

Report of Children and Families' Research Worker
Carrick Knowe Parish Church



October 2012

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1. Introduction and Aims

From April to September 2012, Carrick Knowe Parish Church engaged a Children and Families' Researcher Worker to investigate the prospects for expanding the Church's work with children and families in the Church and the wider community of Carrick Knowe and to further explore the possibilities for employing a children and families' worker. This research builds on the current minister's research during study leave, and the Church's experience in children, youth and family work.

Children and families' work is a key issue facing many Churches across Scotland, and it is often tempting to frame this topic in light of the declining numbers of young people involved in the Church's life. However, what has been enormously encouraging in the last six months is to see the willingness of the congregation in Carrick Knowe not to focus on 'managing decline', but to renew and build on their commitment to children and families in the life of the Church and the wider community. Building on this, the research focused on finding possibilities of projects that would carefully build on the strengths of the Church, remain rooted in the Church's values, and retain a sense of the Church's identity and belonging. It is hoped that this report fits with the congregations' desire for care for young people and children to be an integrated part of life in Carrick Knowe Parish Church.

Much of the information and ideas presented in this report have come through discussion with various Church and community members, who are to be thanked for their time and willingness to offer their thoughts and experiences upon which this report is built.

Aims of this report:

- To give a short account of the work done by the Children and Families' Research Worker in the period of April to September 2012.
- To present the research from both statistical and anecdotal evidence on the needs, assets and opportunities for support for children and families in the Carrick Knowe area.
- To enable the discussions and decisions of Carrick Knowe Parish Church in moving forward with its commitment to children and families in the local area and the possible employment of a children and families' worker.

2. Review of Work Undertaken

In the six months of the research project, a mixture of desk based research, meetings with individuals, and facilitated group discussion took place.

Meetings and Visits

- Youth workers from local youth project, The BIG project.
 - Head teacher of Carrick Knowe Primary School.
 - Community Police Officer.
 - Representative from CrossReach to discuss early years' care in Edinburgh.
 - Visits to two families with connections to the Church.
 - Visits to two leaders involved with children's work at the Church.
 - Meeting with Baptismal Families Elder.
 - Three visits to parent toddler group held in the Church.
 - Visit to the Guild.
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- Contact was also made with the Ladywell Health Practice, but it was indicated that they did not have time for discussion at the present moment, although they would be happy to hear more if projects or events were happening.

Formal/ Facilitated Discussion Groups

- Three discussion sessions with members of the congregation to discuss assets, values and possibilities.
- Youth workers from Uniformed Organisations, representatives from Scouts, Rainbows, Brownies and Guides attended.
- Discussion session with baptismal parents – due to bad weather, only one person made it along.

Church Events

- Families' lunch for parents, carers and children with links to the Church. 40-50 people attended, and it provided an opportunity to informally discuss the possibilities of moving forward with parents and young adults.
- Attending Sunday morning worship and a Kirk Session meeting.

Desk Based Research

- Data from Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics on indicators of deprivation.
- Opportunities for local partnership and funding possibilities.
- Writing up events and collating information.

