



Education Resources

Operating Procedure A31 (C)

Chaplaincy Guidance in Non-Denominational Schools





Education Resources
Executive Director **Jim Gilhooly**

**Policy guidance for schools regarding chaplains and chaplaincy teams
in non denominational schools**

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1.1 Background

The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 states that there is a statutory obligation on local authorities to provide religious observance and religious education in schools. Religious and moral education is a statutory core subject for all pupils attending primary and secondary education, and it is their entitlement to have this taught in a meaningful and progressive way. National guidance enables local authorities and individual schools to take full consideration of local circumstances and community expectations and to involve parents, learners and the wider community when planning for teaching and learning. Schools are also advised that they should plan and deliver religious and moral education as both a specific subject discipline and one which contributes to high quality interdisciplinary learning, as they do with each of the eight curriculum areas. Religious and moral education should, therefore, also contribute to learning and development through the other contexts for learning, that is the ethos and life of the school community and the opportunities provided for personal achievement.

Schools are supported in the development of all curricular content with national advice and guidance on the implementation of Curriculum for Excellence. The programme and content for religious education in all South Lanarkshire schools are developed by staff working groups following the national guidance set out in Curriculum for Excellence. In shaping their programme, the national advice for primary schools is that they should teach well planned experiences across Christianity, world religions and developing beliefs and values. Schools are required to consider how this is met and apply careful planning, giving consideration to increasing higher order skills and critical thinking at an age appropriate level. Parents have a statutory right to withdraw children from participation in religious and moral education. However, national guidance also indicates that without this aspect of their education, learners will not enjoy the full benefits of Curriculum for Excellence since this area of their education contributes to pupils thinking for themselves and making their own decisions about what they believe to be true about human living.

Government guidelines indicate that in non-denominational schools religious observance should be of a 'broadly Christian character'. It should reflect the broad consensus of Christian beliefs and values without being specific to any one denomination and the form it takes may vary from school to school. This does not exclude the possibility of drawing on other religious traditions at times. Religious observance should be inclusive, not exclusive, and should allow pupils from various religious backgrounds, or none, to take part. The Scottish Government letter, 'Curriculum for Excellence – provision of Religious Observance in schools' (22 February 2011) states that 'Scottish Government Ministers consider religious observance to be an important educational experience for young people at all stages of primary and secondary school.'

The role of the Chaplain has a long history and chaplains are found in various settings, including the worlds of industry, commerce, armed forces, hospitals and education. While there is no formal requirement, there is a tradition of chaplaincy in many schools which has provided support for pupils, staff and parents and reflects the community in which the school is located. Chaplains also support religious observance in many schools. One of the well known roles for Chaplains is to provide religious observance in schools. There has been long-standing national advice from the Scottish Government, and advice prepared by the churches, on the role and functioning of chaplaincy teams. In South Lanarkshire, we have recently reviewed our policy on Wellbeing and Care, which has a section on spiritual, religious and moral awareness, and our operating procedures on religious education and religious observance. The national advice from the government and our own guidelines make reference to the chaplaincy team, but these guidelines offer more detailed advice about operational issues.

1.2 Developing Spiritual Values in a school context

Spiritual development can be promoted through the values and attitudes which an establishment promotes and through all subjects in the curriculum. However, religious and moral education has a particular focus in raising awareness of spiritual values.

1.3 Definition and aims of Religious Observance

Religious observance is a statutory requirement in schools under the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. The Religious Observance Review Group concluded that “Religious observance has as its central concern the development of each individual within the school community as a ‘whole person’. This commitment resonates with the commitment in ‘Educating for Excellence’ to realise the potential of every child in every community.

In the Scottish Executive’s Circular 1/2005 (Provision of religious observance in Scottish schools) religious observance is defined as ‘community acts which aim to promote the spiritual development of all members of the school community; to express and celebrate the shared values of the school community.’ Religious observance can provide opportunities for reflection about life, identity and meaning.

In the Scottish Government letter ‘Curriculum for Excellence – provision of Religious Observance in schools’ (22 February 2011) this definition is endorsed. This letter also states that the use of the title ‘Time for Reflection’ might be appropriate because ‘it is a clear description of the activity.’

