

Four Models of Chaplaincy

1. THE BRIDGE BUILDER - The Community Conduit

This model is predicated on a chaplain seeing themselves as belonging very consciously to two different but overlapping communities, namely the school community and the church community. The role of the chaplain is therefore to act as a *conduit* between the two communities; the church allows opportunities for the school to access deep engagement with local community projects and connections, and the school avails itself of a willingness from church volunteers and other sources of church capacity, to serve the schools in their area.

Examples of school involvement in the local community might include:

- Charity work identified and facilitated by the church
- Supporting the ministry of the church in outreach to the elderly
- Supporting free after-school homework clubs
- Collaboration with Archbishop of York's Youth Leadership Awards or Duke of Edinburgh Awards to find 'service' opportunities.
- Identifying new areas of need in the community through which church community and school can collaborate creatively and effectively.
- 'Big event' organising to celebrate aspects of local community and foster deeper links in the area.

Examples of church involvement in the school community might include:

- Offering 1 to 1 mentoring, anger management support or reading partners etc
- Offering clubs after schools using volunteer specialism (e.g. chess club/music ensembles)
- Offering Prayer Spaces (inclusive, invitational installation for people of all faiths and none)
- Offering free breakfast club in school, for those who might otherwise arrive at school unfed.
- Supporting families in the community whose children might be in danger of exclusion/suffering difficult behavioural difficulties.
- Staff support: e.g. cake baking at break and offering impartial 'listening ear'

Hallmarks of this model might be

- Intergenerational
- Creative and responsive to the context of both communities
- The Chaplain acts as Gatekeeper to ensure safeguarding procedure and the quality of training for volunteers

Advantages

- Chaplaincy establishes deep and long-lasting connections between church and school communities.
- Chaplaincy is not overly-dependent on the personality and relationships of one chaplain, leading to sustainability of the model beyond a specific post-holder

Disadvantages

- Chaplain can turn into volunteer manager
- Chaplain might not have time to establish many deep 1 to 1 relationships, but would have to devolve this to volunteers
- Quality assurance for volunteers might cause problems

2. HOLY JO/E - Presence, Prayer and Personhood

This model is predicated on the chaplain being a highly visible presence in the school community and developing strong, enduring relationships. The chaplain must be someone who the young people, staff and parents find it easy to relate to and converse with naturally.

This model depends on the chaplain deliberately maintaining capacity to respond to whatever is happening in the school context, and deliberately not filling his or her time with 'busyness'; this model requires the chaplain to model a 'non-anxious presence' to the school community and to be fastidious in resourcing themselves spiritually, through prayer and contemplation, so that they can in turn resource others.

For this model to work effectively, one would expect to see the following characteristics:

- A dedicated space in the school for the chaplain to work out of – somewhere easily accessible but allowing for appropriate levels of confidentiality. This could be used for 1 to 1s with staff, parents or pupils, but might also be big enough for a small group.
- Weekly meetings with pastoral staff, so that 2-way flow of information can be shared confidentially; chaplain can make referrals to SLT, and SLT to chaplain.
- Chaplain given specific mentoring cases
- Chaplain could develop a group of local volunteers who likewise have capacity and ability for good interpersonal relationships. They would be used for lower-level mentoring and regular support.
- Close, trusting and collaborative relationship between counsellor and chaplain
- Willingness to engage with 'Prayer Spaces UK' for whole school participation in reflective and spiritual time out.
- Time spent 'milling around/loitering with intent' at the school gate before or after school, and at other key moments
- Retreats offered for pupils during school time
- Careful work with local schools for pupils in Year 5 and 6 as they prepare for transition to secondary school
- Modelling of 'non-anxious presence' by leading mindfulness workshops/clubs or contemplative prayer exercises
- Modelling of non-anxious presence by leading 'meditative experiences' in collective worship.

Hallmarks of this model

- Peaceful
- Prayerful
- Person-centred
- Responsive

Advantages

- Chaplain positively effects the whole ethos of the school towards 'being' not just 'doing'
- Chaplain acts in the middle ground between function and dysfunction and is able to forestall more serious mental health and emotional problems developing by catching them early.
- Chaplain is able to notice and pick up cases and whole school issues, which others wouldn't, through their strong relationships and through deliberate time capacity.

