

GENERAL SYNOD

Children and Youth Ministry

Summary

Over the last 18 months the Evangelism and Discipleship Team with support from the Research and Statistics Team have been analysing our engagement with under 16's. This paper and the statistical analysis in the annex are the fruit of this work and they aim to set out the details of our ministry with those under 16. The paper builds on *Encouraging Youth Evangelism* from February 2019. (GS2124A) The opening words of the paper stated that 'Our engagement with young people within our Sunday worshipping communities is currently very limited. The majority of churches have no or very few people under 16.' This paper aims to examine in more details the statistics behind the headlines and to remind Synod again of the urgency of this issue but also to encourage the whole church to take responsibility for responding positively to the challenges raised by the figures. It is important to consider at all levels of the Church how we can support, encourage and sustain future developments that will make a real difference.

This paper is part of a wider narrative of how we can be a growing Church for all people in every place. It is part of a broader approach which includes key activities such as Everyday Faith, motivating the million and especially Growing Faith which aims to create partnerships between the three key communities of Church, School and Household to enable the growth of faith. This report highlights why such responses are important for countering the present situation.

The motion: That this Synod recognising our commitment as a church to the growth of faith in children & young people and the decline in numbers of under 16's connecting with Church

- 1) *Encourage dioceses to act urgently and consider practical ways they can support and resource those churches with significant numbers of under 16s;*
- 2) *Share good models of practice through churches helping to resource others so that we have many more churches engaging with children & young people "*
- 3) *Encourage dioceses to explore new ways to grow new church communities with young people as a primary missional focus; and*
- 4) *Request an update from the Evangelism & Discipleship team in two years with analysis of progress in these areas.*

The statistical headlines

1. We have many opportunities as a Church to engage with children and young people through schools, Messy Church, Toddler Groups and midweek youth and children's ministry. These activities often happen outside Sunday services and are picked up in Statistics for Mission in Worshipping Community Statistics and October count mid-week attendance. We have more limited information about activities that are not acts of worship or fresh expressions of church.
2. But we also need to recognise that in 2018 we reached a new stage where nationally Sunday attendance for 0-16's dropped below 100,000 for the first time ever.

3. According to the single church returns 38% of these churches have no 0-16's and 68% of them have 5 or fewer 0-16's.
4. The statistics show that under 16's are not distributed evenly across our Church. In the 2018 Statistics for Mission, 903 returns reported having 25 or more 0-16's which equates to 41,540 under 16s. This means that 44% of all of 0-16's are to be found in 6.4% of churches and parishes.
5. Decline among under 16's is much faster than decline among all other generations. The number of under 16's reported in Average Child Sunday attendance has decreased by 20% over the last five years compared to a 12% decline in average adult Sunday attendance.
6. There is no room for complacency as even amongst those churches and parishes with 25 or more 0-16's, there is still a pattern of decline. Of the 903 returns with 25 or more 0-16's in 2018, only 394 (44%) had experienced growth in the last 5 years compared to 461 (51%) who had experienced decline.
7. We need to remember that there is no one simple solution which will solve all the issues we face. There are some common themes which emerge such as engaging with Youth & Children's ministry organisations such as Messy Church or Open the Book or developing relationships with Church of England schools but there is clearly no single way to do children and youth ministry. (Of the 903 parishes with 25 or more 0-16's 359 (40%) had a strong link to an affiliated Church of England School.)

The wider national context

8. Various projects and initiatives across the NCIs have recognised the need to help Dioceses and churches to respond positively to these statistics
9. Growing Faith (GS2121) which was debated at the February 2019 General Synod promotes a partnership between the three key communities of Church, School and Household to enable the discovery, exploration and growth of faith for all in those communities. Central to the adventure is the Growing Faith Project, which is using seven Trailblazer Dioceses to experiment with what the intersection of the church, school and household might look like in practical terms. In addition to the above work, each diocese has named a Growing Faith Champion who is tasked with asking, "what is the impact of these discussions and decisions on children, young people and households?" at every level of the diocese.
10. The Fresh Expressions of Church (GS2142) Report to General Synod in July 2019 recognised how many new forms of church seemed to be particularly effective at reaching under 16s. The report stated that in general 'fresh expressions do twice as well as parish churches in attracting those under 16'.
11. Messy Church has had a huge positive impact on reaching families and young people. Church Army estimates suggest that up to 50,000 people attend 1427 Messy Churches in Church of England churches who do not normally engage with church.¹ Over 50% of people attending Messy Church are under 18. In recognition of this vital work the

¹ Details of Church Army report

https://churcharmy.org/Groups/319979/Church_Army/web/What_we_do/Research_Unit/Playfully_Serious/Playfully_Serious.aspx

Evangelism and Discipleship Team have created a joint project with Messy Church and Church Army to study how to deepen the discipleship of Messy Church congregations. The study is focussed on Messy Churches in Bristol, Durham and Hereford dioceses.

12. The Greenhouse Project, led by Heather Cracknell, offers a customisable support system for fresh expression leadership teams, through Learning Communities, which trains leaders, develops leadership resilience, and allows diocesan leadership to strategically develop new worshipping communities. Some of this work is specifically aimed at developing fresh expressions that will connect with younger people.
13. Strategic Development Funding: as at November 2019 £48.9m or 41% of SDF funding has been awarded to projects relating to those under 30. Significant impact is being seen from this including
 - Network Youth Church in Carlisle gathering over 1700 unchurched young people across a variety of youth activities, many in rural areas.
 - Birmingham's Transforming Church : Growing Younger has seen over 1,000 new disciples (youth and children) through the project.
 - Capital Youth in London is in the early stages and focuses on investing deeply in youth ministers alongside a programme of developing youth apprentices within parishes, reporting 300 new youth disciples to date.
14. The Youth Evangelism Officer, who is part of the Evangelism and Discipleship Team, was an appointment encouraged by the Evangelism Task Group (GS2118 & GS2015) and has been working on several key areas:
 - a) He has gathered together a group of the 50 key youth workers from those churches working with the largest numbers of under 16s across the Church of England. Through meeting together in 'The Vanguard', the intention is that this group will become the innovation hub out of which new resources, ideas and support are established, developed and replicated for other churches.
 - b) 'Amplify' is an ecumenical project, to develop young evangelists through a year-long intensive mentorship scheme for 100 young people (11-18 years old) who have been identified and recruited based on their current ability to evangelise their peers. This will result in 180-300 young people trained by 2021. It is estimated that over 100 of these will be Anglican. They will be part of our 1000 Anglican evangelists trained and released by 2025.
15. The Youth Evangelism Task Group was established in 2018. It is chaired by Bishop Paul Williams and emerged from the former Evangelism Task Group. It has established several key priorities and streams of work for development across dioceses.
 - Aspire to have a church with an engaging youth ministry within reach of every young person
 - Equipping the most effective evangelists and pastors among young people
 - Strategically investing in a 'next generation' of youth evangelists and pastors, with excellence in training and authorizing ministry

- Encourage every church to be confident in what they can do in reaching young people
 - Draw on the best practice in youth ministry to forge new partnerships, especially between schools and church-based youth ministries
 - Motivating a million people to pray for a young person
16. Ministry Council, as it continues to support the House of Bishops in the process of re-imagining ministry, is beginning to consider what initial formation for ordained ministries in contexts other than parochial may look like, and whether that is an appropriate route to pursue, recognising that the context and nature of ministry for the ordained changes over time. Foci for such initial formation for ordained ministry in addition to the parochial could include, for example, youth ministry or chaplaincy. There are potential parallels here with both the ministry of and the training of ordained pioneer ministers. Discussions are at a very early stage, and Ministry Council is expected to report to the House of Bishops later this year

What are some possible ways forward from this report?

17. **Growing Faith calls on the whole church to address how we can draw stronger links between schools, churches and families.** This work cannot be focussed purely on the church when it is gathered. Growing Faith reminds us of the important work in households of encouraging and deepening everyday faith among whole families. The British Attitudes Survey suggest two Anglican parents successfully transmit their faith 50% of the time while two 'no religion' parents successfully transmit their lack of religion 94% of the time. The statistics also remind us of the reality of the huge numbers of children we are in direct contact with through schools and the need to make better connections between church and school as we serve these children and young people. Christ Church, Winchester regularly engages with 25 local junior schools and a secondary school, talking to 4,500 children each month. As a result of this, one of the local junior schools now attends two services each year within the church and another has run an "RE day" in the partnership with the church. This has led to many significant relationships with young people in the area offering a great opportunity for children to invite their friends to the wider youth and children's ministry of the church, an offer many of the children have taken up
18. **Recognising and investing in the 903 churches and parishes** who still have 25 or more under 16's and therefore are collectively responsible for 44% of the under 16's in the Church of England. Many of these churches may not even be aware of how important their contribution is towards developing young people in the Church of England. Dioceses, clergy and PCC's need to invest in, encourage and support those leading youth and children ministry in these churches to ensure that they become growing and sustainable ministries in their churches . We must invest in the places that hold the greatest potential for growth It is also important to reflect how they can be encouraged and supported to use their experiences and resources to help other parishes and churches to develop their own offering to under16's.
- St Leonards Church, Eynsham have a youth ministry cell group network of over 70 11-18-year olds. Oxford Diocese have partnered with the church to help expand this concept to help other local churches establish cell groups, supported by the structures of St Leonards existing youth ministry.

- London Diocese, as part of Capital Youth have identified four “Youth Minsters”. These are churches with a growing youth ministry which the diocese has invested to help them grow more. They also work in partnership with other local churches to grow youth ministry collectively in the area they serve. This investment has seen numerical growth in young people’s engagement from 200 to 430 young people in 2 years.

19. **Encourage parishes to see their engagement with children and young people as a priority.** Whilst retaining an ambition for significant growth, we must ensure that parishes engaging with a few young people are still seen as doing important work. We need to help parishes build a culture of deep discipleship with a few rather than only thinking that the large or spectacular is worth striving for.

- Burley, a small village in the New Forest had no youth work. But two older ladies decided to start something. 15 young people now attend regularly. See their story at <https://youtu.be/hckSfJb8PXQ>

20. **Considering some of the common factors for growth and how these might be replicated across Dioceses.** There are several common factors such as size of church, a youth, children or family worker, strong links to a Church of England School. How might these strengths be amplified in our churches?

- Sheffield Diocese has invested £1m in the Centenary Project which works in partnership with churches to set up and establish growing children’s and youth ministry and to employ youth and children’s workers to help develop this. The funding was primarily aimed at the most deprived parishes within the diocese. Over the last 5 years the Centenary Project has worked with 25 churches across the Diocese enabling to employ 21 youth, children and families workers. This year they have also had seven paid interns as part of the scheme.

21. **Reimagine church amongst children and young people.** Research shows that Generation Z (those 18 and under) are the first ever generation in England to be non-churched rather than unchurched. They do not have the same cultural understanding and baggage in relation to church and what it means to be a Christian. While this offers a huge missional opportunity, this same generation is exploring faith in new ways within a post Christian culture. This reimagination might be through fresh expressions of church, pioneering, church planting or other innovative means. Great examples of this already exist, perhaps most notably within Carlisle Diocese with Network Youth Church and York Diocese with its new Missional Youth Church Network (MYCN) in partnership with Church Army and the Archbishop of York’s Youth Trust. We need more innovative and imaginative ways to reach young people through Dioceses committing to exploring new ways they can contextually explore what might be possible. It will be important to share learnings from those who are already experimenting in this area.

22. **Dioceses to consider how children and young people can become key elements of future SDF bids.** It has been encouraging to see the impact of the Network Youth Church in Carlisle and Birmingham’s Transforming Church: Growing Younger. This has given a huge impetus to work in these dioceses among children and young people.

Conclusion

23. We need to be realistic and recognise the urgency of the need for us to respond positively. But it is also vital that we do not lose hope in the power of the good news of Jesus. There are many bright spots and examples of good practice and growth, but these need to be duplicated across the Church. We must take the opportunity afforded us to resource the areas of greatest growth amongst young people and help them through this to become a resource for others. At all levels of the Church we need to recognise our responsibility towards this generation of young people to help them discover Jesus and to live fulfilled lives in our communities
24. This is not an issue that can be quickly fixed and will need the Church to keep this vision for growth in numbers of young people for many years. The Evangelism and Discipleship Team is very aware of the need to take this seriously a long-term project that requires us to all work together collaboratively at every level of the Church through Dioceses, parishes and the NCIs.

