

Chaplaincy in Anglican Schools

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The Guidelines for the Appointment of Chaplains in ASC Schools are included in this policy as Attachment 1.

1. Background

At the National Anglican Schools Conference held at Melbourne Girls' Grammar in April 1997, the then National Anglican Schools Consultative Committee (now formalised as Anglican Schools Australia (ASA) and until recently known as the Australian Anglican Schools Network (AASN)) was asked to conduct a survey on Religious Education and Chaplaincy in Anglican schools in Australia.

The Survey was conducted on behalf of the Committee by Dr Peter Coman, Executive Director of the Anglican Schools Office in the Diocese of Brisbane in February 1998. An Interim Report was presented to the National Conference in May 1998. The Revd Dr Tom Wallace (dec) of the Anglican Schools Commission in Western Australia prepared a discussion paper on Chaplaincy in Anglican Schools and feedback on it was received from several Chaplains in three Australian States.

As a result of the feedback the Paper was revised and was endorsed by a national gathering of Chaplains at the National Anglican Schools Conference in May 1999. Five years later, Mr John Reddan, then ASC Assistant Director (Professional Support), researched and prepared a paper in 2004 on Chaplaincy for the ASC Principals.

This set of guidelines originated in the above processes of consultation and development, with more recent reflections also included from the Revd David Lord, Manager Chaplaincy & Service Learning.

2. Guiding Principles

While these Guidelines assume that a Chaplain will be a Priest, much of what is said will be equally relevant for a deacon or a lay person.

a. *The Purposes and Ethos of Anglican Schools*

The role of a Chaplain is situated within the broader context of the purposes and values of the school community in which she / he ministers, with its students, staff, families and old scholars. The Chaplain will have a significant role in the furtherance of these purposes and values. The Western Australian Anglican Schools Association [WAASA] adopted the Anglican Schools Ethos Statement in 2008 and this provides a clear statement of the ethos and purposes of Anglican schools in Western Australia.

b. *Congruence with Priestly Ministry*

In most Anglican schools the Chaplain is an ordained priest, although in a relatively small number a lay person or deacon may fulfil that role.

It seems reasonable to conclude that a School Chaplain should exercise a ministry which is congruent with her or his ordination vows, recognising that such ministry will take on a particular shape appropriate to the school context. Priestly ministry includes teaching, liturgical, pastoral care, and leadership functions.

c. *Theological Expertise*

A Priest, or others with specialised training in theology, should exercise a ministry which utilises that training by bringing the perspective of faith to bear in all aspects of the life of the school, its "*moral culture*" as well as its religious education and worship; to be a prophetic voice within the school.

d. *Flexibility*

Each School Chaplain will bring her or his own gifts, strengths and abilities to the role and thus there should be some flexibility about the way the role is exercised in a particular school. Similarly the context of each school also differs. All this will affect the weighting that is given to particular functions as well as the shape which those functions take.

e. *The Nature of Schooling*

A school is a specialised social and educational institution which is concerned with the communication of the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which young people need to live with purpose and creativity in contemporary society. It has a set of structures and ways of operation which are appropriate to such an institution. A School Chaplain will need to understand the nature of the institution in which he/she works and how to faithfully be the priest in such a context.

"responding to the call of God and of the Church to live and work as a priest, a pastor and teacher, for God's glory and the strengthening of God's people" (A Prayer Book for Australia, p.793)

3. The Role of a Chaplain in an Anglican Schools

a. *Evangelism and Mission*

In living the gospel, the Chaplain will make known Jesus Christ and will be responsive and sensitive to those opportunities when students or staff want to talk about issues of faith and commitment. While the principal focus of the Chaplain will be within the school community, this may also include the building up of a gathered community both within and beyond the school; and from time to time there will be further opportunities for the school to exercise a ministry to the local community in which it is set and of which it is a part.

This may take the form, for example, of projects of care for needy people, help to parents with teenage children, drug education programs, and so on. It is important for the Chaplain to be involved in these activities in an appropriate way.

In a number of schools creative links are established with local parishes. Where this happens the Chaplain has an opportunity to work with the clergy concerned to enhance the mission of the church as a whole.

"As the Lord's messenger, proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Seek the lost, announce God's justice, warn and correct those in error."
(A Prayer Book for Australia, p. 793)

b. Pastoral Care

Anglican schools have in place structures and procedures for the pastoral care of students including, in many cases, the existence of house and tutorial groups. The Chaplain has an important role to play working in collaboration with other members of staff among whom may be specialist people such as psychologists and nurses. In some cases the pastoral care of students will involve significant contact with other family members. If there is a boarding facility at the school, this will also add another dimension to the pastoral care responsibilities of the Chaplain.

