

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our annual review. Many of you will have received past annual reviews (formerly annual newsletters) and for others it will be your first edition, but for all of you we hope this review will give an insight into our ministry with children through primary schools and in supporting churches working with primary schools and children.



We are delighted to have built up a positive and strong reputation with many schools and churches over the years; indeed having been operating locally for the last 18 years we are greatly encouraged to be recognised by many adults and older young people who remember GenR8 fondly from when they were in primary school. Of course these encounters also serve to remind those of us who have been involved for many years how much older we are! But we are delighted to say with confidence that the GenR8 t-shirt is well recognised locally.

GenR8 started with assembly presentations, and these still remain as a core part of our work. Each term we visit over 100 primary schools in the Cambridge area, plus a further 50+ through our two affiliate teams in West Norfolk and Suffolk. This has provided a platform for other initiatives to schools such as Inspire Prayer Spaces and Cool Choices. Alongside these we run our residential weekend Xcellr8 and Growing Young Leaders (GYL) - two examples of support for churches working with children.

Volunteers are at the heart of what GenR8 does, and are key to reaching so many children. In 2017 Scripture Union launched their 95 campaign which aims to fly the flag for the vital task of sharing the gospel with the 95% of children and young people who do not attend church, reaching the next generation. This aim is at the heart of GenR8 and is the driving force behind many who volunteer with us.

As 2019 begins we would love to see more churches, families and individuals supporting our mission - so whether it's through prayer, volunteering, finance or taking an interest in our work by finding out more - we would love to speak to you.

Thank you for your support and interest.

Steve Whyatt stevew@genr8.org

'We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done.'

Psalm 78:4

NEWS FROM THE NEW INSPIRE DIRECTOR

Looking back, my time with GenR8 seems to have whizzed by and I can't believe I am writing this having been part of the team for a whole term! I started as Inspire Prayer Spaces Director back in August, spending time getting to know GenR8 as a charity and how Inspire Prayer Space Days and Permanent Prayer Spaces have been organised. This meant I could hit the ground running in September when I started to make contact with schools.



Since then, three schools have had Inspire Prayer Space Days (Thorndown Community Primary in St Ives, Elsworth CofE Primary and Great and Little Shelford Primary CofE Primary) all on themes of 'Me, My Community and the Wider World'. All days have been very well received by children, school staff, governors and also by the local church volunteers giving their time to support these days. I have been on a steep learning curve, getting my head around all the things I needed to do in preparation for each Inspire Prayer Space Day and throughout it all, learning to rely on God's strength rather than my own. I have been constantly amazed by God's timing in how conversations and contacts have been made in schools and their communities and I am so excited to see what the new year brings.

Siân Thorne



CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS

GENR8 ASSEMBLY PRESENTATIONS IN 2018

Teams visited schools with three assembly presentations in 2018: Spring Term - "The Choice", Summer Term - "God's Masterpiece", and Autumn Term - "No Room". Seven teams in all presented a Christian message to children in Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.



At Easter we showed that the gift that God gave the world at Christmas became the man Jesus who gave his life on the cross on Good Friday. We illustrated this using a gift in the shape of a box which opened up into a cross shape. The puppets discovered that sometimes friends are prepared to take the blame for something they have not done, just like Jesus did for us. But it didn't end there – a sketch explored the resurrection from the perspective of a number of witnesses, explaining that Jesus came back to life again on Easter Sunday, so that if we choose, we can be friends with God.

'I love the enthusiasm of the GenR8 team and the powerful message that is conveyed' – Headteacher

'For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago', Ephesians 2:10. This verse was the inspiration for our summer assemblies, sharing the good news that each of us is a unique and important person made and loved by God. We illustrated God's love through a retelling of the parable of the lost sheep, including a cuddly sheep, a weeping farmer and some surprising sound effects. The children had fun trying to keep up with the ever faster actions of the John Hardwick song "Nobody's a Nobody", learning that "God wants us to see that everybody's somebody – and that means even me!" In fact, He made us who we are and knows us through and through, as we reflected through a signed summary of Psalm 139.

