

CHRISTIAN CONNECTIONS IN SCHOOLS

(CCiS)

ISSUE 29. AUTUMN 2023



“Making Jesus known to children, young people and staff in the schools of Slough, Windsor & Maidenhead”

News from Wayne Dixon



Listening

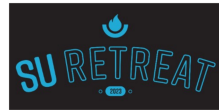
As a pupil at Davies Lane Primary School, my teachers rightly suggested I needed to do more **listening**. I've been sharing these memories as part of It's Your Move! sessions in primary schools, and have been reminding both myself (and the pupils) of the importance of listening, both to each other and to God.

An on-going lesson I am learning in my conversations with a variety of school staff, parents, carers and most importantly children and young people, is that **listening** to some of the joys and pains currently being faced by most of us is vital. Their stories are mostly to do with what happens in school, but others take place at school proms, sports days, school productions and even the high street. I am often reminded of the words written by the apostle Peter, who said: *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.* (1 Peter 3:15)

The lesson remains to listen first and then much wisdom is required.



It's now forty years since a six-month period in 1983 which totally changed my life and was key in my own journey. It started in April that year at Spring Harvest in Prestatyn and was followed by my baptism on 24th July, a Scripture Union Sports Holiday (1st -10th August which was just AMAZING!!!!), exam results later in August (not so good!) and then moving to Slough in early September to start a Business Studies Course at Slough College. My initial intention was to eventually move back to East London to become a Maths and PE Teacher! Well, this didn't happen, but as I reflect, I do thank God for these past forty years as I have tried to **listen** to Him.



This year's Scripture Union Retreat was held in Manchester over a couple of days in May. It provided a very useful opportunity to reflect, listen and learn from others, and right from the very start, it gave us brilliant opportunities and openings both to meet people and to hear about the ways God is at work. One of the things which stuck out for me was a prayer session led by Jenni Whymark on the Saturday morning. That was special – thank you Jenni and all involved in making the retreat happen. It was greatly appreciated!

Opportunities in Schools Ministry

On Monday 2nd October from 8.00-9.00pm, we will host a meeting via Zoom, which gives information about many opportunities for schools ministry throughout 2024 and 2025. These include:

Introduction a Church- Primary School initiative:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvEBYlycwRA

Christmas Unwrapped: <https://youtu.be/U-lcp5d0TaM>,

Easter Cracked: <https://youtu.be/lv07rOYbl4M>,

Examattack: www.examattack.org.uk

It's Your Move!: https://youtu.be/OM_ndo-RmOg

We will also mention several other ministries, including Chaplaincy in School, Christian Staff Initiative (C.S.I.); Guardians of Ancora; GSUS Live; Illuminate; Inter Schools Soccer Sevens' (Boys' and Girls'); iSingPOP and Classroom Worship; Kick Academies (Dance and/or Football); Open the Book; Prayer Spaces in Schools; School Christian Groups; School Prayer Groups (Staff, Parent/Carer); SHINE; T.M.M. (Tea Making Ministry) Pitstop; Wake-up-Wednesday; and Youth Alpha / Christianity Explored / Just Looking in Schools.

If you are interested in joining us, please e-mail or call using the contact details at the end of this newsletter and we will send out a ZOOM link during the preceding week.

News from Wayne Dixon

Following on from the Schools Conference organised by Youth For Christ, Scripture Union are holding two events entitled Introduction to Schools Ministry. The first will be held in Reading on Monday 9th October, with the second taking place online the following week on Monday 16th October. Follow the link for details:

<https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/introduction-schools-ministry-training>

ILLUMINATE

Photograph taken by Maidenhead Advertiser at Altwood School on Wednesday 26th April.



Illuminate was held in Maidenhead from 24th – 28th April, when LZ7 and Saintz visited five schools, during which they took two assemblies and fourteen lessons, and, including the Friday evening concert, impacted some 3000 pupils, mainly aged between 11-15 years old. The week's activities were the culmination of months of planning and preparation, where prayer and training events were held for churches and volunteers, and opportunities provided for Christian young people to come together. School staff feedback was very positive:

'Really enjoyed it! Wish I'd had that kind of thing at my school when I was a teenager.'

'Kids (yr 8) loved it! Great, thought provoking and uplifting session for them.'

'Absolutely AMAZING! Wonderful energy! Fantastic music! -Thank you, it is so wonderful to see the joy in the children. As a Christian, this feeds my soul!'

'An enormous thank you for yesterday and bringing LZ7 and Saintz to Furze Platt Senior School. As you saw, they were really well received with a terrific energy and positivity. While coincidental, having them onsite really gave the party feel as we celebrated our 60th Birthday. Colleagues who had seen LZ7 on their last visit were really impressed how the band and 'show' had developed over the last

decade. I hope that the Braywick concert is a huge success.'

'Please do pass on our thanks to the bands and everyone responsible for organising the events across Maidenhead schools this week. I hope that you are energised by your week with the band and once again have loved the experience.'

