

Youth Catalyst Project Ministry Experience Scheme Placement

2025/2026



the ministry
experience scheme



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Introduction to the Ministry Experience Scheme

Thinking about your next steps? Feeling called into ministry and looking to explore your vocation further?

The Ministry Experience Scheme (MES) and Future Youth (FY) streams aim to help those aged 18-30 gain valuable vocational and leadership experience as you serve for a year in a church placement. The aim of the scheme is to help participants test a sense of calling and gifting as you receive some theological training and insights into a sense of vocation.

For over 10 years, MES has provided a broad ministry experience for young adults - you can discover what you like and what you are good at. Each person's year will look different but will be formed around practical experience, such as chaplaincy, social justice ministry, preaching and Sunday services, digital media, pastoral visiting, event organisation, evangelism and kids and youth work. As far as possible, a wide range of areas can be covered.



Introduction to the Youth Catalyst Project

The **Youth Catalyst Project**, part of the Diocese of Guildford, launched in July 2023 with the aim of doubling the number of young people coming to faith by 2030. We are all about seeking to equip churches, youth ministries and young people to grow a generation of missionary disciples who live out and proclaim the gospel without fear. Our vision emerges from Philippians 1:14.



Our team consists of 10 people, which includes four Hub Leaders working out of four secondary schools as pioneering missional chaplains, and a dedicated Youth Worship & Mission Team who host critical mass worship gatherings across the diocese for young people to come and encounter Jesus.

You can find out a bit more about us here:

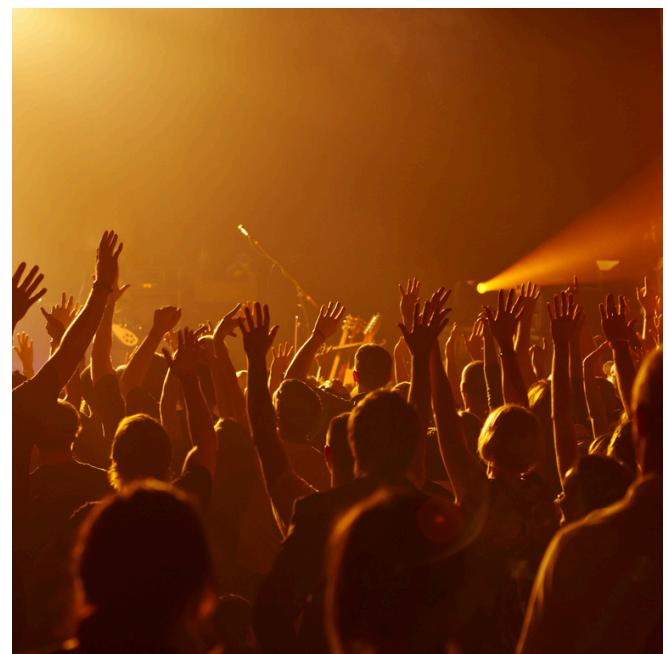
<https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/mission/growing-diversity/youthcatalystproject/>

Youth Catalyst Project Placement

This year, the Diocese of Guildford is piloting a version of the Ministry Experience Scheme (MES) in which you are invited to spend a year with the Youth Catalyst Project, starting September 2025.

This would replace the traditional structure of the MES in which you'd usually be placed within a church; instead, your placement is with the diocese. You will be primarily shadowing our Youth Worship & Mission Team, and can get involved in the following ways:

- Youth ministry (11-18s)
- Event management
- Worship
- Production
- Social media
- Preaching
- Evangelism and outreach
- Some secondary schools work*



We're very flexible and will tailor your year to suit your interests and where you feel called to so that you can gain valuable vocational experience.

While you are on placement, we strongly encourage you to get involved with your church in a leadership capacity to complement your time; however, we will not enforce this.

Structure

When and where

You will join us in September 2025 and be working in both our office on Stag Hill next to Guildford Cathedral, as well as out and about with the team.

Usual hours are likely to be 9-5, but as we often run a lot of our worship gatherings and events on evenings and weekends, you will be entitled to Time Off In Lieu (TOIL), meaning you can take time off for any out-of-hours work on another appropriate day (usually the morning before or after the event). We can work out the exact nature of what your working week will look like with you, but it will not exceed more than 35 hours each week, although we are happy to support placements with fewer hours too.

