

Autumn Term 2026

FACILITATOR GUIDE

BISHOP'S CHILDREN & YOUTH COUNCIL



Diocese of
Leicester

leicester.anglican.org/BCYC

A word from Bishop Martyn



"We have tried to revolutionise the way we listen to children and young people in the Diocese. It's been a good learning exercise for me, going beyond just listening out-of-interest, but listening to the point of saying, how is this going to directly affect what I'm doing"

"I've started to have repeated conversations with people I work with, where I say to them, "What are you doing to listen to the voices of children and young people as you're making decisions about things in the life of the church or of our schools?"

Safeguarding



Listening and responding to the voice of the children and young people is essential for effective safeguarding practice. Listening and responding fosters a culture of trust, promotes wellbeing and honours children and young people's right to be heard and taken seriously in matters which affect them.

Inclusive

Children and young people communicate in different ways. We have tried to adapt our listening practice to hear the voice of those who may often be excluded due to disability, age, development and language. Listening resources are dual-coded, with facilitator prompts and alternative delivery options.

Safeguarding

We trust that those facilitating listening (teachers, school staff, children and youth workers) in school and church contexts have been safely recruited and will adhere to safeguarding policy and practice in their context.

We ask facilitators to record anonymous and unfiltered feedback and only send photos of children and young people with consent. Children and young people need to understand they do not have to participate in any or all activities and agree for their insights to be used in reporting.



Introduction

What's the purpose?

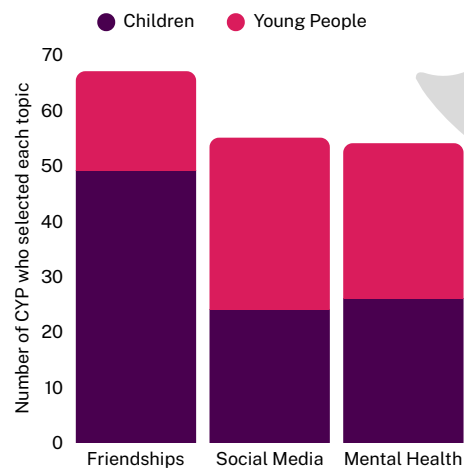
Each term, for the past 3 years, the Diocese of Leicester has facilitated a listening exercise in partnership with schools and church groups. The listening exercise enables children and young people (CYP) to explore an issue of their choice and share key findings with Bishop Martyn, Bishop Saju and the whole Diocese.

Any child or young person (under 18 years) in the Diocese of Leicester can participate. We encourage diversity, inclusion and representation.

What's the process?



Listening theme



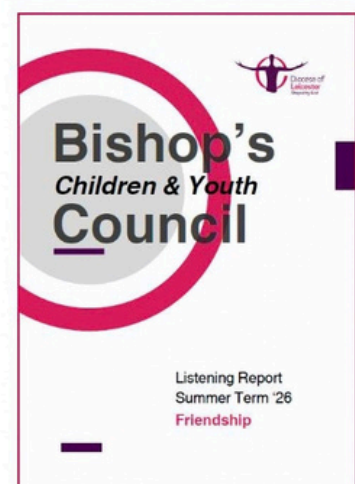
What do you want to talk about?

In Autumn 2025 we asked children and young people, *what do you want to talk about?* The top three answers: (1) Friendship (2) Social Media (3) Mental Health.

In Autumn Term 2026, we will explore the theme - **Social Media**.

Friendship Explored...

In summer term 2026, we explored the theme of friendship. Read the report and watch Bishop Martyn's response video at leicester.anglican.org/bcyc



Session plan



Full permission to use this resource creatively in your setting. You know your children, young people and context best. You may like to add snacks, change the timings or use these resources as ice-breakers over several sessions. Please adapt the rounds to suit your group's needs.

[1 min] Welcome:

Welcome everybody. Explain to participants that by taking part in this listening exercise, they are joining with children and young people from schools and church groups across Leicestershire, to share their collective opinions with our Bishops.

[3 min] Intro:

Introduce the listening theme (social media) and set some basic ground rules with your group. For example, be honest, respect others views, use 'I' statements, share only as much as you feel comfortable...

[1 min] Pray *(if appropriate in your context)*

Use the listening prayer below or do your own thing.

*God, we thank you that you are here with us.
We thank you for listening to and responding to our prayers.
God, we ask you to give us -
Grace to listen deeply,
Wisdom to speak thoughtfully,
Courage to share honestly.
Amen.*

[15-20 min] Rounds:

Invite each participant to share an honest response in each round. Give participants permission to opt-out if they feel uncomfortable.

[3 min] Reflection:

Take a moment to pause and reflect.





