



Chaplain

September 2025

It is Culford's mission to unlock the potential of every child and to develop lifelong values and a love of learning within a community that strives for excellence and nurtures compassion and resilience. We aim to be an internationally recognised independent boarding school that stands out as a leader in innovation placing a focus on nurturing the individual to fulfil their unique ambitions as global citizens contributing to a strong and sustainable future. As staff, we commit to supporting these aims within our individual roles and responsibilities.

Role Description

A Chaplain represents the wider church in and to the school and also, with the Head, represents the school to the wider church. The Chaplain, whatever their denomination, has responsibility for maintaining and developing the Methodist tradition and ethos within the school and will be a main link between the school and the Methodist Church. Culford's Chaplain is strongly encouraged to forge links with the local circuit; it is hoped that this would be both on a personal basis with ministerial colleagues and between the school and local churches.

The Chaplain has responsibility, under the Chair of the District and the Head, for seeing that the Christian faith is proclaimed and explained in ways which respect the integrity, dignity and intelligence of all, for organising the planning and conduct of services and collective worship, and for encouraging the Christian nurture of individuals whilst respecting the fact that our school community comprises people of many different faiths and none.

The Chaplain is seen as a senior member of staff who works alongside the Head and other staff, sharing with them a special responsibility for the development of a stimulating and compassionate school community in which individuals are valued and cared for, and where qualities such as honesty, tolerance, understanding and commitment are encouraged. A good working relationship between Chaplain and Head is of crucial importance.

The Chaplain serves the whole school community, as listener, enabler, prophet and minister. The Chaplain has a distinctive role in supporting and encouraging other members of staff in the exercise of their pastoral and other responsibilities. The Chaplain will prepare a termly report for the School's Governing Board on the spiritual well-being of the school, and attend in person when the governors discuss the report.

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The Chaplain will join the events arranged for Methodist School Chaplains throughout the year. These include, for example: the annual dedication service, the annual Chaplains' Retreat, the annual Schools' Conference. In meeting together Chaplains find mutual support, share issues of common concern and benefit from the fellowship and challenge such meetings can provide. MIST's Pastoral Visitor is always available for guidance and support.

The Head and Chaplain will agree the details of the Chaplain's specific deployment in the school in addition to the responsibilities described above. Such deployment will be planned to support and strengthen the Chaplain's whole school role. The prime role of our Chaplain is to minister to the religious and spiritual needs of the community within the traditions of Methodism and to be actively involved in the whole life of the school, especially but not exclusively the 24/7 resident community.

Depending on the academic qualifications of the Chaplain the role may include teaching and this would be considered a distinct advantage in this particular application. Such classroom contact with pupils can be stimulating and rewarding, and also provide a Chaplain with a clear point of connection with the pupils. For this reason, Culford will always support Chaplains who wish to teach and will make training and development opportunities readily available. However secondary a teaching role may be, a Chaplain must be able to exercise that role to a high standard thus adding to the overall effectiveness of the school's classroom provision.

Chaplaincy has religious leadership at its heart, not academic teaching and such leadership can be exercised in a range of other ways too including, for example: classroom assistant, learning support, boarding duties, community outreach programmes and engagement in extra-curricular activities (e.g. music, drama and sport). Wherever possible, therefore, Culford will seek to utilise the strengths and experience of the Chaplain and in doing so enhance the Chaplain's wider role within the whole school community. However, deployed, the Chaplain has to abide by all school rules, procedures and policies and act in accordance with the code of conduct issued to all school staff including promoting equality, and accepting and celebrating differences in our school community.

There are certain responsibilities perhaps less immediately evident. Although adult members of the community may marry, or bring children to baptism, and although anyone may suffer bereavement, there are likely to be fewer such events than in a circuit. However, the impact of such events when they do occur is likely to be far stronger than in a circuit, both because of the closeness of the school community and the youthfulness of it. For many, for example, any experience of bereavement will be their first. Chaplains are at the leading edge of the church's mission and in schools will have more direct daily contact with young people than in almost any other context; they have an important role in telling the Christian (and Methodist) story and walking a Christian life.

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Essential criteria:

- To be well qualified (to degree level or equivalent) with proven pastoral and leadership skills
- To command respect amongst teaching and support staff
- To bring an energy and enthusiasm for school life with a keenness to support change and development
- The ability to relate to children and teenagers as well as adults
- To be sensitive to the needs, interests and anxieties of all, committed to keeping children safe and to working in accordance with the school's statutory requirements for child protection and safeguarding
- To be able to exercise a pastoral ministry to the whole school community (including families of pupils and staff)
- To be able to plan thought provoking and inspirational assemblies and opportunities for school worship consistent with Methodist teaching and doctrine for pupils in the Nursery, Pre-Prep, Prep and Senior Schools.
- As a practising Christian, be willing to stand clearly on religious and moral issues in the school; setting a high personal standard
- Interested in the wellbeing of the whole school
- Self-disciplined in all confidential matters both personal and organisational
- Resilient and determined in supporting the needs of pupils, staff and parents
- Able to maintain good discipline and in exercising it in such a way as not to damage the pastoral relationship between Chaplain and pupil
- A team player, willing and able to abide by the staff code of conduct and able to provide pastoral support to the Head
- Good administrative ability

Desirable criteria:

- To be an ordained Methodist minister (presbyter or deacon) and normally to have had circuit experience
- Previous involvement in work with young people (including school chaplaincy)
- If a teaching role is envisaged, relevant teaching experience and qualification will be

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expected

Accommodation:

The School provides a house for the Chaplain. The accommodation currently available is a three bedroom house semi-detached property with a garden and a separate study in the main school building.

Application process:

Each applicant for a Chaplaincy vacancy at a Methodist school must complete the School's application form and provide contact details for two referees, one of whom must be the person currently responsible for management or oversight of the applicant's current appointment/employment. Given the timing of this advert, early applications are encouraged.

Induction and mentoring:

Newly appointed Chaplains will be provided with an external mentor (either from the District or from another school). The mentor will be approached in the first instance by the Pastoral Visitor and outline arrangements agreed between the Pastoral Visitor, Head, mentor and Chaplain. He/she will also receive support and guidance from the Pastoral Visitor. Any specific training needed prior to appointment will be agreed between the prospective Chaplain and the Head. The Head will also ensure there is an appropriate person in school to provide guidance/mentoring to the Chaplain in respect of school routines and procedures.