

Stories of flourishing

Doubling the number of children and young active disciples in the Church of England by 2030 is the first stated bold outcome of the Vision and Strategy.

Of course, this isn't about numbers – it's about young lives being won and shaped by the truth, beauty and goodness of Jesus Christ.

Here are four stories of churches that are flourishing in the their work with children, young people and families



Bubble Church case study

Ascension church, Balham has seen a huge growth in it's 'Bubble church' service - a 30 minute service, aimed specifically at children and families.



Lighthouse case study

This holiday club has become a family - growing young leaders as well as catering for children.



Eastbourne case study

St Michael's, Eastbourne have increased the number of children and families in their church over the last two years. Find out what they've been doing to support this growth.



Loftus Case Study

An emphasis on a new Sunday School, and church choir, resulted in an increase in children and young people attending St Leonard's Church, Loftus Parish

Funding opportunities for growing work with children and youth

Watch [this webinar](#) with Benefact Trust and Bishop Radford Trust and hear directly from grant-making charities.

Topics included:

- 1) Opportunities available to local churches working with children and young people in their communities -
- 2) Grant opportunities currently open -
- 3) Helpful advice for churches looking to start new projects or grow existing ones

The session also covers practical advice for churches applying for grants, an overview of the grant making processes, and some examples of best practice when it comes to churches applying for and using grants.

Key principles

Doubling the number of children and young people in the Church of England by 2030 is an audacious task, and the big question being consistently asked is: How?

In 2022 qualitative and quantitative research was conducted with churches who had grown numbers of children and young people consistently and the principles have been summarised in this short and simple film. We have used the P.R.A.Y acronym as an easy and catchy way to remember the key principles which lead to growth in the numbers of children and young people in our church.

PRAY Knowing we rely on God completely in pursuing this bold outcome, we invite you to join our weekly, online, twenty-minute prayer meeting for doubling the number of children and young people in the Church of England. Find out more [here](#). We have also created a resource to help you to pray for the children and young people in your churches and communities. [Download the document](#) to use and share with others.

Prioritise - Prioritising children, young people and families in our churches is fundamental. In most cases one of the key drivers has been committed leadership that sets the culture and see youth and children's ministry as an essential priority. [Download the document](#) to see more.

Resource - We can resource growth through a range of activities, and will soon be supplying an extensive list of links for all contexts. ***The film below***, from Bolton, is an example of thinking clearly to resource children from pre-school groups right through to age 18

Adapt - We need to adapt all that we do to keep children, young people and families at the heart of our work. Let's challenge ourselves and each other to make the changes that will enable that. The case study videos make the need for adapting abundantly clear.

You - This is something that involves everyone in church. Volunteers are your best resource - whether they can commit to working with children, young people and families, or praying and supporting those who do. If you have the option of employing a youth and children's worker this can accelerate growth, with a good team of volunteers working with them. The national aim is to launch a campaign to help churches recruit a total of 27,000 new volunteers and 3,000 employed youth workers for children, young people and families.

Children Changing Places - case study

Resources

KICK

KICK transforms young people's lives, with God's love, through sport and support. This is achieved through values-driven physical education, mentoring, and chaplaincy in schools and community KICK Academies.

KICK partners with the local church and local school to provide support to young people and is a great resource for churches looking to grow their connections with children and young people.

To find out more about what it looks like to start a KICK academy in your context, [visit KICK's website](#).

Minecraft Church

Minecraft Church communities are made up of people of all ages who love meeting up together to play Minecraft, exploring faith in Christ at the same time. There are a number of Minecraft Churches, but there are also resources for those looking to start a community of their own.

To find out more and access resources such as a 'how to' guide, session plans and theological reflections, [visit the Minecraft Church website](#).

The Cheeky Pandas



The Church of England has joined forces with The Cheeky Pandas to bring you this fun-filled and action-packed digital tool to empower you to talk about Jesus in your home and ministry.

For Advent 2023, a brand-new series explored the Christmas story through crafts, sketches and jokes. These fast-paced and fun episodes can be used as part of a Kids Church program each Sunday in Advent, or you can watch them on your tablet or phone anytime, anywhere.

The Cheeky Pandas are pioneers of high-quality Christian content for children and families that brings the love of God into your home, school

and Church, all of our resources are available completely free, so check out the schedule below to find out more, and join us in a world of fun, with the Cheeky Pandas and friends.

What's On?

Episodes, including versions with British Sign Language, are shared on the [Cheeky Pandas YouTube channel](#).

Episode One: Mary and Gabriel

Have you ever wondered what happens if you eat tinsel? Or how to make your very own Angel tree topper? Join the Cheeky Pandas and their friends as they explore the greatest story ever told – the Nativity. This week, we will meet Mary and the Angel/Rockstar Gabriel and learn about God's amazing plans for this festive season.

Episode Two: The Wise Men

God's deepest wish is to guide us towards his son Jesus, and in this episode, we will learn about how he put an actual star in the sky to guide the Magi across the country to meet him! Join the Cheeky Pandas and their friends for jokes, silly sketches and a sparkly star craft as we hear all about God's great love for us.

Episode Three: The Shepherds

In this episode, The Cheeky Pandas and their friends will learn all about how the Angels performed a heavenly rock concert for a lowly group of shepherds. Through jokes, sketches and crafts we will discover why God chose the lowly shepherds as his Holy messengers... and we will finally find out what happens when you cross Santa with a duck...

Episode Four: Jesus is Born!

Do you know why Christmas trees are so bad at knitting? Find out the answer and so much more in the final episode of our special series. Join us in Bethlehem as we follow Mary and Joseph through the town, desperate to find a place to stay before the baby arrives...

Watch the series on YouTube



[Week One: Mary and Gabriel](#)



[Week Two: The Wise Men](#)



Week Three: The Shepherds



Week Four: Jesus is Born!

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