

A high-angle photograph of two young children, a boy and a girl, sitting on a brown carpeted floor. They are both wearing white t-shirts. The boy is on the left, looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The girl is on the right, looking at a laptop screen with her hands clasped near her chin. The laptop is open and positioned in the lower right quadrant of the image. The background is a dark brown wall. The image is framed by a white curved border at the bottom and right sides.

RESEARCH  
REPORT

THE CHARACTERISTICS  
OF GENERATION ALPHA  
AND THEIR ATTITUDES  
TO CHRISTIANITY

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## I Abstract

*Generation Alpha, born into a digitally integrated world, demonstrate advanced proficiency with technology and a strong capacity for creative problem-solving.*

Early exposure to digital platforms has fostered global awareness, environmental consciousness, and a nuanced use of social media for communication, learning, and entertainment.

Data collected from 359 children from seven primary schools in Wales UK reveal both expected and surprising influences, including the significant roles of family, peers, and teachers. Spiritual engagement is marked by a preference for churches offering clear messages and practical support, reflecting a perceived link between spirituality and mental health. *Generation Alpha* is drawn to a range of worship styles, suggesting a diverse spiritual identity. Key challenges include mental health concerns, cyberbullying, misinformation, and social polarisation, all intensified by their digital environment.

Differences between Welsh and English-medium schools in terms of relationships, mental health, church engagement, and belief in God—were notable and merit further study.

While sharing traits with *Gen Z*, *Generation Alpha's* deeper digital immersion and interaction with AI amplify these characteristics, highlighting the need for missional institutions to evolve accordingly.



## 2 Introduction

No sooner have we got used to *Generation Alpha*<sup>1,2</sup> than the year 2025 gives rise to a whole new generation of babies, many of them will even live to see the 22<sup>nd</sup> century.

Generation Beta have been arriving since January 1<sup>st</sup> 2025. I suspect there is not a lot we can understand about *Generation Beta* (other than the fact that they seem to like milk!). But how valid is Generational Theory? It has certainly been lifted up as useful way to categorise insights into emerging generations for multiple purposes; toy manufacturers to produce the next favourite toy or tech giants the next innovation, universities on how to attract new generations of students, big businesses to *future proof* their organisations, political parties to gain votes, school teachers on the best way to teach. All interesting pursuits. And of course those who can make these predictions have developed quite a lucrative career as *futurists*<sup>3</sup>.

Alongside those institutions are the mission agencies focused on communicating to newer generations. They have worked hard on two levels, firstly, how do they best communicate their message to newer generations, and secondly, how do they work alongside fellow employees who may be from different generations and have a different

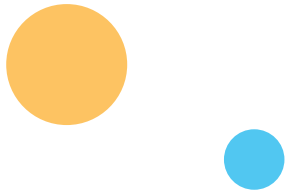
Generation	Birth Years	Characteristics
<b>Silent Generation</b>	1928 - 1945	Known for being pragmatic and cautious, often referred to as the "Traditionalists".
<b>Baby Boomers</b>	1946 - 1964	Experienced post-WWII economic growth, known for valuing hard work and loyalty.
<b>Generation X</b>	1965 - 1980	Grew up with the rise of technology, known for independence and work-life balance.
<b>Generation Y Millennials</b>	1981 - 1996	Digital pioneers, faced economic challenges
<b>Generation Z</b>	1997 - 2012	Digital natives, highly connected and socially conscious.
<b>Generation Alpha</b>	2013 - 2024	Born into a fully digital world, expected to be highly tech-savvy.
<b>Generation Beta</b>	2025 -	

worldview<sup>4</sup>! And of course it is a noble cause. The Old Testament tribe of Issachar were valuable because they knew how to understand the signs of the times (1 Chronicles 12:32). But this idea that different

generational cohorts have unique characteristics is certainly intriguing. The above is a much-used table of generational theory<sup>5</sup>: And maybe a little more detail on more recent generations<sup>6,7</sup>:

Characteristic	Generation Z (1997 - 2012)	Generation Alpha (2013-2024)
<b>Technology</b>	Digital natives, grew up with smartphones and social media.	Born into a world with AI, smart devices, and ubiquitous internet.
<b>Education.</b>	Highly educated, value practical education and certifications.	Expected to be the most educated generation, with a focus on digital learning.
<b>Diversity</b>	Racially and ethnically diverse.	Even more diverse, globally-minded.
<b>Social Influence</b>	Influenced by social media, value authenticity and transparency.	Influenced by technology from birth, highly tech-savvy
<b>Work Preferences</b>	Value flexibility, gig economy participation.	Likely to value flexibility and work-life balance even more.
<b>Mental Health</b>	High awareness of mental health issues, prioritize well-being	Expected to continue prioritizing mental health and well-being.
<b>Global Events</b>	Shaped by the Great Recession, COVID-19 pandemic.	Shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic and rapid technological advancements.
<b>Religion</b>	Value personal spirituality over traditional religious practices and institutions.	More likely to engage in personalized, value-based spirituality, drawing on global resources and viewpoints, thanks to their digital fluency.

The meta narratives are useful. But there are concerns. Until recently the prevailing view of Gen Z was summed in this paragraph<sup>8</sup>:



Many Gen Z individuals are moving away from traditional religious affiliations. About 48% identify as religiously unaffiliated, often referred to as “nones”. This includes atheists, agnostics, and those who don’t subscribe to any particular religion. This generation places a high value on mental well-being and often integrates spirituality into their self-care routines. Gen Z is known for questioning traditional institutions, including religious ones. They value authenticity

and are quick to call out hypocrisy and this has led to a more individualised and flexible approach to spirituality.

But there were other characteristics that were less visible<sup>9</sup>:

Despite lower participation in organised religion, nearly half of Gen Z believes in a higher power. The rise of the internet and social media has exposed Gen Z to a wide range of beliefs and practices, fostering a culture of exploration and openness.

The Bible Society report, *Quiet Revival* captures what is currently happening:

Church decline in England and Wales has not only stopped, but the Church is growing, as Gen Z leads an exciting turnaround in church attendance. These are striking findings that completely reverse the widely held assumption that the Church in England and Wales is in terminal decline. While some traditional denominations continue to face challenges, we’ve seen significant, broad-based growth among most expressions of Church – particularly in Roman Catholicism and Pentecostalism. There are now over 2 million more people attending church than there were six years ago. McAleer (2025, p.6)



A report from the *John Smith Centre*<sup>10</sup> released a week before the *Quiet Revival* report stated that 67% of Gen Z were optimistic about their futures. But more interestingly the report concluded that:

**Young peoples' attitudes, their sense of agency and their willingness to contribute to society diverge significantly due to their life circumstances, by where they live.**

Both reports suggest the need to be careful with meta-narratives. And it is true that Generational Theory is not an exact science, and it does seem unlikely that two people born at the same time from different countries, with different family makeup, different educational opportunities, living in different socio-economic climates, can manifest the same set of characteristics. But let's take that one stage further and ask the question, what will it mean to look closely at *Generation Alpha* in a single geographic context. Focusing on Wales, UK with a population of 3.1million people<sup>11</sup>, looking at 7 schools – four of them English language Schools and three of them Welsh Language Schools – and drawing on urban, post-industrial, suburb and city locations from each. Where research was undertaken in Welsh-medium schools, the questionnaires were distributed in the Welsh language and the Focus Groups were conducted in the medium of Welsh.



### 3 Literature Review

This study draws upon several key texts that inform contemporary understanding of generational cohorts and their socio-religious dynamics.

James Emery White's *Meet Generation Z* (2017) presents *Gen Z*<sup>12</sup> as a pivotal generation, marking a decisive shift in cultural and religious engagement in the West. White argues that this cohort represents both a critical missional challenge and an opportunity for the Church. He argues *Gen Z* has the potential to be the most influential religious force in the West. His book focuses on understanding and reaching this generation, particularly within the context of a changing cultural landscape and the rise of "nones" (religiously unaffiliated individuals).

The concept of the *Rise of the Nones* (2014) was explored in James Emery White's earlier book and it explored the people who identify as having no religious affiliation. The book is divided into two main sections: The first section looks at understanding the characteristics of the *Nones* which are really *Gen Z* characteristics and the second section looks at how the church can better connect with them.

McCrindle and Fell's *Generation Alpha* (2021) offers an in-depth analysis of the generation succeeding *Gen Z*. The authors provide sociological and technological insights into how *Generation Alpha* are

likely to interact with the world, shaped profoundly by digital immersion and global connectivity.

Additionally, Beckwith's *Postmodern Children's Ministry* (2004) contributes a theological and pedagogical lens through which to interpret children's spiritual development in a postmodern context. This resource is especially pertinent when applied in considering how faith is communicated and experienced by children in a contemporary UK context.