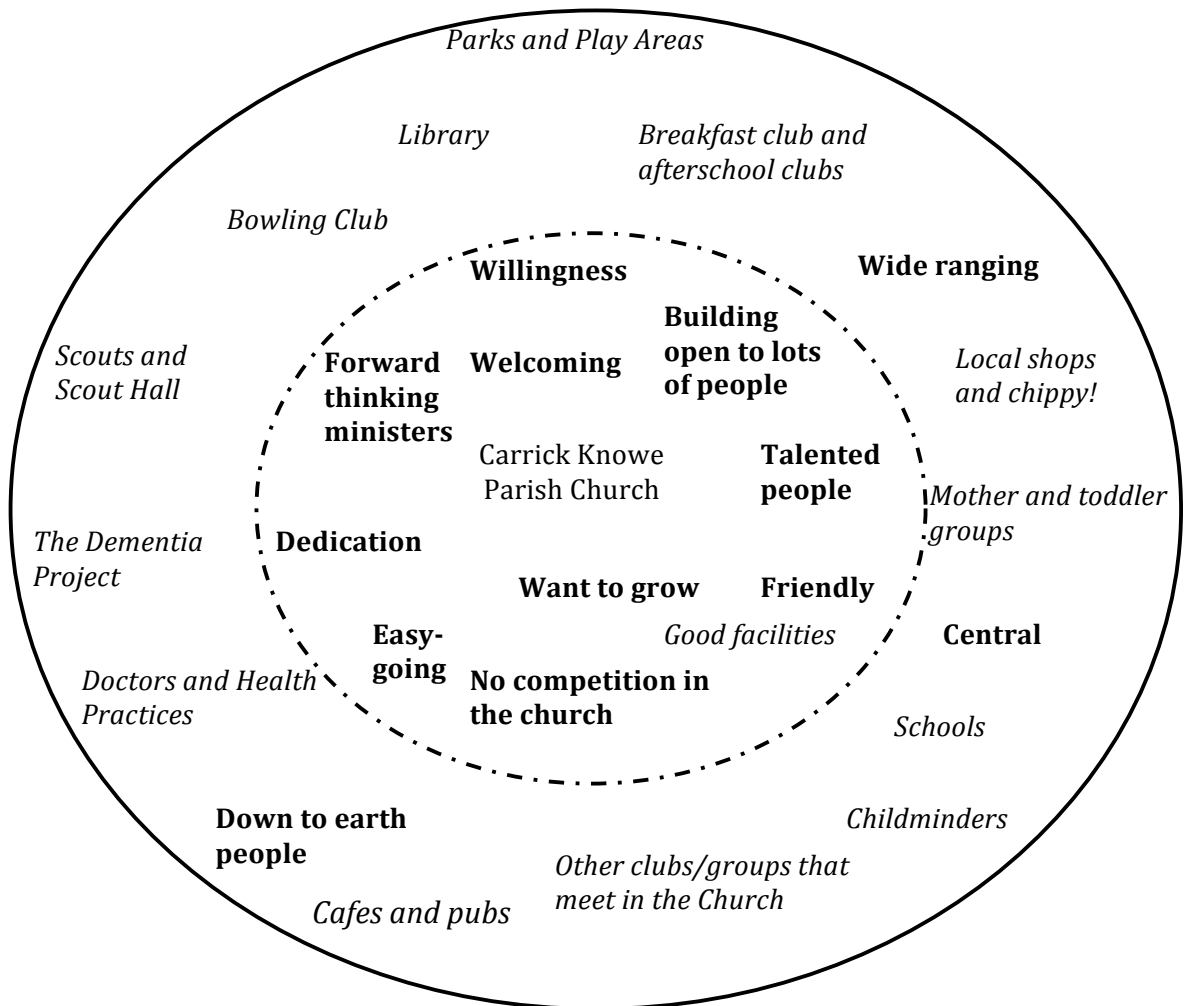
3. Assets and Needs in Carrick Knowe

Assets and Resources

The assets, or positive features, and resources of the Church and the wider community were identified in a session with the congregation discussion group. Identifying and appreciating these resources and positives about the Church and the community enables people to see what is going well, and what can be built on in the future. These positive elements tell a strong story about Carrick Knowe Parish Church – it is and can be easy-going, friendly, dedicated and is open to lots of people in the community. This doesn't mean that the Church can just sit back and keep saying that it is all of these things, but it shows that Carrick Knowe Parish Church has a lot to offer and can keep aiming to live up to these positives!

Assets and Resources Map

Resources are in italics. Assets/positives are in bold.



The resources are physical places and groups already used by families and children in the area, and provide possibilities for partnership and networking with the Church. Taking into account what resources are already on offer for families ensures that any future work fills a gap, or extends what is already going on, rather than competing with other community groups. The assets are positive elements, the good things about the Church and the wider community that can be built upon. For example, the friendly, easy-going nature of the congregation and the wider community was highlighted; this was important to the people at the families’ lunch as they commented on how much they enjoyed the relaxed and informal atmosphere.