Jimmy Dale, Youth Evangelism Officer

Revd Canon Dave Male, Director Evangelism and Discipleship Team

February 2020

Children & Young people in the Church of England and the factors that are common to growth

An analysis of the average child Sunday attendance (including Sunday church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools) as reported in the Statistics for Mission and supporting research into common trends in parishes with 25 or more under 16s



January 2020

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1. Key Findings

2.1 Under 16s in the Church of England are declining year on year at almost twice the speed of adults

In the last 5 years, the number of churches and parishes with 25 or more under 16s has decreased by 28% and the overall attendance of under 16s has decreased by 20% (compared to a 12% decline in adult Sunday attendance). In fact in the last year, attendance of under 16s have declined by 8% (compared to 3% in adult Sunday attendance). There are now just 903 churches and parishes which have an average Sunday attendance of 25 or more under 16s.

Those 903 churches and parishes reported 41,540 under 16s. That means that 44% of all of the Church of England's under 16s are present in 6.4% of its churches and parishes.

Even amongst those churches and parishes with 25 or more under 16s, there is a pattern of decline. Of the 903 returns with 25 or more under 16s in 2018, 394 (44%) had experienced growth in the last 5 years compared to 461 (51%) who had experienced decline. This is in comparison to nationally where 2998 (21%) had experienced growth amongst attendance of under 16's in the last 5 years compared to 6642 (47%) who had experienced decline.

While there is growth in some churches and parishes, only 10 of the 394 returns that recorded growth had growth of over 50 (or 10 per year). Further analysis reveals that 4 of these are resource churches and 1 of them was a plant from Holy Trinity, Brompton and as such, 5 of the 10 have seen significant external support and resource.

2.2 Parishes with large congregations are more likely to have children and young people than parishes with small congregations

When looking at the 903 returns with 25 or more under 16s, there is a clear connection between size of all age attendance and attendance of under 16s, with 44% of the 903 returns reporting having over 200 in their all age attendance, compared to only 3% of returns nationally

While in some ways this does not come as a surprise, there is also a clear connection between the absolute number of under 16's and percentage of under 16s, with the higher the attendance of under 16s, the higher the percentage of the congregation this accounted for (24.1% in returns with 100+ under 16s, dropping to 23.4% in returns with 51-100 under 16s and dropping again to 20.8% for returns with 25-50 under 16s). This is in comparison to a national average across records of 8.1% based on percentage amongst all returns and 7.2% across records with less than 25 under 16's.

2.3 Parishes with 25 or more under 16s are likely to either employ a youth, children or families worker, or have a strong link to an affiliated Church of England School

Of the 903 returns with 25 or more under 16s, 507 (56%) employ a youth, children or families worker compared to 4.5% of churches who have less than 25 under 16's. When looking at the remaining 396 parishes with 25 or more under 16's but no employed youth, children or family worker, it is striking that 292 of them (74%) have strong links to an affiliated Church of England School and 30 (8%) are cathedrals.

When looking more widely at the 1110 parishes who employ a youth, children or families worker only 507 (46%) have 25 or more under 16s. 105 (9%) Of the parishes that employ a youth children or families worker have 5 or fewer under 16s and 211 (19%) have less than 10 under 16s (inclusive of the previous 105). While some of this may be due to joint employment or external community work it is indicative of a culture of separating youth and children ministry from the wider ministry of the church.

2.4 Parishes with more than 25 under 16's are more likely than other parishes to engage with Youth & Children's ministries or organisations, have strong links to Church of England schools or have a choir involving children and young people.

Of the 903 parishes with 25 or more under 16s 360 (40%) had a strong link to an affiliated Church of England School and 191 (21%) had a choir which engaged young people. It is worth noting that this is significantly represented in parishes with 25-50 under 16s and cathedrals (81% of those with choirs either had under 50 under 16s or were a cathedral and 82% of those with strong links to an affiliated Church of England School either recorded between 25-50 under 16s or were a cathedral).

Additionally when looking at churches engagement with children through organisations, 165 (18%) of the 903 parishes ran Messy Church and 125 (14%) ran Open the Book in local schools. This is comparison to 10% who ran Messy Church nationally and 11% who ran Open the Book. While there was some engagement with organisations and resources aimed at 11-18's, this was significantly fewer than organisations and resources aimed at under 11's.

2.5 A majority of the churches and parishes with a large number of children and young people are in the evangelical tradition

While overall, 55% of the returns with 25 or more under 16s were evangelical (compared to 29% central, 12% Anglo Catholic and 4% cathedrals), in those with over 50 or more under 16s, this rises significantly to 71% who were evangelical (compared to 15% central, 10% Anglo Catholic and 4% cathedrals)

2.6 Parishes in an urban setting are more likely to have children and young people than parishes in a rural setting

When looking at the 897 parishes with 25 or more under 16s, 737 (82%) are in an urban setting. This is contrast to the national picture where 36% of parishes are in an urban setting or compared to 32% of parishes that are in an urban setting and have less than 25 under 16's

2.7 The number of parishes with 25 or more under 16s is declining faster in the Northern Province than in the southern Province

While the 2 provinces fare similarly in the overall figure for total under 16s, when comparing growth and decline in parishes with 25 or more under 16s, it is clear that parishes in the northern province are declining at a faster pace than in the southern province, with aggregate attendance of under 16's in the northern province declining at 35% between 2014-2018, compared to the southern province which declined by 29% over the same time period.

2.8 Parishes with 25 or more under 16s are likely to have big ministry budgets

When looking at IMD ranking, parishes with 25 or more under 16's are fairly evenly spread across deprivation categories. When looking at the 897 parishes with 25 or more under 16's, 293 (33%) parishes are in the 25% least deprived compared to 235 (26%) who are in the 25% most deprived. While it seems there is a potential connection between a parish's IMD and the number of young people, it is worth noting that 468 (52%) of the 897 parishes fall in the less deprived half, as such offering a far more evenly spread picture.

Perhaps more striking was the fact that 55% of the 897 parishes with 25 or more under 16's had an average income of more than £200,000 compared to 9% of parishes nationally or compared to 5.7% of parishes who have less than 25 under 16's. Additionally 45% of the parishes with 25 or more under 16's pay more than £75,000 in parish share, compared to 6.9% of parishes nationally and compared to 4% of churches who have less than 25 under 16's.

There is also a clear trend between parishes with a higher attendance of under 16s and parish income per person attending the church. When looking at overall income divided between the attendance of over 16's in a parish, 59% of those with 100+ under 16s had above the average income per adult, compared with 53% of those with 51-100 under 16s and only 40% of those with 25-50 under 16s.

2.9 Resource churches feature heavily within the list of returns with 25 or more under 16s

When mapping resource parishes against the 903 returns with 25 or more under 16s, 58 (65%) of the 89 current resource parishes feature

It is worth noting that while 31 of the resource churches fall below the 25 or more threshold, the data for under 16's Sunday attendance are from Oct 2018 while the list of resource churches is a current list. Further analysis of those 31 resource churches shows that 18 (58%) of them have been planted since Oct 2018 and as such would not be reflected in the data.

2. Background, items of note & methodology

2.1 Background

Over the last 24 months, the Evangelism & Discipleship Team have been looking to assess the current level of engagement of children and young people within Anglican parishes, while additionally creating an updated picture of employed Youth, Children's and Families workers across the Church of England.

Statistics for Mission asked additional questions in 2013 and 2018, to identify parishes who said they were employing a Youth, Children's and Families worker. Whilst analysing this data, the suggestion was made to additionally analyse the October Count data, looking specifically at average child (under 16's) Sunday attendance (including Sunday church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools). The data did not include services held midweek but did offer the most reliable and consistent data with regards to children's and young people's engagement in regular services.

While the age banding is extremely broad, ranging from infants to 16 year olds, it also for historic comparison excludes 17 & 18 year olds, who most parishes would consider young people.

At the February 2019 Synod, Mark Russell spoke to a private members motion around Youth Evangelism (GS 2124A & GS 2124B), which included the Average Child Sunday attendance statistics for 2017. These were as follows:

	Number of children aged under 16 according to Usual Child Sunday attendance, 2017									
No of under 16s	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20-25	26-50	51-100	100	Total
No of churches	3,810	3100	1330	830	490	300	510	140	30	10540
% of churches	36.1%	29.4%	12.6%	7.9%	4.6%	2.8%	4.8%	1.3%	0.3%	

These figures only reflected the 10,540 single church returns and did not include multi church returns on the basis that 8 churches in a parish, each with 5 under 16s would offer a joint return of 40 leading to misleading figures.

At the July 2019 Synod these figures were raised again and a request was made to publish the names of the 680 parishes with 25 or more under 16s, with the intention for further analysis into why these parishes had sustained above average numbers of under 16's.

On the basis of this request, a list of single churches who had 25 or more under 16s and had sustained their numbers for at least 3 years was published. The decision to include only churches who had sustained attendance figures for 3 years was to help rule out irregularities (ie a special service that had seen a one off higher attendance). This was produced in alphabetical order and offered no further analysis of the list other than break down by diocese.

At the same time that this list was published, assuming further questions would be raised, the Evangelism and Discipleship team, in partnership with a whole variety of other organisations and departments began a data driven analysis of parishes with 25 or more under 16's attending church each week. For the benefit of full analysis, we broadened the parameters to include any church or parish (single or multi church return) with more than 25 under 16s and included any parish with 25 or more as of the most recent year's data (ensuring new church plants and resource churches were included where possible). This analysis was therefore primarily based on the 2018 Statistics for Mission which offered an additional comparison point. We looked back over the past 5 years data to help determine additional trends.

2.2 Items of note & methodology

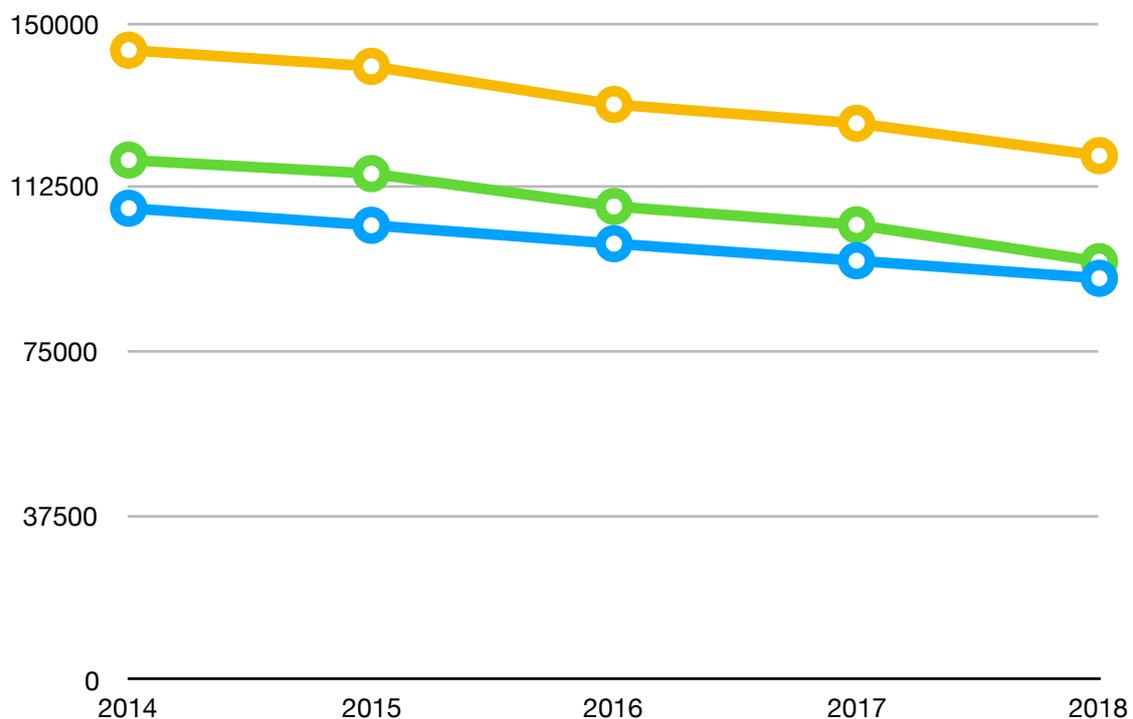
This report has been created, primarily using data collected in the Statistics for Mission, looking specifically at Average Child (under 16) Sunday attendance (including Sunday church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools).

