

New Faces, Shared Mission

– Volunteers and Trainees Springing into Schools Work



Welcoming Paul to the team

We are delighted to welcome Paul Martin as a volunteer supporting our work at Radwinter Primary School, helping to cover part of Nicola's maternity leave.

Paul is a member of Saffron Walden Community Church, a retired teacher, an experienced children's worker, and a proud and devoted grandfather. With his wealth of experience and natural warmth with young people, Paul brings both wisdom and kindness to the role.

It has been a real blessing to have him join us, and we are incredibly grateful for the time and heart he is giving to this work.

Here, Paul shares a short reflection on his experience so far working with the children at Radwinter.

"One of the lovely things about this village school is how seriously they take collective worship. A clear sign of this is that Emily Bartram encourages the role of the Worship Council, a group composed of a boy and a girl in each year from 1 to 6. I have had the joy of working with these youngsters this term, preparing for five sessions of collective worship and the Easter Service, due to take place at Radwinter Church in the last week of term.

The five sessions correspond to five stages of the story of Holy Week, culminating in Easter morning. We have been able to link each one to a value that the school espouses: respect, fairness, kindness, forgiveness and service. The special role of the Worship Council has been to present a "freeze-frame" from the story each week, tableaux which we hope will feature in the Easter Service, too. Holding their expression / position for each of them, even for a few minutes, has proved quite a challenge, especially when the giggles take over! Fortunately, that has happened just in rehearsal so far.

Reflecting on this experience for me, I feel it has refreshed the Easter story. It is testimony to the power of God's word that it speaks so loudly to our current world. Children and adults alike are challenged by its simplicity and profundity."



Meet Pauline

Kt writes: I first met Pauline over coffee in a Waitrose café. Our conversation quickly moved from everyday life and family to schools, young people, and Pauline's growing interest in chaplaincy.

At that stage, I encouraged Pauline to explore a range of chaplaincy settings to help discern where her passion truly lay. So I was delighted when she later got back in touch to say she felt drawn to school chaplaincy and asked whether she could undertake a placement with us.

Pauline is now splitting her placement time between Stort Valley Schools Trust and Romsey Mill in Cambridge, gaining valuable experience across both settings. It's a real privilege to work alongside her and to support her on Wednesdays as she continues to grow in confidence, wisdom, and chaplaincy practice.

In her own words, here is a little more about Pauline and her journey so far:

"Hello I'm Pauline, a retired NHS consultant radiologist doing a volunteer placement toward a self-paced Chaplaincy Course with Waverley Abbey College.

I was so impressed when I attended a taster session at the lunchtime club Rooted and saw how the work of SVST is making a real impact.

I am looking forward to my placement and learning about the various avenues used in the pastoral support of both students and staff"

As we reflect on these stories, we are deeply encouraged by the ways God continues to grow and strengthen this work. It is a real joy to see volunteers like Paul generously giving their time and experience, and to have people like Pauline actively seeking us out for placements as they discern a calling to chaplaincy. At the same time, we are excited to be in the process of growing the team further through the appointment of an additional part-time member of staff. None of this would be possible without the faithful support, prayer, and generosity of the churches and individuals who stand alongside us. Your support enables us to continue offering vital, life-changing care to young people and school communities across our area. We are deeply grateful for all who partner with us, and we pray that together we can continue to grow this work so that even more young people can know they are seen, valued, and full of hope.

Please Pray:

- for the young people who receive mentoring, attend Rooted, or spend time in Soul Spaces—that they would know they are valued, loved, and never alone.
- for provision as the work continues to grow—that God would provide the resources, people, and partnerships needed to sustain and expand this vital ministry.
- Give thanks for the growing team of staff, volunteers, and placement students, and for the relationships being built with young people and schools.

Thank you for standing with us in this work.

Through your prayers, encouragement, and generosity, young people across our schools are discovering that they are seen, valued, and never alone.

Together, with your continued prayer and support, we believe that even more young people can encounter hope, care, and the transforming love of God within their school communities.

We invite you to continue partnering with us in prayer and support, so that this vital and life-changing work can reach even more young people who need someone to walk alongside them.