'It was a good assembly as always and a wonderful message. I really enjoyed it as did the children!' - Headteacher



At Christmas our focus was on making room for Jesus in our busy schedules, and remembering that without Jesus there would be no Christmas. One of the puppets had organised a surprise birthday celebration for the other, but had forgotten to invite them to their own party! They realised that this was a bit like us at Christmas, forgetting to involve Jesus. Team members had fun rushing around to the "Busy, Busy" song, pausing to reflect on the arrival of the baby Jesus. The children joined in with a chant, telling the story of the wise men, learning that they were prepared to travel a long way to visit a child because they believed he was born to be king and save the world.

'The children really enjoyed the assembly and gained so much understanding of the true meaning of Christmas, in such a fun and interactive way.' – Headteacher.

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Altogether, teams in Cambridgeshire, North Hertfordshire, West Norfolk and Suffolk visited 160 schools with a Christian message in 2018.

Helen Tobiss and Kathryn Gee



AFFILIATE TEAM NEWS

The Suffolk GenR8 Team was formed in Gislingham about 8 years ago when Amy Robinson was here with her husband, Tiffer, the curate in the benefice. She introduced us to the magic of GenR8 and imbued us with energy and enthusiasm, acting as producer, director, drama coach and puppet consultant. Sadly Tiffer's placement as a curate finished and they both moved on – but not too far. The team decided to continue so, since then, five of us have toured local schools at Christmas and Easter. Being part of a GenR8 team is a bit of a love/hate relationship. We all hate having to learn the lines, organise props and costumes and set aside time for rehearsals and “performances”. We love, love, love the reaction from the children we reach. The excitement on their faces when they realise that GenR8 are visiting for the assembly is obvious, palpable and so rewarding. The beams of expectation and the little shy waves as the children come in are an expression of their eager anticipation. Their attentiveness, laughter and thoughtfulness during moments of reflection illustrate how successful the GenR8 scripts are at entertaining and engaging, whilst delivering strong powerful messages. We are privileged to be able to reach so many children – we even visit the village school where Amy now lives. She is a friendly critic and can see how her seed of an idea has grown and matured. The thanks of head teachers, staff and children make all the effort a joy. Thank you Steve and all the GenR8 team for all your support and encouragement.



Chris Pitt (Suffolk Affiliate team)

43 schools in 11 days!!! Presentations to some 6000+ children and staff! This is the power of GenR8 in our area of West Norfolk. It constantly seems to us an almost unreal joy and blessing that we are allowed to deliver the name of Jesus in such a powerful way to so many hearts and minds, to see the smiles of expectation and anticipation on faces eager to receive the name of Jesus (and Christmas, of course!); yet it is the genius of the writing and the script that allows the constant flow of one to the other, so that the pressures and worldliness of the season can so readily be translated into the more meaningful and deeper message of the Messiah. May the Lord continue to inspire us, bless us and keep us close.

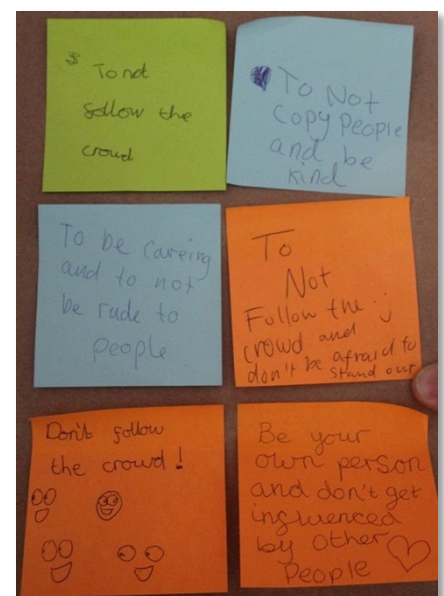
Brian, Josephine and Anne (West Norfolk Affiliate team)

COOL CHOICES 2018

When I looked into joining Cool Choices two years ago, I was very impressed by the content of the programme and since then, it certainly hasn't disappointed me as we have had some amazing visits into Cambridgeshire schools. The workshop itself always has a huge impact on the children and the staff. It gets everyone thinking, talking and supporting each other through drama, games, discussions and lots of thinking and reflection. The feedback from staff is almost always “excellent” and you can tell the Year 6 children have really appreciated the sessions.

