



ST. MARGARET'S
RAINHAM

Discernment Pack

Children and Families Minister

We're growing. We're planting.
And we need someone passionate
about the next generation to
help lead the way.





Welcome

Rainham is an extraordinary place. With a parish of nearly 26,000 people and rising — nine schools, and communities that range from real deprivation to relative comfort, St Margaret's sits at the heart of one of the most complex and compelling mission contexts in the Church of England. And yet, what our research keeps telling us is this: people here are not hostile to faith. They are simply waiting to be met.

That is why this role exists.

We are not looking for someone to run programmes. We are looking for someone who understands that faith grows through relationship, presence, and trust — and who has the vision and the patience to build something that lasts. Over the next four years, we want to see three new worshipping communities take root, 150 or more children and families drawn into sustained encounter with the living God, and a parish culture that puts the next generation at its heart.

The foundations are already here. We have strong school partnerships, a flourishing toddler group, an entrepreneurial and generous congregation, and a clear sense of where God is calling us. What we need now is the right person to help us go further.

If you are someone who loves children and families, who thrives on building relationships in real communities, and who is energised rather than daunted by complexity and scale — we would love to hear from you.



Where we believe God is leading us with children and families

St Margaret's is a church that longs to grow — spiritually, numerically and transformationally. By transformational we mean that the life of Christ not only deepens in individuals, but also shapes the communities in which we live and work. Faith is not simply something we attend to on a Sunday; it is something lived, shared and embodied in everyday life.

“
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”

We are a diverse Anglican church in the best sense of that phrase. On any given Sunday you will find the quiet simplicity of the 8am congregation alongside the vibrancy of the 10.30am service, where around one hundred and twenty people gather with both choir and band — rooted in prayer, scripture and sacrament while open to creativity and the work of the Spirit. It is during this service that our 252 Kids Club meet.

Yet when it comes to children and families, we know we are not yet where we long to be.

We have contact — families at baptisms, children encountered through schools, warmth and goodwill. What we do not yet have is depth. The challenge is not activity but continuity. Children appear in church but do not always feel it belongs to them. Families attend events but do not always find a community in which they can remain.

We sense God is inviting us to move from contact to belonging.



Our hope is to nurture three new intergenerational worshipping communities, connecting around one hundred and fifty people, drawn from relationships in schools, homes and parish life. These would not be children's groups running alongside the main congregation, but communities where children and adults pray, explore scripture, serve and grow together. Alongside this, we want to deepen our school partnerships and help parents nurture faith at home — because when prayer and storytelling become part of everyday family life, faith takes root in the next generation.

We are willing to experiment, to learn as we go, and to accept that not everything will work. Our desire is not to impose a perfect plan but to discern where God is already at work and join in.

We are not looking for someone to run programmes. We are looking for someone who will help us listen well, build relationships patiently and nurture communities of faith that can grow and endure.



Current ministries overview



St Margaret's already has an active and growing ministry with children and families. The opportunities around us are considerable; the main constraint at present is not demand but the capacity within the existing team to develop the work further.

A key part of this ministry is 252 Kids, which meets during the 10.30am Sunday service in term time. On the first Sunday of each month the whole church gathers for an All Age Service, while on other Sundays primary-school-aged children meet separately for teaching, activities and discussion. Attendance varies week by week — sometimes a handful of children, sometimes around fifteen — but the aim remains consistent: introducing the foundations of the Christian faith through engaging and interactive exploration of the Bible.

Alongside this, we host a family coffee morning and toddler group each Monday during term time from 9.00–11.00am. This provides a welcoming space for babies,

toddlers and their parents, grandparents or carers. Around thirty to fifty people attend each week, the vast majority from outside the church community, making this an important point of connection with local families.

Throughout the year we also run seasonal family events linked to the church calendar, including a Pancake Party, a Light Party around Halloween and a Christingle Service. These regularly attract between 150 and 200 people, many of whom have little previous connection with church. In the summer we host Teddies Down the Tower, a much-loved family event where toys travel by zip line from the church tower into the churchyard below.

Taken together, these activities mean that the children and families “fringe” of the church is already significant, particularly alongside the number of baptisms we conduct and our engagement with local schools. The opportunity now is to nurture these relationships so that they deepen into

sustainable worshipping communities and ongoing discipleship.