There are various measures of church size which include but are not limited to:

- Usual Sunday attendance (all age)
- Usual Child Sunday attendance
- Average Child Sunday attendance (including Sunday church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools)
- Average Child weekly attendance (including Sunday and midweek church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools)
- Worshipping Community Statistics

The key finding is that the number of under 16's is declining regardless of which one of these measures you use.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	growth/ decline in numbers	growth/ decline in %
Usual Sunday attendance (all age)	659,100	652,000	639,300	627,200	611,100	-48,000	-7%
Usual Child Sunday attendance	107,700	103,800	99,600	95,700	91,700	-16,000	-15%
Average Child Sunday attendance (including Sunday church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools)	118,700	115,600	108,100	103,900	95,500	-23,200	-20%
Average Child weekly attendance (including Sunday and midweek church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools)	143,800	140,100	131,400	127,100	119,700	-24,100	-17%



- Usual Child Sunday attendance
- Average Child Sunday attendance (including Sunday church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools)
- Average Child weekly attendance (including Sunday and midweek church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools)

While we have been collecting Worshipping Community Statistics since 2014, these figures need to be treated with caution. When looking at the statistics, the Worshipping Community of regular worshippers at Church of England churches has been almost unchanged from 2014-2018, falling by 2% over this period.

However keeping track of a church's Worshipping Community is more challenging than counting attendance at services, and not all churches can report precise numbers with many not offering an age breakdown in their worshipping community statistics. The accuracy of the data has improved in recent years (although data has only been collected since 2012, with variable reliability for the first few years) as the concept has become more embedded as an aid to providing good pastoral care.

This is an ongoing process, and therefore changes in a church's Worshipping Community from year to year may reflect changes in record keeping rather than changes in worshippers. Thus, although the Worshipping Community is developing into an important measure of the number of regular Church of England worshippers, it has not been collected reliably for long enough to offer robust information about trends in participation at individual churches.

When deciding on which measure to use it is important to note that each measure of church size has strengths and weaknesses and not every parish returns numbers for each measure

As an additional point of comparison, below is a table showing the 10,937 single church returns (not including any benefices or multi church returns) and the corresponding data for usual child Sunday attendance, average child Sunday attendance and average child weekly attendance in the 2018 returns. Across a variety of measurements the trends remain largely the same as demonstrated in the previous graph.

Across all of these measures, most churches have very little or no under 16's as demonstrated in the below table.

Measure of under 16 attendance taken from the 10,937 single church returns		Number of children aged under 16 attending									Total
		0	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 to 20	21 to 25	26 to 50	51 to 100	over 100	
Usual Child Sunday attendance, 2018	Number of churches (rounded to nearest 10)	3,490	4,290	1,370	650	380	220	390	123	30	10,937
	% of churches	32%	39%	13%	6%	3%	2%	4%	1%	0%	
Average Child Sunday attendance (October 2018, including Sunday church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools)	Number of churches (rounded to nearest 10)	4,170	3,260	1,400	790	440	260	460	140	30	10,937
	% of churches	38%	30%	13%	7%	4%	2%	4%	1%	0%	
Average Child weekly attendance (October 2018, including Sunday and midweek church services and fresh expressions of Church, but not including services for schools)	Number of churches (rounded to nearest 10)	3,940	3,080	1,390	850	490	340	600	200	50	10,937
	% of churches	36%	28%	13%	8%	4%	3%	5%	2%	0%	

While we could have used any of these data sets to analyse, they all broadly show the same pattern of decline and as such, we have chosen to analyse average child Sunday attendance as despite being limited to Sunday engagement, this offers data for most parishes and is more accurate, as Sunday attendance is less likely to fluctuate from year to year. We have used a slightly different break-point from the table above, looking at churches with either under 25 (1-24) or over 25 children under 16.

In this report we look at the data in several different ways: as records, as churches and as parishes.

Records & churches

When churches submit their Statistics for mission they can do this in a number of ways. Some parishes may offer multiple returns for each church within the parish while some parishes may offer a joint return for the

whole parish. In some cases, churches/parishes reported in different ways in different years - e.g. reporting as a single church in 2017 but a joint return in 2018.

We have used the term 'parish' throughout the paper for simplicity. However please note that unless specified, this data will include a mixture of parishes, churches, BMO's and fresh expressions. In most cases, the statistics are for one church but sometimes for an entire multi church parish and sometimes for a subset of churches within a multi church parish.

To illustrate this, in the 2018 returns 14,031 records contained 10,937 single church records (77%), alongside 3,248 parish records and subsets within parishes (23%). Of the 14,031 records, 903 (6.4%) records (churches, parishes or subsets) were reported as having 25 or more under 16s. Those 903 records contain the data for 1183 churches. This breaks down as follows:

Type of return	No of returns with 25 or more under 16's	Overall percentage of returns with 25 or more under 16's
Parish returns	199	22%
Joint return for a subset of a parish	7	1%
Single churches	697	77%
Total	903	

Parishes

Some data sets are parish data sets (eg, census data, deprivation dat, parish finance etc). When comparing attendance against these data sets we will need to aggregate attendance up to a parish level. This means that in some cases 2 churches (both with more than 25 under 16s) will be amalgamated for a joint return of over 50 while other churches with fewer than 25 under 16s will be amalgamated as a parish to have a joint return of greater than 25 under 16s. When we do aggregate up to parish level, the number of parishes with 25 or more under 16s increases from 903 returns to 946 parishes (out of a national total of 12,366 parishes).

Further analysis shows that only 6 parishes have 2 churches that feature twice (with both individual church returns reporting more than 25 under 16s) and are therefore amalgamated leaving 897 parishes with 25 or more under 16s. With data at a parish level, a further 49 parishes report more than 25 under 16s but these have not been included in the analysis as we have tried to use the most granular data set available.

206 of the 903 returns who reported 25 or more under 16s are returns from multiple churches (either aggregated or subsets), however no further church level breakdown is available and as such they have been retained.

In summery these different ways of looking at the data set as shown in the table below

	Number with 25 or more under 16's	Total amount	% of total amount that those with 25 or more under 16's account for
Records	903	14,031	6.4%
Churches	1,183	15,539	7.6%
Parishes	897	12,366	7.3%

Links to Schools

While there is no official measure as to how closely a church is linked with a Church of England school, we have deemed churches to have a strong link to their local school based on qualitative research via church and school websites. If churches talked about having strong links with a local Church of England school, listed members of the school staff (eg headmaster) amongst their staff or offered guidelines around admissions, the church was deemed to have a strong link. Vice versa, if a school website talked about the church as strongly connected, this was also defined as a strongly linked.

Youth, children or families worker

Mapping employment of a youth, children or families worker brings with it various challenges.

Firstly in the definition of the work employed. Within this context we have included anyone who is paid any amount of money to work any amount of hours in a specified way amongst families, children and young people, within the wider life and ministry of the church. We have also included degree students and gap years who, while they may not be paid, will have specified roles and hours dedicated to ministry amongst families, children and young people. Some of these will be employed across multiple churches, and sometimes multiple denominations. This is discussed in section 8.2.

Secondly, There is no obligation for a church to inform anyone that they have employed a youth, children or families worker. As such we cannot verify that the figures pertaining to employment are accurate but every effort had been made to ensure that they are as accurate as possible. As mentioned previously, Statistics for Mission asked additional questions in 2013 and 2018, to identify parishes who said they were employing a Youth, Children's and Families worker. We have then verified this information and corrected where necessary. This has been done in partnership with the Diocesan Youth Officers and Children's Work Advisors networks, other diocesan contacts as well as qualitative research via church websites and phone interviews. Various colleges (Cliff College, St Mellitus & The Institute for Children Youth & Mission) as well as other organisations and networks (HTB Network, New Wine Network, Pais Movement and South West Youth Ministry) have all helped us ensure that our records on this are accurate as they can be.

Finally, employment of Youth, children or families workers change all the time, with workers moving on and funding beginning and ending. As such the numbers published are correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of printing but will be out of date within a few months

Estimation

It is regular practice within the Statistics for Mission that where data is missing due to a church or parish not submitting their returns, the Research and Statistics department will estimate based on trends from previous years from that church. Within the 2018 data, 32 of the 903 returns were estimated figures. Of these, 25 were estimated between 25 and 50 and 7 between 51 and 100.

Diocese in Europe

The Statistics for Mission include data for the Diocese in Europe. We have excluded this data from the report as some data sets (e.g census data and deprivation data) are not available. For reference, the Diocese in Europe has 154 churches or parishes and in 2018 recorded 1089 under 16s (similar to the previous year). There are 11 churches or parishes (7% of the Diocese) which have 25 or more under 16s and those 11 churches hold 38% of the under 16s in the Diocese. At the other end, 45 churches or parishes (29%) had no under 16s.

3. 2018 Statistics for Mission and 5 year overview

Looking at the Church of England as a whole we are in decline, when looking specifically at under 16s we are declining at a much faster rate.

The following table shows the decline (excluding the Diocese in Europe) in Average All age Sunday Attendance, then broken down into adult attendance and child attendance (under 16), as well as the number of returns reporting 25 or more under 16's.

	Average all age Sunday attendance (October)	+/-	percentage growth/decline	Average adult Sunday attendance (October)	+/-	percentage growth/decline	Average child Sunday attendance (October)	+/-	percentage growth/decline	No of returns with 25 or more under 16's	+/-	percentage growth/decline	Percentage of whole church
2014	829,589			711,024			118,565			1,247			8.9%
2015	803,986	-25,603	-3%	689,534	-21,490	-3%	114,452	-4,113	-3%	1,223	-24	-2%	8.7%
2016	769,358	-34,628	-4%	662,442	-27,092	-4%	106,916	-7,536	-7%	1,090	-133	-11%	7.8%
2017	746,660	-22,698	-3%	643,856	-18,586	-3%	102,804	-4,112	-4%	1,016	-74	-7%	7.2%
2018	719,830	-26,830	-4%	625,412	-18,444	-3%	94,418	-8,386	-8%	903	-113	-11%	6.4%
Overall		-109,759	-13%		-85,612	-12%		-24,147	-20%		-344	-28%	

As headline figures, in the last 5 years, the number of parishes with 25 or more under 16s has decreased by 28% and the overall attendance of under 16s has decreased by 20% (compared to 12% decline in average adult Sunday attendance).

There are 41,540 under 16s recorded as attending the 903 churches and parishes who recorded 25 or more under 16's. To frame that another way, 44% of the Church of England's under 16s are represented by 6.4% of its churches.

It cannot be emphasised strongly enough, the need for significant, immediate investigation into how we can support and nurture our remaining ministry with under 16s, with investment and resource focused primarily on the remaining churches with children and young people engaged and attending. Based on current trends this is not an issue amongst the many other issues, to be addressed a later date but rather, a matter of pressing importance.

What follows is an analysis of the 903 parishes and churches which have 25 or more under 16s as of the 2018 Statistics for Mission.

This paper is not written to condemn or shame but to help us address, realistically from a statistically grounded position, where we are at as a Church in regards to under 16s, look statistically at the factors common to growth and motivate us to seriously address this as a primary priority.

It is also worth bearing in mind that the Statistics for Mission 2018 were gathered in Oct 2018 so at the time of this report being published, this data is all nearly 1.5 years out of date and as such (based on current trends) we will now be in a worse position.

4. Analysis by Diocese

What follows is 3 tables which help unpack the average child Sunday attendance statistics for 2018 across the Dioceses. The 3 tables analyse all 15,539 churches that offered returns and are as follows

4.1 Diocese break down of total attendance of under 16s ordered by total amount

While this paper primarily focuses on the 903 returns that reported more than 25 under 16s, it is important to set this within the wider context of under 16s in the Church of England as a whole. As highlighted previously the overall attendance of under 16s over the last 5 year has decreased by 20% (compared to 12% decline in all age attendance), declining by 8% between 2017 and 2018. This is contrast to a 4% decline in all age attendance.

4.2 Diocese break down of total number of parishes with 25 or more under 16s ordered by percentage of diocese with 25 or more under 16s.

