



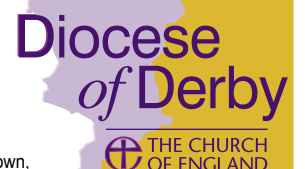
RENEWING  
Ministry

# Churches and Schools in MMAs



July 2006

by Alison Brown,  
Derby Diocesan Schools Officer



THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND

## Why get involved?

Both School and Church are at the heart of their local community and as such share a concern for the community and in particular the children/young people. You may well struggle to get children (and their parents) to attend church, but they all have to go to school. This provides church with both opportunities for mission and service.

The following questions may help you to quickly evaluate how well you know and are involved with your local school/s.

- Do you know, and are you in communication with the Head Teacher of the school/s in your MMA?
- Is the vicar or other representatives from church known in the school (by staff, children and parents)?
- Is the school regularly prayed for in your services? Does the school know this?
- Do you have anyone in your congregations who is employed in any way in a school?
- Do you have anyone who works voluntarily in the school? e.g. classroom helper, PTA member, governor. And these people affirmed in these roles as an area of ministry?
- Do the pupils visit the church for lessons/worship/special events?
- Do the pupils and staff currently view the Church, and more importantly, its message as relevant to their lives?

If you have a Church School in your MMA there is a particular expectation placed upon you:

‘Church Schools stand at the centre of the Church’s mission to the nation’.  
(*Resolution of the General Synod, 1998*)

- What are the implications of this statement to your relationship and involvement with the school? (Resources are listed to help you think further around this issue)

## So, how to be involved in school

Health warning! Below is a list of possibilities – they don’t all have to be done; they don’t all have to be done by you. It is important to play to your strengths individually and as a church- be honest in what you can do well and can sustain, and forget the rest.

1. Assign someone from your congregation/s to act as School Befriender. This person will be responsible to communicate between school and church e.g. staff changes, illnesses, special events etc. - and inspections!

2. Set up a prayer support group that could meet, say, half-termly.
3. Get involved with the school – ask if there is a way you can help e.g. paint the loos, dig over a flower bed, tidy library, and listen to readers. Be prepared to serve the school. This builds trust.
4. Make a list of life experiences that are found in your congregation that may enrich the school curriculum e.g. war experiences, living in a foreign country, particular hobbies, writing, careers, business experience.
5. Get involved in school activities – can you offer an ex-curricular skill such as helping in a chess/gardening/cooking club; help with cycling proficiency.
6. Help fund an RE day in school through an organisation such as the Barnabas Trust.
7. If it is your forte, help to take assemblies, if not, provide the school with details of Christian groups who come into school to do just that.
8. Offer a gift to Year 6 pupils as they move to secondary school e.g. SU ‘It’s Your Move’.
9. Offer to purchase several new Christian publications per term/year for the school library.
10. Offer to purchase good quality Christian music/songs on CD.
11. Encourage Church members to become school governors.
12. Run a lunch-time or after school Christian club (this need not be weekly)
13. Be willing to talk in RE lessons about why being a Christian is important to you.
14. Make sure that when a school visits your Church that it is warm, well lit, there are people on hand to welcome the pupils.
15. Make full use of Education Sunday – go to town affirming the teachers (in their vocation) and pupils (in their specialness to God).
16. Organise a holiday club (can be anything from one day to one week)
17. Invite school to church for a special service on your Saints day. Or get involved in the school commemoration day service.

### Remember:

- You are guest in the school
- The Head Teacher is in charge
- You’ll be expected to be CRB checked (details available from Diocesan Youth Officer, Board of Education, Derby Church House, Full Street, Derby)
- Never under estimate the value of clear communication e.g. if you are unable to fulfil a commitment let the school know as soon as possible.

## Resources

Generation to Generation – building bridges between churches and schools', Scripture Union, ISBN 1 85999 351 6

Running Christian Groups in Schools – practical help and resources for working with 5-12s, Esther Bailey, ISBN 1 85999199 8

Linking Churches and School Gillian Wood  
ISBN 1874295239 - short, useful booklet.

Churches Serving Schools David Lankshear  
ISBN 0715149935

### Web Sites

[www.cris.org.uk](http://www.cris.org.uk)

A very useful web site with information about a variety of ways to support schools and link to other organisations and web sites.

[www.barnbasinschools.org.uk](http://www.barnbasinschools.org.uk)

Talented group of people who will visit Primary schools and run Barnabas live days looking at key themes from the bible. Also provide Inset for teachers.

[www.derby.anglican.org](http://www.derby.anglican.org)

Childrens' work section located under lifelong learning where you will find information on Open the Book (a Bible story telling project)

[www.natsoc.org.uk](http://www.natsoc.org.uk)

The Church of England site with ideas for Collective Worship and Education Sunday.

## People Resources

For contact details of individuals and groups who are available across Derbyshire to help with assemblies and special events contact Diocesan Children's Officer.

### Derby Diocese Board of Education Team

Director of Education ***Phil Moncur***

Schools Officer ***Alison Brown***

Youth Officer ***Alistair Langton***

Children's Officer ***Helen Proudfoot***

All above can be contacted on **01332 388660**