

JOB DESCRIPTION – Pioneer youth worker – Leigh Park

Job profile	
Job title	Pioneer Youth worker
Team	Leigh Park Ministry Team
Reports to	Vicar of Leigh Park
Principle Location	Park Community School, Leigh Park St. Francis, Leigh Park
Travel required	Irregular visits to locations other than St. Francis and Park Community School
Work pattern / hours	Full time 37.5 hours 4 weekdays and Sundays
DBS check required (Yes/No)	Yes
Special conditions of employment	This role is time-limited for 5 years in the first instance.
Date written/updated	August 2025
Start Date	Q4 2025

Role context

The Diocese of Portsmouth vision and strategy provide a framework for the life and ministry of parishes, chaplaincies, and deaneries of the diocese. It speaks of a diocese longing to be “a rejuvenating community of Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking disciples”.

As a diocese we have been inspired by a vision of Christ’s Body, the Church. A prayerful community which seeks God’s Kingdom in and for the world. A community where older people are treasured as the Church of *today* (rather than yesterday) and younger people find their place and voice as the Church of *today* (rather than of tomorrow).

So, as a diocese we would like to double the number of children and young disciples in our churches and ensure there is a thriving ministry to children and young people within reach of every household across south-east Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

Leigh Park and its neighbouring parishes of Warren Park and West Leigh, form what was at one time the largest council estate in Europe, built to house people made homeless by World War 2 bomb damage in Portsmouth. The entire parish is in an area of significant deprivation.

St Francis Church, the parish church of Leigh Park, was built in 1963. The church is home to a small but committed and faithful congregation (Usual Sunday Attendance 35 adults

Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking

plus 4 children). The church worshipping community does not reflect the demographic of young families, with 54% of the congregation being 70+, compared with just 10% of the parish population being 70+ (2021 census). The church building is in a poor state of repair so currently offers limited opportunity as a centre for increased mission. There is a vibrant and impactful engagement with five local primary schools. However, this does not currently result in church attendance of families and children, and does not flow through to engagement with secondary age children or their families.

The local secondary school, **Park Community School** has 973 pupils on roll. Broadly in line with its 5 feeder primaries, Park Community School's current Pupil Premium Strategy records that 61% of its pupils attract pupil premium, around 2.5 times the national average.

The school's slogan is "Much more than just a school" and they have an established programme of community support which includes: food bank, uniform bank, pantry, weekly munch (for free school meal families, to eat as a family). The church is known and trusted within the Park Community School and has worked with the school on these community projects but has not had capacity to extend its reach to mission within the school. The school head has identified a "youth worker-shaped hole" in the school's resources and has approached the church to explore how they might deliver more to meet the pastoral and practical needs of the pupils and their families.

The Diocese of Portsmouth has been awarded £5.3m by the Church of England's Strategic Mission and Ministry (SMMI) board to support delivery of its rejuvenate strategy (Rejuvenate). This funding enables the appointment of a pioneer youth worker based in Park Community School, serving the needs of pupils and their families as part of the Leigh Park parish ministry team.

Role purpose and objectives

Leigh Park Pathfinder

The **PURPOSE** of the role is to enable growth in disciples of Christ by number and depth by growing a new worshipping community in Park Community School, and revitalising discipleship pathways in the Parish. This project is a pathfinder, building our learning to inform subsequent mission in working class estates in the wider Catholic tradition.

The role-holder will lead this work in the Parish through the following:

- Offer pastoral support to pupils at Park Community School via a chaplaincy-style approach during school time.

Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking

- Grow a new, voluntary worshipping community in Park Community School, based on the group of existing Christian pupils within the school. This may meet at lunchtime or after school.
- Deliver invitational and worship activity within the school day, based on the requirements for collective worship.
- Provide links between the school and the existing church congregation – activities which provide a coherent but mixed ecology in the Parish.

The key **OBJECTIVES** of this role are:

- Grow a new, voluntary worshipping community in the school, based on the group of existing Christian pupils within the school, building to 60 people.
- Increase Sunday attendance at St. Francis by 50 in total (more than doubling the current Average Weekly Attendance), including but not limited to families involved with Park Community School.
- Have around 20 people a year make a public commitment to faith through non-infant baptism or confirmation.
- Create a community of 50 new volunteers and lay leaders.
- Establish a new discipleship group of around 35 people.

