



A Heartfelt Thank You: Reflecting on the Impact of Your Support Through Soul Spaces

As we reflect on the recent Advent Soul Spaces, we are filled with gratitude for a group of young leaders who poured their hearts into creating a meaningful experience. Their focus, determination, and care were evident as they led around 200 pupils through four thoughtful reflection stations. The true spirit of Christmas came alive through their leadership and commitment.

These young leaders didn't just follow plans; they embodied love, patience, and dedication. They created space for their peers to pause, reflect, and connect with the deeper meaning of Christmas. The feedback from the students they guided is a testament to the impact they made: *"Seeing younger children enjoying the activities made me think more about Christmas."*

"I've loved teaching others a lesson about Christmas," shared one leader, discovering joy in sharing the Christmas story.

"I think it was an amazing and inspiring event," said another leader, their passion for the experience igniting a spark in everyone around them.

It wasn't just about the lesson—it was about growth. One leader shared, *"After we got through all the classes, I was exhausted because I was continually repeating myself!"* Their resilience, kindness, and dedication made the event unforgettable.

The impact of these Soul Spaces was also felt by the children. One student shared, *"It reminded me about the real meaning of Christmas. My favourite part was that it was fun but it also made me feel."* Another said, *"It was such a calm time. It helped me to stop and think, which was so nice."*

The feedback from the children was moving, with reflections on God's love, forgiveness, and the importance of gratitude and compassion. One child shared, *"I learned that God really really likes me,"* while another reflected, *"Tiny bits of kindness can make a big difference. God loves, and I should as well."* None of this would be possible without your generous support—through prayer, donations, and encouragement. Your belief in this work enables us to empower young leaders, deepen their faith, and inspire acts of service.

As we look to the future, we are filled with hope. With your continued support, we can reach more young people, transform more lives, and spread more love. Will you join us in prayer and giving? Together, we can have an impact—one reflection, one act of kindness, one prayer at a time. Thank you for being part of this incredible journey.

Kt Haynes – kt.stortvalley@gmail.com

I find my sessions really helpful because I like to be able to say what I want and never get judged for whatever I say. I like to be able to get advice so I can improve myself. I like to be able to get told what I need to hear and not what I want to hear. I feel safe and it will always be a good place to come to.

- Year 9 Student

OUR TRUSTEES' PASSION FOR SCHOOLS & YOUNG PEOPLE

Margaret – I am pleased to have recently joined SVST as a trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding. Originally from just outside Reading, I have lived in East Yorkshire, Durham and now Essex. I have three children of my own and am also a teacher at a Primary School in Saffron Walden. At home, we have four guinea pigs and in my spare time I enjoy travelling and music. I am really excited to have joined SVST and trust that the Lord will enable us to grow as a charity this year. I see firsthand in school the immense benefits of the work that Kt and Nicola undertake with our children and young people and we are very grateful for the opportunity to show God's love in action. I am proud to support the valuable work that Kt and Nicola undertake each week supporting many young people in our local schools. As a teacher myself in one of these schools, I know the children and parents are very grateful for the support and encouragement offered by SVST. In addition, many children are able to participate in the Rooted group which runs for Y6 and the termly Soul Spaces are enjoyed by the whole school.



Margaret, John & Bren

John - It's been an absolute privilege to get involved with SVST. This is an organisation that's making a real difference to young people's lives. We have two incredible workers in Kt & Nicola and I have been very excited to see just how many young people they are able to have contact with each week. The respect which Kt and Nicola have built in the schools is clear and they are able to have really meaningful spiritual discussions with the people they meet. It makes me excited for the future but also a little frustrated because there is a need that we can meet in other schools but we don't currently have the resources to do that. That's why your support matters so much.

Bren - I moved into the area in 2022 and met Kt later that year. She shared her passion for her work with SVST telling me about the Soul Spaces and assemblies they do in local schools, sharing God's love with children and young people. Kt also shared with me about how she and Nic watch children and young people grow in confidence as they work alongside them through mentoring and supporting them for much of their school lives. Recently I was privileged to go to one of the schools and see their Christmas Soul Space. These spaces give children an opportunity to be quiet and reflect on life during a busy school day. I recently became a trustee and now share Kt and Nic's passions to reach these young people with the love of God every day. The Lord has good plans for the future of the trust and I am excited to see how the work grows and develops. Kt & Nic continue to give children and young people value and worth, listening to them and showing them how much God loves them, and I look forward to seeing this vital work continue into the coming years.



Gary

Gary - I have been involved in various ways with SVST for a good few years but since becoming a Trustee in 2024 I have been given a whole new understanding of the great work that is done! Kt and Nicola do so much more than I realised and the stories of children they either mentor or work with never fail to inspire me. They are truly showing God's love through soul spaces, Roots course, assemblies and mentoring. What excites me about SVST is the chance to grow this vital work and do more! Our children and young people need to see God's love in action. The work of SVST enables this to happen.

We are currently looking for another Trustee, someone to help with fundraising/grant writing and a church champion for each church in the Stort Valley area. If you feel that God is calling you to become more involved with the work of SVST, we would love to hear from you!

