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SCHOOL-CHURCH COLLABORATION

Six Sessions to Improve School-Church Partnerships

Context of the training

School and church leaders are very busy. They want to work well together and sense how fruitful partnership could be, but often fail to prioritise this amidst more immediate tasks. Research shows that powerful school-church partnerships develop where:

- External facilitation sets a context and structure for rich conversations.
- Contextualised training is offered that is relevant to both partners.
- Key parish leaders diarise time termly.
- A jointly created and owned action plan is used.

Aims

Provide school and church leaders with:

- A termly opportunity for rich partnership conversations.
- Facilitation to support dialogue around more challenging topics.
- Training in areas of mutual interest and benefit.
- Space to review and adapt their shared action plan.

Structure for each session (1.5hrs)

Headteachers attend with their church counterpart. These two leaders may also decide to bring additional parish partners with them e.g. other senior leaders from school, key Christian school staff, children's and family worker from church or a key lay volunteer.

- Bible input, worship and prayer (delivered invitationally, sensitive to non-Christian school staff) (8mins).
- Session theme and structure outlined. Ice-breaker opening table discussion contextualised question related to the theme (6mins).
- Input: high quality taught input with handout (30mins).
- Facilitated activity: building on the input and providing space for participants to wrestle with it for their own context with their co-collaborators (40mins).
- Next steps, notices and grace/prayer/blessing: participants given time to name three actions arising and a timescale, plus space for Diocesan notices (6mins).

Session	Content	Resources
SESSION 1 Mid Oct- Mid Nov 2-3.30pm	Barriers to Effective Partnership Purpose: how can you analyse the efficacy of your partnership? Common barriers – and creative solutions	Grove Book chapter 4 Headteacher insight video 'What's working?' analysis matrix
SESSION 2 Late Feb- early Mar 2-3.30pm	 Pupil Spiritual Development What is this? How is it similar to but distinct from <i>Christian</i> spiritual development? Where can you see 'progressively deeper opportunities' for your community Vs where is the pathway patchy? Places you can work smarter not harder. 	Grove Book chapter 5 Smarter not harder case studies video Pathway map
SESSION 3 June-early Jul 2-3:30pm	Power of Questions Power of curiosity and finding the right question. User pathways: what is the experience of spiritual development like for different members of the community? E.g. Christian, spiritually curious, those of other faiths/ worldviews, staff, wider families, SEND, EAL, UKME, etc.	Grove Book chapter 5 Lead On Questions article 'Pupil Experience' task

Session	Content	Resources
SESSION 4 Mid Oct- Mid Nov 2-3.30pm	Genuine Vs False Agency Empowerment of others Vs false agency. Critique models of spiritual encounters.	Pupil video Grove Book chapter 6
	Examine the use of Christian disciplines within school and church and consider: • Where are pupils active agents Vs passive recipients? • What can be done to increase pupil agency? • Are there ways to increase pupil agency at home/outside of school and church?	Disciplines mapping sheet
SESSION 5 Late Feb- early Mar 2-3.30pm	 Drawing in support from home Acknowledge: Both school and church struggle with lack of volunteers. Pupils who are supported by home/an interested adult do better with (a) educative outcomes and (b) spiritual development/faith formation. Input into maximising number and impact of volunteers. SWOT analysis of where church and school are working well with home to support pupils, where there are opportunities, what the barriers/fragility isWhat can church and school learn from each other? 	Grove Book chapters 5 & 6 SWOT analysis sheet
SESSION 6 June-early Jul 2-3:30pm	Holding Difference Well Look at Eastern Vs Western theology and how this underpins differing approaches to sitting with difference. Examine models for holding difference well and work through a toolkit for disagreeing well.	Toolkit
	Consider areas of possible tension/difference.	Cost: TBC