

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our look back at GenR8 events and activities in 2019. We hope this review gives you a bit of insight into what is involved in our ministry. Our face-to-face work with children and schools has delivered a full programme including assemblies, Cool Choices, It's Your Move, Xcellr8, Prayer Spaces and others. For this we need to say a huge thank you to all our volunteers who faithfully support our work often in the midst of tough life challenges. It's also been a busy year in administration, with lots of background tasks taking up our time and energy; there always seems to be something to update and change! With this in mind we are extremely grateful to our small staff team and GenR8 trustees who do so much to further this side of the work. We also want to say a massive thank you to all our supporters, partners and churches for their amazing support of our work in prayer, finance, encouraging words, and general interest in our ministry. Without you we simply don't exist! THANK YOU ALL!

I remember asking someone several years back, "how do you measure success?" The reply was, "I keep being invited back!" Of course, there should be other measurements, but there is something quite simple yet substantial in that reply. We are pleased to say that being invited back is an area we do quite well in and for many, many schools we have been regular visitors for over 15 years!

"GenR8 has a good reputation amongst heads. A real achievement!" – Head Teacher

"Can we have more GenR8 please?" – Students at a Collective Worship review

Of course, at the heart of our work is a desire to see people make decisions for Jesus, and we are delighted to get feedback that affirms this aspect of our mission, for example:

"It was at Xcellr8 where I decided to follow Jesus properly, soon after I went to my vicar and asked to be confirmed. Being a Christian helps me to be loving and compassionate towards people and the world in general, but I think that the biggest impact is that even though I am scared or anxious or crying, I know that God loves me and is looking out for me." – Young Person

2020 looks like being a challenging year particularly in the area of volunteers for our assembly teams. There is a banner in my church that says simply 'The Lord Provides'. Most weeks I look at that banner and pray that he will! Not surprisingly God has provided over many years and in so many ways. Sometimes surprising ways! But as I write it doesn't stop me being anxious for the year ahead, I'm sure the banner will be well used in 2020!

We would love to see more churches, families and individuals supporting our mission, whether through prayer, volunteering, finance or taking an interest in our work by reading prayer letters and newsletters. If that's you, or someone you know please do get in touch. Thank you.

Steve Whyatt

steve@genr8.org

Steve in action
with the West
assembly team
in the summer



*Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay; you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand. - Isaiah 64:8*

CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS

GENR8 ASSEMBLY PRESENTATIONS IN 2019

Teams visited schools with three assembly presentations in 2019: Spring Term – ‘What a friend!’, Summer Term – ‘The Bible’, and Autumn Term – ‘A gift worth searching for’. Seven teams in all presented a Christian message to children in Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk.

Our Easter assembly explored the theme of being a good friend, and how this might involve giving something up for others. The children heard that the ultimate example of this was Jesus’ sacrifice of himself on the cross, and were told the story of Good Friday using a single sheet of paper torn into three crosses, a spear and two dice. Our sketch looked at the disciples’ response to the news of the resurrection and how that must have been hard to believe and comprehend. However, they discovered that ‘seeing is believing’, a concept illustrated by the puppets – one of whom had seen an elephant walking through the town! We finished by reflecting on how the events of Easter mean that if we ask, Jesus can always be by our side.

The summer theme was the Bible - a special book for Christians that is not only historical but has relevance to our lives today. We shared with the children how it can help us to understand how God wants us to live and care for others. We had fun illustrating the types of literature found in the Bible using props including a storybook, binoculars, a crown, a police hat, a very shiny star and a cuddly owl! The words of our song, John Hardwick’s ‘For God so loved the world’, came straight from the Bible (John 3:16) and summarise its core message. The team retold the story of King Josiah finding a portion of the Old Testament whilst re-building the temple (without the help of Bob the Builder – who did not come along for another 2500 years!). This discovery changed how a whole country lived, worshipping God and caring for others in a way that they had not done before. We concluded by reflecting that Jesus taught us how to care for one another, using the words of Matthew 15:35-40 ‘For I was hungry and you fed me...’.



