

Survey of Chaplains 2019
Part 1 – Questions 1 - 11
‘About your Context’



Editorial notes from Chaplaincy Central on the data – ‘About your context’.

Overview

In most situations chaplaincy is taking place with secondary aged pupils (12-18) but in a mix of Faith / State / Independent establishments and with an equal mix of whether the role is representing the Christian faith exclusively or covering more of a multi-faith brief. Whilst much chaplaincy is long standing, it is worth noting that 20% have launched within the past three years – a sure sign of growth. More were funded by the educational world than by church funding, but not by much and the vast majority are managed by the Head / SLT. The majority of chaplaincy provision is less than a FT role but this is spread across a wide range of tasks with pastoral care the most significant with collective worship / chapel close behind.

Questions 1 and 2

Whilst we know that some people ticked more than one box in answer to these questions we were delighted that you lovely chaplains come from a fairly balanced mix of education establishments. The fact that the majority of you work in secondary schools is what we would have expected.

Question 3

A two thirds/one third split between sole chaplains and those who are part of a team means there are still a lot of you who are working away on your own. This is OK if you are integrated and well supported but we know from the comments made at the end of the survey that this is not always the case. It is a good reminder for us in Chaplaincy Central that educational chaplaincy can feel an isolated place to be and opportunities to meet and reflect with other chaplains are very precious – don't miss our one-day conference in July.

Question 4

We found the responses to this question most interesting and clearly there are still a large number of chaplaincies that are explicitly Christian. This rather goes against the trend of anecdotal reports we have received. On this sample it is more or less a fifty-fifty split with as many chaplains having to take responsibility for other faiths as not. Something for CC to bear in mind as we look for resources.

Question 5

It is encouraging that more than 50% of respondents are part of a chaplaincy that has over 20 hours provision a week. We realise that this includes those in teams and those in boarding schools where hours are often longer because of other duties. The comments also suggest that, as we expected, there are many of you who are contributing longer hours than required by the institution. Refreshment of body and soul is clearly something CC needs to be focussing on.

Question 6

Two features of the responses here encourage us. Firstly that nearly 50% of chaplaincies represented in the survey are able to celebrate more than 10 years of work and secondly that in the last 3 years 16 new chaplaincies have been established. Sustainability and growth are clearly possible and we need to cherish both.

Question 7

It is wonderful that approximately 50% of the chaplaincies represented in this report are funded by the educational system. What is equally interesting is that around 40% are funded by the church community either directly or through local ministries. What is important is that we don't forget that around 10% of chaplains may well not be funded. This is a sizeable group and at Chaplaincy Central we will try to be aware of the implications for all of you.

Question 8

We asked chaplains to tick just three of these responses and were duly reprimanded by one respondent that 'ticking only 3 is ridiculous'. Sorry – we were just trying to tease out major tasks ... but we should have appreciated that all your tasks are major ones! From the data received by adding assemblies and chapel together we can clearly see that the two major areas of work for many chaplains are this and pastoral work – no real surprise there. There are then three areas of fairly even response: groups, events and teaching. For the rest it is really interesting to read through the comments and see what chaplaincy is required to provide in different contexts.

Questions 9 and 10

Our overriding thoughts on the response to these two questions is that it is good that so many chaplaincies are line-managed and in contact with senior people in the institution. This is useful evidence for us and for all chaplains to use in conversations about management and day to day running of educational chaplaincies. Obviously the 2 situations where there is no line management and no designated person within the institution for the chaplain to contact are 2 too many. If that is your situation and you think we might be able to help – do please let us know. We can also see that some of you have an educational line manager and a church/organisational based line manager. Any top tips for working with multiple line managers will be gratefully received by us at CC.

Question 11

If a chaplaincy has no funding we are not surprised that such chaplaincies have no budget. But the issue is more concerning than that. By adding the relevant 'other' responses to the figure of 41 we can see that roughly 50% of chaplaincies have a budget of only £0 - £250. Running a chaplaincy on such a shoestring has all kinds of implications on what can be done – even providing a drink for a distressed student or staff member. In a full time or team context even those of you with more money in the kitty will be having to use it very carefully. Acknowledging that this is a difficult time for all budgets, we at CC still think there is work to be done.

We hope you enjoy chewing over these results... feedback and thoughts would be amazing!