

Information for Candidates Head of Children & Youth Ministry

This is an opportunity for an innovative leader to take on a key strategic role within the Diocesan team so all generations can encounter the love of God made known in Jesus Christ. In March 2024, the Oxford Diocesan Synod led by Bishop Steven, unanimously adopted the vision to see ***'a growing number of children and young people deeply rooted in Christ and living out their faith in the world in the whole of their lives'***. We are on a journey to engage more effectively with children, young people and families as active participants in, and contributors to, God's mission and the life of the Church. The Head of Children's & Youth Ministry (CYM) will be at the heart of shaping and delivering the bold strategy for this across our Diocese.

Building on Strong Foundations: *putting children and young people at the heart of a more Christ-like church.* Multiple strands have led to this significant chapter in our Diocese. We are deeply thankful for past generations and celebrate all the ways in which our worshipping communities and those faithfully serving in them are being Good News for children, young people and families. However, some time ago we recognised the need for significant shifts in understanding and practice in CYM to reverse a generational decline in levels of church engagement and to renew intergenerational mission and discipleship.

In 2020 the major report [Disciples Together](#), called for deep transformations in the life of the Diocese. Through prayerful listening, research and reflection, we discerned several key cultural shifts within a clear theological and practical framework. These included the need to restore the central place of children and young people in God's mission and the Church, to amplify their voices and to value spiritual experience as much as knowledge and understanding. In practical terms, we made commitments to new resources for CYP and family discipleship, to better equip those serving in all forms of ministry with them and to develop the key missional inter-play between church, school and household contexts.

'Disciples Together' led to the first stages of reshaping our support for CYM. Two Diocesan Advisers became a team of three 'Discipleship Enablers', each embedded into Area teams as a strategic presence in archdeaconries and to grow relationships of trust across deanery networks and local parishes. To date, the Enablers have supported over 265 parishes in the form of parish consultancy, training, assisting CYP minister recruitment and producing resources. Through the creation of 'toolkit' resources - [Space Makers](#) for schools and most recently [Space Makers for Families](#) – they have engaged with over 160 schools, responding directly to mental health needs and encouraging new contemplative spiritual practices. Through a focus on Church/School relationships, we created chaplaincy roles, at secondary and primary age, and new links with paid parish children's and/or youth roles. Key to all this has been significant investment through the Diocesan Development Fund which over the last 5 years has distributed £2.2m to 86 projects involving children and young people, including 43 paid roles, and representing over 50% of the total funds allocated for growing mission across the Diocese. Through all this, we have sought to be at the forefront of helping local parishes appoint paid children, family and youth ministers and to grow their volunteer teams. We have seen signs of creativity, energy and churches across our diocese trying new things which has led to increased CYP connections and growth.

Catalysing strategic and operational delivery step changes: towards a doubling in the number of children and young people connecting with our churches and discipleship pathways.

However, despite the encouragements, the annual statistics for mission reveal the extent of the continuing challenge and level of response we need to make. Since 2019 there has been a 25% decline in children and young people attending our worshipping communities. 30% of our churches have no engagement with children or young people at all week-by-week and a further 42% are ministering with fewer than 5 children or young people. All this in the context of an estimated 500,000 children and young people living in the Diocese.

Last year's Synod decision reflected an understanding of the need for further step stages. Initially, we explored the possibility of a cross-diocese strategy of interventions supported by national church funding. We are now set on pursuing the key aims and objectives more organically, with significant support continuing through our own Diocesan resources, including the funding to enable recruitment for this new post. Other key foundations include:

- A commitment to help all deaneries develop plans to serve and grow ministry among the children and young people living in their area
- Active support through Discipleship Enablers to help parishes make bids to the Development Fund for CYM work including matched funding for new posts
- Work on-going to identify and develop 'Pathfinder Clusters' in different contexts to bring together people in local CYM networks (church, home, school) for mutual support, explore new ways of connecting and creating discipleship pathways for children and young people and to share learning across the diocese.
- 'Launchpad' training (in partnership with Youthscape), 'Heart to Heart' days (for CYP volunteers) and peer networking etc, being offered to encourage vocations, equipping and commissioning of those involved CYM.
- The successful pilot and now roll-out, of the 'YouShape' discipleship year programme for 18-30s to create a discipleship pathway and nurture a new generation serving in local churches.
- 'Space Makers' being actively promoted into more school, church and home contexts