The children heard that Jesus is ‘a gift worth searching for’ through our Christmas assemblies. There were lots of laughs as one of the team members had to search through a nest of boxes to find a small but precious gift; the puppets discovered that the greatest Christmas gift can be found in the Bible; and some less than ‘wise men’ rode their imaginary camels in search of a new baby king. They were rather clueless on arrival at Herod’s palace but when they eventually got to Bethlehem they discovered

the baby Jesus, God’s son come to live among us. Other visitors to Jesus were the shepherds, who had been told of the birth by ‘A Band of Angels’, in the song we sang with the children. Everyone was encouraged to search for the name ‘Jesus’ in a visual puzzle, as well as in their Christmas celebrations.

Helen Tobiss and Kathryn Gee

Assembly Support Material

GenR8 offers schools support material to go alongside each assembly presentation, giving curriculum links and suggested activities. These enable teachers to prepare for or follow up on the theme with the children. We are grateful to Kathryn Wright who has provided these over the past few years and to Sally Daggianti for taking on this task in 2019.

Affiliate Team News

Anne, Jan, Dennis and Stephanie of the West Norfolk affiliate team write:

"After five years of moving (pretty seamlessly!) from Easter to summer to Christmas GenR8 presentations, the West Norfolk GenR8 team (consisting of Josephine and Brian Griffin and Anne Sparrow) were all set to continue in the same mode after Easter 2019, but God in His unfailing wisdom had other ideas!! Unfortunately, Brian was taken ill and soon realised that reluctantly he and Josephine would need to retire from GenR8. Anne was keen to continue with a new team, but at first it proved difficult to find any willing new recruits. However, the Lord spoke to three individuals – who didn't know each other – and a new team was formed in November of 2019.



West Norfolk Team preparing for Christmas

It was a steep learning curve but after six rehearsals and with Steve's help, we felt ready (with some trepidation!) to go into schools. Fortunately, the schools (16 in all had been booked) were keen to have us and we soon felt much more at ease. At the time of writing we are now raring to go with the 2020 Easter presentation!"

The Suffolk Affiliate team based in Gislingham also took the Christian message into schools at Easter and Christmas. Thanks to Chris and the team.

"Being part of a GenR8 team allows me to indulge my passions for Am Dram and for spreading the Good News of God's love to a new generation. It's fantastic to be greeted by enthusiastic children when we go into schools. In such diverse places such as the Co-op or an inter-schools cross country race it's a joy to be recognised and asked 'When is GenR8 coming to school again?'" – Affiliate team member

IT'S YOUR MOVE 2019

"All in all, a very good day. The team are very strong and it's a privilege to work alongside them!" These were my comments half way through our 2019 'It's Your Move' (IYM) week, when the team of ten young people from Years 10-13 were able to visit 15 primary schools. Having young people on team is a great boost to the session and is so beneficial to the Year 6 students who love having the opportunity to chat to them about their experiences of secondary school. As well as being an enjoyable week with lots of fun and laughs along the way, IYM is a great opportunity for the young people to be part of something really valuable: *"It was so great to be a part of, especially when you were able to answer the questions the Year 6s had and knew that you were helping them feel more confident about their transition. I also loved getting to meet new people and make some new friends."* Natasha (Y13)

It's great to work alongside local churches who get involved by handing out the IYM books, reminding the students they are being prayed for, and taking part in the small groups that are central to IYM sessions.

"The IYM session from Steve and the team was really excellent - one of the best I can recall. The Y6 teacher was incredibly positive about the whole thing - she loves the books too." Alistair (Church Pastor)

Parents also recognise the opportunity for team members to grow through their experience of the IYM week: *"Thank you so much, Steve, for giving the young people a wonderful opportunity! Grace really enjoyed it."*



If you know of Year 11 or 13 students or other young people who might be interested in and available for IYM 2020 in July, please get in touch.