*Generations* by Lisetti (2023) is a comprehensive guide that explores the unique characteristics, strengths, and challenges of different generations, including *Generation Z*, Millennials, *Generation X*, Boomers, Silents, and *Generation Alpha*. Lisetti delves into the defining moments and shared experiences that shape each generation, offering keen insights into intergenerational dynamics and relationships. The book suggests that generational theory transcends national borders, showcasing the global impact of generations on societies, economies, and cultures. It aims to bridge gaps between generations.

*Generation Alpha: They're Alpha for a Reason* by Dr Daliah Wachs (2020) addresses common stereotypes about this generation, such as perceived lack of direction and social skills, and counters these with a positive outlook on their potential. Wachs suggests how *Generation Alpha* will navigate and reshape the world with unprecedented speed and determination. More of a booklet than a book really, but still some helpful insights.

And most recently *The Quiet Revival Report* (2025) highlights several reasons for the growth of Roman Catholic and Pentecostal churches, while other denominations continue to decline. Of course, it is more nuanced than saying Pentecostal Churches are growing others are not. Where there are churches from any denominations that manifest the vibrant worship styles and passionate preaching of the Pentecostals, they are growing too. So, it is the Charismatic churches that are yielding growth. However, the report also points to the growth in Catholic and Orthodox churches, and we will return to that in our analysis chapter.

## 4 Methodology

The methods of data collection were two fold, quantitative and qualitative, falling back on Creswell & Plano Clark's (2018, p.12) assertion that, "Mixed methods research provides a stronger understanding of the problem or question than either method by itself."

The intent was to undertake quantitative data collection in the form of questionnaires that were distributed to Welsh-medium<sup>13</sup> and English-medium schools across Wales in urban, suburban, post-industrial and rural<sup>14</sup> areas. Unfortunately, the Welsh language urban school withdrew at the last minute due to lack of staffing. But in all, 359 children from school years 5 & 6<sup>15</sup> from seven different schools across Wales completed the questionnaires. There was close to 50/50 Welsh and English and a similar numbers of children contributed in each school.

The survey questions were:

1. Who do you learn the most from?
2. Who would you trust with important questions?
3. What would you choose to do for fun?
4. **Do you believe in God?**
5. Who do you think Jesus is?
6. **How often do you go to church/chapel?**
7. **Which of these describes your level of worry and anxiety?**
8. **What things cause you worry or anxiety?**
9. **Who would you talk to if you felt worried or anxious?**
10. Where do you spend most of your time outside school?
11. If you could be part of a regular club to talk about God, where would you like to meet?



Questions 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 were taken further as questions for the Focus Groups. After the questionnaires were completed three of the schools, one Welsh-medium rural, one English-medium suburban and one Welsh-medium post-industrial agreed to a single focus group each to explore the findings of the questionnaires. These focus groups were made up of 6-8 children from school years 5 and 6.

Throughout the whole process, parents/carers were kept informed of the questionnaires being distributed and for the children taking part in the focus groups parents were asked for explicit permission for their involvement. An additional adult provided by the school was present for the focus groups. In addition to these permissions, it has still been decided to anonymise the children and the schools they attend. The only defining feature kept is the type of school, urban, rural, etc and this because it has direct bearing on the research itself.

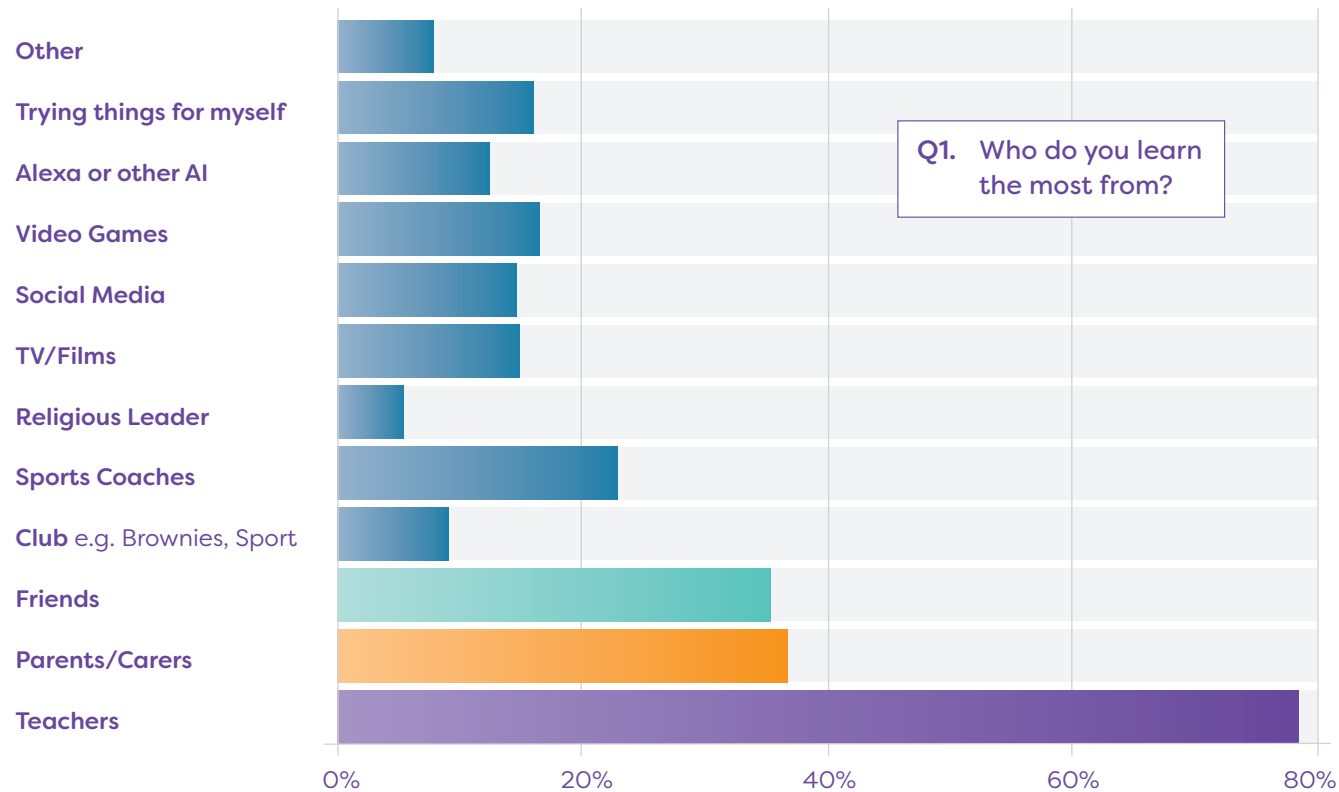


# 3 Reporting

## Questionnaires

As you would imagine, 359 responses yielded a plethora of data. The below deals with the actual data collected without analysis. It is very much the

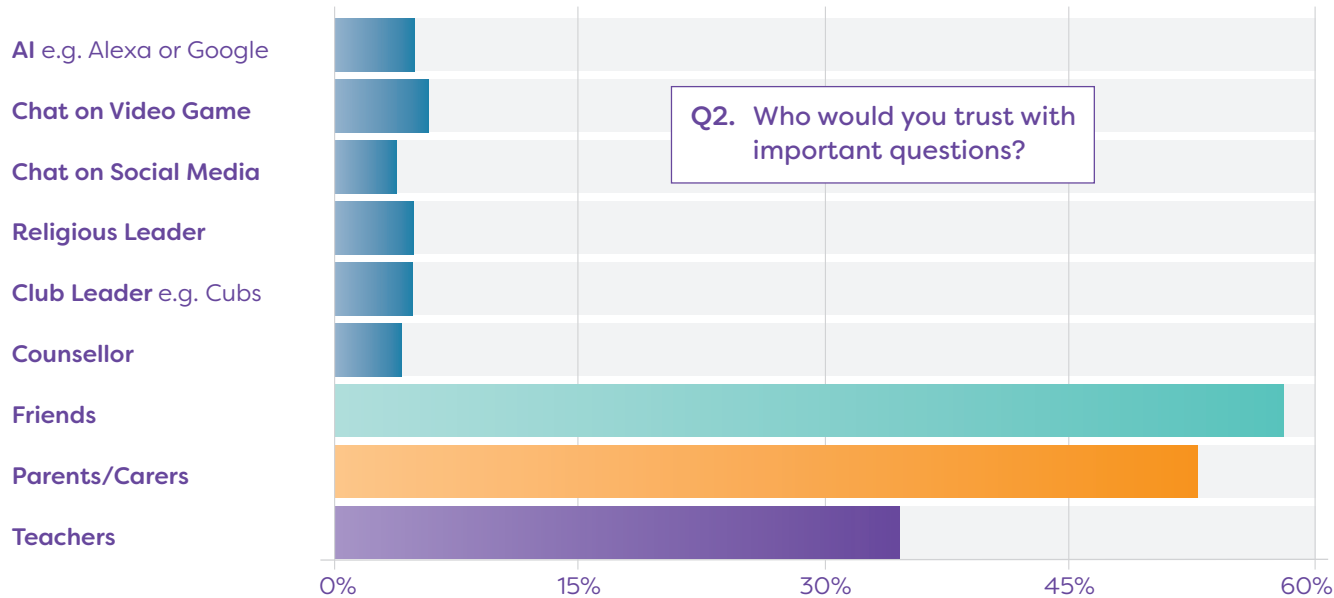
presentation of facts. The first question asked who they learnt most from:



Q1. Who do you learn the most from?

