



in association with
Scripture
union

Christians and Sheffield Schools
connecting • encouraging • resourcing

Christians and Sheffield Schools (CaSS)

Annual Report

September 2020

CaSS is the work of the Sheffield Schools Christian Worker Trust

(Registered charity 1007305)

CaSS aims to connect

- Christians with Sheffield schools so that they can work together to serve their communities;
- Christians working in schools with one another;
- Christian activity happening in Sheffield schools by building up an overview of it.

CaSS aims to encourage

- Christians to pray for and serve their local schools;
- Churches to support members of their congregations who work or study in schools.

CaSS aims to resource

- Christians working in or serving Sheffield schools in a wide variety of ways.

Link Advisor's Report

“How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?” (Psalm 137:4)

An annual report, a 35th birthday for CaSS and a lockdown all offer time for reflection and for taking stock. These are some of my reflections on the work of CaSS over the past year:

- CaSS was ahead of its time 35 years ago in serving schools.
- We have improved and refined our key offerings of The Joined Up Conference and School Chaplaincy Training and are getting involved in new areas of training and resourcing.
- We have developed strong partnerships. Many of our projects are now delivered as part of teams with the major denominations of Anglicans, Methodists and URC. In addition, we have continued to be a mission partner of Scripture Union. We are making new connections with Together for Schools and with a team hoping to deliver mentoring. Our links with Open the Book (Bible Society) have strengthened and we are a Northern Networker of Prayer Spaces in Schools.
- CaSS is serving the schools across the city via membership of SACRE and The Diocesan Board of Education.
- Sadly, our work has been disrupted this year by coronavirus and lockdown, but this has offered space to create new resources and think differently about our projects.

School Chaplaincy Project

The aims/vision of the project:

- to start/encourage conversation around school chaplaincy
- to explore the challenges/opportunities school chaplaincy presents
- to start to equip/resource those wishing to become school chaplains
- to provide opportunities to talk with school chaplains
- to build a supportive community of school chaplains
- to offer further training to established school chaplains



Linda Gascoyne from Sheffield Listening Services (<https://www.sheffieldlistening.org/>) ran some introductory training on listening for our school chaplains in the evening of Thursday 26th September 2019.

We have set up a Sheffield School Chaplaincy Facebook group for the chaplains that we have already trained and for some invited others. We have 30 members at present. We hope to create a space to share good practice and learning, a place for discussion and support, and to create community. Recent blog posts from CaSS posted in the group have covered subjects such as 'Loss', 'Five Key Questions for after Lockdown', and 'School - Sacred/Secular Space?'.

We have made the school chaplaincy work more prominent on the CaSS website and there is a school chaplaincy stream at the 2020 Joined Up Conference.

I have reported regularly to the School Chaplaincy Support Group on the progress of the school chaplaincy project.

Sadly, the planned School Chaplaincy training for May/June 2020 was cancelled due to lockdown.

SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY TRAINING COURSE 2020

Includes - the difference school chaplaincy can make to the school community, being professional in the school setting, children and spirituality, Gen Z, understanding the school staff, chaplain to all faiths & none, listening, collective worship, SMSC, RE, SACRE, British values, mentoring, mental health, models & values of school chaplaincy, job descriptions, school chaplaincy scenarios, support &

resilience for school chaplains & those they serve, loss or bereavement, gender, drugs, opportunities to meet working school chaplains & more...



We have created a slideshow teaching session on 'Loss' and created a set of 70 Gen Z postcards to start discussion in various settings. We hope to get these printed soon.



Connecting

I am now a member of the local SACRE (Standing Advisory Committee for RE) run by the council and The Diocesan Board of Education.



I also, with partners, met with Sheffield Council to discuss helping those suffering from ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences). We had a workshop on ACES at Joined Up.

We were honoured to be invited to the launch event for School Pastors at Meadowhead School. What an inspiring occasion!



TISCA (The Independent Schools Christian Alliance) is an association of teachers and others concerned to promote Christian values in the Independent Schools of the UK and around the world. They met at Birkdale School this year and it was good to meet with them.

We were excited to offer a homemade Nativity Set in the 'Where's Jesus?'/Christmas Tree Festival at the Millhouses' Methodist Church. Hundreds of children have visited the festival with their families or local schools and found Jesus pebbles around the community. Scripture Union via CaSS supplied some free Christmas booklets for visitors.



Wonderful Julie Robinson painted over 300 Jesus pebbles! Jesus pebbles could be found in the church, the local shops and streets. The festival was a wonderful success attracting families, schools and community groups. Very sadly Julie passed on in February. We will miss her infectious enthusiasm. To see Glynis talking about the festival in one of Joined Up's short stories go to www.joinedupconference.com.

We have continued to make connections with individuals. Here are some recent examples:

- a teacher wanting RE help
- parents who were upset as their children's Christian Union was stopped in a local secondary school
- we found a speaker for a local church wanting to educate about online safety.

Prayer

Workers and CaSS Trustees continue to meet monthly to pray for Sheffield schools and issues surrounding education.