INSPIRE 2019



This year, the Inspire Prayer Spaces team has worked in collaboration with local churches to reach 1,020 children. WOW! Prayer Spaces on a number of themes were run in seven primary schools across Cambridgeshire. Themes included 'Me and My Community', designed to encourage children to think about how they all fit together to form one 'body', and 'Hope', which fitted into a wider collective worship theme for the school. There were also transition sessions especially designed for Year 6 children about to make the move to secondary school. The children at each school responded really positively to the days, making thoughtful and insightful comments. Some of the questions the children had for God were: *"Why do you only talk to some people?"*, *"Why did Eve sin?"*, *"Does God get sick?"*, *"Why haven't you sent Jesus as a girl?"* and *"How can we get through hard times?"*.



Many of these days were well supported by local churches, either financially or with volunteers. They give an opportunity to show how the local church can work together with GenR8 to support schools by delivering a day which develops the spirituality of children, promotes the children's mental health, shows how schools can encourage the upholding of British Values and which also covers part of the Religious Education curriculum.

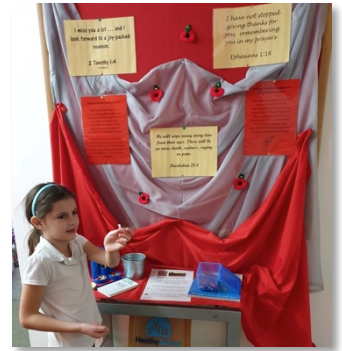


In September, some of the Inspire team went to the national Prayer Spaces in Schools conference. This was an opportunity for the team to network with other groups and charities in the country, share ideas and resources and receive teaching for the future. It was a really valuable day, full of inspiration and ideas and lots to think about!

"Thank you very much. This day went above and beyond our expectations!" – Deputy Headteacher

PERMANENT PRAYER SPACES

Teachers in schools who had had an Inspire Prayer Space event often commented, "we need something like this here all the time". So this made us wonder if a Permanent Prayer Space (PPS) could meet that need. So far, 12 schools have hosted a PPS and we are currently resourcing 8 primary schools.



What? A PPS is an installation set up in a chosen space and is administered by a church link volunteer. This involves setting up a new space every 4-6 weeks. The material is designed to be broadly Christian but accessible to all. It focusses on church festivals, British Values and other aspects of the SMSC (spiritual, moral, social, and cultural) curriculum.

How? Inspire volunteers create the activities, make up the resource boxes and deliver them to the church link volunteer, offering extra help with display if needed. Everything is provided... drapes, cushions, activities, blutack and drawing pins! It is designed to give no extra work to school staff.

Why? This creates a small sacred space in a school where children (and visitors and staff) can visit, observe, take time out, think, reflect, and maybe even pray. It's a way of providing Christian input to a school. It's a way of developing links between schools and their local churches. It's a way of showing children that God is interested in their everyday lives.

Janet King, PPS volunteer coordinator



COOL CHOICES 2019

35 primary schools were visited, and 45 sessions run with classes of Year 6 students, with the aim of helping them to make cool life choices. The session is packed with information, interaction, opportunities for participation as well as thought provoking moments and a fair bit of fun. Encouragingly evaluation scores are high and comments received speak favourably of the sessions' value to students as well as teachers. Here are a few comments from 2019:

"Cool Choices encourages children to think more deeply about choices they might have to make in later life and gives children an opportunity to see how Christians make life choices by looking to God." – GenR8 team member

"It is always a thought-provoking session that we feel really benefits the children."

"What a super experience for the children to have access to. Thank you." – Year 6 teachers

"I have learned that your choices are your choices, no-one can take that from you. This will make me bold with my decisions in the future and keep going with the right choices." – Year 6 student



Our thanks to Peter, David, Lynn, Caroline, Cheryl, Bev, Siân and Steve who led sessions throughout the year. If anyone would be interested in being on a Cool Choices team or would like Cool Choices to visit their local school in the future do get in touch.

