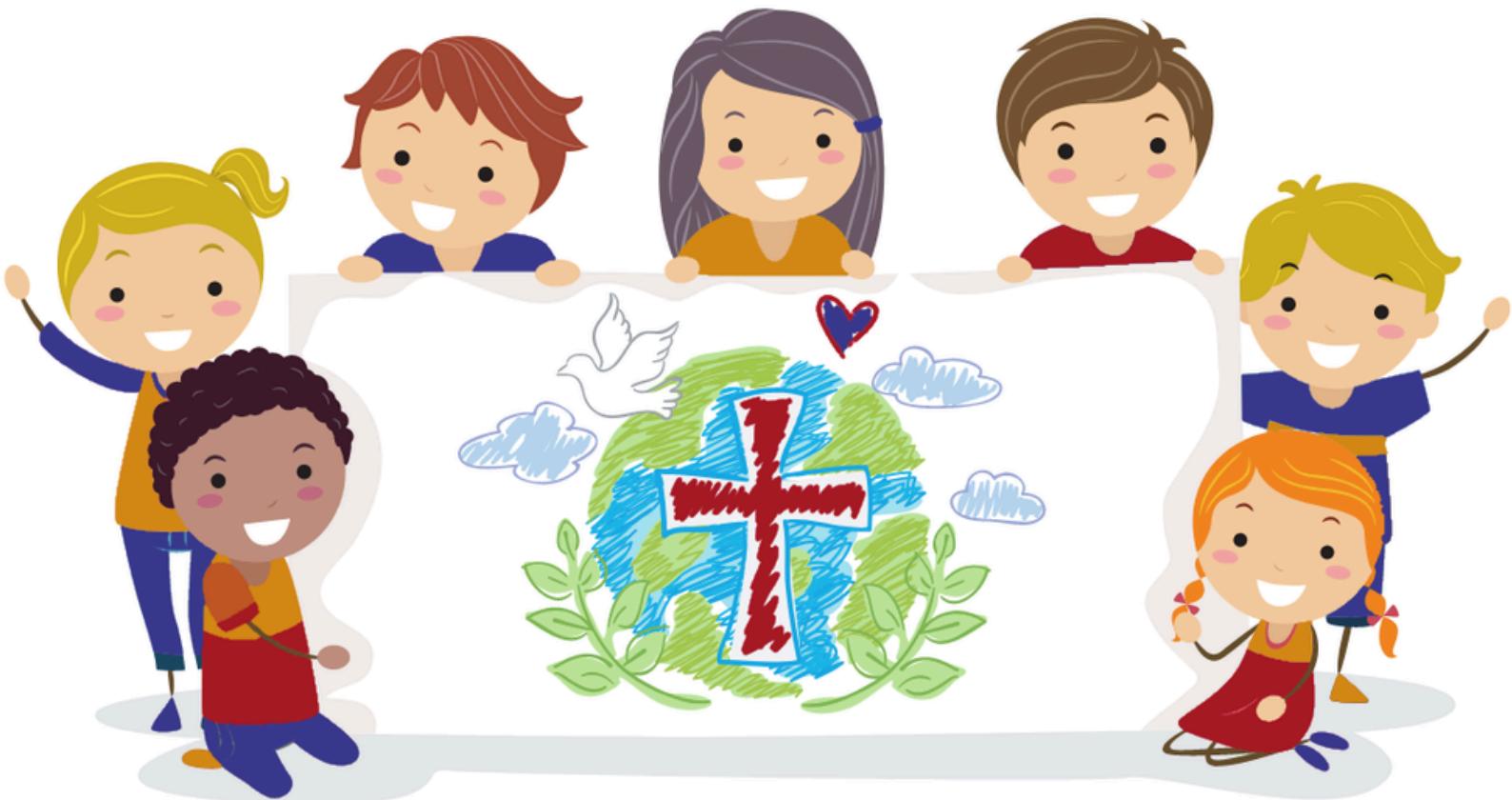


# School Chaplaincy

## A Ministry of Presence



The Church of England  
Diocese of Ely



## Information on School Chaplaincy in the Diocese of Ely

The vision for school chaplaincy in this diocese, is that every child **and** member of the school community, should be able to have access to a School Chaplain or School Chaplaincy Team at some point in their school life. The reasons for this are many and varied. Anecdotal evidence suggests that people who undertake roles as School Chaplains or who become part of a School Chaplaincy team, can have significant impact on the lives of children and young people.



## What is a School Chaplain?

A School Chaplain or Chaplaincy Team can be defined as someone who will listen, care, pray for and bless the people in the school through a **ministry of presence**. They provide spiritual, pastoral, and emotional support to students, staff, and the wider school community. The School Chaplain/Chaplaincy Teams will champion the participation, voice and leadership of children and young people. With rooted Christian faith and values, the Chaplain or Chaplaincy Team fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment, encourages faith development across the community and beyond and acts as a bridge between the school and the local parish church, helping to develop new worshipping communities where appropriate

School chaplains or chaplaincy teams are 'distinctively Christian' and 'utterly inclusive', who work with people of all faiths and none, and in all contexts within the school. They inhabit a liminal space as they are both part of and separate from both the church and school community. They are able to link with other church leaders, ministers and others to support the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of the whole school community.