The Chaplain has an important pastoral care role in relation to the Principal and members of staff.

In some schools the Chaplain will also have a significant pastoral care role with those "old students" who look to the school for help in times of crisis or on important occasions such as weddings, baptisms and funerals.

There is no doubt that the pastoral care role of the Chaplain can be very demanding, although the precise pastoral care responsibilities will vary from school to school and will depend on the Chaplain's pastoral skills. Some Chaplains may have more specialised counsellor training and the school may wish to draw upon that from time to time.

"Be a pastor after the pattern of Christ the great Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep" (A Prayer Book for Australia, p.793)

c. Liturgy and Spirituality

The basic responsibility for arranging the liturgical life of the school will rest with the Chaplain. This will involve arranging opportunities for students to share in services of worship and to participate in their planning and conduct. One of the most challenging and demanding tasks of the Chaplain will be to facilitate experiences of worship which have meaning and relevance for young people.

There will be services which are arranged for members of staff and on occasions for the whole school community. Students may also be prepared for baptism and / or confirmation. There will be those occasions when the Chaplain will provide a liturgical framework for the expression of grief, as in the case of the death of a student or teacher, or for the expression of joy, as in the case of the celebration of marriage or the opening of new school facilities.

The spirituality of young people will, in the main, be nurtured through meaningful involvement in services of worship, times for quietness and

reflection, meditative experiences which draw upon the creative arts, and time to appreciate and enjoy the natural environment.

It is clear that this area of responsibility requires careful thought and preparation. If it is to be done well the Chaplain must have a time allocation for it which is realistic.

"You are to encourage and build up the body of Christ, preaching the word of God, leading God's people in prayer' declaring God's forgiveness and blessing, and faithfully ministering the sacraments of God's Grace with reverence and care. (A Prayer Book for Australia, p.793)

d. *Teaching*

The teaching role of the Chaplain in a school context is a very important issue. The position advanced in this set of guidelines is that the Chaplain will exercise this ministry most effectively, not only by teaching Christian/Religious Studies, but also by acting as a resource person, especially for others who teach in this learning area.

The Chaplain may assist other members of staff in dealing with theological issues as these arise in learning areas other than Religious Studies. A number of schools have appointed a separate Head of Religious Studies and this seems to be a desirable policy to pursue. Where this is the case, the Chaplain will need to attend meetings of the staff involved in this learning area. It may also be helpful if the Chaplain has some opportunity to visit classrooms and contribute in ways which make use of her/his expertise.

It follows that the Chaplain might have a limited and perhaps relatively small teaching load. This view is reinforced by an appreciation of the time-consuming nature of the other aspects of her / his role.

It is recognised that in some Anglican schools, the Chaplain undertakes a large teaching load and in fact may wish to do so. It is also recognised that in some schools the Chaplain may teach a subject other than religious studies. In some situations the Chaplain is the Head of Religious Education. The important point is that there needs to be a proper balance which allows the Chaplain to effectively fulfil all aspects of the role.

The Chaplain may exercise a significant teaching ministry by providing professional development for staff in dealing with theological / philosophical / ethical issues as these arise in the curriculum. The Chaplain might also help staff explore the implications of the Christian purposes of the school for classroom practice.

"Be a teacher taught by the Lord in wisdom and holiness" (A Prayer Book for Australia, p.793)

e. *Leadership*

There is a sense in which the Chaplain represents and symbolises the Church's commitment to its mission as this finds appropriate expression in a school community. Thus the Chaplain will exercise a prophetic ministry, as necessary, reminding the school community of its Christian purposes and encouraging its members to give expression to their Christian commitment in ways which are helpful in an educational context.

Another important way in which the Chaplain exercises leadership is by the manner in which she/he continues to remind members of the school community of the significance of the spiritual dimension in human experience. This capacity is enhanced when the Chaplain places priority on the nurture of his/her own spiritual life and takes opportunities for renewal through retreats, spiritual direction and supervision, as well as through other professional development activities. One or more of these avenues may be required by the Diocesan Bishop.

This leadership is enhanced further in those schools where the Chaplain is a member of the school executive team and may also have an opportunity, from time to time to talk with the School Council about issues affecting the spiritual and religious life of the school. This needs to be done in consultation with, and the approval of the Principal who may share leadership responsibility in this area with the Chaplain.

The relationship between the Chaplain and the Principal in a school is crucial.

"Lead the people of God as a servant of Christ" (A Prayer Book for Australia, p.793)

f. *Collegiality*

The role of Chaplain as spiritual leader and the confidante of many within a school community, including the Principal, may lead to a sense of isolation at times. Provision for spiritual direction, collegial gatherings and networking is therefore important for Chaplains.

