

The Development of Chaplaincy in a School or Academy

Developing a Job Description

Once your parish or deanery has decided that it wants to appoint a Chaplain to work with your local Secondary school a vital next step is to talk to the Head teacher of the school to discuss the specific role the Chaplain will have in the school, the sort of person that the school would consider appropriate and the support and management structure the church would provide.

Most schools will be open and welcoming to the idea but will need reassurance that a Chaplain will both compliment and develop their existing provision.

Timetable the meeting well in advance, consider inviting a member of the Board of Education staff to attend the meeting to advise on the sort of roles a Chaplain may take and to talk about good practice in other schools. This will enable schools to see the possibilities, help explain the jargon of both sides and dispel any myths about Chaplains. Remember many head teachers and school staff may have only come across the concept of a Chaplain in an Independent school context. They may fear confessional RE teaching in particular.

Be realistic; consider what can be achieved given the time that is being allocated to the work. Remember the more effective the Chaplain is the more the role will grow and the more time it will take. Don't set someone up to fail.

Below is a model of the sort of role description and person specification that might begin to emerge.

Roles

- Developing school worship (including Collective worship) using a variety of forms of worship with a range of groups of students (and staff?)
- Contribute to the personal well being of all students and staff complimenting the existing school support structures, Teenage health support Centre and pastoral support team.
- Working with a range of partners support the school in the further development of the school's distinctive Church school ethos (Church schools only)
- Support and develop opportunities for young people to explore and develop their own spirituality
- Support Christian young people within the school community
- Help develop Church school partnerships across the Deanery
- To comply with all school procedures in particular school safeguarding procedures



Person Specification

- Proven ability to work with young people in the 11-18 age category
- The ability to be a self starter and self manager in working with young people and with adults
- Have an understanding of issues facing young people
- Have an understanding of youth social networking culture
- Have a commitment to and ability to contribute to the young people's well being
- Have an ability to facilitate creative ways for people to explore spirituality and big questions
- An ability to work with the school accountability structures
- Have an understanding and knowledge of the maintained education sector

With this sort of outline in place you can now feed this into your parish profile as you start you search for a suitable candidate.

When you get to the interview stage make sure the programme includes a visit to the school, an opportunity to see the candidate working with young people and for the head and key staff to meet with them.



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