



# **GUIDANCE TO GOVERNING BODIES**

**Appointment of a Headteacher or  
Principal to a Catholic School or  
Academy**

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**EDUCATION COMMISSION**

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# **GOVERNORS**

## INTRODUCTION

The governing body is the employer of staff in the Catholic school or academy (any further reference to school also includes academy unless otherwise stated). The decision to appoint a person to the post of headteacher or principal (any further reference to headteacher also includes principal unless otherwise stated) must be ratified by the whole governing body.

In appointing a person to the post of headteacher, the governing body is collaborating in a special way with the Archbishop who has canonical responsibility to ensure the person appointed is a practising Catholic, in good standing in the Catholic community, a person of prayer and reflection with a sound theological basis and has excellent professional skills and the relevant experience to lead a Catholic school.

This guidance should be used in conjunction with the guidance, advice and support from the Education Commission, the local authority (for maintained VA schools), the school's HR provider and any party the school has contracted with to provide support for leadership. In the case of a school being in the trusteeship of a religious order, advice should be sought from a representative of the trustees.

The Archbishop expects to be represented at all appointments of headteachers by the presence of an officer from the Education Commission.

Governing bodies of Catholic schools have a legal responsibility to ensure the school is managed and organised according to Christian values and the teachings of the Church, and it is the headteacher who will be the instrument in carrying this forward.

*'The Catholic school finds its true justification in the mission of the Church; it is based on an educational philosophy in which faith, culture and life are brought into harmony....The achievement of this not so much depends on subject matter or methodology as on the people who work there.'* (The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School: Congregation for Catholic Education 1988).



## APPOINTING THE RIGHT PERSON

Appointing the right person to the post of headteacher to lead a Catholic school is probably the most important decision a governing body will make.

The combined guidance and advice from the different parties supporting the governing body should enable it to be confident in appointing the right person or agreeing an appointment should not be made.

The person appointed must be the right person for the school. Candidates called for interview may be strong in experience, qualifications and achievements but on their own these are not enough.

There should be a match between the strengths of the candidate and the needs of the school and the direction it is taking.

To achieve this, the job description and person specification should be drawn up so they reflect the priorities of the school improvement plan and clearly outline the skills, attributes and experiences needed for the headteacher to move the school forward and achieve continuous improvement.

As well as being a person of strong personal faith and practice the headteacher must show her/himself to be an exemplary leader of a Catholic school demonstrating an understanding of education based on Gospel values. The headteacher of the Catholic school must demonstrate an unwavering drive to develop all in the school to reach the highest standards possible in all areas:

*'Those who are in charge of Catholic schools are to ensure, under the supervision of the local ordinary, that the formation given in them is, in its academic standards, at least as outstanding as that in other schools in the area'* (The Code of Canon Law: canon 806 (2))



## THE HEADTEACHER IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

There is a requirement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference for England and Wales that those appointed to the post of headteacher must be practising Catholics (Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers in Catholic Schools: Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales. 2009). The Archdiocese of Southwark endorses this requirement fully. Practising Catholic means that the person is a baptised Catholic or has been received into the Church, the person is in good standing in the parish and wider Catholic community, there is nothing in what the person believes or practises in their life which is against the teachings of the Church and the person is in full sacramental communion with the Church.

The Catholic Education Service has produced guidance on the qualities a Catholic headteacher should have:

- S/he is the leading professional in the school and working with the governing body will provide vision, leadership and direction and ensure it is led and managed in such a way that promotes its mission statement.
- Working with the governing body s/he is responsible for the continuous improvement in standards in all areas, of staff as well as students, and for ensuring the equality of opportunity for all.

To achieve these the headteacher must be committed to promoting:

- The leadership of the Catholic community in the development of faith and spiritual life.
- The search for excellence – as an integral part of the spiritual quest.
- The uniqueness of the individual – valued and loved by God.
- The education of the whole person – based on the belief that the human and divine are inseparable.
- The education of all – within the special duty of care for the poor and the education of those who are socially, academically, physically or emotionally disadvantaged.
- Education in moral principles – through the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values.

The key skills and attributes of the headteacher include:

- Enabling regular reflection on core purposes to strengthen and renew the life of the school as a Catholic community.
- Ensuring change is managed in line with the school's mission statement.
- Undertaking all organisation in awareness of the need for solidarity and subsidiarity.
- Recognising the need for humility, openness, honesty and integrity in directing and coordinating the work of others.
- Recognising, developing and celebrating the gifts of each member of the community.
- Encouraging others in reflective approach to practice.
- Providing a role model which inspires and encourages all to continue on the journey in faith.
- Recognising the help that can be provided by the Diocese, religious orders, the Catholic Education Service and other Catholic agencies and schools.
- Fostering good relationships which reflect the Gospel values of justice and reconciliation.
- Working towards the development of a culture of inclusion rather than exclusion.

Prayer and reflection are at the heart of the headteacher's life. The exercise of leadership is in itself a ministry which demonstrates **faith** and **vision**. This ministry gives a position of influence underpinned by **discernment**. The relationships they have in the school community and in the wider community are hallmarked by **compassion** and **forgiveness**, as well as striving for **excellence** which is compatible with the Gospel value of the **call to perfection**

## THE VACANCY ARISES

Once the Chair becomes aware that there will be a vacancy, the Education Commission, and if applicable, the local authority and/or the trustees of a religious order should be informed as soon as possible.

There are occasions where confidentiality must be maintained. An example is where the incumbent headteacher has given several terms' notice but does not want others informed until a later stage. In circumstances like this the Chair should ask for the confidentiality to be extended to the Education Commission and, if applicable, the local authority and/or the trustees of a religious order. The early communication provides the opportunity for the Education Commission and others to give advice on the stages that need to be followed.

## FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Once the Chair has received firm confirmation of a vacancy and that there is no longer a need for confidentiality, a full governing body meeting should be called. It is important to give governors as much notice as possible as it is likely to be a non-scheduled meeting. The agencies advising the governing body should be notified and invited. These will include:

- An officer from the Education Commission.
- A representative of the trustees of a religious order, if applicable.
- An adviser from the local authority, if applicable.
- The school's HR provider.
- The school's leadership adviser, if applicable.

The advisers have advisory rights only throughout the whole process and any votes taken or decisions made will be the responsibility of governors. It is good practice not to invite the incumbent headteacher to the meeting. If this proves difficult, the Chair should seek advice from the Education Commission who will advise on how the situation should be managed.

The purposes of the meeting are:

- To inform the full governing body of the vacancy.
- To agree a date for the new appointment to take effect.
- To consider the strategic needs of the school in reference to the school development/improvement plan, post ofsted action plan, monitoring reports, performance data and other relevant information.
- To discuss the qualities, skills and experiences the new headteacher will require.
- To agree a salary range for the new headteacher.
- To agree a timetable for the appointment process.
- To set up an appointment panel.
- To consider if the appointment panel requires training.

It is important to agree at this stage if the governing body wants to have a system whereby more than one candidate could be considered for appointment. It can be the case that after the selection process more than one candidate is appointable. The panel would then agree to whom the job would be offered first. If declined it would then be offered to the next preferred candidate.

It is important the governing body considers all guidance given by the advisers. Whilst it is important to celebrate the work and achievements of the incumbent headteacher, the governing body is not appointing a successor. The skills and experiences required of the new headteacher may not be the same of those required of the incumbent headteacher.

The Chair must complete Supplementary Form 1 and return it to the Education Commission.

## THE APPOINTMENT PANEL

- The appointment panel must be convened at the full governing body meeting and this action must be recorded.
- The panel must consist of at least three governors (not the headteacher). Associate members are not governors so cannot be included in the panel but may advise.
- At least one governor must have completed successfully the statutory safeguarding in recruitment training.
- There is no requirement as to which category of governor must be included but our guidance is that the majority should be foundation governors to ensure that the successful applicant meets the requirements for the headteacher in the Catholic school. Where possible the parish priest should be included on the panel. If the parish priest is not a governor he can be invited to attend parts of the process as an adviser.
- It is important to ensure that there is no conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest. E.g. a staff governor on a panel might benefit by 'acting up' if there is an internal applicant.

## THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PROCESS

The appointment panel is responsible for all stages of the process and does not have to report back to the full governing body until the meeting at the end of the process. Advice should be taken as considered appropriate at each stage. This should be from the advisers supporting the governors in the process and will often be by telephone or email.

The appointment panel must manage the following stages:

- Electing a Chair.
- Appointing a clerk.
- Agreeing on a date for the shortlisting.
- Confirming date(s) for the interview day(s).
- Preparing the application pack.
- Drafting the advertisement.
- Agreeing the arrangements for visits to the school/
- Agreeing a process to manage pre shortlisting enquiries.
- Arranging for appropriate venue(s) for the interview day(s).
- Arranging the shortlisting meeting.
- Informing applicants of shortlisting decisions.
- Taking up references.
- Agreeing interview tasks and questions.
- The Interview day(s)
- Decisions and post selection actions.
- Follow up

## ELECTING A CHAIR

Once the panel has been convened it is good practice to elect a Chair who will have responsibility to ensure the panel works to the agreed requirements and timetable.

## APPOINTING A CLERK

The panel should appoint a clerk. It is not necessary for the clerk to attend all stages but will need to be present when decisions are made in order to record them, viz. the short listing meeting and interviews.

## AGREEING A DATE FOR THE SHORTLISTING MEETING

This should be done as far in advance as possible. It is important to confirm dates with the advisers before finalising them.

## CONFIRMING DATE(S) FOR THE INTERVIEW DAY(S)

This should be done as far in advance as possible and confirmed with the advisers before publishing them. The times people are required should be indicated but are subject to change.

## PREPARING THE APPLICATION PACK

The application pack is a very important set of documents as it gives a good indication of the achievements of the school and the direction in which it is moving. It is also compiled to attract applications from suitable candidates. It should contain sufficient information for the candidate to develop an understanding of the school and its ethos but should not contain too many documents that could mean potential candidates could be put off from applying as they do not have the time to read it all.

The essential documents for the pack are:

- A letter of welcome from the Chair.
- Brief statement about the post including salary details.
- Statement on the Headteacher and Principal in the Catholic School (appendix 1).
- School brochure or prospectus.
- Contextualised information about the school which could include Key stage results, Sec 5 and Sec 48 report summaries, Summary of school development/improvement plan.
- Directions to school's website.
- Job description (appendix 2).
- Person specification (appendix 3).
- Brief summary of school's safeguarding policy
- CES application form\*
- Details of returning completed applications.
- Dates of shortlisting and interviews.
- Procedures for visiting the school.\*\*

\*The Governing Body is the employer of the headteacher in a Catholic school. It is a requirement that the Catholic Education Service (CES) application form is used. This is used for appointments in all Catholic schools in England and Wales and meets employment law requirements. It has parts which are not contained in local authority application forms viz. asking for a person's religion and asking for the name of a priest to provide a reference. There are separate forms for VA schools and academies. They are available on [www.educationcommission.org.uk](http://www.educationcommission.org.uk)

\*\*The appointment panel must decide when it is appropriate for candidates to visit the school.

If visits are made before applications are received or once applications are received but before the shortlisting meeting, it should be made clear as to the purpose of the visit. If the visit is optional then the purpose of the visit is for the applicant to gather information about the school. The visit is not part of the selection process so any information about or perception made of the applicant during the visit cannot be used at any time in the selection process. If visits are required before or after shortlisting then they can be used as part of the selection process but those visiting must be told this. In this case the timetable for each visit must be exactly the same.