We seem to cover a wide list of subjects, all of which are so important as the children move into secondary school and teenage life. The Cool Choices programme provides time and space for the children to think for themselves and think 'out of the box' about life's choices - big and small - and how they impact on everyone around them and themselves. You can see that the children love all the games and the drama sketches are also a highlight. I love the fact that we end the sessions from a Christian point of view, through considering the wise and foolish builder (Jesus can be the foundation to build our lives upon and to help us make 'cool choices' in life), and through a video clip from a highly motivated Christian who has tetra-amelia syndrome, a rare disorder characterised by the absence of arms and legs, which leaves everyone with the 'WOW' factor!

Caroline Lamaison (GenR8 Cool Choices volunteer)



INSPIRE PERMANENT PRAYER SPACES

This is the second year that St. Peter's church has supported permanent Prayer Spaces at Barton Primary School. As two members of St. Peter's, we began the link between church and school with some uncertainty as to how we would be involved in this new venture. This was soon remedied by a meeting with Janet King (GenR8 volunteer) over coffee at Burwash Manor!

Barton Primary is a church school where the Christian ethos is very much in evidence with class and whole school assemblies being regularly held in the church. The head teacher suggested that we use a deep window recess in the main hall for the permanent prayer space. This has worked very well and from time to time we have included the school's wooden cross, circle of joined hands and recently the Christmas tree alongside the GenR8 Advent display.



We have introduced some of the prayer space themes in morning assembly and teachers take classes in groups to reflect on the topic and participate in the activities, one of the most popular being the Harvest "thanks" paper chain which we later displayed in church. The ingredients for Christingles were donated by St. Peter's and we spent a busy but fun morning working alongside children and staff making the Christingles in school.

We have been made very welcome in school and feedback indicates that Permanent Prayer Spaces is much appreciated and we feel it enhances the link between church and school.

Margaret and Ruth

'Working with GenR8 with Permanent Prayer Spaces in Oakington has been amazing for me and along with other initiatives that I have been involved with it gives me an appreciation of GenR8's work in the area. I love prayer spaces as it really supports children and schools. The support GenR8 offers is great and it's been helpful to meet others from local churches to talk over our ideas.' - Ben Phillips, Church Family Worker.

IT'S YOUR MOVE

Last year the team were able to visit 15 primary schools during our It's Your Move week in July. Key to It's Your Move is the involvement of older young people going back into primary schools to lead interactive lessons with Year 6 students facing the transition to secondary school. This year we were able to offer two schools our Inspire prayer space 'transition' sessions which give students the opportunity to reflect further on their impending move. Feedback was very positive, particularly about the young people's involvement in these sessions – they were Heather, Claire-Louise, Joe, Grace, Florie, Caitlin and Lauren. Here's what two of the team said:



'I really enjoyed meeting the children and making them feel more comfortable about starting secondary school. A huge benefit of doing Its Your Move with GenR8 was that lots of the children recognised me when they came up to my secondary school, some talked to me about how they were finding secondary school, it was really lovely to hear how well they doing.' - Claire-Louise

'What I noticed when we did our presentations was how well the children responded to us as young team who were close to them in age. All of the children seemed to learn a lot and appreciate what we were doing. It was nice to see that in every school we went to the children looked forward to GenR8! For me I enjoyed working as a team with people my own age and doing something which I knew really made a difference.' - Heather

Here's what two visitors said about the sessions:

'Great programme and team.' - Lynn; *'The energy of the young people was astounding'* - Sarah.