This table focuses on the 903 returns with attendance of 25 or more under 16s, offering a diocesan perspective on the percentage of parishes and churches in the diocese with 25 or more under 16s, as well as highlighting the total attendance of under 16s held in these parishes (see yellow column). This highlights that while the number of parishes and overall attendance of under 16s is dropping, a strikingly high amount of the total attendance of under 16s for most dioceses is contained in a relatively small number of parishes.

4.3 Diocese break down of total number of parishes with zero under 16s ordered by percentage of diocese with zero under 16s

At the opposite end of the spectrum, there are an alarming number of parishes which have zero under 16's, which (due to the breadth of this age range) has further implications, as with no babies, toddlers or young children, the implication is that there are no young families

4.1 Diocese break down of total attendance of under 16s, ordered by average number per parish in 2018

Diocese No		2014	Average attendance of under 16s in each church	2018	Average attendance of under 16s in each church	Growth/decline in since 2014	% growth/ decline	No of Churches in Diocese
	Total	117,465	8	94,418	6	-23,047	-20%	15,539
23	London	9,937	20	9,052	19	-885	-9%	487
37	Southwark	7,546	21	6,477	18	-1,069	-14%	355
24	Manchester	5,517	17	4,445	14	-1,072	-19%	316
17	Guildford	3,955	19	2,817	13	-1,138	-29%	212
22	Liverpool	3,572	15	2,953	12	-619	-17%	238
31	Rochester	3,840	15	3,112	12	-728	-19%	261
3	Blackburn	4,108	15	2,986	11	-1,122	-27%	272
2	Birmingham	2,206	12	2,013	11	-193	-9%	184
35	Sheffield	2,312	11	1,926	9	-386	-17%	209
9	Chester	4,052	12	3,033	9	-1,019	-25%	342
32	St Albans	4,008	10	3,178	8	-830	-21%	407
5	Bristol	1,920	10	1,477	7	-443	-23%	201
8	Chelmsford	5,373	9	4,193	7	-1,180	-22%	577
10	Chichester	4,268	9	3,253	7	-1,015	-24%	476
27	Oxford	6,919	9	5,414	7	-1,505	-22%	812
29	Portsmouth	1,352	8	1,073	6	-279	-21%	168
41	Winchester	2,919	8	2,280	6	-639	-22%	357
6	Canterbury	2,918	8	2,261	6	-657	-23%	359
46	Leeds	4,483	7	3,619	6	-864	-19%	603
13	Durham	2,076	8	1,565	6	-511	-25%	264
11	Coventry	1,920	8	1,421	6	-499	-26%	242
14	Ely	2,139	6	1,799	5	-340	-16%	330
38	Southwell & Nottingham	1,721	6	1,507	5	-214	-12%	296
20	Lichfield	3,264	6	2,521	5	-743	-23%	544
12	Derby	1,621	5	1,367	4	-254	-16%	315
28	Peterborough	2,027	5	1,643	4	-384	-19%	380
25	Newcastle	1,371	6	1,025	4	-346	-25%	238
19	Leicester	1,559	5	1,202	4	-357	-23%	311
42	Worcester	1,292	5	1,033	4	-259	-20%	274
16	Gloucester	1,748	5	1,378	4	-370	-21%	380
43	York	2,797	5	2,019	3	-778	-28%	584
34	Salisbury	2,469	4	1,797	3	-672	-27%	569
1	Bath & Wells	2,047	4	1,733	3	-314	-15%	560
7	Carlisle	1,231	4	936	3	-295	-24%	330
15	Exeter	1,896	3	1,655	3	-241	-13%	599
36	Sodor & Man	171	4	107	3	-64	-37%	39
33	St Edmundsbury & Ipswich	1,231	3	958	2	-273	-22%	478
39	Truro	722	2	551	2	-171	-24%	303
21	Lincoln	1,230	2	1,114	2	-116	-9%	625
26	Norwich	1,171	2	1,074	2	-97	-8%	640
18	Hereford	557	1	451	1	-106	-19%	402

4.2 Diocese break down of total number of records with 25 or more under 16s, ordered by number of records in diocese with 25 or more under 16s

Diocese No	No of Parishes with 25 or more under 16s	No of records with 25 or more under 16s in 2014	Under 16s represented in those records with 25 or more under 16s	No of records with 25 or more under 16s in 2018	Under 16s represented in those records with 25 or more under 16s	% of records in diocese with 25 or more under 16s	Individual parish breakdown			% growth/ decline in records with 25 or more under 16s	% growth/ decline in under 16s within records with 25 or more under 16s	% of diocese total under 16s held in records with 25 or more under 16s	no of records in diocese	under 16s in diocese
							Records with 100 or more under 16s	Records with 51-100 under 16s	Records with 25-50 under 16s					
	Total	1,247	58,243	903	41,540	6.4%	44	195	664	-28%	-29%	44%	14,031	94,418
23	London	140	7,195	110	5,771	24%	6	28	76	-21%	-20%	64%	465	9,052
37	Southwark	104	5,075	78	3,803	24%	4	22	52	-25%	-25%	59%	321	6,477
24	Manchester	68	3,527	57	2,568	20%	5	8	44	-16%	-27%	58%	282	4,445
27	Oxford	72	3,801	51	2,718	8%	8	9	34	-29%	-28%	50%	664	5,414
8	Chelmsford	59	2,797	42	1,865	9%	1	10	31	-29%	-33%	44%	489	4,193
31	Rochester	43	2,064	35	1,607	15%	1	8	26	-19%	-22%	52%	229	3,112
9	Chester	45	2,073	35	1,368	13%	0	8	27	-22%	-34%	45%	279	3,033
3	Blackburn	52	2,329	32	1,323	12%	1	5	26	-38%	-43%	44%	263	2,986
22	Liverpool	45	1,984	30	1,352	13%	2	4	24	-33%	-32%	46%	237	2,953
17	Guildford	49	2,546	29	1,525	17%	3	8	18	-41%	-40%	54%	170	2,817
32	St Albans	46	2,030	29	1,304	8%	1	9	19	-37%	-36%	41%	363	3,178
46	Leeds	44	1,762	29	1,165	5%	1	5	23	-34%	-34%	32%	539	3,619
10	Chichester	42	1,784	28	1,238	7%	1	9	18	-33%	-31%	38%	407	3,253
41	Winchester	31	1,496	24	1,004	8%	0	4	20	-23%	-33%	44%	296	2,280
2	Birmingham	21	1,019	22	1,061	13%	2	4	16	5%	4%	53%	171	2,013
6	Canterbury	25	1,407	19	1,053	6%	1	1	17	-24%	-25%	47%	336	2,261
43	York	32	1,368	17	723	3%	1	3	13	-47%	-47%	36%	498	2,019
14	Ely	19	931	16	817	5%	2	3	11	-16%	-12%	45%	319	1,799
34	Salisbury	23	1,129	15	714	3%	1	4	10	-35%	-37%	40%	520	1,797
35	Sheffield	21	983	14	722	7%	1	4	9	-33%	-27%	37%	204	1,926
38	Southwell & Nottingham	23	723	14	445	5%	0	0	14	-39%	-38%	30%	286	1,507
5	Bristol	23	885	13	562	7%	0	3	10	-43%	-36%	38%	193	1,477
20	Lichfield	20	796	13	450	2%	0	0	13	-35%	-43%	18%	551	2,521
16	Gloucester	15	748	12	612	4%	1	2	9	-20%	-18%	44%	336	1,378
1	Bath & Wells	18	892	12	702	2%	1	6	5	-33%	-21%	41%	493	1,733
28	Peterborough	17	741	12	511	3%	0	3	9	-29%	-31%	31%	369	1,643
29	Portsmouth	12	485	11	427	7%	0	3	8	-8%	-12%	40%	148	1,073
15	Exeter	10	447	11	565	2%	0	6	5	10%	26%	34%	543	1,655
19	Leicester	12	513	11	395	4%	0	2	9	-8%	-23%	33%	308	1,202
12	Derby	13	555	11	401	4%	0	1	10	-15%	-28%	29%	276	1,367
13	Durham	17	699	11	443	5%	0	2	9	-35%	-37%	28%	242	1,565
26	Norwich	8	268	10	369	2%	0	1	9	25%	38%	34%	576	1,074
11	Coventry	20	733	10	372	4%	0	1	9	-50%	-49%	26%	235	1,421
7	Carlisle	11	392	8	259	3%	0	0	8	-27%	-34%	28%	289	936
21	Lincoln	11	500	7	345	1%	0	4	3	-36%	-31%	31%	581	1,114
42	Worcester	9	450	7	302	3%	0	2	5	-22%	-33%	29%	242	1,033
33	St Edmundsbury & Ipswich	10	443	7	255	2%	0	1	6	-30%	-42%	27%	463	958
25	Newcastle	12	529	6	244	3%	0	2	4	-50%	-54%	24%	207	1,025
39	Truro	4	107	4	148	2%	0	0	4	0%	38%	27%	240	551
18	Hereford	1	37	1	32	0%	0	0	1	0%	-14%	7%	371	451
36	Sodor & Man	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%	0%	0%	30	107

4.3 Diocese break down of total number of records with zero under 16s, ordered by percentage of diocese with zero under 16s

		Records with 0 under 16s in 2017	Records with 0 under 16s in 2018	% increase/decrease	% of the diocese	No of records in Diocese
		4,933	5,157	5%	38%	13,631
26	Norwich	386	398	3%	71%	562
18	Hereford	234	255	9%	69%	367
21	Lincoln	373	385	3%	69%	562
33	St Edmundsbury & Ipswich	279	301	8%	66%	458
15	Exeter	279	296	6%	56%	527
1	Bath & Wells	272	272	0%	56%	488
34	Salisbury	250	258	3%	52%	497
39	Truro	124	120	-3%	51%	236
19	Leicester	134	149	11%	50%	301
7	Carlisle	148	140	-5%	49%	283
16	Gloucester	149	157	5%	48%	325
43	York	241	229	-5%	47%	485
42	Worcester	106	108	2%	47%	231
38	Southwell & Nottingham	111	118	6%	43%	275
14	Ely	123	133	8%	43%	311
28	Peterborough	148	152	3%	42%	360
25	Newcastle	67	79	18%	40%	198
12	Derby	95	103	8%	38%	273
36	Sodor & Man	12	10	-17%	37%	27
6	Canterbury	110	114	4%	36%	317
20	Lichfield	202	185	-8%	35%	535
11	Coventry	65	72	11%	33%	218
27	Oxford	182	204	12%	31%	659
13	Durham	61	64	5%	28%	230
8	Chelmsford	120	131	9%	27%	483
10	Chichester	90	104	16%	27%	392
41	Winchester	65	74	14%	26%	281
29	Portsmouth	31	38	23%	26%	145
32	St Albans	87	95	9%	26%	363
5	Bristol	41	46	12%	25%	184
46	Leeds	110	120	9%	23%	513
35	Sheffield	39	37	-5%	19%	195
9	Chester	34	37	9%	14%	273
3	Blackburn	30	33	10%	13%	249
2	Birmingham	19	19	0%	11%	170
24	Manchester	23	24	4%	9%	275
22	Liverpool	15	19	27%	8%	225
23	London	38	38	0%	8%	451
31	Rochester	19	15	-21%	7%	224
17	Guildford	10	9	-10%	5%	166
37	Southwark	11	16	45%	5%	317

5. Analysis of growth and decline in under 16s over 5 years, 2013-2018

Even amongst those with 25 or more under 16s, there is still not necessarily growth. When looking at the 903 returns in 2018 with 25 or more under 16s, 413 (46%) of them had declined since the previous year, 461 (51%) had declined over a 5 year period, with a decline more noticeable in larger churches.

5.1 Analysis of sustained numbers of under 16's

Year on year analysis shows there is a significant fluctuation between those rising above and falling below 25 under 16s. While this is to be expected it does highlight that the number of churches with consistent returns of 25 or more under 16's is significantly lower.

To help illustrate this, 167 (18%) of the 903 returns who recorded 25 or more under 16s in 2018 had grown from 2017, when they had reported less than 25 under 16s, growing on average by 47%. This is fairly consistent with 2017's data, which saw 185 (18%) of the returns report 25 or more under 16s who in 2016 had fewer than 25. Additionally 9 (1%) returns reported data for the first time offering no growth or decline comparison point.

