DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

Recruitment Guidance for Senior Catholic Posts

Section B

PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE AND GENERAL DOCUMENTS FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUSTS AND GOVERNORS

Sep 2025

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INTRODUCTION

This document contains agendas and supporting documentation

It should be read in conjunction with document 'A', General Guidance and Key Documents for Catholic Education Trusts and Governors, and the relevant section 'C' documents:

- C1 Recruitment to Executive Headteacher, Headteacher, Head -of School posts in Catholic schools
- C2 Recruitment to Deputy Headteacher posts in Catholic schools
- C3 Recruitment of Heads of Religious Education
- C4 Recruitment of Lay Chaplains

AGENDA FOR THE INITIAL MEETING

1. Opening prayer

2. Apologies for absence

3. Confidentiality

4. Declaration of interest

5. Confirmation of vacant post(s)

6. Procedural matters to note

    a. Membership of recruitment panels
    b. References
    c. Safer recruitment practice
    d. Diocesan Equal Opportunities Statement

7. Consideration of vacancy

    a. Job description
    b. Person specification
    c. Remuneration advice
    d. Advertisement[1] checklist
    e. Application pack[2] checklist
    f. Date of advertisement closing date for applications[3]
    g. Date for circulation of applications and shortlisting working sheet
    h. Date of shortlisting meeting
    i. Interview date
    j. Responsibilities

8. Close of meeting

[1] Recommended for delegation to sub-group
[2] Recommended for delegation to sub-group
[3] List of names of applicants and their schools to be sent to the Diocese and the recruitment adviser

THE INITIAL MEETING OF THE PANEL

Before the initial meeting

1. The Diocesan Department for Education (DDfE) (0191 243 3313) is contacted by the Catholic Education Trust (CET) to discuss the vacancy that has arisen and plan for the recruitment to that vacancy. A follow up confirmation email will be sent by the CET and the DDfE will arrange for a Diocesan recruitment adviser to be appointed. The date of the initial meeting will be mutually agreed and the Diocesan recruitment adviser will be informed and in attendance.
2. An initial phone call takes place between the CET and the Diocesan recruitment adviser.
3. The agenda and supporting papers are distributed before the meeting.
4. The following people are invited to form the recruitment panel and be in attendance throughout the recruitment process:
    - Diocesan adviser appointed by the Diocese
    - Professional adviser appointed by the panel
    - HR adviser for the CET
    - Priest with pastoral responsibility
    - The chair and other members of the local governing committee (LGC) – *except appointments of CEOs and Deputy CEOs*

The remainder of these notes should be read in conjunction with the agenda.

Role of the Advisers

The Diocesan adviser is the Bishop's representative to ensure that the process is carried out in line with the Bishop's expectations. The professional adviser is there to offer their professional assessment of candidates and their relative strengths. The professional adviser may be the CEO, Deputy CEO, Standards Officer or a serving Headteacher from that CET. The HR adviser's role is to advise the panel on process, ensuring best practice and compliance with fair employment legislation.

Managing the Meeting

An appropriate amount of time should be allocated for the initial meeting. **The meeting must be minuted**. For appointments within the CET more than one vacancy may be considered at the initial meeting.

Agenda Items

Agenda item 4: Declaration of interest

Declaration of interest should be shared and recorded. If a member of staff is serving as a governor in a VA school or as a governor on a LGC in an academy and could be a potential permanent or acting candidate, then this should be declared and the person remove themselves from the process.

Equally if the vacancy is for the post of deputy headteacher and a staff governor is a potential candidate then it is not appropriate for that person to be involved in the appointment process.

If an interest is declared but the person does not feel that it debars them from taking part in the shortlisting/appointment process, then the recruitment adviser must investigate this further with the DDfE and then advise the panel accordingly.

Agenda item 5: Confirmation of vacant post

The panel confirms the vacancy and the receipt of formal resignation of outgoing post holder.

Agenda item 6: Procedural matters to note

a. Confirmation of membership of the recruitment panel. Members of the panel not at the initial meeting may be present at the rest of the recruitment process. The panel should be present for the whole recruitment process from shortlisting to interview and therefore must commit to that. An exception for this could be the priest with pastoral responsibility who may, for pastoral reasons, not be able to be present for the whole process.
b. References should be sought after the shortlisting has taken place. They should not be copied and circulated to the panel. They should be made available to the panel on the interview day.
c. At least one member of the interview panel should have undergone the safer recruitment training in the last three years, and the date of this training must be recorded by the Diocesan recruitment adviser.
d. The panel should be familiar with and have formally adopted the Diocesan Equal Opportunities Statement. The panel should be reminded that whilst the process of appointment is open, details of individual applicants are confidential and should not be discussed outside the meeting.

Agenda item 7: Consideration of vacancy

a. **Job descriptions.** The generic Diocesan job descriptions are to be adopted. They cover all the key aspects of the roles and are acceptable to the professional associations. The job descriptions can be tailored to meet the school's specific requirements.

b. **Person specification**. It is recommended that the Diocesan pro formas are used.

c. **Remuneration advice.** The panel sets a salary for the post. The advisers will offer guidance on the appropriate salary where relevant. Reference should be made to the most recent *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions* document. At this stage the panel might also consider whether they would be willing to contribute to relocation expenses.

d. **Advertisement checklist.** There is an advertisement checklist which the panel may find helpful (see appendix).

e. **Application pack checklist.** There is an application pack checklist which the panel may find helpful (see appendix).

f. **Date for advertisement/closing date for applications.** This should allow time for candidates to obtain information from the school and complete and return their application. Ideally this should span two weekends.

g. **Date for circulation of applications and shortlisting working sheet.** Arrangements for circulating applications should be made. Confidentiality must be stressed. A shortlisting pro forma per applicant should be completed by each member of the panel.

h. **Date of shortlisting meeting.** The date for the shortlisting meeting should take account of the time needed for applications to be circulated to the panel.

i. **Interview date.** Time must be allowed between shortlisting and the interview date to allow for references to be requested and received. A period of two weeks between the closing date and the shortlisting meeting is therefore recommended.

j. **Responsibilities.** There should be clear arrangements and allocation of responsibilities for placing the advertisement. Wherever possible it is recommended that applications are returned to the chair of the panel.

