

Welcome to the FWW Prayer Guide for September. We hope it will be useful for personal prayer, but also for those who lead intercessions in services. Do pass it on to those in your church who would be interested. Any feedback from use of the Guide would be most welcome. We also use the Guide as the basis for our quarterly online prayer meeting. The next meeting will be on October 8th from 1.00 – 1.30 p.m. For the Zoom link for that, and any feedback, please email dickjohnson@faithatwork.org.uk

As schools and colleges begin the new academic year, our prayers this month focus on those who work in the education sector. Latest figures show that more than 570,000 people in the UK taught in schools in 2023 (primary to 6th form)¹, a staggering 83% being female. Add those working in further and higher education, and the many who work in support roles, from cleaners, and janitors to administrators and advisors, and education makes up a significant part of the economy.

One current challenge is how to attract people into teaching. Recruitment of new teachers in almost all secondary subject areas has fallen far behind targets, and with more people leaving the profession, teacher supply is in a 'critical state', representing 'a substantial risk to the quality of education'.² The reasons for the high number of leavers include high workload, falling behind in pay compared to other parts of the labour market, and that flexible working (including working from home) is less possible in this sector.

Jesus placed children at the heart of God's Kingdom (Luke 18 v 16). Their care, nurture and education is a sacred calling which has long been part of the work of the Church. Join us this month, alongside praying for the work of FWW, in praying for all who work in this vital sector.

Heavenly Father, as Jesus spoke of your Kingdom belonging to children, so we pray for all whose work is to care for and educate young people.

Give wisdom and discernment to all who teach;

Strength and resilience to those whose vocation is tested by the many challenges of working in the education sector today;
and compassion and love for all in their care.

That those they teach may discover the wonders of your world, and learn to love and serve according to the example of your Son, in whose name we pray.

Amen

Especially we pray for:

- All working in childcare, schools and colleges (*Be specific, naming and praying for those working in schools, nurseries, and other forms of education in your community*).
- Children and all who have a part to play in their education at home and where they live.
- Those who make policy in education at this time of political change, for wisdom in decisions, especially in the area of recruitment and retention of teachers.
- For workers in this sector facing challenges of workload, maintaining discipline, and staff shortages.
- Faith at Work in Worcestershire in our specific plans for the rest of this year:
 - arrangements for a **workplace visit** to manufacturing company in Redditch in the autumn;
 - recruitment of new trustees and chaplains;
 - training in safeguarding for all volunteers;
 - the planning of a survey to be carried out in the winter to measure the impact of chaplaincy.
- In our cycle of prayer for the work of FWW, this month we pray for:
 - **Chaplains in Redditch Town Centre:** Paul Lawlor (team leader), Elaine Whitfield, Sharon Forrest, Linda McRoy, Lucas Allmark – visiting shop workers in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, and Paul's ministry as a director of the Redditch BID (Business Improvement District)

¹ [How many teachers are there in the UK? | Tes](#) January 2024

² [Teacher Labour Market in England Annual Report 2024 - NFER](#)