CHILDREN OUTSIDE SCHOOL

XCELLR8

Being part of the Xcellr8 2019 team as a first time member was a really fun, exciting, action-packed and rewarding experience. When the weekend arrived I felt prepared and knew what was being asked of me due to meetings with the team beforehand, which allowed me to get to know the faces of the team and have an idea of what to expect. As a joint leader within our small groups, it was great to learn from the other leaders and also to participate in the teaching and reinforcement of the lessons through related games. Seeing how much the children enjoyed the activities, learning new skills during workshops and seeing the children encounter the nature of God during the weekend, made it an amazing time that I will remember always. I would love to be a part of it again!



Nick Cassidy



Back in March eight young people attended our 4th Growing Young Leaders (GYL) day. Run in partnership with Nicola

Grievies from the Eastern URC, we had an encouraging and enriching day. The aim of GYL is to encourage young people in school Years 6-8 (age 10-13) to begin a leadership journey. We invite those who work with children and young people in churches to think about who might benefit from such a day. GYL recognises this is an important time of transition in school and church for this age group, and seeks to develop the leadership potential of these young people.

"It was great to see my daughter enthused by Christian training and wanting to move on in her relationship with God" – Parent

Last year we ran a brand-new overnight event called Growing Young Disciples (GYD). Building on successful GYL days we felt prompted to run a discipleship



day for young people of the same age range. In partnership with the Eastern URC, GYD aimed to provide an opportunity for young people to grow as followers of Jesus. Eleven young people attended and, although flagging after a late night of chatting, threw themselves into the sessions which focussed a lot on our 'frontlines': the people we meet every day, doing everyday activities such as at school, in clubs, groups, at church etc. We concentrated on what it means to reflect Jesus on our frontlines. Arguably we should have started with GYD and then launched GYL, but best laid plans and all!

"Charlie had an absolutely amazing time and came back buzzing! Thank you so much!" – Parent

ADULTS – SUPPORT AND SUPPORTERS

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

In 2019 we have welcomed a number of new volunteer recruits including Katalin Kovacs, Linda Hardy and Tony Daggianti to the assembly presentation teams, and Cheryl Titmus to the Cool Choices team. We are also delighted that Jennifer Harrison has joined us as a booking coordinator for the West assembly team. At the same time we sadly said goodbye to Brian and Josephine Griffin who retired from the West Norfolk affiliate assembly team due to ill health. The staff team has also seen some changes with Iris Considine joining us as our administrator whilst Julia Stone remained on staff as bookkeeper. Siân Thorne has increased her working days from two to three, getting involved in Cool Choices in addition to her core work with Inspire Prayer Spaces.

VOLUNTEER EVENTS

Social Evening

On 26 April a large group of GenR8 volunteers, young and not so young, gathered for an evening of fun, fellowship and pizza. It was a great opportunity for those involved in the many different aspects of GenR8's work to meet together to share their experiences. Steve had put together a quiz which, in the GenR8 way, involved lots of interaction with activities including hula-hooping, competitive bubble blowing and making a model of the Director out of plasticine!



Training



The annual volunteers' training day, for assembly and Inspire teams, took place at Willingham Baptist Church in September. Sessions were led by Amy Robinson, David Newton and Siân Thorne, covering topics including drama skills, storytelling and GenR8 values

GenR8 volunteers and staff also attended a number of safeguarding training sessions presented throughout the year by trustee Liz Jenkin.

