



Thames North Synod

Role Description for Children and Youth Advocates

Introduction

The Thames North Synod Children and Youth Advocate (CYA) will be appointed by the Synod Meeting to work with and support the Children and Youth Development Officer (CYDO). It is a voluntary post with expenses paid. Appointment to this role will be subject to safer recruitment procedures which includes the completion of a volunteering form requiring 2 referees and a DBS check. There will also be a requirement to undergo safeguarding training.

History

In November 2013, Synod approved the dissolution of the roles of Children's Work Secretary and Youth Secretary to be replaced by three Children's and Youth Work Advocates. It was the intention of the Synod Children's and Youth Committee (dissolved November 2015) that the post-holders would be responsible for working geographically (west, centre and east of the Synod). There was an additional advocate for Pilots (Regional Pilots Officer) which continued until 2022 when support for Pilots came under the umbrella of URC Children.

The Children and Youth Advocates will work in collaboration with:

- CYDO.
- Synod Youth Representative (SYR).
- Local Churches.
- Local Area Groups (LAG).
- Discipleship Steering Group (DSG).
- Any future Synod Youth Executive or equivalent group.

The tasks (supporting the CYDO) will include:

- Visiting and exploring effective ways to be in contact with both paid and voluntary Children, Youth and Family Workers across the Synod.
- Offering support and encouragement to Children, Youth and Family Workers.
- Promoting and supporting Synod children's and youth events and training e.g. Safeguarding Training.
- Promoting and supporting Assembly level children's and youth events and training e.g. Youth Assembly, Mental Health First Aid Training.
- Sharing information with young people, Children, Youth and Family Workers, and others when necessary.
- Advocating the importance of children and young people's voices throughout the Synod.
- Collating and sharing Good News Stories.
- Supporting the SYR in developing initiatives.
- Providing pastoral and logistical support to the SYR and members of any future Synod Youth Executive or equivalent group.

Time Requirement:

- This is a termed Synod appointment for a 3-year period, which may be renewable.
- Time, emphasis, and direction will be determined by the person carrying out the role in consultation with the CYDO.
- The Children's and Youth Advocates will be *in attendance* members of the DSG. It is expected one advocate to attend each of the five DSG annual meetings.



- It is expected the CYA would attend the Synod meetings in March and October.
- It is expected CYA would become members and attend 3 meetings annually with any future Synod Youth Executive.

Resourcing the Role:

- Three posts, divided according to Local Area Groups, to be appointed by Synod.
- Basic administrative support for carrying out the role is available from the Synod office.
- The CYA will be responsible for keeping the CYDO informed of any changes to named Children, Youth, and Family Workers, plus Children and Youth Elders in local Churches, so an updated database can be maintained.
- The CYA will be on the mailing list of the National Children's and Youth Work Office.
- Expenses (including travel) will be reimbursed by the Synod Accountant on submission of a completed Synod expense slip supported by receipts (where relevant) and authorised by the Children's and Youth Development Officer.

Thames North Children & Youth Development Officer on behalf of Thames North Synod Discipleship Steering Group.