



CHRISTIAN OPTIONS IN
PETERBOROUGH SCHOOLS

Summer Newsletter: 2026

24 Primary Schools
taught this year

4500+
Primary Students reached

2500+
mentoring sessions

18 Primary and
Secondary Schools
engaging with mentoring

5 Secondary Schools
Regular visits

32 QKA CU sessions
4 Sir Harry Smith CU sessions
1 OBA lesson
6 Peterborough School Chapel
2 King's Assemblies
33 King's Park Up Sessions
36 King's CU sessions
17 King's Alt Worship

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CROPS is a Charity Incorporated Organisation, Registered No. 1157651



A message from Sam Higgins *CROPS Team Leader*

What a brilliant year it's been! We've seen fresh new opportunities to connect with young people through our events, schools, mentoring, work experience, volunteering, and everything in between. The work we do simply can't happen without your wonderful support. On behalf of the team and trustees, a huge thank you for everything you do for CROPS and the young people of this city!

Here are a few stories highlighting the great things that have happened this year...



Work Experience

"The thing I enjoyed most about doing work experience with CROPS was going into schools and getting to meet young people..."

The thing that surprised me the most was the amount of admin that goes into planning events such as together and Christian unions, and it made me appreciate how these events are run and the effort that goes into them."

- Work Experience Student

"Something that surprised me was how much some children and classes engaged with the things we came at them with..."

even in secondaries they appreciate what CROPS do much more than I thought they might" - Work Experience Student



Abigail Standbrook
is our gapper from
September 2026

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GAP YEAR

"During my gap year, i'm really looking forward to experiencing new events run by crops, like school Christian Unions and alternative worship, which i hope will help me grow deeper within my faith. i'm also excited to see letton and together from a leaders perspective!

in my spare time, i love to play a variety of musical instruments, seeing my friends and enjoy baking.

Find out more about how to get involved on the gap year at crops.org.uk/get-involved

Primary Schools

Rachel Jessup

The Butterfly Effect



In the last few weeks we have taken 26 lessons in 21 different schools preparing the children for their move up to Secondary school. We have given 'It's Your Move' books published by Scripture Union to 984 pupils in partnership with Ely Diocese and several generous local churches. The best part of these lessons is the input of the young people who join us on work experience in Yr 10 (aged 15) and Yr 12 (aged 17) – they can answer any questions the children have about how to settle into their new school and especially what to look forward to. In one school we were part way through the lesson when a butterfly appeared in the small room we were in and proved the theory that the flapping of a butterfly wing really can cause chaos!



Collective worship/ Assemblies



'Do not be angry with each other, but forgive each other. If someone does wrong to you, then forgive him. Forgive each other because the Lord forgave you.' Colossians 3:13 ICB

This term I have enjoyed retelling the story of the breakfast on the beach – how Jesus met with Peter where he was and helped him to make a new start. Jesus trusted Peter with a huge job for the future even though he had got it wrong in the past. The children loved seeing how the baking powder and washing up liquid churned up the water in the glass but how the power of God's forgiveness in us (white vinegar) bubbles up and overflows to have a good effect on all those around us. Real forgiveness affects our actions and sets us free from the grudges or hurts in our past. True forgiveness often needs God's help and love to make it possible.

'Can we do the actions from the beginning of the Old Testament?' Yr 6 boy

I had just finished the NT Mini series of 5 lessons giving an overview of the storyline of the New Testament and we were about to do all the handsigns and keywords we had learnt from the last 5 weeks. The year before, half of the Yr5/6 class had learnt the Old Testament handsigns in the same way and now he was suggesting that we do all 80 + handsigns together from the year before as well! It was brilliant. I was so impressed with how many of the Yr 6's remembered what we had learnt last year and also how the Yr 5's joined in - they will truly be ready for next year now...

CROPS Mentoring

Chris Wild

CROPS Mentoring believes that every young person should have someone they feel they can talk to in schools. This academic year, we've carried on our pursuit to make this a reality all over Peterborough.

We're really thankful for our team of 25 volunteer mentors, who continue to give their time so consistently and make a real difference in schools. Their ability to build the relationships that are so core to mentoring, whilst working alongside students to develop strategies to help them grow, is really significant. As one student said,

"You've helped me more than you could know or than I could fully explain."

It's been great to also hear such positive feedback from schools about the difference our mentors are making across Peterborough: *"It has made such a difference to our students,"* *"We really appreciate the support they have given and the service you provide to young people,"* and *"The students find the sessions incredibly helpful."* It's always good to hear this, but it also reminds us how important it is that students are given regular time and space to talk through the issues they are facing. Whenever I meet with our mentors, I'm full of admiration for the work they do and the deep care and passion they do it with.

This year has been a time of valuable growth and development for our Primary School Mentoring project. We've successfully worked in 5 primary schools, and the potential for future growth with more primary volunteers is huge.

Demand is growing naturally; despite not advertising yet, multiple schools have approached us directly asking for mentors.

We also held our annual mentoring training recently, this year focusing on Autism and Neurodivergence. It was a really helpful session for the team, giving us more understanding and practical tools as we support students with different needs and ways of processing the world around them.

