



Brentwood Schools Christian Worker Trust Newsletter, Spring Term 2025

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“Serving school communities by providing Christian learning and support”



The Power of Education

Shigemi Harata is a great example to us all. This Japanese man became the oldest person in the world to graduate from university... at the age of 96! In some of our recent assemblies in secondary schools, we have been able to encourage students to keep looking for opportunities to learn and grow. In Proverbs 1:5, the Bible advises, “Let the wise listen and add to their learning,” and it was Nelson Mandela who said: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

It is an enormous privilege for us to be involved in the challenge of educating young people and children, to help them learn and grow spiritually. We are so grateful for the opportunities we have to do this through our assemblies, lessons, lunchtime clubs, pupil support and prayer spaces, all of which I hope you will enjoy reading about in this newsletter.

And if you think you might be able to help us to continue serving schools in this way, by volunteering, giving or praying, please check out the back page and/or get in touch. Thank you for your support.

Ian Kemble, Director of Schools Work

11 things we are doing with schools this term...

- Our Love Easter project with about 12 schools
- Our Sadness to Joy project with about 16 schools
- 61 assemblies in 28 schools
- ‘Pop-up prayer spaces’ in 2 secondary schools
- 25 OT/NT Mini lessons
- One-to-one pupil support in 8 schools
- A whole-school, whole-day prayer space in a primary school
- Lunchtime clubs in 5 schools
- A Curiosity Trail for Year 1 pupils
- Prayerfully Learning Together project connecting schools & churches
- 6 Q&A R.E. lessons with Year 11.

SAVE THE DATE

Our End-of-Year Celebration will be on **Thursday 17th July**. Please join us at 7pm for 7.30pm at Trinity Church. More details to come in our Summer Term Newsletter.

Pray for Schools Fortnight...

...is from Sunday 4th May to Sunday 18th May 2025. With GCSEs, A-Levels and Key Stage 2 SATs all starting within this fortnight, it’s a great time for churches to be praying for our local schools, especially for everyone involved in taking exams.



Holly and Frances with pupils at 'Darkness to Light'



Pupils at 'Darkness to Light'

Thank you

Our Christmas projects, **Christmas Wonder** and **Darkness to Light** were a great success. I would like to thank the churches in Brentwood for their ongoing support of our work and for hosting our Year 6 Christmas projects as well as our upcoming Easter projects. Holding these projects in churches strengthens the link between schools and local churches and enables the pupils to see how accessible and engaging churches are. Thank you.

Evie Bartlett, Project Administrator & Schools Worker



Feedback from a pupil at our **Christmas Wonder** project:

“The ‘Journeying’ zone allowed me time to think about things I don’t normally get time to”.

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Love Easter

At the end of this term, we will be leading *Love Easter* sessions with Year 6 pupils from local primary schools. We start taking bookings for these lessons soon after Christmas, and the available slots get booked up quickly. This will be our fourth year of running *Love Easter* and it has proved popular with schools, due to its calm and reflective nature. It is run in the style of a prayer space and many of the sessions take place in local churches.

The children have the opportunity to learn about the death and resurrection of Jesus, as well as reflect on related themes relevant to them in today's world, including: role-models, remembrance, hope, forgiveness, doubt and belief. However, the over-riding theme is that of Love, as the children discover WHY Christians believe Jesus died and rose again.

Alison Carmichael, Schools Worker

Sue with pupils at 'Love Easter' last year



Sadness to Joy

The Easter Story is difficult to tell for any age group, most of all little ones, but that is what we do in our *Sadness to Joy* lessons for year 2 infants. The key to our approach is in the title - our storytelling notices the sadness but looks towards the moments of joy and hope. The lesson involves plenty of movement and interaction.

Using 'The Lion Storyteller Bible', we follow the days of 'Holy Week': the children join with the crowds waving palm leaves on 'Palm Sunday'; they have their hands washed, re-enacting Jesus washing feet on 'Maundy Thursday'; they hear the story of Barabbas, Jesus and the Crucifixion on 'Good Friday'; and finally they experience the surprise and joy of the women meeting Jesus alive on Easter Sunday morning.

Sue Evans, Lead Schools Worker



Pupil comment from *Christmas Wonder*: "It made me think about what the Bible actually says".