This exercise shows that there is already a lot going on for children and families in the area, a view confirmed by a number of parents who felt that their children were already involved in a lot of groups. *However, it is likely that the parents reached by this research are well linked in the community, and there are many families in the community that this project did not have the scope to reach who are not well linked to groups.* However there are virtually no activities or spaces for families to come together in the area, or for entertainment like the cinema or soft play.

Assessing Needs and Areas of Deprivation

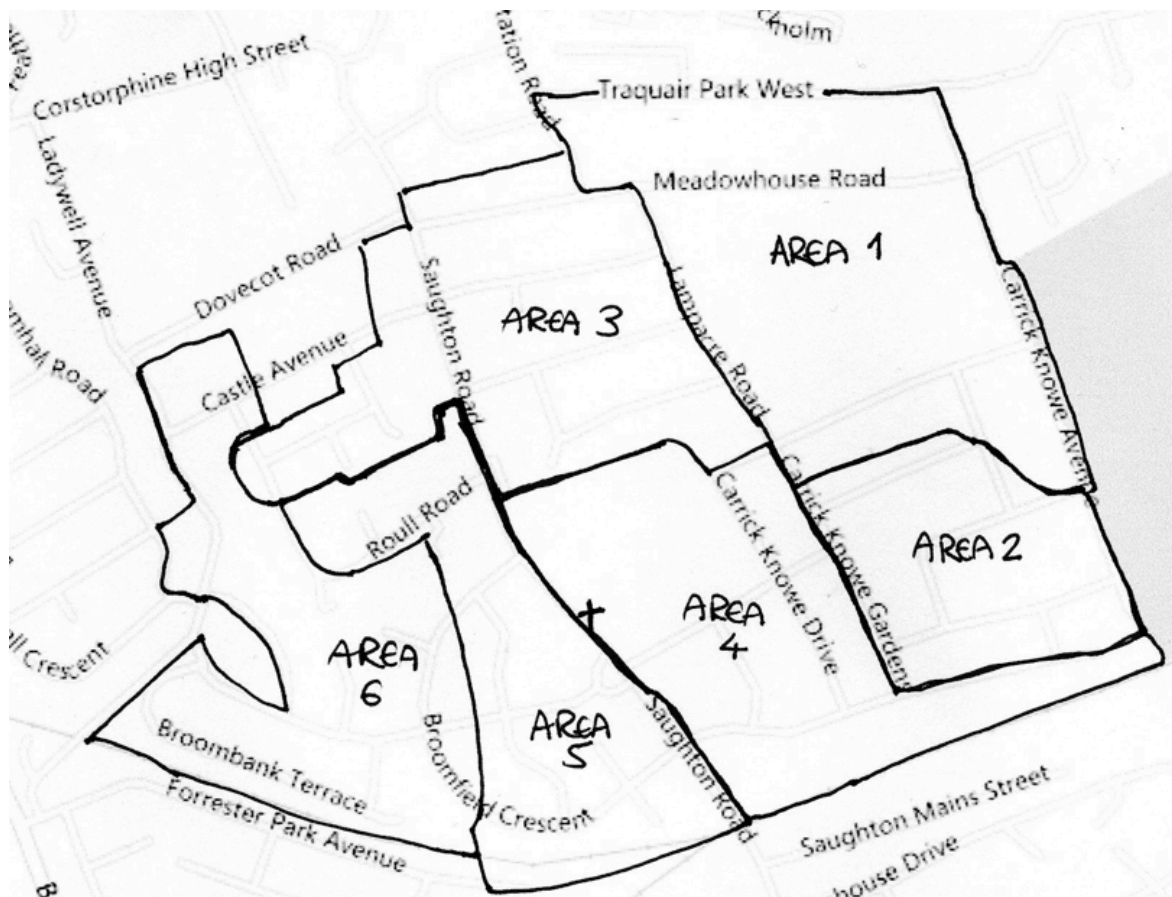
Whilst speaking about positives is important, it is also necessary to consider how a future project might be focused on enabling families in Carrick Knowe who may not have very much or are on the margins of the community. Data from the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics shows that Carrick Knowe has relatively low levels of poverty compared to the Edinburgh wide and Scottish averages, with income deprivation¹ at 7 percent and employment deprivation² at 5 percent.