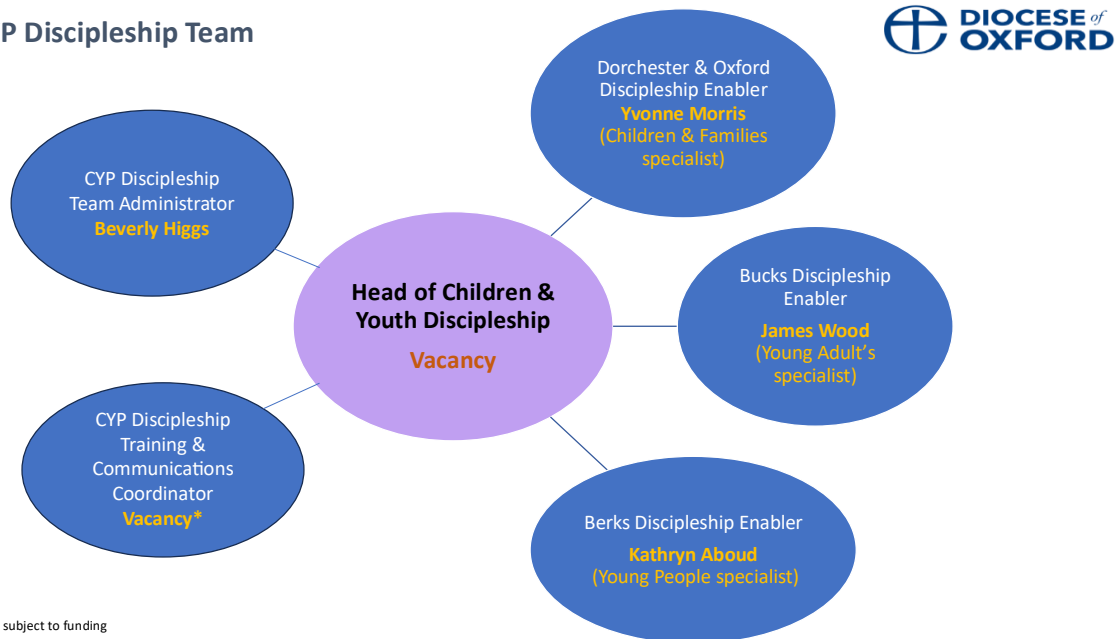
We are eager for the new Head of CYM to bring their experience as a 'thought leader' and expertise as a 'cultural architect' to refine and catalyse a truly holistic strategy and lead the team in effective delivery. To give a sense of the scale of our ambition, we believe the Holy Spirit has stirred in us the need to pray and work together over the next 3-5 years for a doubling in the number of children and young people we are connecting with and inviting to share in discipleship pathways. We imagine the need for:

- At least 50% of our deaneries actively engaged in supporting fresh forms of CYM
- At least 150 parishes renewed in their vision and sense of strategy for effective ministry
- At least 2 or 3 'Pathfinder Clusters' or other forms of CYM pioneering work in each archdeaconry
- High-quality training provision through our digital learning hub and experience-based pathways, moving us towards a target of recruiting 1000 new CYM volunteers.
- Focused and practical support for existing paid CYM workers stirring vocations towards a target of 100 people taking up new paid roles.

Forming and operational leadership of the new 'CYM Team'

A key early task will be to form the existing Discipleship Enablers, Administrator and additional support roles (as funding allows) into a new dedicated CYM team to work collaboratively, but also separately, with the remaining members of a reconstituted 'Adult Discipleship' team, as well as in cross-disciplinary ways across the wider Department of Mission and Ministry.

CYP Discipleship Team



Sharing in strategic and operational Leadership of the Department of Mission and Ministry

As one of the key leaders in the Department, you will serve as a close colleague of the Director of Mission and Ministry and be a member of the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) alongside the Director of Formation for Ministry, the Head of Adult Discipleship & Social Justice and the Lead for the Vocations/DDO Team. This is a high-quality team built on a shared commitment to mutual accountability and support as we seek together to serve God's Kingdom purposes.

You will also be part of the largest department in Church House – full of creative, highly skilled and motivated colleagues with a shared commitment to encouraging one another and working collaboratively together.

JOB TITLE: Head of Children's and Youth Ministry
GRADE: Band F (£61,491 - £66,222 per annum)
EMPLOYER: Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance
DEPARTMENT: Mission and Ministry
LINE MANAGER: Director of Mission and Ministry
ACCOUNTABLE TO: Director of Mission and Ministry
RESPONSIBLE FOR: Discipleship Enablers (x3), Administrator, Team Administrator
LOCATION: Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1GF

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The Diocese of Oxford is the Church of England in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. We are a living, growing network of more than a thousand congregations, chaplaincies and schools, working for the common good in every place in one of the great crossroads of the world. Our Christian vision, ethos and principles underpin all that we do and the work of every member of staff.