## DRAFTING THE ADVERTISEMENT

The quality of the advertisement and what it contains is important in attracting interest in the post. The essential insertions are:

- Name and contact details of the school.
- School crest.
- Date when appointment takes effect.
- A brief formative statement about the school highlighting achievements.
- A brief statement on the qualities, skills and experience of the person the school wants to appoint.
- Requirement for the person to be a practising Catholic\*
- Salary details\*\*
- Closing date for applications and to whom they should be sent.
- Brief statement about safeguarding/CRB checks
- Dates of interviews

\*It is a requirement from the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales that the person holding the post of headteacher should be a practising Catholic. This is endorsed fully by the Archdiocese of Southwark. Advertising for a practising Catholic does not contravene employment law.

The 2010 Equality Act allows for employers to make it a requirement that a person appointed to a specified post in a place of employment which has a religious character to be a member of the particular religion. This is endorsed in section 60 of the School Standards and Framework Act (SSFA) 1998 which gives the governing body of a voluntary aided school with a designated religious character the right to give preference to those of the that religion in connection with appointment, remuneration and promotion.

Section 124AA of the SSFA 1998 makes similar provision in appointing Catholic headteachers to academies designated as being Roman Catholic.

The Discrimination on Grounds of Religion and Belief Regulations 2003, allow for preference in the appointment of a person of the same religion as that designated by the school if it can be shown there is a genuine occupational requirement. It is important not to put in phrases like 'practising Catholic preferred' as it is not the same as 'practising Catholic required'. The governing body could be open to challenge and make it difficult to justify a genuine occupational requirement. Do not use the term 'practising Christian' as there is no definition for a practising Christian. The governing body could also be open to challenge as preference can only be given to a person of the same religion as designated to the school. The religion is Roman Catholic. Christian is a separate designation.

\*\*Some governing bodies put in the actual salary levels as well as the points range.

Regulations allow for the governing body to advertise the post of headteacher in such a manner as it considers appropriate. Our guidance is that the post should be advertised as widely as possible to attract a good 'field'. The school's HR provider can help with this. Governing bodies should consider the Catholic Teachers Gazette which goes into every Catholic school in England and Wales, the Education Commission Website and local parishes. Governing bodies may wish to consider advertising more widely such as in the Times Educational Supplement (TES) and on-line sites specialising in senior leadership appointments.

Governing bodies may be approached by specialised recruitment agencies who charge for their services. The costs can vary enormously. The Education Commission does not make recommendations in relation to recruitment agencies.

## **ARRANGING A PROCESS TO MANAGE PRE SHORTLISTING ENQUIRIES**

The panel should agree how enquiries are managed. Most enquiries will be made by email or telephone.

A senior person in the school (teaching or other) should be asked to answer enquiries. This ensures consistency.

The main enquiries are likely to be questions such as:

- Can I visit the school? The panel will already have agreed a procedure for visits.
- Can I have more information? – If the information is on the school website direct the person there. If the information is available and not confidential then copies can be sent.
- Can I submit my CV instead of completing the application form? – The answer is always no. It is important that all applications are received in the same way.
- If shortlisted can I be interviewed at a different date? – The answer is no unless the person comes under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations requiring the governing body to make reasonable adjustments. Advice should be sought from the school's HR provider.
- If successful in my application can I negotiate a higher salary than the one advertised? – The salary range is published and therefore is a contractual component. If a potential candidate is already on a higher salary than what is being offered, advice should be sought from the school's HR provider.
- I have a disability. Can special provision be made for me at the interview? - There is a statutory duty to make reasonable adjustments in order to ensure no one is at a disadvantage owing to a disability. The person does not have to be registered disabled. Advice should be sought from the school's HR provider.

## **ARRANGING FOR APPROPRIATE VENUE(S) FOR THE INTERVIEW DAY(S)**

It is important that the venue is fit for purpose. It may be possible to use the school. If the school is the venue then it is important that the candidates are given enough accommodation where they will not be disturbed. Governing bodies might feel this is best achieved in an offsite venue such as a parish hall, presbytery, LA professional development centre or facilities in a nearby further or higher education institution.

The arrangements should be that the candidates are able to prepare, present and rest without any undue disturbance.

The essential requirements are:

- Availability of parking spaces for candidates.
- A 'sitting out' room where candidates can take a break.
- A preparation room for candidates, if required.
- An interview room large enough to accommodate the panel, advisers and candidates comfortably.
- Sufficient toilet facilities (check there are enough toilet rolls).
- Hot and cold drinks available throughout the process
- Lunch if candidates are required both sides of lunchtime.

## **SHORT LISTING MEETING**

The panel and advisers should be given as much notice as possible for the date and venue of the meeting.

Application forms should be given to panel members and advisers in enough time before the meeting so that they can be read.

It is up to the Chair of the panel to decide how the process will be managed. There are a number of models and the school's HR provider will be able to offer guidance.

It is important to remember that the application forms will not give all the information that is required in order for the panel to determine whether an applicant is appointable. It is acceptable that the applicant matches sufficient criteria at this stage.

It is Diocesan guidance that each applicant who matches sufficient criteria should be shortlisted even if it means all applicants or only one.

The clerk should keep a record of decisions and how they were arrived at.

Applicants who are unsuccessful at the shortlisting stage have a right to feedback if they request it.

Notes made by panel members and advisers are part of the appointment process and should be given to the clerk at the end of the meeting. The notes must be kept for six months from the time an appointment is made.

There will be occasions when advisers will not be able to attend the meeting. This does not prevent them from further participation in the process as they advise and do not vote. In such cases the adviser will inform the Chair of their observations from the application forms. The Chair will be able to relate this to the panel at the time the advisers would have given their input.

## **INFORMING APPLICANTS OF SHORTLISTING DECISIONS**

At the end of the shortlisting meeting it should be agreed as to how applicants are informed of the panel's decisions.

