

Useful Publications supporting this Document at the time of writing:

AMAZE

CYPG strongly recommend you purchase this folder. Provides case studies, examples and pro forma templates for all the documentation you will require as it guides you through the employment process.

Cost £35,00

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THE PROJECT WORKER BY ALISON PEACOCK

A 40 page guide to help you think through the implications and **responsibilities** of prospective employment. Cost: suggested donation of £6.00

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INTRODUCTION

You've decided that your church might need someone to work specifically with children and young people. There is a lot to employing a youth worker and you must be aware of what you are taking on. The questions you ask, and the answers you come to as a congregation will shape and determine everything from this point on...

This document can help with this preliminary part of the process. It is designed to raise awareness of issues surrounding good employment and working practice; to bring to your attention the legal (and ethical) obligations of being an employer; and to point you in the direction of publications that will take you from where you are now, to the point of successfully employing your worker.

Before you go any further, ask yourselves the following question...

ARE WE SURE WE KNOW WHAT WE WANT?

Most of the problems that occur after a Church has employed a worker arise because this question was never asked. It is as well to be honest about motivations, hopes and dreams in a venture such as this.

A vague or confused sense that 'we really should be doing something for young people', or a recognition that 'there aren't any young people in the congregation' is not sufficient to drive the project. A number of areas need to be considered:

There is a great deal of emphasis on the place of young people in the Church at the moment, and the danger is that this obscures other equally important groups of people: the elderly; the homeless; the unemployed; asylum seekers. **If we are going to invest heavily in a particular area, are we sure that children and/or young people is where our church should be focusing?**

Do we want a youth worker (working with 13yrs+) or a children's worker (4-12yr olds)? The skills and understanding required for these two age groups are very different, and it is unlikely you will find one person who can deal equally well with both.

written acceptance of the job.

Congratulations - you've just employed your children's and/or youth worker!

ARRIVAL AND INDUCTION

Having employed the successful candidate, some further thought needs to be given to their arrival and introduction to the church, the locality and their new job. As well as organising the induction programme (up to 3 months), you will need to give some thought to helping the candidate sort out accommodation (if not already done); set up an office/study; introductions to other church-based, or local authority workers, and so on. Please don't assume this will just happen! It needs to be initiated.



structures and procedures. Careful thought needs to be given to who assumes the managerial role: that he/she/they have both the competence and time to do the job well. This role needs to be kept separate from the pastoral care of the employee, and is essentially task-orientated and work related. Some thought will also need to be given to the worker's place within the overall team in the Church, and the implications this has for their involvement in strategic thinking and planning for the church in general.

It is important that this structure is public knowledge, as much because of what it says about who is NOT responsible for managing the worker. Church members, especially if they have given financially to support a worker, may feel they have a degree of ownership, and the right to impose their own agenda and expectations.

SUPPORT STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

Quite separate from, but as significant as the management structures, is the support structures and procedures. These are categorically non-managerial, and are less to do with accountability and fulfilling the job description, and more about the development of the worker as a person. Incorporated into this should be ongoing formal training or study (for example, in youth work or theological education); personal and professional development; mentoring; spiritual direction and development etc. It is advisable to draw up a 'Working Agreement' (similar to that completed by assistant curates and their training incumbents) as a means of helping with non-management issues.

SELECTION PROCESS

Once all this is in place, and you have received the prospective applications for the job, you are ready to begin the selection process. It will be important to analyse and process the applications, and notify those short-listed of the details for Interview. The interview will need to be carefully thought through and conducted by those who have both the competence and time to do the job well. Decisions should be made as soon as possible after the interview date, and an informal offer made to the successful candidate by telephone or in person. Whilst this offer may be conditional on references and CRB clearance, the informal offer, if accepted, should be followed up by a formal letter, along with the terms and conditions of employment for them to sign and return along with their

Do we want someone who will work with those already in the church family or do we want someone who can bring children and/or young people into the congregation from outside? Again, the abilities required are very different, and there is danger in expecting the same person to be able to achieve both roles.

Are we expecting young people to begin attending our services? How soon? If we don't see young people in the congregation within (say) 6 months, will this lead to disillusionment? Criticism? Withdrawal of funding?

Do we want someone who will manage volunteers, someone will do the work alongside members of the congregation or someone who will actually do all the work instead of them?

WHAT ARE OUR EXPECTATIONS OF THE WORKER?

Again, honesty is the best policy. It is generally a good idea to provide a forum where people can articulate their expectations - especially if they are contributing time and/or money to the project. Failure here could easily result in disillusionment and frustration later in the process. Talking to churches who have already employed a worker might help clarify what you can realistically expect. Again, a number of areas need to be considered:



Are we expecting the worker to be involved in other aspects of the life of the church?

Are we expecting the worker to be involved in summer camps? With other organisations? Schools? These are areas of work in which we might not see any return for our money! Are we happy for that to be the case?

LOOKING AHEAD

How will we react to children and/or young people who might begin to attend our services as a result of employing a worker? Will it be us that changes or will we expect them to conform to our ways? If we don't

actively welcome and encourage young people coming into our church, they are unlikely to stay and this will leave our worker in an impossible position.

Is this project sustainable? In real terms, we probably need to be thinking of offering 5-year contracts. Can we guarantee funding for this? How will we guard against the danger of a work that is overly dependant on the children's/youth worker? Will we be able to get the volunteers needed to staff growing children's/youth work? Increased children's or youth work requires an increased budget. Will we be able to afford it?

TAKING THE PLUNGE

A significant priority for you now is developing structures and frameworks that incorporate your legal responsibilities and protect the prospective employee, ensuring their ongoing personal and spiritual development, and that they operate under realistic expectations and towards realistic targets. Your relationship with the successful candidate will be primarily that of employer/employee, rather than that of advocate, counsellor, friend or member of congregation, and the structures that protect that professionalism should be put in place before the candidate is accepted.



An Overview of the Process of Employing

JOB DESCRIPTION

Having made a realistic and informed decision as a Church that you are going to employ a worker, your appointment team should begin to draw up a job description. This helps to clarify the roles and tasks the employee is expected to fulfil. It is possible, with negotiation, that this document may

change and develop as new opportunities present themselves, and should it become clear that previous expectations were unrealistic, or misplaced. Nevertheless, this document should be in place very early in the process of seeking to employ your youth and/or children's worker.

FUNDING

The question of funding must be considered realistically from the outset. An adequate salary level should be decided on along with review options, timing and methods of payment. Further funding needs to be allocated for the selection process (e.g. advertising, etc.); working expenses (housing, office, telephone, travel, hospitality, resources, training courses/study etc.); budget; National Insurance and pension contributions; insurance policies. This needs to be guaranteed throughout the duration of the contract.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Assuming the funding is in place, the appointments team should develop a person specification and formulate a written contract.

While the Job Description gives a picture of the roles and tasks, the function and the purpose of the job, the Person Specification describes the characteristics, skills, experience and qualifications required of the person who will be able to do the job. It is possible to state at this stage that the post requires a personal commitment to the Christian faith. The Contract should incorporate terms and conditions of employment; articulate both disciplinary and grievance procedures; give details of holiday entitlement, pay (including sick/maternity pay and leave); give conditions under which a contract may be terminated, and so on.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Having created the job, it is now necessary to generate the application process. This covers everything from advertising for applicants, sending out Application Forms and Packs, and securing references. Interview dates will need to be set before advertisements go to press.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

It is increasingly recognised that a crucial factor in successful and effective employment is the implementation of clear management