

School and Community Chaplain

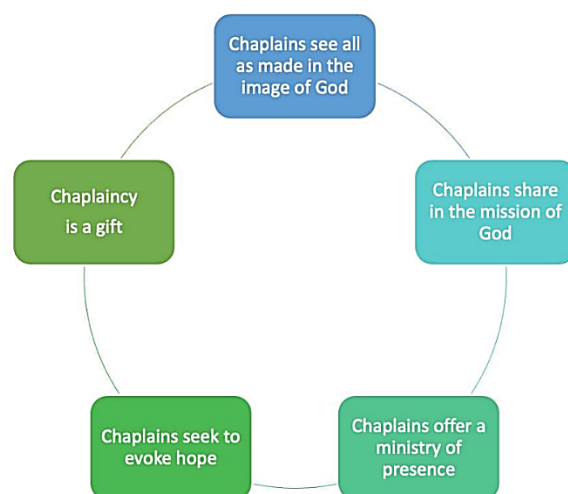
Being with people and bringing hope

We are seeking to recruit a full-time **School and Community Chaplain** to strengthen and build bridges between Stoke Bishop C.E. Primary School, St Mary's Church and families within the parish and beyond.

The Chaplain's role would be to lead and support the members of St Mary's Church in realising our vision of *following Jesus and making Him known*, particularly in relation to helping families grow in faith at church and home, and helping our local primary school flourish as a worshipping community, in line with the objectives of the Church of England's Growing Faith Foundation¹.

The role of a Chaplain

Chaplaincy has been defined as: *Journeying alongside people wherever they find themselves*. In the broadest sense, the role of a Chaplain is to **support people, create safe spaces for spiritual development and to work collaboratively**. Bristol Diocese describes Chaplains as *distinctively Christian and utterly inclusive, working with people of all faiths, beliefs and worldviews in the community. They share in the life of the community, journeying alongside people wherever they find themselves*.



What's the history at a local level?

Since 2016 St Mary's has had a full-time Children and Families Minister, who has in many ways operated as a School and Community Chaplain. Strong links with the school have been built (over several decades) and the school has recently had a very positive [SIAMS Inspection Report](#) (October 2025). Following our C&F Minister's retirement, we have slightly re-shaped the role and defined it clearly as a Chaplain because it is primarily outward-looking, towards the school and wider community. St Mary's is a church with a long history of investment in children and young people and a committed team of volunteers who serve and pray. Whilst there is a job description, it is envisaged that the Chaplain's role would grow in bespoke and organic ways, responding to the community context, and by listening to the voices of children, young people and their families.



St Mary's Church is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

**Stoke Bishop
Primary School**

¹ Growing Faith is the movement that exists to put children, young people and families instinctively at the heart of all the mission and ministry of the Church by changing the culture of the Church of England. It comes from the vision set by the House of Bishops and endorsed by General Synod in 2019. It involves churches, schools, and households working together to help children, young people, and families have life in all its fullness.

[Growing Faith Foundation – National Society for Education](#)

School and Community Chaplain

Role Description

Being with people and bringing hope



Location: St Mary Magdalene Church, Stoke Bishop, Bristol and employed by the PCC.

Main Purpose: To lead and support the members of St Mary's church in realising our vision of *following Jesus and make Him known*, particularly in relation to helping families grow in faith at church and home, and helping our local primary school flourish as a worshipping community. The Chaplain's focus is being with people and bringing hope.

Reporting to: The Vicar and PCC. This role will be line managed by the Vicar.

Working closely with: Stoke Bishop C.E. Primary School, volunteers who minister to children and young people, and the wider ministry team.

Salary and hours: Salary £32,400p.a. Full time hours of 37.5 per week, which will involve flexible working and will include evenings, weekends and sometimes during school holidays. At least one full day off per week with two full days off consecutively at least once a month. Holiday entitlement 25 days per year plus Bank Holidays.

General information: There is a Genuine Occupational Requirement for the post-holder would be a practising Christian, and committed to the ministry of St Mary's Church. It is envisaged as a Lay Chaplain role (not-ordained) but we also welcome applications from ordained ministers. Accommodation is not provided. The Chaplain would be subject to regular DBS checks and Safeguarding training, and would be expected to have a robust understanding of the church and school Safeguarding policies and ensure that they are being applied in practice.

Support and training:

- Member of the St Mary's staff team, who meet regularly for support and prayer.
- A 'Growing Faith' Steering Group at St Mary's is being established and would be a key source of prayer and support for the Chaplain.
- The Chaplain would be part of the Bristol Diocese Under 18s Chaplaincy Network (meets six times per year) and could also join the Church of England's [Chaplains in Education Network \(Growing Faith Foundation\)](#).
- St Mary's is part of the Avonside Mission Area, a partnership of five Anglican churches in NW Bristol. A network of ministers in similar roles within ASMA already exists.
- St Mary's is a Mullers Partner Church and there would be support for the Chaplain through the [Mullers network](#) of people working with children and youth.
- Trinity Theological College is in the parish of Stoke Bishop and there would be opportunities for the Chaplain to undertake further study if they chose to do so.
- The [Bristol Chaplaincy Network](#) could also provide support and signposting for training.

Main responsibilities:

1. To help children and adults connected to Stoke Bishop C.E. Primary School to flourish spiritually.

It is envisaged that could be achieved via the following, but this is not an exhaustive list.

