



Appointing Chaplains in Schools

Archdeacon of London

January 2018

It is much encouraged that schools should have chaplains. There are various models for this and no two are alike, but this note attempts to set out the ecclesiastical issues which need to be taken into account by all schools seeking to appoint a chaplain, including Independent Schools.

The general principle is that the Area Bishop should be aware of clergy who are working in the Episcopal Area, and have agreed that they may be licensed or given Permission to Officiate (PTO) before an appointment is finalised. Local parish clergy should as a matter of courtesy be made aware of those who are ministering at schools in their parishes.

ORDAINED CHAPLAINS

All clerics functioning in any sort of public ministry should hold either PTO or the Bishop's licence without which he or she cannot have a public ministry. If this licence were to be revoked at some stage this can impact on the cleric's employment as a chaplain.

An informal arrangement with a local licenced priest or priest with PTO can remain local. If someone is appointed from outside the parish in which the school is situated there should be consultation with the parish priest and communication with any other parishes directly involved with the school.

If a chaplain is specifically recruited as such, full or part time, the Area Bishop's office should be informed before the advert is placed in order to discuss the structure of the appointment and avoid the difficulty of the school making an appointment which the Area Bishop may be unable or unwilling to support. The Area Bishop can advise on the nature of consultation needed with the local parish at this stage.

In some cases the involvement of the Area Bishop, the Archdeacon, or the Area Bishop's nominee in an interview process might be appropriate, especially if the chaplain is to be part-time in a parochial setting.

A cleric who is a Chaplain may be employed by the school, may work in the school in conjunction with an Office in the local church, or may be self-supporting. In any event it is necessary that the Area Bishop's Office issues a Statement of Particulars which delineates the nature of the Ecclesiastical Office that the cleric holds. This is in addition to, and alongside any contract of employment which the school may be providing.

LAY CHAPLAINS

Lay Chaplains may be appointed in schools. Nevertheless there should be consultation with the Area Bishop and the local church. Head Teachers and Governing Boards should take great care to ensure that Lay Chaplains are suitably trained in both pastoral care and theology and that appropriate contractual arrangements are in place. LDBS Advisors and or the Area Bishop's office can support that process.

If in doubt contact the local Area Bishop's Office for help and support at an early stage.