



FOREST SCHOOL

Forest School Chaplain 2025

Job Description

Chaplaincy at Forest exists to ensure that pupils consider that there is more to life than the material. It aims to encourage everyone to develop their spirituality whatever they perceive it to be; the Chaplain is not there only for those who share the Christian faith but is responsible for the spiritual life of the School and is pastor to the entire School community.

This position is a role that encompasses both pupils and staff across the whole school community. Chaplaincy at Forest is about guiding and resourcing spiritual development and dialogue, empowering the discovery of deeper meaning and creating space for exploring purpose, identity and values.

The strategic role of Chaplain brings with it the responsibility of leading the spiritual and moral life of the school community, to ensure the School delivers the ISI requirement that a Forest education develops “spiritual and moral knowledge and understanding.” In doing so the role of Chaplain is responsible for upholding the ethos and values and marking significant moments throughout the school year. The Chaplain is also a key member of the Forest community, supporting both pupils and staff and complementing the work of the School’s outstanding pastoral systems.

Forest School is an Anglican foundation founded to promote Christian ideals. As such the role of the Chaplain is to ensure that the values, ethos and moral character that has been borne of those principles is a living and breathing part of school life for all pupils. Because of our foundation and heritage we are proud to provide regular gatherings in our Chapel for every pupil in school as part of their weekly timetable, which ensures that collective worship is practised that, whilst being of a 'broadly Christian nature' is an inclusive space and time designed for spiritual development of all pupils, regardless of faith or belief.

SACRE (The Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education) believe that ‘broadly Christian character’ means:

- the promotion of values that most Christians believe to be important. These may be, and often are, values held to be important by other faiths, and belief systems.
- incorporating elements that some Christians might recognise from their worship, e.g. stories, learning from the good example of others, including readings from holy and spiritual books.

The Chaplain is line managed by the Deputy Head (Safeguarding).

Principal responsibilities

- To provide leadership and take strategic responsibility for the active development of Chaplaincy across the whole School
- To capture pupil (Prep and Senior School) and staff voice around matters of faith and belief and create opportunity for all to be able to confidently express and share their voice
- To design and create leadership opportunities for Faith and Belief Advocates (Prep and Senior School)
- To lead at whole School seasonal and remembrance events as well as moments of reflection
- To plan and lead regular chapel gatherings for all pupils throughout the School (4-18)
- To work closely with the Director of Music (Senior School) and relevant colleagues in the Prep School in the planning and implementation of a variety of musical offerings during Chapel and other services
- To ensure that all pupils (Prep and Senior School) are fully rehearsed and prepared to deliver during Chapel
- To be a support and advocate for pupils (Prep and Senior School) of all faiths – including supporting the development of faith-based clubs and societies
- To drive and develop Network Hubs and Outreach Opportunities to share and receive learning and resources around Chaplaincy in education. This should be underpinned by establishing Chaplaincy at Forest School as a best practice model for the 21st Century
- To ensure that research and networking is undertaken regularly to ensure that Forest is up-to-date with best practice
- To create a diverse and dynamic programme of visiting speakers to enhance the provision of faith and belief as part of Chaplaincy
- To ensure that the school calendar recognises and celebrates significant moments of religious or spiritual celebration
- To produce an annual report for SLT on the work of the Chaplaincy and any further reports, as requested
- To manage and be accountable for the Chaplaincy Budget
- To monitor the condition of the Chapel building and its contents and submit requisitions for repairs or renovation as may be necessary
- To support the RS departments in both PS and SS, contributing to lessons and providing creative opportunities for pupils to engage with the subject
- To ensure that faith and belief is embedded in the Personal Development Curriculum across the sections
- To organise training opportunities for staff around matters of faith and belief
- To lead a Staff Resource Group focussing on faith and belief
- To play a central role – strategically and operationally – in terms of staff welfare at Forest School with respect to Prep School, Senior School and Non-teaching staff
- To be available to meet with colleagues and offer support
- To maintain a very high-profile presence around the School

Additional responsibilities:

- To work as a key member of the pastoral team and support staff in their pastoral responsibilities.
- To meet with Deputy Head (Safeguarding) bi-weekly
- To meet with other key colleagues frequently, including Senior School Deputy Head (Pastoral), the Prep School Senior Deputy Head, School Project Counselling Manager and SENCOs
- To be a member of the Pastoral Development strategy Group.
- To provide updates to the Senior Leadership Team and to the Governing Body
- To support with Duties, as required
- To undertake anything additional that might be reasonably required

Person Specification

The successful candidate will be an ordained priest who must be an excellent communicator with the ability to support pupils from a range of faith backgrounds. The Chaplain will offer a creative and joyful approach to worship, working in line with the Christian foundation of Forest School.

Our new Chaplain will enjoy engaging with the faith, doubts and scepticism of intelligent young people and colleagues and possess the theological literacy to do so.

