



## INTRODUCTION:

Throughout the last ten years the children and youth ministry at P's & G's has seen great growth and change. At present we have approximately two hundred and twenty children and young people. This figure does not include groups such as Megamix and Holiday Clubs; due to the current limited children's programme.

We have over seventy volunteers working within an array of various programmes throughout the week. The children and youth ministry also impacts on a large number of adults; for example through Parents and Toddlers.

Our children and young people are:

- Well educated – Private school and top state schools
- Scattered
- Middle class
- Busy – school, exams, extra curricula activities and active family lives
- Stressed and under pressure from teachers, parents, friends and dealing with issues such as image, alcohol, and sex
- Dressed in designer/labelled clothing such as Jack Wills, Abercrombie and Fitch etc

Due to the lifestyles of the children and young people that P's & G's works with we have very little time with them. Our focus over the last few years has been to make sure that the programmes make the most of the limited direct contact and that it is of the highest quality possible.

Our vision is:

**Helping children and young people encounter and engage with Jesus within community**

Our values are:

- **Age targeted**
- **Creative**
- **Fun**
- **Safe**
- **Relevant**
- **Prayer Supported**
- **Relational**
- **Christ Centred**



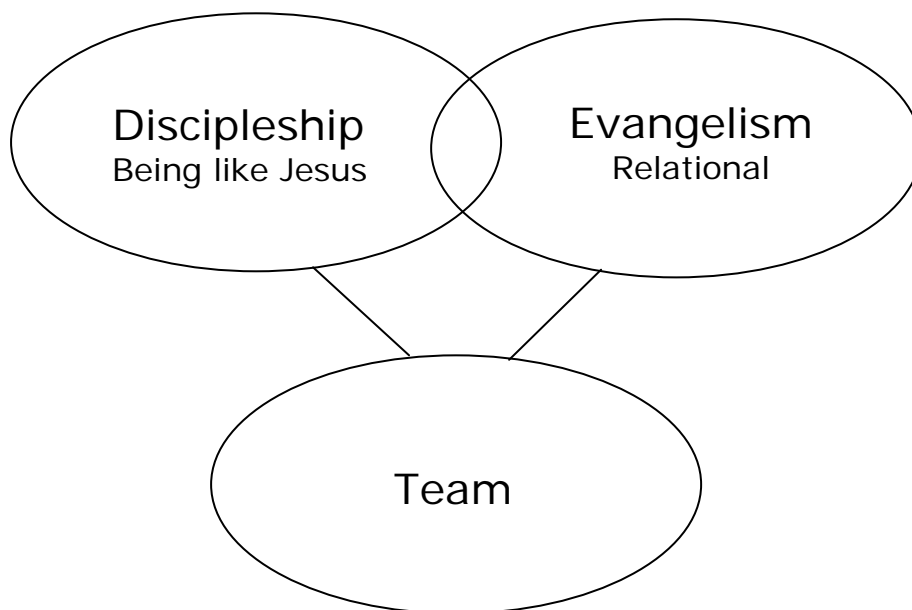
## STRATEGY:

We see the future focused on two linked yet distinctive areas; “discipleship” and “evangelism”. Integral to the fulfilment of these areas is the “team”.

**Discipleship** – The traditional idea of discipleship for children and young people has mainly been conducted within a bible study context. However we propose a more holistic form of discipleship, focused teaching children and young people to “be like Jesus”. For this to be adopted a much broader set of programmes must be implemented.

Therefore the focus for the next five years will be to enhance our work on discipleship with the 0 – 18 age group. This will be to adopt a more holistic and experiential approach; helping children and young people to encounter and engage with God by learning to be more like Jesus.

**Evangelism** – We propose that the churches philosophy of evangelism for the 0 – 18 age group be focused on the biblical concept of “relational evangelism”. Thus children and young people will be encouraged and engaged in using their current relationships to spread the gospel. Programmes will be established to help facilitate this new approach and to enable the development of relationships within the various age groups including the leadership.



# DISCIPLESHIP:

## WORSHIPPING GOD

**Bible** – We will encourage a healthy bible culture amongst the children and young people. This would be done through helping children and young people develop skills to study the bible on their own and in a group context.

**Teaching** – We will provide children and young people with relevant, high quality and wide variety of teaching. This will be done by providing teaching sessions which incorporate a range of learning styles.

**Worship** – We will help children and young people express themselves in worship in small groups, joint groups and in the wider church body. By developing worship particularly among the children's groups, for example using EnE concept.

**Small Groups** – The structure of the children and youth programme is based on small groups. This helps teaching to be relevant to specific age groups and allows children and young people to flourish in a safe environment of peers. This will be continued.

**Prayer** – We will encourage a healthy prayer culture in each group using a variety of styles. This must be role modeled by and from the leaders.

## LOVING PEOPLE

**Integration within the church** – The children and youth ministry covers a large area of church life and will be fully integrated into the wider programme. Children and young people should feel part of the wider church family and learn how to be part of that family. Children and young people are considered equal members of the church family along with the adults.

**Community** – The children and youth programmes will promote community, and whenever possible the establishment of healthy relationships.

**Parents** – The children and youth ministry has a lot of contact with parents; both churched and non-churched. Where possible programmes helping parents network and develop parenting skills will be provided.

**Nurturing** – The children and youth strategy will now connect all programmes from 0 to 18 years. This will encourage a continuous nurturing culture.

**Special Needs** – There will be a review exploring the possibilities of providing a ministry to Special Needs children and young people.