Schools are required to provide for religious observance but increasingly the focus for this is on time for reflection. The purpose of religious observance is to provide young people with opportunities for reflection, both individual and collective. The national guidance on the provision of religious observation, issued on 22 February 2011, states that:

“Scotland is a society with a longstanding Christian tradition. However, Scotland has for many generations also been home to many who have other faith and belief traditions, never more so than at present. This trend is likely to continue as Scotland remains a country where people from other communities are welcomed and we can expect Scotland to become increasingly diverse in the range of faith and belief traditions represented. Religious observance needs to be developed in a way which reflects and understands this diversity. It should be sensitive to our traditions and origins and should seek to reflect these but it must equally be sensitive to individual spiritual needs and beliefs, whether these come from a faith or non-faith perspective”.

We agree with the later statement in the guidance which states that “many school communities contain pupils and staff from faiths other than Christianity or with no faith commitment, and this must be taken fully into account in supporting spiritual development. It is of central importance that all pupils and staff can participate with integrity in forms of religious observance without compromise to their personal faith”.

1.4 Frequency of Religious Observance

Religious observance needs to take place sufficiently frequently to have an impact on the spiritual development of the school community. However, it is the quality of such occasions which is of greatest importance. ‘Every school must provide opportunities for religious observance at least six times in a school year, in addition to traditional celebrations central to the life of the school community.’ (Curriculum for Excellence – provision of Religious Observance in schools 22 February 2011) The school community should be involved in making decisions about frequency.

1.5 Chaplains in South Lanarkshire Council schools

The head teacher is responsible for the composition and size of the chaplaincy team. Chaplains are in school by invitation of the head teacher. As with all visitors to establishments, the head teacher must know who is in their establishment and what their role and function is. Chaplains for each school will be drawn from local places of worship and faith groups. In making an appointment to the chaplaincy team, head teachers must consider how representative that person is of their faith body and how representative the faith body is within the local community.

Chaplains work under the direction of the school although members of churches have a right to hold their own beliefs and values. The requirement is that when becoming part of the chaplaincy team in any school, chaplains are making a commitment not to promote their own individual beliefs, but rather to work on the school's identified programme.

Where team chaplaincies are in place they must be both ecumenical and, where possible, inter faith. However, in some contexts this may not be possible. Where one denomination is represented this does not imply that other denominations or faiths are to be excluded or that the school is expressing a preference for one denomination or faith group over others. It is vital that schools engaging with chaplains take account of the educational environment in which they are working and consider the context within which staff, pupils, parents and the school community function. Head teachers must inform the parent council, as representatives of the parent forum, in decisions about the composition and size of the chaplaincy team. The size of the chaplaincy team should reflect the size of the school.

It is clearly valuable to take account of their parental perspectives and of their parental knowledge of the local community. Information about who is in the chaplaincy team and of what they do in school must be provided annually to parents.

For formal approval, schools are required to notify South Lanarkshire Council annually as to the composition of their Chaplaincy Team, using the South Lanarkshire Council pro forma.

1.6 Child Protection / PVG

Chaplains must be given a copy of South Lanarkshire Council's Child Protection Policy and be made aware of child protection procedures in the establishment. All members of the Chaplaincy Team must have full PVG. Head teachers must check with chaplains whether they already have PVG scheme membership with or outwith South Lanarkshire Council for regulated work with children / protected adults. If this is the case education personnel will provide an alternative application form: existing PVG Scheme member application.

Chaplains' roles will vary from school to school: present at assemblies, leading religious observance, visiting classes, engaging with small groups or any other activity agreed with the head teacher.

During visits to classes and small groups at least one member of the teaching staff must be present. During larger meetings, religious observance events, or assemblies there should be sufficient staff present to comply with normal operating procedures. If a chaplain is delivering an extra curricular activity under the auspices of the school, such as Scripture Union, with no members of school staff present then parental permission is required.

1.7 The role of the chaplain

Head teachers and chaplains need to be clearly aware of the difference between the chaplain's functions in school and the chaplain's functions in church. Chaplains in schools are there for everybody, regardless of individual denomination or personal beliefs.

The chaplain's key function is to assist the establishment in the delivery of religious observance / time for reflection. The role of the chaplain can be a diverse one and may include:

- assisting the school to help support and develop the religious observance calendar of events;
- providing pastoral care and support for staff, pupils and their families, where appropriate;
- having a key role during times of extreme difficulty or crisis;
- supporting school community events;
- visiting classes at the invitation of teachers and / or head teacher to complement the curriculum;
- contributing to extracurricular clubs in consultation with the head teacher;
- leading or helping pupil groups with a particular religious, moral or citizenship interest;
- participating in school trips;
- providing a link between the school and local community;
- any other activity agreed between the head teacher and the chaplain.