In comparison to this 280 (28%) of the 1016 returns who had 25 or more under 16s in 2017, had declined to below 25 under 16s in 2018, with an average decline rate of 38%. Of those 280 returns, 21 (2%) of them had declined to have fewer than 10 under 16s

With this in mind, if (as with the statistics presented to Genral Synod in Feb 2019 in GS 2124A & GS 2124B) we were to only analyse churches who had consistently reported 25 or more under 16s for 3 years or more, only 657 (73%) of the 903 returns would be eligible. If you were to expand that further and only analyse churches that had recorded 25 or more under 16s for 5 years or more, this would only be applicable to 574 (64%) of the 903 records.

	Returns with 25 or more under 16's in 2018	Returns that have sustained 25 or more under 16's for 3 years	Returns that have sustained 25 or more under 16's for 5 years
Number of returns	903	657	574
%	100%	73%	64%

A further break down of this data shows that most year on year growth and decline is small with 69% of parishes only fluctuating by 10 or fewer between 2017 and 2018.

5.2 Analysis over a 5 year period, 2013-2018

When looking at larger comparisons of growth and decline we have looked at trends over a 5 year time period, hoping to help offer a more consistent picture of national growth and decline. However all analysis at a church level has been done looking at the 903 churches and parishes who recored 25 or more under 16s in 2018.

The numerical growth or decline has been calculated by comparing the 2013 figure to the 2018 figure. This is a very simple way of determining change.

Note that as mentioned above 'New data entry indicates parishes who have reported data for the first time and therefore statistically would show growth. These have been included separately so as not to skew the data.

	Total returns	Numerical increase in under 16's between 2013-18	Numerical stability in under 16's between 2013-18	Numerical decline in under 16's between 2013-18	New data entry
Returns with 100 or more under 16's	44	14	0	28	2
		32%	0%	64%	5%
Returns with 51-100 under 16's	195	87	2	96	10
		45%	1%	49%	5%
Returns with 25-50 under 16's	664	293	15	337	19
		44%	2%	51%	3%
Total	903	394	17	461	31
		44%	2%	51%	3%

When comparing this to wider national trends it is interesting to note that while there is decline in 51% of those returns with 25 or more under 16's, there is also growth in 44% of the returns with 25 or more under 16's. When comparing this to the national figures, proportionally there are over twice as many of the 903 returns with 25 or more under 16's and reporting growth than there are records reporting growth nationally

	Total returns		Numerical increase in under 16's between 2013-18	Numerical stability in under 16's between 2013-18	Numerical decline in under 16's between 2013-18	New data entry
National	14031	No of returns	2998	3503	6642	888
		% of total amount	21%	25%	47%	6%
Returns with 25 or more under 16s	903	No of returns	394	17	461	31
		% of total amount	44%	2%	51%	3%
Returns with less than 25 under 16s	13282	No of returns	2655	3526	6244	857
		% of total amount	20%	27%	47%	6%
% of the national number of returns in banding with 25 or more under 16s			13%	0%	7%	3%

Further analysis of the stable group shows that only 688 (19%) of the 3542 returns with stable numbers for under 16's's across 5 years actually reported any under 16's attending as opposed to the remaining 2846 who reported 0 under 16's in both 2013 and 2018.

When this is analysed further, it is worth noting that for the majority of churches the decline or growth is marginal with 73% growing or declining by less than 5 each year. This small incremental decline, evident in the year on year comparison, is shown to be an ongoing trend in many parishes and churches, with some parishes losing over 100 U'16's in 5 years.

	No of returns	Numerical increase in under 16's between 2013-18					Numerical stability in under 16's between 2013-18	Numerical decline in under 16's between 2013-18							New data entry
		+>50	+30-50	+21-30	+11-20	+1-10		0	-1-10	-11-20	-21-30	-31-40	-41-50	-51-100	
Returns with 100 or more under 16's	44	1	4	2	2	5	0	6	8	4	5	2	3	0	2
		2%	9%	5%	5%	11%	0%	14%	18%	9%	11%	5%	7%	0%	5%
Returns with 51-100 under 16's	195	9	7	15	23	33	2	23	25	19	14	7	7	1	10
		5%	4%	8%	12%	17%	1%	12%	13%	10%	7%	4%	4%	1%	5%
Returns with 25-50 under 16's	664	0	14	35	91	153	15	154	117	38	16	4	7	1	19
		0%	2%	5%	14%	23%	2%	23%	18%	6%	2%	1%	1%	0%	3%
Total	903	10	25	52	116	191	17	183	150	61	35	13	17	2	31
			3%	6%	13%	21%	2%	20%	17%	7%	4%	1%	2%	0%	3%

When comparing the growth and decline to national trends, it is striking that outside of churches with 25 or more under 16's, growth is almost entirely by less than 10 over the 5 years. This is in contact to churches with 25 or more under 16's who, when growth was recorded, showed more significant growth, seeming to suggest that growth in under 16's is amplified by the presence of other under 16's.

	Total returns	Numerical increase in under 16's between 2013-18					Numerical stability in under 16's between 2013-18	Numerical decline in under 16's between 2013-18							New data entry	
		+>50	+30-50	+21-30	+11-20	+1-10		0	-1-10	-11-20	-21-30	-31-40	-41-50	-51-100		->100
National	14021	No of returns	10	30	51	247	2660	3503	5181	958	277	109	49	61	7	888
		% of total amount	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%	2%	19%	25%	37%	7%	2%	1%	0.3%	0.4%	0.05%	6%
Returns with 25 or more under 16s	893	No of returns	10	25	52	116	191	17	183	150	61	35	13	17	2	31
		% of total amount	1.1%	3%	6%	13%	21%	2%	20%	17%	7%	4%	1%	2%	0.2%	3%
Returns with less than 25 under 16s	13168	No of returns	0	5	-1	131	2469	3526	4998	808	216	74	36	44	5	857
		% of total amount	0.0%	0.04%	-0.01%	1%	19%	27%	38%	6%	2%	1%	0.3%	0.3%	0.04%	
% of the total national figure made up of parishes with 25 or more under 16s			100%	83%	102%	47%	7%	0%	4%	16%	22%	32%	27%	28%	29%	3%

6. Summary of qualitative analysis of parishes with 25 or more under 16s

The question has been raised at previous General Synods, as to why some parishes have larger numbers of under 16's.

Anecdotally there is often an assumption in youth and children ministry that there are connections between growth and parishes that are large in size, based in an urban setting, well resourced or wealthy, from an evangelical tradition and who employ a youth, children or families worker. On that basis we have analysed the 903 parishes and churches who reported having 25 or more average child Sunday attendance, according to the 2018 Statistics for Mission under a number of areas:

1. Analysis of trends related to size of all age congregation
 1. Analysis of all age congregation figures
 2. Analysis of the percentage of the all age congregation who are aged under 16's
2. Analysis of trends related to employed youth, children & families workers
Additionally we have analysed two connected groups under two subheadings:
 1. Analysis of those parishes with 25 or more under 16s and no employed youth, children or families worker
 2. Analysis of those that employ a youth, children's or families worker and have fewer than 25 under 16s
3. Analysis of trends related to engagement with youth & children's ministry organisations and groups
4. Analysis of trends related to tradition
5. Analysis of trends related to urban and rural settings
This has been analysed using two different data sets
 1. Analysis by urban/rural classification dataset
 2. Analysis by parish population
6. Analysis of trends related to province
7. Analysis of trends related to deprivation and resource
Deprivation and resource has been analysed under three different data sets
 1. Analysis by parish IMD ranking
 2. Analysis by parish share
 3. Analysis by total income
8. Analysis of trends related to resource churches

It is important to note that there is no formal statistical analysis in the following sections. We are looking at simple connections between variables but further data analysis has not been carried out. While simple trends may be apparently observed. Even if these observations were backed up by statistical analysis, connection does not necessarily demonstrate causation. Here we are only looking at one variable at a time and are not considering confounding or interactions between variables.

7. Analysis of trends related to size of all age congregations

7.1 Analysis of all age congregation figures

While there is a strong connection between number of parishioners and the attendance of under 16s, this is not necessarily a simple case of cause and effect.

Looking at 2018 Statistics for Mission data, across the whole of the Church of England, only 180 returns (1.2%) reported all age attendance higher than 300. Of those, only 9 (5%) had more than 150 under 16s while 49 (27%) reported having fewer than 50. It is worth noting that 7 of those 180 (3.9%) fell below 25 under 16s

With that said, the table below does show a strong connection between overall numbers and attendance of under 16s. Only 1 parish among the 903 with 25 or more under 16's has fewer than the national average congregation of 53, whilst 225 (25%) have all-age congregations 5 times the average

	No of returns	Average all age attendance	1000 or more	501-1000	401-500	301-400	201-300	101-200	51-100	0-50
Returns with 100 or more under 16's	44	728	7	17	11	5	4	0	0	0
			16%	39%	25%	11%	9%	0%	0%	0%
Returns with 51-100 under 16's	195	316	1	12	28	48	73	33	0	0
			1%	6%	14%	25%	37%	17%	0%	0%
Returns with 25-50 under 16's	664	179	0	3	7	32	150	419	53	0
			0%	0%	1%	5%	23%	63%	8%	0%
Total	903	1223	8	32	46	85	227	452	53	0
			1%	4%	5%	9%	25%	50%	6%	0%

It is interesting to compare these figures to the overall attendance figures for all 14,031 returns. While only 8 of the 178 returns with an all age Sunday attendance higher than 300 fell below 25 under 16s (and as such the national percentages and the percentages of those with 25 or more under 16s are largely the same), churches with all age Sunday attendance of 51-100 had nearly 3 times the national average percentage of under 16s. It is however also worth noting that only 0.4% of churches with an all age attendance of less than 100 had 25 or more under 16s and even those who did, by merit of having 25 under 16s have an entry point of 25% of the total congregation (assuming a congregation of 100)

	Total returns		1000 or more	501-1000	401-500	301-400	201-300	101-200	51-100	0-50
National	14031	No of returns	8	33	48	90	274	1514	2662	9402
		Average % of all age attendance aged under 16's	0.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.6%	2.0%	10.8%	19.0%	67.0%
Returns with 25 or more under 16s	903	No of returns	8	32	46	85	227	452	53	0
		Average % of all age attendance aged under 16's	0.9%	3.5%	5.1%	9.4%	25.1%	50.1%	5.9%	0.0%
Returns with less than 25 under 16s	13128	No of returns	0	1	2	5	47	1062	2609	9402
		Average % of all age attendance aged under 16's	0.0%	0.01%	0.02%	0.04%	0.4%	8.1%	19.9%	71.6%
% of the total national figure made up of parishes with 25 or more under 16s			100%	97%	96%	94%	83%	30%	2%	0.0%

7.2 Analysis of the percentage of the all age congregation who are aged under 16's

While perhaps it could be expected that larger churches would record higher numbers of under 16's, we have additionally analysed what percentage of the congregation is under the age of 16. This offers perhaps a more level comparison, helping highlight parishes who may be smaller in size but have a higher percentage of the congregation. For example a parish with 50 people, 25 of which are under the age of 16 is arguably more noteworthy than a parish of 1000 having 50 under 16's.

There is however a clear trend with the higher the number of overall attendance correlating with a higher percentage of under 16's. Returns with over 100 under 16s reported an average of 24.1% of their Sunday congregation under the age of 16, dropping to 23.4% with those returns with 51-100 under 16s and dropping again to 20.8% for returns with 25-50 under 16s. This is in comparison to a national average of 8.5%.

	No of returns	Average percentage of all age attendance made up from under 16's	+50%	41-50%	31-40%	26-30%	21-25%	16-20%	11-15%	6-10%	1-5%
Returns with 100 or more under 16's	44	24.1%	0	0	7	11	13	7	5	1	0
			0%	0%	16%	25%	30%	16%	11%	2%	0%
Returns with 51-100 under 16's	195	23.4%	0	7	26	28	57	55	16	6	0
			0%	4%	13%	14%	29%	28%	8%	3%	0%
Returns with 25-50 under 16's	664	20.8%	2	7	50	98	153	204	124	23	3
			0%	1%	8%	15%	23%	31%	19%	3%	0%
Total	903		2	14	83	137	223	266	145	30	3
			0%	2%	9%	15%	25%	29%	16%	3%	0%

Of the 16 parishes who have more than 40%, 5 of them have figures that suggest a one off event took place with numbers doubling (if not more) from previous years.