We had hoped to have a session in each of the schools on Wednesday 3rd May for those who attended the concert, or took part in the lessons and wanted to find out more about Jesus and the Christian faith, but that didn't happen on this occasion. No young people attended the initial follow-up session held the morning after the concert at The Braywick Leisure Centre, and even though five young people (all from Altwood School) attended the follow-up session the following Friday, and were invited to a subsequent series of after-school sessions, none came to these. We still hope that the Altwood school chaplain, Jo Ellington, will be able to hold an Alpha follow-up for these five young people and anyone else who would like to attend.

These experiences have shown us that there are lessons to be learned, the most important being the increasing gap for our young people between participating in an event like this in their schools, and becoming part of a church. We believe that the Christian young people already in our schools have a vital role to play both in praying for their peers and friends at school, and in introducing them to Jesus. Initiatives like **SHINE** help see:

(<https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/shine-schools>), as do school based Christian groups (see Isaac's article which is attached to this newsletter as an example).

Financially, there was a shortfall of approximately £8000, as the end of week concert didn't sell out, and there were fewer grant funds and contributions from individuals and churches.

Even so, my own personal conclusion is that opportunities like these provide additional

options in helping to make Jesus known, most clearly seen in the on-going conversations I still have with both pupils and staff who remember previous Illuminate mission events in 2010, 2012, 2015 and 2018.

It's Your Move!

Since the book came out in 2001, I have been very encouraged with the connections it makes with both Christmas Unwrapped and Easter Cracked, because so many of our local schools receive all three presentations. I also have the chance to continue these connections in other ways, e.g. taking part in 'Transfer Day'. It's Your Move! certainly works, as seen in the Q & A sessions that take place, using the clip from Lorna Cooper. Praise God for this ministry, which we hope to provide for all the schools which would like it next year. For this, we rely on the generosity of individuals and churches, so please see Ways to donate below, if you would like to contribute, making clear that the donation is for *It's Your Move!* .

Feedback from this time:

"This book has changed the way I now look at secondary school..... 'It's Your Move' has boosted my confidence entirely and I no



longer think of my new school as such a scary place. This book is incredibly helpful, with great top-tips, fun activities and even a secondary school planner! It's thought out beautifully, and I know it has helped many children biting their nails at the thought of moving up a school. It's laid out in such a colourful, organised and encouraging way, making it fun to read in bitesize chunks – or all of it at once! 'It's Your Move' reminds me that I'm not alone..... If I had to describe this book in three words, they would be: uplifting, memorable and brilliant. Utterly brilliant. To finish this off, I leave you with a piece of advice - It really IS your move." (Year 6 pupil June 2023)

Inter Schools Soccer Sevens

Seven schools took part in the girls' competition: Altwood, Beechwood, Cox Green, Lynch Hill, Newlands Girls', Windsor Girls' and the hosts, Furze Platt Senior. It was great fun, and various connections were made with other opportunities in our schools. Newlands won the competition for the second year running!



Ways to donate

To maintain and develop the work in our schools we are looking for individuals and churches prayerfully to consider giving to CCiS. If you would like to support us financially there are several ways you can do it, all of which will bless us:

- Visit <https://www.cafonline.org/> - I'm an individual > Giving to charity > Connecting you to charities > I want to donate.
In the search box type: **Christian Connections in Schools**
- **Make** a bank transfer to *Christian Connections in Schools*.
Account number: **00032898**.
Sort code: **40 52 40**.
- **Send** a cheque (payable to **Christian Connections in Schools**) to:
The Treasurer, CCiS, Westfield, 3c College Avenue, Maidenhead SL6 6AR.
- **Leave** a bequest to CCiS in your Will. Your solicitor or will-writer should be able to help you, using our charity name *Christian Connections in Schools* and registered number 1150149.

Pause to pray for...

“Prayer is the most SIGNIFICANT contribution we can make to our schools”



- Christian staff, children, and young people in our schools every day.
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- Pupils starting new schools – especially the new year 7's (age 11/12)
- National Prayer Day for Schools: Friday 29th September
- Opportunities in Schools Ministry: Monday 2nd October (8.00-9.00pm on ZOOM)
- Introduction to Schools Ministry: Monday 9th or Monday 16th October
- The young people and schools impacted by Illuminate
- Christmas Unwrapped, to be held in local schools and churches
- It's Your Move! 2024 presentations in 50+ schools for 3400 pupils
- Those in our schools and churches continuing to face bereavement, illness, redundancy, and other issues
- On-going plans for a possible Lighthouse in July or August 2025
- The mental health and well-being of staff, children, and young people in our schools
- Issues related to anxiety: eating disorders, depression, self-harm, suicide, exam pressures, low self-esteem, bullying connected with social media and family breakdown.
- CCiS Trustees meetings: Thursday 21st September and Thursday 23rd November



**Christian
Connections
in Schools**

We very much appreciate your interest, prayers and support as we seek to make Jesus known to children, young people and staff in our local schools.

Please let us know if your contact details are incorrect. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, please let us know by replying 'unsubscribe' via email, or by getting in touch via the contact details below.

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CCiS in association with
Scripture Union



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Work of CCiS - check out the video from the link below:

<http://ccischools.org.uk/about-ccis>