

## **Recruitment Model for Primary Schools**

### **Aim: To encourage primary school pupils to learn to ring**

The scheme assumes that the primary school pupils have no experience of bell ringing through family or Church connections.

The outline below assumes that the activity will be run along the same lines as any other after-school activity and therefore requires liaison between the school and bell ringers, as individual schools may vary in their arrangements.

The suggestions below draw on experience of such after-school clubs already in operation.

### **Advance planning: Some issues to consider before approaching the school**

- Staffing for the activity. Ideally at least two experienced ringing teachers, preferably male and female. Who will take the lead? Who is in charge and who is responsible?
- Suitable tower for teaching, light bells, a method of silencing bells for teaching handling.
- Local contact/connection with the school.
- Are the necessary DBS checks in place?
- Scheme of work and reward/certification available (Bell Club from Sherbourne Teaching Aids, or Learning the Ropes from ART).
- Which age group(s) will be appropriate/targeted? Consider the weight of the bells.
- How long will the programme last? Number of weeks in the programme.
- Day and time of sessions.
- How many learners can the programme accommodate (physical space and staffing available)?
- What are the plans for the end/continuation of the programme? Which local towers will be able to accommodate and/or be suitable for young ringers?
- How will the students get to the tower (and home again afterwards)? Plan escorted delivery and return of younger pupils.

### **How to interest the pupils and the school**

Make contact with the school. Any of the following options could be used: phone call or e-mail; liaising through a known parent or member of staff; Vicar if a Church school; or visit the school office yourself.

Make an appointment to meet the Head Teacher and go prepared with an outline plan of what you are offering. Be willing to be flexible with your ideas and take on board the suggestions of the Head Teacher, as (s)he knows the audience with which you are trying to engage. Agree some basic terms and conditions to take away and discuss with your fellow teachers.

Return with detailed plans, including e.g. a start date and all the paperwork required.

### **How to launch the activity**

- Work with a member of school staff to write information for the weekly newsletter.
- Prepare an application form to send to interested pupils.
- Make a personal presentation to all year 5/6 pupils. Use the DVD from ART, 'The Inside Story' (five-minute introduction to bell ringing). You could equally use an extract from 'The Craft of Bellringing' (Perrin). A small demonstration bell may be helpful but an enthusiastic person who is comfortable with talking to primary school pupils is best.
- Have a member of school staff to support you.

### **Training sessions**

Weekly sessions need to be planned in advance, with plenty of activities that vary in length from 5 to 10 minutes. Hand bells, worksheets, quizzes and any other bell-related activities are needed whilst individuals are having 1:1 bell handling tuition or only half the group is ringing. Suggested plan:

- Register attendees including adults, and record payments.
- Consume drinks and snacks.
- Outline the plan for the session, review safety rules and what was covered in the previous session.
- Check and record targets/achievements regularly and discuss next steps.
- Include practical and theory elements in each session.
- Regularly seek feedback from pupils, parents and the school.

### **At the end of the programme**

- Record and celebrate achievements with an award ceremony, certificates and/or badges as appropriate.
- Advertise the event (school assembly, local newspaper, Ringing Round Devon).
- Plan a special ringing event, e.g.: school service, Saint's day, Queen's birthday, mini outing/visit to another tower etc.
- Introduce the pupils into a local band and support their transition.
- Use the pupils as ambassadors for future recruits/helpers with the next group.
- Encourage and support them to continue and to participate in service ringing and other ringing activities in the future.
- Build on the experience: investigate whether you could roll out the scheme elsewhere in your area, or help others to do something similar.

### **What has been done in the past and why it has worked**

- A Church school was approached.
- A member of staff who was a lapsed ringer was prepared to support recruitment, and to deliver and attend practices.
- A detailed scheme of work was produced, with awards (certificates and badges) throughout the progression.
- Teachers had certification, both professional and from ART.
- The following were provided: DBS certification, health and safety policies, safeguarding and working with young people policies, parental consent forms, risk assessments.
- A structure similar to that of other after-school activities was used, i.e. £2 voluntary contribution (which went into the training fund for resources & future training needs).
- The aim was to ring for school services.
- The club contributed to the school aim of 'links to the local community'.
- Access to a suitable training bell (dumb bell and simulator) was available.
- The school liked the idea that each lesson was planned and reviewed with individual progress checks.
- Contact was maintained with parents and the school throughout the programme, 1:1 and/or by e-mail.
- Gradual inclusion into a local band was achieved when appropriate.
- Additional holiday club ringing sessions were run, making use of a light ring of bells nearby.

## **Recruitment Model for Secondary Schools**

### **Aim: To encourage secondary school pupils to learn to ring**

Students of secondary school age who come into contact with bell ringing through families, friends, Church or other society membership may well have begun to ring before reaching secondary school.