The role of school admissions also cannot be overlooked. Of the 99 parishes with higher than 30%, 55 of them (55%) have strong links to Church of England Schools and as such high percentages of young people could be attributed to attendance for school admission.

Of the 22 parishes with fewer than 10%, 10 of them are cathedrals. Additionally 6 of the churches are Resource churches who may have experienced sudden adult growth at the early stage of establishing a new congregation.

When looking nationally, 51% of returns with 25 or more under 16's had more than 20% of their all age attendance made up from under 16's, in comparison to just 10% nationally

	Total returns	Average percentage of all age attendance made up from under 16's		+50%	41-50%	31-40%	26-30%	21-25%	16-20%	11-15%	6-10%	1-5%	0%
National	14031	8.1%	No of returns	17	49	227	346	741	1413	2144	2290	1246	5558
			% of total amount	0.1%	0.3%	1.6%	2.5%	5.3%	10.1%	15.3%	16.3%	8.9%	39.6%
Returns with 25 or more under 16s	903	21.5%	No of returns	2	14	83	137	223	266	145	30	3	0
			% of total amount	0.2%	1.6%	9.2%	15.2%	24.7%	29.5%	16.1%	3.3%	0.3%	0.0%
Returns with less than 25 under 16s	7570	7.2%	No of returns	15	35	144	209	518	1147	1999	2260	1243	5558
			% of total amount	0.2%	0.5%	1.9%	2.8%	6.8%	15.2%	26.4%	29.9%	16.4%	73.4%

8. Analysis of trends related to employed youth, children & families workers

One area that has increased hugely in the last 3 decades has been the rise in employment of youth, children and families. However there is much debate as to whether the presence of an employed youth, children's or families worker is the cause of growth or a response to growth.

Across all Church of England churches and parishes, there are around:

- 890 youth workers (259 of which are youth and children or youth and families workers)
- 628 children and families workers
- 78 degree students completing mixed mode training in a church based youth, children's or family ministry position
- 196 gap years and internships, mostly lasting one year but with a primary focus on church based youth, children's or family ministry

These are employed in various capacities (full and part time, many in shared posts with other churches or in partnership with local charities and organisations) at 1110 parishes (7% of all Anglican parishes)

232 (21%) of those 1110 churches share employment, with the workers in those 232 churches collectively doing ministry in 525 churches, sometimes from different denominations. When Looking at these churches in connection to their Statistics for Mission figures, we have used the figure of the primary employing church (or church with highest number of under 16's) and discounted the others from further analysis.

		Number of under 16's in churches with an employed Youth, Children's of Families worker								
			100+	51-100	25-50	11-24	6-10	5-1	0	No data
All Youth Children & Families workers	1110	No of parishes	33	148	326	367	106	81	24	25
		% of total amount	3.0%	13.3%	29.4%	33.1%	9.5%	7.3%	2.2%	2.3%
Churches with Youth, Children & Families workers across multiple churches	232	No of parishes	10	20	48	73	35	32	14	0
		% of total amount	4.3%	8.6%	20.7%	31.5%	15.1%	13.8%	6.0%	0.0%
% of the total national figure made up of parishes employing workers across multiple churches			30.3%	13.5%	14.7%	19.9%	33.0%	39.5%	58.3%	0.0%

When looking specifically at the 903 returns with 25 or more under 16s there are:

- 463 youth workers (52% of all employed in the Church of England)
- 368 children workers (59% of all employed in the Church of England)
- 26 degree students with a primary focus of U18's (33% of all engaged in the Church of England)
- 135 gap years and internships with a primary focus of U18's (69% of all engaged in the Church of England)

These are split across 507 (56%) of the 903 churches and parishes that have 25 or more under 16s

It is additionally worth noting that of the remaining 396 churches, 13 have current adverts for youth, children or families workers and 10 have employed a youth, children's or families workers within the last 12 months.is

No of employed youth, children's or families workers (inc degree students and gap year students)

	No of returns		10 or more	5-10	4	3	2	1	0
Returns with 100 or more under 16's	44	33	1	7	4	7	7	7	11
			2%	16%	9%	16%	16%	16%	25%
Returns with 51-100 under 16's	195	148	0	17	8	32	43	48	47
			0%	9%	4%	16%	22%	25%	24%
Returns with 25-50 under 16's	664	326	1	8	5	18	100	194	338
			0%	1%	1%	3%	15%	29%	51%
Total	903	507	2	32	17	57	150	249	396
			0%	4%	2%	6%	17%	28%	44%

		Number of employed Youth, Children's of Families workers in a single parish						
			10 or more	5-10	4	3	2	1
Churches with Youth, Children & Families workers and 25 or more under 16's	507	No of parishes	2	32	17	57	150	249
		% of total amount	0.4%	6.3%	3.4%	11.2%	29.6%	49.1%
All Youth Children & Families workers	1110	No of parishes	2	38	26	72	245	727
		% of total amount	0.2%	3.4%	2.3%	6.5%	22.1%	65.5%
% of the total national figure made up of parishes employing workers and having 25 or more under 16's			100.0%	84.2%	65.4%	79.2%	61.2%	34.3%

When analysing this data, there are two important conclusions. Firstly, not every parish with 25 or more under 16s employs a youth, children's or families workers and secondly, not all youth, children's or families workers are working at parishes that have 25 or more under 16's on a Sunday. This is summarised in the table below.

	Total returns		
National	14031	No of churches that employ a youth children's or families worker	1110
		% of total amount of churches that employ a youth children's or families worker	7.9%
Returns with 25 or more under 16s	903	No of churches that employ a youth children's or families worker	508
		% of total amount of churches that employ a youth children's or families worker	56.3%
Returns with less than 25 under 16s	13282	No of churches that employ a youth children's or families worker	602
		% of total amount of churches that employ a youth children's or families worker	4.5%

8.1 Analysis of those returns with 25 or more under 16s and no employed youth, children or families worker

Of the 903 parishes with 25 or more under 16s, 395 of them (44%) do not employ a youth, children's or families worker.

It would be easy to look at these figures and draw the conclusion that employed workers are not essential. However an interesting pattern is evident in those parishes that do not employ a youth, children's or families worker.

Of the 396 parishes which have 25 or more under 16s and no employed youth, children's or families worker, 292 (74%) have strong links to an affiliated Church of England School. The role that school links and subsequent school admissions make on under 16's attendance cannot be overlooked. Unfortunately further analysis around the age breakdown of those under 16's would be needed to conclude where this was a factor (with large numbers of 5-11 year olds and significant drop off outside of this).

Interestingly, when looking at all 903 parishes, 360 (40%) of the parishes have a strong link to an affiliated Church of England School.

While attendance impacted by school admission could easily be dismissed, it highlights an enormous missional opportunity with large quantities of these 5-11's attending church for several years. As highlighted in Growing Faith, our ability to successfully help churches, schools and families to work together, offers the best chance for effective discipleship of our children and young people.

The other noteworthy group in the 396 parishes which have 25 or more under 16s and no employed youth, children's or families worker is the presence of cathedrals who make up 8% of those with no employed worker. Traditionally youth, children & families posts are not common in cathedrals, with many offering strong choral traditions and as such employing Directors of Music.

It is however worth highlighting that there are 32 cathedrals with 25 or more under 16s, with Salisbury Cathedral having recently appointed a Minor Canon for Young People and Chelmsford Cathedral employing a Youth and Community Chaplain.

It is also worth noting in relation to cathedrals that 25 (78%) of them also have strong links to an affiliated Church of England School and as above, this may impact their numbers.

	No of returns	Strong Link with Church school	Cathedral	Other
Returns with 100 or more under 16's & no employed youth, children or families worker	11	10	4	1
		91%	36%	9%
Returns with 51-100 under 16's & no employed youth, children or families worker	47	36	4	11
		77%	9%	23%
Returns with 25-50 under 16's & no employed youth, children or families worker	338	246	22	85
		73%	7%	25%
Total	396	292	30	97
		74%	8%	24%

8.2 Analysis of those that employ a youth, children’s or families worker and have fewer than 25 under 16s

603 churches and parishes employ a youth, children’s or families worker but have fewer than 25 under 16s.

While some of the 603 parishes fall just short of 25 under 16s, it is notable that 211 (19%) of all parishes employing a youth, children’s or families worker) have fewer than 10 under 16s, and 105 (9%) have fewer than 5.

While there will no doubt be justification of vibrant work outside the church and in the community, this could indicate a culture where youth, children and families ministry is separated and outsourced from the church when a worker is employed. In some cases this may look like churches establishing para church projects around perceived social and community benefits, possibly for the purposes of accessing increased grants and funding opportunities or as a way of having a wider reach within the local area. While this can lead to growing youth and children’s ministry, these figures suggest that the link between outreach and discipleship is not always as effective as it could be.

In 119 (20%) of the 603 churches and parishes, the employed worker is across multiple churches. Sometimes this will be within a parish where each church submits separate returns and sometimes different parishes will employ a youth, children or families worker collectively. As such it may be that one of the churches involved in the joint employment is the primary beneficiary of children and young people's attendance on a Sunday

While joint ministry and external community work may explain some of these statistics, it would be fair to assume that a parish which is financially invested in the evangelism and discipleship of children and young people, would see a number of families as part of its regular worshiping congregation. However, these statistics point to the fact that in a significant number of cases, it would appear the churches have seemingly separated their work with young people and children off from their wider ministry to such an extent that this is no longer the case.

No of returns	21-24	16-20	11-15	6-10	5	4	3	2	1	0	No data
603	96	112	159	106	19	19	11	13	19	24	25
	16%	19%	26%	18%	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	4%	4%

9. Analysis of trends related to engagement with youth & children's ministry organisations and groups

While this by no means is inclusive of all Youth & Children's ministry organisations, below is small sample of organisations who generously worked with us to help look at trends for how additional support can impact ongoing engagement with churches amongst children and young people.

Please note that Scouts and Guides were not included as many parishes have troops meeting in their building without any direct relationship or engagement beyond this. In contrast to this, the organisations selected were more likely to be run in parishes with an active church led youth and children's programme, facilitated by the parish.

	Total		Returns with 100 or more under 16's		Returns with 51-100 under 16's		Returns with 25-50 under 16's		Nationally		
Total returns	903		44		195		664		14,031		% of groups in churches with 25 or more under 16's
Messy Church	165	18.3%	7	15.9%	26	13.3%	132	19.9%	1427	10.2%	11.6%
Open The Book	125	13.8%	7	15.9%	32	16.4%	86	13.0%	1587	11.3%	7.9%
Mission Academy Live	51	5.6%	3	6.8%	15	7.7%	29	4.4%	72	0.5%	70.8%
Boys Brigade	29	3.2%	1	2.3%	3	1.5%	25	3.8%	90	0.6%	32.2%
Church Lad and Girls Brigade	13	1.4%	0	0.0%	3	1.5%	10	1.5%	50	0.4%	26.0%
Girls Brigade	8	0.9%	2	4.5%	1	0.5%	5	0.8%	32	0.2%	25.0%
Walsingham Youth Pilgrimage	4	0.4%	0	0.0%	1	0.5%	3	0.5%	48	0.3%	8.3%

10. Analysis of trends related to tradition

Tradition is not something that has been mapped before in the Church of England but for the benefit of addressing the anecdotal evidence that evangelical churches are those with lots of young people, it was helpful to analyse this.

