



Core Standards of Christian Chaplaincy with Children & Young People

First Edition, August 2019

These standards have been developed by CYM in discussion with a wide range of organisations involved in chaplaincy with children and young people. They have been extensively researched and consulted upon, including two events with a variety of organizations and individuals and comments from the sector have helped form the final document. It is our hope that these will form the basis for a more consistent and professional approach to chaplaincy without in any way diminishing its vocational basis. We along with our consulting partners, commend them to all those engaged in work with children and young people.

Core Standards for Christian Chaplaincy with Children and Young People

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INTRODUCTION: CHAPLAINCY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

There are a variety of different types of chaplain with children and young people.

Broadly speaking there are:

- Managing chaplains
- Paid chaplains (employed, service level agreements, part of a broader paid role). Paid chaplains are full time or part time, paid by place of work or other body such as denominational body or voluntary sector organization.
- Honorary chaplains
- Chaplaincy volunteers

There may need to be differentiated elements of the standards to reflect

this. There is not necessarily any agreed level of training or prescribed training, which suggests that someone may be called a chaplain although some settings have recommendations or expectations, which are made clear by the relevant oversight body.

The intention of this project is to work collaboratively with anyone who offers chaplaincy with children and young people to agree some core standards. It is acknowledged that there is a diversity in the way these standards may be expressed and that there are both commonalities and distinctives of different contexts in which chaplaincy may take place.



Titles for chaplains

There are a wide variety of titles given to chaplaincy roles. These include:

- Chaplain
- Pastoral Assistant
- Placement chaplain
- Volunteer chaplain
- Chaplaincy Volunteer
- Chaplaincy Youth Worker
- Assistant chaplain
- Chaplaincy Manager
- Senior chaplain
- Co-ordinating chaplain
- Lead chaplain
- Youth Worker
- Schools Worker
- Outreach Worker
- Head of Spiritual Care
- College/School Pastor
- Hospitaler
- Honorary chaplain



SECTION ONE: UNDERPINNING VALUES

Christian chaplaincy services with children and young people (0-25) are shaped by the following values:

1. Participation

As far as is possible and appropriate, children and young people are invited to participate in and contribute to the development of chaplaincy services.

2. Equal Opportunities

Following the example of Christ in the gospels all are welcome to participate in and approach any of the services offered by a chaplain.

3. Unconditional Care

Following the example of Christ in the gospels the chaplain's offer of pastoral, spiritual and religious care to children and young people is unconditional, being based on the belief that all are accepted and loved by God our creator.

4. Collaborative and multi-disciplinary

Particularly in institutional settings chaplains are committed to working with adaptability, flexibility and accountability to stakeholders and encourage the engagement and training of volunteers as appropriate.

5. Context focused

Chaplains will seek to be integrated and embedded into institutions as appropriate, bringing value where possible and being aware of broader political contexts whilst never losing sight of their position as a minister of the Christian faith.

6. Mission Focussed

Following the great commission as

expressed by Jesus in Matthew's Gospel, a chaplain fulfils their role as part of that great commission; being and bringing good news to the institution in ways that are appropriate to the values of the host institution and in the light of their policies and practices.

7. Inclusive

Mindful of the multi cultural context of the world in which they work a chaplain must remain true to their missional calling but at the same time be able to operate collaboratively with people of other faiths. Traditionally this has best been expressed through a commitment to love demonstrated in action and hospitality.

Christian chaplains who work with children and young people will:

8. Be a practicing Christian, who has a vocation to work with children and young people, recognised by their denomination or organisation and tested in previous service. They will be a person of prayer, committed to their own and others' spiritual development.

9. Seek to model the character of Jesus in all that they do. This will mean that they will treat individuals with dignity and respect offering acceptance and demonstrating unconditional positive regard with empathy and compassion as appropriate.

10. Seek to act with transparency, honesty and integrity and work professionally within ethical and good practice guidelines, upholding recognised Christian values and living by them; recognising where those values are worked out in policies and good practice such as safeguarding guidelines.

11. Seek to follow the example of Christ in the gospels, support and try to meet the needs of the individual wherever they are encountered; whether they are educational, spiritual, pastoral, cultural, emotional or physical; empowering people to make their own choices and decisions.

12. Seek to represent Christ's body; the Church, offering unconditional love and service as appropriate; including provision of services, rituals, liturgies or worship that facilitates a person's personal and spiritual development and meets their expressed needs.

13. Be able to respond to and work with individuals from belief and faith systems which are not their own.

14. Be a lifelong disciple committed to reflective practice, personal spiritual disciplines and fellowship within the broader church.