The successful candidate will:

- Be a gifted preacher with the ability to articulate the spiritual ethos of the School.
- Be passionate about the impact of the role of Chaplain on pupils/staff.
- Have personal values that are consistent with the ethos of a School with an Anglican foundation.
- Be a good communicator with excellent interpersonal skills at all levels with pupils, staff and parents.
- Be open, warm and friendly.
- Have drive, energy, resilience and a sense of humour.
- Have high expectations of self and of others.
- Have the ability to build trust in the School community.
- Have the ability to support any member of the School community in crisis or suffering loss.
- Work on own initiative.
- Be punctual and have good attendance.
- Demonstrate good judgement.
- Have a positive approach to problem solving.
- Be able to work efficiently, effectively and to meet deadlines with minimal supervision.
- Be able to build, develop and maintain professional relationships.
- Understand the issues of confidentiality and be able to demonstrate tact and empathy in sensitive situations.
- Be able to work in a way that promotes the safeguarding, welfare and safety of pupils.
- Be fully aware of statutory safeguarding practices and policies relating to schools.
- Understand relevant policies and legislation in relation to inclusion.
- Have experience of working in a school environment.
- Understand child development and learning.
- Have the ambition to help develop each child to maximise their potential.
- Have the desire to afford each child the dignity they require to build self-esteem and so to flourish.
- Have a desire and determination to make a significant contribution to the Forest School community as a whole.
- Have good numeracy and literacy skills.
- Have good ICT skills.

Annex A: Chapel

Chapel at Forest School

Introduction

Forest School believes that attending Chapel provides a distinctive and important experience for all pupils which stands apart from the rest of a busy week at Forest. Coming together in Chapel, a place of moral authority for all pupils, focussing on the same thing, listening, singing, reflecting, all enhances the School's collective culture and identity. It is a space to provide comfort and reassurance at times of difficulty too, in allowing calm reflection in a mindful manner.

At best, Chapel is inspiring and morally encouraging, as well as being an opportunity to engage with faith and religion, whether pupils are actively engaged in worship, or not. At least 50% of Forest pupils claim to have 'no faith', however the value and contribution of Chapel transcends personal faith (or lack of) to offer a uniquely rich and formative opportunity to bring the community together and to help pupils develop their 'spiritual and moral knowledge and understanding'.

At the same time, collective worship remains an essential component of the School's Anglican foundation and is upheld with sincerity and relevance. Weekly Chapel gatherings offer a space to mark events, share values, and connect pupils to the School's heritage, with the Chaplain recognising the need to make these sessions engaging, relevant, and respectful of the School's Anglican heritage while appealing to pupils with diverse beliefs and backgrounds.

Objective – as part of the wider Chaplaincy programme:

To resource and equip pupils in their spiritual development, providing progressively deeper opportunities to become aware of the spiritual side of oneself, others and the world.

To provide foundational literacy and awareness around spiritual and religious topics that enable pupils to reflect on their experience of life and the world, explore their own and other people's values, perspectives and world views, and to respond to a growing sense of self.

As pupils progress through the School, we want to encourage them to become increasingly confident in their articulation of their values and beliefs and how this impacts their place in the world. They will have increasing opportunities and resources to feel empowered to discover deep meaning in society and their own sense of character, purpose and how this interacts in community.

As they gain an understanding of their own and others' beliefs, we will encourage pupils to become more conscious and aware of prejudice and injustice in this area and be equipped to be proactive and vocal members of society.

Impact

- Confident articulation of personal values and beliefs and how this impacts action
- Strengthened skills of empathy and dialogue with those of different beliefs and worldviews
- Development of oracy, collaborative and presentation skills
- Understanding of the value of reflective practice for wellbeing and personal development
- Ability to explore different definitions of spirituality
- Understanding of the value of community gatherings on regular basis for 'moment marking' and for significant events or celebrations

Chapel programme:

Each term has an overarching theme:

- **Michaelmas:** Building Firm Foundations

- **Lent:** Change and Purpose
- **Trinity:** Endings and Beginnings

Each term will include:

- Recognition of significant religious festivals – these will be displayed in the Chapel noticeboard each term.
- Exploration of world events – current affairs, significant weeks/days (eg Holocaust Memorial Day, International Women’s Day, Mental Health Week, World Humanism day etc)
- Reflection on School and personal values – including the School motto and School song – reflection on community values and history
- Reflection on ‘big questions’ - opportunity for self-reflection and meditation
- Exploration of the place of creativity and music in spiritual development

Music will be used for the purpose of building community as well as understanding a range of music that is used for spiritual reflection; this will include:

- Collective singing of hymns
- Sharing or listening to music from a diverse range of faiths and beliefs
- Performing in or listening to choirs or ensembles – these will include information and context given to understand the history and use of the music and its role in spirituality and/or reflection.

The Chaplain will always end Chapel with a blessing – this will come from a variety of contexts, including Christian prayers, prayers from other religions, or words of ‘wisdom’ or poetry designed to aid reflection.

Across the course of a term pupils should expect to hear:

- Their own and other beliefs represented
- Guest speakers increasing the diversity and inclusivity of pupil experience of Chapel
- Pupil led Chapels and Staff-Led Chapels
- Chaplain and other staff holding and guiding the space as a space for spiritual development and reflection as individuals and as a school community.

Terms and Conditions

- Hours: 08:30 - 16:30, Monday - Friday
- Membership of a generous pension scheme.
- Free lunches during term time and when working during the school holidays.
- Refreshments available in the Common Room throughout the day.
- Discounted membership of the Sylvestrian Leisure Centre.
- Assistance obtaining permit of parking.
- Employer death in service benefit
- Support with extensive CPD opportunities
- Required attendance: In addition, and as part of your contracted hours, you will be required to work any additional hours/days within the scope, spirit and purpose of this job description and as requested by your line manager.