CHILDREN OUTSIDE SCHOOL

GROWING YOUNG LEADERS (GYL)

We were delighted that thirteen young people booked into our third GYL day in May and that many of the young people were able to attend our reunion a few months later. GYL is a key opportunity for this age range that often sees young people at a crucial time of transition at both school and church. GYL recognises both this transition and the leadership potential of many young people in church. GYL is a day to encourage that potential and inspire further young people's faith journeys.

We are delighted that seven young people who have attended GYL over the past 3 years have become young leaders at our Xcellr8 weekend where they can get hands-on experience of leadership. In an ideal world we would like to create further opportunities within GenR8 for children and young people to have leadership experience, but time and resources are at present limited.

If you know of any young people in Years 6-8 who would benefit from a GYL day, do get in touch.

Here's a couple of comments from GYL 2018:

'The girls got so much out of the day, they couldn't stop talking about it all the way home! They are presenting what they did and got out of the day to the benefice congregation on Sunday...' - Children's worker

'I enjoyed the kindness we were all shown and the fact that the leaders weren't rushing anything and that they were making sure we all understood it by making games out of it and making sure we all understood it. I also enjoyed that we were given time to communicate with our peers, talk and laugh together...' - David (Yr7)



XCELLR8



Xcellr8 is our annual residential weekend for children aged 8-11. Our theme for 2018 was 'Communic8' with our teaching focus on the Lord's Prayer. 64 children attended the weekend and enjoyed the usual mix of fun, games, challenges and small group sessions. We were privileged to have a team of 48 leaders including over 20 young leaders ranging from school years 8-13. Here's what Emily, who has been on our young team for the last 5 years, says about Xcellr8:

'Xcellr8 is always one of the highlights of my year!!! There's such great atmosphere on the weekend and seeing the children having fun whilst learning about Jesus is incredible. Being a young leader enables you to grow in confidence and challenge yourself with different activities so you become a great role model to the children. This is also one of the many benefits that the children receive from the weekend as they see how God has changed many young people's lives.'

ADULTS – SUPPORT AND SUPPORTERS

BIG PICTURE

Working alongside Nicola Grieves from the Eastern URC and Debbie Hill the Ely Diocesan children's advisor, we ran our second Big Picture day back in January. Run every two years, Big Picture is an opportunity for children's and youth workers to reflect on and grow their vision for work with children and young people. Each of the 4 one-hour sessions on Church, Community, Mission and You has a short upfront time followed by several different opportunities for attendees to reflect on their own situation and environment. These included a prayer space room, a creative zone, as well as opportunities to carry on the conversation with the session leader, and time to talk with others from different churches or with the people from the same church. It has proved a positive and popular day;

'Inspiring, challenging, run well'

'Thank you for giving me the space today to really listen'

'Brilliant!'

'Very thought provoking'

'Wow, what a great day! Time to listen, reflect, create, network, and for myself.'

'I felt the whole day was stimulating.'



CHILDREN'S WORKER NETWORK

During the last year, alongside Katie and Josie from C3, we organised termly gatherings for those who work with children in a paid or significant volunteering role. These are opportunities to touch base over lunch and chat about the issues and challenges of children's ministry. We rarely get to conclusions or answers but those who have attended have found it helpful to chat with people who share an appreciation of some of the issues that children's workers face as well as the challenges society and culture bring in a fast-moving world.

If you know anyone who might be interested in these in the year ahead do get it touch.

'Thank you for arranging the network meeting on Monday, it was very interesting and good to meet others in similar jobs.'

CHURCH SERVICES & EVENTS

For several years GenR8 has been invited from time to time to lead all-age church services. Over the last year we again have been privileged to visit several churches from different denominations. It's great to be able to share some of what we do with children in primary schools with a wider audience. We are delighted to get comments from all ages such as:

'I just wanted to thank you both so much for all of your truly amazing input'

'Thank you again for the service you took last week. It was a strong message that, I think, impacted on many - young and old alike'

'It made me feel young again!'