This work is supported by a strong culture of volunteering and shared ministry. Eighty-six people are currently safely recruited to volunteer within the life of the church, with around fifty actively serving across hospitality, events, worship, pastoral care and children's work.

The purpose of this role is not to replace what already exists, but to build on these foundations. The Children and Families Minister will help identify, equip and encourage others in ministry, nurturing potential leaders and building teams so that the work can grow in a healthy and sustainable way.

The congregation has shown a genuine willingness to try new things when it comes to mission and community engagement. Over recent years a number of initiatives and events have been introduced, and there is a broad recognition that reaching children and families requires creativity, flexibility and openness to change.

The Vicar sees this role as a partnership in ministry, offering support and collaboration while creating space for new ideas and initiatives to emerge.





Salary, benefits and practical arrangements

We aim to be clear about the practical aspects of the role so that candidates can discern whether this opportunity is right for them.

- **Salary:** Starting salary of £34,000 per year, reviewed annually in line with the cost of living.
- **Pension:** 8% non-contributory pension contribution.
- **Contract:** Permanent position, subject to the usual employment and safeguarding checks.
- **Housing:** No housing is provided with this role.
- **Relocation:** Financial support towards reasonable relocation costs may be available if required.
- **Expenses:** All reasonable ministry related expenses reimbursed in line with the church's expenses policy.



- **Holiday:** 25 days annual leave plus bank holidays.
- **Working pattern:** The role will involve Sunday working and some evening commitments, but we are committed to ensuring a healthy and sustainable rhythm of work and rest, and some flexibility in working patterns will be possible.



Job description

JOB TITLE:	Children and Families Minister
ROLE TYPE:	Licensed Lay Worker - Children & Families
REPORTING TO:	The Parochial Council of St Margaret of Antioch Rainham
LINE MANAGER:	Rev'd Nathan Ward
HOURS:	Full time (35hrs per week)
SALARY:	£34,000

JOB PURPOSE:

To lead, develop and embed a relational model of discipleship among children and families across church, home and school, enabling the formation of sustainable intergenerational worshipping communities and supporting long-term growth in faith and belonging.

The post holder will cultivate relationships, equip volunteers and help the parish move from occasional contact with families to consistent pastoral and spiritual presence.

Over four years the role will enable the development of three worshipping communities and sustained engagement with at least 150 children and adults.

The role focuses on forming disciples and communities rather than maintaining existing programmes. The post holder will shape the form this ministry takes and is not expected simply to maintain inherited activities.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:

Grow belonging and faith among children and families
Cultivate relationships that lead to regular participation in worshipping and communal life of the church.

Develop new worshipping communities
Establish and nurture three intergenerational worshipping communities emerging from relationships in schools, toddler groups, homes and church, each practising rhythms of welcome, prayer, storytelling, worship and shared life.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:

Create pathways into the wider church
Enable families to move from initial contact to sustained belonging across life stages, ensuring engagement develops into ongoing participation rather than isolated events.

Equip and release others into ministry
Recruit, train and mentor volunteers and emerging leaders so each worshipping community develops shared leadership and increasing sustainability.

Support faith in the home
Encourage and resource parents, carers and grandparents to practise prayer, reflection and Christian life within everyday family routines.

Strengthen partnerships with schools and community
Maintain consistent presence and collaborative relationships with local schools and community settings that enable regular pastoral and spiritual engagement.

Embed children and families in the whole church
Work with clergy and lay leaders to shape intergenerational worship and integrate children and families into the normal patterns of parish life.

Safeguard and sustain the ministry
Model best safeguarding practice and undertake reflective evaluation and ongoing development to ensure ministry operates safely, accountably and in line with Church of England safeguarding policies.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

Candidates must meet all essential criteria to be shortlisted.

