

Diocese of Hereford

IME2 Placements - An Outline

a. Why Placements?

Placements form an integral part of the IME2 partnership between the curate, the training benefice and the Diocese. Part of the commitment of the training benefice (recorded in the working agreement) is to release the curate to undertake a placement, the purpose of which is to widen the experience of the curacy post, given that parishes are able to offer very different ranges of opportunity for acquiring knowledge, skills and practical involvement. Placements therefore can:

- help curates to be better equipped for future positions of greater responsibility,
- be part of the process of 'letting go' for those who will be moving on, and
- ensure (with careful planning) that curates are better prepared to play their part in meeting the strategic needs of the Diocese for ordained ministry in the future.

b. Who does a Placement?

A fundamental aspect of IME2 is that there is no distinction between different categories of curate. This principle is maintained for placements, though with some minor adjustment.

- Stipendiary clergy, all heading for a new post carrying more responsibility, are expected to do a placement in all cases.
- OLMs and SSM will be offered placements, but without the expectation that there is for stipendiary clergy. Here, all is open to negotiation - whether a placement is desired / appropriate, what form it should take and when it should be done. Placements may indeed be done after the end of IME2, which may have advantages in terms of available time and funding (CME grants are available for all beyond IME2).

c. When is a Placement done?

The best time for stipendiary curates to undertake a placement would appear to be the September at the beginning of the third year after ordination. This would fit best with an expected length of title post of three to four years. All ought therefore to have the opportunity both to fit a placement in and to decide what placement to do on the basis of a reasonable amount of parish experience. Placements will therefore need to be planned in the second half of the second year.

d. What Structure should it have?

There are two possible structures for a placement: block and day release.

A block placement of somewhere between one and two months allows a curate to be immersed fully in the placement situation without competing priorities. The agreement of the benefice to the placement would then not be undermined by expecting effectively the same amount of weekday and Sunday involvement in the parish by a curate as before. However genuine the parish's blessing of the placement, the reality is that in a day release situation there will be events and needs that creep in to threaten the placement.

However, a block placement denies the possibility of reflection on the placement over an extended period of time, particularly reflection in the light of what is also happening in the parish. There is less possibility of the one fruitfully informing the other than with day release. The impact on the parishes will also be felt less with day release.

Either is possible and the decision will form part of the process of sanctioning a placement.

e. Who sanctions a Placement?

That a placement will take place at some stage will be included in working agreements from the time of ordination as a deacon. As these will be agreed by PCCs (who bear the responsibility of meeting expenses), there will then be no surprise to anyone later on.

Actual details of a placement will be worked out in consultation between curate, training incumbent and CMDO. Local Ministry Development Groups and PCCs ought to be consulted and informed, but this is not a question of approval.

f. Who pays for a Placement?

Stipend and housing are unaffected by going on a placement. Expenses are a different matter, as it is less obvious that a benefice should foot the bill for work taking the curate away from the parish. Nevertheless, payment of all curacy expenses are part of a benefice's commitment to the IME2 partnership, as a gift to the wider church, and this includes placement expenses. Despite this, there is some money available within the IME2 budget, and the Diocese should be able to offer up to £100 (approx.) for the expenses of each placement, the actual amount varying according to the number and type of placements being undertaken at any one time.

g. Should there be any desired outcomes?

There should be two types of report produced from a placement:

- i. a diary of reflection on the placement experience
- ii. a fuller report produced at the end of the placement.

These should go to the training incumbent (and therefore the PCC / Ministry Team as appropriate) and the CMDO. This is not a grading / appraisal exercise but rather allowing the curate and the benefice fully to benefit from the placement experience and the CMDO to be aware for the future of the value of any particular placement.

h. Additional Day Placements

As well as the main placement, it may be useful for a stipendiary curate in her/his third year, looking towards moving on, to explore forms of ministry other than parish ministry. The training incumbent and/or CMDO can therefore help with arrangements for third year stipendiary curates to spend a day with, eg, hospital, school, forces and prison chaplains, to find out more about this form of ministry, if this is requested. Such additional day placements will be on an individual basis.

Revd Preb Nick Helm

CMDO

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