The role of the chaplain may differ from school to school depending on the school community, the chaplain's particular interests and the time available.

The construction of the chaplaincy team needs to be made clear and must be reviewed regularly in discussion with the head teacher. All activities and resources used must be appropriate to the age and stage of the pupils and complement and endorse the school's programmes of study, which will be based on Curriculum for Excellence guidance.

1.8 Engagement with parents

School handbooks must contain a statement about the development of 'Spiritual, social, moral and cultural values.'

Annually schools must inform their parent council about the composition of the chaplaincy team. This information must be updated in the school handbook each year.

The head teacher must engage in discussions with the chaplain(s) early in the school session about their role and the timing and subject of planned activities. Parents must be informed about the times and subject of planned activities which will be delivered by the chaplaincy team. This information must be shared through parent council meetings, news bulletins, school newsletters or the school website. An outline of religious observance events will be made available on request.

Under the terms of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, parents / carers have the right to ask for their children to be withdrawn from religious observance and / or religious and moral education. A statement to this effect must be included in the school handbook. In addition, parents must be reminded on an annual basis of their right to withdraw. This should be done through the school's first newsletter. If a pupil is withdrawn the school must make suitable arrangements for the pupil to participate in a worthwhile activity, in consultation with parents. If parents have any concern about religious observance they should approach the head teacher to discuss their concerns.

1.9 Religious and moral education and chaplaincy

The chaplaincy team has no function to ensure that religious and moral education is carried out. The programme of religious and moral education and its delivery remains the responsibility of the head teacher and the teaching staff of the school. However, schools may involve the chaplaincy team, as a resource, in religious and moral education planning and delivery.

1.10 Procedures regarding visiting faith representatives or speakers

Schools will often find it valuable to invite an individual or agency to visit the establishment and participate in an assembly or work with a group of children. This type of activity can complement and supplement the work of the school. Individuals from faith and non-faith groups can contribute additional knowledge and breadth of expertise. This may help pupils 'recognise, reflect upon and develop a deeper understanding of the value and worth of each individual which comes from one's dignity as a person and their contribution to the school and wider communities' (Circular 1/2005). Visitors representing a range of responses to faith in action can impact on the spiritual development of a school community in helping to make the experience an openly inclusive one. The headteacher may seek the views of the chaplain or chaplaincy team when such visits by faith representatives are taking place. However, the headteacher has ultimate responsibility for who is in their school or establishment.

1.11 Planning with speakers or visitors

Visitors should be viewed as a resource to enhance the planned religious observance and / or religious and moral education programme. The programme must be thoroughly planned and involve the school staff, chaplaincy team and visiting speakers. The programme must allow all staff, pupils and speakers to be able to contribute without compromising their faith stance.

Circular 1/2005 makes it clear that religious observance needs to be developed in a way that is sensitive to our Christian traditions but which 'must be equally sensitive to individual spiritual needs and beliefs, whether these come from a faith or non-faith perspective.'

1.12 Materials and publications

Publications must not be sold to pupils by either individuals or groups.

Head teachers must consider carefully the materials that they send home. If they think any materials are of a sensitive nature they must discuss them with their chaplaincy team and / or their parent council prior to issue and must seek advice from Education Resources staff. We live in a diverse society, within which parents express a range of views and opinions about religious and moral education. This is, therefore, a sensitive issue.

Presentations and any associated materials or publications which are used must be age and stage appropriate. The school must ensure that presentations and associated materials are at an appropriate level and should be interesting and stimulating. Handouts or other materials must be discussed with the head teacher in advance of events, to ensure their suitability and appropriateness. If the chaplaincy input is a team approach then fellow members of the team should view any materials prior to their issue.

1.13 Fund raising

There are many excellent examples where schools and establishments work very closely with faith based organisations to support charitable work. However, any school fund raising must be worthwhile and appropriate and contribute to developing children's understanding of citizenship and the school's programme for global education.

1.14 Positive partnerships

Carefully planned partnership working with chaplains, including religious observance, will provide opportunities to develop a deep understanding of the dignity and worth of each individual within the school community. 'As well as being a statutory element of a school's provision, religious observance also has an important part to play in the development of the learner's four capacities, as a successful learner, confident individual, responsible citizen and effective contributor.' (Education Scotland)

1.15 Evaluation and review

The impact of the *Policy Guidance for schools regarding chaplains and chaplaincy teams in non denominational schools* will be evaluated in the following ways:

- annual return from headteachers;
- school improvement plans and standards and qualities reports;
- establishments' monitoring activities and self-evaluation processes.