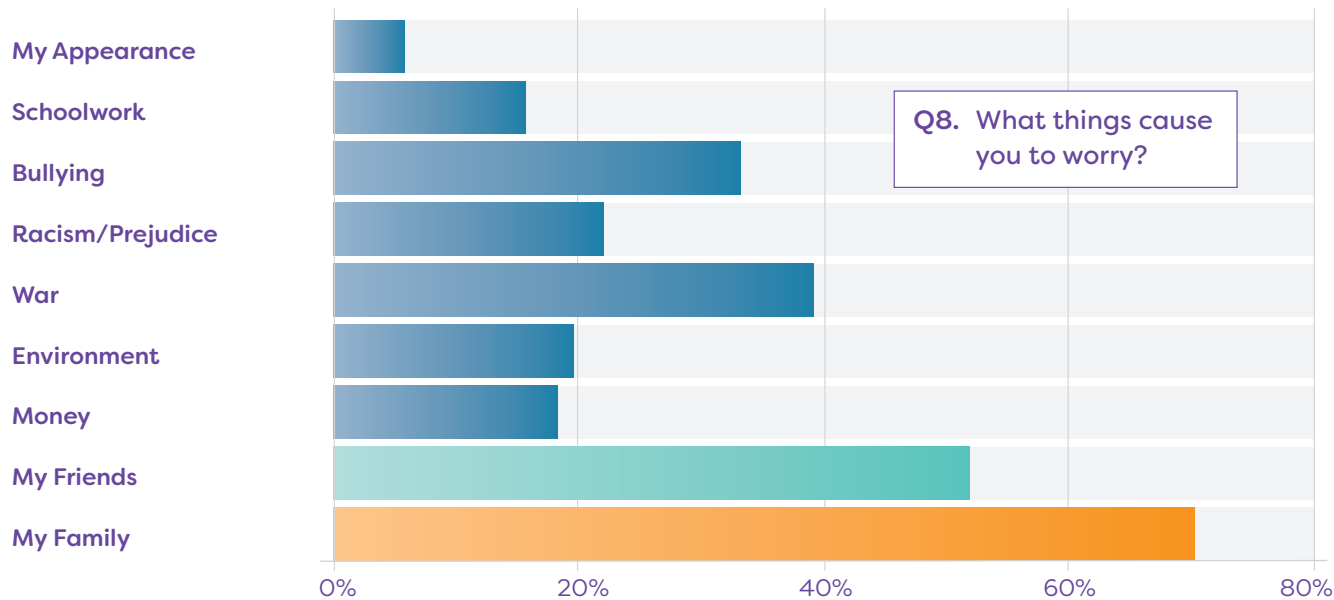
It is likely that the presence of the word “learn” was the reason ‘teachers’ featured so heavily on this particular question. The next question was similar and asked who the children would trust with important questions. It is noteworthy that when the word “learn” is replaced with the word “trust” there is a more prominent role for parents/carers and friends.

This understanding of the importance of parents and carers can be seen in the questions that explored mental health (Q7 and Q8). The first asked how often they felt worried or anxious. 44% commented that they were sometimes worried, while 12% commented that they were often worried and anxious. With only 13% saying that they were never worried or anxious. But when asked what they worried about the most, 71% said they worried about their family, followed by 51% who worried about their friends (children were allowed to choose multiple responses to this question), although sadly indicative of the state of the world, at the moment and the fact that *Generation Alpha* are globally minded, 40% expressed that they were anxious about war, twice as many as expressed concern around the environment. Interestingly, only 5% expressed anxiety to do with appearance. Possibly the media projection is not accurate or these children have not reached the age for that particular pressure yet.

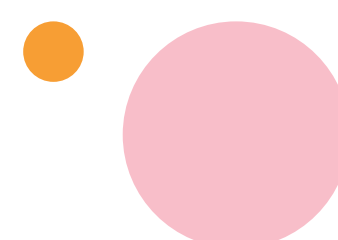


In the response to the question around who they might talk to if they were feeling worried or anxious (Q9), 67% suggested they would talk to their parents/carers, 40% said they would talk to a friend or friends and 20% said they would talk to a teacher. But despite schools investing much in terms of mental health education at primary school level<sup>16</sup>, still 35% of children reported they would keep their worry and anxiety to themselves.

When asked where they spent most of their time outside of school, the responses were not surprising with 74% stating they would be at home and 48% attending various clubs inside and outside of school. With spending time with friends (27%) and spending time outdoors (29%) featuring in the responses. In relation to 'going to church' only 3% of children ticked that option. Again, worth noting the children were allowed multiple responses to this question.



The prominence of friends re-emerges in the next question that asks what would you choose to do for fun? But equally interesting to see that sport is still as important as ever (especially if time outdoors, sports and adventure sports are added together) alongside video games and watching Netflix/YouTube.

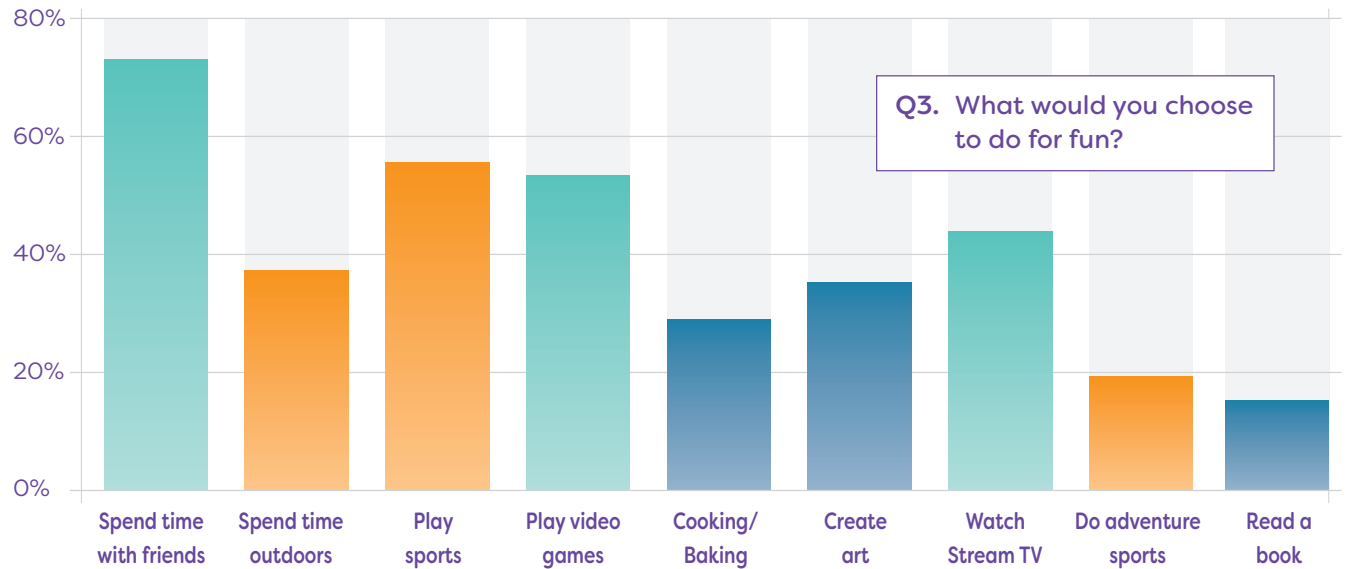
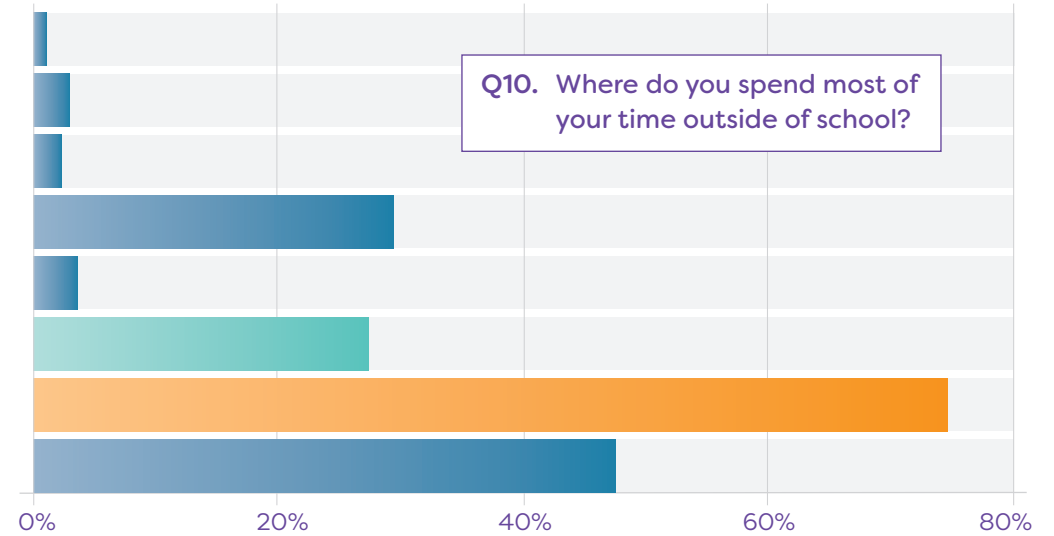