Area	Income Deprivation (%)	Employment Deprivation (%)
Carrick Knowe	7	5
Edinburgh	11	9
Scotland	14	12

However, the area defined as ‘Carrick Knowe’ in these statistics is not the same parish, or the area that the Church would wish to offer support to. For example, Broomfield Crescent, Broombank Terrace and Broomhall Avenue (areas five and six on the map below), are not part

¹ Income deprivation is defined as people who do not earn a living wage and are identified through the receipt of Working Tax Credits or Jobseekers Allowance.
² Employment deprivation is defined as people who are unable to work through incapacity or severe disability.

of 'Carrick Knowe' in the statistics. This is significant as in these areas, rates of income and employment deprivation are higher, as with some of the smaller areas within Carrick Knowe (areas 2 and 4 on the map below). Whilst this does not mean that Carrick Knowe is one of the poorest areas in Scotland or Edinburgh, it shows that there is economic diversity within the area and that there are several families in the area who do not have very much, but do not show up on the average statistics.



	Income Deprivation (%)	Employment Deprivation (%)
Area 1	10	5
Area 2	17	7
Area 3	4	4
Area 4	18	8
Area 5	17	10
Area 6	16	8

Furthermore, the statistics for children on free school meals at the local primary school indicate that just over a fifth of children at Carrick Knowe Primary are on free school meals,

roughly the same as the Edinburgh average.³ Child poverty charities such as the Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland and The Children’s Society continue to campaign over the importance of free school meals, arguing that it is one of the key indicators of and important provisions for children living in poverty.⁴ Based on anecdotal evidence from the school, it is likely that children receiving free school meals are not accessing resources in the wider community; they are unlikely to be receiving breakfast at home, but are not attending the breakfast club at the school. As a result, it is worth considering what could be done to specifically build relationships with and be alongside those families and children who are less well linked to the resources and networks in the wider community.

Area	Children on Free School Meals (%)
Carrick Knowe Primary	21.3
Edinburgh	21.8
Scotland	22.6

Overall, the aggregate statistics do not necessarily tell the whole story of the community, and it is worth the Church’s time looking at the more detailed statistics, and building relationships with and listening to those who are not well embedded in the communities’ networks. Focusing on specific needs within the community, such as the 1 in 5 children on free school meals would provide a clear approach and achievable outcomes. There is also a good deal of funding and support for projects that focus on healthy eating and social integration for children.

³www.educationscotland.gov.uk/scottishschoolsonline/schools/freemealentitlement.asp?iSchoolID=5521920

⁴ www.cpag.org.uk/scotland/school-meals www.childrenssociety.org.uk/fairandsquare

4. Values, Vision and Identity

One of the main issues for the Church in moving forward is the desire for any children and families' work to be integrated into the life of the Church. Many members of the congregation have stated their feelings that any future project should be deeply rooted in the Church's identity and expression of faith. This is not to say that a project should be for the purposes of seeking conversion or be explicit in talking about faith, but rather values such as hospitality and being at the heart of the community should shape the focus of support in order to find a good fit with the existing life of the Church. As a result, two of the sessions with the congregation discussion group sought to identify not just what practical possibilities are open to the Church, but also what values and vision should guide the kind of support or project the Church can develop.

One session worked on resolving the polarity between wanting a project that focuses on *church inreach* – loosely defined as 'getting people in to church worship' and services – and *church outreach* – 'getting out into the community and meeting needs'. This exercise identified values and aims of extending children and families' work, and indicators of success in this area. Full details of the exercise are available in the appendix.

