



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Manchester

CHURCH
FOR A
DIFFERENT
WORLD

Encounter Project Manager

Information for applicants

February 2026

A Message from Bishop David

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the role of Encounter Project Manager.

Manchester Diocese has an inspiring vision and we are making good progress towards achieving this with the development of a wide range of programmes, all designed to release missional energy. The Encounter Project Manager has a key role to play in shaping and leading the delivery of this strategy, particularly our commitment to Growing Younger.

Rooted in a clear, hopeful and outward-looking vision for the future and supported by substantial investment from the national church, our diocese's strategy is resourcing mission and ministry across our communities, strengthening the excellent work already taking place. With this support, we are well-equipped to develop a wide range of initiatives that will sustain and grow the missional health of our parishes for years to come. This support along with the rich history and variety in our diocese, makes it a wonderful place to engage in Gospel ministry.

It is important to us that the new Encounter Project Manager is committed to diversity, inclusion and racial justice. We are also looking for someone who is generous in working with a breadth of traditions and spirituality in the Church of England. In particular, we welcome female candidates and candidates of global majority heritage to help ensure the diversity of our senior team.

We are very much looking forward to welcoming our new Encounter Project Manager to the diocese and supporting them with their work.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Walker', with a small cross symbol to the left.

The Rt Revd Dr David Walker,
Bishop of Manchester



About Us

Manchester Diocese serves a vibrant, dynamic and creative community in the North West of England. It covers an area of 416 square miles and has a total population of 2.2 million. The diocese is divided into four archdeaconries, seven deaneries and 33 mission communities. There are more than 300 places of worship and chaplaincies, which are organised into 256 parishes and 175 benefices.

Geographically, the diocese takes in the two cities of Salford and Manchester and the metropolitan boroughs of Oldham, Rochdale, Bury and Bolton. Parts of the metropolitan boroughs of Wigan, Trafford, Stockport, Tameside and Blackburn with Darwen, and most of the borough of Rossendale in Lancashire, are also within the diocese. It has the fourth highest population density of any diocese in the Church of England.

While predominantly urban, a significant part of the diocese is rural, although less than 3% of the population of the diocese lives in these areas. 125 (48%) of our parishes fall within the 10% most deprived nationally.

Parishes and chaplaincies across our diocese are supported by the Diocesan Board of Finance, based at St John's House in Bury town centre. This team works with churches and congregations across the diocese to achieve our strategy and our mission goals. It also provides support with clergy stipends and housing, finance, safeguarding and governance.

Across the diocese, 193 Church of England primary and secondary schools educate over 58,000 pupils every day. These schools are mostly funded by local authorities, with the diocese providing support with religious education and Christian ethos, governance, the recruitment of head teachers, admissions, and building projects. The team which supports these schools is also based at St John's House, as part of the Diocesan Board of Education.



Our Vision

Our vision is for Manchester Diocese to be a *worshipping, growing, transforming Christian presence at the heart of every community.*

Much of what we are doing in Manchester Diocese is already contributing to a culture of hope and an expectation of growth, working with our parishes, schools and chaplaincies. This includes many forms of inherited as well as fresh expressions of church. We serve in an area that has a rich history of culture and innovation, made up of diverse and vibrant communities, and a longstanding commitment to social justice. It is a wonderful place to engage in Gospel Ministry.

Our work together grows out of Jesus's Great Commandment which is to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...and love your neighbour as yourself'. (Matthew 22: 36-40)...

... and out of his Great Commission, 'to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit' (Matthew 28:19-20).

Our strategy is based on positive, inspiring and relevant plans for the future. It is enabling us to bring together the key areas of opportunity and challenge, building on our learning and experience from the significant changes and investments that are already underway. Many of these changes have focused on new ways of working together which are becoming embedded in the life of our diocese.

Building on these successes, we are shifting to the next level in setting our priorities and working out what we want to achieve next. Given the excellent start that has been made, we now have the opportunity to be even more creative and ambitious with our plans for the future living out our values of **faith, hope and love.**

Built around four key themes – Parish Renewal, Growing Younger, Church Planting and Revitalisation, and Developing Missional Leaders – this strategy will guide our work over the coming years.

At the heart of this support is our commitment to **Parish Renewal**, providing specialist, practical help to ensure the missional and financial sustainability of our parishes. This includes financial support for those wishing to establish New Worshipping Communities. Our aim is to ensure that every parish is equipped to thrive and serve its local community.



The funding will enable us to deepen our commitment to **Growing Younger**, nurturing children and young people on their discipleship journey. Building on the success of the Places Project in Bolton and the Man Dio Growing Faith programme across the rest of our diocese, the Encounter Project will provide additional children's and youth workers, while the Equip training initiative will support lay and ordained leaders so they grow in confidence and develop their skills in ministry with children and young people.

Alongside this, the investment will support **Church Planting and Revitalisation** through strengthened partnerships with our existing resource churches and the Antioch Network. Six new resource churches representing a range of traditions will also be established and supported in planting new churches.

We will build on the work that is already taking place to bring forward and develop the next generations of **missional ordained and lay leaders** at every stage of their vocation, including a new, diverse generation of leaders equipped to grow faith communities.

In all of this we are deeply committed to championing **racial justice** and ensuring that our clergy, lay leaders and congregations represent the rich diversity of our diocese.

We are working towards the 2030 **net zero carbon** goal set by General Synod, by supporting our churches and schools with measuring their energy use and taking simple, practical steps to reduce their carbon footprint.

We will continue to provide a safe environment for all by promoting effective **safeguarding**.

Across our diocese, people hold diverse views and express their faith through **different traditions**, united in a passion for Jesus Christ and his Church. Our bishops honour these differences by inviting church communities from across our diocese to learn together, support one another and listen to God.

