



WORKING IN YOUTH MINISTRY SEEMED LIKE A DISTANT DREAM



Sarah Robbshaw

Sarah Robbshaw believed that studying for a diploma in youth ministry was an unaffordable and “distant dream”. But when Future Generations was launched in 2024 by St Mellitus College, with funding from the CofE's 30k Project, that dream became a reality.

Here is Sarah's story:

“As a single parent, putting myself through theology training and following God's calling for me in Youth Ministry seemed like a distant dream. But in May 2024 I saw an advert for the Future Generations course at St Mellitus on social media. At first, I put it to the back of my mind but prayed about it and asked God what He had in store for my next chapter.

Over the coming weeks the advert popped up several more times, so I decided to take a look. The course looked amazing and after an open day at St Mellitus, I knew that was where I was meant to be.

Since starting the course in September I have grown both in my ministry and as a person; I am more confident in my abilities, and the skills that St Mellitus have taught me on how to approach the Youth Ministry within my church. I have already learned a deeper understanding of faith and in turn I have become a more faithful servant of God.

This would not have been possible for me without the bursary and the support from both the college and my placement. The financial pressures of being a single parent and lack of funds at church, meant that I would never have been able to fund the course as well as travel, books and other expenses.

I am truly grateful to God and the Church of England for breaking down barriers for people like me, making it more accessible to serve the young people in my parish, build lasting networks with my cohort and share Jesus' love.”



Future Generations is a two-year diploma with either a youth or children's ministry focus, run by St Mellitus college.

This has been made possible by funding from the 30k Project, which seeks to help churches recruit and support 30,000 new leaders with children, young people and their families by 2030. A crucial aspect of this is offering relevant and affordable training so that those in volunteer and paid roles are equipped, empowered and encouraged in their mission and ministry with children, young people and families.



Sarah (right), with her Supervisor (centre) and a fellow student (left)



The Future Generations Class of 2024, in front of St Mellitus

What other students said about the Future Generations course:



I am now much more confident as a Christian in running our toddler group, less apologetic – and as a result I've invited lots of families to church, and 3 came over Christmas.

Vicky, Children's Ministry Student

St Mellitus College is such an oasis for me, and it really energises me for my work at church. It's helping me to understand why I do what I do. Now I have a way of talking about my work from a theological perspective and that feels good.

Charlotte, Children's Ministry Student

This course has provided me with so much and I would not have been able to be here without the bursary funding... with no fees I am able to complete this course and receive a proper qualification to achieve my dream job.

Rebecca, Youth Ministry Student

I've realised how important it is to focus on whole families, not just the young people – if my young people are bringing their parents to church, we need to be ready to teach and disciple them as well.

Josh, Youth Ministry Student

Dr Mark Scanlan, the Lead Tutor for Future Generations Training, said:

"It is such a joy and privilege to play a part in the CofE's bold vision. The bursary funding provided through the 30k Project has facilitated a diverse student cohort with a wide age range, geographical spread and from across the traditions of the Church."

[Find out more about St Mellitus College here](#)



Dr Mark Scanlan

