# GUIDANCE FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL VISITS

'*Instilling learners with passion and pride in themselves, their communities and their country is central to the four purposes (*of the Curriculum for Wales*). Learners should be grounded in an understanding of the identities, landscapes and histories that come together to form their 'cynefin' (Cynefin is the place where we feel we belong, where the people and landscape around us are familiar, and the sights and sounds are reassuringly recognisable. Though often translated as 'habitat', cynefin is not just a place in a physical or geographical sense, it is the historic, cultural and social place which has shaped and continues to shape the community which inhabits it). This will not only allow them to develop a strong sense of their own identity and well-being, but to develop an understanding of others' identities and make connections with people, places and histories elsewhere in Wales and across the world.*' *Curriculum for Wales*, *Designing a curriculum in Wales and for Wales*, see www.hwb.gov.wales

**Churches and Christians are clearly an important part of this understanding of 'cynefin' and should therefore take full advantage of the opportunities to visit and contribute to a school's curriculum and acts of Collective Worship.**

**If you intend to visit a school**:

- Remember to make an appointment with the Head Teacher, even if you do know another member of staff.
- Remember that you are a person that has been invited to the school.
- Remember to dress appropriately. Ask a member of staff what is acceptable.
- Be clear as to what is expected of you: what time you should arrive, where you should go: how much time has been allocated to you, what are the ages and abilities of the learners that you will be addressing, etc.
- Pray beforehand: you could also ask others to pray while you are at the school.
- Be punctual! Arrive early and do not overstay your welcome. If you do go over the time allocated, you will not be popular with the staff! Rather, try to conclude a few minutes early as a few minutes late could disrupt the school's timetable for the rest of the day.
- Be consistent and dependable. Although teachers will not appreciate a last-minute call telling them that you're cancelling your visit, it is very important that you contact the school if you are unable to take part in a previously arranged activity.
- A member of school staff should always be with you in order to qualify your contribution and also as regards good practice. It is their responsibility to ensure discipline so that you are free to carry on with your own presentation.
- It is as Christians that we present ourselves to the school and it is our own belief and viewpoint that we are there to express: don't assume that learners hold the same viewpoint as you. We should not evangelise in order to avoid accusations of proselytising.
- Ask the Head Teacher if it is necessary for you to sign a declaration concerning Child Safety and be checked through the DBS.
- Our school work is more than leading acts of Collective Worship; it could be more beneficial initially to build a relationship with the school through a variety of activities, e.g. reading with the children, sport, mentoring, contributing to specific class work, participating in the "Open the Book" scheme, etc.
- Remember to plan carefully and liaise with school staff. This will influence the attitude of the staff towards you.
- Be aware of the age range in Collective Worship presentations and the ability range in lessons.
- It is beneficial to ask about particular school themes so you're your work will support the school in its teaching.
- It is quite possible that the pupils themselves will be measuring your performance. Be yourself and always show respect. If you discuss matters with them, remember that they too have a right to their own opinions, just as you have a right to express clearly what you believe.
- There is no need to get into heated discussions or try to score points by winning an argument. Remember you want to be invited back to the school!
- Remember the Head Teacher and teachers are under no obligation to have you back at their school.
- Following your visit: send an e-mail or letter or phone to thank the staff and pupils.

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