



## Vision for the Development of School Chaplaincy in the Diocese of Nottingham



Our diocesan vision for school chaplaincy is that:

***Every school will have access to chaplaincy provision so that the diocesan vision for everyone in our schools will be better supported and enabled.***

***Namely, that each person will be helped to:***

- ***encounter God's personal love for them (Encounter);***
- ***discover and grow in their personal relationship with Jesus Christ as his disciples (Discipleship);***
- ***be open to the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit in their lives so that, in accordance with their age, they will be helped to reach out to others with God's love. This may be expressed in many ways, including care and practical service, especially to the disadvantaged and those most in need (Missionary Discipleship).***

The Catholic Life and Mission of the Multi-Academy Trust or independent Catholic school is of primary importance and should be clearly evident in everything that is undertaken both at Trust and individual school level. Chaplaincy is central to the development of the Catholic Life and Mission of the Multi-Academy Trust and independent Catholic school. It sits alongside each headteacher's fundamental responsibility to nurture and promote the Catholic Life and Mission of the school at local level. It is a crucial vehicle for linking home, school, parishes and broader diocesan life; it also plays a central role in effective transition from the primary to the secondary phase. As such, it should be represented at the level of the board of directors.

The current picture of chaplaincy in our schools is very mixed. A majority of our secondary schools employs a lay chaplain. In some cases, this role is shared between the secondary school and the feeder primary schools. A smaller but growing number of primary schools have chaplaincy provision. Sometimes, this role is undertaken by staff who are released from other duties for a period of time each week.

The NRCDES now sets each Catholic Multi-Academy Trust and independent Catholic school the target of ensuring that each school has access to chaplaincy on a weekly basis. The present arrangement of lay chaplains working across a cluster of schools could perhaps be replicated in regional clusters or 'hubs' within each of the Trusts. In order to provide this, each Catholic Multi-Academy Trust will appoint a 'lead lay chaplain'. This post will bring with it the responsibility of coordinating and developing the provision of chaplaincy within the Catholic Multi-Academy Trust by working with 'link chaplains' from each of the regional hubs. Each independent Catholic school will also be expected to secure high-quality chaplaincy provision for the pupils in its care, taking account of the guidance within and content of the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory 2023, 'To love You more dearly'*.

What will this mean for Catholic chaplaincy?

### **Mission & Evangelisation**

- The role of chaplaincy is essential to the Catholicity of our schools. Its primary role therefore is to keep Christ at the centre of all aspects of the life of the school and, in the context of the diocesan vision, to ensure that every person in our schools has the opportunity to personally encounter God who loves them, to grow in their relationship with Christ as his disciples, and to develop the confidence to put their faith into action and to reach out to others with love and practical support. It must ensure therefore that the teachings and mission of the Catholic Church are understood, upheld, professed, and lived out.
- Through prayer, word and deed, chaplaincy should proclaim the Gospel in the school so that all may be helped to know the Good News of Jesus Christ and given the confidence to share it with others.
- Chaplaincy must ensure that Collective Worship is an integral part of the daily routine of the school, by providing opportunities for pupils and staff to be engaged, challenged and affirmed by prayer so that the three diocesan vision themes of 'Encounter', 'Discipleship' and 'Missionary Discipleship' are firmly embedded throughout the school. Liturgy, celebrations of the word and prayer should all be conducted in keeping with the *Prayer and Liturgy Directory 2023, 'To love You more dearly'*.
- It is to be a means of unity by linking home, family, parish and the wider diocese so that bridges can be built and the mission of the Church can be lived out in its fullness.

### **Faith Formation**

- The chaplaincy provision will develop connections between the Religious Education department, the whole school, the local parish, and diocesan organisations such as the NRCDES, the NDCYS and the Diocese of Nottingham's Adult Formation for Mission Department, so that personal faith can be developed.
- It will create supportive environments so that all members of the school community feel that they can explore, question and grow in their faith. The formation of their faith will be based on the foundation of first enabling people to encounter God personally.
- It will supply appropriate catechesis and support for the Religious Education curriculum when necessary ensuring that this takes account of changes within the *Religious Education Directory (RED), 'To know You more clearly'* in readiness for September 2025.
- It will help people to see how Collective Worship and outreach to others, especially those in most need, are vitally connected. We recognise the face of Christ, whom we worship in the Mass and in Eucharistic Adoration and whom we meet in prayer, and in the disadvantaged and marginalised. It is our love for Christ whom we encounter in the sacraments that sends us out to love him in the lives of those most in need.
- It will ensure that schools enable all pupils to take a lead in the Catholic Life and Mission of the school.
- It will be inclusive and respectful of the celebration of other beliefs and faiths within our schools.

## ***Development of Chaplaincy***

To make this vision of chaplaincy into more of a reality, the following areas will need to be developed:

- Opportunities for schools in the Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts to work together in resourcing and recruiting lay chaplains who best serve their particular needs and the requirements of each school.
- Prioritising the position of chaplaincy by ensuring that the Director of Chaplaincy or Lead Lay Chaplain in each Catholic Multi-Academy reports to the CEO and works as part of the executive team which is responsible for driving forward the diocesan vision of chaplaincy in the Trust.
- Encouraging and enabling the development of pupil leadership in chaplaincy within each school.
- Empowering staff in schools to deliver on the Church's mission, especially as it is expressed in the diocesan vision for our schools.
- To facilitate the growth of chaplaincy in the Catholic Multi-Academy Trust, the independent schools and across the diocese, every opportunity should be given to mentoring and developing young people so they can discern a vocation in chaplaincy. This can be achieved by working closely with the schools within the Trust; the volunteer team of the NDCYS; local university chaplaincies and Catholic societies (CathSocs); sixth form centres and colleges; local parishes; in house volunteer programmes etc.

## ***Continuous Professional Development***

- To empower lay chaplains to effectively carry out the mission entrusted to them, they should have access to:
  - An appropriate induction;
  - Continuous professional and spiritual development;
  - Opportunities to take part in a mentoring scheme;
  - Opportunities to attend diocesan/Trust meetings and retreats for lay chaplains;
  - Time to access spiritual direction (guidance to help them grow in their own personal faith and in their awareness of themselves as Disciples/Missionary Disciples);
  - A chaplaincy budget so that they can resource their work adequately.

In all of our work, the *Diocesan Standards for Lay Chaplains* will be observed.

**Approved by Rt Rev Patrick McKinney, Bishop of Nottingham**

November 2023