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<p>> EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicant member of the Church of England and eligible to be licensed by the Bishop of Rochester • Level 5 or Level 6 qualification (Diploma/Degree) • Accredited or recognised theological study which • Minimum 3 years' experience working with children and/or families in a church or Christian context • Experience of developing relationships with children, parents or carers over time (not solely event-based work) • Experience of working collaboratively with volunteers and the building of teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of forming or leading new worshipping communities • Experience of ministry within schools or community settings • Experience of mentoring or training volunteers or leaders • Experience within an Anglican parish context
<p>> SKILLS AND ABILITIES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to build trust and communicate well with children and adults across generations • Able to encourage faith exploration in ways appropriate to different ages and stages • Able to work independently, organise time effectively and sustain relational ministry • Able to work collaboratively with clergy, lay leaders and volunteers • Able to reflect on practice and adapt approaches appropriately • Competent basic administration and communication skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to teach or lead intergenerational worship • Ability to develop and equip leaders rather than personally running activities • Creative communication skills (storytelling, prayer, informal teaching contexts) • Confidence engaging with schools and community organisations • Experience of project management or working within a funded project framework

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<p>> VALUES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A living Christian faith expressed through prayer and participation in church life • Commitment to the mission and ministry of the Church of England • Commitment to safeguarding and the wellbeing of children and vulnerable people • Demonstrates patience and attentiveness in ministry, prioritising relationships over programmes • Willingness to learn, reflect and grow in ministry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciation of intergenerational church life • Desire to nurture faith in everyday family life, not only church activities • Openness to collaborative and pioneering approaches to mission
<p>> COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING</p>	<p>This post includes regulated activity with children.</p> <p>The church is committed to safeguarding and therefore candidates must undergo a safer recruitment process.</p> <p>A Church of England Confidential Declaration form must be completed by all applicants for positions engaging in regulated activity or otherwise working/having substantial contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults which requires an enhanced with barred list DBS check.</p> <p>The church takes the safety of everyone within the church very seriously and expects that everyone will work within the church safeguarding policy. In particular, the church expects anyone who becomes aware of a safeguarding risk or of actual abuse, to immediately raise this with their manager or safeguarding officer.</p> <p>The post holder must complete and maintain all safeguarding training required by the Church of England for licensed Children and Families ministers throughout their employment.</p>	

What support actually looks like

We take support seriously. Not as a line in a contract, but as a culture.



“ Conferences and retreats are encouraged, not treated as indulgences. ”

Supervision

You will meet monthly with the Vicar whose background is in youth and community work, including time in custodial settings and later as Head of Children's Services for an international charity. He is experienced in offering person-centred, reflective supervision.

This is not primarily about targets and outputs. It is about you — your leadership, your emotional world, your faith, your wellbeing. We will of course review priorities and progress, but the focus is sustainable ministry rather than constant performance.

Alongside this, we would expect you to have a spiritual director. If you do not already have one, we can help you find one through the Diocese of Rochester. We would encourage you to meet with them at least bi-monthly. Your spiritual life matters more than your programme plan.



Team and Working Relationships

You will not be working in isolation.

Our staff team meets online every Monday morning for a 30-minute check-in. We review the previous week and look ahead to what is coming. Once a month we meet for a longer session to reflect more deeply on how we are doing personally and to think strategically about the work.

Our full time administrator will provide practical and logistical support. We want you leading and shaping ministry, not drowning in avoidable admin.

In terms of volunteers, you will be building and developing teams rather than running everything yourself. Part of the role is identifying, encouraging and releasing gifted people. We expect you to shape this area, not simply inherit a fixed structure.

You will also be part of the Diocesan Children and Young People's Network, which provides regular support gatherings and an annual retreat. That wider connection matters. You are not alone in this calling.

Training and Development

If training needs are identified, we will fund them. Ongoing development is important to us.

There will be a designated annual training budget, agreed with you, and time will be protected to undertake it. Conferences and retreats are encouraged, not treated as indulgences. Growth in ministry requires space to learn, reflect and be renewed.



Life in Rainham



Rainham is a thriving town on the eastern edge of the Medway area in north Kent. With a population of around 26,000 people, it combines the feel of a settled suburban community with excellent transport links to London and the Kent coast.

It should not be confused with Rainham in Essex.



Originally an agricultural village centred on St Margaret's Church, Rainham has grown into a well-established residential town with strong schools, active community organisations and a significant commuting population.

Rainham sits within the wider Medway Towns (population around 280,000) alongside Gillingham, Chatham, Rochester and Strood. Many residents commute into London via high-speed rail from Rainham station, while others work locally in healthcare, education, retail, construction and professional services.

