

Supporting Christian involvement in schools

Most churches will have lots of links to the world of education and to local schools. The *Transforming Lives* website has a wealth of information about how you can support and encourage Christians who are already involved in schools, and how you can inspire more Christians to make connections. Here is a taster of some of the ideas. Visit www.transforminglives.org.uk/support.php for more.

Parents

Encourage parents, grandparents and carers to get involved in the life of the school, for example as members of the PTA, helping out at school fetes or drama productions or running the second-hand uniform stall. It's a great way to build relationships and to show your commitment to a school.

Volunteers

Many schools welcome regular volunteers – to help with reading and basic maths, to be a mentor to older pupils or to do practical tasks such as setting out art materials or helping with cooking. Approach your local school to find out what needs they have. Or sign up with a national scheme such as [Volunteer Reading Help](#).

Resource RE

Offer your church building for class visits or activities. As part of their RE programme, many schools value the opportunity to visit places of worship. Having friendly members of the congregation on hand to explain what goes on and why, can help to bring the experience alive for pupils.

Schools' workers

Support the work of any local Christian youth work agency that works in schools. [Youth for Christ](#) and [Scripture Union](#) have workers across the country. In some towns and cities local churches have set up a charity or trust that employs people to work in schools.

Governors or Parent Councils

School Governors are the largest volunteer force in the country. Their role is key in shaping the ethos of schools, raising standards and supporting teachers. There are many routes into governing depending on where you live in the UK; as a parent, a teacher or other member of school staff, through church, the local authority and the local community. In Scotland, School Boards have recently been replaced by Parent Councils.

Teachers

When a member of the congregation gets a new job as a teacher, pray for them publicly and commission them into their role as a way of showing that it's not just 'full-time Christian workers' who are called by God.

Support staff

Remember that Teaching Assistants and people who work in non-teaching roles in schools have a vital part to play in the world of education. Pray for them as well as teachers during services at significant moments during the year – at the start of a new term, if a school has had an Ofsted inspection or the period leading up to SATs or exams.

Prospective teachers

Encourage youth leaders to arrange some sessions on vocation in the youth group, exploring the areas of calling and of integrating faith and work. This will obviously benefit all the young people in the group, not just those who are interested in teaching.