These priorities align with the Church of England's overall vision which is to create a church of missionary disciples, where mixed ecology is the norm, and whose membership is becoming younger and more diverse.



Role description

Employer:	Manchester Diocesan Board of Finance (MDBF)
Salary:	£46,750 (Diocesan Pay-scale Band 6.1 – spot grade)
Hours of work:	Full time - 35 hours per week
Contract:	Fixed Term to 31/12/2029 with the possibility of extension to 31/12/2033 subject to funding from the Church Commissioners
Normal place of work:	Hybrid - based at St John's House, 155-163 The Rock, Bury BL9 0ND

Purpose

The Encounter Project Manager is the strategic lead for the Encounter Project, overseeing this work throughout the diocese in order to double the number of young active disciples and ensuring there is a thriving CYP ministry within reach of every young person.

Accountability and Key Relationships

The post is line managed by Director of Children and Young People.

The post-holder will work closely with Director of Children and Young People, Equip Lead and Archdeaconry team leads.

The post-holder will be a member of the DBE team, and the wider diocesan team.

The post-holder has line management responsibility for Archdeaconry Team Leads and MDGF Deanery Enablers.

The post-holder will work closely with the Area Deans, and clergy and lay leaders across the diocese.

Encounter

In Manchester Diocese, we are energised by the opportunities to create ways for children and young people to encounter Jesus.

Luke 24 tells the story of two men on the road to Emmaus who encounter each other and talk about the remarkable events of the previous days. Without realising, they are joined by Jesus whom they proceed to talk and eat with. Suddenly they realise that Jesus has been in their midst all along. Seeing the impact of that encounter, they ask, “were our hearts not burning with fire while he talked to us on the road”.

The next stage of our ministry with children and young people is about creating, enabling and sustaining those encounter opportunities.

The objectives of Encounter are to:

- develop discipleship pathways to support children and young people in their faith journey at church, school and home.
- build strong links between our CE and community schools, and parishes and mission communities to encourage children, young people and their families to join their local church.
- increase the number of intentionally Christian toddler, children's and youth groups in parishes.
- ensure that the worship experience of children, young people and their families is positive and inspiring; - develop the confidence and skills of the lay and ordained leaders supporting children, young people and their families.

Further information about Encounter is available in the supplementary summary document.

Key Responsibilities

1. Develop and implement the Encounter project in line with the diocesan strategy, ensuring the smooth transition of Man Dio Growing Faith Project and Places Project into one cohesive project for the diocese.
2. Working with the Encounter Archdeaconry Team Leads, support and develop the Encounter Archdeaconry Teams so that they are focused on supporting parishes, schools and chaplaincies in doubling the number of young active disciples.
3. Regularly monitor and evaluate the Encounter Project in order that learning is carried forward for future proposals and accurate data is provided for the relevant boards.
4. Support the Director of Children and Young People in future bids to the Church Commissioners to secure further funding for children's and young people's ministries in Manchester Diocese.
5. Work alongside the Equip Lead and Equip Team to ensure delivery of national resources provided for children and young people's ministry.
6. Proactively promote national developments and emerging good practice in other dioceses applying learning to Manchester Diocese.

Person Specification

	Requirements
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educated to degree level or equivalent
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of strategic leadership in ministry with children and young people in a diocese or equivalent Experience and understanding in project management Experience of leading change management in teams Experience of working with a broad range of stakeholders Experience of staff management and leading a team with an effective management style
Knowledge and Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of Church of England structures Knowledge of safeguarding best practice and an advocate for developing a strong and embedded culture of safeguarding Working understanding of budget management
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to clearly communicate vision, strategy and clear objectives Able to foster good team work with colleagues, parishes, schools and chaplaincies Good communication and networking skills with a wide variety of stakeholders Able to manage own workload and that of others to achieve a positive work life balance Competent IT skills
Personal Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A practising Christian Commitment to the diocese's vision and strategy An appreciation of the diverse communities in Manchester Diocese <p style="text-align: right;">continued...</p>

	Requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to engage positively with the breadth of traditions in the Church of England • Committed to diversity, inclusion and racial justice • Fully committed to the development and training of self and others
Work-related circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility to attend evening and weekend meetings • Willing to travel across the diocese and beyond

There is an Occupational Requirement for the post-holder to be a practising Christian, in accordance with Schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010

Additional Information

Summary of Terms and Conditions of Employment

Employer	Manchester Diocesan Board of Finance (MDBF)
Salary	£46,750 (Diocesan Pay-scale Band 6.1 – spot grade)
Hours	Full-time (35 hours per week)
Contract	Fixed term to 31/12/2029 with the possibility of extension to 31/12/2033 subject to funding from the Church Commissioners
Location	St John's House, 155 – 163 The Rock, Bury BL9 0ND
Line Manager	Director of Children and Young People
Probation	Appointments subject to a 6-month probationary period
Pension	MDBF offers membership of the Church Workers Pension Fund– Pension Builder Classic product
Annual Leave:	22 days' entitlement for the first 12 months of employment, rising to 25 days annual leave thereafter, in addition to bank holidays and 3 church days

Application timetable

The closing date for applications is **Thursday, 26 February 2026 at 4:00pm.**

Shortlisted candidates will be informed by **Friday, 27 February 2026.**

The interviews are scheduled for **Friday, 6 March 2026** at St John's House, 155-163 The Rock, Bury BL9 0ND. Further details will be provided to shortlisted candidates.

Eligibility and pre-employment enquiries

There is an Occupational Requirement for the post holder to be a practising Christian in accordance with Schedule 9 to the Equality Act 2010.

The post will be offered to the successful candidate subject to satisfactory references and proof of eligibility to work in the UK.

The post is subject to an enhanced DBS check with a check of the Adults and Children's barred lists.