



D) CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS: SCHOOL VISITS

D) 1. CHURCH BUILDING AND SPECIAL SERVICES

Aim to give children time and space to experience the building itself, both outside and inside. The size, shape and age of the building might be outside the experience of many children. Give them time to look up at a steeple or tower, to notice stone carvings, to discover that stained glass in daytime is seen best inside.

Talk about graves and the churchyard. Some children will ask about skeletons and ghosts! Be ready to make an appropriate response – mention this to teachers if needed. Churchyards are often wildlife havens. Lichens, mosses, insects, birds and many other types of wildlife will



Where it is possible for children to attend the church there might be traditional times that they attend a service.



Harvest, Christmas, Leavers' Assemblies are often part of this routine. If the church and school aren't close enough to walk between, these special occasions might happen at school with clergy and other visitors from the church congregation.

Think about other opportunities for visiting:

Remembrance Day – including a visit to the War Memorial

Saints Days

Experience Events – as mentioned in C) 2.

D) 2. SCHOOL VISITS TO CHURCH

Whatever age and style your church is, activities such as:

[EUCCHARISTIC JOURNEY](#) and [EXPERIENCE CHURCH](#) could help to introduce children of primary age to the church building and ways in which it is used.



For **Pre-school and younger infants**, some churches have made treasure trails around their church using different teddies and taking photos of them in places around the church. Learning about Baptisms and Weddings is another popular activity.

Meeting some of the people who work or help in church could be useful. It might be an opportunity to show children some robes and even allow them to try some on. An opportunity to chat and ask questions of people in the church is an option too.

If there are particular **features, memorials or historic artefacts** in your church aim to allow older primary and secondary children the chance to be detectives and find out, e.g. WHY is the font from Saxon times when the church itself is not? Timelines and short historical information around the building will be more interesting than simply telling them a list of dates etc.

If your church is **modern**, you could share any maps you can find with the children to discuss what was there previously and why a new church was built here. The history of the community around the church might link to other areas of the curriculum.

D) 3. CURRICULUM LINKS

There are many links, here are just a few:

SCIENCE – Graveyards are often havens for wildlife – look for lichens, insects, birds etc. Also look at the trees – why do so many cemeteries have yew trees growing in them?

HISTORY – possibly the church might go back to Norman times, look for changes and think about why. War memorials could help students understand the impact of war on their communities.



MATHS – Lots of measuring opportunities – how could you measure the girth and height of a tree? Could you produce a scale drawing of the church layout?

ART – Drawing and painting both inside and out. Focus on stone carvings/faces etc. Investigating how stained glass windows are made.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - symbols in the church, how does the use of the building reflect the beliefs of the people?

MUSIC – Many churches have an organ – if it is a traditional pipe organ you could try to make sounds by blowing over bottles. Other churches use modern instruments, especially drums. If a church musician is available when the children visit they could give a demonstration. Also choirs might give some input to the visit.



TECHNOLOGY – roof and window structures – why are pillars important and how do they work?



Part of a window in St Mary and All Saints, Chesterfield (The Crooked Spire) which shows part of the history of the church and town.