15. Be accountable and participate in appropriate supervisory relationships.

SECTION TWO: PURPOSE

Context: Where we are

Operating in the liminal space chaplains fulfil a representative role. They have moved into the neighbourhood as God moved into the world (John 1:14) and as such:

- Chaplains are a part of an institution (school, hospital, YOI) but not constrained by it, being aware of the privilege and boundaries of their place within the community; their workspace is a place of encounter where God is already at work.
- Chaplains collaborate with a wide variety of stake-holders yet remaining distinctively Christian. Chaplains remain true to their mission calling to be Christ's body in that place.
- Engaging with children and young people through individual encounters or accompanying them for the journey following the example of Christ on the Emmaus road, chaplains offer access to support and care.

Who we are

Being the representative of Jesus: Chaplains are first and foremost disciples of Jesus and that is the foundation of their identity. Therefore in order to maintain this identity they must:

- Be secure in their own faith and relationship with God.
- Become the translator between religious and statutory worlds.
- Be a spiritual, pastoral, cultural and moral resource.
- Be a critical friend and prophetic voice to the community.
- Be a prophetic presence for the individual.



Role: What we do

Creating sacred spaces: Chaplains are the visible representatives of Christ's body the church and as such need to ensure that the church and all it offers is both visible and accessible to those who need it, for whatever purpose. They can do this by giving space and opportunity for:

- Personal and corporate reflection, worship and refreshing the soul.
- Holistic personal transformation to be realised as appropriate (discipleship/mentoring opportunities).
- Contributing to the Common Good, for example, fund raising, awareness raising, collective remembrance.

Outputs & Outcomes: What happens

Facilitating the opportunities for children and young people: Chaplains reflect the desire of Jesus that we come to live life in all its fullness and as such work towards maximising the opportunities for personal growth in a variety of ways including:

- Meeting the needs of children and young people whenever possible.
- Developing resilience, building self-esteem and offering opportunities for empowerment, recognising the valuable contributions each individual can make to their community when given the opportunity and means.
- Deepening and enhancing their humanity through a wider exploration of the human condition.
- Exploring faith and the meaning of life in response to questions and curricula.
- The creation of opportunities for young people to find their voice and for that voice to be given an opportunity to be heard.
- The provision of opportunities where God can be encountered in the everyday.

SECTION THREE:

CORE STANDARDS FOR CHRISTIAN CHAPLAINS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

1. The chaplain will be a committed Christian disciple who has embarked on a journey of faith and personal growth. They will be in good standing with their church/denomination. Their vocation to work with children and young people will have been discerned by their Christian leaders and this will be indicated by their being commissioned to the role. They will be committed to their own personal spiritual development as well as to context appropriate training that will enable them to develop the skills necessary to fulfil the task in the context that they have been called to.

For ordained chaplains this will normally include holding a licence or equivalent

qualifications. It may also encompass a willingness to work towards relevant qualification having already gained significant appropriate experience. For any lay or part-time chaplains not employed by their institution or for those undertaking the role in a voluntary capacity there should be a church or properly constituted organization who have discerned their call and offered support, training and supervision for that role as appropriate to their role and level of responsibility.

The chaplain will be able to demonstrate their commitment to CPD and will maintain a record of training undertaken with evidence of how this has had an impact on practice.

2. The chaplain will seek to embody the life and mission of Jesus Christ through the unconditional giving of love and care for all those children and young people met during the course of their duties and by the promotion of Christian ethos and values as appropriate, Christian services, rituals and practices as necessary and Christian Education, where required.

The vision statement, ethos and values should be established (if appropriate and not already written) in partnership with the host institution and reflect the beliefs and values of the Christian faith as expressed in the creeds and through history. The chaplain will at all times show in their lives that they are a servant of God and model a life style that reflects the person and character of Christ:

a) The chaplain will, as appropriate, in partnership with the management

of the institution, be able to support the creation of a vision and ethos statement; monitor and evaluate its impact and effectiveness and advise on ways that this statement could be embodied in practice in all aspects of the institutions work and in the lives of staff and young people.

b) The chaplain will seek to act, where appropriate, as a critical friend. They will aim to be an advocate for those whose voice needs to be heard within the institution all the while maintaining an Christian ethos and approach to service.

c) The chaplain will contribute to the organisation of collective acts of worship, including special services, as required by law and the institution, drawing upon the expertise of trusted partners, staff, children and young people and others as appropriate.





3. The chaplain will offer unconditional pastoral care to the whole institution.

This care involves both long term and transient members of the community and people at every level and role within the institution and is founded upon engaging in the building of purposeful relationships through active listening, mediation, education, appropriate interventions, crossing boundaries of belief and culture, having involvement in critical incident management being both proactive and reactive as the context requires.