Children and families' work from Carrick Knowe Parish Church should:

- Have a wide pool of volunteers and a good skill base (from inside and outside the Church).
- Make the Church more vibrant.
- See the Church facilities are well used, especially by young people.
- Meet the needs in the wider community: physical and social needs, and spiritual needs, and the need to belong.
- Reduce people's fears about coming into the Church and provide a bridge between Sunday worship and groups that use the Church in the week.
- Be about the Church walking the walk, showing hospitality and showing that you can be unselfish in a selfish world.
- Encourage everyone to be honest and real with each other, enabling everyone into a sense of 'being human together.'

The indicators of this will be:

- Asking for feedback from the congregation before any changes are introduced (people feeling listened to on a deep level, feeling valued).
- Having measureable outcomes for a project.
- Being able to provide people with more information about what happens in the Church and the community, and seeing a stronger connection between the two.

A second session discussed the kind of vision for a 'good' or 'faithful' Church project. This took into account the reality of being a 'fragile' community, which is not a negative aspect of life, but rather that the Church is able to be a place where people can be 'real human beings together' and can be honest and find belonging around shared experiences. In this session, people expressed an enthusiasm for this vision for a Church project, saying 'I'd like to be part of that!'

A faithful Church project will have:

- ◆ Commitment and determination – people will get involved and be enthusiastic.
- ◆ Supportive relationships between people.
- ◆ A willingness to give – of time, talents and money.
- ◆ A common vision of what is being worked toward and belief in what is being done.
- ◆ Pulling together.
- ◆ Good leadership.
- ◆ Positive attitude and people thinking in positive terms.
- ◆ A wide impact – being recognised as a good place.
- ◆ Forward thinking.
- ◆ Reviews and adapts to the situation and is resourceful.
- ◆ Awareness and willingness to respond to others.
- ◆ Know assets and being self-aware.
- ◆ Supported by users and meets a need.
- ◆ Honesty about the challenges faced.

5. Themes and Ideas

Celebrate what is already working!

-‘Bring a friend’ days at Sunday Club and other youth events.

-Baptismal Families Elder. Although not all the families have been receptive, several families mentioned their appreciation of these visits, and as a result there are families coming to events at the Church that may otherwise have dropped out of contact.

-Relational, easy-going approach.

-Well-used hall by lots of groups. This provides a good community network to draw on for community events.

Support and extend current activities in the Church and the wider community

Family information letters. Some parents said that they weren’t always sure what was happening and when in the area. Let people know what’s going on at the Church and community with times and information for uniformed organisations, parent toddler groups, library rhyme-times, etc. This wouldn’t be a newsletter that people would be asked to write for, but an information leaflet with everything that is happening in the area; it would provide a service for families, and would strengthen links with other community groups.

Support for volunteers. Pairing up people in the congregation who want to support the work but don’t have time or energy, ask them to meet up with one of the people involved in children’s work to support/mentor them. Some of the uniformed organisations leaders mentioned that they appreciated the chance to get together and chat, so it would be worth exploring the possibility of getting different volunteers together a couple of times a year.

Build relationships with families the Church already has contact with. Some parents mentioned that they weren’t always sure what is happening in Sunday Club (one parent wasn’t sure if they had to book a space), and they would appreciate the chance for people to get to know them and their kids better. Although this seems simple, there are people who haven’t grown up through the Church or are familiar with the Church, and for them, it can be intimidating if they feel that everyone else knows each other. Also, people identified that several parents drop their kids off but don’t come in and it is difficult to get to know those families; one suggestion would be to place someone from the welcoming team on the cloisters door to specifically chat to parents.

Keep activities varied. I discussed the idea of a focused arts worker with youth workers from The BIG project and with the headmaster, but they recommended that mixed activities would be best for drawing in and keeping a range of children.

Build on times when there is more contact with the Church

Around Christmas more families tend to come to services. The youth workers at The BIG Project identified that Christmas holidays can be a very difficult time for families, and felt that a holiday club after Christmas and before school starts would be really helpful – it would provide stability for kids, and space for parents. It would be possible for the Church to run a two-day activity club in early January, which could be advertised at Christmas services and through the school.