The town offers access to beautiful countryside and coastline. The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lies just to the south, while the Medway marshes and north Kent coast are a short drive away. Riverside Country Park and Capstone Farm Country Park provide extensive walking routes, green



space and opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Rainham is a place where community relationships matter. Many families stay for generations, and there is a strong sense of local identity and belonging. Rainham is served by a number of well-regarded primary and secondary schools, and St Margaret's already has positive relationships with several of them.

For ministry with children and families, this creates a context that is both stable and complex: busy working households, strong schools, and many families who are spiritually curious but not yet connected to church life.



A illustrative week

Because this is a newly created role, the exact shape of the week will develop over time as the Children and Families Minister discerns where God is already at work and how best to support it. The outline below is therefore not a fixed timetable, but an example of what the rhythm of the role could look like. It reflects how time might typically be balanced between prayer, relationship-building, preparation and leading ministry. Each day begins with time set aside for prayer and personal Bible study, helping ensure that ministry flows from a rooted spiritual life.



Monday

Community Connections

The day begins with the staff team check-in (9.15–9.45am), followed by the Family Coffee Morning and Toddler Group (10.00–11.30am), welcoming babies, toddlers and their parents or carers. That takes you into lunchtime with the afternoon often used for follow-up conversations with families, pastoral contact, and planning upcoming activities.

Tuesday

Schools and Preparation

A morning focused on engagement with local schools, including leading Acts of Collective Worship (assemblies) and building relationships with staff and pupils. Followed by preparation in the afternoon

Wednesday

Collaboration and Development

A day for team collaboration, meeting with the Vicar and other key volunteers where appropriate. One lunchtime small group brings together grandparents who are exploring faith.

Thursday

Community Engagement

Time spent building relationships with families connected to the church, supporting baptism families and developing new initiatives with children and families in the community. The day often includes leading a weekly toddler service and a second school assembly during term time.

Friday

Day Off

Saturday

Day Off

Sunday

Worship and Children's Ministry

Sunday centres around the 10.30am service, where the Children and Families Minister supports and develops ministry with children and families, including the 252 Kids programme during term time and regular All Age Services. Sundays are visible and relational, but the aim is for them to be sustainable and supported by a strong team of volunteers.

Working Pattern and Pace

This role will involve some evening work. Our expectation is that you will not work more than two evenings a week as a norm. Ministry with children and families does not need a heroic martyr; it needs someone who is still here in ten years' time.

We will have honest conversations if we sense you are operating at an unsustainable pace. Longevity matters more than intensity.

Days off are non-negotiable. They are important practically, spiritually and relationally. Take them. Protect them. If you start giving them away habitually, we will challenge you. Rest is not weakness; it is obedience.

Our aim is simple: to create an environment where you can flourish, not just function.

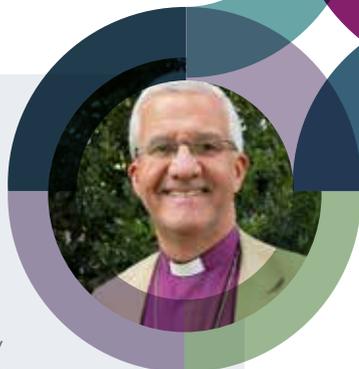
“
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”

Short testimonies

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I am delighted to support this exciting new post in the parish of St Margaret's Rainham. As a Diocese, we are absolutely committed to strengthening our work among children and young people and this role is an integral part of that. We believe God is doing a new thing among a new generation. If you want to be part of that and believe that God may be calling you to Rainham, we would love to hear from you.

The Right Reverend Dr Jonathan Gibbs – Bishop of Rochester



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“

I like learning about God and the stories in the Bible.

From Krish age 5

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”

I go here to learn new things about the Bible.

From Joshua age 8

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I like sharing, I like singing and dancing, I like loving, I like drawing, I like colouring.

From Isaac age 4

”

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“Ministry with children, young people and families flourishes best when it is rooted in relationship, prayer and mutual encouragement. Within the Diocese of Rochester, the Children and Young People Mission and Ministry Team exists to advise, support and walk alongside parishes as they seek to deepen their engagement with the next generation and their families, offering advice, training and resources to help this work grow and endure .