Once the decision is made it should be conveyed as soon as possible.

Some governing bodies have a standard letter for those being called for interview and one for those not being called.

It may be appropriate to email particularly if the interview date is soon after the shortlisting meeting. If email is being used it is important to ask applicants for the email address to be used.

A telephone call is the quickest way but can be problematic at times especially when someone who has not been shortlisted wants chapter and verse as to why, there and then. Feedback should not be given at this time but at a later time when the notes on the decision not to shortlist are at hand.

Shortlisted candidates must be informed that they are required to bring proof of identity, proof of address and original qualifications or certified copies when they attend for interview.

## TAKING UP REFERENCES

It should be agreed at the end of the meeting as to how references for shortlisted candidates are requested and received. This is normally done by the school's HR provider or clerk. If it is the clerk then s/he must have successfully completed the statutory training for safeguarding in recruitment. The CES application form requires up to three references:

- One from the parish priest where the candidate worships regularly
- One from the candidate's present (or most recent) employer
- One from the candidate's current or most recent LA. Candidates working in academies or in local authorities who do not give references may give the name of another suitable referee.

Diocesan guidance is that three references should be taken up.

It is required that the Department for Education's guidance on safeguarding in educational settings is followed.

- If the candidate is not currently working with children a reference must be obtained from the most recent place where the applicant worked with children or young people
- Open testimonials and references beginning 'To Whom it May Concern' are not acceptable.
- A job description and person specification should be included with reference requests
- Requests for references should state that the reference must be accurate and not contain any material misstatement or omission and that the relevant factual content contained in it may be discussed with the applicant
- Reference request should ask for details of the applicants present post and salary and verifiable comments about the applicant's performance history and conduct and the relationship of the referee with the applicant and the time the candidate has been known to the referee
- Reference requests should ask for details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to in which the disciplinary sanction is current and any disciplinary procedures involving children's safety and welfare even if the sanction has expired
- Reference requests should ask for details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised about the candidate relating to the safety and welfare of children or young people or their behaviour towards children or young people, and the outcomes e.g. whether they were investigated, conclusions reached, and how the matter was resolved

The person receiving the references should check that all specific questions have been answered. If there are questions unanswered or parts are vague the referee should be telephoned and asked to provide fuller information. Any information about past disciplinary action or allegation should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Actions or allegations resolved some time ago, or if unfounded, are less likely to be of concern to the panel. A history of repeated allegations or actions over time is likely to be of concern to the panel.

References can be asked for in a variety of written forms. The school's HR provider will advise on the most appropriate. The Diocese provides a pro-forma for the panel to use when requesting a reference from the parish priest of the parish where the applicant worships regularly (appendix 4). Verbal references by telephone are not acceptable.

Governing bodies may wish to refer to *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007* available on the DFE website.

## AGREEING INTERVIEW TASKS AND QUESTIONS

The tasks and interview questions should be agreed before the interview day (s). They should be designed to test and challenge the professional skills of candidates and relate to the needs of the school. Normally interviews for headteachers are spread over two days. Day one is used for the tasks which may include:

- A finance test to ascertain if candidates have an understanding of school finances in regards to planning, monitoring and ensuring value for money.
- Taking an assembly. A Commission assembly assessment sheet is available (appendix 5).
- Meeting with the student/pupil council.
- Gold fish bowl. Where candidates are observed together discussing a topic.
- Observing and giving feedback from a lesson.
- In-Tray exercises to test how well candidates can prioritise and delegate.
- Analysis of school data exercise.

Some schools also prefer a 'carousel' of small panel interviews on day one where each candidate is interviewed on a number of topics e.g.

- Catholic ethos and mission
- Teaching and learning
- Leadership

Notes should be taken at each exercise.

Day 2 is normally used for a presentation and interview.

It is good practice to give the title of the presentation on the day it is presented. The title of the presentation should be relevant to the school. Once the title has been given the candidate should be allowed sufficient time to prepare. It is up to the candidate as to how s/he presents so it is important to have a flip chart and a laptop available for their use.

The interview questions will be agreed with input of the advisers. The local authority or leadership adviser will give guidance on professional questions, the Education Commission adviser will give guidance on Catholic ethos and leadership questions and the HR adviser will give guidance on personnel and safeguarding questions. At least one question must test the candidates' understanding of safeguarding in educational settings

## THE INTERVIEW DAY(S)

The Panel and advisers should meet before the candidates arrive giving enough time to go over the plans for the day. If the procedure is that decisions will be made at the end of day 1 as to whether candidates go through to day 2, then candidates must be informed of this before they arrive for interview.

The requirements are;

- Candidates should be met and welcomed
- Candidates should be shown where the toilets are and taken to their 'sitting out' room
- Candidates (either individually or together) should be introduced to the Chair of the panel
- Candidates should be given a timetable for the day(s)
- Candidates should be offered refreshments.
- Someone should act as 'chaperone' for candidates throughout the day(s)
- The candidates' should provide proof of identity, proof of address, evidence of eligibility to work in the United Kingdom and originals or certified copies of qualifications

It is good practice for someone to take responsibility for ensuring everything is where it should be when needed:

- Packs for the panel and advisers
- Paper and pens in the interview room and candidate's work room
- Drinking water and glasses in each room
- Hot drinks are ready at the timetabled times
- Flip chart has enough clean sheets
- Ample flip chart pens
- Electronic equipment, if required, is working

If there is a presentation the panel should be briefed on what the candidates should present. This briefing is normally done by an adviser and there may be a checklist for the panel to follow.

Each candidate must be given the same amount of time to make the presentation.

There should be an allocated amount of time given for the panel to ask questions following the presentation. This must be the same for each candidate.

Before the interview the Chair should agree who asks each question. A 'marking sheet' with what should be contained in the answers may be used by panel members. The school's HR provide will advise on this.

