



## Commissioning Service for a New Headteacher

## Introduction

A commissioning service is a great opportunity for parish, governors, staff, parents and pupils to welcome and affirm a new Headteacher as they begin their new role. A commissioning service welcomes the new Headteacher into the school, the parish and into the diocesan family of schools.

Arranging a commissioning service is also a great opportunity for the incumbent to meet with the new Headteacher and governing body to plan such an event.

To encourage and help you to do this we have provided some thoughts and an outline of an order of service. We recognise that the service will be personal to the school and parish and we would encourage you to adapt what is provided to best support you in being able to involve the school and parish community in this celebratory occasion.

A member of the Board of Education, usually the link adviser for the school, will attend to present a Bible to the Headteacher as part of their welcome.



## Things to consider when planning a commissioning service

### Who will be invited to the service?

Board of Education representative, governors, staff, parents, pupils, parish / benefice representatives, local community representatives, LA representative?

### Where will the service take place?

In your context, is it more appropriate to welcome the Headteacher in the church or to invite the parish into the school?

Things to consider will be the space that you need and what will enable the service to be accessible to the wider school community.

### When will the service take place?

Think about when in the term it will be most appropriate. Ideally a commissioning service will have most impact in the first half term of the Headteacher's appointment.

What time of the day and week will enable parents, pupils, parish and governors to take part in the service?

### Who will do the commissioning?

This will usually be the vicar, but it may be carried out by a foundation governor or diocesan officer in certain circumstances.

### What format will the service take?

Think about who will take part in the service. How will you involve pupils and the school community in the service? Which aspects of the service could pupils lead? Will you ask pupils to write prayers? Who will write the order of service? Will the pupils play a part in this? Think about songs/hymns/musical items that could be included at different points in the service, if appropriate.



## Use of symbols

Within the service template, a Bible is given to the Headteacher by a Board of Education representative. This is a reminder that the Bible is an inspiration and a guide to life.



Within the service template, a candle is lit. This is a reminder that Jesus said: 'I am the light of the world.'

**You could choose to build additional symbols into the service.**

A governor could give the keys of the school to the Headteacher. The keys symbolising responsibility and trust.



A representative of the local community could give a map to the Headteacher. The map symbolising both the school and the local community.

A member of the church could give a prayer book to the Headteacher. The book symbolising that regular prayer is the foundation for spiritual growth.



## Template for Commissioning Service

### Gathering

Clergy: Welcome in the name of Christ. God's grace, mercy and peace be with you.

All: And also with you.

### Greeting

Clergy: We are gathered here on this special day to welcome you, (name of Headteacher), as our Headteacher into our school community.

All: We welcome you.

If you have a School Creed or school vision statement /strapline you could include this in the service in some way.

### Act of Commissioning

Clergy: We join together to welcome (name of Headteacher) to the school and to acknowledge his/her Christian Ministry of Headship. Each group, when asked for your commitment, please respond with: We will with the help of God.

Clergy: (name of Headteacher), as the Headteacher of (name of School) you have a special responsibility to ensure that everyone in your school is valued and recognised as being a child of God, uniquely gifted by Him. You are responsible for ensuring the school is rooted in Christian values, principals and beliefs; that worship and Religious Education are central to the whole life of the school; and that the Christian faith influences the whole school curriculum and its ethos. Do you commit yourself to this work?

HT: I will, with the help of God.

Clergy to Parents: Parents, you are your children's first educators and partners with the school in their education. Do you commit yourselves to working with the Headteacher, staff and governors of (name of School) by supporting them in their work?

Parents We will, with the help of God.

Clergy to children: Children, will you promise to do your best to help your new Headteacher and the staff at your school?

- Children:** We will, with the help of God.
- Board of Education representative to governors:** Governors, as those who have appointed (name of Headteacher) as Headteacher of your school, do you commit yourselves to supporting him/her in ensuring that all pupils receive an education in the context of the Christian faith?
- Governors:** We will, with the help of God.
- Clergy to staff:** Staff, do you commit yourselves to the education and nurture of pupils in a Christian environment and to working with and supporting your new Headteacher?
- Staff:** We will, with the help of God.
- Clergy to everyone present:** As members of this congregation and as members of the local community, will you support the Headteacher, staff and governors as they seek to educate the children of our school in the context of the Christian Faith?
- All:** We will, with the help of God.
- Clergy to Headteacher:** To be entrusted with the leadership and management of a school and the nurture of its pupils is a solemn trust. We pray that God will strengthen you by His grace to faithfully fulfil this task.
- Board of Education representative to Headteacher:** Receive this Bible to mark your new headship. It is God's Word and the foundation of all true wisdom. Use it to guide and inspire you.
- Clergy to Headteacher:** Lord give to ( name of Headteacher) your special gifts of love, joy, wisdom, grace and understanding that he/she may serve your children with gladness to the honour of your Holy Name.

## **Prayer**

### **Contribution from pupils**

### **Lighting of a candle**

The Headteacher comes forward. The Incumbent lights a candle and gives it to the Headteacher

**Clergy:** Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never

walk in darkness, but will have the light of life”.

(name of Headteacher) now that you belong to (name of school), may you kindle the light of Jesus in your heart.

God of new beginnings, may your light from this candle remind us of your steadfast love, protection and inspiration as (name of Headteacher) works among us in school.

### **Blessing**

May the road rise to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face.

May the rain fall softly upon your fields.

Until we meet again.

May God hold you in the hollow of his hand

Amen.

### **Dismissal**

**Clergy:** Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All:** In the name of Christ. Amen.

## Prayers

Below are a couple of examples of prayers you could use in the service template. However you may choose to use the school prayer and for members of the school community, especially pupils, to write their own prayers for the service.

God of new beginnings. We thank you for bringing (name of Headteacher) to our school. We ask your blessing that s/he may have wisdom and strength in the leadership s/he exercises. Bless us in our school, church and wider community so that, in work and play, we may grow in respect and trust for one another and for you. We ask this through your son Jesus Christ who brings the promise of new life and love to all.  
Amen.



Let us pray for our Headteacher, for our community, and for ourselves. God who made us, give ( name of Headteacher) your special gifts of leadership, wisdom, patience and care, for the well-being of your children, and the glory of your name.

God who loves us, help ( name of Headteacher) , the teaching staff, and all who work and assist in the school, to ensure that all pupils reach their potential.

God who knows us, through the shared values of church and school, may we learn and share together, and continue to grow in love and understanding.

God who is with us, give wisdom and guidance to those who go from here to new places of education, work and living.

Generous God, who pours out gifts on all creation, equip us for the work to which you call us, and give us happy hearts; through Jesus Christ our Saviour.  
Amen.