We are also pleased to be able to visit church groups such as mission groups and women's meetings. It is great to get an opportunity to share what we do and why we do it with people who otherwise might not hear about our work. It's always humbling to hear how different generations value what we do and to receive such positive feedback and encouragement.

If you would like to explore GenR8 leading or inputting into an all-age service or church related group do get in touch.



Entertaining the Caravanners and Campers Christian Fellowship

TRAIN UP

Unfortunately, we had to cancel our Train Up day in October for those who work with children due to a lack of firm bookings. Train Up has been an umbrella for training evenings and days over the past years and it was sad that a day that promised so much had to be cancelled.

SHOWCASE

The Showcase evening on Tuesday 2nd October was a enjoyable event that brought together many friends of GenR8, old and new, to share and 'celebr8' all things GenR8. The evening started with a short quiz activity as an icebreaker and then an opening worship song and prayer led by John Hardwick. Our director, Steve Whyatt shared a bit about what motivates us to work with this generation of young people and introduced some of our assembly presentation volunteers – Jane Farewell, Kathryn Gee, David Newton, Bev Thomas and Petal White. The team presented a short sketch from the summer tour and demonstrated how we prepare practically to go into schools with an assembly. Following this, two of our volunteers, Jackie and Peter Smith, let us know about the Cool Choices programme that encourages Year 6 students to think about the choices they make everyday and how to distinguish between good and bad choices.



The Xcellr8 residential weekend was enthusiastically talked about by Ruth Barry and one of our young team, Emily Staplehurst, who even demonstrated the art of carrot flinging! Siân Thorne, our new Inspire Prayer Spaces Director, then talked about the Inspire programme and two of the volunteers, Ruth Terrell and Alex Gullon, shared their inspirational stories of working alongside children at an Inspire Prayer Spaces day. They gave a great insight into the impact these days make and how open the children often are to think about and pray at the various prayer stations.

Heather Magowan (Year 10) and Joe Gilmore (Year 11), two of the young people who took part in our 2018 It's Your Move week admirably demonstrated and shared their insights and experiences of being on the 2018 team and, as part of that, led a short quiz on phobias. Did you know that phobophobia is the fear of phobias?!

Janet King, a key volunteer in our Inspire permanent prayer spaces project, spoke passionately about the impact and importance of having permanent prayer spaces in schools and by having two different 'displays' on show was able to give a strong visual representation of this area of work.

Kathryn Gee gave the answers to the booking coordinator puzzle that was given out on arrival, and shared something about this important administrative role. The evening was concluded with Lynn Murdoch talking about her journey joining GenR8's trustee body and with Director, Steve Whyatt sharing a bit about other activities we undertake and how people could get involved with our mission.

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

Last year we welcomed Lucy Mann to the GenR8 team but unfortunately due to personal circumstances Lucy stepped down from her staff role at the end of March 2018. We are delighted that since then Lucy has been able to volunteer in our assembly presentation teams. We are very pleased that Siân Thorne has joined the staff team, taking over Lucy's work directing Inspire Prayer Spaces and Permanent Prayer Spaces. At the start of 2018, Helen Tobiss joined the staff as our Communications Coordinator, replacing Debbie Jackman; Julia Stone (Administration and Bookings coordinator) continues to do an amazing job with the administration and bookkeeping, and with Steve Whyatt (Director) this makes up our current staff team.

We have welcomed several new faces to our volunteer presentation teams including Laura Thomas, Kelli Nelson and Mike Sweetlove. Alex Gullon and Ruth Terrell have joined the Inspire team and Bev Thomas has taken on the booking coordinator role for the Central team. At the same time we have sadly had to say goodbye to Jane and Mike Askew who have been part of the Royston team for many years, but have moved 'up North' to be near their family and to Nick Lewis who is also relocating.



