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Growing Faith: reaching children and young people where they are



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Introduction

Archdeacon Jo Kelley Moore
Growing Faith Champion

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'Growing Faith envisions children, young people and households coming to faith, growing in discipleship and contributing confidently to the Kingdom of God through the community of faith. It is about how, as members of the whole people of God, children and young people are encouraged and how the whole Church is equipped to think intergenerationally.'

From GS 2121 Growing Faith: Churches, Schools and Households, The Archbishops' Council (2019)

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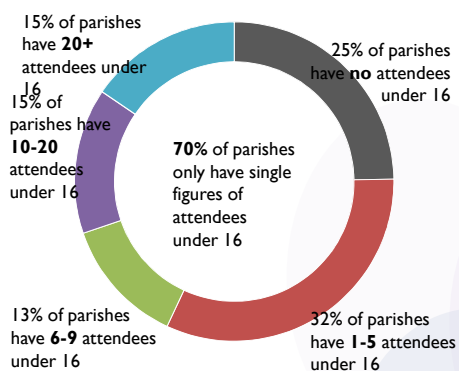
“How are we seeking a renewal of minds and hearts within the diocese so that it becomes second nature to look at all daily activities and every decision through the lens of what it means for our children, young people and households?”



General Synod is asked to welcome the House of Bishops’ vision and encourage all dioceses, parishes, fresh expressions, Church of England schools and college or university chaplaincies to ensure they weave it through every strand of their strategy for mission and ministry.



Children and Young People per parish



Faith at Home

90% of Anglican parents think it is important to pass faith on to their children,

but only **29%** think of it as their responsibility



Faith at Home

Among Christians who say that religion is very important in their lives, only **36%** listed religious faith as an especially important quality that children can be encouraged to learn at home, compared to good manners (94%) or tolerance and respect (83%).

European Values Study, quoted in Voas and Watt, The Church

Growth Research Programme Report.



An overall ambition

Growing Faith wants to see

Churches which serve and are served by their local school communities, actively building strong relationships between church, schools and households

So...

The partnership between churches, schools and households is crucial

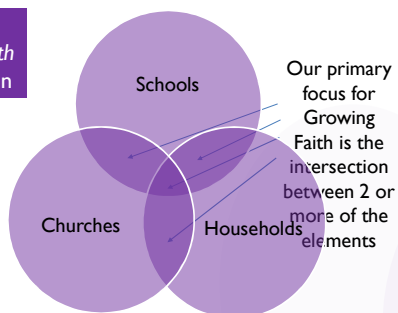


Growing Faith Values

- Connected Communities
- Spiritual Encounters
- Imaginative Practices



The Growing Faith Intersection



Our understanding of young people's faith development is that it much more likely to happen, and be sustained if it happens in the intersection

Themes

- ❖ Households becoming confident in sharing and nurturing faith
- ❖ Congregations recognising the part they play
- ❖ Churches serving the life of schools and all CE schools committed to working in partnership with churches, building meaningful long-lasting relationships with children and young people
- ❖ Particular challenges and opportunities to develop work with older teenagers and students in both further and higher education



Growing Faith wants to see:

a) Every parish creating expressions of church where children, young people and households are actively involved, growing spiritually and have their voices heard.

b) Anglican parents recognising the importance of sharing faith with their children and actively engaging in this responsibility.

c) Clergy and lay ministers who are confident in supporting households in sharing faith at home.



d) Congregations which nurture and support, and are nurtured and supported by the faith of children and young people.

e) Churches which serve and are served by their local school communities, actively building strong relationships between church, schools and households.

f) Children and young people who are confident to share their faith with their peers and families.



Possibilities

- ❖ Prayer spaces / spiritual gardens
- ❖ Chaplaincy
- ❖ Support in transfer between schools / further or higher education
- ❖ Church-based toddler provision that is intentionally missional
- ❖ New expressions of church for Early Years and primary age children and their families
- ❖ Help and ideas for parents, grandparents and godparents to pass on faith
- ❖ Children and young people's active participation in decision-making
- ❖ Leadership responsibility and development for children and young people
- ❖ Broader application of the Understanding Christianity resource
- ❖ And.....



A few examples...



Church and School together

Reflections by Simon Young
Bapchild and Tonge



Zeal Youth Hub

Louisa Ley
Sittingbourne











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Blend

Goudhurst and Kilndown

Lesley Hardy

Stephen Hardy

Vicki Young



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So what next?

Community Connections

Spiritual encounters

Imaginative Practices