We have broken tradition into the following categories using existing networks and associations

Conservative Evangelical

This is those who:

- identify on their website as conservative evangelical
- are members of the conservative evangelical Gospel Partnerships (held regionally)
- are members of Reform or Church Society
- Are listed as having alternative episcopal oversight (AEO) from the Bishop of Maidstone
- are engaged in the Growing Young Disciples Network

New Wine Network

This is those who either:

- identify on their website as a New Wine church
- are listed as members of the New Wine network on the New Wine website

HTB Network

This is those who either:

- identify on their website as being part of the HTB/ focus network
- HTB/ Focus leadership have identified as belonging to their network

Evangelical

This is those who either:

- identify on their website as Evangelical
- are members of the Evangelical Alliance

Central Church

This is those who either:

- identify on their website as “central tradition” or “middle church”
- parishes which are doing traditional parish ministry, operating in inherited mode

Liberal Catholic

This is those who:

- identify on their website as Liberal Catholic
- Clergy are members of Society Catholic Priests
- Associated with Affirming Catholicism

Traditional Catholic

This is those who:

- identify on their website as Traditional Catholic
- are members of The Society
- Are listed as having alternative episcopal oversight (AEO) from the Bishop of Ebbsfleet, Bishop of Fulham or Bishop of Richborough

Cathedral

While not a tradition, there is a recognition the unique style and position that cathedrals hold

	No of returns	Conservative Evangelical	HTB	New Wine	Evangelical	Central Church	Liberal Catholic	Traditional Catholic	Cathedral
Returns with 100 or more under 16's	44	13	3	14	3	4	3	0	4
		30%	7%	32%	7%	9%	7%	0%	9%
Returns with 51-100 under 16's	195	36	20	59	22	31	13	8	6
		18%	10%	30%	11%	16%	7%	4%	3%
Returns with 25-50 under 16's	664	80	28	116	107	224	58	29	22
		12%	4%	17%	16%	34%	9%	4%	3%
Total	903	129	51	189	132	259	74	37	32
		14%	6%	21%	15%	29%	8%	4%	4%

As headline figures, of the 903 parishes with 25 or more under 16s, 55% are evangelical, 29% are central tradition, 12% are Anglo Catholic and 4% are cathedrals.

	Evangelical	Central	Anglo Catholic	Cathedral
Returns with 100 or more under 16's	75%	9%	7%	9%
Returns with 51-100 under 16's	70%	16%	11%	3%
Returns with 25-50 under 16's	50%	34%	13%	3%
Total	55%	29%	12%	4%

There is a strong connection between quantity of under 16s and tradition, with the higher the number of young people, the higher the concentration of evangelical parishes (with 75% of those with 100 or more being evangelical in contrast to just 50% of those with 25-50. When analysing just those with more than 50 under 16's, the number of evangelical churches rises significantly to 71%, compared to 15% central, 10% Anglo Catholic and 4% cathedrals.

11. Analysis of trends related to urban and rural settings

For the purposes of determining urban vs rural we have used 2 different data sets, broken by parish. These are:

1. The urban/rural classification dataset used is the 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Output Areas in England, published by the Office for National Statistics
2. Parish Population

As described on page 7&8, each of these data sets are analysed at a parish level, giving a total of 897 parishes, rather than 903. Further explanation of this can be found on page 7&8.

Additionally, for both data sets, BMO's & some Cathedrals are excluded due to not having a parish area and subsequently there is no data available.

11.1 Analysis by urban/rural classification dataset

The urban/rural classification dataset used is the 2011 Rural-Urban Classification for Output Areas in England, published by the Office for National Statistics is a nationally recognised way of defining the make up of an area, simply based on whether the majority of the land area is Urban or Rural.

This classification is a simplified version of the full dataset, which uses the following categories:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Rural hamlets and isolated dwellings in a sparse setting | 6. Rural town and fringe |
| 2. Rural hamlets and isolated dwellings | 7. Urban city and town in a sparse setting |
| 3. Rural village in a sparse setting | 8. Urban city and town |
| 4. Rural village | 9. Urban minor conurbation |
| 5. Rural town and fringe in a sparse setting | 10. Urban major conurbation |

	No of parishes	Urban	Rural	BMO or Cathedral
Parishes with 100 or more under 16's	49	42	4	3
		86%	8%	6%
Parishes with 51-100 under 16's	204	172	18	14
		84%	9%	7%
Parishes with 25-50 under 16's	644	523	100	21
		81%	16%	3%
Total	897	737	122	38
		82%	14%	4%

There is an obvious urban weighting amongst the 897 parishes with 25 or more under 16s, with 82% of the parishes being classified as urban compared to nationally where 36% of parishes are classified as urban.

Further analysis in relation to all age break down shows that there is a slight difference between urban and rural parishes in relation to the percentage aged under 16's. Looking at the 122 rural parishes, there is an average of 20% of the congregation aged under 16's. In urban settings, this rises to an average of 22% of the congregation aged under 16's.

Comparing this to the national picture the urban weighting is even more evident with 36% of parishes being classified as urban nationally compared to 82% of parishes with 25 or more under 16's.

	Total parishes		Urban	Rural	BMO or Cathedral
National	12366	No of parishes	4429	7875	62
		% of total amount	36%	64%	1%
Parishes with 25 or more under 16s	897	No of parishes	737	122	38
		% of total amount	82%	14%	4%
Returns with less than 25 under 16s	11469	No of parishes	3692	7753	24
		% of total amount	32%	68%	0%
% of the total national figure made up of parishes with 25 or more under 16s			17%	2%	61%

11.2 Analysis by parish population

While parish population offers some guide to how densely populated a parish is, it can be misleading, because congregations might not come entirely from within parish boundaries. Some city centre parishes will draw from across a whole city while only having a parish boundary covering a few streets around.

Additionally the size of a parish can affect how many people live within its boundaries, with some parishes covering over 100 square miles and others only covering the area around the church property or surrounding streets. When looking at the data for the 898 parishes with 25 or more under 16s, 4 of the parishes have parish populations of under 100, in contrast to the largest which has over 75,000.

With that noted, there is a clear connection between the population size and the attendance of under 16s, with 25% of parishes with a population above 15,000 having 25 or more under 16s, compared to only 6% of parishes with a population below 15,000

For comparison, 732 (86%) of the 854 parishes with available parish population data (excluding BMO's and Cathedrals without parish data) having populations higher than the average parish population (4,266).

	No of parishes	Number of people living within the parish boundaries according to the Parish Census data 2019							BMO	Cathedral's without parish data
		1 - 2,500	2,501- 5,000	5,001- 10,000	10,001- 15,000	15,001- 20,000	20,001- 25,000	>25,000		
Parishes with 100 or more under 16's	49	4	7	14	8	3	5	3	2	3
		8%	14%	29%	16%	6%	10%	6%	4%	6%
Parishes with 51-100 under 16's	204	11	33	71	42	13	7	13	10	4
		5%	16%	35%	21%	6%	3%	6%	5%	2%
Parishes with 25-50 under 16's	645	35	77	260	144	66	25	13	14	11
		5%	12%	40%	22%	10%	4%	2%	2%	2%
Total	898	50	117	345	194	82	37	29	26	18
		6%	13%	38%	22%	9%	4%	3%	3%	2%

			Number of people living within the parish boundaries according to the Parish Census data 2019							BMO	Cathedral's without parish data
			1 - 2,500	2,501- 5,000	5,001- 10,000	10,001- 15,000	15,001- 20,000	20,001- 25,000	>25,000		
National	12545	No of parishes	6873	1510	2381	1081	350	135	102	91	22
		% of total amount	54.8%	12.0%	19.0%	8.6%	2.8%	1.1%	0.8%	0.7%	0.2%
Parishes with 25 or more under 16s	898	No of parishes	50	117	345	194	82	37	29	26	18
		% of total amount	5.6%	13.0%	38.4%	21.6%	9.1%	4.1%	3.2%	2.9%	2.0%
Returns with less than 25 under 16s	11647	No of parishes	6823	1393	2036	887	268	98	73	65	4
		% of total amount	58.6%	12.0%	17.5%	7.6%	2.3%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	0.03%

12. Analysis of trends related to province

There have been many questions raised about the geography of the parishes within the country. We have therefore analysed the data by province. We have done this over a 5 year period as this offers a greater trends analysis. For reference, it is worth noting that there are 3 times as many parishes in the southern province compared to the northern province.

While the 2 provinces fare similarly in overall figures for under 16s, when comparing growth and decline in parishes with 25 or more under 16s, it is clear that parishes in the northern province are declining at a faster pace than in the southern province (35% in the northern province compared to 26% in the southern province).

		Southern Province	Northern Province	Total
	No of Parishes	11,808	3,731	15,539
2014	Total No of under 16's	84,054	33,411	117,465
	Parishes with 25 or more under 16s	877	370	1,247
	under 16s in parishes with 25 or more under 16s	41,874	16,369	58,243
2018	Total No of under 16's	68,297	26,121	94,418
	Parishes with 25 or more under 16s	650	253	903
	under 16s in parishes with 25 or more under 16s	30,928	10,612	41,540
	+/- Total No of under 16's	-15,757	-7,290	-23,047
	% growth/ decline in total No of under 16's	-19%	-22%	-20%
	+/- Parishes with 25 or more	-227	-117	-344
	% growth/ decline in no of parishes with 25 or more under 16's	-26%	-32%	-28%
	+/- under 16s in parishes with 25 or more	-10,946	-5,757	-16,703
	% growth/ decline under 16s in parishes with 25 or more	-26%	-35%	-29%

13. Analysis of trends related to deprivation and resource

The affluence of a parish is difficult and complex to determine due to a number of factors.

Parishes have been analysed based on 3 different measures, each of which has its own complications:

1. Parish IMD rank
2. Parish share
3. Parish Income

As described on page 7&8, each of these data sets are analysed at a parish level, giving a total of 897 parishes, rather than 903. Further explanation of this can be found on page 7&8.

13.1 Analysis by parish IMD rank

The Index of Multiple Deprivation ranks every small area in England from 1 (most deprived area) to 32,844 (least deprived area). The Church of England statistics team have worked using this data to offer a parallel ranking system, based on parish boundaries. Based on the 2019 deprivation dataset, the 12,425 parishes are ranked based on their deprivation.

There are two things to consider here. Firstly while this is a good indicator as to the deprivation (or lack thereof) of the geographical area a parish church is based in, this only tells part of the story with many parishes gathering their congregations from beyond their own boundaries and IMD racking only tells you about the area the church is based.

Secondly, even for those attending from within the parish, this may well not be representative of the parish population as a whole.

Within this, some cathedrals and churches with a BMO work outside of the parish system and as such do not have equivalent data.

When looking at the distribution of IMD ranking amongst the 897 parishes with 25 or more under 16's, 293 (33%) parishes are in the 25% least deprived compared to 235 (26%) who are in the 25% most deprived. While it seems there is a potential connection between a parish's IMD and the number of young people, it is also worth noting that 468 (52%) of the 897 parishes fall in the less deprived half, as such offering a far more evenly spread picture.

Parish IMD rank (1=most deprived out of 12,425 parishes)

	No of parishes	1 - 3,106	3,107-6,212	6,213-9,319	9,320-12,425	BMO or Cathedral
Parishes with 100 or more under 16's	44	7	7	9	16	5
		16%	16%	20%	36%	11%
Parishes with 51-100 under 16's	195	35	26	51	70	13
		18%	13%	26%	36%	7%
Parishes with 25-50 under 16's	658	193	118	115	207	25
		29%	18%	17%	31%	4%
Total	897	235	151	175	293	43
		26%	17%	20%	33%	5%

When comparing this to national trends, there is a slight weighing towards less deprived parishes but this appears more evidently when compared to IMD rankings for churches with less than 25 under 16's

			1 - 3,106	3,107-6,212	6,213-9,319	9,320-12,425	BMO or Cathedral
National	12725	No of parishes	3106	3106	3107	3106	300
		% of total amount	24%	24%	24%	24%	2%
Parishes with 25 or more under 16s	897	No of parishes	235	151	175	293	43
		% of total amount	26%	17%	20%	33%	5%
Returns with less than 25 under 16s	11828	No of parishes	2871	2955	2932	2813	257
		% of total amount	24%	25%	25%	24%	2%

13.2 Analysis by parish share

Secondly, we have chosen to look at parish share. Parish share is calculated differently in each diocese but the wealth of an area and the wealth of a congregation are common factors in calculating parish share. However some parishes, especially new parishes and cathedrals may be exempt from paying a parish share. Additionally some parishes may decide for various reasons to not pay their parish share (this is shown below as none paid).

Based on data from the 2017 parish shares, we have mapped each of the parishes and based on an average parish share of £27,420, 782 (87%) of the 897 parishes pay above this with 186 (21%) paying over 4 times this amount.