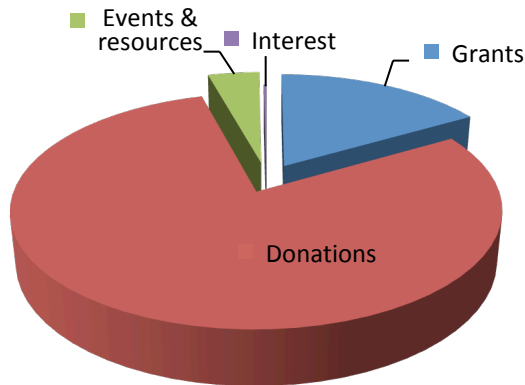
The GenR8 Trustees

BEHIND THE SCENES

FINANCES

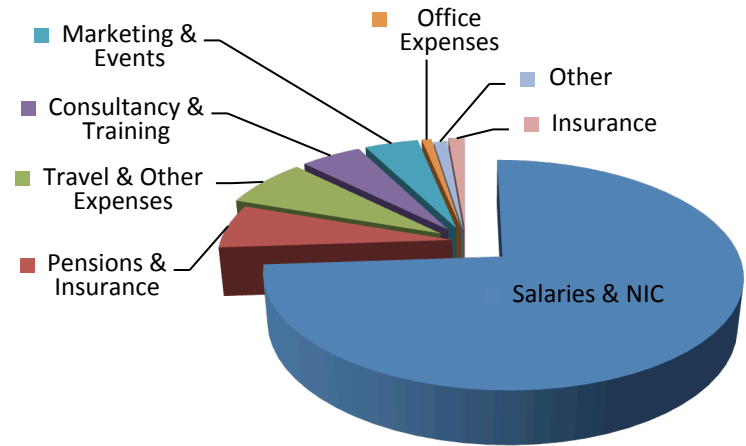
Where do our finances come from?

2017-18 Income

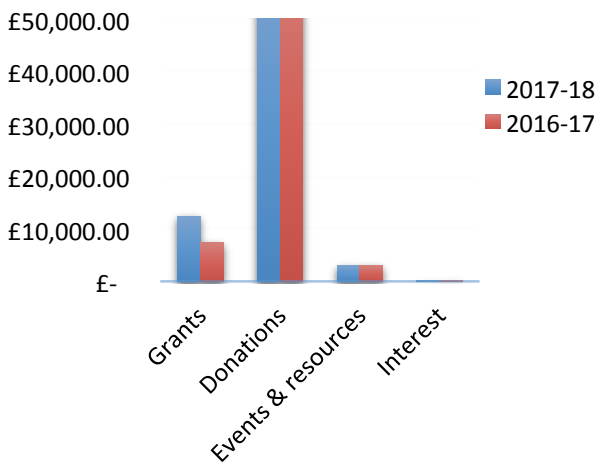


Where is our money spent?

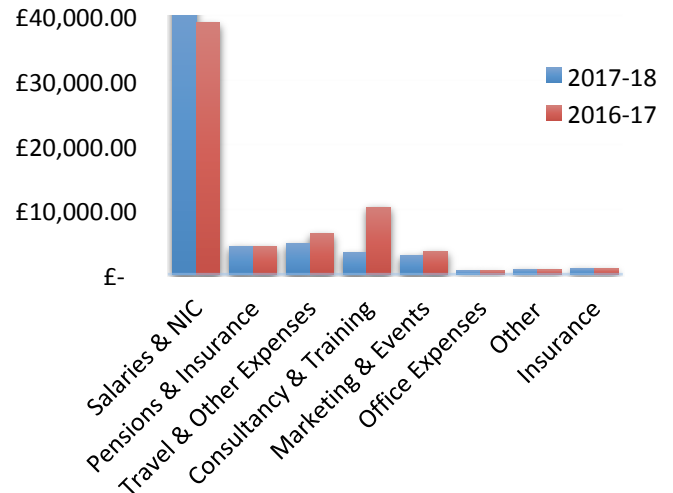
2017-18 Expenditure



Income Comparison by FY



Expenditure Comparison by FY



Income over the 2017/2018 financial year totalled £74,612, with expenditure of £67,123: a surplus. We are very grateful to all the individuals, families, churches, schools and businesses for their generosity. We are also thankful for grants from several trusts towards our work with Inspire Prayer Spaces. If you are interested in finding out more about how you can financially support or fundraise for GenR8 please contact steve@genr8.org

