

SCHOOLS & EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The “**Spiritual Stronghold**” for **February 2014** is “**Schools & Education**” and we invite Churches throughout Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin to make this a focus for corporate prayer during services on **Sunday 2nd February 2014**.

Education Sunday is on **16th February 2014** and there is a service based on Matthew 5:21-37 with a theme of “Going above and beyond” looking at Obedience and the First World War. More information is available on: www.educationsunday.org as well as at the end of this document. If you would prefer to use the Corporate Prayer in services on that Sunday, as part of an Education theme, please feel free to do so.

In addition, below you will find some “**Points to Ponder**” with additional information and topics for which to pray plus details of **resources** that you may wish to research.

Education is not only about making sure all children can attend school. It is about setting young people up for life, by giving them opportunities to find decent work, earn a living, contribute to communities and societies and fulfil their potential. UNESCO reports that across the world there is a lost generation of 200 million young people who are leaving school without the skills they need.

CORPORATE PRAYER

“Heavenly Father

We thank You that Your desire is to have an intimate relationship with each child/young person through Jesus.

We pray for schools in our community :

- that there will be sufficient resources to buy books, computers and sports equipment.*
- for staff, that you will ease the work load and make paperwork more straight forward.*
- for the pressure of Ofsted and league tables*
- for support staff, for those involved in school maintenance, catering, cleaning, administration medical and pastoral care*
- for our local school communities to work together harmoniously and effectively.*

We pray that all staff will have the determination, patience, compassion and wisdom that they need every day.

We pray for those starting schools that you will help them make friends and settle in. May school be a fun place to learn. Help them as they learn to read and write and do sums.

We pray for children with special educational needs and the special schools here in Shropshire. Give the teachers the energy they need to support and encourage these children.

We remember the lost generation and pray that schools will provide children with the skills and qualifications they need for living in the 21st Century.

We thank you for Christian Organisations that help in Schools: Open the Book, Prayer Spaces in Schools, Youth for Christ and Scripture Union. Encourage and inspire all those who work with them and help them day by day as they visit schools in Shropshire.

We ask this in Jesus’ name and for His glory, Amen.”

EPHESIANS 3:16-17 (NEW LIVING TRANSLATION)

“I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in Him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong.”

SHROPSHIRE

Shropshire Hope 2014

POINTS TO PONDER

Special Needs

Pupils with special educational needs have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most pupils of the same age. 1 in 5 pupils has a special education need; a total nationwide of about 1.6 million young learners. Source – Care Prayer Diary

A Healthy Diet

Sadly 1 in 7 school children in the UK will go to school without breakfast. Source - Kelloggs

A good breakfast is essential for children to start the day and learn at their best.

Organisation	Overview	Website
Pray For Schools	The vision of Pray for Schools: to mobilise Christians to support their school communities through prayer so that “every school in the UK a prayed-for school!” This website provides loads of resources and ideas.	www.prayforschools.org
Scripture Union	SU’s mission statement is “Using the Bible to inspire children, young people and adults to know God”. Both the main website and the Scottish site have a wealth of resources and ideas.	www.scriptureunion.org.uk www.suscotland.org.uk
Youth For Christ	National Christian charity that was founded by Billy Graham in 1946. Working with over 250,000 young people each month, with teens from every background and culture in Britain. The 400+ full-time staff and countless local volunteers specialise in working with unchurched youth: communicating and demonstrating the Christian faith.	www.yfc.co.uk
Prayer Spaces in Schools	Enables children and young people to explore faith and spirituality from a broadly Christian perspective in a safe, creative and interactive way. A range of flexible resources can be adapted to work for participants aged 5 to 18.	www.prayerspacesinschools.com
Open The Book	Offers a programme of themed and dramatised Bible stories using teams of local volunteer storytellers at no charge to the schools. Each session is around 10 minutes long and is suitable for schools assemblies.	www.openthebook.net
Urban Saints	Since 1906 Urban Saints (formerly known as Crusaders) has been reaching out to children and young people with the good news of Jesus Christ primarily by resourcing and supporting churches and volunteer youth and children's groups.	www.urbansaints.org

If you are aware of other organisations that you feel could be included please email us:

admin@shropshirehope.co.uk

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to **Jane Newey**, National Co-ordinator for “**Pray For Schools**” who has provided the material for this “**Spiritual Stronghold**”.

If you would like to contact Jane regarding possible activities and resources for schools in your area, please email her:

england@prayforschools.org



EDUCATION SUNDAY

South West Youth Ministries (SWYM) have produced a comprehensive guide for anyone involved in schools ministry to use in the run up to Education Sunday.

This is now available on the **resources page** of the Shropshire Hope **website** together with an innovative “Nursery Rhyme Mass”.