

Dear Friends and Supporters

We hope you are well and that you've enjoyed some fun times over the summer months.

### **God's story, your story, our story....**

As you may know, BSC was set up as a charity in 2015 under the governance of our Trustees, with Jane and Liz engaged as independent consultants. The vision was, and remains, to see more **churches in Bristol connecting with their local school**. But our story started way before that when Jane and Liz were both employed as Schools Workers by two well-resourced churches in Bristol from around 2007. During that time, they would sometimes share a cuppa together and, over time, began to realise that they both had a desire to equip smaller churches in the city to serve their local schools. Jane and Liz joined with a few others to form a group called CROSS (Churches Reaching Out Serving Schools) which aimed to support and encourage churches to connect with their school. Bristol Schools Connection grew out of, and further developed, this vision. It emerged over a number of years, through much thought, consideration and prayer.

**In the last 7 years** we have had the absolute privilege of working with people from churches all over Bristol. Jane and Liz have journeyed with many of you in small ways or more involved ways. We have seen numerous connections between churches and schools develop and deepen. It has been such a joy to see people from local churches becoming an integral part of the life of their local school.

**Fifteen years ago**, when Jane and Liz were first involved with Christian schools work, the most prevalent model was to go into school to host assemblies, lessons and Christian clubs. There was an appropriate level of assumption that children and young people knew something of Christian stories, beliefs and practices. The hope of the wider church in engaging with school was that children and young people would come to faith in God for themselves, and perhaps boost numbers and lower the average age at our church services. We want to honour the churches and organisations who undertook this outreach into their communities and celebrate all the fruit that resulted.

**We live in a changing world**, and much has changed in society, in parenting, in children and youth culture, and in schools and education. There isn't space to expand adequately on all of this here. Suffice to say that we believe that some new opportunities are bubbling up...

As we work with churches across Bristol, many are increasingly realising that going into school, and serving in whatever way emerges, is a **new way of being and doing church**. It's a Jesus-like model of being in the marketplace, meeting people where they are. This has been happening in some amazing and creative ways in our city – more on that at our upcoming event (see below) - such that countless Christians are now acting as 'Chaplains' to their local school, even if they don't explicitly carry this title.

As we look forward, we sense that God is calling church to go and **be and do church in the marketplace**, in the school community. And we have some theology, thoughts and ideas about how this might look.

We would love to share more of this and our vision with you on

**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> October** from **2 – 3.30pm** at **St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School (BS1 6RT) \***

for a time of story-sharing, celebration, prayer, looking forward and ICE CREAM! We would also ask you to **bring someone else from your church** who you think would be excited about this vision.

**Please RSVP with the number of people coming to:**

[liz@bristolschoolsconnection.co.uk](mailto:liz@bristolschoolsconnection.co.uk) or [jane@bristolschoolsconnection.co.uk](mailto:jane@bristolschoolsconnection.co.uk)

We love journeying with you all on this adventure. We are excited about what will unfold in the next chapter of this story. We value your prayers, your encouragement, and your financial giving.

With our love, thanks and prayers,  
Jane and Liz and our Trustees

\*parking in school car park or nearby streets

If you would like to give to the work of BSC, visit our online giving page [here](#).  
If your church would like to give, then please get in touch.