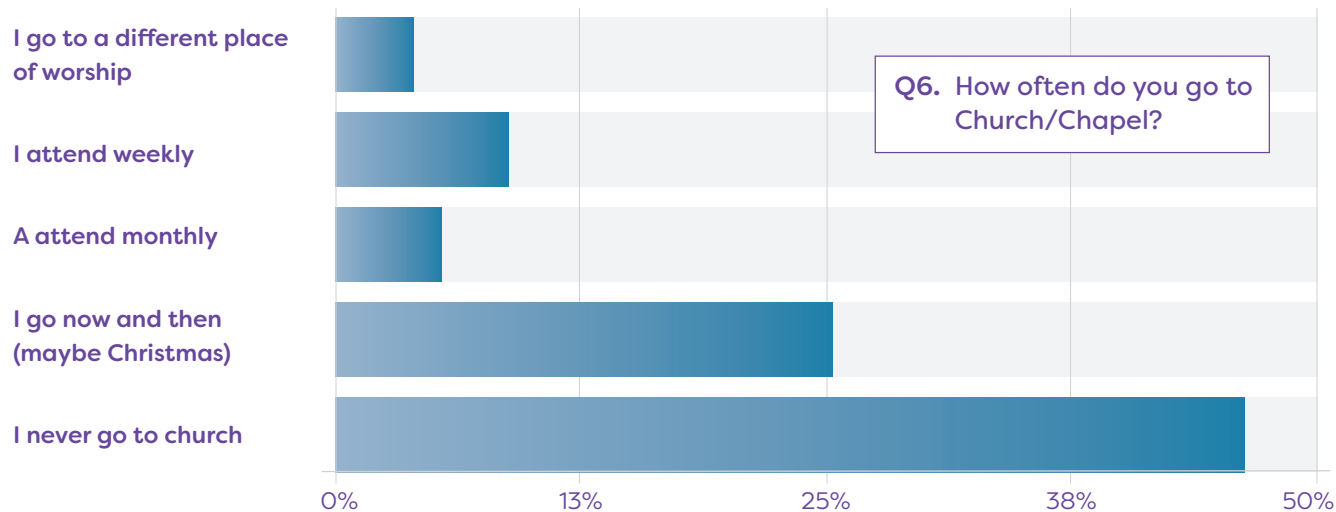
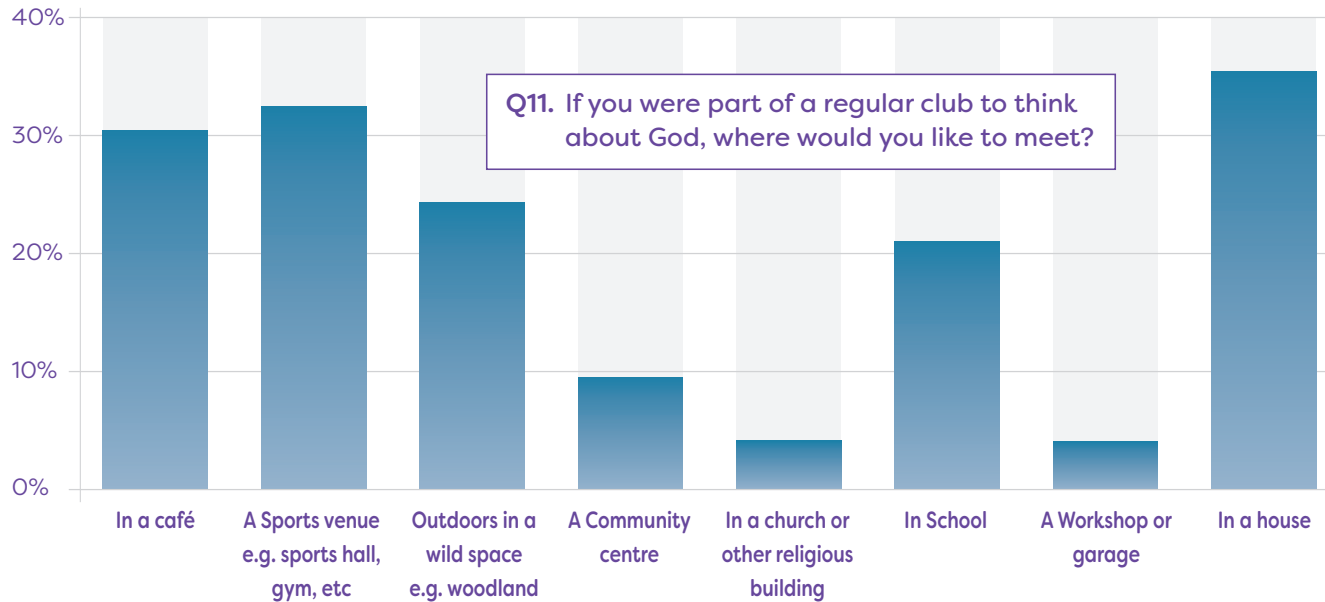
The questions around belief and church were equally interesting (Q4 and Q5). When asked about a belief in God, 62% of the children said they believed in God with 18% suggesting they believed in multiple gods, 16% expressing the view that they don't know if there is a God and only 11% stated they didn't believe in God. Similar results emerged when they were asked who Jesus was, 69% stated he was the son of God, with 17% suggesting he was a prophet/teacher, 4.7% suggesting he was a made up character and 12% stating that they didn't know.

When asked if they could be part of a regular club to learn about God and look at some of the areas they had been talking about, where would they like to meet, it was clear that the church building was not their preferred option, with only 4% commending that option.



**The Library**  
**Doing Schoolwork**  
**At Music Lessons**  
**Spending Time Outdoors**  
**Church**  
**Socialising with Friends**  
**At Home**  
**Various Clubs (Sports)**





This uncertainty about the church is probably reflected in the responses to the question about church attendance clearly church attendance is not something these children do on a regular basis. Although the weekly figure is slightly higher than the 5% presented by Scripture Union (England and Wales)<sup>17</sup>.

Before continuing to the next phase, there are some things that the data has shown that were unexpected, and that is the differences that have emerged between Welsh-medium and English-medium schools. Firstly, in terms of key relationships, while 41% of English-medium school children would trust a parent or carer with important questions, the percentage rose to 64% for children from Welsh-medium schools. In terms of belief in God, 11% of English-medium children said they didn't believe in God but this number doubled when it came to Welsh-medium children. Additionally, 34% of English-medium children expressed being worried or anxious occasionally, this figure rose to 53% for Welsh-medium children. Finally, in terms of church attendance, 39% of Welsh-medium children attend church occasionally as opposed to 11% of English-medium children.



## Focus groups

To aid with the process of identifying where the comments came from we will label the Focus Groups FG1, FG2 and FG3. FG1 is English-medium urban, FG2 is Welsh-medium rural and FG3 is Welsh-medium post-industrial.

As might be expected, Focus Groups with 9 to 11-year olds are interesting and keeping control of tangents is quite a skill. On the transcripts, one of the Focus Groups has a page and a half on pets and another has a similar discourse on sweets and chocolate!

The follow up questions to the children in their focus groups involved:

1. Belief in God
2. Church attendance
3. Mental Health
4. Sharing Concerns

(3) and (4) are clearly closely related.

## Belief in God

The survey revealed that 80% of the children believed in God or gods. When this was fed back to the children with the question, does the 80% surprise you? They were quick to comment:

*It doesn't surprise me because, well, like, because most people do, like, everybody I know except for a couple of people believe in God so I wouldn't be surprised (FG1).*

Reinforced by a child from FG2 who commented, "yes maybe there is no God and some people believe in the Big Bang Theory, but I believe most children would believe in some kind of God." The creation theme was also mentioned by a child in FG3 who reasoned, "I think that if God didn't make the world, who would have."

But some answers were even more philosophical, a child in FG2 commented, "I believe that everyone believes in something."



But possibly the more surprising comment was the child from FG3 who was intent on bringing a reality check to the interviewer:

*Yes, of course I believe in God, I believe it would surprise you, but a lot of children our age don't really talk about things like this. About God and what they believe about him. We don't really hear a lot about him. Children think it is old fashioned to talk about God.*

The way the Focus Groups were led overall, each child had a chance to speak at least once.