- Hosting reflective prayer spaces for the school community each year.
- Hosting immersive trail experiences for the school community.
- Supporting the school in providing welcoming spaces for children to flourish.
- Serving the school as a Foundation Governor and working strategically with others to implement the vision, values and Christian distinctiveness of the school.
- Regular involvement with Collective Worship and festival services.
- Co-ordinating the Parent Prayer Group and regularly praying for the school.
- Working with the school to ensure that the needs of the 'first 20%' of children are met, and responding to particular needs that arise.
- Creating safe spaces inside and outside of school to explore spirituality and ask questions about the Christian faith.
- Being intentionally present and available at various times in the school day/week/year.
- Being available for meaningful conversations with school staff and parents.
- Proactive engagement with current issues affecting the school or wider community.
- Help to set up and run a Pupil Chaplaincy team.

2. To help children and families grow in faith through activities and services at St Mary's.

- Connecting with families and preschoolers through our weekly toddler group, leading the team of volunteers who run this group.
- Helping children and young people to encounter God through fortnightly (term time only) SHINEonSundays sessions during Sunday morning services. The Chaplain would oversee the team of volunteers involved with this ministry.
- To be a member of the team of volunteers who run Fuel, a weekly youth group (Fridays 6-7.30pm during term time), attending on a rota basis to connect with Year 6 children from Stoke Bishop C.E. Primary School and to maintain connections with those now in Secondary School.
- To be a member of the team who run the Explore@4 service (fortnightly on Sundays 4-5pm during term time) as this is often the 'way in' to church for new families.

3. To support parents in their role as teachers of faith in the home setting.

- Finding creative ways to empower parents to invest in their children's faith development throughout the year, sharing resources and providing encouragement.

This job description is not exhaustive and the School and Community Chaplain will be expected to undertake any other activity reasonably requested by the Vicar. The job description will be reviewed, in consultation with the post holder, from time to time and amended in light of the changing needs of the church and community.

St Mary's Church is committed to safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

School and Community Chaplain

Personal Profile

Being with people and bringing hope



There is a Genuine Occupational Requirement for the post-holder to be a practising Christian, and committed to the ministry of St Mary's Church. The right candidate will have a mature faith in Jesus, would be subject to regular DBS checks and Safeguarding training, and would be expected to have a robust understanding of the church and school Safeguarding policies and ensure that they are being applied in practice.

E = Essential

D = Desirable

Personal qualities

- Honesty and integrity. **E**
- Passionate about and gifted in growing faith in school, home and church. **E**
- Approachable by people of all ages. **E**
- Ability to engage and inspire children and young people, build trust and gain respect. **E**
- An open heart and a "can do" attitude, able to receive feedback. **E**

Skills

- Able to work relationally, empowering and supporting others. **E**
- Competent administratively, demonstrating self-management. **E**
- Evidence of being able to work creatively and pioneer new ideas. **E**
- Additional gifts or skills, e.g. in music, sport, drama, art. **D**

Ethos and Knowledge

- A good knowledge of the Bible, with the ability to think theologically and engage children through age-appropriate biblical teaching. **E**
- Safeguarding policy and practice. **E**
- Willing to assent to [St Mary's Guiding Statements regarding same-sex relationships](#).² **E**
- Willing to assent to the Diocese of Bristol Ethos document for Under 18s Chaplaincy.³ **E**
- Understanding of Children's development (both emotionally and spiritually). **D**
- Understanding of how schools work and the wider educational scene. **D**

Experience

- Working as part of a team, building and maintaining good relationships. **E**
- Working with children in various settings. **E**
- Working with people with differing cultures and beliefs. **D**
- Evidence of involvement in training, reading, academic study or other personal development relating to children. **D**

² Full details about how this document was created, and further information can be found on the [church website](#).

³ See page 5



Ethos Document for Under 18s Chaplaincy

We ask chaplains to practise under this ethos document which outlines the values that underpin good working standards in Chaplaincy with Under 18s. This document is based on *Core Standards of Christian Chaplaincy with Children and Young People 2022*.⁴

Core Values

Unconditional care

Following the example of Jesus, the chaplain's offer of pastoral, spiritual and religious care to children and young people is unconditional and without judgement, being based on the belief that all are welcomed and loved by God our creator. Chaplains aim to have a posture of service, as modelled by Jesus.

Inclusivity

Providing equal opportunity. Chaplains are distinctively Christian (in our context) and utterly inclusive, working with people of all faiths, beliefs and world views. They share in the life of the community in which they work, upholding the values and ethos of the organisation in which they are Chaplain.

Participation

As far as is possible and appropriate, children and young people are invited to participate in and contribute to the development of chaplaincy.⁵

Collaboration

Chaplains work with local churches to create chaplaincy teams. Chaplains facilitate the development of partnerships with other organisations and charities which could lead to a mutually beneficial relationship. They build bridges, for example between the school and church, and between the school and the wider community, including other Christian denominations and faith communities. They also work closely with the Diocese of Bristol Under 18s Chaplaincy Adviser and Under 18s Strategy Enabler.

Respectful spiritual dialogue

Chaplains meet and connect people with different views. People are supported to feel safe exploring spirituality, sharing their thoughts/feelings, beliefs and world views. This fosters a culture of curiosity, listening, respect, reimagining and hope. Chaplains encourage questions, listen and accept diverse views.

Safeguarding / Health and Safety

Chaplains are committed to the safeguarding of children and young people. They adhere to the safeguarding policies, procedures and confidentiality within the organisations they work in. They consider the safe delivery of activities through the use of dynamic risk assessments.

⁴ Core Standards of Christian Chaplaincy with Children and Young People. Second Edition, September 2022. Centre for Chaplaincy with Children and Young People.

⁵ Treseder's (1997) Degrees of Participation (Save the Children).