



in association with
Scripture
union

Christians and Sheffield Schools
connecting ● encouraging ● resourcing

Christians and Sheffield Schools (CaSS)

Annual Report

2011 – 2012

CaSS is the work of the Sheffield Schools Christian Worker Trust

(Registered charity 1007305)

CaSS aims to connect

- Christians with Sheffield schools so that they can work together to serve their communities;
- Christians working in schools with one another;
- Christian activity happening in Sheffield schools by building up an overview of it.

CaSS aims to encourage

- Christians to pray for and serve their local schools;
- Churches to support members of their congregations who work or study in schools.

CaSS aims to resource

- Christians working in or serving Sheffield schools in a wide variety of ways.

Link Advisor's Report

**They found Jesus sitting among the teachers listening to them and asking them questions.
Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.**

Luke 2:46-47

My first year as CaSS Links Advisor has been busy, varied and interesting.

New phase, new face

One of the first things I did at the request of CLC was to move to the downstairs office at 291 Abbeydale Road.

It also seemed the right time to freshen up the CaSS logo and to introduce the strap-line of 'connecting encouraging, resourcing' thereby offering a quick explanation of CaSS' aims. I am very grateful to youth worker and friend Dan Harris for his design which he has added to CaSS notepaper, postcards and business cards. He has also designed a fabulous Christmas card for CaSS to use as a fund raiser next year.

The new logo led on to reworking the CaSS website. I'd like to say a public thank you to friend and former Birkdale colleague Paul Harker for all his hours of hard work. We hope to launch the new website shortly and I'm sure you'll agree he's done a great job.

I have changed the design, but continued the CaSS tradition of producing three newsletters and prayer diaries that are sent out to supporters termly. We have just about finished updating the CaSS database and I'm very grateful to Richard Donkin for his work in this area.

Connecting & Encouraging

I have worked hard to meet people and tried to get a feel for the Christian work that is already taking place in Sheffield schools. It has been a joy to connect with a wide variety of people who fulfil different roles and ministries in a range of Sheffield schools.

I have met and encouraged youth workers, people who work in the diocesan education office, RE teachers, Methodist Inspyre student youth workers, visited parent/school prayer groups (e.g. Tapton, Sheffield High School, Westways, Birkdale, Lydgate Infant & Junior, King Edwards), Shine Sheffield, Eden project workers in Firvale, a SACRE member and a whole variety of people when staffing a CaSS stall at mission fayres etc. I've spoken at prayer meetings where several Sheffield churches have joined together to pray for education (at Montgomery Hall, in Stocksbridge and Empower held at Victory Assembly). Since CaSS is an associate member of Scripture Union I have also connected with them in a variety of ways.

I meet with the CaSS Management Group regularly and every month a group meet to pray for CaSS and I attend, offering regular updates on the work.

Resourcing

In order to resource others I have sought to increase my skill set and to become more informed about activities in Sheffield. I have had a tour around The Oakes Christian Holiday Centre, visited Totley Rise's Journey to Bethlehem, experienced Totley Hall Farm's wonderful live nativity with a school and Millhouses Methodist Christmas Tree Festival with another school. I have attended training courses on the early sexualisation of children, Fairtrade in schools, Prayer Spaces in schools, (3 days) Godly Play training and have trained to be a trainer for Open the Book.

The final piece of training led to four CaSS Open the Book taster sessions (at Bent's Green, Deepcar, Grenoside & Mosborough) with 60 people being trained and new Open the Book teams have already taken assemblies at All Saints Totley, Oughtibridge Infant, Oughtibridge Junior and Lydgate Junior. I have been invited to speak about Open the Book at a Scripture Union associates' day in Leeds. I extend my sincere thanks to Rev. Hilda Isaacson and Viv Jeans from the Deepcar Open the Book team for inspiring me and running the taster courses with me.

I have met and discussed ideas for schools' work with many individuals and spoken with a large team from St. Thomas Crookes. I've been able to be an extra pair of hands on a school's Scripture Union Lifepath day about Eric Liddell and helped with Year 6 transition activities at St. Mary's Walkley, Walkley Primary, Parson's Cross and St. John's Deepcar. I've learnt about Love2Last's schools work on relationships by attending team meetings, meeting their schools' worker and going into Sheffield High School for 5 sessions with their Christian Union.

I am working on a welcome pack for schools who want to visit the Jesus Centre, planning and researching readings for Christmas carol services and putting the finishing touches to a school cross-curricular day on local Christian hero James Montgomery in association with Lindsey Beagles at Montgomery Hall and Danni Fenton at the Sheffield Cathedral Archer Project.

It is a great encouragement to see the wonderful ways in which Christians are serving Sheffield schools, but there are many schools in Sheffield and there is a lot more still to be done!

Thank you very much for your support during the past year.

Fiona Walton

Management Group Report

This is the first annual report since the retirement of Linda Chambers and the subsequent appointment of Fiona Walton as Links Advisor on a 0.5 full-time equivalent basis. Fiona has built upon the firm foundations already laid by her predecessor whilst at the same time bringing a refreshed vision to the work. A visual cue to this refreshed vision is the new CaSS logo comprising of the traditional church building and the modern school campus joined together in straddling the local community. CaSS has always recognised the local church to be God's chosen instrument for blessing local communities and that church involvement with local schools is a valid and potentially fruitful expression of God's love to a community. CaSS also values schools as communities of professional people for whom teaching is often much more than a vocation.

Fiona balances a primary school teaching role and being a mother to her three children with her CaSS ministry. This brings a credibility and integrity to her ministry whether working with schoolteachers, school managers, church leaders or Christian parents. I congratulate Fiona on her first year at CaSS and the recent confirmation of her contractual appointment with CaSS as permanent.