## Church Attendance

But it also became clear quickly that belief in God didn't translate into attendance at church. When asked what happened at church, it was FG1 who seemed to have the most knowledge:

- “They pray and talk about God.”
- “And they sing.”
- “They do Christian things, but not sure what it's called! (then remembering) I think it's called baptism, which is starting a new life by going under the water.”

FG3 had their own list:

- “So sometimes we, sing or pray, and we talk to the priest or the pastor and I have fun there and I go with my mother.”
- “I believe they are just talking and maybe praying and stuff.”
- “And sometimes if a baby is born sometimes they put like water on their head.”

A child from FG2 commented, “I only go there for weddings or funerals.” But one child from the same group owned up to the fact that he went most weeks and added, “my dad's the pastor!”

Children from both FG2 and FG3 stated that they had stopped going because they had rugby on Sunday morning and church only happened on Sunday morning. Another volunteered that some people work on Sundays, “like my mamgu<sup>18</sup>”.

But children from FG2 highlighted the church/chapel divide. The child from the church boasted, “when I have been we get wine”, the chapel child responded, “we get Vimto or squash.” But a comment from FG3 would have been the great leveller had they been in the same room with the words, “nobody actually likes wine!”

But then FG1 and FG3 seemed to hit on a vein that they felt needed fully exploring, and that was, how do you make church more interesting. Here are their imaginings:

- “To catch more people for God, maybe do a craft and the like, they could sing and do a show maybe, maybe they would go on trips.”

The trip theme was quickly picked up:

- And once every year we go on a trip, we could go to Sant Fagans<sup>19</sup> this year, we could go to a waterpark the next year, and go to Ninja Warrior after that.

But ideas flowed:

- Maybe we could do something like cook and do, I would like to cook, if you cook, we could bring a cookie or biscuits and we can decorate them.”

They then re-emphasised, “some children don't go to church because they think it's boring.” And continued with their list of ‘enhancements’.

- “Maybe they could build a play area outside”
- “And maybe they could have a jungle gym.”
- “Maybe we could have stories?”
- “And lots of arts and crafts.”
- “And make the church more colourful”

But an interesting comment from a child in FG3, “I don't think I would change it because I like the way it is now. I think we should just keep it that way.” But again, it falls to a child in FG2 to make an obvious but astute comment to end this section, “maybe children don't go to church because their parents won't take them.”

## Mental Health

We noted earlier that 44% of the children completing the surveys felt worried or anxious sometimes. And 12% felt worried or anxious most of the time. On this theme the children from FG1 had the following advice for those who felt anxious:

- “Maybe they should go for a swim or go to bed.”
- “Maybe they should go outside or play in the park.”
- “Play football or listen to music”
- “Maybe go to a running club.”
- “Maybe they could do something to take their minds off the worry.”
- “Do something positive and go somewhere happy.”

This tendency of Generation Alpha to present the problem and the solution will be a common theme. There were certainly some children who commented from FG2, “I never worry”, but this balanced by a child in FG3 who was courageous enough to state, “Sometimes my head just gets very dark, like worry box dark.” And someone else from the same group focused attention even deeper:

**I’m always worried, always worried. There is always something in my head, and my mother always says that I don’t need to worry because God is there with you, even if something worrying happens.**

## Sharing Concerns

And the related theme is who these concerns are shared with, this showed a range of wisdom from all three Focus Groups, a child from FG1 stated:

**I mostly talk to my parents but I would also talk to teachers because they can be helpful too. So most I talk to my family, but I would also feel safe with my friends too.**

And a heart-warming entry from FG2, “I would talk to my sister, to me she is one of my best friends and she is now a teenager and it is her I talk to the most.”

And one that possibly expects too much of their church leader, “I would talk to my pastor because they know everything and they will help me.”

Other comments are far more predictable:

- “I would talk to my mum and dad.”
- “I would talk to someone I trust.”
- “Someone like a best friend.”
- “Maybe a teacher in school.”

But a slightly concerning comment to end this section from a child in FG3. “I agree that you should talk to someone and be more open, but sometimes people make fun of you.”





# 5 Analysis



In some ways this research isn't presenting huge differences to the Scripture Union report on *Gen Z (A Look into the Lives of Generation Z)* or the Exploring Hybrid Mission amongst young people report<sup>20</sup>.

Other than the general feeling that *Generation Alpha* have taken *Gen Z* characteristics and multiplied them 100-fold. For example, *Gen Z* were digital natives, *Generation Alpha* are digital natives growing up with screens as part of their everyday lives and AI playing an ever-increasing role.

But this particular research has thrown up a range of surprises. Firstly, there was an expectation that there would be differences between children in different contexts, rural, urban, suburban, post-industrial. But certainly, in terms of the areas considered, including religion and spirituality, there is a commonality across the country studied. Does that mean that these are attributes that are present in *Generation Alpha* across England and Wales and possibly the whole of the United Kingdom? And do these same attributes resonate around the world? Certainly, the research coming from America and Australasia suggests they do. But all this research can do is speculate based on the Wales returns.

Equally surprising is what did produce a variance, and that was the difference between Welsh-medium and English-medium schools both in terms of key relationships, mental health, church attendance and belief in God. This was an unexpected outcome of the research and if nothing else, highlights an area for future exploration.

*Generation Alpha* are growing up in a world where technology is seamlessly integrated into daily life, making them incredibly adept at using digital tools and platforms. With access to advanced technology from a young age, they are likely to be creative and innovative in their approach to problem-solving (witnessed in their "how to catch more people for God" comments. It was a problem to be solved. Therefore they are not just the target, but they are also wanting to be part of the solution). They are more connected to global cultures and issues through the internet and social media, fostering a broader worldview and have increasing

environmental awareness, they are likely to be more conscious of sustainability and eco-friendly practices, but equally conscious of world disasters, inequality and the impact of famine and war. And of course they are highly engaged with social media platforms, using them for communication, entertainment, and learning.

But to our specific data gathered from our seven schools. The data has certainly yielded some interesting results and some unsurprising ones. It is no real surprise that they see their teachers as the main place for learning and the school therefore remains an important institution in the life of *Generation Alpha*. It is also not surprising that parents and carers were seen as key trusted relationships<sup>21</sup>. In terms of mission, the family has been the focus of attention for many decades now, with organisations such as Care for the Family and Bible Reading Fellowship<sup>22</sup> investing heavily in resources targeted at equipping parents/carers to communicate faith to their own children.

However, while investment from parents/carers remains important, the highest percentage for trusted relationships is attributed to friends/peers. And maybe this suggests a strong opportunity for peer evangelism. Equipping children and young people to communicate the Jesus story to their friends.

When asked where they spend most of their time. Overwhelmingly the response was 'at home.'<sup>23</sup> But to understand this further, the question that looks at what they do for fun becomes relevant. Spending time with friends, video games and YouTube all suggest that *Generation Alpha* may spend a lot of time at home, but they are not alone but connecting with their friends online.

Research published in the *Journal of Creative Research Thought* (April 2018) titled, "The Impact of Digital Communication"<sup>24</sup> noted an order in preference for the way *Generation Alpha* communicate to their peers. Firstly, despite their digital immersion, *Generation Alpha* values face-to-face interactions with friends above all other forms of communication. Their preference is direct communication with friends or would be friends, when that is not available, video calls become a significant mode of communication – some of this is of course the shaping of *Generation Alpha* from the Covid pandemic. Platforms like Zoom, Teams and

Google Classroom facilitated virtual learning and social interactions, during what might have been a time of extreme social isolation otherwise, and it has made video calls a routine part of their communication habits. They continued this habit and embedded these things into everyday life long after the pandemic alongside additional video platforms and only after exhausting these options do they resort to messaging apps; WhatsApp is widely used by *Generation Alpha* for quick and convenient communication, but there are plenty of alternatives contending for this space. These platforms allow *Generation Alpha* to stay connected with friends and family, share multimedia content, and participate in group chats<sup>25 26</sup>. But Youthscape<sup>27</sup> builds on this and recognises that the digital world plays a significant role in shaping young people's spiritual journeys. Social media platforms and online communities provide space for spiritual exploration and connection<sup>28</sup> while YouTube provides direct input/content and is often assumed to be authoritative with high trust being given to *influencers*<sup>29</sup>.

This is explored more fully in our research paper on Hybrid Mission ([www.scriptureunion.org.uk](http://www.scriptureunion.org.uk)). But now to the specific areas that emerged from our Focus Groups:





## Belief in God

80% of children in our survey believed in God or gods. And further to this, they are actually surprised that everyone doesn't believe in God, although we shouldn't take lightly the astute observation that it is not the sort of thing they think about, without being prompted. They are deeply spiritual, but the *Quiet Revival Report*<sup>30</sup> noted almost one third of the 18- to 24-year-olds surveyed were curious to learn more about the Bible, but, of those who did, 35 per cent said that their faith was "undermined when they think/read about some parts" of it. It suggests a clearly spiritual generation but the report is right to state, "there is clear need for more discipleship around Scripture." But to keep that in perspective, the report continues, "approximately one-third of

churchgoers say they lack confidence in navigating or understanding the Bible and speaking about it with others." So, we have *Generation Alpha* and *Gen Z* who are two generations wired for spiritual encounter who are desperate to engage with the Bible<sup>31</sup>, yet it seems that most churches have congregations who do not understand the Bible themselves. A desperate need exists to properly equip those who would disciple young people and children.