South Lanarkshire Council will promote and share good evaluation practice and encourage others to learn from it. Advice will be offered on effective religious observance and evaluation to those establishments which request or require it.

Appendix

Education (Scotland) Act 1980

Provision of religious education and religious observance in primary and secondary schools:
Circular 6/91

The Scottish Executive

The Religious Observance Review Group Report (2004)

The Scottish Executive

Provision of religious observance in Scottish schools: Circular 1 / 2005

The Scottish Executive

'Curriculum for Excellence – provision of religious observance in schools' (letter to all schools, 22 February 2011)

The Scottish Government

SLC policy on Wellbeing and Care (section on spiritual, religious and moral awareness)

South Lanarkshire Council Operating Procedure *Religious Observance*

South Lanarkshire Council Operating Procedure *Religious and Moral Education*

Education Scotland Religious observance template

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/r/genericresource_tcm4624926.asp?strReferringChannel=educationscotland&strReferringPageID=tcm:4-615801-64

Glasgow University, Scripture Union Scotland and the Church of Scotland have created a learning opportunity to assist school staff, chaplains and other faith group leaders in the delivery of religious observance. www.gla.ac.uk/departments/religiouseducation

Education Scotland website offers guidance and exemplar materials to support schools in developing high quality activities for education about faith and belief, and for religious observance.

www.LTScotland.org.uk/religiousobservance

The Scottish Catholic Education Service offers guidance and exemplar materials to support denominational schools on aspects of religious observance and School Chaplaincy.

www.sces.uk.com

The PVG Scheme is managed and delivered by Disclosure Scotland.

<http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk> Telephone number 0870 609 6006

Examples of good practice

Education Scotland: A chaplaincy team in a secondary school. The example of Ross Hall shows how developing a chaplaincy team took place with increasing co-operation between the churches. The team is well integrated in many aspects of school life.

Education Scotland Moving on (transitions) assembly resource. This resource outlines an assembly for upper primary pupils looking at the issue of change, how to prepare for it and how to look on it as a positive.

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/Moving%20on%20transitions_%20assembly%20resource_tcm4-642960.pdf

Education Scotland Pathways assembly resource

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/Pathways%20assembly%20resource_tcm4-653351.pdf

Education Scotland Friendship resource

http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/Images/Friendship%20assembly%20resource_tcm4-642866.pdf

Useful contexts

South Lanarkshire Council Emotional Literacy Framework Calendar

Rights respecting Schools Award

Global Citizenship

Religious Observance Template

(Religious Observance template is available on SLC GLOW)

Purpose

The purpose of the template here is to guide thinking and help prepare for RO events making sure that all important features outlined in the Religious Observance Review Group Report are in place.

Application

This template can be used in an RO event of any size, length, age group or location

Who Completes this?

The person or chaplaincy team in charge of the RO event should complete this consulting with the RO team in the school and if appropriate SMT.

Filling the Boxes in the Template

- ❖ **Rationale:** Why this event is being done, how it is being shaped and how it fits in with the life of the school community.
- ❖ **Title:** What it's going to be called.
- ❖ **Stage:** Which age group, year group or stage of pupils this is aimed at.
- ❖ **Aim:** The broad aim of what is intended to be achieved through this event.
- ❖ **Objectives:** This section is in two parts.

The first links the event with the 'sensings' laid out as examples in the Review Group Report. (Sensing mystery; values; meaningfulness; a changed quality of awareness; otherness; and challenge - p13). It is these factors which differentiate an RO event from simply e.g. a PSD lesson or an administrative assembly in the life of the school. This list may not be exhaustive, but it does give an indication of some essential elements of the spiritual dimension of human life.

While it cannot be guaranteed that pupils and staff will experience a sense of mystery etc, events should be designed which allow for this to happen and to be nurtured.

This section allows staff to chart this objective over the course of a year and the breadth of a pupil's experience of school life

The second part lays out what a pupil or member of staff should be able to do at the end of the event, by e.g. stating new things learned, being able to analyse their own beliefs; or, identify challenges to respond to and how they will do it.