It is good practice for the Chair to tell the candidate at the beginning of the interview how many questions there will be and the amount of time they will have to answer them.

The same lead questions must be asked of each candidate. Once a candidate has answered a question they may be asked supplementary questions. Supplementary questions are asked to clarify something the candidate has said. The supplementary questions do not have to be the same for each candidate as their answers to the lead question will be different. It is important the Chair 'manages' the supplementary questions in that they do not take up too much time or become a discussion between the candidate and the person asking the questions.

The last questions in the interview are two questions asked by the Education Commission adviser on behalf of the Archbishop (appendix 6).

The Chair should then:

- Ask the candidate if s/he has any questions
- Ask the candidate if s/he will accept the post if it is offered to her/him
- Explain to the candidate when and how s/he will be informed of the governing body decision

## **DECISIONS AND POST SELECTION ACTIONS**

It is the responsibility of the panel to come to a decision. This is done by assessing each candidate in order against the selection criteria and how they performed in the tasks, presentation and interview. It is important that candidates are not assessed against each other.

The school's HR adviser will provide guidance on how this is done.

The advisers should be present during the plenary session and asked to give their judgements. It is important that these are taken into account. It is important that the advice given to the panel should be clear, unambiguous and concise and relate to the process and the boundaries in which the adviser advises.

The local authority or leadership adviser will give detailed feedback on the professional competencies of the candidates in relation to the national standards for headteachers and the quality of their outcome during the interview(s).

The Education Commission adviser and, if applicable, the representative of the trustees of a religious order will give detailed feedback on the candidates' competencies in understanding the Catholic school, the school's ethos and mission and Catholic leadership. The advisers cannot vote on a candidate's appointment or not being appointed.

The Education Commission Adviser can make one of the following three statements either after each candidate has been discussed or towards the end of the plenary:

- The Diocese will fully support the appointment of X if that is the decision of the panel
- The Diocese will support the appointment of X if that is the decision of the panel, but the panel should be aware there is need for support in.....
- The Diocese would not support the appointment of X if this is the decision of the panel for the following reasons.....

There should be a vote taken by panel members only on each candidate. It is important that this is recorded and clear notes should be taken as to the reasons for either appointing the candidate or not appointing.

It is totally acceptable for the panel to vote not to appoint any candidate.

If a decision has been made to appoint a candidate the panel should agree the starting point on the salary range.

The panel must also decide if another candidate can be offered the post if the preferred candidate refuses it if there has been an agreement made at the full governing body meeting that this is acceptable.

It should be agreed who will provide feedback to the candidates. Dates and times should be agreed when the person giving the feedback will be available.

All notes made by the panel members and advisers must be handed in at the end of the meeting to either the clerk or the school's HR provider.

The full governing body should meet as soon as possible after the interviews. This is best done at a time following the interviews on the same day. It is a statutory requirement to have this meeting for the purpose of ratifying the panel's decision (subject to the usual checks being made). Although there is no set formula for the meeting best practice suggests that the Chair of the panel gives a brief summary of why the panel came to its decision and to give a brief summary of the strengths of the successful candidate. If the panel has agreed to offer the post to a 'reserve' candidate if the preferred one refuses, this should also be ratified. There should be no discussion on reasons why candidates were not appointed as there could be a challenge from an unsuccessful candidate. It is not the business of this meeting to interrogate the panel or to ask it to justify why it came to its decision. The full governing body has already expressed its confidence in the panel when it was set up.

Once the decision has been ratified candidates should be informed as soon as possible. The successful candidate should be contacted first. The reason for this is if the candidate refuses the post the panel may have a 'reserve'.

Unsuccessful candidates should be given details of the person they should contact for feedback

## FOLLOW UP

The following should commence the day after the candidates have been informed:

- A letter of appointment) should be sent to the successful candidate. The letter should state that the person will be employed by the governing body of the school. It should also state the salary range and starting point. It should also make clear that the appointment is conditional upon the statutory checks being made (e.g. CRB checks). A health questionnaire can be sent at this stage but liaise with the HR provider first.
- If applicable, the local authority should be informed of the appointment in writing
- The Education Commission and, if applicable, the trustees of a religious order, should be informed. There is a proforma for sending the information to the Education Commission (appendix 7)

Once the governing body has received in writing acceptance of the post by the candidate and all checks have been made, two copies of the CES contract for headteachers should be sent to the candidate both of which are signed and one returned. Contracts are available to download from [cesew.org.uk](http://cesew.org.uk). Governing bodies of catholic academies should use the contract approved by the Education Commission. The type of contract will differ slightly depending on the status of the academy.



## APPENDIX 1

### THE HEADTEACHER AND PRINCIPAL IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL AND ACADEMY

Catholic schools and academies in the Archdiocese of Southwark are established to provide the highest standards of Catholic education for the children and young people in their care. They form a vital part of the educational mission of the Diocese, and make a major contribution to the Church's task of evangelisation. They are challenged to be communities of hope and of witnesses to the love of Jesus Christ.

By accepting the post of headship, headteachers and principals make a public commitment to follow Christ's example of leadership. They share in the ministry of the Archbishop and undertake their work in communion with him, with all the catholic schools, academies and colleges in the Diocese and with the wider Church community.

Catholic schools and academies are at the interface of many different understandings of life, society and education. The difference between the Christian approach to education which is based on an understanding of life as God's gift, and a general approach to education which does not openly acknowledge any religious values is of fundamental importance. However, in a fast moving world where there are innumerable issues to be dealt with on a daily basis, the challenge to discern what will assist the growth of the community is not an easy one.

Prayer and reflection are essential for headteachers, who give witness by their example to the central importance of relationship with Christ. Their exercise of leadership should increasingly demonstrate qualities of love and forgiveness, of service, of respect for the individual and of care for the disadvantaged. Their roles give them a position of influence, not only with pupils, staff, parents and governors, but also in much wider contexts.