## Church Attendance

In regard to Church attendance, we would be remiss not to once again turn to the *Quiet Revival Report* and its observations on *Gen Z* and their contribution to church growth. We have already noted the similarities between *Gen Z* and *Generation Alpha*. But the report focuses on elements for helping churches attract younger generations are seemingly contradictory. Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches are attracting individuals to their rich traditions and sense of transcendence. But Pentecostal churches known for their vibrant worship services and strong community focus are also growing. Their emphasis on personal spiritual experiences and active participation resonates with many, but especially with younger generations. However, this is not unique to Pentecostal denominations. Charismatic networks such as *Holy Trinity Brompton* network of churches<sup>32 33</sup>, *New Wine Churches*<sup>34</sup>, *Vineyard Churches*<sup>35</sup> and a range of other Charismatic churches in other denominations are seeing growth<sup>36</sup>. And there are other factors, Klein (2024)<sup>37</sup> noted that immigration plays a part in both

Catholic and Pentecostal churches seeing significant growth among ethnic minority communities. Charismatic churches often have strong evangelical outreach programs, which help in attracting new members. The final factor attributed to this is that Charismatic churches are particularly adept at addressing contemporary issues and providing practical support, which makes them more relevant to people's daily lives.

Therefore, two very different sides of the church are growing while those who occupy the middle ground are continuing to see decline. This suggests that churches with a clear identity can communicate an unequivocal message to those exploring faith. Huffman (2023) states, "This is proving particularly attractive to the younger generations who have also perceived a strong link between spirituality and mental health." Young people find that spiritual practices help them cope with stress, anxiety, and other mental health challenges, therefore they are not attracted to the more liberal churches who they perceive as focusing on issues that for them are not issues and often have an ambiguous view of the Bible. But instead to churches that provide environments where God can be encountered, with Biblical sermons based on the demands of everyday life. And a strong emphasis on social justice.

In terms of attendance the numbers are complex. While, the Church of England has recorded its third year of growth (5% in 2024)<sup>38</sup> – they are the only Anglican denomination recording growth in the UK<sup>39</sup>. But it is clearly more nuanced, in 2018



Anglicans (across the UK) made up 41 per cent of all churchgoers. This decreased to a third of churchgoers by 2024. Roman Catholic churchgoers have increased from 23% to 31%, while Pentecostals have increased from 4% to 10%. It is clearly a rapidly changing landscape<sup>40</sup>.

But this goes beyond Church attendance. The rise in spirituality among *Gen Z* is discussed by Youthscape<sup>41</sup> and brings some interesting insights and in many ways is more in keeping with the results the research outlined earlier. It suggests that many children and young people are exploring spirituality outside traditional religious institutions. This includes practices like meditation, mindfulness, and personal prayer. But goes on to resonate with the *Quiet Revival Report* with the assertion that *Generation Alpha* and *Gen Z* are seeking communities where they feel a sense of belonging and purpose. This has led to increased participation in spiritual groups and activities that offer supportive environments.

And clearly, this is an important aspect for *Generation Alpha* who when asked where they would like to meet to think about God, only 4% suggested a church!<sup>42</sup> It may be that more creative places for running church are more likely to be more attractive for *Generation Alpha*. A practice already being explored by many parachurch organisations who are finding the local sports hall or the lunch time event in school or indeed the coffee shop easier to gather children and young people in than the church building. However, the recent resources coming out of Scripture Union that help Churches become more *Generation Alpha*

friendly may help with this<sup>43</sup>, particularly when combined with the SU discipleship resource “So what next?<sup>44</sup>” This is also evident in numerous GROW Communities<sup>45</sup> developed by Scripture Union Mission Enablers and Faith Guides. GROW Communities are a new network of children or youth-focused groups. While the groups are likely led by adult Christians, they will be “peer-shaped” and “peer-served”, while reflecting young people’s learning styles and interests.

The range of answers as to how churches can be places of welcome (or in the words of the survey, ‘more interesting’) are intriguing, and one of the children premised his comments with the phrase, “to catch more people for God you will need to...” They suggested, do cooking, decorate biscuits, maybe have an outside play area, and lots of arts and crafts and maybe make the church more colourful and do shows and do some singing. Really interesting ideas, and without knowing it, they had outlined exactly what takes place at Messy Church in many parts of the country<sup>46</sup>. The Seriously Playful report commissioned by the Church Army (2019) stated:

**Messy Church is successful in attracting families who are new to church, with 40% of attenders being non-churched families and 21% being de-churched families.**

However, there was certainly an interesting comment from one child who commented, “I don’t think I would change it because I like the way it is now. I think we should just keep it that way.” An important comment

to note. It is not just adults who are impacted if we try and change the services or the look of the church. Children have strong feelings too and therefore there is wisdom in emulating those churches who haven’t changed their traditional services but have developed all sorts of activities and alternative services alongside<sup>47</sup>.

Finally, a comment from one of the *Generation Alpha* Focus Groups that should be given serious attention, “maybe some children don’t go to church because their parents won’t take them.” What it underlines is, while this research has already noted the emphasis on resources directed at families, this shouldn’t be at the expense of children who will not hear the Jesus story if relevant and accessible activities are not created outside of the areas that are assumed to be for families only. Scripture Union have noted that 95% of *Generation Alpha* don’t go to Church<sup>48</sup>. Therefore, initiatives such as school assemblies, lunch time clubs, outreach sports clubs and other clubs for children and young people, bible studies in people’s homes or in halls or in sports clubs all begin to gain prominence when we consider that children and young people don’t feel that they can go to church unless they are going with their family. And if Jesus’ account of the lost sheep<sup>49</sup> is to be taken seriously, more focus needs to be given to these outreach initiatives than to the church services themselves!



## Mental Health & Sharing Concerns

*Generation Alpha* have been categorised as open-minded, inclusive, and socially conscious, and they will demand more transparency, accountability, and sustainability from institutions and corporations (Fell, A. 2021). However, they are not without challenge and risk too, and while the children in our study commented on age old anxieties such as bullying (32%) and schoolwork (16%). It was worry about their family (70%) and friends (59%) that rose to the top – despite being digital natives, *Generation Alpha* are highly relational. Worry to do with appearance landed at just 5%, a long way behind prejudice (21%)

and the environment (20%). However, worth noting our survey is looking at children at the top end of primary school. Nevertheless, highlighting the impact of globalisation and the way new stories can travel around our world, 39% of the cohort said they were worried about war. Technology now makes the stress that comes from world conflict, immediate.

However, it is clear that *Generation Alpha* will likely face challenges around mental health issues, cyberbullying, misinformation, and polarisation. This has led experts like Haidt (2025) to call *Generation Alpha* “the anxious generation” due to the significant rise in anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. Fell (2021) suggests:

**These challenges will be amplified by the unprecedented scale, speed, and complexity of the digital/virtual world, and will require new skills, values, and tools to navigate.**

44% of the children in our survey felt worried or anxious but 12% felt worried most of the time. And while the *John Smith Institute* referenced earlier concluded that 67% of *Gen Z* were optimistic about the future<sup>50</sup>, this is surely balanced by the child from one of the focus groups who commented that, “sometimes my head gets dark, like worry box dark.” And another who commented, “I’m always worried, always worried. There is always something in my head.” Mental Health is clearly a concern for those who work with *Generation Alpha*.

What is interesting are the ways that *Generation Alpha* themselves suggest that worries and anxieties should be dealt with, and they predominantly involve some sort of activity. Go for a walk, swim, play outside, play football with friends, listen to music, maybe go for a run, go somewhere happy or do something positive. Mental health is of course extremely complex, but it is encouraging to see *Generation Alpha* themselves building in coping mechanisms for engaging with a complex world.

What is good to see is the range of support structures that *Generation Alpha* have built into their lives, with 67% suggesting they would talk to their parents/ carers if they were worried or anxious, 40% talking to a friend or friends and 20% talking to a teacher<sup>51</sup>. But with 35% saying they wouldn’t talk to anyone, there is still some work to do in educating *Generation Alpha* that asking for help is always the right thing to do.





# 6 Conclusions



White (2017, p.15) described *Gen Z* as the “last generation”<sup>52</sup> – not an apocryphal statement but a statement acknowledging that it is becoming increasingly difficult to tie down the characteristics of a generation.

