family’s faith in the home context.”

Read the report [here](#) **“DO CHURCH STRUCTURES ENABLES CHILDREN’S AND FAMILY MINISTRY TO GROW?”** It includes challenging statistics around the opportunities for clergy, youth and children’s leaders to grow in their understanding of this work.

Listening to families of different ages and structures might show you some areas where households would welcome support. Here are a few:

[Care for the Family](#) offers ideas for work with Dads, couples and resources for encouraging faith at home.

[Growing Together](#) from the Diocese of Gloucester have produced a folder of exciting spiritual activities for families learning at home together.

[Lectio for Families](#) is a free devotional app that helps families to read the Bible and explore faith together.

[The Good News Family Edition bible](#) is a completely new presentation, with ideas and resources for families to read and learn together.

[Imaginer Home School Values](#) fun ways for children to explore the ‘value in focus’ of school each term with their families

These two organisations are other excellent resources for schools work.

School Pastors <https://www.streetpastors.org/about-us/school-and-college-pastors/>

E) 2. CHAPLAINS, SCHOOL PASTORS AND SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS

[School Pastors](#) are volunteers who commit themselves to the service of young people in their community, offering a reassuring and friendly presence to students who may not feel able to speak openly to teachers or parents.



[Education Chaplains](#)

Diocese of Derby Children’s Adviser Sarah Brown
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Education Chaplains serve in a variety of settings, from Primary and Secondary Schools throughout Derbyshire to Derby College and the Joseph Wright Sixth Form Centre in Derby. Chaplains support staff as students, offering a listening ear and pastoral support for all.

Also see:

School Chaplains <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/school-chaplaincy>

[The Bible Society](#) offer a section of resources for School Chaplains, including some resources based on Psalm 23.



E) 3. CHALLENGING TIMES – BEREAVEMENT AND SERIOUS INCIDENTS

Over the recent years of Covid lockdowns, schools are likely to have thought through and planned for a serious event such as a death amongst staff or pupils, or times when illness affects a large number of those linked to the school.

In terms of bereavement there are resources available:

The Diocese of Derby has a box of useful books and leaflets which can be borrowed free of charge by a school or church. Please contact [Sarah](#) to borrow this.

These websites have resources around support following bereavement.

Please check that the contents are suitable and appropriate for your situation

- [The Childhood Bereavement Network](#)
- [Cruse Bereavement in Schools](#)
- [Child Bereavement UK](#)
- [Sudden Bereavement](#)

Unexpected and serious incidents are sometimes not thought through by organisations as it can seem unlikely that such an incident will ever happen. However, looking through recent news we can see that communities and therefore churches and schools have experienced serious fires, floods, explosions, shootings and knife attacks, children going missing and even poisonous chemical incidents.



When such an incident occurs, the effect of the shock sometimes makes quick decision making very difficult. In such cases, to have thought through processes in advance and have a recorded plan to use is a good starting point for an emergency.

This applies to churches as well as schools. A report into the Grenfell fire commented,

“In the chaos of the fire and its aftermath, “the role of the diverse faith groups in the community stood out. Churches, mosques, synagogues and gurdwaras all stepped up to the plate, responding practically, emotionally and spiritually to a moment of pain and confusion,”

Perhaps churches might think through and plan with these or similar prompts:

- What sort of support could you offer a family when a child dies?
- What sort of support could you offer a child when a parent/guardian dies?
- What actions might you take if a disaster happens in your community?

E) 4. MENTAL HEALTH – WHAT SUPPORT COULD BE OFFERED?

This [NHS Mental Health in children](#) page has relevant advice if you have a concern about an unhappy child.

The Children's Society "Good Childhood Report" (covers ages 10-15 with the full survey, and uses informal methods to gain information from younger children)

childrenssociety.org.uk/good-childhood indicates that children and young people are becoming more unhappy.

Some of their key findings were:

- UK children’s happiness with their lives continues to decline.
- More children are unhappy with their appearance than with family, friends, school and schoolwork. Girls are more likely to feel this way than boys.
- Happiness with school and schoolwork declines significantly with age, and was significantly lower among children in lower income households.
- Over half of parents and carers feel that the pandemic has had a negative impact on the education of their children.
- 85% of parents and carers are concerned about the impact of the cost of living crisis on their household/family over the next 12 months, which will only get worse as this crisis unfolds.

The Children’s Commissioner for England produces reports and carries out surveys. They can be viewed [here](#).

PERHAPS AN EVEN BETTER WAY OF COLLECTING EVIDENCE is to listen and talk to



families, schools and others who have contact with children in your local area. What are they noticing? What are their concerns for today's children?

[Safeguarding Training](#)

Please refer to the matrix for training on the Diocese of Derby's Safeguarding pages. You are advised to talk to your Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Parish Priest or the [Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser](#) on 01332 388678. In an emergency please ring the Police or Social Care.

[This page has policy documents](#)

You might want to recommend organisations which offer phone and online support, such as [CHILDLINE](#) 0800 1111 or,

[DERBYSHIRE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT LINE](#) 0800 028 0077 which is freely available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for Derbyshire residents of all ages.

[MIND](#) provides lists of support, including the Samaritans.

[YOUNG MINDS](#) offer support for young people and families

[NSPCC](#) offer online advice and a help line:

**“There can be no keener revelation
of a society’s soul than the way in
which it treats its children.”**

Nelson Mandela