Provide space for families to come together

Hosting fun and sociable events. Several parents said that whilst they felt that there was a lot on for young kids in the area, there aren't a lot of things for families to do together, which is particularly difficult when a family has children at different stages. The uniformed organisations reported that their kids normally eat alone and are not spending a lot of time socialising with their family. The head teacher of Carrick Knowe Primary said that he was beginning to see that kids are less sociable and less resilient as a result, i.e. less able to resolve small disputes. These events could include:

- Film nights.
- Family lunches.
- Family fun days/evenings with things like cupcake decorating, pottery painting.
- Child friendly community café (run regularly or as more of an 'event').
- Other places in the community are thinking about events like this and the Church could get involved in supporting them, for example, the school is thinking about hosting a bonfire night for the community – could the church provide a stall of home baking or flasks of soup?

Messy Church. It would also be possible to offer spaces for families to come together as part of the worship of the Church, with the option of running a Messy Church group once every so often within the Church – using arts and crafts that everyone gets involved with, not just the kids. However, it would be important for this not to be run in competition with or as an alternative to Sunday worship.

Explore opportunities for partnership

Crossreach. Crossreach is extending its children's work and is open to the possibilities of partnering with churches in the west of Edinburgh to host various services. These services would likely focus on working with children affected by substance misuse in their families, and offering counselling and recovery services to families. In particular, Crossreach is developing its early years' work. This could be a long-term possibility for partnership, and would focus on hosting services provided by Crossreach staff and volunteers.

Carrick Knowe Primary School. As highlighted above, there is already a good working relationship with the primary school. The head teacher is supportive of developing this, and would be happy to promote community events through the school.

Bring community partners together. The community police are keen to get involved with more support for the community and are likely to appreciate being asked to participate in larger community events, and were keen to find out what is happening with different local community groups. They were positive about the suggestion of a youth forum for getting together different community partners and volunteers together to share information and ideas around children's and youth work.

Target specific groups or ages.

Breakfast club for children on free school meals. This report has already highlighted that around 1 in 5 children at Carrick Knowe Primary School are on free school meals and would benefit from a breakfast club specifically for them. This would require picking the kids up and bringing them to the Church before dropping them back at school, and would need access to a minibus, a good team of volunteers and good funding. However, it would meet an identified need and there are a large number of funding bodies willing to support breakfast clubs, and provides an opportunity for thinking about long-term support to children in the community.

Younger and/or Older Children? A number of parents commented on the fact that there is a lot on for younger children, and the Church currently has more children in that age group involved in Sunday school, but less for teenagers. The Church could try to target an age group that there is less on for – for example, Andrew mentioned that P6 and P7 kids start to feel like there isn't a lot on for them, and they start to act up in school. Alternatively, the Church could choose to focus on younger children, and build on relationships with parent toddler groups, and Crossreach on early years work.

