

CHURCH

SUPPORTING LOCAL

SCHOOLS



IMYC
Irish Methodist Youth and Children's Department

WHY SHOULD WE SUPPORT OUR LOCAL SCHOOLS?

We have so much to give thanks for when we think on our local schools. They are brimming with talent and resources that invest in the lives of our children and young people. Recently our schools have been in the headlines as we have heard about budget cuts, staffing shortages, and fears for the future. In a season of challenge, we have the opportunity to come alongside and support our schools both prayerfully and practically. Here are some top tips and suggestions to guide you:



SUGGESTIONS FOR

PRAYER



Pray for funding to be made available for valuable support programmes.

Pray for all staff in schools, that they would feel encouraged for their valuable work.

Pray that all children and young people thrive within their learning environment, receiving the support they need.



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PRACTICAL TOP TIPS

SPEAK TO THE HEAD TEACHER

The best place to start is to have a conversation with Senior Staff in the school and ask are there areas of need that your Church can offer support. It may be that they have a gap that you are unaware of, so start by listening well. Be guided by their experience, and willing to serve where is most needed.



OFFER FINANCIAL SUPPORT

With the reduction of budgets, many valuable programmes that seek to invest in the care and growth of children and young people will have to be cut. This will be hugely detrimental to students, particularly those most vulnerable. Perhaps your church could sponsor one of these programmes or sessions. Your financial contribution could mean that an external expert organisation is able to run programmes within the school. This would be a valuable resource to both staff and students.. a gap that you are unaware of, so start by listening well. Be guided by their experience, and willing to serve where is most needed.



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PRACTICAL TOP TIPS

VOLUNTEER

Perhaps you have people within Church who could offer some time to support your local school. Maybe volunteers could serve with a Breakfast Club, or with a Reading Recovery Programme, or After-schools Club. Be guided by your school as to what is most needed, and ensure that all Safeguarding regulations are adhered to.



PROVIDE SPACE

You could provide space in the church or halls to facilitate a fundraiser for the school, or to host a school uniform project or book swap to help recycle and reuse good condition uniforms and books..



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PRACTICAL TOP TIPS

CREATE SCHOOL PACKS

Churches could make up School Packs which teachers could give out to families in need. These could be school bags filled with a lunch bag, water bottle, some stationary and even a gift voucher for a local shop.



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Supporting your local school might involve connecting with other expert agencies. Here are a few that may be of interest:

CONNECT WITH OTHERS



PLAY IT BY EAR

Chris & Ross from Play it by Ear run a variety of programmes in schools. They have one particular programme called 'What's going on?' that focuses on understanding and expressing healthy emotions that has been a huge hit in Primary schools. Could you sponsor this workshop for your local school? Contact Ross or Chris to find out more: www.playitbyear.com

PRAYER SPACES in SCHOOLS

Prayer spaces enable children and young people, of all faiths and none, to explore life's questions, spirituality and faith in a safe, creative and interactive way. Could your church partner with the school to help create and facilitate such a space?. Read more about this initiative at: www.prayerspacesinschools.com



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REDEEMING OUR COMMUNITIES

Redeeming Our Communities (ROC) is a faith-based charity which seeks to encourage community transformation by creating strategic partnerships. ROC (NI) already partners with many local churches in the hosting of School Uniform Projects. Why not see if they have one in your area that could use your support, or contact them for advice of how to begin one.

See <http://linktr.ee/rocnorthernireland> for more information.



LOVE FOR LIFE

Love for life seeks to inspire the next generation to know their worth, flourish in their relationships, and value their sexual choices. They support schools in their delivery of Relationships and Sexuality Education providing lessons plans and programmes in both Primary and Post-Primary schools. Find out more about their work at: www.loveforlife.org.uk



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THE BIG HOUSE

The Big House is a place where you can discover more of God's love and hope in your life. They have developed a number of resources for youth groups and schools as well as provide counselling services to young people of secondary school age. Find out more about their work at: www.thebighouse.org.uk

SCRIPTURE UNION

Scripture Union in both Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland are passionate about making God's Good News known in primary, post primary and special schools through dedicated staff, training of local volunteers and resourcing the church. Find out more about what they do and how you can play your part here: (Northern Ireland) www.suni.co.uk or (Southern Ireland) www.scriptureunion.ie



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