Our Church House and Area Office teams work to support the mission and ministry of our parishes, providing expert advice and support. Together, we are called to become more Christ-like: contemplative, compassionate and courageous for the sake of God's world. You can find out more about how the diocese is structured and the work of our staff teams at oxford.anglican.org/on-the-money and oxford.anglican.org/annual-review.

JOB PURPOSE AND PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

In line with our vision to be a more Christ-like church, the Head of Children and Youth Ministry will collaborate on, shape and lead the operational delivery of an effective strategy to reverse generational decline and see a growing number of children and young people across the Diocese of Oxford becoming rooted in Christ and living out faith in the whole of their lives.

1.	<p>Strategic and operational leadership of CYM across the diocese</p> <p>Work with Parishes, Bishops, Area Teams, Deaneries, Departmental and Church House colleagues, to embed the cultural and practical shifts required to engage confidently with children, young people and families and foster intergenerational mission and discipleship across the whole Diocese.</p> <p>Refine, catalyse and lead on specific actions to deliver the Diocesan mission priority of doubling the number of children and young people who are connecting with churches, encountering the love of God in Jesus Christ and following pathways into discipleship over the next 3-5 years.</p>	80%
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2.	Contribute to the work of the Department of Mission and Ministry Engaging proactively in the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) to enable integrated and cross-disciplinary working which will advance all aspects of the Department's responsibilities and for their own continuous professional development.	10%
3.	Fostering regional and national partnerships Acting as a key advocate for CYM on behalf of the Diocese, including representing the Bishops and the Diocese as appropriate in regional and national arenas and helping to form effective missional partnerships.	10%

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Strategic and effective leadership of CYM across the diocese

Support churches, leaders and communities to embed necessary culture shifts to engage with CYPs and foster intergenerational mission and discipleship across the diocese:

- Champion and amplify the voices and needs of children and young people in all decision making – fostering a positive culture of Christ-like courage and openness to Spirit-led innovation.
- Bring appropriate challenge to address the structural and cultural barriers limiting the participation of particular groups of children and young people in CYM
- Draw on current mission trends and best practice, to provide a theologically informed strategy for making the necessary cultural shifts and practical steps to grow intergenerational mission and discipleship across the diversity of demographic and missional contexts in the Diocese
- Support Bishops and Area Teams to appropriately shape and deliver CYM strategy in each archdeaconry
- Inform and support the development and creative use of digital platforms for CYP engagement and discipleship
- Develop pathways to actively encourage vocations and support CYP ministry roles of all types (self-supporting and paid) through high-quality training and resources (maximising the use of the Diocesan Digital Learning Hub) and strategic partnerships (with other dioceses, CMS, Youthscape etc)
- Inform and support the provision of CYM as a core element in IME and CMD
- Manage and motivate the CYM team through a culture of continuous learning and collaboration aligned with diocesan vision and values, regular and high-quality supervision, setting and monitoring SMART objectives, providing expert guidance and offering training and coaching to achieve strategic and developmental goals.

Catalyse actions necessary to realise Diocesan CYM mission priorities:

- Build strong relationships of trust and understanding with all key stakeholders and generate time-based 'maps' and plans to inspire and motivate about achieving the mission priorities
- Collaborate with Departmental and Church House colleagues, Bishops, Area Teams and deanery leaders to ensure key diocesan commitments and investments are being aligned with agreed priorities
- Work with area teams and the CYM team to support Lay Chairs, Area Deans and other local leaders in discerning ambitious but achievable new CYM objectives as part of deanery strategies - ensuring leadership support, financial and other resource needs have been clearly identified and addressed; proactively identifying and dealing with potential issues before they create problems.
- Work with area teams and DET to identify and develop pioneering approaches to connecting with CYPs and creating discipleship pathways through initiatives such as 'pathfinder clusters' and ensure the sharing of best practice across the diocese
- Support the DET in working with deaneries and parishes to develop appropriate and high-quality bids for grants from the Diocese Development Fund – ensuring these clearly align with the areas of greatest CYP need and opportunity in the diocese
- Work with the Vocations and DDO Team, to identify and establish new vocational pathways for young leaders and for under-represented groups of people.
- Collaborate across Church House to identify and maximize the missional opportunities across the DBF/DBE Church/School/Trust partnerships
- Monitor, evaluate, share progress and learning through timely completion of reports as required for stakeholders.