Dependent upon the context and whilst still maintaining professional boundaries, the chaplain may continue to offer appropriate pastoral care beyond the institution, for example, by continuing to support prisoners and their families upon release:

- d) The chaplain will be able to demonstrate appropriate support for those who hold or are developing a Christian faith within the institution either in the context of a group or one to one work with appropriate supervision.
- e) The chaplain will demonstrate their Christian values and ethos through their own conduct and presence. They will be observed as a person who works in such a way as to be a model of fairness.
- f) The chaplain will understand the unique nature of their position with regards to relationships with children and young people and work in ways that ensure they conduct their operations with integrity and dignity.

- a) The chaplain will be able to demonstrate an ethic of care with all whom they encounter.

- b) The chaplain will demonstrate their training in key pastoral skills, such as active listening, grief counselling, mentoring etc, operating within the safeguarding guidelines of the institution and with appropriate recognition of issues of confidentiality.
- c) The chaplain will engage in supervision and maintain records, in a form agreed with the institution, of such meetings showing any actions taken as a result of such meetings.
- d) The chaplain will demonstrate appropriate levels of understanding of key pastoral issues relating to children and young people and any societal stigmas attached to them. In order to provide effective pastoral care they will seek to acquire and develop knowledge and training in context appropriate areas.
- e) The chaplain will seek to work as part of a team within the institution and engage in collaboration with other skilled adults who have a pastoral care role within the institution. Depending on their context and working within the limits of their experience and competence, they will know when to make timely and appropriate referrals.
- f) The chaplain will be engaged in an holistic approach to pastoral care that encompasses the whole

institution, specific groups and individuals that includes both proactive and responsive activities.

4. The chaplain will offer unconditional Christian and spiritual care to the whole institution demonstrating the capacity, as a first responder, to engage with those of belief and faith systems different to their own working collaboratively as appropriate. The chaplain will be the champion of children and young people, ensuring that as far as is possible, they will be protected from harm and enabled to reach their potential. They will be available and accessible to all people as far as the institution allows either in playground, chapels, corridors, classrooms or public spaces.

Chaplains will be known for their inclusiveness and their willingness to engage in non judgmental relationships founded on a desire to value all people as God created and loved. Their primary calling to serve Christ will be worked out through the depth and richness of their relationships with those in their care:

- a) The chaplain will engage in pastoral care with children and young people of all faiths and none showing an ability to build networks across belief systems that would support individuals in areas of need, which the chaplain is unable to meet.

The chaplain will demonstrate a commitment to working with those of other faiths operating from a foundation of hospitality, love and acceptance.

- b) The chaplain will be able to articulate and work within the distinction between spiritual and religious care.
- c) The chaplain will be able to recognise the signs and dangers of spiritual abuse¹ and be accountable for taking appropriate steps for dealing with such.
- d) The chaplain will be engaged in regular face to face contact with children and young people available to all, denying access to none. They will be possessed of the skills necessary to be good informal educators as well as pastoral carers.

5. The chaplain will work within the institution's policies and practices with an emphasis on safeguarding and in compliance with the policies and practices of the commissioning body. The chaplain will seek to conduct their ministry in a way that is beyond reproach.

Engaging in training in all areas considered necessary for safe practice such as safeguarding and Prevent, supporting the institution in ways that enable it to meet its objectives with regard to the well being and care of children and young people and everyone linked to the institution:

- a) All members of a chaplaincy team will be in regular receipt of training in all areas of safeguarding, maintaining an up to date knowledge and understanding of the issues involved.
- b) The chaplain will be able to recognise and articulate all signs of abuse, including spiritual abuse, in both staff and young people.

¹The house of Bishops document 'Promoting a Safe Church', defines Spiritual abuse as 'An attempt to 'force' religious values or ideas onto people, particularly those who may be vulnerable to such practices. Within faith communities harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice; this can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching, or intrusive healing and deliverance ministries, which may result in vulnerable people experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm.

- c) The chaplain will demonstrate an ability and willingness to signpost young people to necessary and appropriate services as part of their pastoral care.
- d) The chaplain will always engage in best practice, including the setting of appropriate boundaries, when working with young people to safeguard their own and others welfare and well being.

6. The chaplain will promote inclusion, equality and diversity enhancing the well being of children and young people engaging in non discriminatory practice.

Engaging in practice that supports the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual development of children and young people, championing practice that is empowering and transformative:

- a) The chaplain will demonstrate an understanding, in the way that they work, of the key principles of inclusive ministry.
- b) The chaplain will comply fully with all legislation and guidelines relating to matters of inclusion and diversity and work in accordance with such.
- c) The chaplain will be self reflecting and demonstrate a high level of self awareness in relation to their own prejudices, preconceptions and areas

of bias and work in such ways to overcome them/prevent them having any impact on their interactions with young people.

- d) The chaplain will ensure and demonstrate that the services that they offer are accessible to all who wish to make use of them irrespective of gender, ability, age or culture.

7. The chaplain will have a clear understanding of how children and young people develop and will use their experience and understanding to create effective ways of working with them at each stage of their developmental journey.