Round One

Thumbs up/down

Description: silent decision-making game where participants choose to respond with a 'thumbs up' or thumbs down' gesture.

You will need:

- Print out & cut up social media icons template (provided)
- Print out of scoresheet (provided)
- Phone or camera to record feedback

How to: in silence, show participants the first social media icon, for example Snapchat. Ask, '*do you know this icon?*' Invite participants to give a silent 'thumbs up' if they know the icon, or a 'thumbs down' if they don't. Count and record responses on the scoresheet.

After a 3-2-1 countdown, invite participants to shout-out the answer.

Continue to show the same icon. Now ask, '*do you use e.g. Snapchat?*' Invite participants to answer using 'thumbs up' for yes, 'thumbs down' for no. Record responses.

Repeat this process for each social media icon.

If you have time, ask your group to vote on which social media platform is their most used... record on final column of the scoresheet.

Recording: Complete the scoresheet to record how many participants know and use each social media platform.

facilitator prompts



Encourage participants to be honest.

Give permission to participants to opt out, if they don't want to answer one of the questions.

If anyone does not feel comfortable using their thumbs, print out a thumb-up and thumb-down image for participants to point to.

definitions

Social Media **platforms** can be defined as digital websites and apps that let people connect, share content, and build online communities.

A social media **icon** is a tiny picture or symbol that stands for a website or app where people talk, share, and play together.





Thumbs up/down scoresheet	 Thumbs up (known)	 Thumbs Down (unknown)	 Thumbs up (Use)	 Thumbs Down (Don't use)	Most used Social Media platform?
 YouTube					
 Facebook					
 Instagram					
 TikTok					
 WhatsApp					
 Snapchat					



Round Two

Finish the sentence

Description: finish the sentence to share your opinion

You will need:

- Print outs of blank sentence sheets (enclosed)
- Pens or pencils
- Phone or camera to record feedback

How to: introduce the social media ban to your group... say something like...

“In the summer, the UK Government announced proposals for a ‘social media ban’ for children and young people under the age of sixteen. The social media ban will come into place in March 2027 and focus on social media platforms such as Snapchat, TikTok and Instagram”

Invite participants to take a moment, individually, to consider whether they think the social media ban is a *good* or *bad* idea.

If participants don’t know what to think or think the ban is both *good and bad*, encourage them to consider; *‘does the good outweigh the bad?’* or *‘are there more bad reasons than good reasons for the ban?’*

Invite participants to write **ONE REASON** on **ONE SHEET** for why they think the social media ban is either a good or bad idea.

Recording: photograph completed sentence sheets (or post the originals).

facilitator prompts



If any of your group are struggling to complete the activity, try reframing the question...

‘...will the social media ban affect you in any way? will this be good or bad for you’

‘...why do you think the government want to introduce a social media ban for under-16s?’

Remind participants there are no ‘right or wrong’ answers, simply their honest opinion.

writing

If writing is a barrier, encourage participants to act or share their response with a friend or facilitator to scribe.

Give permission to participants to work in pairs or with a friend to complete this activity.



The social media ban is a **good** idea because...

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The social media ban is a bad idea because...

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Round Three

Fill the screen

Description: participatory drawing activity exploring most common uses of screen time and possible alternatives

You will need:

- 2 large pieces of paper (A3 or flip chart size)
- Pens and pencils
- Phone or camera to record feedback

How to: Draw a basic outline of a screen / device (as below) on both sheets of paper, or print out the template on A3 paper. Write the questions on each sheet.

It may be worth defining 'screen time' to the group. Say something like...

'Screen time is the amount of time you spend using electronic devices with a display screen. Such as smartphones, tablets, computers, game consoles and televisions'

Invite participants to draw **ONE RESPONSE** on **EACH** sheet of paper.
Each sheet of paper has a different 'screen time' question:

1. what do you spend the most time doing on a screen?
2. what would you do if you had no screen?

Recording: photograph each piece of paper

facilitator prompts



If any of your group are struggling to complete the activity, try reframing the question...

‘...do you spend more time streaming, watching videos, messaging, playing games?’

‘...what apps do you use the most or websites do you visit the most?’

drawing

If drawing is a barrier, encourage participants to write their responses.

Participants could share their response with a friend or facilitator to draw.



A large empty rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a drawing or response.

What do you spend the most time doing on a screen?



what would you do if you had no screen?