These objectives support the Church of England's Vision & Strategy for the 2020s and beyond

- To affirm the CofE vocation to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ afresh to each generation
- To enable the CofE's priority to be a Church that is younger and more diverse
- To advance the CofE's bold outcome to double the number of Children and Young people in active discipleship by 2030
- To support churches to develop deeper missional relationships with schools
- To develop links between schools, families and parish churches

Within the first three years of being in post, we would expect to see:

2025/6:

- Launch initial in-school activity including prayer space, drop ins and support for collective worship.
- Launch new voluntary worshipping community.
- Start raising new volunteers through school and church.
- Put in place a year 6 to 7 transition plan.
- Provide a faith element to the summer holiday scheme.
- Celebrate Lent / Easter / Advent / Christmas in school and in church.

2026/7:

- Launch the Big Ask sessions for parents

Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking

- Launch Teen Good Neighbours
- Hold first baptisms for school children.
- Continue to build up volunteers and lay leaders.

2027/8:

- Launch confirmation classes for school children
- Put in place a year 11 transition plan.
- Set up 16-20 age discipleship group
- Raise up further volunteers and lay leaders.

Key responsibilities

Lead responsibility for achieving the stated project objectives:

- Grow a new voluntary worshipping community in the school, building to 60 people.
- Increase Sunday attendance at St. Francis by 50 in total (more than doubling the current Average Weekly Attendance), including but not limited to those families involved with Park Community School.
- Have around 20 people a year make a public commitment to faith through non-infant baptism or confirmation.
- Create a community of 50 new volunteers and lay leaders.
- Establish a new discipleship group of around 35 people.

Allocate time to achieve the following tasks:

- Planning and preparation of forthcoming activities and events
- Communicating plans with school staff, children, parents and the Church leadership and members.
- Co-lead Festival and Celebration events with school children and parents, and church members.
- Assist with school trips and outside activities under the supervision of school staff.
- Assist with the supervision of pupils out of lesson times, including before and after school and at lunchtimes.

Financial and project management:

- Work within set budgets and provide reports as required
- Provide regular feedback to the Strategic Programmes Team on project successes, challenges and progress against outcomes.

Liaison and Networks:

Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking

- To be directly responsible for day-to-day relationships with the Park Community School contact and Senior Leadership Team
- Maintain effective pastoral relationships with Park Community School children, staff and parents.
- To develop effective working partnerships with the Leigh Park Incumbent and other Ministers and projects across the Diocese
- To liaise with the Safeguarding Adviser as appropriate.

Other activities:

- To undertake any other tasks and specific projects as may reasonably be required by the Vicar of Leigh Park

Essential and desirable skills, knowledge and experience required for the job

Essential

- Practical experience of leading missional work with a proven track record of making and growing disciples of Christ, particularly with young people.
- Committed to the relationship between churches, schools and families in developing disciples of Christ
- Experience of work with children and youth in churches and schools
- A dedicated disciple committed to their own personal renewal of relationship with Christ
- Committed to the revitalisation and renewal of God's church
- Strong ability to communicate ideas effectively with a range of people across the traditions of the church and the wider community
- Relational, with an ability to win the trust and goodwill, of a wide range of people and stakeholders
- Ability to work cheerfully, prayerfully and flexibly both on one's own and in a team
- Comply with school and church policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, equalities, health and safety, security, confidentiality and data protection.

Desirable

- Knowledge of discipleship growth theory, practice and models, particularly with young people in the Church of England

Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking

Work expectations

- The pattern of hours will be negotiable, in partnership with the school leadership. It is expected that the successful candidate will work broadly similar hours both in and out of term time as the school is active throughout the year.
- There will be some requirements for working outside of the agreed work pattern, e.g. evenings. TOIL can be taken for these.
- In negotiation with your line manager, we realise that sometimes it may be helpful to work from home depending on the tasks of the day, but the majority of the time will need to be spent in the school – approximately four days per week.
- The pattern of Sunday work commitments will depend on the needs of the existing and new worship communities.
- There is a Genuine Occupational Requirement for the post holder to be a practising Christian of a denomination which is a member of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland in accordance with Schedule 9 to the Equality Act 2010.
- It is expected that the role-holder will already be or will become an active member of an Anglican church within the Diocese of Portsmouth.

Remuneration

- ☐ The role is remunerated as a lay role at around £33,000 - £34,000 p.a.
- ☐ 25 days holiday plus bank holidays
- ☐ Pension scheme

Jesus-centred, Kingdom-seeking