The scheme outlined below assumes that the students whom you would like to interest in learning to ring have had no previous contact with bell ringing. It also assumes that these are day (rather than boarding) school students. Whilst the model described has been tried in this type of setting, it could work more easily in a boarding school environment in some respects.

This outline assumes that an activity along the lines of an after-school club will be run for a certain number of weeks (e.g. one school term) and that participants (learners) will not yet be linked to a home tower during this period. The expectation is that the participants will be able to handle a bell individually and ring in rounds at the end of the programme, and that those who then wish to continue (which may not be all) will be assisted with integrating into the local band at a tower near their home.

The suggestions below draw on experience from schemes of this kind, which have been operated in various areas.

### **Advance planning: Some issues to consider before approaching the school**

- Staffing for the activity. Ideally at least two experienced ringing teachers, preferably male and female. Who will take the lead? Who is in charge and who is responsible?
- Suitable tower for teaching, light bells, a method of silencing bells for teaching handling.
- Local contact/connection with the school.
- Are the necessary DBS checks in place?
- Scheme of work and reward/certification available (Bell Club from Sherbourne Teaching Aids, or Learning the Ropes from ART).
- Which age group(s) will be appropriate/targeted? Consider the weight of the bells.
- How long will the programme last? Number of weeks in the programme.
- Day and time of sessions.
- How many learners can the programme accommodate (physical space and staffing available)?
- What are the plans for the end/continuation of the programme? Which local towers will be able to accommodate and/or be suitable for young ringers?
- How will the students get to the tower (and home again afterwards)? Plan escorted delivery and return of younger pupils.

In the 'Useful Documents for Members' area of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers' website, there is helpful guidance in the section headed 'New Ringers': <http://devonringers.org.uk/guild/useful-docs>

### **How to interest the pupils and the school**

With possibilities (and alternatives) thought through (but not set in stone), make contact with a local secondary school (this could be through a teacher, through a parent, or by a direct approach to the school) with the offer of an after-school programme. Where there is a ringer (or a former ringer) on the staff, this person can be helpful in suggesting ways of making the initial contact.

Some secondary schools run special events at which local organisations are able to make presentations or to mount displays to encourage students to join local societies. A one-term after-school club could be a follow-up to one of these events.

It may be important to find out whether the school has particular requirements for activities of this kind. This may include the expectation that one of the teachers will have a watching brief or will be the liaison person between the school and the person running the scheme.

### **How to launch the activity**

An initial taster session is usually a helpful way to start. A session of this kind can accommodate more students than the regular weekly teaching. Assume that not everyone who comes to a taster session will want to continue. Make clear that it is a chance to find out more.

To run the activity, you will need to arrange the following (judging the content according to the age group of the students and the requirements of the school):

- Letter of consent signed by each student's parent/guardian.
- Written description of the scheme, with your contact details (making clear to parents that they are welcome to come to the sessions).
- List of names, e-mail addresses, mobile phone numbers, addresses for students who want to take part.
- How to make contact with the school, should any issues arise.

At the first session, tell students:

- The purpose of scheme and the ground rules in the tower.
- How to make contact if they are ill or otherwise unable to attend.
- What you expect that they will have achieved by the end of the course.
- How their achievements will be recognised, e.g. links with any scheme operated by the school, such as PiXL EDGE ([www.pixl.org.uk/edge](http://www.pixl.org.uk/edge)).
- What the next steps can be and how they can progress further if they wish.

### **Training sessions**

There needs to be plenty for students to do (not simply watch and wait). This is where it helps to be using a tower where there is space for more than one activity to be happening simultaneously).

During the programme:

- Keep the local Branch informed about what it is happening.
- Where appropriate, keep the school informed about the students' achievements.
- Seek regular feedback from the students about the sessions and about how they feel they are progressing.
- Put plans in place for learners who are likely to want to continue and to integrate into towers in their local area; identify ringers who can help them to make this transition (e.g. to accompany learners to their new towers and to continue to take an interest in their progress).

### **At the end of the programme**

- Record and celebrate achievements with an award ceremony, certificates and/or badges as appropriate.
- Ensure that these achievements count towards any achievement records operated by the school.
- Encourage feedback from the students about the programme as a whole.
- Ensure that learners who want to continue are helped to do so and that they know which further opportunities are available; introduce them into a local band and support their transition
- Encourage and support learners to continue and to participate in service ringing and other ringing activities in the future.
- Build on the experience: investigate whether you could roll out the scheme somewhere else in your area, or help others to do something similar.