Some months ago I turned up to a play at the Montgomery Theatre about the work of the Sheffield Sunday Schools' Union that was founded by James Montgomery in 1812. I had been invited to this play by family friends whose children were participating, and was somewhat surprised to see Fiona on the stage performing a singing role! I think she was also surprised to see me in the audience! I wasn't checking up on you Fiona, but was reminded of the breadth of activities and networks you have established in such a quick and unassuming way. I know that the children and young people participating in the play valued your involvement. Fiona's report and prayer diaries provide a fuller flavour of links and connections made than can be mentioned here and I recommend a prayerful reading of them.

There have been some changes to the CaSS Management group over the last 12 months. Di Durie has stood down as chair and expressed an interest in working with Fiona to develop a strategy for volunteer development. This is a key area of responsibility and Di's ongoing involvement with the CaSS management group is very much appreciated. Efe Eruero has

joined the management group and brings an expertise in accountancy as well as a key link with Baptist congregations in Sheffield. Thank you to Richard Donkin for his time inducting Efe into the treasurer's role and also for his valued support with diverse issues requiring specialist knowledge of information technology, Charity Commission processes and many other areas. Glenn Evans has continued in the role of secretary and co-ordinates the CaSS prayer meeting. As a retired headteacher he brings an expertise to CaSS as we seek to be the best we can be as a Christian employer. Martyn Edwards has joined the management group and taken on the role of chair. He also brings a link with charismatic churches in Sheffield. Such churches often operate in less formal networks than those of the Anglican diocese and Methodist circuits. The role of CaSS in seeking to support churches of all denominations across the city to engage with schools and to have a strategic overview of Christian schools' work is both important and challenging.

2012-13 promises to be a difficult time for schools as they manage tightening budgets whilst seeking new ways of partnership working in response to the Coalition Government's localisation agenda. In many ways CaSS is emerging from such a transitional period and now looks forward to a long term strategy albeit with a part-time links advisor rather than a full-time worker. This makes the role of volunteer development and church links of vital importance and will be a focus of discussion at forthcoming management group meetings.

Significant work has been undertaken on website development supported by a grant from the Sheffield Evangelical Trust. The new website emphasises the refreshed CaSS vision of *connecting, encouraging and resourcing* and is intended to be a hub that Christians across Sheffield can engage with interactively. It is anticipated that the static pages of the new website will be published shortly with the more interactive features and resources to be added over time.

CaSS has been blessed to receive financial support from the Anglican Burgesses' Trust and Methodist circuits and these provide welcome stability for the next two years. In the long term it is important for CaSS to broaden its base of financial supporters. This needs to be done in a way that acknowledges our dependency on God to resource His work. The Management Group will plan for the long-term sustainability of CaSS beyond existing

financial pledges at forthcoming management group meetings. Please take time to prayerfully read the treasurer's report.

I thank the management group for the expertise and enthusiasm they have brought to the work of CaSS over the previous year. I also thank the many individuals and organisations who have supported CaSS including Christian Literature Campaign for use of premises at 291 Abbeydale Road.

I conclude this report with the final two verses taken from *Angels from the realms of glory*, James Montgomery's well-known Christmas carol written in 1816. Let us continue to worship Christ and proclaim Him as the great desire of Sheffield's schools. Amen.

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great desire of nations,
Ye have seen His natal star;
Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ the newborn King!

Saints before the altar bending,
Watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending,
In His temple shall appear:
Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ the newborn King!

Martyn Edwards
Chair of Management Group.

Treasurer's Report

The charity has managed to produce a surplus for the year ended 31st August 2012. The size of the surplus was enhanced by an unexpected tax rebate of £902. Full audited accounts are available upon request.

	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10
Income	£18,765	£22,701	£25,926
Expenditure	£16,534	£27,560	£26,045
Surplus	£2,231	(£4,859)	(£119)
Reserves	£3,863	£1,632	£6,491

We received donations from approximately 31 (49 in 2010/11) individuals, 11 (12) churches and 2 (2) trusts. Many individuals give under gift aid which brings in a welcome sum from HM Revenue and Customs. The trustees are grateful to all who support the ministry.

About 81% of all expenditure is on salaries and associated costs such as National Insurance. We paid £455 (£515) to Scripture Union for their support and training facilities. The decrease was due to normalisation of their financial year. Our reserves are held on deposit at our bank where we have rapid access for our day to day needs. For the next financial year we are continuing to receive funding from the Church Burgesses, local Methodist district and circuit. The trustees are looking to investigate into other areas to support the organisation so it can be sustainable in the future. We are grateful for God's faithfulness in providing the resources needed for this ministry, and trust in Him for our future provision through the generosity of our supporters.

Efe Eruero

Treasurer

Management Group

Ann Bielby (trustee)	St. Thomas Crookes
Richard Donkin (trustee)	All Saints Ecclesall Parish Church
Di Durie (trustee)	Christ Church Fulwood
Martyn Edwards (trustee)	Meadowhead Christian Fellowship
Efe Eruero	Cemetery Road Baptist Church
Glenn Evans (trustee)	Bents Green Methodist Church
Jenny Lambourne (trustee)	Diocesan Childrens' Officer (C of E)
Rachel McCallam (trustee)	Mission and Development Enabler (Methodist)

Further copies of the annual report may be obtained from the CaSS office.

291 Abbeydale Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire. S7 1FJ

Tel: 0114 249 5343

Email: office@cass-su.org.uk

Website: www.cass-su.org.uk



in association with
Scripture
union

Christians and Sheffield Schools
connecting ● encouraging ● resourcing