

## **Religious Observance and Chaplaincy**

### Chaplains and Chaplaincy

#### **1] The Term**

The term chaplain may be derived from the Latin word *capella* (chapel) — a place of worship.

#### **2] Who appoints a School Chaplain in Scotland?**

- For the non-denominational school, the chaplain is appointed by the head teacher. This is a devolved responsibility from the Local Authority.
- Within the denominational school, church authorities have the responsibility of appointing chaplains.

#### **3] History**

The role of the chaplain has a long history. Originally they served alongside armies to provide spiritual support and guidance for soldiers- Early examples are in the army of Moses (Book of Numbers 31:6) possibly 1300 BCE, and in the Assyrian armies of 7BCE. It is understood that such chaplains represented a single faith. In very recent history chaplains are now found in a variety of settings: industrial, commercial, higher education and in services such as the fire service.

In Scotland, John Knox laid out his vision for Scottish education in the First Book of Discipline 1560; the church was at the heart of provision. Education included the catechism and the local minister had a role in teaching this.

In his ecclesiastical structure in the Second Book of Discipline (1578), Knox appears to have envisaged the category of doctor who had a role in the school “to open up, by simple teaching, the mysteries of faith”

With the late 19 century development in Catholic schools, the clergy had a key and continuing role at many levels of school life.

#### **4] Developments within the Denominational Setting**

The developed understanding of the role for the denominational sector has been set out under six headings by the Catholic Education Service in England and Wales in the document: A Guide to the employment of lay chaplains in Schools and Colleges CES: England and Wales. 2004. (pp 6-8)

The categories are:

- Spiritual accompaniment (beginning where a person is and going on the spiritual journey with them);
- Pastoral Care (being involved in relationship and developing trust so that sensitive issues can be discussed)
- Evangelisation (presenting the challenge of the gospel within a Christian framework)
- Catechesis (educating and instructing in matters of faith)
- Religious Education (supporting the RE department in a school)
- Liturgical celebration (leading the community in worship)

While these six broad areas have parallels in non-denominational schools, categories 3, 4 & 6 could only be expressed through the informal curriculum

The Church of England has produced a job description for their chaplains which is available through this link <http://www.natsoc.org.uk/teachers/chapid.html>

It was always understood that chaplains came from a faith background and the early examples presume that. Chaplaincy as now developed in the 21st century assumes a faith background but chaplains minister not only to those of that faith but may walk with all who are on a spiritual journey.

## **5] Outline of Chaplaincy Role for the Non-denominational Setting**

Headteachers are encouraged to appoint a chaplain or chaplaincy team. The chaplain or chaplaincy team is appointed in line with the local authority policy.

The role of the chaplain or chaplaincy team will be fully discussed and regularly evaluated in discussion between staff and the chaplain(s).

The role of the chaplain or chaplaincy team includes:

- being a member of the Religious Observance Team
- being a resource for the RME curriculum
- providing pastoral care for staff and pupils (and if appropriate, their families)
- being available at community events in the life of the school
- having a key role at times of extreme difficulty
- within Learning Communities, providing a bridge and common resource across the Learning Community

## **6] Who are the chaplains?**

The chaplains may be those traditionally charged with this responsibility. They may be trained youth workers or suitable lay people from a local faith community. They may also be members of staff. In short, at the risk of being tautological, the chaplains are those fulfilling a chaplaincy role recognised by the SMT

The issue of suitability of a person as a chaplain, or of their continuing suitability, is a decision for the headteacher or SMT in discussion with the person concerned and the faith community to which they belong. This may involve a regular process of evaluation and review.

## **7] Structure and Relationships**

In order for chaplaincy to work effectively, there has to be a structure of review within a team setting which includes the SMT of a school. The bottom-line is however, that the chaplaincy work has to be based on relationships of trust

## **8] CPD & Training**

CPD is required to help chaplains and SMTs understand the new guidelines and the opportunities that exist for developing chaplaincy.

## 9] A Contract

It is helpful if the relationship is framed in a contract.

## 10] A Parallel Role: Healthcare Chaplaincy in Scotland

Some chaplains (but not all) have found helpful the model now offered by healthcare chaplaincy in Scotland. Following a major review new guidelines were issued in 2002.

Within a healthcare setting the following is described:

**Health Care Chaplaincy** is a service provided to patients, their carers and staff within the health care setting, which involves sharing and meeting their existential, spiritual, religious and pastoral needs. Chaplains are trained to serve appropriately the needs of those of different faiths, of different denominations and of no particular Faith

**Spiritual Care** is person centred care which, through affirmation, enables a person to make the best use of all their personal and spiritual resources in facing and coping with the doubts, anxieties and questions which arise in a health care setting and often accompany ill health and suffering

(<http://www.spiritualcare.org.uk/hdl 2002 76.htm>)

The description of life setting above, could equally be made of many of the pupils and staff in our schools. The vision of chaplaincy here and application, it agreed to a school setting, is not running better assemblies, but being a spiritual guide. This will involve RO events in schools

## 11] The Chaplain and his/ her integrity

Many clergy express concern about retaining their integrity within a non-denominational school setting more used to a confessional environment, where certain assumptions can be made about what is believed, some find the world of the school threatening or uncertain.