In Ely Diocese we want to encourage individuals, teams and parishes to consider this mission and ministry with and in partnership/collaboration with their local school.



## **A Model shaped with the local context (parish, school and wider community) at the heart of it.**

Parishes and the local community are key partners in helping to create a Chaplaincy ministry for schools in their locality. The Ely Diocese vision is for every parish to consider how they can build such a meaningful relationship as part of their missional vision and wider ministry and whether or not a model of School Chaplaincy helpfully supports this.

For our church schools, the **Parish School Covenant** has been pivotal in establishing the relationship between a school and the local church. The School Chaplaincy model is a further step in developing that relationship.



**So...**  
**How could it work?**

## **The School Chaplaincy model of Ministry**

There are two strands to this model. Each strand is described in more detail below.



The first is where a single person wishes to explore a vocational calling to school chaplaincy.



The second is where a local church wishes to explore a Team Chaplaincy approach to serving and partnering with their local school.



## The School Chaplain Approach

A person from any walk of life may wish to explore a calling to school chaplaincy. This person may already be working in a school in some capacity or they may be doing voluntary work in a school that is connected with their local church or they may have some other situation that has prompted them to think about school chaplaincy. At this point they will have conversations with the Growing Younger Enabler for Parish-Schools Mission, their local Incumbent and local school, to explore the situation and possibilities. This is the start of the discernment process and the rest follows as below.



## Discerning a vocation to be a School Chaplain

- Prayerful conversations between candidate, Incumbent and School
- If, after these conversations, a way forward can be seen, then further conversations are undertaken between the Growing Younger Enabler – Parish-Schools Mission and the wider Lay Ministry Team
- PCC agreement is sought and confirmed
- There is formal agreement between all parties that the candidate can undertake training to become a School Chaplain

Ely Diocese can provide training or training pathways to ensure that the candidate is appropriately trained for the role. See separate booklet for information on School Chaplaincy Training Pathways. A starting point for training could be the [Discovering Chaplaincy course](#).

Once training is complete, It is envisaged that the School Chaplain will continue working in the school they have trained in and a working agreement will be drawn up to reflect this. Their role description will be shaped locally but the example in [Appendix 1](#) is a suggested starting point. The post can be either voluntary or paid, part time or full time.



## **Safeguarding requirements**

Anyone working or volunteering in schools in a chaplaincy role will need to be safely recruited and undergo the relevant safeguarding training which may include school as well as Diocesan requirements.

## **Supervision**

It is best practice, and therefore expected, that vocational School Chaplains are supported with regular supervision both throughout their training and ministry. It is expected that the Incumbent of the parish or other ministry lead, will take up this role although there may also be supervision in the school environment. In the best models, the parish and school will work closely together with the School Chaplain to ensure that there is effective and appropriate supervision.



## The Team Chaplaincy Approach

A Parish church or Benefice may wish to take a team approach to serve and partnering with their local school(s). In this way the team works in and with the school to develop chaplaincy in many different ways, nurturing faith development, pastoral and spiritual care amongst children, young people and the wider school community. In turn, this may lead to new worshipping communities based in the school.

At the same time, the school will want to partner with the church (possibly arising out of their Parish School Covenant) and will actively encourage a ‘ministry of presence’ in the school from the local church. The Incumbent or other ministry lead would lead this team. Members of the team may need some training to help them in upskilling and development of their vocational formation and journeys. Ely Diocese has appropriate training pathways which include the Church of Ehland, Growing Faith Foundation, Discovering Chaplaincy course, an entry level course which provides an introduction to chaplaincy in schools and is a great starting point for all those who are working and volunteering in schools. ALM pathways for those with discerning a calling to this ministry are also in development.

Discernment, safer Recruitment, safeguarding, supervision and ongoing vocational development are essential parts of chaplaincy as with any local ministry and the Mission and Ministry team are always available to support with this.



With both strands there is some cross over and a School Chaplain may arise out of a church following the Team Chaplaincy approach and it is hoped that these vocational journeys will be supported by the parish.

## **Next Steps for Parishes and Benefices**

If you are already working with your local schools, seeking to develop these relationships or are think school chaplaincy may be part of your future mission and ministry we would love to support you on this journey.

If you or someone in your school or parish, would like an initial conversation about School Chaplaincy, please contact the Reverend Mandy Flaherty, Growing Younger Enabler for Parish-Schools Mission on [Mandy.flaherty@elydiocese.org](mailto:Mandy.flaherty@elydiocese.org) or 07944 091 812.

## **Template Role Description**

[Appendix 1: School Chaplain Role Description Template](#)