Looking back at our Christmas Projects

In December, our team took a total of 34 lessons with 22 different schools exploring the Christmas Story through our projects, *Christmas Wonder* & *Darkness to Light*. Christmas is such a great time to talk about the Christian belief that Jesus came to the world as the Saviour!

Both lessons encourage pupils to WONDER: noticing the amazing moments in the story, asking questions about what was going on, and seeing how the story is about LIGHT coming into the DARKNESS. We thank God for the amazing depth and imagination in the responses from the children (and school staff!)

Sue Evans, Lead Schools Worker



Pupils joining in at 'Darkness to Light'

A teacher's comment on **Darkness to Light**:
"Amazing session - very interactive and well-presented. The children were hooked from the start!"



Pupils enjoying 'Darkness to Light'

Schools Work Partner: Aaron Watts (DRCC Youth)



BSCWT is delighted to work in partnership with several other Christian people/organisations serving schools locally. DRCC Youth is one such organisation. We invited Aaron Watts to tell us more...

DRCC Youth works across Brentwood to see vulnerable and 'at risk' young people supported, loved and empowered to reach their full potential. Working with local authority services, organisations and local secondary schools, we provide opportunities for young people to engage with our team in varying contexts: 1-2-1 support, detached (street-based) youth work, youth clubs and in school engagements such as classes/workshops and intervention projects. Through using a technique we call 'Gospel Informed Emotional Intelligence,' we seek to teach the love of Jesus Christ and His personhood to young people in a tangible way giving them tools to love, forgive, have self-control, to be patient and compassionate and then empowering them to make positive and healthy life choices in the chaotic world they live in. Our team is ever growing, and the need is great, with waiting lists for most of our projects - please get in contact to find out more!



Aaron at a school assembly

Aaron Watts, DRCC Youth - www.facebook.com/DRCCYouthBrentwood

Secondary Assemblies

This term, we have the continuing privilege of being invited to speak in various assemblies in several local secondary schools. Tackling themes such as "How important is it to have a mission in life?", "Are we learning, growing & getting better?" and "Forgiveness", we are able to share stories and ideas from the Bible, and elsewhere, to encourage students to reflect on significant matters of spirituality, faith and life. When kindly introducing our team in an assembly recently, one teacher told his students: "You're in for a treat! These assemblies are always great!"

Ian Kemble, Director of Schools Work

Primary Assemblies

This term we are continuing with the Biblical story of David in our assemblies for primary and specialist schools. In the first half of term, we considered the relationship between David and Jonathan and how it was tested when King Saul was trying to kill David. Combining the story from 1 Samuel 20 with acting, shooting arrows and a quiz, we encouraged the children to think about what it means to be a good friend and how that means making the right choices, even if it's difficult to do. We finished the assembly with Psalm 25:14-15: "...I always look to you, because you rescue me from every trap."

Holly Coleman, Schools Worker



Clubs

We continue to be blessed with GOOD NEWS concerning our primary school clubs! Warley Jaffa eXplore is continuing well, and Holly Trees and Mountnessing eXplore clubs have not only restarted but are flourishing. Larchwood Bible Club is restarting next term with new year groups and we have also been able to start a completely new club at Ingatestone Junior School. We also have requests from other schools to start new clubs!

Crucial to running clubs is our volunteer team. If you would like to be part of an amazing group, and if you have 1 hour a week to spare, please do get in touch!

Sue Evans, Lead Schools Worker

Pupil Support

A recent TV documentary 'Swiped: The School That Banned Smartphones' was an interesting watch. Year 8 pupils at a school in Colchester were challenged to give up their smartphones for 21 days. Their reactions and emotions were documented. Staff noticed a drop in anxiety symptoms, better sleep patterns, a reduction in symptoms relating to depression and improvement in working memory. 'The Anxious Generation', a book by Jonathan Haidt, shows how smartphones and social media have contributed to a decline in young people's mental health, and offers actionable solutions. This term our Chaplains are supporting around 50 pupils across 8 schools, many of whom are dealing with complexities linked to today's technological world. We are thankful to God for this important work and the privilege of serving schools in this way.

Fiona Mason, Operations Manager & Schools Worker



Prayer Spaces

We are carrying on with yet another bumper crop of 'prayer space' activity this term!