The successful candidate for the Children and Families Minister post at St Margaret's will not be on their own. They will be welcomed into a wider network of colleagues across the Diocese, including employed and volunteer children's and families' ministers, who share a commitment to seeing lives transformed by the love of Jesus. This supportive environment — from regular networking and learning opportunities to diocesan training and encouragement — is designed to empower creativity, sustain resilience, and enable shared learning as together we seek to nurture confident and compassionate communities of faith.”

Cheryl Trice

Diocesan Team Lead Adviser, Children and Young People Mission and Ministry Team

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“Strong partnerships between church and schools are vital if we are to support children and young people in their spiritual, personal and academic development. At Medway Anglican Schools Trust we are committed to creating learning environments where every child feels known, valued and encouraged to flourish.

The appointment of a Children and Families Minister at St Margaret's presents an exciting opportunity to deepen those partnerships, not just in occasional contact, but in sustained, relational engagement that strengthens both school and parish communities. The successful candidate will find in us a collaborative and supportive partner — ready to work together, share insight and build bridges between the life of the school and the life of the church.

Our collective hope is that through this role, children and families will encounter a sense of belonging, purpose and faith that complements their educational journey and nurtures confident discipleship.”

Ben Hulme

CEO Medway Anglican Schools Trust

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Our discernment process

At St Margaret's we approach this appointment not simply as a recruitment exercise but as a process of discernment. We are seeking to listen carefully for where God may be calling someone to share in the ministry of this church among children and families. For that reason, the process is designed to help both the candidate and the parish prayerfully explore whether this role represents the right next step in ministry.

The process therefore combines reflection, conversation, practical engagement with the parish community, and structured interviews. It is informed by the wider discernment framework used across the Church of England, which recognises several key qualities that underpin Christian ministry: love for God, a sense of call to ministry, love for people, wisdom, fruitfulness, and potential for future growth. Our conversations with candidates will seek to explore these qualities in the context of ministry with children and families.

We hope the process will feel supportive, thoughtful, and prayerful, giving candidates the opportunity to share honestly about their faith, their experience of ministry, and the gifts they believe God has given them.

Application

Candidates are invited to complete an application form and reflective statement. This invites applicants to share something of their journey of faith, their sense of calling to ministry with children and families, and their experience of nurturing faith in others.

Initial Conversation

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an initial online conversation with members of the discernment panel. This conversation is intended to explore vocation, experience, and understanding of the role.

Psychometric Assessment

Candidates invited to the final stage will be asked to complete a short psychometric profile. This is not used





as a pass-fail test, but as a reflective tool to help both the candidate and the panel understand natural strengths, leadership style, and preferred ways of working.

The profile will form part of the wider discernment conversation and candidates will be asked to reflect on the report briefly during the final stage of the process.

Discernment Day

Final candidates will be invited to spend time at St Margaret's for a discernment day. This will include several elements designed to help the parish and the candidate get to know one another more fully.

These may include:

- meeting members of the congregation and volunteers involved in children and families ministry
- a practical exercise or short presentation related to the role
- leading or contributing to a short act of worship suitable for children and families
- a structured interview with the discernment panel

Throughout the day there will also be opportunities for informal conversation, as we believe that ministry is relational and best discerned through genuine engagement with the life of the church.



Final Discernment

At the end of the discernment day candidates will be invited to take some time for personal reflection. Each candidate will be asked to submit a short written reflection (approximately 500 words) describing what they have learned about themselves through the conversations, exercises and experiences of the day.

This reflection is not an assessment of performance, but an opportunity to demonstrate self-awareness, openness to learning, and the ability to reflect thoughtfully on ministry practice.

Following the discernment day the panel will take time to reflect prayerfully on the process, including the conversations held during the day, feedback from those who met the candidates, and the written reflections provided. References and safeguarding checks will then be completed before a final appointment is confirmed.

A Shared Process of Discernment

We recognise that discerning a call to ministry is a shared process. We hope this approach allows candidates to explore the role thoughtfully while also helping the parish recognise the gifts and calling of the person who may be invited to serve here.

We encourage candidates to approach the process prayerfully and with openness, trusting that God guides both individuals and communities as they seek to serve his mission together.

“**You did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.”**
John 15:16”





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