### **What has been done in the past and why it has worked**

- The initiative came from the school (there was already contact between the school and the Church. Consequently, the school contacted the tower captain to ask whether something could be arranged to enable students to experience bell ringing).
- The sessions were explicitly linked to the school's aim of encouraging students to take part in local community activities out of school hours.
- A member of staff was prepared to support recruitment, and to assist liaison with the school and the students.
- The students were similar in age.
- Those teaching ringing were experienced in working with students of this age group.
- The following were provided: DBS certification, health and safety policies, safeguarding and working with young people policies, parental consent forms, risk assessments.
- Contact was maintained with parents and the school throughout the programme, 1:1 and/or by e-mail.
- Students were contacted regularly by e-mail and they informed the teachers in advance if they were unable to attend a session for any reason.
- Gradual inclusion into local bands was attempted when appropriate.

## **Recruitment Model for Mission Communities, Deaneries or Cluster Groups**

### **Aim: To encourage people of all ages to learn to ring**

Many towers struggle to find enough ringers to ring bells for services on a Sunday without assistance from neighbouring towers. This model is used to encourage towers across an area to work together on recruiting and training new ringers.

The scheme outlined below assumes that recruitment within the Church community has been exhausted and that attempts have also been made to engage lapsed ringers. It draws on a combination of experience from various recruitment campaigns that have had some success.

### **Advance planning: Some issues to consider before advertising your course**

- Staffing for the training of new recruits. More than two teachers will be required if there is a good response and a supporting band will be needed once the new recruits are ready to ring with others. Support may be required from the Branch or Guild Education Officer.
- Check the state of the bells in the towers that you are attempting to populate. The Guild Advisers on Bells and Belfries will perform an inspection at the request of the PCC.
- Suitable tower for teaching: bells that can be silenced, a dumb bell with simulator, bells that 'go' easily, central location with parking if necessary. Think about the immediate neighbours.
- Risk assessments and insurance.
- DBS checks if young people or vulnerable adults are involved.
- Agreed scheme of work for recruits to follow, e.g. Bell Club from Sherbourne Teaching Aids, or Learning the Ropes from ART.
- Finances to cover the cost of resources, e.g. advertising, posters, leaflets, books, spare ropes, spare stays etc.
- Resources for the training: books from the Central Council, Whiting Society, ART etc.
- Plan how long the initial training may last, taking into account frequency, day/evening sessions, and availability of trainers.
- If you are planning a recruitment event, set a start date for training to begin.
- Be prepared to run daytime and evening sessions to suit all ages/occupations of new recruits.
- A local goal may help to initiate interest, e.g. to ring for the village open day, ring in the New Year or similar.

### **How to launch the activity**

The recruitment drive can be launched either through an advertising campaign over a period of time or at a specific event.

#### **Advertising:**

- Local parish magazines, local newspapers, ONE magazine.
- Posters, leaflet-drop, school newsletters, village hall / library noticeboards.
- Ringing for national events with advanced advertising, such as St George's day or the Queen's birthday.

#### **Recruitment events:**

These might take place before or on the same day as the chance to 'have a go'.

- Coffee mornings, bingo nights, national events.
- Tower open days, Heritage Open Day, village open days.

A 'taster' day is a good way to start a recruitment drive. Be prepared for the unexpected, as there may be varying numbers of people who are interested. A booking system may be needed for health and safety reasons. Materials for information, such as DVDs, display boards and leaflets, are available for use on the day. Demonstration bells and mini rings are available through the Guild and Branches; these will add to the appeal. During the event, these resources can be used to inform those who are waiting for a turn to enter the tower/ringing room. The taster day could include:

- Tour of the bells.
- Demonstration ring.
- Climb to the top of the tower to see the views and photograph the surrounding area.
- Visit to and explanation of the clock.

- Opportunity to have a go.

Useful promotional resources:

Central Council leaflets, Discover Bellringing (ART), demonstration bell (Guild or Branch), mini ring (Frank Mack or others), display boards (e.g. from the North East Branch), DVDs (The Craft of Bellringing, The Inside Story – ART), team T-shirts, Guild sweatshirts.

### **Training sessions**

Having recruited new learners, a programme of training needs to be planned, taking into account:

- Numbers of teachers.
- Numbers of learners.
- Availability of participants.
- Frequency of sessions.
- Towers to be used for training.
- Helpers required once new recruits start to ring with others.

### **At the end of the programme**

Ensure that you have a strategy in place for moving on and for integrating the new recruits into local towers. At an early stage, consider which towers will be suitable. If a completely new band has been trained for one tower, encourage them to hold an AGM to elect a captain, to establish tower traditions, and to continue to be involved with other towers. Make sure that you and the Branch provide ongoing support to your recruits; encourage them to join the Guild where appropriate, so that they can benefit from all the resources and support available.

### **What has been done in the past and why it has worked**

To reach the stage at which new recruits are able to handle a bell independently, training has been proven to be most effective when sessions are more frequent than weekly and when learners have been in pairs or threes with two teachers. An intense week of training has been successful in one area, with three learners and two teachers attending on three days in one week. Another success was achieved with a couple who attended training sessions with two teachers for one to two hours twice per week over a period of two months.