CHURCH SERVICES & EVENTS

Once again we had several opportunities to visit churches and groups around the area which we really enjoy. In 2019 we led or took part in several all-age services, spoke to a Mothers' Union and church mission groups, as well as providing spiritual input into a Girls' Brigade day. Places visited included: Cambridge, Northstowe, Shelford, Arbury, Sawston and Burwell. We highly value the fact that many churches pray regularly for our work so it was great to take part in a church service where GenR8 was the mission group they were praying for that month. We are delighted that several churches contact us regularly for points to guide their pray for our ministry - we are more than glad to provide these! If you would like to explore the possibility of GenR8 visiting your church or group do get in touch.



"I am always amazed at what you do for the Lord in our local schools!" – Church mission group prayer co-ordinator

CHILDREN'S WORKER NETWORK

The last year has seen the usual termly opportunities for those who work with children in a paid or significant volunteering role to gather together. We meet at the beginning of term over lunch and chat over a range of issues and challenges that we face not only in children and schools work but as Christians in an increasingly dynamic, changing and challenging world. Topics have included: attracting volunteers, culture, sexuality as well as thinking about the challenges we face in ministry.

"The group have been inspiring and supportive". – Children's Worker

"Thank you so much for all the time and energy you pour into supporting those in this ministry. I found the network meetings really valuable and shall recommend to my successors that they get involved with your events." – Children's Worker

UNDER FIVES

Sue Greene works alongside GenR8 supporting under-fives ministry: Sue writes:

I've been affiliated to GenR8 for many years supporting those involved with working with under-fives ministry in the county, and now throughout the UK! In 2006 Steve encouraged me to set up the Scramblers Network to support Christian toddler group leaders in Cambridgeshire. This has 'escaped' from Cambridgeshire using Facebook and now has over 600 members. The site has many practical suggestions of crafts, sensory play and games as well as more spiritual input for groups. Our own toddler group, The Ark, has about 70 people attending every week and we have recently also started running an extra group on Saturdays.

I am happy to support and help churches who are planning to start their own groups and can offer on-going support and practical help as necessary. In the past few years I've been able to travel round the country speaking at conferences as well as the work nearer to home. I am affiliated to Scripture Union and a speaker with The Entheos Trust.

TRUSTEE PROFILE

I was asked to be a trustee of GenR8 in 2016, soon after I arrived in Cambridge having returned from living in Romania and setting up a children's evangelistic ministry there. I was thrilled to find a Christian ministry to schools based in Cambridgeshire, and it is a privilege to be one of the seven trustees of GenR8. I have prior experience of setting up and being a trustee of other UK charities that strengthen the teaching of Christianity in schools. We meet roughly bi-monthly under the chairmanship of Ian Sanderson, and we are well aware of our need to depend on God's wisdom as we try to support our Director, Steve Whyatt, and look at current issues in GenR8 as well as planning for the future.

Trustees have responsibilities set by the Charity Commission, including keeping up to date policies, safeguarding children, financial management and submitting an Annual Report and Financial Statement. As Trustees, we cannot make any decisions with financial commitments which the charity would be unable to fund. By God's grace and the generosity of our donors and some Trust Funds, Siân Thorne was appointed in 2018 to oversee the Inspire Prayer Spaces and in 2019 we agreed to increase her time with us to three days a week so that she could also be involved in additional school activities, such as Cool Choices. The trustees are the legal employers of GenR8 staff and we are thankful for God's provision of Steve and Siân, as well as the very able part-time administrative team we had in place by the end of 2019 - Iris Considine, Julia Stone and Helen Tobiss. The Trustees not only interview, appoint and provide job descriptions for staff, we also want to provide support, encourage and oversight.

As a Trustee I really value opportunities to see and know what is going on in GenR8, which now has so many diverse activities, which you can read about on our new website. I greatly value my relationship with Steve and I love to watch the creative and relevant assembly presentations. I am very glad that I have been a helper on Inspire Prayer Spaces in the past and am now able to go into schools with the brilliant Cool Choices programme.

There will be challenges ahead for trustees, but I believe that, under God's direction and provision, GenR8 has a great future in bringing the Christian message to children in Cambridgeshire and beyond.

