

Executive Assistant to the Bishop of Selby (Lead Bishop for the Diocese of York)

Headline

The Executive Assistant helps create the conditions in which the Lead Bishop can serve the diocese, providing support for both administration and pastoral relationships.

The postholder will be a trusted, proactive and wise presence, bringing organisation, foresight, discretion and excellent administrative support to a complex and varied role.

Working in close partnership with the Bishop and Chaplain, and with colleagues in the Diocese and at Bishopthorpe, the Executive Assistant will anticipate needs, manage competing demands, and help ensure that the ministry of the Bishop is effective, well-resourced and sustainable.

Description

The Executive Assistant is a senior member of the Lead Bishop's Office, working closely with the Lead Bishop and Chaplain to extend and enable the Bishop's ministry and leadership across the Diocese of York. The postholder will provide proactive, strategic and highly professional executive support, ensuring that the Bishop's time, priorities and resources are used effectively in support of the Diocese's mission and ministry.

The Executive Assistant will act as a trusted colleague, organiser, coordinator and facilitator, helping to respond efficiently to a high volume of correspondence and invitations, to ensure that the Bishop is well prepared for meetings, visits and key decisions, that actions are followed through effectively, and that those who engage with the Bishop's Office receive a welcoming, responsive and pastorally sensitive service.

The role requires sound judgement, initiative, discretion and resilience, together with the highest standards of confidentiality, discretion and professional integrity. The ability to build positive relationships across the Diocese, the wider Church, civic life and local communities. The work is varied, demanding and often fast-moving. The successful postholder will bring a calm presence, excellent organisational skills, good humour and a commitment to supporting the flourishing of ministry and leadership in the Diocese of York

Reports to: The Chaplain to the Lead Bishop

Responsibilities

Executive Support to the Lead Bishop

- Provide high-level executive support to the Lead Bishop.
- Manage a complex and demanding flow of correspondence and diary, ensuring that responses, appointments and commitments align with the Bishop's priorities and strategic objectives.
- Exercise judgement in balancing competing demands on the Bishop's time and attention.
- Coordinate appointments, meetings, visits, engagements and public events.
- Organise travel, accommodation and associated logistics.
- Ensure the Bishop is fully briefed and appropriately prepared for meetings, visits, services and public engagements.
- Maintain oversight of actions requiring the Bishop's attention and ensure timely follow-up.
- Act as a gateway to the Bishop's Office, ensuring appropriate access while protecting time for priorities, reflection and decision-making.
- Lead on the Bishop's Office responsibilities as part of clergy appointment processes in the York Archdeaconry (as set out in the process document), working closely with the Archdeacon of York's Office and the Chaplain.

Coordination of the Bishop's Ministry

- Work closely with the Bishop and Chaplain to support the delivery of strategic priorities and objectives.
- Maintain awareness of forthcoming commitments, key developments and emerging opportunities across the Diocese, including a weekly diary meeting with the Bishop and chaplain, a quarterly look ahead and meetings with the Archdeacon's Office and the other Bishops' EAs for diary setting and coordination
- Assist in coordinating diocesan visits, consultations, celebrations, confirmations, services and events.
- Support the administration and coordination of the Ministerial Development Review (MDR) process within the Archdeaconry of York, working with relevant clergy, reviewers and diocesan staff to ensure reviews are arranged and completed in a timely manner.
- Support the implementation of initiatives led by the Bishop.
- Monitor progress against agreed actions and ensure appropriate follow-through.
- Help ensure that work streams involving the Bishop are effectively coordinated across diocesan structures and teams.

Correspondence and Communications

- Manage the Bishop's correspondence, emails and enquiries.
- Draft letters, emails, briefings, reports and other documentation on behalf of the Bishop.
- Ensure communications are timely, professional and pastorally sensitive.
- Deal appropriately with confidential, complex and sensitive matters.
- Maintain systems for tracking correspondence, decisions and actions.

- Liaise with colleagues and stakeholders to gather information and draft responses as required.

Stakeholder Engagement and Relationship Management

- Develop and maintain productive working relationships with clergy, lay leaders, diocesan colleagues and external partners.
- Act as a first point of contact for many individuals seeking to engage with the Bishop's Office.
- Liaise with churches, schools, charities, civic organisations, local authorities and national Church bodies as appropriate.
- Represent the Bishop's Office with professionalism, courtesy and hospitality.
- Support the Chaplain and Bishop in maintaining effective relationships across the Diocese and wider Church.

Meetings, Visits and Events

- Coordinate meetings, visits and events involving the Bishop.
- Prepare agendas, papers and supporting documentation.
- Arrange venues, hospitality, travel and practical logistics.
- Welcome visitors and guests to the Bishop's Office.
- Support significant diocesan occasions and civic engagements.
- Ensure that visitors experience a warm, efficient and professional welcome.
- Contribute to the planning, organisation and delivery of Archdeaconry of York events and initiatives, working closely with the Archdeacon's Personal Assistant and other colleagues as required.