2. Share in the leadership and cross-disciplinary working of the Department of Mission and Ministry

Work collaboratively as a member of the SLT to support and enable the work of the department to be as fruitful as possible – discerning and sharing in opportunities for cross-disciplinary approaches and work:

- Collaborate on the planning, direction and development of the overall departmental work plan – carrying out duties commensurate with the grade and level of responsibility of this post, for which the post holder has the necessary experience and/or training, as agreed by the line manager.
- Champion the highest level of safeguarding policy, practice and culture development, adhering to diocesan and national provisions/requirements.
- Ensure that diocesan work in improving equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), for clergy, staff and volunteers, is integrated into the activities of the team by promoting close collaboration with diocesan EDI advisers and role modelling good practice.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of technical competency areas – taking a proactive approach to continuous professional and personal development by embracing training and other development opportunities.
- Participate in the ODBF performance management processes.

- Comply and fully cooperate with ODBF policies including:
 - Health and safety
 - Dignity and respect in ministry and at work
 - Equality, diversity and inclusion
 - GDPR
 - Safeguarding
- All such other duties as may be reasonably required by your line manager

3. Fostering Regional and National partnerships

- In consultation with the Director of Mission and Ministry, participate in national and regional consultations and networks to inform the continuing development of the strategy of the Diocese and work of the department and for individual support and encouragement.
- Keep in close touch with national developments and emerging good practice in other dioceses, applying the learning to the Diocese of Oxford.

DIMENSIONS

- **Children and Youth Ministry** – the Diocese has over 600 parishes, over 800 churches and 284 schools (serving c. 60,000 children and young people). Over the last 6 years the Diocese of Oxford's Development Fund has invested more than £2.2m in 86 innovative children and young people (CYP) projects, including 43 paid roles.
- **Relationships** – working across the Diocese requires high-quality relationships of trust with a large number of key stakeholders at all levels, but particularly with local clergy, Area Deans and Lay Chairs as well as Bishops, Area Teams and colleagues across Church House. Within the Department of Ministry and Mission, it will be key to work closely with other members of the SLT; in particular, with the Head of the Adult Discipleship & Social Justice Team to ensure a joined up and holistic approach to inter-generational discipleship.
- **Delivery** – forming and leading a high performing team to deliver against agreed outcomes to achieve the agreed Diocesan vision and strategic priorities.

PLANNING & ORGANISATION

The post-holder will:

- In consultation with the Director of Mission and Ministry and SLT colleagues, plan annual work plans in their area of responsibility in line with the strategic objectives and smooth running of the department.
- Plan and organise their own work and support direct reports to ensure the smooth running of the CYM Team
- Manage multiple priorities and projects anticipating pressure points and projects with competing deadlines.

DECISIONS

The post-holder will:

- Make appropriate decisions in relation to Children and Youth Ministry across the diocese, in consultation with senior colleagues and senior clergy where required.
- Management and operational responsibility for the CYM team including budgets and other resources.
- Take decisions on whether a deanery or parish CYM proposal to the Development Fund is sufficiently strategic to be considered by the Fund
- Prioritise their own work across the range of principal accountabilities.
- Work both on their own initiative and collaboratively.
- Make time for their own professional and spiritual development.

CONTACT WITH OTHERS

Internal:

- Director of Mission and Ministry
- Head of Discipleship & Social Justice
- Director of Formation for Ministry
- Diocesan Secretary
- Bishops, archdeacons and Heads of Department
- Department of Mission and Ministry colleagues
- Other colleagues within Church House Oxford and Area Offices

External

- Area Deans & Lay Chairs
- Clergy
- Church Children and Youth Ministry Leads
- National and Regional networks for Church of England Children & Youth Ministry

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The person appointed will be a committed member of a Church recognised by the National Council of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and in sympathy with the aims and approach of the Church of England. This constitutes a Genuine Occupational Requirement under Schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010.

Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications, knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant youth/children's work qualification or substantial record of training for church contexts • Relevant theological qualification or substantial record demonstrating theological knowledge and understanding • Clear understanding of theories and practice relating to the spiritual and faith development of Children and Young People 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theological understanding of the issues involved in ministerial and lay education, training and formation. • A practical understanding of the workings and governance of a diocesan structure.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant practical and strategic leadership experience in work with children, young people and intergenerational ministry - a 'thought leader' • Experience of leading projects and change with a variety of stakeholders – a 'cultural architect' • Experience of managing teams, workplans and budgets in relevant contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of developing mission opportunities at scale • Experience of delivering and monitoring major projects or programmes involving various stakeholders in Church of England church contexts • Partnership working with schools • Safeguarding oversight at a senior leadership level
Skills and Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passionate advocate for the spiritual lives of children and young people – with the skills to bring about transformational change in the levels of church engagement and participation • A collaborative, nurturing and inspiring leader with ability to take initiative, work creatively and build strong working relationships • Excellent organisational skills with the ability to work to deadlines • An excellent communicator able to adapt to a range of audiences and across the range of traditions reflected in the Diocese of Oxford. • Able to travel throughout the diocese which covers a large geographical area including many rural locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to network across dioceses and with the central departments of the Church of England to shape mission strategy for children and young people • Supporting church planting and/or pioneering with a specific focus on children, youth and inter-generational mission



