



Good ideas

1. Develop a phone/contact list for all those involved in the partnership.
2. Realise relationships are, by nature, organic. Plans will be made but sometimes the best outcomes occur when we simply listen to each other and respond instinctively.
3. Don't expect too much too soon. Relationships need time to grow, but do provide opportunities for them to grow.
4. Where a Uniting Church school is involved, maintain good relationships with them and respect their need to plan ahead and have long lead times
5. Work out what you really want to achieve or aim at and allow this to limit what you do. Otherwise you will be spread too thin and feel aimless.
6. If you are working with a remote school, don't spring surprises on them; discuss everything with the Principal first. Regularly review your purpose and approach with your partner community
7. Once established, seek appropriate support from other churches and community members in your area. This builds interest and ecumenical ties.
8. Tie fund-raising to specific outcomes; eg, we are raising funds for playground equipment for the school, or books for the senior students.
9. Develop multiple ways members of your congregation can be involved eg visits, fundraising, prayer for specific issues, logistics, transport...
10. Use people's strengths and career skills. Often remote communities have ideas but need some expertise or encouragement to develop them.
11. Don't underestimate what you can achieve. Pymble congregation was daunted by the idea of fund-raising for a bus, but when the time came we raised the outstanding funds required before we could develop a fund-raising strategy.



12. Congregations require a co-ordinator, and remote communities need a local champion to continue the partnership.
13. If Sydney students are traveling to remote areas they will probably be a new group each year, and possibly a different teacher. Therefore it is wonderful if the church representative/s can be consistent over the long term. This consistency and long term approach is perhaps the greatest contribution the Congregation can make.
14. Don't go with a conversion mindset but a service mindset. Most remote schools have bad experiences of traveling missionaries/preachers etc who come in, present an inappropriate message and are never seen again. Pymble congregation was involved for 5 years at Enngonia before we asked to lead one Scripture lesson. And we haven't raced to do it again. Actions speak louder than words in these contexts.
15. Use the visits for multiple outcomes. Yes, visit the school, but who else would it be valuable to see? Mayor? Aboriginal Elders? (These aren't always easy to identify or find.) Long term residents?
16. If in an Aboriginal community, appreciate the complexities of indigenous ways and tribal politics.
17. Where possible, buy locally. Your visit could represent a significant boost for local businesses (but warn them that you are coming and check they can accommodate your needs.)
18. Ensure that several people are interested and involved in developing and maintaining relationships with schools and country communities.