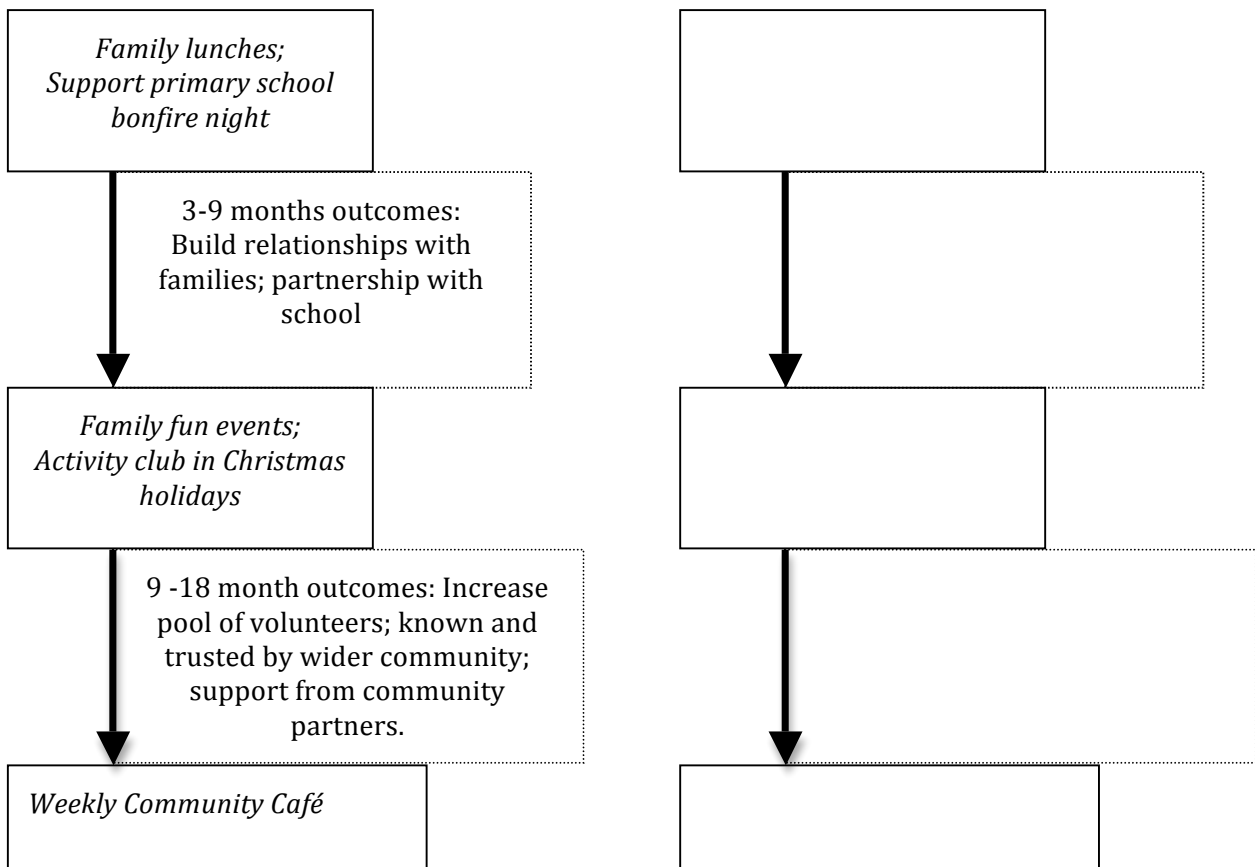
Opportunities for Employing a Children and Families' Worker

The opportunity for employing a children and families' worker requires careful thought, but is a good prospect for the Church to be considering. The Church would need to ensure, firstly, that there would already be enough happening with children and families' work for them to come in to, for example, the Church having started to work on community events. Secondly, there would need to be a group of volunteers who would be able to support the project. The Church would need to consider how they wished to balance the worker's time between (i) fundraising, (ii) delivery of services, (iii) co-ordinating and training volunteers, and (iv) building relationships with families.

6. Moving Forward

<p style="text-align: center;">Short Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Welcomer on cloisters door -Mentoring/ get-togethers for volunteers. -Supporting primary school bonfire night. <li style="padding-left: 40px;">-Family newsletter. -Regular families lunches. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Medium Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Film nights. -Family fun events. -Messy Church group. -Activity club in the Christmas holidays. -Community Youth Forum.
<p style="text-align: center;">Long Term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 45%;">-Community café. <li style="width: 45%;">-Breakfast club. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 45%;">-Hosting Crossreach services. <li style="width: 45%;">-Youth group for p6-7 kids. 	

Above is a list of some of the ideas for what the Church could do – please add more! It is useful to think about what outcomes can be gained from short term activities that would help in moving towards long term activities, like in the diagram below, where short term work helps to build relationships that enable the medium term activities, which lead to a greater pool of volunteers and support from community partners to work toward the longer term projects. Also - have fun along the way, get involved in things that you will enjoy doing together!



7. Funding and Training Opportunities

Awards for All Scotland (part of The Big Lottery)

www.awardsforall.org.uk/scotland

£500 – £10,000

Required aims:

- Bringing people together
- Increasing involvement
- Improving quality of life
- Helping groups to become well organised

Investing in Communities (part of The Big Lottery)

www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_investing-in-communities

£500 - £10,000

Could be applied for in partnership with the local school.