Many volunteer and paid chaplains come from a background in youth and children's work and their learning in this role will enrich their practice as a chaplain.

They will engage in practice that is person centred, age appropriate and which recognizes the different learning styles and intelligences of the different children and young people they serve, striving to provide opportunities for them to fulfil their potential:

- a) Chaplains will have the ability to engage with a wide range of children and young people including those displaying challenging behaviours

and have undertaken appropriate training to manage these situations in groups or one to one settings.

- b) The chaplain will, in addition to displaying an understanding of human and spiritual development, show a working understanding of how people learn in order to construct programmes, resources and activities that engage with children and young people in the institution.
- c) Chaplains with educational responsibilities will develop an understanding of the nature of curriculum design and its place in their role, working towards the design of appropriate and differentiated learning activities for all children and young people in their care.
- d) Chaplains will be aware of barriers to learning and personal development and seek effective ways to help people overcome them.

8. The chaplain will be a reflective and resilient practitioner, committed to personal spiritual development and discipleship, confident in their own professional identity and ability to access support and self care as required, participating in appropriate supervisory relationships (including clinical supervision) and line management.

A chaplain will be seen as a person of God with a commitment to prayer, worship, fellowship and personal study; engaging in theological and professional reflection as a means of improving their own effectiveness, performance and activity, accessing CPD. This may include undertaking research in order to further enhance their contribution to their field of work:

- a) The chaplain will be engaged in the principles and practices of personal discipleship showing a commitment to the spiritual disciplines of their traditions.
- b) The chaplain will engage in purposeful and accountable relationships with personal mentors, spiritual directors or pastoral supervisors in order to enable on-going growth and development.
- c) The chaplain will demonstrate their active engagement with personal supervision and will be able to identify how this has improved their practice.
- d) The chaplain will participate in the review and management appraisal process put in place by their authorising faith body and their institution.
- e) The chaplain will participate in and keep a record of regular CPD in areas that are appropriate to their sphere of work.



- f) Depending on their role the chaplain may undertake research on a regular basis into the needs of the children and young people in their care as well as broader research that will enhance their skills and the experiences of those whom they serve.

9. The chaplain will serve the institution and those connected with it offering their expertise and facilitating critical dialogue as appropriate, acting as critical friend.

Engaging in dialogue with those in authority to develop an ethos that ensures that principles of fairness and justice are recognized and applied:

- a) The chaplain will understand the importance of dialogue and engage in best practice in areas of policymaking, advocacy and the development of a Christian basis for working.

- b) The chaplain will actively promote an approach to their ministry that offers practical and emotional support to children and young people who are victims of injustice.

10. The chaplain will work to establish appropriate boundaries to the relationships within the institution.

Engaging in best practice that recognises the dignity and needs of the children, young people and staff of the institution, keeping records as appropriate to the context:

- a) The chaplain will seek to bring to all relationships an attitude of grace and acceptance.
- b) The chaplain will comply with other relevant standards as appropriate to the nature and context of the role.

11. The chaplain will promote spiritual development and facilitate the encounter with the transcendent for those within the institution as appropriate to context:

- a) Engaging in leading worship, facilitating ritual and the development of liturgy appropriate to the context in line with institutional policies and practices.
- b) The chaplain will conduct acts of prayer and worship as appropriate to the institution and in line with statutory requirements, understanding the value and benefits of the same in terms of their contribution to the spiritual development of all those associated with the institution. This may include celebrating significant life events such as marriage or confirmation. The chaplain will be appropriately qualified for such acts and conduct them in consultation with and in accordance with the requirements of the particular faith body.
- c) The chaplain will be able to facilitate the exploration of the spiritual through a variety of activities taking account of best practice, the context of the institution and the cultural demographic of the community.
- d) Where expected of the role, the chaplain will be engaged in the

creation of tools and strategies to measure and evaluate spiritual development of all those within the institution.

- e) The chaplain will seek to be aware of the impact of their work on spiritual development.
- f) The chaplain will work towards the creation, development and management of experiences for encounter or sacred spaces (both physical and virtual) in which children and young people will be enabled to engage with and reflect upon the transcendent.

12. The chaplain will develop and provide resources to the institution that can be accessed by all and that will support the aims and objectives of the chaplaincy:

- a) Engaging in the creation of tools for personal reflection, discipleship, spiritual discovery, group discussion, interventions.
- b) The chaplain will demonstrate the ability to create, adopt and utilise a wide variety of resources and interventions that meet the varied

needs of children and young people in a range of contexts and settings such as one to one, small groups, large assemblies, tutor groups, etc.

- c) The chaplain will demonstrate their ability to create resources that are accessible and inclusive, meeting a wide variety of individual needs and learning preferences.
- d) The chaplain will ensure that any resources that they create can be accessed and used by adults and children and young people in a range of settings and across a wide variety of formats.



