



# Schools' Work Guidelines

These guidelines are intended for churches and for visiting team members. They were originally written by a Christian schools worker and have been used for many years on missions round the UK.

The 'principles' and 'what we offer' sections below are things that you can show to a school to reassure them, if there is need to do so. They are reproduced on a separate sheet at the end of this document as something that could be given to a head teacher, where necessary. If you already have a good working relationship with the school, then you will probably not need to do this or convince them to receive a team from your church, but we realise that you might be breaking new ground.

## Principles

These are things which it is particularly important for visiting teams to note for how they approach schools' work. Some additional practical instructions will be given in subsequent pages.

- We recognise schools as places of education and seek to work in them in appropriate ways.
- We seek to work in conjunction with school staff and in sympathy with the ethos of the school.
- We will show respect for school administration, staff and parents, and never knowingly undermine them.
- We recognise and respect the right of staff and students to hold different views on matters of faith and belief.
- We will not pressurise the students to accept the Christian views being presented.
- We will seek to teach Christian principles while not promoting denominations or any one church's programme.
- Although the Anglican Church has an entitlement to attend church schools and support the schools' distinctive Christian character and ethos, including the ability to explore questions of faith and spirituality, the points above still apply.

## What we offer

Churches need to know what the Senior Leaders and team members can offer in the school setting. The three most likely possibilities are listed below.  
N.B. Schools' work can include secondary/sixth form groups as well as primary.

We offer, as a resource to the school, a team of people from a variety of churches and backgrounds who can speak relevantly about their faith in Christ and how that faith relates to everyday life. They have all received suitable training and are available for:

- **Assemblies or Collective Worship...** To stimulate thought about an aspect of Christian belief and to give pupils an opportunity to reflect on its relevance to their lives.
- **Lessons ...** An opportunity for a class to ask their own questions of the team in order to enhance their understanding of how the Christian faith and the role of the church relate to real issues.
- **Other.** Christian Unions or community activities, such as 'Parent and Toddler' groups or parents coffee mornings, other lunchtime or After School clubs if the schools have these. Are there activities that you could offer which involve the local church (e.g. supporting a Prayer Space in the school during the week) which can lead to ongoing engagement by the church?

## Child protection & insurance issues

Some team members are likely to be DBS checked for things they do in their own home church setting. However, you need to note that we cannot DBS check people specifically for the Moving Mountains Mission. The short duration that they will be with us means that they do not qualify for the category that requires such checks. So, please do NOT say that all team members will be DBS checked. For this reason – and also simply for insurance reasons – visiting teams will always work alongside school staff. This means that they never have unsupervised contact with classes or individual children, who remain under the care of teachers and other school staff at all times. This will probably only need spelling out if you encounter a teacher who raises concerns.

## Additional Guidelines for Team Members

These are a very brief summary of guidelines that have been used on missions for many years.

### Three golden rules for schools work

1. **Be LEGAL.** Schools are places of education, not evangelism. Therefore you must never preach, make an appeal, or invite someone to make a personal decision for Christ at a school event. This is important. Do not despair, however: you can say things like 'I believe that ...' or 'The Bible says' or 'Christians believe ...' So, there is ample opportunity in schools to say something meaningful about our faith but you must simply not overstep the mark into asking young people to respond to the message.
2. **Be WISE.** Touch is simply a 'no-go' area with pupils. Similarly, do not get into 1-to-1 situations with them. This is as much for your protection as theirs. Think also how you will relate to other people present – teaching staff, and possibly parents or governors in an assembly setting. Always show respect for the school and its rules.
3. **Be PREPARED.** Make sure you know how long you have got (and stick to time, especially at secondary school level), whether there are any guidelines for your input, where & when to report / sign in, etc. If you are asked to lead a lesson, aim to speak with the teacher in advance to discuss content and also to gauge the likely level of engagement from that particular class (which can vary greatly according to age, confidence, ability level, etc.).

### Some guidelines on knowing your audience

Schools, just like churches, have jargon. If you haven't been in education for some time, you may not be familiar with the different Key Stage age ranges, for example. The table below will give some very brief ideas on communicating with different age ranges:

Key Stage	Age range	Good approaches	Additional notes
KS1	4-7	Be visual & imaginative Tell a story Try to get on their level & use ideas that relate to them Make one point Beware asking too many questions due to the 'I forgot' response	Sometimes a primary school assembly is KS1 <u>and</u> KS2 = a challenge! Aim to communicate to 7-8 year olds in this situation & hope to carry a wider age range with you
KS2	7-11	Use drama & involve volunteers Ask their opinion, e.g. 'what do you think happened next?' Be thought-provoking Be still (sometimes) ...	Songs often work well up to age 11 Try not to leave them 'hyped up' at the end of an assembly
KS3	11-14	Telling your story Relevance to everyday life Use DVD clips possibly	Songs are out! These 'good approaches' apply to older groups too
All groups		Try to start well (catch their attention) & also end well	Some mission assemblies / classes can be the best they've ever had

Things to avoid with ANY group are:

- Being 'naff' / trying to be what you are not (the 'Aston Villa supporter moment')
- Jargon: think really carefully about the Christian words you use – can they be understood by someone who probably has little or no Bible knowledge (which is very likely the case)? Sometimes we have to use such a word but, if so, then find ways to explain it in everyday language.
- Going over time
- Anything too abstract – by all means, communicate deep things but use STORIES to do so



# School's Work Guidelines for the Moving Mountains Mission:

## Information sheet for schools

### What is the Moving Mountains Mission?

*Around 50 Senior Leaders from Anglican, Methodist, Salvation Army and URC churches from across the country are visiting Cumbria in March for four days of mission together, based on an initiative from the Archbishop of York, who will also be joining us. We've called the mission "Moving Mountains".*

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- **Lessons...** An opportunity for a class to ask their own questions of the team in order to enhance their understanding of how the Christian faith and the role of the church relate to real issues.

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