



CHRISTIAN VALUES IN EDUCATION

6th ROUNDTABLE CONFERENCE REPORT

9th November 2016

Next Steps for CVE

Impact of CVE Scotland during 2016

Summary of report to the Roundtable conference by Beatrice Roy, National Worker

1. Support for Teachers

- The feedback we have had from Christian teachers over the last year shows three main areas where they are looking for help:
 - How to respond to the challenges of secularism
 - Permissions and boundaries
 - New resources and ideas
- Meetings and events across Scotland are our most effective way of supporting Christian teachers. These run in partnership with local Christian organisations, often SU workers and local committees:
 - The number of these events, and their spread across Scotland, has significantly increased over the last year: an average of 4 per year (2013-2015) rose to 8 events (2016)
 - 20 - 30 people attend each meeting
 - Typical evaluation comments: "Excellent ideas, resources & advice" (Aberdeen). "Delighted to see that CVE is helping to fulfil the aims of Curriculum for Excellence" (Ross-shire) "Valuable knowledge for supporting me as a Christian Teacher in School" (Ross-shire)
- CVE Scotland is now the only national support group for Christian teachers who work in the nondenominational sector. (Christians in Scottish Education, formerly the Association of Christian Teachers Scotland, was wound up during 2016).

2. Support for Chaplains and Schools Workers

- Support from CVE Scotland comes initially via area meetings (jointly with teachers and other volunteers)
- Chaplains are most interested in the resources and ideas on our website -- but generally, until they come to a CVE Scotland meeting, they are unaware of the website or what it offers.
- We have had inspirational feedback from chaplains and schools workers who are developing partnerships between local churches and local schools. We are very keen to work with others (including CVE Scotland committee member Rev Steve Younger) who are promoting dynamic approaches to school chaplaincy.

3. Partnership with National Organisations

- Education Scotland now recognises CVE Scotland as an official partner – a significant achievement for us. During 2016, CVE Scotland had a very detailed and productive meeting with Joe Walker, Education Scotland's officer in charge of Religious Observance and RME, when a number of new initiatives were discussed.
- Bee Roy and Richard Coton (CVE Scotland Secretary) delivered training for the Religious Representatives on local authority education committees; Andy Bathgate and Steve Younger also participated in their annual conference.

4. Support for Parents

- We have now expanded into the area of supporting Christian parents of school-age children
- 2 parent seminars have been run so far and we expect to run more in future.
- We provided detailed advice for the Evangelical Alliance's booklet for parents, *You're Not Alone*
- We have developed a new area of our website with wide-ranging advice for Christian parents, called *Any Questions?*
- Parent response has been very enthusiastic: "Amazed, inspired & resourced to do more in schools" (Edinburgh Event); "Encouraged and equipped by what I can do in Education for my child" (Aberdeen Event)

5. Website and Staffing

- Our website, mailing list and system of Prayer and News Updates continue to develop:
 - News Updates are e-mailed out every 6 to 8 weeks. These have links back to the website:
 - the number of people on our mailing list has nearly doubled
 - from each News Update at least 25% access our website via links etc: a very encouraging level of uptake
 - Our Prayer Calendar is emailed out every 10 weeks. Two thirds of those that receive our New Updates also receive our Prayer Calendar.
- Without our partners and volunteers, we could do nothing. We are immensely grateful to them, and we definitely need to grow their numbers further
- Beatrice Roy (our National Worker) started maternity leave immediately after the Roundtable conference. We are looking forward to her return in summer 2017. In her absence, we are delighted to have Kate Russon as our Part-Time Administrator. Kate brings a wealth of experience from both the commercial and charity sectors.