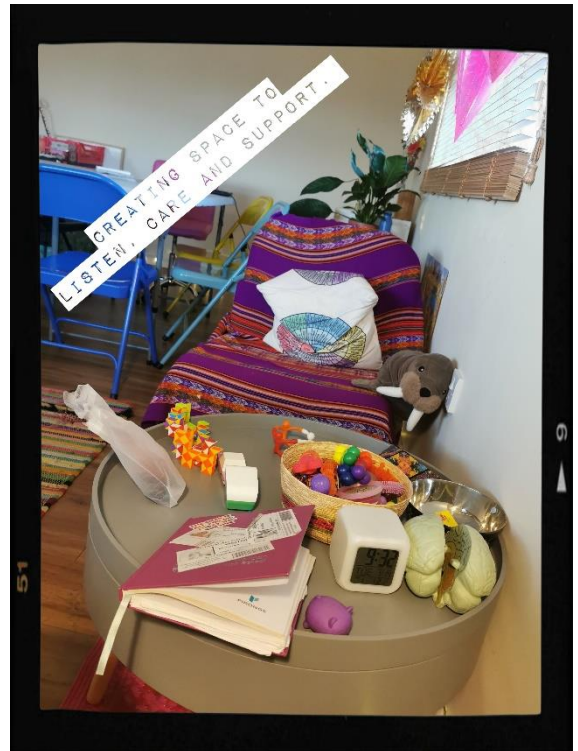
MENTORING TESTIMONIALS

Y11 Student Female

Mentoring was an important part of my life for around three years. It allowed me to be open and honest with an adult I not only knew was there to help me, but that I also felt like I had a friendship with. To know there are people out there who are for you is an amazing thing. Mentoring especially allowed me to get to know the fun side of myself, in the midst of finding ways to manage my stress and sadness it opened me up to learning how much I could do and what was out there for me to love. From the chess games we played in sessions to bonding over food, there was never a time when I felt unwelcome or unseen. Mentoring really was a blessing for me.

Y10 Student Male

I first started going to mentoring and my mentor Kt has been helping me since year 5. I first joined because I was struggling with home and school problems and my mental health was quite bad, I really enjoy our sessions because it gives me a chance to open up or even just have a chat with someone about everything that's going on in my life, it has helped me a lot as I don't normally talk to anyone but Kt she knows everything about me as I trust her because I've known her for so long, it's nice to know that you can go and talk to someone even if it's the most random things and that how I feel when I go and see Kt she has helped me a lot with my life and I'm very thankful that I still have sessions after 5 years because I benefit from it a lot, every time I walk out the shed I have a smile on my face because I've spoken to someone about how I feel, the support they have given me has really helped and my mental health definitely gets better bit by bit every session.



Y9 Student Female

I first started mentoring and my mentor Kt has been there through a lot of things that have been happening in my life, she was there when I was in the wrong and when I was in the right but never saw me as a bad person, she helped me see the good in people and how some people's actions aren't okay. She helped me through a court case which I never thought I'd be confident enough to go forward with and she has been nothing but a massive help on keeping me on my feet during the whole thing and letting me know no matter what happens I'll always have someone to talk to. It changed me and made me become a better person and helped me opening up and I'll forever be grateful for that. Mentoring got me to a better place in life that I thought I would have to get to by myself and that's all thanks to the people who allow me to sit there and waffle. It has got a lot better and that's because I've had someone to talk to even if I have bad day.



LIFE IN ALL ITS FULLNESS

The mission statement at Radwinter Primary School is 'Growing and learning together to embrace life in all its fullness'. Their website explains that 'this reflects a Christian understanding that God's love is for everyone recognising that every child has individual talents, needs and a worthy contribution to make.' The chaplaincy service that SVST provides, complements this well. Whether running a Soul Space, working with the Worship Council, taking assemblies, supporting young people through mentoring, offering a lunchtime sanctuary space or running seasonal events, in all that we do we strive to demonstrate the unfailing, never-ending love that God has for each child and young person we come into contact with. It is a pleasure and a privilege to be able to offer the gift of time to those who need a listening ear or a bit of encouragement, including staff, and to love and serve our schools, with open hands, asking nothing in return.

Sometimes it's hard to quantify or measure the impact we have but what I know for sure, is that each time I leave a school, I know that God has used me, sometimes in a big and public way and sometimes in a small and quiet way. He's there in the biblical assembly message, His Holy Spirit is guiding in the more gentle, pastoral spaces and His love is ever present, before we even cross the threshold, in schools as a whole. We serve, we love and we care, doing our best to support young people and see them thrive, or to put it another way, to see them embrace life in all its fullness.

Nicola Williamson – nicola.stortvalley@gmail.com

At Radwinter, we are incredibly fortunate to have Nicki come in to school as our school Chaplain once a week. She supports our pupils and staff across the school in a multitude of different ways: 1-to-1 pastoral sessions, empowering and organising the worship council, leading assemblies, running a Sanctuary Space lunchtime club, leading church services and hosting reflective prayer spaces. All of these experiences are invaluable to the children and allow them to develop their spirituality in their own personal way.



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