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Able to work outside normal working hours, including evenings and weekends.	
Work related personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A strong personal faith and spiritual maturity.• Able to relate generously and positively to those of theological traditions other than your own and be completely even-handed in role on contentious theological issues.• Personal resilience reflected in the ability to manage significant workloads and to make difficult decisions.• Clear personal commitment to maximising equality, diversity and inclusion.• Clear personal commitment to developing and embedding a culture of safeguarding.• Committed to own professional development.	

GENERAL INFORMATION

Band	Salary Band F
Remuneration	<p>Salary scale - £61,491 - £66,222 per annum</p> <p>There are four points within the band. Moving to a new point is dependent on the successful achievement of the objectives agreed between you and your Line Manager. Any approved move in incremental points takes effect in September each year.</p>
Hours of work	<p>37 hours per week with regular agreed hours and days.</p> <p>Your working pattern should be agreed upon with your line manager; however, it is recognised that this role requires the ability to work flexibly, and with that, some evening and weekend work may be required for which time off in lieu may be taken on agreement with your line manager.</p>
Place of work	Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1GF
Holidays	<p>Your annual leave entitlement is broken down as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the first year of your employment with us you are entitled to 25 days' annual leave per annum. - During the second year, up to and including the fifth year of employment, you will be entitled to 1 day of extra annual leave per consecutive year. - In the sixth year and thereafter, you will be entitled to 30 days' annual leave per annum. <p>The above annual leave entitlement is calculated on a pro-rata basis for part-time employees.</p> <p>In addition, you are entitled to the usual United Kingdom public holidays.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Board gives three discretionary holiday days to its employees, namely: Ascension Day, Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve.</p>
Pension Provision	<p>It is a statutory requirement for ODBF to automatically enrol employees into an appropriate Pension scheme of our choice. Our scheme is the Church of England 'Pension Builder 2014' (PB 2014). Information can be sought from the Church of England website: https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/my-membership-april-2024_1.pdf</p> <p>We operate our auto-enrolment pension scheme as a Pension Salary Exchange (PSE) scheme. This means you will exchange your 5% annual salary pension contributions for additional employer contributions reducing your tax and national insurance payments.</p>

	If the postholder is an ordained minister and wishes to remain in the Clergy Pension Scheme, they may request to do so if they are a current member or hold deferred rights, however, agreement to do so will be at the sole discretion of the Board.
Probation period	6 months, during which time progress is regularly reviewed and the period may be extended.
Notice period	During probation, 1 month and thereafter, 3 months from either side, or the statutory minimum (whichever is greater).
Circumstances	Ability to travel across the Diocese of Oxford, which covers a large geographical area, including many rural areas.

NOTE: The current main duties and responsibilities of this post are outlined in this job description. The list is not meant to be exhaustive. The need for flexibility, shared accountability and team working is required. The post-holder is expected to carry out any other related duties that are within the employee's skills and abilities, commensurate with the post's banding and whenever reasonably instructed.

It is the practice of the ODBF to review job descriptions annually to ensure that they relate to the role as then being performed or to incorporate whatever reasonable changes that have occurred over time or are being proposed. This review will be carried out by the line manager in consultation with the post-holder before any changes are implemented. The post-holder is expected to participate fully in such discussions and implementation.

For more information about what it is like to work at Church House Oxford, please visit <https://www.oxford.anglican.org/vacancies/>

RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

For further information about the role and to apply, please visit [Vacancies - Diocese of Oxford](#)

Closing date for receipt of applications: 9:00am on Monday 6th October 2025

Interviews will take place in person at Church House Oxford on 20th October 2025

We want the Church of England's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion for all to be reflected in our staff. We are particularly keen to receive applications from UK Minority Ethnic / Global Majority heritage and disabled candidates, who are currently underrepresented.

The Church of England is committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of everyone within our church community. In the Diocese of Oxford we follow and are committed to the Church of England's House of Bishops' Safeguarding Policies and the relevant statutory legislation and guidance "Working together" to ensure the welfare of children and young people is paramount. This post is subject to an enhanced plus barred lists DBS check