

Schools have worked incredibly hard and fast to find ways of helping children learn at home whilst continuing to provide education at school for the children of key workers. It has been a huge learning curve for all involved – teachers, support staff, children and households – and not without its challenges.



Whether your local school has a Church of England foundation, is a community school or an Academy, it is likely to need support. The needs of each school will vary depending on its context – some may be in areas of high deprivation, seeking to support parents in accessing food and practical help; others may be in areas where Covid-19 has been particularly virulent, so emotional and pastoral support may be higher on the agenda.

Ask, rather than assume, how you can best support the school. A conversation with the headteacher will identify ways in which you and the church can be of most help. It might be through navigating forms and bureaucracy, support in RE and Collective Worship, pastoral care for staff or helping to prepare for the increased provision of the school. Members of the church community may have skills or specialist knowledge which could be offered via screen or video to supplement lessons or projects that classes are involved in. It might even be that the staff would welcome spiritual support through prayer or conversation.

When schools reopen, support may be needed in helping to mark things that were missed (e.g. leavers' events, end of term productions, summer sports days), to mark pain and sadness, but also to look towards the future with hope.

Ideas that might help

- Involve church members in regularly praying for the school, its staff and its pupils. Ask individuals to commit to praying for a class or year group.
- Offer to record a regular act of Collective Worship for the school. A familiar face can help reassure students and staff alike that not everything has changed.
- If the school has a chaplain, contact him/her to ask what practical support they need.
- Check the guidance that your Diocesan Education Department or Local Authority is giving to schools so that you are aware of what is being required of them.
- Ask what spiritual support the school would appreciate.
- Support school leaders with particular reference to Grief and Bereavement, through our Faith at Home resources for [school leaders](#) and for [parents](#).
- Encourage schools to look beyond the local situation by supporting a charitable organisation (such as Christian Aid or Water Aid) which is making a difference in developing countries.

Additional resources

The Church of England has prayers designed for children to use during the pandemic.

Worship Workshop has a Song Bank of 100 hymns and songs which schools can download for use in Collective Worship.

Prayer Spaces in Schools have ideas to help households engage in prayer activities at home.

Water Aid is helping to combat Covid-19 by promoting good hygiene in developing countries.

Christian Aid is responding to the coronavirus outbreak in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Illustrated Ministry is offering free resources based on the week's lectionary reading, including reflective colouring sheets, which can support RE or Collective Worship.

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