Office Management, Finance, and Administration

- Contribute to the effective and efficient operation of the Bishop's Office.
- Maintain accurate, secure and well-organised systems for records, information and correspondence.
- Support effective information management and record keeping.
- Administer and keep records of the day-to-day financial processes from the Local Account and other charitable trusts and grants in the name of the Bishop.
- Work with the Bishop and Chaplain to complete the budget process for the Local Account
- To fill in and submit Quarterly Returns to the Church Commissioners for the Local Account
- Identify and implement improvements to administrative systems and processes.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to ensure resilience and continuity across the office.
- Provide mutual support and cover for the Archdeacon's Personal Assistant during periods of annual leave or absence, ensuring that time-sensitive matters are addressed promptly and continuity of service is maintained.

Safeguarding, Compliance and Governance

- Demonstrate a commitment to creating and maintaining a strong safeguarding culture.
- Undertake safeguarding training appropriate to the role.

- Ensure compliance with diocesan policies and procedures.
- Handle personal and sensitive information in accordance with data protection legislation.
- Maintain the highest standards of confidentiality, discretion and professional integrity.
- Comply with all relevant governance, financial and information management requirements.

General Expectations

The Executive Assistant will:

- Be a proactive, supportive and trusted presence within the Bishop's Office.
- Contribute positively to the life and culture of the team.
- Demonstrate flexibility in responding to changing priorities and demands.
- Exercise sound judgement and initiative.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues across the Diocese.
- Undertake any other duties reasonably consistent with the nature and seniority of the role.

Requirements

The Church of England is for everyone, and we want to reflect the diversity of the community the Church serves across the whole country. Therefore, while of course we welcome all applications from interested and suitably experienced people, we would particularly welcome applicants from UK Minoritised Ethnicities (UKME)/Global Majority Heritage (GMH) and other under-represented groups.

Person Specification

Essential Experience

- Experience of providing executive or senior administrative support to a senior leader.
- Experience of managing complex diaries and competing priorities.
- Experience of organising meetings, events and visits involving multiple stakeholders.
- Experience of handling confidential and sensitive information.
- Experience of drafting correspondence, briefings, reports and other professional documentation.

Essential Knowledge and Skills

- Outstanding organisational and prioritisation skills, working at pace and sometimes under pressure.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong interpersonal and relationship-building skills.
- Ability to exercise sound judgement, diplomacy and discretion.

- Ability to anticipate needs and work proactively.
- Strong attention to detail and commitment to accuracy.
- Excellent IT skills, including Microsoft 365 applications.
- Ability to manage multiple demands while remaining calm under pressure.
- Strong administrative and coordination skills.
- Ability to work independently and use initiative.

Personal Attributes

- Professional, approachable and service-oriented.
- Emotionally intelligent and pastorally sensitive.
- Flexible and adaptable.
- Resilient and able to thrive in a demanding environment.
- Collaborative and committed to team working.
- Able to maintain absolute confidentiality.
- Good-humoured, positive and solutions-focused.
- In sympathy with the mission, ministry and values of the Church of England.

Desirable

- Experience of supporting a senior church, charity, public sector or civic leader.
- Knowledge of the structures and governance of the Church of England.
- Experience of project coordination or programme support.
- Experience of budget monitoring and financial administration.
- Experience of preparing briefing materials for senior leaders.
- Understanding of the Diocese of York and its context.
- Experience of working within a faith-based or values-led organisation.

This role profile outlines the principal responsibilities but is not exhaustive. The postholder may be asked to undertake other duties in line with the general nature and level of the role and occasional out of hours or weekend working might be necessary. Any reasonable adjustments or changes will be discussed in advance.

All staff working at Bishopthorpe Palace share responsibility to promote and maintain a strong safeguarding culture regarding children and vulnerable adults,

including identifying the key actions they should take given their role and responsibilities. Training and compliance with safeguarding policies are mandatory.

A basic DBS check is required for this role.

About the department

The Bishop of Selby's (Lead Bishop's) office is based at Bishopthorpe Palace on the outskirts of York, offering a unique and pleasant working environment. Staff at Bishopthorpe Palace form a close-knit and collaborative team, supporting the Archbishop's ministry across the Province of York, nationally, and internationally.

About the National Church Institutions (NCIs)

The National Church Institutions comprises a wide variety of teams, professions and functions that support the mission and ministries of the Church of England in its vision to be a church, centred on Jesus Christ, for the whole nation - a church that is simpler, humbler, bolder.

We Include. You Belong.

Our Belonging and Inclusion Strategy aims for everyone in the National Church Institutions (NCIs) to feel that they belong and are valued for who they are and what they contribute. Together, our people contribute in different ways towards our common purpose, whichever NCI they work in and whatever their background.

Living out our values in all that we do, we:

- Strive for **Excellence**
- Show **Compassion**
- **Respect** others
- **Collaborate**
- Act with **Integrity**

We believe our commitment to belonging and inclusion fuels our progress and drives us forward. The NCIs are a safe, inclusive workplace for people of all backgrounds and walks of life. We welcome applications from people of all faiths and of no faith. We want to encourage applications from a diverse group of people who share our values. Even if you have never thought about working for us before, if you have the skills and experience, we're looking for, then we would like to hear from you.

