

Under 18s



After School Bell Ringing Clubs

Produced by the CCCBR Young Ringer's Workgroup

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Introduction

This article aims to guide those wishing to establish an After School Bell Ringing Club for young people in Year 6 (ages 9-11 years) and above. It will help you to understand the necessary steps to engaging with your local school and setting up a successful club.

1. What is a Bell Ringing Club

An after-school Bell Ringing Club is an exciting opportunity for young people to learn bell ringing as part of after school enrichment activities. It offers them a novel activity, a chance to learn new skills and build confidence in a non-school environment. It is a pathway to recruit young ringers to boost local towers and join district youth bands and even compete in ringing competitions.

1.1 Key points for a successful club

- Keep groups small; a maximum of 6 works well
- Run the Club for a maximum of 1-hour. Times will be dependent on proximity of the school to the tower, term time only
- Involve parents, ensure they understand the physical side to the activity and the proximity learners and teachers will work together
- Engage a named teacher as liaison point with the school; this is a mandatory requirement to meet school safeguarding policies and responsibilities
- Have 5 ringing teachers/helpers to train the learners plus another responsible adult to supervise those not ringing
- Plan other activities to occupy learners when not on a rope
- Use readily available aids such as Central Council of Church Bell Ringers Guides, Sherborne Teaching Aids, ART Learning the Ropes as well as progress cards, badges and certificates to structure training and reward learners
- Highlight achievements in school assembly or newsletters

1.2 Practical considerations

All towers are different, consider how a bell ringing club of young people would work in your tower. For example: -

- Space for the children when learning to handle a rope or waiting their turn
- Access and/or stairs to the ringing room
- Teaching and supervising, who and how
- Alternative supervised activities during breaks
- Toilets and refreshments
- Sufficient boxes of the right height
- Have a model bell to explain how it works



TIP

See Teaching Aids available through the CCCBR and ART online shops: Children love to receive badges and certificates in recognition of their achievements. If you can, giving certificates in school assembly will be a real boost to them.



TIP

Using Callchangesim.co.uk helps children understand how called changes work and is a good non-ringing activity while waiting their turn on the ropes. This does require internet connection and suitable devices.

2. Getting started

Once you have worked out how you can practically run your club, it is time to engage with your local school.

2.1 Engage with your local school

If you have a local connection use that, otherwise, you could approach with the support of your church minister or priest, a school governor or a teacher who rings locally.

2.2 Talk to the children

Offer to do a presentation to school, make it exciting and show ringing as a fun and rewarding activity.

2.3 Talk to the parents

Talk to parents about the practicalities and physical activities of learning bell ringing. Bring them into the tower to see for themselves and have a go chiming or ringing. They will also need to collect their children from the tower after the bell ringing club each week. This can be an opportunity for them to come in and see how their children are progressing.

2.4 Supervision and safeguarding of children

Agree approach to supervision with the school. This is an after-school activity so you will need to follow school rules including having a member of staff as liaison point who will also need to be present at all club practices. The school is the safeguarding body and all issues will need to be reported to them.

All parishes should have a safeguarding officer who needs to be aware of procedures; however, schools will have their own policies and procedures to follow and may need to obtain DBS checks on your ringing teachers through their school volunteer policy.



TIP

Watch the Ringing 2030 Recruitment and Development Recruitment Network meeting of 19th July 2026 discussing [After School Bellringing Clubs](#).

3. From bell club to local band

Plan how to integrate your learners into the tower band or local district youth band. The aim is that the children feel part of the tower band and will be ready to move on once sufficiently competent. This will enable you to offer bell ringing club to a new cohort.

- Coordinate ringing practice times so that children meet people who ring at the tower
- Arrange to let the children observe the start of a practice
- Introduce the children to the local youth lead so they join district youth practices

Conclusion

Bell ringing clubs offer an unusual and exciting enrichment activity that feels special because places are limited. They benefit young people by helping them become part of their local community, meet people they might not otherwise encounter, and learn valuable transferable skills from older ringers. Club members can also be recruited into local bands, helping to strengthen numbers and skills.

Clubs can also result in recruiting parents as trainee ringers too!



TIP

Use the [Young Ringers Hub](#) resources and guides on DofE, Uniformed Groups, Lesson Plans, etc. Content is regularly being developed and refreshed.