- ❖ **Link with CfE.** This task enables us to locate the RO event within the broader educational programme of the school.
- ❖ **Is this part of a series?** It is helpful over the longer term to plan how this event will fit in with others, or how the themes may be developed or built on.
- ❖ **Introduction.** Deciding how the event will be introduced and who will do this are important in setting the tone for the whole event. Careful thought should be given to this as much as to any other section.

- ❖ **Stimulus/ Stimuli.** The stimulus/ stimuli which allow(s) for reflection and provoke(s) consideration of spiritual themes is / are key to the event. The possible stimuli within our contemporary culture, religious traditions and current events are many and varied. The forms in which this can be presented allow for considerable variety. Care has to be taken to justify why a certain stimulus and means of delivery have been chosen.

Examples of stimuli could be e.g. a faith based story; a clip from a film or a TV programme; a drama; poetry or reading; a PowerPoint presentation, a charity speaker; a story from a member of the school or wider community; local cultural event a piece of contemporary music; or a national / international event.

Key to this process is understanding how the stimulus supports the aim and objectives of the event and are linked in with the broader aspirations of RO.

- ❖ **Guided Reflection.** Having presented the stimulus/ stimuli a careful teasing out of the issues raised is required in order to allow those present to interpret and be fully involved in the event. Again, this is done with a view on the aim and objectives of the event.
- ❖ **Response & Possible Next Steps.** This can take many forms. It could be a challenge to go and further reflect on the issues raised. If the stimuli and reflection have been powerful, then this may be enough. If a challenge to do something arises out of the preceding sections then action may be appropriate. Prayer (used inclusively or allowing non-participation) may be the truly human action as a result of the issues considered.

This also allows the opportunity to link the RO event with the wider curriculum

- ❖ **Evaluation (a)** Linked with the objectives set out above. Obviously an exam is not an appropriate means of evaluating whether the objectives have been achieved, but a short discussion with selected pupils or with the pupils on the Pupil Council may be.

Under the **Standards in Scotland's Schools. Act 2000**, 2.1. account must taken of “so far as is reasonably practicable, to the views (if there is a wish to express them) of the child or young person in decisions that significantly affect that child or young person, taking account of the child or young person's age and maturity”

If a shared value of the school is “respect” then genuine consultation with pupils models this value.

- ❖ **Evaluation (b)** the team who ran the event should take time to consider the event, whether or not the objectives were achieved (and if not why not), and lay out next steps.
- ❖ **Evaluation (c)** evaluation of pupil participation and engagement with the event.
- ❖ **Running Order** allows everyone involved to know what comes next.

The Template

Part 1 - structure

Rationale	This section should include a statement setting the scene. E.g. "within the school community/ local community/ pupil's lives/ pupils and staff experience.... This assembly intends to explore this theme and enable
Title	Title of Assembly or event
Stage	Age group or year group
Aim	Set out the aim of the event.
Objectives	1] At the end of this pupils will have experienced (list words from RORG report) mystery, values, meaningfulness, changed quality of awareness, otherness, challenge. 2] At the end of this pupils will be able to (use words such as describe, list, state, explain, evaluate, identify, select, analyse, evaluate,... not words such as understand, appreciate, be aware of...)
Link with CfE	
Is this part of a series	State series or follow up
Introduction	
Stimulus/ stimuli	
Guided Reflection	
Response & Possible Next Steps	
Evaluation (a) (achieving the objectives)	How will we know the objectives have been achieved? e.g. Discussion with pupils
Evaluation (b) (of the team and event by the team)	Of the event - will happen by post assembly chaplains meeting.
Evaluation (c) (evaluation of pupil engagement and participation)	

Part 2: Running Order

Running time	Minutes	Activity	Personnel	Requires	Action



**Education Resources
Executive Director Jim Gilhooly**

**Chaplaincy Team
Annual return – To be included in the annual data check**

Formal approval of your establishment's engagement with your chaplaincy team is based on the following being completed:

Confirm these checks have been undertaken	Yes / No
Parent council informed of composition of the chaplaincy team for the session	
Parent forum informed of the chaplaincy team composition through the establishment's usual communication mechanisms	
Parents informed of RO calendar for session	
Parents reminded of opt out procedures for RO and RME	

Establishment	
Existing members of chaplaincy team	Affiliated church / organisation
New members of chaplaincy team	Affiliated church / organisation
Number of children withdrawn from RO	
Number of children withdrawn from RME	
Head Teacher:	
Date:	

Please return to: education@southlanarkshire.gov.uk