The nature of the headteacher's role means there are high expectations of those applying for headship. Candidates should be people of prayer and have a sound theological and educational understanding and the qualities of wisdom and discernment necessary to manage the tensions and ambiguities of the role. They must be baptised Catholic or received into the Catholic Church, in good standing in their parish and wider Catholic community, there must not be anything in what they believe or practice that is against the teachings of the Catholic Church and they must be in full sacramental communion with the Church.

The demands of the role could appear to be impossible. Certainly, no headteacher can succeed in fulfilling most requirements of the job without the support of colleagues in and out of school, of all members of the Church community and of family and friends. But if a person is called to this ministry God will give her or him the grace and strength to carry it out, to begin again after failure and to find great joy in responding to the mission.

## APPENDIX 2

### THE JOB DESCRIPTION

This is a model job description for a headteacher in a Catholic school. Governing bodies should customise it to meet their particular needs. Each job description should start with the following:

**AIMS OF THE SCHOOL:** (Insert school's aims or mission statement or summary of the mission statement).

**JOB PURPOSE:** To lead and manage the school in consultation with the Governing Body, in order to provide a Catholic Christian educational community in which all are enabled to achieve their highest potential.

**RESPONSIBLE TO:** The headteacher is an employee of the Governing Body and is required to carry out professional duties as detailed in this job description, and in Canon Law, the Trust Deed and Instrument of Government for the school (Articles of Association and Memorandum of Understanding for academies) and, where applicable those set out in the current School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOL

The strategic direction and development of the school stems from the educational mission of the Church which is reflected in the school's mission statement, the school's development/improvement plan and all policies and procedures.

Main Tasks:

- To ensure the vision for the school is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted upon effectively by all
- To work with the Diocese, parishes and others to create a shared culture and positive climate that reflects the Mission of the Church in education
- To work with the Governing Body in forming educational aims and objectives, targets, outcomes and policies for their implementation
- To develop the schools development/improvement plan to promote and sustain ongoing improvement
- To work with and motivate others to ensure creativity, innovation and quality, including in the use of appropriate new technology, to achieve excellence and nurture human wholeness
- To ensure that strategic planning is based on the Governing Body's policies and takes account of the diversity, values and experiences of the school and wider community and the mission of the Church in education

### LEADING LEARNING AND TEACHING

In a Catholic school the search for excellence is expressed in learning and teaching which responds to the needs and aspirations of all its pupils and acknowledges their individual worth as children of God.

Main tasks:

- In consultation with the Governing Body to develop curriculum policies and practices that meet statutory requirements, are relevant to the aptitude and stages of development of all pupils, including those with special needs, and provide for the spiritual, moral, cultural, social and emotional development of all pupils
- To determine and implement a diverse and flexible curriculum and implement an effective assessment framework
- To develop systems of evaluating individual pupil progress to improve learning and teaching, motivate pupils, inform parents and challenge staff, including the use of new technology to enhance and extend the learning experience of pupils and staff

- To ensure the Diocesan policies on religious education, sex and relationship education and worship are implemented
- To monitor, evaluate and review teaching practices and promote improvement strategies
- To identify excellent practice in teaching and disseminate to develop practice across the school
- To challenge underperformance at all levels and ensure effective remedial action.
- To implement strategies to secure high standards of behaviour and attendance
- To develop an extended school programme providing high quality opportunities for pupils and staff to pursue learning outside of the classroom setting

#### LEADING AND MANAGING STAFF

In a Catholic school the role of the headteacher is one of leadership of a learning community rooted in faith. Christ is the inspiration for the headteacher's leadership. The headteacher's management of staff should demonstrate an awareness of their unique contribution as individuals, valued and loved by God.

Main tasks:

- To assist the Governing Body in determining the staffing structure for the school
- To develop and maintain effective strategies for recruitment, induction, professional development and appraisal of staff having regard to Diocesan guidance and advice
- To treat all staff fairly, equitably and with dignity and acknowledge their contributions by acknowledging and praising success
- To ensure effective planning, allocation, support and evaluation of work undertaken by teams and individuals, ensuring clear delegation of tasks and responsibilities
- To develop and maintain a realistic culture of high expectation for self and others and take appropriate action where necessary
- To review own practice regularly, set targets and take responsibility for own development
- To have regard to the work/ life balance of individual members of staff

#### MANAGING THE ORGANISATION

In the Catholic school the deployment of staff, finance, material resources, and time should be done to promote the common good in achieving the outcomes identified in the development/improvement plan.

Main tasks:

- To implement policies and procedures of the Governing Body to create an organisational structure, which reflects the school's Catholic Christian values and enables the management systems, structures and processes to work effectively in compliance with statutory requirements.
- To take responsibility and account for the financial and material resources which are delegated to the headteacher
- To manage the school's financial, and human resources effectively and efficiently to achieve the school's educational goals and priorities
- To manage and organise the school environment efficiently and effectively to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum, health and safety regulations and reflects the distinctive nature of the Catholic school
- To ensure stewardship of the buildings and grounds in relation to Diocesan requirements
- To provide a safe and secure environment for all who work in and visit the school
- To ensure the use of all resources is monitored, evaluated and reviewed to improve the quality of education for all pupils and to secure value for money
- To use new technology to improve the effective use of resources

## SECURING ACCOUNTABILITY

In the Catholic school the headteacher fulfils her/his responsibilities in accordance with its Instrument of Government ( Articles of Association and Memorandum of understanding for academies). The headteacher supports the Governing Body in fulfilling its responsibilities under Canon Law to the Diocese and in accordance with English law.