Reflection

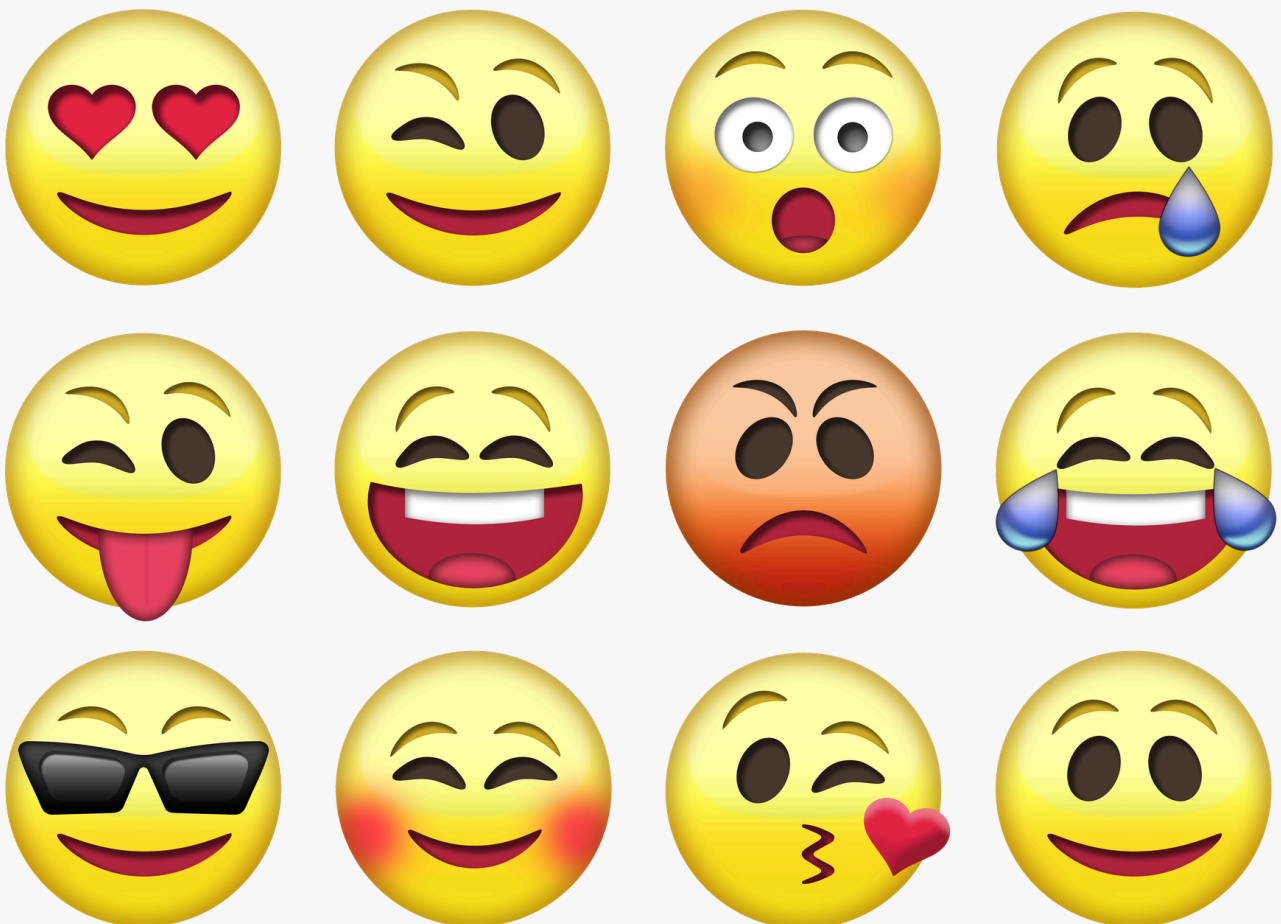
Pause:

Take a moment to reflect together at the end of your session.

Show your group the picture of the emojis. Ask participants to think about how they are feeling. Invite participants to choose an emoji (or two) that describes their feelings.

Options:

You could complete this reflective activity in silence or invite participants to share the emoji they choose and why (if they are willing).



facilitator feedback

✉ matt.long@leicestercofe.org

🌐 <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/e/ur3n2AWjRU>

Please complete feedback form and upload photos of responses from your listening group via the **link above**.

Or email responses to address above. If emailing, please copy and paste the three questions below into your email and briefly answer.

Questions:

1. Where did you meet? (Name of church / school / group)
2. How many children / young people in your group?
3. Age range and makeup of group?
(Gender, Ethnicity, Special Educational Needs & Disability).

Please email feedback to Matt Long (Youth Engagement Officer) by **Friday 29th January 2027**.

We would love to hear your reflections on the listening exercise... What worked well? What didn't? What would you change? Ideas?

All (brutally honest) feedback is super useful as we learn together.