Lynn Murdoch, GenR8 Trustee

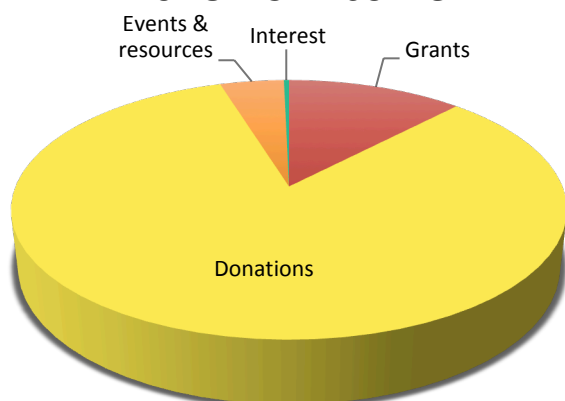


GenR8 Trustees

FINANCES

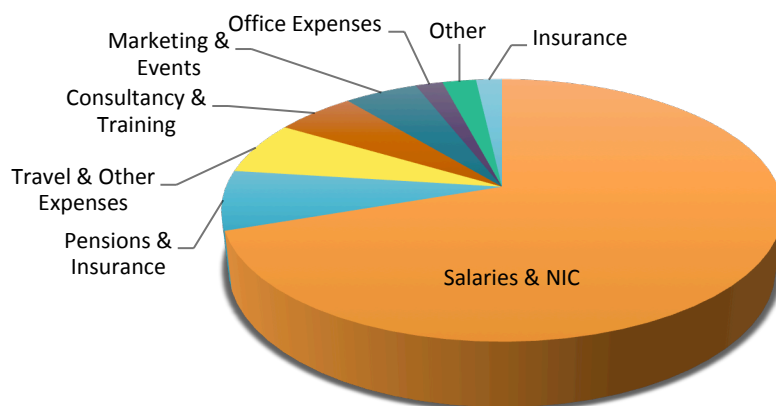
Where do our finances come from?

2018-19 Income

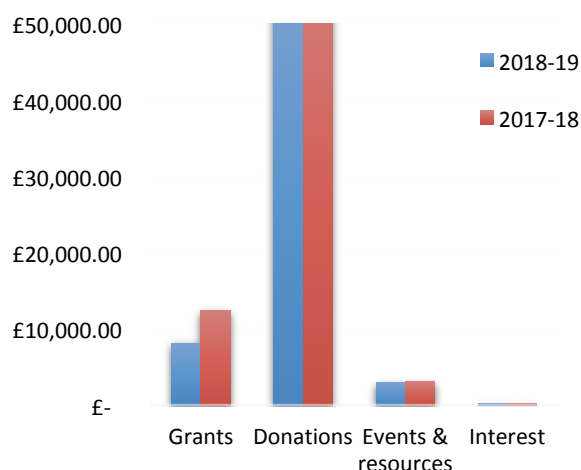


Where is our money spent?

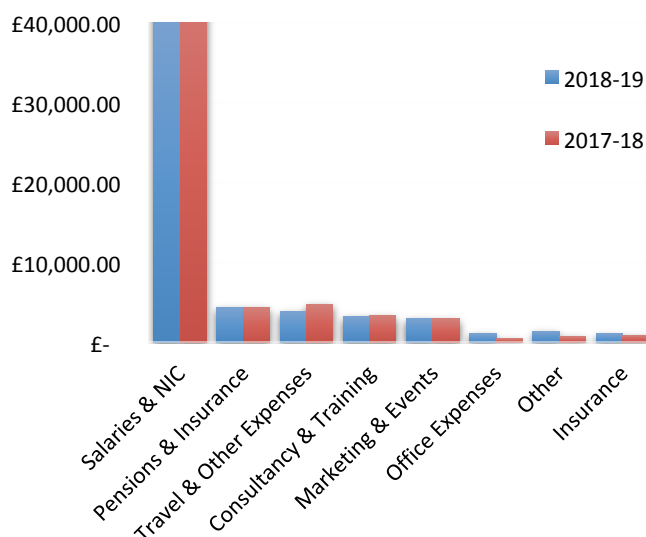
2018-19 Expenditure



Income Comparison by FY



Expenditure Comparison by FY



Income over the 2018/2019 financial year totalled £66,977, with expenditure of £59,986. 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.