Main tasks:

- To fulfil contractual commitments in relation to the governing body including attendance at Governing Body meetings, reporting to the Governing Body as required and assisting it in its work as needed
- To develop and maintain positive relationships with parishes, the wider Catholic Community, other Catholic schools and other schools in the area
- To recognise the authority of the Archbishop in relation to the provision of Catholic education in the Diocese and to work with Diocesan authorities to provide them with such information as they require
- To develop a Catholic ethos enabling all to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding, celebrate success and share responsibility for outcomes
- To ensure individual staff responsibilities are defined clearly, understood and agreed and are subject to review and evaluation
- To develop and present a coherent, understandable and accurate account of the school's performance to a range of audiences including parents, governors, the Diocese and the local authority
- To provide opportunities for parents to have dialogue and meetings with staff in the school to support their children's learning
- To liaise with other agencies as appropriate.
- To ensure accurate and up to date records are maintained to satisfy safeguarding regulations
- To reflect on own personal contributions to school achievement and to take account of feedback from others

## STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

In a Catholic school the headteacher shares responsibility for the mission of the school and the wider Diocesan educational system and is therefore called to work in collaboration with others including, parents, clergy, religious, diocesan officers, colleague headteachers and agencies set up by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, as and when appropriate.

Main tasks:

- To build a school culture and curriculum which takes account of the richness and diversity of the school's communities rooted in the Catholic Christian faith
- To create and promote positive strategies for challenging all types of prejudices and discrimination
- To liaise, where appropriate, with offsite learning providers to ensure an appropriate curriculum relevant to individual needs and aspirations
- To seek opportunities to invite parents, past pupils, community figures, businesses and other organisations into the school to enhance and enrich the school and its value to the wider community
- To contribute to the development of the education system by, for example, sharing good practice, working in partnership with other schools and promoting innovative initiatives, especially with other Diocesan schools
- To promote and develop the good reputation of the school within the local and wider communities

## APPENDIX 3

### THE PERSON SPECIFICATION

This is a model Person Specification used for the appointment of Headteachers in Catholic schools. It should be customised to meet the school's needs.

Key: (E) is essential criteria and (D) is desirable criteria.

AIMS OF THE SCHOOL: (insert school's aims, mission statement or summary of mission statement)

#### INTRODUCTION

The core purpose of the headteacher in the Catholic school is to provide leadership in the context of a community rooted in the Catholic faith. Thus it is an essential requirement the person appointed to the post has a strong, personal faith and recognises the opportunities and challenges facing the Catholic school as a vibrant part of the mission of the Church in education.

#### FAITH COMMITMENT

- A practising and committed Catholic (E)
- A secure understanding of the distinctive nature of the Catholic school (E)
- Understanding of the headteacher's role as pastor (E)
- Understanding of the school's role in the Catholic and wider community (E)
- Ability to demonstrate care, compassion and reconciliation (E)
- Ability to lead acts of worship in the Catholic school (E)
- Evidence of participation in parish or Catholic community life (D)

#### QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

- Qualified teacher status (E)
- Honours graduate or equivalent (E)
- Evidence of continuing professional development including leadership (E)
- Evidence of ability to lead quality professional development opportunities (E)
- Qualification in Catholic teaching or leadership e.g. CCRS, MA in Catholic Education (D)
- NPQH or Equivalent (D)\*

\*The NPQH is no longer mandatory but governing bodies may still require it as a desirable specification.

#### EXPERIENCE

- Proven successful track record of teaching in at least two key stage areas (E)
- Successful experience of senior leadership at assistant or deputy level or equivalent (E)
- Successful experience of leading one or more subject areas, key stages or whole school curriculum initiatives (E)
- Thorough knowledge and understanding of current educational issues (E)
- Recent experience in a Catholic school (D)

#### STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

- Ability to articulate and share a vision for the Catholic school (E)
- Ability to inspire and motivate all in the school community (E)
- Evidence of successful strategies for planning, monitoring, reviewing and evaluating school improvement (E)
- Ability to analyse data, develop strategic plans, set targets and achieve desired outcomes (E)

- Ability to develop policies and procedures that demonstrate the Catholic ethos of the school and a commitment to equal opportunities for all (E)
- Understanding of the role of the governing body in the Catholic school (E)
- Ability to develop and maintain a positive culture of high expectation and performance (E)
- Understanding of and commitment to promoting the safeguarding and welfare of pupils (E)

#### LEARNING AND TEACHING

- A secure understanding of the statutory requirements for the curriculum and assessment (E)
- Knowledge and experience of a range of successful learning and teaching strategies to meet pupils' needs (E)
- A secure understanding of assessment procedures and practices which enhance pupils' learning (E)
- Experience of effective monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching (E)
- Experience of individual pupil tracking and monitoring to improve achievement including the use of new technology (E)
- Successful experience in creating an effective learning environment and developing and implementing policy and practice to ensure excellent pupil behaviour (E)
- The ability to role model excellent teaching (D)
- An understanding of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education (D)

#### LEADING AND MANAGING STAFF

- Ability to build and support effective teams (E)
- Ability to delegate and support colleagues (E)
- Experience of performance management for staff and supporting continuing professional development relevant to the school and the individual (E)
- Understanding of budget planning, staff deployment and effective use of resources (E)
- A commitment to the pastoral care of staff (E)
- Experience of working with governors in strategic areas (D)
- Involvement in staff recruitment, appointment and induction (D)

#### ACCOUNTABILITY

- An understanding of the relationship between the headteacher and the governing body (E)
- Ability to communicate effectively in writing and orally to a range of audiences including pupils, parents, staff, governors, clergy, fellow professionals and the media (E)
- Ability to produce clear reports, information and advice to staff and governors (E)
- Ability to provide clear information to the Diocese and the CES when required (E)
- Ability to set clear targets and the means in which to achieve them (E)
- Ability to present the school at its best in the Catholic and wider communities and in the media. (E)
- Understanding the criteria for evaluating a Catholic school (D)
- Experience of presenting reports to governors (D)