	No of parishes	NA	None paid	£1 - £15,000	£15,001 - £30,000	£30,001 - £50,000	£50,001 - £75,000	£75,001 - £100,000	£100,001 - £150,000	£150,001 - £200,000	£200,001 - £300,000	£300,001 - £500,000
Parishes with 100 or more under 16's	44	3	1	0	1	2	5	4	9	7	12	0
		7%	2%	0%	2%	5%	11%	9%	20%	16%	27%	0%
Parishes with 51-100 under 16's	195	8	1	2	9	18	23	47	55	22	8	2
		4%	1%	1%	5%	9%	12%	24%	28%	11%	4%	1%
Parishes with 25-50 under 16's	658	24	8	15	53	112	207	122	99	13	4	1
		4%	1%	2%	8%	17%	31%	19%	15%	2%	1%	0%
Total	897	35	10	17	63	132	235	173	163	42	24	3
		4%	1%	2%	7%	15%	26%	19%	18%	5%	3%	0.3%

When this analysed against national trends, there is a clear connection between those paying a higher parish share and those with 25 or more under 16's with 71% of churches with 25 or more under 16's paying more than £50,000 compared to nationally where only 17.5% paid above £50,000

	Total returns		NA	None paid	£1 - £15,000	£15,001 - £30,000	£30,001 - £50,000	£50,001 - £75,000	£75,001 - £100,000	£100,001 - £150,000	£150,001 - £200,000	£200,001 - £300,000	£300,001 - £500,000
National	12545	No of parishes	143	180	5721	2583	1725	1324	505	279	54	28	3
		% of total amount	1.1%	1.4%	45.6%	20.6%	13.8%	10.6%	4.0%	2.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.0%
Parishes with 25 or more under 16s	897	No of parishes	35	10	17	63	132	235	173	163	42	24	3
		% of total amount	3.9%	1.1%	1.9%	7.0%	14.7%	26.2%	19.3%	18.2%	4.7%	2.7%	0.3%
Returns with less than 25 under 16s	11648	No of parishes	108	170	5704	2520	1593	1089	332	116	12	4	0
		% of total amount	0.9%	1.5%	49.0%	21.6%	13.7%	9.3%	2.9%	1.0%	0.1%	0.03%	0%

13.3 Analysis by total income

Thirdly and perhaps the most useful, we have looked at parishes' annual income in 2017.

There are two key things to note. Firstly the figures shown are only income that has come in during the year. This does not include any finances held in savings funds or reserves.

Secondly, it is worth noting that this figure is all income, including legacies and grants so for some parishes, their income may appear higher than it would be on an average year. Additionally it will include all income (not just individual giving) so if a parish hires out its hall 5 days a week, that will increase the overall income substantially.

It is also worth noting that 35 of the parishes did not supply details of their income including 29 cathedrals and 6 parishes.

Based on the average parish income £86,545, 770 (86%) of parishes with 25 or more under 16's had a higher income than this with 245 (27%) receiving over 4 times that amount.

	No of parishes	NA	Fewer than £50,000	£50,000 - £100,000	£100,001 - £200,000	£200,001 - £300,000	£300,001 - £500,000	£500,001 - £1,000,000	£1,000,001 - £2,000,000	Greater than £2,000,000
Parishes with 100 or more under 16's	44	3	0	1	3	3	2	17	10	5
		7%	0%	2%	7%	7%	5%	39%	23%	11%
Parishes with 51-100 under 16's	195	8	0	8	25	43	42	55	12	2
		4%	0%	4%	13%	22%	22%	28%	6%	1%
Parishes with 25-50 under 16's	658	24	27	83	225	145	109	40	4	1
		4%	4%	13%	34%	22%	17%	6%	1%	0%
Total	897	35	27	92	253	191	153	112	26	8
		4%	3%	10%	28%	21%	17%	12%	3%	1%

When this is compared to national trends, again a strong connection can be seen between churches with higher income and those with 25 or more under 16's, with 83% of parishes with 25 or more under 16's reporting income of higher than £100,000, compared to only 25% of parishes nationally

	Total returns		NA	Fewer than £50,000	£50,000 - £100,000	£100,001 - £200,000	£200,001 - £300,000	£300,001 - £500,000	£500,001 - £1,000,000	£1,000,001 - £2,000,000	Greater than £2,000,000
National	12545	No of parishes	180	6690	2599	1925	610	343	156	31	11
		% of total amount	1.4%	53.3%	20.7%	15.3%	4.9%	2.7%	1.2%	0.2%	0.1%
Parishes with 25 or more under 16s	897	No of parishes	35	27	92	253	191	153	112	26	8
		% of total amount	3.9%	3.0%	10.3%	28.2%	21.3%	17.1%	12.5%	2.9%	0.9%
Returns with less than 25 under 16s	11648	No of parishes	145	6663	2507	1672	419	190	44	5	3
		% of total amount	1.2%	57.2%	21.5%	14.4%	3.6%	1.6%	0.4%	0.04%	0.03%

It could be argued that larger churches, simply because of larger attendance will have greater income. We have therefore analysed income in relation to average adult Sunday average attendance figures from the 2018 Statistics for Mission. It is worth noting that there is huge range with a number of outliers which makes the average income somewhat higher and we have therefore used the median income as a measure. In

2017 the median income for a parish per person was £1556. Of the 897 parishes with 25 or more under 16s, only 416 (46%) had a higher than average income compared to 446 (50%) who had a lower than average.

	No of parishes	NA	£0-500	£501 - 1,000	£1001 - 1,500	£1,501 - £2,000	£2001 - 2,500	£2,501 - £3,000	Greater than £3,000
Parishes with 100 or more under 16's	44	3	0	5	6	10	10	6	4
		7%	0%	11%	14%	23%	23%	14%	9%
Parishes with 51-100 under 16's	195	8	6	17	53	45	24	20	22
		4%	3%	9%	27%	23%	12%	10%	11%
Parishes with 25-50 under 16's	658	24	23	112	206	124	79	30	60
		4%	3%	17%	31%	19%	12%	5%	9%
Total	897	35	29	134	265	179	113	56	86
		4%	3%	15%	30%	20%	13%	6%	10%

		None or NA	Fewer than average	Greater than average
Parishes with 100 or more under 16's	44	3	13	28
		7%	30%	64%
Parishes with 51-100 under 16's	195	8	81	106
		4%	42%	54%
Parishes with 25-50 under 16's	658	24	352	282
		4%	53%	43%
Total	897	35	446	416
		4%	50%	46%

From the above analysis, there is a clear connection between churches with a higher attendance of under 16s and the generosity of those within the church (64% of those with 100+ under 16s had above the average income per person, compared with 54% of those with 51-100 under 16s and only 43% of those with 25-50 under 16s).

14. Analysis of trends related to resource churches

While not directly a measure of investment, the surge in resource churches is interesting to map, with 89 resource churches across 25 of the 42 dioceses.

When mapping this against the 903 parishes with 25 or more under 16s, 58 of the 89 (65%) resource churches feature.

Many of the resources churches which have been planted in the last 5 years feature, with 14 (24%) of the 58 featured resource churches having been planted since 2014

	No of returns	Resource Churches
Returns with 100 or more under 16's	44	6
		14%
Returns with 51-100 under 16's	195	22
		11%
Returns with 25-50 under 16's	664	30
		5%
Total	903	58
		6%

While 31 of the resource churches fall below the 25 or more threshold, the data for under 16's Sunday attendance is from Oct 2018 while the list of resource churches is a current list. Further analysis of those 31 resource churches shows that 18 (58%) of them have been planted since Oct 2018 and as such would not be reflected in the data

15. Analysis by senior leaders in youth and children ministry in the largest 5 parishes

While it is interesting to analyse the data, we also wanted to enable those responsible for youth and children ministry at each of the top 5 parishes the opportunity to comment on why they felt they had as many under 16s as they do:

1. Holy Trinity, Brompton (London Diocese) - Tom Clarke (Youth Pastor)

At HTB, we create spaces where young people thrive - treasure God, have fun, realise identity, influence society, value all and emulate Christ. We've seen the most extraordinary culture of invitation amongst our young people, increased our presence in local schools, invested in our 'PoDs' (pockets of disciples) by reading the Bible with young people in smaller groups and prayed a lot together during 'digital detoxes'. I think cumulatively these have all been factors in the growth we've seen in our youth ministry

2. Canterbury Cathedral (Canterbury Diocese) - Revd Dr Emma Pennington, Canon Missioner at Canterbury Cathedral

At Canterbury Cathedral we have the privilege of ministering to people of all ages across the city. We have a strong choral tradition and a dedicated team of young people who assist at the altar during our regular Sunday Worship, while our Sunday Club is flourishing.

The popular Sacred Space services, which are held in collaboration with Canterbury Christ Church University, began in late 2018 and provide a place for spiritual reflection dedicated to young people in Canterbury.

3. St Barnabas, North Finchley (London Diocese) - Peter Landry (Youth Pastor)

"Numerical growth was never our main focus, we want to grow, empower and equip young disciples of Christ. Our numerical growth is symptomatic of a healthy youth ministry, not what made us healthy.

Reflecting I would probably say that key factors in growth included Creating an environment in which young people can encounter God by meeting their spiritual, emotional and physical needs, having clear transition strategies as opposed to retention strategies (empowering young people to successfully navigate faith deconstruction, reconstruction and ownership) and finally empowering, equipping and releasing young people to be Christ ambassadors within their influence circles"

4. All Souls, Langham Place (London Diocese) - Trevor Pearce (Youth Minister)

When looking at the reasons for our growth in children and young people, a central reason is our conviction that the Bible is the Word of God and controls all we do. Our primary aim with children and young people is to disciple them by teaching them God's word. Our prayer is that God will grow young people who are devoted to knowing Jesus and making him known, whatever the personal cost to them.

5. St Nicholas, Sevenoaks (Rochester Diocese) - Simon Heather (Youth Minister)

"Entertainment might draw a crowd of young people for a time, but only through the gospel of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ does the Spirit promise to truly transform hearts and form a loving community. At St Nicholas church Sevenoaks our simple aim is to teach and model the gospel of Christ to young people that they might be built up to serve and love others and to share the gospel with those around them."

16. Conclusions

When looking at these findings it is clear that there are certain factors that are associated with the outcome we care about, namely seeing more children engaged in the life of our church. A brief overview shows that these churches are:

- **Large** (44% of the 903 returns reporting having over 200 in their all age attendance, compared to only 3% of returns nationally)
- **Employ youth, Children and families workers** (56% employ a youth, children or families worker compared to 4.5% of churches who have less than 25 under 16's)
- **Have strong links to schools** (40% had a strong link to an affiliated Church of England School)
- **From and evangelical tradition** (55% of the returns with 25 or more under 16s were evangelical, compared to 29% central, 12% Anglo Catholic and 4% cathedrals)
- **Urban** (82% of parishes with 25 or more under 16's are in an urban setting compared to 36% of parishes nationally)
- **Have big ministry budgets** (55% of parishes with 25 or more under 16's had an average income of more than £200,000 compared to 5.7% of parishes who have less than 25 under 16's)

However this paper is not a professional statistical analysis (although one could be completed using the data available if resources were made available to do the work).

What we have presented is what is referred to as a univariate, analysing one variable at a time, independent of the others. For further analysis you would need to do a multivariate analysis, where all variables considered in relation to each other. To illustrate this, it could be argued that until you have addressed if all urban churches are large or if all large churches are well resourced, that the analysis in relation to the number of under 16's offers nothing more than observations for further analysis.

With that said, these factors do pose some interesting questions as to how we may address the challenge of under 16 attendance and offer some form of intervention.

Within these factors, some are beyond our control for intervention (eg, rural/urban) but others offer suggestions for ways in which we can usefully intervene. For instance:

Employed youth, children and families workers - we could release resource to help fund new roles in churches without employed worker.

Finance - we could help support better training around stewardship and giving.

Size - We could help churches in the area of evangelism and how to grow

Links with Schools - we could help churches establish stronger links with church schools

Engaging with youth and children's organisations - we could encourage more churches to work alongside youth and children's organisations to help grow their ministry.

It is also important to state that nowhere have we proved causation and plausibly churches will employ a youth worker when they have young people. Equally, it may then be the case that because a church has lots of young people, then they have a strong link with the local school.

While we haven't shown that any of these are causal factors, many of them are plausibly causal. If they are, then any intervention to improve the presence of these factors would be expected to have a positive impact.

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