CaSS has been working in partnership with 'Together for Schools' to connect, support, encourage and inspire Christian teachers and others employed in schools. The launch event at St Bartholomew's, Primrose Hill provided a 4 day Prayer Space for those working in schools and finished with a wonderful evening of collective inspiration and connection.



Unfortunately, The Together for Schools / CaSS Prayer Space in March had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus.

We suggested ideas for prayer in lockdown.

CaSS wrote and shared two prayers for people to use to pray for schools during lockdown.

The 2020 Joined Up Conference (5th) was a great success! This was despite our (CaSS, Diocese, Methodist & URC) venue cancelling less than 2 days before! We were so very grateful to Wesley Hall Methodist Church and STC (St Thomas' Crookes) Anglican-Baptist for helping us out and for the approximately 200 folk who gathered together to hear two wonderful keynotes (Huw Thomas & Sam Richards), visit the vibrant marketplace and to attend three of the 18 workshops on offer:

- Children, Creation and God,
- Schools Work and Chaplaincy
- Messy Church Discipleship
- Internet Addiction and Porn
- Doing Theology with Children and Young People
- Teenagers and the Impact of the Developing Brain on Behaviour
- Playing with Stories
- Mental Health
- Intergenerational Ministry for Real
- Youth Ministry – Reaching and Refreshing
- Whole Life Discipleship
- Bullying – Off and Online
- Transition from Children's Ministry to Youth
- Identity – Sexuality and Gender
- Welcoming Children with Special Needs
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the Church
- Soulful Wellbeing – How to Nurture Your Soul
- Social Activism: Learning from Greta...and Jesus.

See www.joinedupconference.com for more photographs.



We were kindly given great reviews, although we do realise there are still things we can learn.

- “Keynotes and worship were brill.”
- “Short stories inspiring and varied.”
- “Workshops were really great.”
- “Very well organised.”
- “It was all excellent.”
- “Great day!”
- “Thanks to all the young people helping the day run smoothly.”
- “Really glad I came.”
- “The short stories were so encouraging.”
- “The organisers definitely pulled the rabbit out of the bag!”
- “An extremely worthwhile day.”
- “Really good meeting new people.”
- “A good marketplace to view resources.”
- “Great value.”
- “Interesting and relevant.”
- “Absolutely loved it!”
- “So nice to be part of this wider family.”
- “Love Wesley Hall.”
- “So kind of STC to help out.”
- “Really refreshing.”
- “I loved it!”
- “Good to share with other practitioners.”
- “Very high standard.”
- “Enjoyed hearing stories of what God is doing.”
- “Huw Thomas was great!”
- “Loved second keynote.”
- “Lots of excellent teaching.”
- “Loved it. Wanted it to be longer!”
- “Vibrant. Lots happening.”
- “Fantastic. Looking forward to next year!”

Open the Book

Fiona had a 6-month training and development role with Open the Book (Bible Society).

We have gathered our 100+ photos of OtB training/school sessions and helped the OtB/Bible Society create about 150 Facebook posts to encourage groups to connect during this unprecedented time.

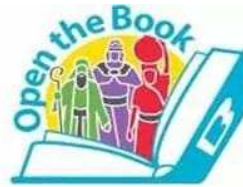
We have kept in touch with Sheffield OtB teams with email letters.

Open the Book Core Training at St Columba's Church in February was well attended, informative and great fun!



Fiona visited an OTB resource centre in Otley and hopes to use it as inspiration for the CaSS office.

We wrote a prayer that has been used by OtB nationally.



Father God,

I place my Open the Book school in your hands.

I give you all the teachers and staff who work there.

I trust you with all the children and families who belong there.

May they remember the stories of you that we have told them, as they face these uncertain days

Please strengthen them and protect them all from anxiety, fear and illness.

Help them to grow in faith, hope and love.

Provide parents with patience, energy and creativity.

Give our communities understanding, generosity, sympathy, and love for each other.

Grant the leaders of our nation wisdom, compassion and courage.

May we all put our trust in you.

Amen.

Further Resourcing

The **One Mentoring** project is being supported and has input from the major denominations in Sheffield and from CaSS. Although a lot of work has been put into this project, coronavirus has meant the project has stalled at present.

The Methodists and CaSS held a 5th Learning Hub. Rosie Dixon spoke with passion on 'Developing Young Leaders in our Churches, Schools and Local Communities'.

We have added lots of further links, resources and ideas to the CaSS website:
www.cass-su.org.uk.

Other News

We were saddened to report the death of Dorothy Beech (1926 – 2020).

Dorothy, a Maths teacher at High Storrs, was ahead of her time in understanding the value and importance of Christians serving schools.

A member of St Thomas' Church, Crookes, she was a founder member of CaSS, a trustee for many years and a great supporter of CaSS. We are thankful for her life.

Thank you for your support over the past, unprecedented, year.

Fiona Walton

Schools Links Advisor

Management Group Report

- Scripture Union reports that half of our children and young people feel lonely, half have been bullied, a quarter have self-harmed and one in ten say they have nothing to live for.
- NHS data shows that one in six children now experience a probable mental health problem such as emotional difficulty, anxiety and depression.
- The Children's Commissioner for England has described the dramatic increase in children struggling with mental health problems, exacerbated by the Covid crisis, as 'extremely alarming'.