This can be evidenced in such questions such as

- Can I pray in the name of Jesus?
- Can I give a Trinitarian blessing?
- Do I have to present another faith view?
- If I am called to preach the Gospel, then how can I do other than that and surely I need to do that even if it does not fit in with educational theory?
- Can I only give the lowest common denominator of faith — bland and meaningless?
- If I focus on people, do I lose the security of my beliefs?

Behind this may also lie concern at the expectations of the congregation (who pay the stipend), and how this ties in with one's theology or worldview. The challenge is help congregations to an understanding the RORG Report and the requirements of Circular 1/2005

Some may react to these concerns with greater stridency in what they assert others may feel they have failed

The vision of chaplaincy within Scottish education in a multicultural Scotland is to recognise:

- that people of faith come from a specific background and it is not expected that they be anything other than they are
- that chaplains are not in a confessional setting but an educational one and must abide by the educational guidelines and sensitivities
- that chaplains are part of a learning community and they are learners too and must be open to interaction and dialogue, accountable to the school

**Therefore,**

- Reading a Christian Prayer is possible if prefaced by an invitation to those present to respond to it as they feel is appropriate.
- A Trinitarian blessing is appropriate in an event in the informal curriculum
- It could be tokenistic and unreal for a member of one faith community to speak with integrity on behalf of another. However, the value of other faith positions is to be recognised and valued.
- The gospel can be presented as part of a range of options, but not as the only one within an educational setting. What is described as proselytism (the double glazing sales techniques of the religious world) or viewed as indoctrination is not appropriate
- Presented with integrity, faith will not appear bland and meaningless, but rather as the guiding force and the centre of one's life
- Person centred care requires that we begin where the pupils! staff are and not with a preconceived structure to be imposed. Of course, the whole life of a chaplain will be informed by his! her faith and the experiences they have had, but these inform and guide rather than prescribe how it should be for others

## **12] A Christian Theological Foundation.**

For those for whom theological questions are vital, then the theological foundation of all this is described in the words "incarnational" and "holistic",

### **13] Not for me**

In view of all the above, it might be that some chaplains have to admit 'this is not for me'. It may also be the case that some headteachers have to say 'This is not for you,

### **14] Chaplains and Disclosure**

This is quite clear.

The definition of a child care position contained within the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003 (POCSA) - is available on this link

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2003/30005--c.htm#sch2#sch2>

With particular reference to Paragraph 1(a) of the definition, it may be considered that a school chaplain is one whose normal duties (chaplain, minister, priest, etc.) includes work in an establishment mentioned in Paragraph 2 - such establishments include educational establishments and schools are included in this.

It is an offence for an organisation (e.g. school, council, church) to offer work in a child care position to, or procure work for, an individual who is on the list of being disqualified from working with children (DWCL) Therefore, to offer work in a child care position, you have to check the DWCL and the only way to do this is to obtain an Enhanced Level Disclosure for such positions.

Further information is available on this

link <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/30859/0023655.pdf>

It is the view of Sandy Henderson of Disclosure Scotland that

"It is more than likely that schools or councils would insist that the chaplain's employers (even the schools or councils themselves if they are the employers) obtain an Enhanced Disclosure prior to them working within the school.

"It may be that the chaplain has had a Disclosure carried out by virtue of his position elsewhere (e.g. minister, priest, etc). But, disclosures are position specific and the schools or councils may insist on a "fresh" Disclosure for the position of school chaplain.

Sandy Henderson  
Contracts & Compliance Manager  
Disclosure Scotland/SCRO  
Tel. No. 0141 585 8309

[www.disclosurescotland.co.uk](http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk)

## 16] Other resources

INCLUSION HERE DOES NOT CONSTITUTE APPROVAL: these are here for illustration only.

### **Glasgow City Council**

Management Circular 30: Role of School Chaplains in Non- Denominational Schools, July 2005

[http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/50A6038C-77CD-40E0-BBDE-5C8070F60579/0/MC30\\_0705.PDF](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/50A6038C-77CD-40E0-BBDE-5C8070F60579/0/MC30_0705.PDF)

Management Circular 46: Appointment of School Chaplains July 2005.

[http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/6CDDFF41E-F062-4B5A-A3C3-50E93ABBE95E/01MC46\\_0705.PDF](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/6CDDFF41E-F062-4B5A-A3C3-50E93ABBE95E/01MC46_0705.PDF)

### **Anglican Schools**

Job Description for chaplains in Anglican schools in England: <http://www.natsoc.org.uk/teachers/chapjd.html>

### **Catholic Education**

A Guide to the employment of lay chaplains in Schools and Colleges CES: England and Wales. 2004.

The Chaplain: Faith presence in the school' community L Monahan and C Renehan, Columba Press, Dublin, 1998.

Catholic Education beyond 2000: Spiritual Education, Religion and the Money Culture John Hull, St Andrews College, Glasgow, 1995.

### **School Chaplaincy in Australia**

<http://www.cra.org.au/pages/00000026.cgi>

<http://www.ug.edu.au/news/7article=3229>

[http://www.aasn.edu.au/zone tiles/Chaplains/anglican schools chaplaincy.pdf](http://www.aasn.edu.au/zone%20tiles/Chaplains/anglican%20schools%20chaplaincy.pdf)

### **School Chaplaincy in Canada**

[http://www.bloxham project.org.uk/chaplaincy%20booklist.htm](http://www.bloxhamproject.org.uk/chaplaincy%20booklist.htm)