Plenary Discussion

Q. How can CVE Scotland reach 1000s of Christian parents to:

- help them become more involved / influential in school?*
- help them support their child at school?*

- Make a video on the potential influence of Christian parents/grandparents in schools -- to be shown in churches and on social media (target the video at Christian parents and church leaders, also at the wider church encouraging them to pray for parents, pupils and schools) #
- Link to SU Scotland's '*Back to School with God*' Sunday initiative -- and also with the wider teaching on Christian parenting/grand-parenting
- Develop local champions to spread the message
- Identify whether any other organisation is encouraging Christian parents to get involved with schools: if so, work in partnership with them. (An approach to the National Youth Assembly may also be worthwhile.)
- Work with key churches/networks of churches in an area in order to deliver CVE Scotland parent seminars #

Key messages:

- the increased role of Parent Councils, and the importance of becoming a Parent Council member particularly now
- the wide variety of opportunities for involvement in schools: school trips, library helpers, supervising lunches, etc etc
- prayer
- school involvement is a key part of Christian parenting/grand-parenting, not an optional extra (link to the wider teaching on Christian parenting/grand-parenting)
- a jargon-free guide to schools -- but also the jargon you need to use *in* schools
- the Church's involvement in schools is primarily to support educational aims rather than being directly evangelistic

Q. What role if any is there for CVE Scotland in supporting the development of dynamic school chaplains? (e.g. Chaplaincy that makes wide-ranging links between congregations and local schools)

Key Needs for School Chaplains:

- Share Steve Younger's research on chaplaincy + examples of good practice (e.g. Amie Aitken and the Chaplaincy Team at Carluke High School)
- Training on permissions and boundaries
- Emphasise the importance of teamwork in chaplaincy
- Training on how to speak into schools using their language.
- Training in how to support Christian teachers in the school context
- Emphasise the areas where schools are in most need of support by churches/Christian volunteers:
 - Pupil Support (e.g. relationships education programmes such as Romance Academy; mentoring programmes; loss and bereavement courses/support; primary intervention through TLG)

- Resources and/or people who can help delivery of specialist areas where school resources are increasingly stretched, e.g.
 - *music* (churches have many talented musicians , offer help running community choirs)
 - *Social media* (expertise for teachers and parents in the safe use of social media)
 - *Sports*
 - *Health & Wellbeing*
 - *RME: Christianity content*
- teachers are *short of time* and churches have access to volunteers *with time*

Suggested approaches:

- Work with Church of Scotland's education committee in identifying dynamic Scottish school chaplains; help them to network with each other and to be champions of best practice
- Work with others (e.g. Steve Younger) to impact training of chaplains
- Examine what training is already happening (Scottish Episcopal Church Institute: course includes a module which touches on chaplaincy; Scottish School of Christian Mission -- what chaplaincy model do they use?)
- Promote stories/experiences of good chaplaincy practice to churches, church leaders, Education Scotland etc.
- Increase use of our Facebook page and of Twitter to highlight our key messages and assembly resources; make our own video clips to increase our impact
- Offer input on the potential for School Chaplaincy, into future conferences for Christian youth workers
- With non-Christian teachers/ headteachers, explore their perceptions of chaplaincy

Q. What should CVE Scotland's next steps be in supporting Christian teachers? (How do we build confidence in Christian teachers to speak about Christian values?)

- Develop networks of Christian teachers
- Emphasise that teaching is a Christian vocation/ help Christian teachers understand what it means in practice to be a Christian in the classroom and the school/explore the impact on teaching of the fact that all children are made in God's image
- Encourage sharing good practice from other schools
- Increase use of our Facebook page and of Twitter to highlight our key messages + classroom/assembly resources; make our own video clips to increase our impact
- Start an online prayer requests + advice line
- Work with local churches to share the vision of how they can support Christian teachers and parents
- Help evangelical churches understand how the support-for-schools model *is* mission (help them understand "poverty")

Q. Are there opportunities for CVE Scotland to work in closer partnership with specific Christian charities/churches to achieve all these aims? If so, what can we do together?

Suggested organisations:

- Action of Churches Together
- TLG

- Youthscape
- Home for Good
- Bible Wonderland.co.uk
- Safe Families for Children
- CCPAS
- Church of Scotland– Education Committee
- Church of Scotland - Children's Group
- Fischy Music
- CARE for the Family
- Scottish Bible Society (see recent research by Fiona McDonald on use of Bible in literacy teaching)
 - use video clips produced by partner organisations on the CVE Scotland website/Facebook page/Twitter feed