It is within this context that the Gospel message of 'new birth', 'living hope' and an 'inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade' is as relevant as ever for children and young people (1 Peter 1: 3-4). I encourage prayerful reading of Fiona Walton's report (presented earlier in this booklet) in which she has set out the struggles and achievements of CaSS over the last 12 months.

The Management Group has continued to meet quarterly throughout the year and has responsibility for the governance of the charity and the management of Fiona Walton (Links Advisor) and Jacqueline Ryan (Administrator). We are a small group of trustees drawn from different denominations with an interest in the wellbeing of Sheffield's schools and all those who work and study in them. We are saying goodbye to Martyn Edwards this year, who is standing down as chair and trustee after a period of ten years. We would like to thank him for his work during this time and wish him all God's blessing for the future.

CaSS is a mission partner with Scripture Union and shares their passion to create opportunities for children and young people to explore the Bible, respond to Jesus and grow in faith. We highly value our partnership with Scripture Union as an international, inter-denominational, evangelical Christian organisation and share their aim to inspire children, young people and adults to know God.

Looking forward to 2021, School Chaplaincy continues to be a key priority for CaSS and we are grateful to the Methodist District for extended project funding for the next two years. CaSS would like to thank Sheffield Methodist Circuit and The Diocese of Sheffield for their help with and input into the School Chaplaincy Course. The next course for prospective school chaplains is being planned for 2021 to be delivered through a blended approach of on-line and face-to-face learning. We thank God for other chaplaincy initiatives that have impacted schools in Sheffield including School Pastors, South Yorkshire Chaplaincy and

Listening Service and One Mentoring. It is exciting to see all that God is doing to bless schools through His people and the opportunity to play a part in this.

We are grateful to Harry Bottom Charity and May Hearnshaw Charitable Trust for providing funding to develop an online community of practice to support trained chaplains as they establish themselves in schools following initial training. This has already been valuable in sharing resources during lockdown and we look forward to seeing how it develops further over the coming year.

Prayer is vitally important to support Christians working in schools. We are grateful for a grant received from the Sheffield Evangelical Trust that will enable us to develop new approaches that encourage prayer for schools in Sheffield.

We are very grateful to CLC International for use of their premises at 291 Abbeydale Road, an arrangement we have enjoyed for more than 20 years! We have a ground floor office and access to bookable meeting spaces. We do welcome visitors at our office but please telephone or email in the first instance to confirm office hours. Contact details for CaSS are on the last page of this report so feel free to contact us if we can assist in any way.

Martyn Edwards

Chair of Trustees

Treasurer's Report

A summary of accounts is shown in the table below:

	2019-20	2018-19
Income	£19,289	£18,899
Expenditure	£19,994	£16,465
Surplus	-£705	£2,434
Reserves	£3,415	£4,120

Income increased a little to £19,289 in 2019-20 from £18,899 in the previous year. This income has come from a combination of gifts from 16 individual supporters and 6 churches and grants from 3 trusts. We are extremely grateful to all those who support us with gifts large and small but we continue to be dependent on grants from trusts to keep CaSS running.

Expenditure went up to £19,994 in 2019-20, substantially more than £16,465 in the previous year. This was due to increased salary, insurance and pension costs. Salaries, National Insurance and pension contributions represent 91% of our expenditure.

We needed a loan to keep us afloat at one point of the year but that was repaid before the year end.

The charity had a deficit of £705 for 2019-20 as against a surplus of £2,434 for 2018-19 so our reserves are down to £3,415. These reserves are held on account at Lloyds Bank. To a large extent these reserves represent grants from trusts which will be used up in coming years to fund the costs of various ongoing projects.

The reserves policy is currently equal to one month of expenditure, which will be increased to three months when this is possible. Trustees are aware and regularly reminded of their liabilities.

We are thankful to Almighty God for His provision for the work of CaSS and continue to trust Him for the coming years.

A full copy of the audited accounts is available, on request, from the CaSS office.

Alan Nickless

Treasurer

Management Group

Richard Donkin (trustee)	All Saints Church Ecclesall
Di Durie (trustee)	Christ Church Fulwood
Martyn Edwards (trustee)	Meadowhead Christian Fellowship
Alan Nickless (trustee and treasurer)	St Thomas' Crookes
Glenn Evans (trustee)	Bents Green Methodist Church
Rachel McCallum (trustee)	Methodist Yorkshire-Plus Learning and Development Officer

Contact CaSS

fiona.walton@cass-su.org.uk

admin@cass-su.org.uk

www.cass-su.org.uk

07812 855 332

Postal address only - Christians and Sheffield Schools, c/o Bents Green Methodist Church, Ringinglow Road, Sheffield, S11 7PU

Twitter - @ChristiansSheff

Facebook - Christians & Sheffield Schools – CaSS

Instagram - @Christiansandsheffieldschools

Further copies of the annual report may be obtained by emailing admin@cass-su.org.uk.



Registered Charity number - 100730