Our Curiosity Trail at Long Ridings has had 3 sessions based on the school RE curriculum about "Why do people pray?" and 'Charity'. At St Thomas' School, as part of the Prayerfully Learning Together (PLT) project, pupils have worked hard on ideas for upcoming lunchtime sessions opened up to all pupils in Key Stage 2.

All of Hutton All Saints School explored ways of praying with St Peter's Church, Hutton, and Year 6 pupils had a questionnaire and soon will have another PLT 'prayer space'. Pupils shared that they would like more opportunities to pray about others beyond their own family and friends.

For the first time students at St Martin's School were also offered a lunchtime 'pop up reflective space' directly linked to our recent assemblies.

Frances Coe, Schools Worker



Barbara telling the story of Samson at an 'OT Mini' lesson





VIEW FROM THE CHAIR:

As I write this, Christmas doesn't seem long ago but the shops already have Easter eggs for sale and it's only just February!

This time of year can be a time of looking back as well as forward to an exciting New Year. As we look back, we are grateful for the many blessings the Lord has given the Trust over more than thirty years. This has allowed us to grow and work in so many schools with seven members of staff and a large number of volunteers.

As we look forward there are a number of challenges that the Trust faces but we know that the Lord is with us and will guide us through these challenges. Plans are already underway for the Easter projects, and we are again thankful that so many schools are open to us going in to share with the children the Christian message of Easter.

Please continue praying for the Trust and all who are involved in the work of the Trust as we move forward.

Mick Bastable, Chair of Trustees

Finance Update from the Treasurer & Trustees



The Trust, as always, is extremely grateful and thankful to all individuals, churches and charitable trusts for their continued generous support of BSCWT.

The accounts for the 2023/2024 financial year are complete and a copy is available on request.

To the end of January, regular income was £57,076 and expenditure was £113,710 giving a deficit of £56,634. The deficit is covered by previous legacies and one-off larger donations.

We continue to pray for new opportunities that allow us to communicate with young people in our local schools. However, in order to ensure that our invaluable work endures and expands, we continue to be dependent on donations from both individuals and churches. If you are a UK tax payer, you may be able to make your donations go further by allowing us to claim gift aid. The charity would receive 25p for every £1 that you give.

For further information about making a donation please do contact me by email on treasurer@bscwt.org.

Please continue to pray for the work of the Trust and for the children that we are reaching on a regular basis.

Claire Lim, Treasurer

Schools Ministry Sunday

Thank you to everyone who helped our local churches to celebrate Schools Ministry Sunday on or around 2nd February. Next year, Schools Ministry Sunday is on 1st February 2026, giving us an opportunity to pray for all kinds of Christian ministry that goes on to serve our local schools.

All photos in this newsletter are used with permission. Photos of our 'Darkness to Light' lessons are provided by PhotographybyAnnaMarie.

How can you be involved?

If you are a Christian with a passion for schools, education, children and young people, and think you might be interested in being involved, please get in touch with us at the BSCWT office. Please join with us to:

GIVE: BSCWT depends on the continued generosity of people who support us financially. If you'd like to support the work financially, please:

- Set up a standing order or a donation via your online banking. Please contact us for a Gift Aid Declaration form, if applicable (or download one from www.bscwt.org/downloads).
- Contact us for a standing order mandate.
- Donate online at www.stewardship.org.uk/partners/20028156 or send a cheque to our office.
- For on-line banking/standing orders, please contact the BSCWT office for our bank account details.

PRAY: We believe praying for our local schools, children and young people is really important. Please contact us to:

- Request our weekly prayer email, termly prayer calendar and newsletter by email or post. Contact us at office@bscwt.org or 01277 523522 or visit www.bit.ly/BSCWTconsent
- Start a prayer group for schools in your church or start/join a prayer group for a particular school.
- Just pray - on your own or with others!

VOLUNTEER: There are over 40 people who give their time and energy to volunteer with BSCWT:

- Our **Associate Workers** volunteer with us in schools, working with children and young people (see www.bscwt.org/vacancies).
- Our **Trustees** oversee the running of the Trust.
- Our **Support Teams** assist the Staff and Trustees by doing important tasks in areas such as prayer, finance, human resources, policy-writing, events, monitoring and publicity.
- Our **Church Reps** help us to liaise with our local churches.
- We are also open to applications from people interested in doing an internship or work experience with us.



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