Although I would argue that this has been the case since generational theory developed, guessing where one generation ends and the next begins is not an accurate science and invariably generations share similar characteristics. But this research has shown that in many ways *Gen Z* and *Generation Alpha* have merged and share many of the same characteristics – acknowledging that *Generation Alpha* is *Gen Z* intensified! But agreeing with White (2017) on the difficulties in continuing to name the characteristics of newer generations, it is likely that *Generation Beta* will be an intensified version of *Gen Alpha*.

That does mean therefore that we are dealing with generations who are deeply spiritual, and the vast majority have a belief in God or gods. The characteristics of both generations become clear, both generations are spiritual and have a desire to connect with God, but both generations haven't connected well with organised religion and the institution of church, and while it is encouraging to read the renewed interest in the Roman Catholic and

Charismatic churches, our survey suggests that only 7% of the children completing the survey attended church weekly.

This has led to two related factors, firstly, conversations on spiritual matters are rare – summed up by one child with the words, it is “old fashioned to talk about God.” And adding, “we don't hear a lot about Him (God)”. While there are some wonderful stories of children and young people choosing to make their way to church and even stories of children bringing their parents after doing a school visit as part of the national curriculum or hearing something interesting in a religious studies lesson, on the whole they are not thinking about God. Secondly, renewed interest in some forms of church is encouraging, but it comes on the back of decades of decline and non-attendance with the result that we have children whose knowledge of the Bible is significantly lacking and who need discipling, we also have previous generations in a similar position, so it is difficult to find people who can do the discipling.

There is also an interesting question on where the discipleship takes place and the Church building is clearly not being perceived as the place to go. In our survey 4% suggested meeting there and 7% suggested they attended there for services. But that shouldn't be seen as negative. Initiatives that have begun outside Church, in coffee shops or community buildings or schools have been around for centuries, and sometimes those initiatives lead to the eventual merging into existing congregations and sometimes they grow into churches in their own right. It should also be acknowledged, as shown in our Focus Groups, that Sunday morning rugby and other Sunday morning activities have been competing with church services for decades now, and the church is not winning. So, rethinking when and where church's meet is a clear priority.

Alongside this, two other areas that shouldn't be overlooked: Discipleship activities that are sports orientated were clearly proving successful. Over half the children surveyed said they would choose to do

sports for fun. It was also noteworthy that sports and other outside activities were seen as key to dealing with worries<sup>55</sup>. But the other aspect is the home with 74% spending most of their time there. Children and young people's small groups in homes may also have potential (of course with the necessary checks in place). Watching a video together and discussing or possibly online courses where children and young people watch a course at the same time, but in separate homes are all possibilities. But the interesting aspect of this is the courses have the capacity to be peer led. The highest percentage of children stated they trusted their friends more than anyone else with important questions. The importance of friends is highlighted consistently throughout the research and therefore peer to peer discipleship should be a primary consideration. But without the need to focus less on equipping parents/carers to communicate faith. Parents and carers were also seen as of high importance throughout.

However, before moving on, it is important to capture the comment from the child who said, some children can't go to church because their parents don't take them. And there is clearly an important piece of work to be done here. Scripture Union suggest 95% of children and young people in the UK do not go to church. And while everything written here exists to better enable boys and girls and young people to connect with the Jesus story, a special emphasis is needed on children from non-churched families. It is evangelism in its purest form, the connecting of children and young people with the Jesus story

who wouldn't hear that story in any other way. And in many ways a way given significant profile by Bill Wilson as he outlined the establishing of an outreach children's club in New York City in his book, *"This Child is Mine (1992)"*. The principles of connecting with *Gen Alpha* was considered further in my book *"Changing Lives (2017)"*. But lunch time clubs in schools, after school projects, sports clubs are all great ways of making the connection with unchurched children.

Although, the discussion on making church more attractive shouldn't be overlooked and the range of ideas presented by the children may seem outlandish, but I would contend that they are worthy of consideration. Quite some time ago Rick Warren wrote a book called the Purpose Driven Church (1995), it was an interesting read, but one area he drew attention to was people (of whatever age) are not coming to a church if they don't know it exists. Certainly, a play park at the rear of church or a jungle gym inside may well help with that. The premise being that attendance only happens after awareness. Of course, the other aspect that proved noteworthy is the children unknowingly listed many of the features that make up "Messy Church" so there may well be an existing activity that can help attract children, young people and families.

It was interesting to see that global issues were beginning to rate highly and sensitive teaching on these areas might be useful. It is concerning that a child living in rural Pembrokeshire should be worrying



about war. But there were clearly children dealing with worry and anxiety identified in this reach and it highlights a need to provide support into the sphere of mental health. The statement from one child that they worry all the time must be noted, alongside another's statement that his head felt dark, worry box dark. But 44% of children mentioned they were sometimes anxious, while 12% commented they were often worried. But it is the percentage who would keep anxiety and worry to themselves that raise the largest concerns (35%).

And in conclusion there is more work to be done. Firstly, in terms of repeating this research on a wide canvas to see if the conclusions hold true in other parts of the United Kingdom. But secondly, differences between Welsh- and English-medium schools—in terms of relationships, mental health, church engagement, and belief in God.

# 7 Recommendations

The church's mandate hasn't changed for 2,000 years. Matthew 28:19-20 was Jesus' command to the church and remains as vital now as it ever did.

Therefore with that understanding, some recommendations:

1. The ways that we can capture *Generation Alpha's* imaginations are important. They are not automatically thinking or talking about God. All sorts of evangelistic resources exist to help children and young people focus on God. School assemblies and lunch clubs, after school clubs, sports ministries, and possibly more needs to be written to facilitate home group materials for children – in actual homes or online (remembering that 74% spend most of their time at home).
2. Discipleship of young people and children needs a two-pronged approach.
  - a. Seeing the need to equip and empower *Gen Z* to make them active and effective disciple makers of *Generation Alpha*.
  - b. The question becomes, how do we effectively disciple *Gen Z* so that they think of more than themselves as being disciplined but also given the tools to make disciples. Making disciples has only ever necessitated the disciple maker

being one step ahead. Whether it be the *Alpha Course* or some other resource, the need to equip those who are to become the equippers is clear.

3. Peer to peer evangelism resources have become increasingly necessary for communicating into areas that are not accessible to churches. After all, the best way to learn has always been to teach. But the statistics regarding how much *Gen Alpha* gain information from their friends makes this area vital. There are examples of young people running *Alpha Courses* in their schools, but this could likely be spread wider and peer led Alpha groups and broader discipleship groups could meet anywhere. Is it possible that if we take the information from point 1 above on how much time *Gen Alpha* spend at home, then maybe peer led groups meeting in homes becomes an exciting initiative, possibly using resources like the Big Cell created by Youth With A Mission (YWAM<sup>54</sup>) or similar for this purpose.
4. However, alongside this, we clearly now have the skills and technology to run small group gatherings online. A small group of children or young people

meeting together at the same time but meeting online. The security and safeguarding implications will need to be carefully thought through, but if a small group of friends chose to do this on a cold winters evening, there may be some significant gains in terms of discipleship.

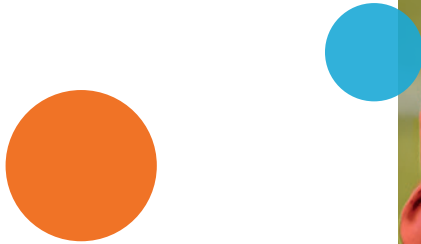
5. *Generation Alpha* preferred to meet almost anywhere other than church. But Church Leaders need to understand this and be comfortable with it. The fact that a group meets weekly in the church hall but never come to Sunday services should be embraced. They may be playing sports on Sunday, or where parents are separated, children are with different parents in different locations on different weeks. Making regular Sunday attendance impossible. But there is also the possibility that the kind of service provided may not be appropriate, their parents may never attend, and it is difficult for a young person to attend by themselves. But even if they gather outside of Sundays, they can still be seen as part of the church, and after all, the goal is the making of disciples, not filling a particular time slot.

6. There may be other ways to see them incorporated into more regular services. The children's ideas on making church more attractive may seem outlandish, but they deserve consideration. Some considerations on making church more attractive should also be considered, some of the suggestions may seem outlandish, but they should be considered carefully. Resources like Scripture Unions, "Top tips for churches," needs to be strongly promoted and possibly expanded alongside their resource, "So what next?" There is a need to outwork the mandate to make disciples, but it starts with those already part of our congregations, there will need to be an emphasis on making *Gen Z* disciple makers.

7. The mention of Sunday sports warrants further discussion on the importance and relevance of sports based discipleship opportunities. *Gen Alpha* still seem keen to be outside with their friends and any discipleship activity that capitalises on that is likely to be successful, and resources such as the Sports Resources from Scripture Union<sup>55</sup> will prove invaluable in this.

8. There is a need to ensure children and young people whose parents do not attend church do not miss out on the opportunity for Christian discipleship. There is lots of information and resource out there on establishing a holiday club, but maybe instruction is needed on establishing weekly outreach clubs for children and young people that contains weekly curriculum rather than a five-day holiday club curriculum<sup>56</sup>.