**Pastoral Care** – We will provide appropriate levels of pastoral care for all children and young people; with appropriate support structures and training.

**Accountability** – We will encourage and putting in place accountability structures within the youth ministry. This would focus on mentorship groups for both peer and leader accountability.



## SERVING THE WORLD

**Serving** – We will focus on helping children and young people discover their God given gifts. Then provide and encourage them with opportunities to serve within the church with appropriate support structures to help them develop and grow.

**Social Awareness** – The children and youth people will be encouraged to support a local social action project; raising the awareness of social justice and poverty issues. Social awareness will be included in the curriculum each year.

**Cheryl's Children's Home** – The older teenagers will continue with their work on projects at Cheryl's Children's Home in Kenya; giving them an opportunity to experience short term mission overseas. The children and youth ministry will develop a partnership by supporting Cheryl's, through fundraising and building relationships.



# EVANGELISM:

## LOVE PEOPLE

**Gathered Community** – The evangelism programmes will be focused on relationships already established by our children and young people. Children and young people will be targeted through the churches gathered community.

**All Age and relevant** – Evangelism programmes will be provided for all ages. Each project should be strategic therefore focus on a specific group and be relevant to that group.

**Building community for churched and non-churched** – Evangelistic programmes will provide opportunities to build community amongst children and young people especially as a first step and contact for non-churched.

**Serving Broughton and P's & T's** - The church will still provide outreach opportunities to the local community through involvement and service to Broughton Primary school and also by providing a weekly Parents and Toddler Group.

**Equipping to share faith** – The evangelism programmes will be based on relational evangelism using projects to assist children and young people to do this. Therefore training must be provided to equip our children and young people to witness to their friends.



## TEAM:

### WORSHIP GOD

**Prayer and worship** – Prayer and worship is a high priority for the children and youth ministry. Leader's role model a lifestyle of prayer and worship; therefore opportunities for leaders to gather to pray and worship specifically for this ministry will be provided.

### LOVE PEOPLE

**Child protection and health and safety** – There should be an increase in training and awareness of child protection and health and safety. Clear structures of communicating these issues should be created and procedures established for making sure each programme is safe and fulfills the churches child protection policy.

**Networking, nurturing and celebration** – The volunteers working with children and young people are highly valued and this must be demonstrated to the leaders through annual celebration events. Leaders will also be given opportunities to network with each other to help grasp the bigger picture of the children and youth ministry and help develop the nurturing process of each child. We also recognize that leaders themselves need nurturing and developing possibly by core team members and team leaders.

### SERVE THE WORLD

**Recruitment Processes** – One of the biggest challenges to the children and youth ministry is the recruitment of volunteers. There is a constant stream of volunteers passing through the various groups, as a result there needs to be a fresh focus on how to recruit volunteers from the church into this ministry. We will aim at a clearer and more centralized recruitment process.

**Developing leader's passion** – Leaders involved in the children and youth programme for long period of time are highly valued. Consequently there should be a fresh focus on developing leader's continual and steady passion for this ministry.



## RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- **Volunteers** – The biggest resource in the children and youth ministry is people. Over seventy adults in the church are already involved in this ministry however any increase in programmes and activities will also require an increase in volunteers. Currently the church is struggling to provide enough leaders for each group and programme. For the children and youth ministry to expand the current recruitment processes will need development.
- **Funding** – Over the last three years funding for children and youth ministry has been reduced; yet much of the work has continued to grow and expand. The children and youth programmes will struggle to continue with this growth without significant financial investment. The need for increased funding to achieve this strategy will be for areas such as evangelism for all ages, conferences for leaders to attend both locally and nationally, programmes for special needs and joint worship sessions.
- **Staffing** – The last ten years has seen the employment of a Children's Director and Youth Director. The work has continued to grow throughout the church and is now one of the largest ministry areas in P's & G's as well as one of the main reasons many families attend the church. Over the last three years, staff working in this ministry have struggled to maintain growth and keep up with the work rate. If this strategy is to be achieved and any further growth then there is an essential need for more paid staff to assist in this ministry.

Required staff positions are:

- A full time *Assistant Children's Worker (ACW)* who should be appointed to work under the Children's Director with the 0 – 11.
- A *Student Youth Worker (SYW)* from International Christian Collage should be employed to work under the Youth Director. The Student Youth Worker post is similar to a part time youth worker because they are studying while working. They will have cutting edge youth work skills and offer much more to the youth programme. At the same time P's and G's will be providing a fantastic placement and training opportunity for a student who will then impact the wider church in the long term.

Without these two staff appointments it is unlikely the children and youth ministry area can continue to grow without running the risk of burning out the current staff and not achieving this strategy.

## SUMMARY:

The key focus of this strategy is to link children and youth ministries together so that children and young people are nurtured on a continuous programme from the ages of 0 – 18 years. In this strategy most of the objectives are to improve on work that is currently undertaken. However at present the children and youth ministry is stretched across a wide range of programmes. Therefore the next five years requires the church to firstly meet the needs of the current programmes; and then provide a



better quality and more strategic form of children and youth ministry; as well as introducing new programmes.

As a church, P's & G's is blessed with a large number of children and young people attending each of the programmes. The work and growth of this ministry is the exception to the rule of churches within Scotland and the UK. To offer some statistics, according to Quadrant Christian Research only 61% of churches in the UK have children under 11 years attending and only 41% have any present over the age of 15.

The children and youth ministry at P's & G's is bigger than many primary schools. God has clearly been working through P's & G's to reach out to people of all ages and the possibilities of future work in this area of the church is very exciting.