Line management

Your line manager for pastoral support and 1:1s will be Jamie Walker, our Youth Worship & Mission Team Lead. Depending on which area of ministry you feel called to, or whichever area you're trying out at the time, you will be working alongside other members of team with different expertise, be it worship, production, social media, or secondary schools work.

Vocations and Theological Training

There will be opportunities throughout the year for you to meet with our Young Vocations Advisor and possibly our Director of Ordinands to discern your sense of calling if you'd like to.

As per the usual structure of the MES, you will also attend national conferences and training days with other participants on the course throughout the UK.

Each Monday, you will join in with our First Timers cohort, a non-accredited course designed for those in their first year of ministry to gain a foundational knowledge of theology and learn good practice. You'll be joining other participants from the Ministry Experience Scheme and Future Youth streams at other churches, as well as those on the New Wine Discipleship Year, and other employed and voluntary staff across the diocese enrolled on the course.

There will be a time for discipleship and worship in the morning, followed by the teaching sessions. The day will run 9:30-14:30 and will be at Emmanuel Stoughton, Guildford.

All fees for the First Timers course are covered by the Diocese for MES participants.

You can find out more about what First Timers looks like here: <https://www.cofeguildford.org.uk/for-leaders/children-and-youth-workers/>

Practical Information

Costs

It does not cost anything to enrol onto the MES year.

All your course fees and residential costs, as well as travel and IT expenses, are covered for by the Diocese, so you will not need to pay for these.

Although the MES is a voluntary year, meaning it is not a salaried position, you are entitled to a £74 per week living allowance to help cover weekly food and living costs.

Accommodation

Unfortunately, the Diocese **does not** currently provide accommodation for MES participants on the Youth Catalyst Project Placement. We would therefore encourage that participants live locally at home, rather than seeking to move out while enrolling onto the year.



How do I apply?

Interested in applying? Great! We would love to hear from you.

We are currently open to receiving applications until the 17th August 2025. Please send an email to our MES Coordinator, Sophie Blake, at sophie.blake@cofeguildford.org.uk with the following info:

- Your name and where you're from
- Which church you currently attend
- Why you're interested in joining the Youth Catalyst Project Placement for the Ministry Experience Scheme
- Any previous experience/your interests/skills & hobbies
- What you're hoping to get out of the year
- An up-to-date CV attached

We'll then review the information you have sent us and schedule a time to have an informal interview, which will allow us to see if you are the right fit for the placement and allow you the opportunity to ask any questions you have.

If you would prefer a conversation before applying, please don't hesitate to get in touch, we'd love to chat!

Do I get to pick what I do?

The short answer is yes, within the boundaries of what the Project can offer! We will work with you to see which areas of ministry you would like to gain experience in.

Which areas of ministry aren't offered on the Youth Catalyst Placement?

We work with 11-18yr olds, so we can offer experience in youth ministry, as well as worship, preaching, evangelism, production, and social media (both related to youth and in general, due to our team expertise). We do not cover children and families ministry. We also don't generally cover community outreach (homelessness, food banks, Hear Here clinics, fundraising etc), elderly, women's and men's ministries, etc. While there may be some scope to look into young adults' ministry (generally 18-25yr olds) this would be alongside another area of ministry.

Do I receive any formal certificate or qualification at the end of the year?

You will receive a certificate from National Church to certify that you have completed the Ministry Experience Scheme with us. You will also receive a (non-accredited) First Timers certificate, signed by the Bishop, as recognition of the theological training you undertook across the year.

Do I get paid for the Ministry Experience Scheme?

No, this is a voluntary position, meaning you are not an employee. However, we will give you a £74pw living allowance to help you cover basic week-to-week costs.

Can I work part-time in a different job alongside the year?

Generally, we have calculated that it should be possible to manage on £74pw for covering the cost of living and if a participant has their own accommodation. However, we understand that some participants may need to have a part-time job alongside the MES year. We would recommend that you let us know if this is the case so that we can factor this in to your working hours and ensure that you are not overworked.