9. The data drawn on mental health is of concern. There is clearly a need to equip children to deal with Mental Health in schools. Scripture Union's the Lost Sun Resource is ideal for use in schools and other contexts. But courses like Flourish<sup>57</sup> are also well suited to deliver in schools. However, it is done, talking about Mental Health with *Generation Alpha* is vital. The problems of the world are clearly becoming the problems of *Generation Alpha* on the doorstep as wars and famine and destruction are beamed unfiltered directly onto their television, laptop or mobile phone.



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## 9 Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> The term was introduced by Australian social researcher Mark McCrindle in a 2008 report on the subject.
- <sup>2</sup> *Generation Alpha* represents the most globally interconnected cohort of children to date. Encompassing individuals born between 2013-2024, this generation is navigating an era characterized by rapid transformation and an overwhelming influx of information—both beneficial and detrimental.
- <sup>3</sup> Lisetti (2023, p.7) suggests the first attempt to define generational cohorts came in the 1920s when demographers Strauss and Howe.
- <sup>4</sup> There is a whole world of memes dedicated to the differences between generations in the workplace.
- <sup>5</sup> This one generated from McCrindle and Fell (2021), Lisetti (2023) – although it is acknowledged that different sociologists will sometimes suggest different dates.
- <sup>6</sup> <https://www.generationalpha.com/blog/difference-between-gen-z-and-gen-alpha>
- <sup>7</sup> <https://godinallthings.com/2023/10/31/the-spirituality-of-generation-alpha-a-look-ahead/>
- <sup>8</sup> <https://www.wokewaves.com/posts/gen-z-spirituality-religious-landscape>

- <sup>9</sup> <https://relevantmagazine.com/faith/how-gen-z-is-leading-a-spiritual-awakening/>
- <sup>10</sup> <https://www.johnsmithcentre.com/uk-youth-poll-2025/>
- <sup>11</sup> National Office of Statistics (2021 Census) - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity>
- <sup>12</sup> Generation Z (born roughly between 1995 and 2010)
- <sup>13</sup> A school where Welsh is used as the main language of teaching, and most subjects (except English itself) are taught through the medium of Welsh.
- <sup>14</sup> In Wales (pop 3.1million) and the UK more broadly, the definitions of rural, urban, suburban, and city aren't always rigidly fixed, but they are commonly defined using a mix of statistical classifications, planning terms, and social understanding. But we have endeavoured to use definitions suggested by the Office for National Statistics (ONS):
  - Urban areas are settlements with a population of 10,000 or more. City was a possible investigation category, but in Wales (as elsewhere) city is not defined by population size. For example, St Davids has fewer than 2,000 residents but is nonetheless a city. And it was clear that in other countries, even larger Welsh



cities would be considered Urban based on population.

- Suburban is defined as primarily residential, some services and amenities and relatively close to urban centres.
  - Rural are areas with populations under 10,000, including villages, hamlets, and isolated dwellings.
  - Post-Industrial
- <sup>15</sup> Aged between 9 and 11.
  - <sup>16</sup> <https://flourish.co.uk/> is an excellent example of one of many initiatives.
  - <sup>17</sup> <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/>

<sup>18</sup> Welsh for Grandmother

<sup>19</sup> <https://museum.wales/stfagans>

<sup>20</sup> [Hybrid Mission | Scripture Union](#)

<sup>21</sup> This has continued to be the case for centuries with historian Phillipe Ariès (1960) suggesting this has been the case since the 15th Century. Before then he suggests there was no real concept of childhood.

<sup>22</sup> Including Kitchen Table Project and Parenting for Faith respectively.

<sup>23</sup> Certainly, this is true in a Welsh context as shown by reports like the one by The National Museum of Wales entitled: ‘*Exploring Welsh speaking Youth Culture*’. Dr Daryl Leeworthy is a historian and biographer based in Wales. He was previously the Rhys Davies Trust Research Fellow at Swansea University. This article was published as part of Amplified Voices: Turning Up the Volume on Regional Youth Culture. With thanks to National Lottery Players and the ongoing support of the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

<sup>24</sup> A similar article appeared in *The Journal for Adolescence and Youth* on 20 September 2024

<sup>25</sup> <https://ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2406392.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> International Journal of Adolescence and Youth (Routledge) Alpha Generations Sociocultural Influences January 2025.

<sup>27</sup> Youthscape is a nationally recognised Christian Youth Organisation providing resources, training events and camps for young people and youth leaders/pastors.

<sup>28</sup> in Volume 27 of “The Story”. The Story is a handy digest of UK and international research relevant to work with young people.

<sup>29</sup> YouTube influencers are content creators who have built a significant following on the platform by producing engaging and influential videos.

<sup>30</sup> Bible Society 2025.

<sup>31</sup> As an aside it is noteworthy that they like to engage with the Bible in paper form. There is almost something in the validity of what can be held in the hand.

<sup>32</sup> Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) is an Anglican church located in London, England. Known for its charismatic evangelical ethos, HTB has planted numerous churches across the UK under its Church Revitalisation Trust (CRT) umbrella.

<sup>33</sup> Helen Coffey’s article titled, “**Make Christianity cool again: Why Gen Z is flocking to church**” in the Independent Newspaper on April 20<sup>th</sup> 2025 takes her example of Gen Z growth from Harbour Church Portsmouth. A Charismatic Church planted through the HTB network.

<sup>34</sup> A Network of Churches focused on summer conferences and leadership development.

<sup>35</sup> Vineyard churches are a global network of Christian churches.

<sup>36</sup> A wide range of material exists on the why, but they generally agree:

- **Experiential Worship:** Charismatic churches often emphasize dynamic and expressive

worship, which appeals to younger generations seeking a more immersive spiritual experience.

- **Focus on the Holy Spirit:** These churches highlight the power and presence of the Holy Spirit, including beliefs in supernatural interventions like healing and prophecy.
- **Community Engagement:** Charismatic congregations tend to foster a strong sense of community and belonging, which attracts people looking for deeper connections.
- **Adaptability:** They are often more flexible and responsive to cultural changes, making their services and outreach efforts more relevant to contemporary audiences.



- <sup>37</sup> [https://christianeducatorsacademy.com/what-christians-think-about-immigration-insights-from-the-church/#google\\_vignette](https://christianeducatorsacademy.com/what-christians-think-about-immigration-insights-from-the-church/#google_vignette)
- <sup>38</sup> <https://www.brin.ac.uk>
- <sup>39</sup> ibid
- <sup>40</sup> Williams, H. (2025), Church Times Article
- <sup>41</sup> in Volume 27 of “The Story” – The Story is a handy digest of UK and international research relevant to work with young people.
- <sup>42</sup> Slightly outside of our scope, but it was interesting to read how McManus (2025) planted the church “Mosaic” in Los Angeles, he comments that they started in coffee shops, homes and eventually moved to a night club. - Mosaic Podcast – Erwin McManus 2025.
- <sup>43</sup> “Top Tips to Make Your Church *Generation Alpha* Friendly” by Scripture Union (England and Wales) – they identified (1) Prayer (2) Safeguarding (3) Welcome (4) Help with the Bible (5) Visibility.
- <sup>44</sup> <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/so-what-next>
- <sup>45</sup> <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/grow-communities>

- <sup>46</sup> “Llan Llanast” is the Welsh version of ‘Messy Church’, an activity designed to engage families in church activities through creative, informal, and interactive sessions. It typically includes crafts, storytelling, singing, and sharing food. The aim is to create a welcoming environment for people who might not usually attend traditional church services (<https://www.messychurch.brf.org.uk/>).
- <sup>47</sup> George Lings when Director of Research for the Church Army wrote a range of booklets on different ways of doing and being church. Booklet 33 looks specifically at Café Church (<https://churcharmy.org/our-work/research/publications/encounters-on-the-edge/>).
- <sup>48</sup> <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/95-campaign>
- <sup>49</sup> Matthew 18:12-14
- <sup>50</sup> <https://www.johnsmithcentre.com/uk-youth-poll-2025/>
- <sup>50</sup> Remembering that children could tick more than one box. But noteworthy that the 35% who wouldn’t talk to anyone are likely to have only ticked that box.
- <sup>52</sup> <https://youngadultstoday.podbean.com/e/generation-z-with-james-emery-white/>

- <sup>53</sup> <https://content.scriptureunion.org.uk/collectiondetailpage/sports-11-14s>
- <sup>54</sup> Written by Andy & Catherine Kennedy and available on Amazon.
- <sup>55</sup> [Resources | Scripture Union](#)
- <sup>56</sup> 52 weeks of curriculum for primarily unchurched children is available in Fusion, Detonate and Impact all by Mark Griffiths and available on Amazon.
- <sup>57</sup> [Mental Health Resources for Educators - Flourish.](#)

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