Interested in projects under the following areas:

-Supporting 21st Century Life
Projects such as: family support, befriending, peer support. Outcomes such as: Children at risk of isolation becoming successful learners, confident individuals and maintain better relationships with their families and communities.

- Life Transitions
- Growing Community Assets

Young Start (part of The Big Lottery)

http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_young_start

£10,000 - £50,000

Focused on children and young people. Meet one or more of the following outcomes: Confident; Healthy; Connected; Enterprising.

FiSCAF (Faiths in Community Scotland Action Fund)

<http://www.fiscaf.org/>

Small (£500 - £2,000) and Major Grants (£15,000) available.

Requirements:

- Locally based faith group
- Tackling a particular aspect of poverty in your community.
- Work is inspired by, and rooted in, faith.
- Plan to encourage the widest possible participation through your work.

Robertson Trust

<http://www.therobertsontrust.org.uk>

Small Donations: revenue donations of up to £5,000 and capital donations of up to £10,000.

Priority areas: Health; Care; Education and Training; Community Arts and Sport. Priority given to projects and posts which relate to direct service delivery.

Rayne Foundation

<http://www.raynefoundation.org.uk>

Current areas of special interest: Arts in deprived areas. Also funds social welfare projects, such as breakfast clubs

Scottish Community Foundation

<http://www.scottishcf.org/>

- Express Grants (up to £2,000), focus on community-led, small groups.
- Comic Relief Local Communities Programme (£1,000 - £10,000)

Baird Trust

The Baird Trust funds social projects (up to £10,000 a year) and educational projects (up to £5,000).

<http://www.bairdtrust.org.uk/>

The Tudor Trust

www.tudortrust.org.uk

No minimum or maximum.

For core funding and project grants.

Key aspects:

For smaller, forward-looking groups.

Working directly with people on the margins of society.

Building stronger societies by overcoming isolation and fragmentation.

Organisations embedded in their local community.

High levels of user involvement.

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

Provides reasonably high levels of funding, but would be best for long-term projects.

Supported Sectors: Arts; Education and Learning; Environment; Social Change.

The Fergusson Bequest

The Fergusson Bequest has traditionally funded the repair and maintenance of church buildings, but in has recently extended it's funding to some social and educational projects, and it is worth contacting the secretary to discuss whether they would be open to an application.

<http://www.fergusonbequestfund.org.uk>

BBC Children in Need

Small Grants (up to £10,000)

-Focus on young people experiencing disadvantage.

Alternatives for just Breakfast Club funding

The Sutton Trust

Tesco Charity Foundation

Garfield Weston Foundation

Ernest Cook Trust

Training

Fit For Funding and Valuing Volunteers

Faith in Community Scotland's Transformation Team offers two forms of training for faith groups involved in local anti-poverty community projects. Fit For Funding offers training and advice in completing successful funding applications. Valuing Volunteers looks at how to make the most of the volunteer base in your church and community.

<http://www.transformationteam.org/index.php?id=3>

Starting a Breakfast Club

Kellog's and ContinYou offer training across the UK for schools and local groups that want to start up a breakfast club.

https://www.giveachildabreakfast.co.uk/start_a_breakfast_club.aspx

ACE Training

The Scottish Community Development Centre runs the Achieving Community Empowerment training, which provides 10 days of strategic planning support.

<http://www.scdc.org.uk/what/achieving-community-empowerment/>

Appendix – Polarity Management Tool for Church Inreach vs Church Outreach

The polarity management tool looks at balancing two sides of an argument that are traditionally seen as opposites and that it is difficult to find a balance between. This tool maps out the ‘upsides’ of both Church inreach and Church outreach, and the ‘downsides’. Rather than focusing on trying to decide between inreach and outreach, it focuses on trying to identify what in the ‘upsides’ of both could be focused on. For more information, see *Managing Polarities in Congregations* by Roy Oswald and Barry Johnson.