Disadvantages

- Dependent on getting just the right person
- Model might not be easily sustainable when post-holder leaves.
- Lends itself less obviously to a 'team chaplaincy' approach
- Potentially distant from the church sphere

3. THE SPIRIT LEVEL IN SCHOOL Wholistic Spiritual and Pastoral Care Giver

This model is predicated on the chaplain being deeply integrated into the pastoral support systems of a school. The chaplain is bringing a spiritual and existential angle to the pastoral support team, helping them to take in the bigger picture and offering 'spiritual care' when and where appropriate. This might mean working with pupils/staff /parents for whom the spiritual dimension of life is particularly significant or who are wrestling with the bigger existential questions of life. However, it acknowledges the 'spiritual element' of all human existence, in that we all carry fundamental questions of meaning, identity and purpose.

In this role the chaplain will often address concerns which are at the forefront of the school's mind in whole school assemblies, year group or house meetings or tutor/form time and the chaplain would listen attentively to what is arising from year group councils and other feedback forums. The chaplain will be 'feeling the pulse of the community' and addressing these concerns through the different structures outlined.

As the spiritual arm of pastoral care, it would be natural for the chaplain to be involved in some more formal areas of school activity such as lessons, whether it be PSHCE, RE or indeed offering spiritual insights into other subjects such as English, Physics, Biology, History etc.

Spiritual care would also entail creating opportunities for the school community to have spiritual space, either in collective worship or in other formats. These would inevitably come from a Christian perspective, as this would be the religious tradition of the chaplain, but they would aim at complete inclusivity

This model would suit someone who has previously worked in schools or has been a teacher and understand the rhythms, structures and opportunities that arise in the school context.

- Deeply rooted in the pastoral support system of the school
- Working with pupils who are in danger of being excluded or in other areas of serious difficulty
- Working with parents; leading workshops on difficult pastoral issues
- Working with groups of pupils around sensitive areas such as bullying, body-image
- Leading PSHCE lessons with other members of staff.
- Sign-posting and offering expertise on significant areas of pastoral need such as suicide, bereavement, stress and other mental health issues
- Aware of and responsive to pastoral issues arising in the school such as bereavements, family separation, adoption, family trauma, imprisonment of family member etc
- Offering spiritual care through whole school/year group/form time acts of inclusive worship
- Offering specific spiritual care for Christians, Muslims and other faith groups through Christian Union, facilitating Friday Middy Prayers and their equivalents

Hallmarks

- Wholistic: Important ethos contributor
- Integrated into structures
- Clear brief of 'spiritual care'
- Openly but inclusively Christian

Advantages

- Extra capacity and dimension given to already over-stretched resources
- Chaplain fully integrated into the School strategy and structural framework.
- Clear brief of 'spiritual care' (like the definition used by the armed forces)

Disadvantages

- The chaplain can become a 'social-worker' rather than a spiritual Leader of the community
- Lacks Christian distinctiveness, if not careful.
- Doesn't necessarily connect easily or obviously with the local church communities

4. SOUL MATE Peer support from youth worker

This model is predicated on a particularly horizontal relationship where the chaplain acts as peer or friend, even if the chaplain in question is considerably older than the students. An obvious candidate for this kind of role is someone who comes from a youth work background and who is comfortable relating to young people 'on their level' as a modus operandi. Typically, this chaplain will be seeking to make full use of gaps in the schedule before, after or during the school day when young people have a chance to just be.

The chaplain, in this model, will take opportunities to connect as much as possible with the lives of students through extra curricula events such as school trips, performances, sports fixtures, residential etc and will see all of these as opportunities for building meaningful relationships. The chaplain here is acting very much as a role model as well as a friend, and is positioning themselves as someone who can be a significant adult presence in the lives of young people.

Engagement might include:

- Attending school excursions
- Coaching a sports team/leading a music ensemble
- Passing on 'the word on the street' to senior management
- Participant or mentor in other pupil activities such as school plays, debating etc
- Attending key school events (results day, parents meetings)
- Hanging out with pupils over lunchbreak
- Leading Christian Union
- Signposting young people to other Christian events after school
- Using lesson time for 1-1 mentoring
- Participating in school councils

Hallmarks

- contemporary
- relevant
- not 'schooly' – on the pupils' side
- distinctively Christian

Advantages

- Delivered by someone who is a specialist at working with young people
- Not confused with teaching staff and therefore 'on the side' of young people
- Creates a solid platform for developing deep engagement with faith beyond school
- Could be a split post: half-time youth worker to parish, half-time chaplain to school

Disadvantages

- Geared towards young people rather than the whole school community
- Could be seen as proselytising if the chaplain engages with young people beyond school.
- Potentially high impact, but possibly only for a small number of pupils
- Frequent higher turnover of younger 'youth worker' employees.