In our mentoring sessions themselves, we continue to help students make sense of their big emotions, understand what might be going on underneath them, and slowly build ways of recognising and managing them in school and at home.

Mentoring sessions always end up covering a wide range of everyday issues to discuss—every student is unique and has a different story to tell. A flavour of the subjects from the last few weeks includes: how to approach difficult conversations with parents, dealing with anger, feeling judged or "fat shamed", learning to be more assertive, navigating boundaries at home, how to start conversations and make friends, and dealing with emotional overwhelm or "meltdowns" in school. Every session is so different, and so worthwhile.

We're really grateful for the ongoing support that makes this work possible, so a huge thank you to CROPS supporters and volunteers.



Secondary Schools +

Sam Higgins

This academic year has provided a wonderful opportunity to connect with new students and build meaningful relationships



The King's School - Alternative Worship

Our alternative to the normal school assembly on a Friday, held once every two weeks, has grown dramatically. In September 2025, only a handful of students attended. By January, over 40 students joined, outgrowing the prayer room! We relocated to the school canteen, where the group now averages 74 students per session. How incredible is that? Many students do not come from Christian backgrounds, yet they are eagerly engaging with stories of figures like Corrie Ten Boom, Maximilian Kolbe, Ernest Shackleton, and Eric Liddell. Together, we explore coping with change, finding hope, and living with integrity. Please pray as we plant seeds and share the Good News.

Ormiston Bushfield Academy – RE Lesson

I had the pleasure of being invited to share with the Year 10 students of OBA about the heart and ethos of CROPS. It was a great opportunity to share my personal journey while tying it into their syllabus on Christianity, covering topics like crime and punishment, and peace and conflict. This is the start of an exciting new relationship with OBA, who are exploring opportunities for CROPS to regularly visit the school from September 2026, as well as booking GSUS Live for November/December 2026.

Sir Harry Smith CU

We have had the wonderful privilege since after the Easter holidays, of joining the Christian Union over at Sir Harry Smith. There is a wonderful group of young people of all ages where we have explored topics such as honesty and forgiveness and as Christians should we forgive.



Queen Katharine Academy Christian Union

This group has been wonderful to join every week. The four to five lads thoroughly enjoy a good debate, covering topics ranging from the upcoming social media ban to whether you should forgive no matter what's happened.

"I enjoy listening to different views and hearing what people believe, it helps challenge what I believe." – Queen Katharine Academy Student

Other wonderful opportunities include sharing at The Peterborough School chapel, The King's School CU, and our Park Up lunch club. Park Up offers a safe, relaxed space for about 40 students. Seeing young people so spiritually open this year makes it a profound privilege to walk alongside them and point them toward the hope of Jesus.

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TOGETHER

Over the past 11 sessions (September 2025 to July 2026), our TOGETHER series, *"Imperfect People, Faithful God,"* has been a profound journey.

We consistently see the immense pressure teenagers face to appear completely "sorted" and perfect before they feel they can follow Jesus. This year, we deliberately pushed back against that narrative.

By exploring the messy realities of biblical figures, we showed the young people that our weaknesses and mistakes don't push God away; rather, He actively works through them. From Peter's beautiful restoration after his failure to Gideon's calling amidst deep insecurity, each session revealed a different facet of grace. We explored how doubt isn't distance, but a doorway to encounter, just as it was for Thomas.

It's been beautiful seeing the young people so hungry to grow and worship together.



In February half term, over 4 sessions, Daniel Beckett shared powerfully how to grow in confidence in our walk with Jesus. We explored where we might be called to step out and what it might look like to be living out their faith in action- by serving, leading and praying for one another.

48 young people joined us to worship, reflect and build community. 'Letton Time'- free periods where Lettoners can relax, play games and join in with sports, seminars and various fun workshops.

The space to grow in relationships and learn from one another are in-between spaces where God is doing His work. Having time to be, without pressure to be 'doing' is so important to the teenagers during a residential. In the 'After Hours' we experienced a Letton Hall Houseparty first- a silent disco! The young people had a blast out on the go-karting track, and enjoyed dressing up as video game characters and board games for our themed dinner!

'It refreshes my soul'
- Lettoner



Letton Hall HOUSEPARTY

Get Involved



Serving is at the heart of what we do here at CROPS, and our small team runs, thanks to those who volunteer to support our work. Whether you have administrative/ technical skills or wish to work directly with young people through mentoring in schools, we would love to have you involved.

Find out more ways to get involved at:
crops.org.uk/get-involved/

Heart for Children

Heart for Children is an ecumenical network of professionals working with children and families in a Church context or faith-based charity/organisation that meets termly at CROPS.

For five years, Heart for Children has connected Peterborough practitioners to discuss updates, share how God is moving, and reflect on professional development. This dedicated space fosters cross-church relationships, offering shared resources, vital support, and prayer. Ultimately, it unites and supports those who build up the children and families within our community.

Join now at: crops.org.uk/get-involved

Fundraise

As a charity, we rely on your generous support to fund our vital work with young people. Whether you want to get your church community involved or take on a personal sports challenge, fundraising is a fantastic way to help!

Learn how to get started by downloading our toolkit at:
crops.org.uk/get-involved



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