In order to lessen a sense of isolation, interactions with others beyond the school will come as the Chaplain is involved in those events in the life of a school or diocese – such as synods, clergy retreats, spiritual direction, professional development activities or committees – as are required or encouraged by the Bishop and Principal.

A further important opportunity for collegiality is offered by WAASA through its Chaplains' meetings and gatherings each term.

"Together with your bishop and other ministers, you are to take your part in the life and councils of the Church"
(A Prayer Book for Australia, p.793)

4. The qualifications required of a School Chaplain

A School Chaplain, in most cases, will need to be licensed by the Diocesan Bishop. In addition she / he should have:

- an accredited theological qualification, preferably at degree level;

- a professional qualification in Religious Education or Education - (this may not be essential but it certainly is an advantage);
- pastoral skills and understandings which will enable her/him to exercise pastoral care both for young people and adults;
- an ability to work as a member of a team in the school community and with local parish clergy where that is appropriate;
- a degree of maturity of Christian faith which will give integrity to his/her ministry with students, staff and parents;
- an open and warm personality which demonstrates a loving concern for others, especially for young people.

"Love and serve the people with whom you work, caring alike for young and old, rich and poor, weak and strong." (A Prayer Book for Australia, p.793)

5. Training for a School Chaplain

A School Chaplain will need to participate in the training which is appropriate for her/his diocese for those in ordained ministry. Normally this will include a sound theological education and formation for priestly ministry. This latter part of the program will need to include:

- a strong component of training in pastoral care;
- an understanding of the theory and practice of religious education in a school context;
- an understanding of the developmental characteristics and needs of children and adolescents;
- an understanding of the role of liturgy in a school context and its practical implementation;
- an understanding of the nature of a school as community; and as an educational institution in society, its internal structures and dynamics and a sense of the external environment in which it operates – governmental and other statutory authorities;
- the development of skills in team membership and leadership;
- a recognised course in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE);
- usually at least one practicum in an Anglican school to provide an apprenticeship period with an experienced Chaplain and the opportunity for constructive feedback.

6. Procedures for the Appointment of a Chaplain

The ASC Council has adopted the Guidelines for the Appointment of Chaplains in ASC Schools (Attachment 1) for Principals to use when appointing a school Chaplain.

7. Responsibilities

The School Chaplain exercises her / his vocation in two unequal spheres. This is both a joy and a challenge. She / he is appointed by the School Principal as a key member of staff (accountable to the Principal on school matters). She / he is also licensed by the Diocesan Bishop as a priest within the Diocese.

It is essential that the Chaplain's role statement includes how these dual responsibilities operate in practice. It should include appropriate mechanisms of review with agreed processes for resolution should competing loyalties cause unresolved tensions.

8. Remuneration, Terms and Conditions of Appointment

The ASC Guidelines referred to above include the provision for the Chaplain to be remunerated under either a Diocesan stipend or the ASC EBA.

It is recognised that many chaplains will have professional teaching qualifications. It will be important, however, to determine "*the Chaplain's remuneration*" in relation to the diocesan standards for clergy stipends and allowances as this will maintain parity with other clergy and thus not erect a barrier to the movement of clergy from parish to school or vice versa. This arrangement will ensure the Priest does not lose long service leave, superannuation and other entitlements, if moving from a school to parish ministry. Some parish clergy are paid a stipend which is a percentage above the minimum and this would be entirely appropriate for a school chaplaincy position. The components of the package would need to include:

- stipend which may be at an appropriate percentage above the Diocesan minimum;
- provision of a house (either owned or rented by the school) or a housing allowance, plus appropriate allowances for utilities and telephone.
- payment of long service leave and superannuation to the appropriate clergy funds.
- payment of a travelling allowance or the provision of a car.
- provision of assistance in relation to professional development. This will include time to participate in a regular retreat with other clergy and to maintain some contact with the wider life of the Diocese;

A process for an appropriate form of appraisal should be in place in each school, one that is helpful to the Chaplain in identifying areas of need and arranging professional development. Some dioceses also have a form of ministry review for clergy and a school Chaplain may participate in such a review which takes proper account of the school community context.

Where a lay Chaplain is appointed the salary arrangements will need to take into account the person's qualifications and experience as well as the level of responsibility carried within the school community.

¹These documents are titled, "The Christian Purposes of Anglican Schools in the Diocese of Perth" and "Ethos Statement for Anglican Schools in the Province of Queensland".

GUIDELINES FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHAPLAINS IN ASC SCHOOLS
 The following process is suggested for adoption by ASC schools to help facilitate the appointment of Chaplains