Nick Roger (GenR8 Treasurer)

SUPPORTING GENR8 FINANCIALLY

GenR8 relies on financial donations to carry out its work and we are very grateful to all those who support us in this way. There are several ways of giving to GenR8: by cheque, BACS payment, online or with a standing order. Gift Aid can also be reclaimed on your donation if you are a UK taxpayer. If you shop online then you can also give without any cost to you by signing up with 'Amazonsmile' and 'Give As You Live' – a small proportion of each transaction goes into our funds. Visit our website for more information - www.genr8.org/support-us.



WEBSITE

Throughout 2019 we worked with Platform Twenty to update the GenR8 website. The new and improved version is now online at www.genr8.org. Please do visit and share the link with friends and family. There are lots of up-to-date photos of the various different activities that GenR8 provides to schools and to churches – it is amazing how much goes on! We hope that the new website will aid our mission ‘to provide an opportunity for primary school aged children to hear about and learn from the Christian faith’.

THE YEAR AHEAD?

There is a Stephen Covey quote which says, ‘The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.’ In many ways that is our hope for 2020 - to be able to keep on declaring Jesus in and through the different initiatives we are involved with. The year ahead is likely to have its fair share of challenges alongside joys and successes. All being well the latter will far outweigh the former! We are hopeful that one or two new ideas might come to realisation, (see below) but much of this will depend on our capacity to deliver, and new volunteers coming on board. Ultimately, we pray we will hear God’s voice in the midst of our busyness and that He will remain at the centre of all we seek to be and do.

Xcellr8 ‘Xtra’?

For some time we have considered having another Xcellr8 event for children aged 8-11. What will this look like? When it will take place? We are not sure although it would have the Xcellr8 hallmarks of fun, friendship and faith.

Primary Lunch Activities

Another area we are thinking about is how we might utilise lunch times in a small number of primary schools, with ideas and activities linked to RE, PHSE and possibly mental health. Again, this is very much in the early development stages.

Importantly we hope that people will continue to journey with us throughout 2020, there are several ways you can do this:

Volunteer with us

For the year ahead we hope to be able to add to our assembly presentation team. We recognise that our volunteering pattern is not the usual weekly commitment, but we are convinced there are people within our churches who share our passion for mission to children in the local area and have the time. If you know of someone who might want to find out more please do put them in touch, you are never too old! – steve@genr8.org

Pray with us

We produce prayer updates (5-6 times a year) called ‘Elev8’. If you would like to be informed in your prayers for our ministry then do sign up for Elev8 by emailing Helen at helent@genr8.org. We also have churches and mission groups who regularly email us to ask for prayer points - we are delighted to be able to respond to these.

Keep in Touch

If you would like to receive our termly prayer and newsletter by email or post, then please get in touch with Helen at helent@genr8.org. We would love to keep you informed about our work.



DIARY DATES

SPRING TERM 2020

Cool Choices – Jan
Children’s Worker Network – Jan
Xcellr8 weekend – 14th - 16th Feb
Easter assembly tours – March

SUMMER TERM 2020

Children’s Worker Network – April
Summer assembly tours – June/July
It’s Your Move – July

AUTUMN TERM 2020

Cool Choices – Sept/Oct
Children’s Worker Network – Sept
GenR8 training day – Sept/Oct
GenR8 AGM – Sept
Christmas assembly tours – Nov/Dec
GYL/GYD – tba

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Inspire Permanent Prayer Spaces, Inspire Prayer Space days, church services and events.

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