Nick Roger (GenR8 Treasurer)

A TRUSTEE'S REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Hello, I'm Steve, the latest recruit to the GenR8 board of trustees, and a vicar in a team of churches to the west of Cambridge. I began to hear good things about GenR8 fairly soon after I arrived in the area nearly ten years ago, so I'm delighted to have the chance to contribute to their work. Primary schools are a significant part of my ministry, and one that I enjoy hugely - I love the energy, directness, and willingness to get involved that the children have. In an era when cultural knowledge of the Bible and the Christian faith are fainter than ever, most children are not hearing about Jesus at home, so the opportunity to bring the Gospel to them at school is a literal Godsend.

When I heard that the GenR8 trustees would have a vacancy, I felt the Holy Spirit nudging me to offer myself. My position as a local church leader gives me opportunities to increase the awareness of GenR8 in local churches, many of whom don't have the resources to do their own work with children or schools. My hope is that more awareness will translate into more support and more volunteers so that GenR8 can continue its critical work of bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to children.

Rev. Stephen Day



WHAT LIES AHEAD?

Our thoughts for the year ahead are filled with excitement and anticipation. God willing, we will continue with much of the activity that has been a feature of our work over the last few years, with the added possibility that one or two new initiatives might come to fruition. Every new year brings its own challenges and changes, but we hope and pray that these will help us in the mission to which we believe God has called us.

New Volunteers

As always we do need to increase our volunteering base; without volunteers we would not be able to continue this mission and share God's love with this generation. Last year Scripture Union launched their '95 campaign' to reach the 95% of children and young people who don't go to church, this is at the heart of why we do what we do. There are various ways to get involved - with assembly presentations, Inspire Prayer Spaces, Inspire Permanent, Cool Choices, behind the scenes administration work and more - please do get in touch.

Website

We are hoping that 2019 will be the year that we can launch our new-look website. It has proved to be a slow process with frustrations with our email system along the way, but we are looking forward to the new website coming online very soon.

IT Support

We do have need from time to time for some support, advice and guidance in the area of IT. If you know of anyone who might have some time on a volunteer basis it would be great to hear from you.

Financial support

In 2019 we are keen to increase our financial support; we are always on the look-out for churches, families, individuals, as well as businesses who can encourage our ministry through one-off donations or regularly giving. If you think you might be able to help, even with a small amount, do get in touch.

Regular updates

If you would like to receive our termly newsletter by email or post then please get in touch. We also produce regular prayer updates called 'Elev8'.

If you would like to be informed in your prayers then do sign up for Elev8 by emailing helent@genr8.org. We will then send you our prayer request email every few months.



Steve "Elev8ing" the Inspire resources!

DIARY DATES

SPRING TERM 2019

Cool Choices – Jan
Children's Worker Network - Jan
Xcellr8 weekend - 15th – 17th Feb
Growing Young Leaders – 23rd March
Easter assembly tours - March
Inspire Prayer Space days – tba
Inspire Permanent - 6 schools
Church services & events - tbc

SUMMER TERM 2019

GenR8 social evening - 26th April
Children's Worker Network - April
Summer assembly tours - June/July
It's Your Move - July
Inspire Prayer Spaces - tba
Inspire Permanent - 6 schools
Church services & events - tbc

AUTUMN TERM 2019

Cool Choices - Sept/Oct
Children's Worker Network - Sept
GenR8 training day - Sept/Oct
GenR8 AGM - Sept
Christmas assembly tours - Nov/Dec
Inspire Prayer Spaces - tba
Inspire Permanent - 6 schools
Church services & events - tbc

For more information about any of the activities mentioned in this Review please contact Steve Whyatt, GenR8 Director steveuw@genr8.org or tel. 01223 237874