#### SKILLS, QUALITIES & ABILITIES

- High quality teaching skills (E)
- Unreserved commitment to the mission of the Catholic school (E)
- High expectation of pupils' learning and attainment (E)
- Strong commitment to school improvement through the pursuit of excellence (E)
- Ability to build and maintain good relationships (E)
- Ability to remain positive and enthusiastic when working under pressure (E)
- Ability to prioritise, meet deadlines and manage own time effectively (E)
- Empathy with children (E)
- Good interpersonal skills (E)

## PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Stamina, energy and resilience (E)
- Sense of humour (E)
- Optimistic outlook (E)
- Confidence (E)
- Commitment to own work/life balance (E)

## APPENDIX 4

### PRO FORMA FOR REQUESTING REFERENCE FROM A PARISH PRIEST

Dear Reverend Father

Name

Address

The above person has applied for the post of headteacher in this school to take effect from xxxx and has given your name as a referee. There is a requirement that the person appointed to this post is a baptised practising Catholic, in good standing within the parish and in full sacramental communion with the Church. It is also a requirement to obtain a reference from the parish priest of the church where s/he attends Sunday Mass on a regular basis.

At the interview the candidate will be asked the following questions on behalf of the Archbishop:

*In taking up the post of headteacher you will be sharing in the ministry of the Archbishop who is the first teacher in the Diocese. This is a ministry which is lived out in public and witnesses to the teachings of the Church. There is, therefore, an expectation that all who hold such posts are practising Catholic and in full sacramental communion with the Church.*

*Is there anything in what you believe or in your personal circumstances that is against the teaching of the Church?*

*As a Catholic leader, how do you demonstrate your commitment to Catholic education and how do you live your faith commitment in school?*

I would be grateful if you would answer the following:

1 To your knowledge, is the person a practising Catholic? Yes No

2 Is this a person in whom you would have full confidence as a leader in a Catholic school? Yes No

3 From your knowledge of the person's faith and religious practice, are you able to recommend her/him without reservation for this post? Yes No

4 Any other comments

Thank you for cooperation

Yours sincerely

## APPENDIX 5

### AIDE MEMOIRE FOR ASSESSING ASSEMBLIES IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The assembly in a Catholic school is primarily an act of worship. It can, however, incorporate items and issues that could be included in an assembly in any school. E.g. events from the news, local events or school news.

Assemblies take a short time and in the day to day life of the school, preparation time has to be proportionate to this and be done along with all the other duties and responsibilities. It is therefore acceptable for a candidate to adopt a simple approach. If there are no power points or visual aids do not worry too much as most assemblies during the year may not have them. The important things to remember are that pupils have learned something from the assembly, what they have learned will help them on their journey in faith or in their spiritual awareness and there has been time for meaningful prayer and reflection.

There is no set format for an assembly in a Catholic school but there are characteristics that are considered strengths:

- The topic of the assembly is made clear to pupils (it does not have to be done at the beginning).
- Pupils are attentive
- There is interaction with pupils
- All pupils can hear clearly what is said and see what is displayed
- Pupils are called by name and thanked if taking part in an assembly
- Prayer is purposeful and related to the topic rather than being functional
- The pupils are involved in the prayers rather than having them said to them (ideally there should be a mix of the teacher leading the prayer and pupils joining in, responding or making their own prayers)
- There is quiet time for personal reflection, even if only 30 seconds of silence. Reflection can be led by the teacher at timely interventions

Try and be part of the assembly and ask yourself the following questions:

- Did I understand what was being conveyed?
- Did I understand what was being used? (Visual or other aids)
- Was the atmosphere at the appropriate times prayerful and reflective?
- Did I learn something new or was something I already knew enhanced?

## APPENDIX 6

### THE ARCHBISHOP'S QUESTIONS

The last questions to be asked at the interview are asked by the representative of the Education Commission on behalf of the Archbishop

- 1. In taking up the post of headteacher you will be sharing in the ministry of the Archbishop who is the first teacher in the Diocese. This is a ministry which is lived out in public and witnesses to the teachings of the Church. There is, therefore, an expectation that all who hold such posts are practising Catholic and in full sacramental communion with the Church. Is there anything in what you believe or in your personal circumstances which is against the teachings of the Church?*

This requires a simple No or yes answer.

If the candidate has answered yes, there should be no discussion but the education Commission officer should ask to meet with the candidate after the interview

- 2. As a Catholic leader how do you demonstrate your commitment to Catholic education and how do you live your faith commitment in school?*

## APPENDIX 7

### PRO FORMA FOR INFORMING THE EDUCATION COMMISSION OF AN APPOINTMENT OR THE DECISION NOT TO APPOINT

This form should be returned to the Education Commission immediately after the decision to appoint, or not to appoint, has been ratified by the full governing body and if an appointment has been made, the candidate has accepted the post.

School

Address

Local authority/local authority area

The governing body has ratified the decision to appoint the person named below as headteacher of this school.

Full name

Home address

Present post (including name of school/college)

Appointment tenable from

Signed

Position

Date

The governing body has ratified the decision not to make an appointment to the post of headteacher

Signed

Position

Date

## APPENDIX 8

### SUPPLEMENTARY FORM 1

The Chair of Governors is asked to return this form to the Education Commission immediately after the full governing body has met to decide the selection process

The Assistant Director of Education  
Education Commission  
St Edward's House  
St Paul's Wood Hill  
Orpington  
Kent  
BR5 2SR  
Or by email to [s.bryan@educationcommission.org.uk](mailto:s.bryan@educationcommission.org.uk)

Notification of the commencement of selection process for a Headteacher

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School: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Reason for vacancy (retirement/resignation): .....

New Headship start date .....

Provisional dates: These must be agreed with the Diocesan Adviser before the timetable is finalised.

Advert: ..... Closing Date: .....

Shortlisting: ..... Interviews: .....

Signed: ..... Date: .....

Tel. Nos: .....

Email: .....