SAFER RECRUITMENT PRACTICE

The Diocese and the panel are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young persons and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

It is essential that panels adopt recruitment procedures that help deter, reject or identify people who might pose a risk or abuse children. Further information about the responsibilities placed on schools when carrying out recruitment procedures can be found in the DfE statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

The panel will therefore ensure that a statement regarding safer recruitment will be included in any recruitment documentation.

Safer Recruitment Training

For maintained schools it is a statutory requirement for at least one member of the selection panel to have completed safer recruitment training. The CES recommends that this training is refreshed every 3 years. Whilst not a statutory requirement in academies, this is considered best practice and is an expectation of the Diocese. Panels should also consider what general recruitment training members of the panel might need.

DIOCESAN MODEL STATEMENT ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Diocesan Department for Education for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle has agreed the following model statement on equal opportunities in employment, for recommendation to boards.

The panel is committed to ensuring that matters concerning appointments, including promotions, are dealt with in a fair and just manner. The panel believes that the principle of equal opportunity in selection is consistent with social justice and good personnel practice. This is in keeping with our Catholic aim to recognise the dignity and worth of all who work or apply to work in our organisations.

Our selection processes aim to select the best applicant assessed against the criteria for the post. We are subject to the law of the land and acknowledge our commitment to conducting our affairs in accordance with the law. The panel do not discriminate on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, or sexual orientation

The Roman Catholic community maintains schools which have, as part of their character, a duty to provide Religious Education and a requirement that those schools be conducted in accordance with the rites, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic faith. It would therefore be clear that where applicants are equal in qualifications and experience in the context of selection criteria for a post that a Roman Catholic applicant would have an advantage over an applicant not of the Roman Catholic faith in being able to contribute to the mission of the Church in Catholic education. For the posts of executive headteacher, headteacher, head of school, deputy headteacher, head of religious education and school lay chaplain there is a genuine occupational requirement for them to be filled by a practising Catholic.

In fulfilling the objectives of Catholic schools, the panel have regard to matters which are particularly significant in the light of the sacramental teachings of the Church. Catholic teachers by their example and practice are witnesses to the Gospels and to the Church's teachings. The panel would therefore, in line with its responsibilities, reserve the right to take account of circumstances which were genuinely within a person's control and which might include marital status, avowed personal conviction, belief or conduct.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

What are these?

The person specification comprises a list of the skills, qualities and experience that the panel requires of the person to be appointed. Some requirements will be deemed essential (e.g. that the person appointed should be a practising Catholic). Others will be judged desirable but not essential. These can be used to differentiate between applicants who are equal in terms of the essentials.

How are the criteria determined?

The criteria for the person specification are determined by the panel. The process of agreeing the criteria gives the panel the opportunity to consider and determine what kind of person they are looking to appoint.

The framework offers a starting point for discussion and has been prepopulated. Many criteria in the person specification are suggested as essential for all schools. Others will be judged essential by the panel or will need discussing, modifying or possibly rejecting as inappropriate to the school's needs.

How do they help?

The final document helps potential applicants to decide if they are eligible for the post. More importantly, it enables the panel to ensure their appointment process complies with the legislation on equal opportunities in employment because once the person specification has been determined, it is essential to focus on these when shortlisting and interviewing. When the panel reaches the point of deciding on the person to be appointed, it must be clearly on the basis of the evidence gained as to who represents the best fit against the person specification. No other factors (such as, for example, information gained informally or outside the declared process) should be considered. If challenged, the panel should be able to show that the best applicant assessed against the person specification has been offered the post.

The person specification is sent to prospective applicants together with the application form and information about the school. Because the framework is a working document, it is recommended that criteria should be transferred to a new document and listed under the headings on the framework, divided into 'essential' and 'desirable'.

How will the panel know whether a candidate meets the criteria of the person specification?

It is not possible to tell at the shortlisting stage whether an applicant meets all of the essential criteria. There will be evidence for some straightforward criteria (e.g. qualified teacher status) in the application and applicants' supporting statements should provide at least an indication of further evidence. However, most criteria will be tested at the interview stage by tasks and questions designed to give applicants the opportunity to demonstrate how fully they meet the criteria. Applicants who clearly do not meet one or more of the essential criteria should be ruled out at the shortlisting stage and the reason for this recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

REMUNERATION ADVICE

Setting an appropriate salary for the role will help to attract the right candidate and to reflect the level of challenge in the role being recruited.

For CEO and Deputy CEO posts, Diocesan guidance is available.

For Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and leaders of Religious Education, the School Teacher's Pay and Conditions document (STPC) provides the statutory framework for teachers' pay.

At present there is no national or Diocesan scale for Lay Chaplains.

All academies in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle are committed to adhering to the STPC for teaching staff.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-teachers-pay-and-conditions

AGENDA FOR THE SHORTLISTING MEETING

1. Opening Prayer
2. Apologies for absence
3. Declaration of interest *
4. Consideration of applications against criteria for vacant post(s)
5. Procedural matters
    a) Agreement of shortlist and decision to proceed to interview
    b) References
    c) Feedback to applicants not shortlisted
    d) Confirmation of selection process
    e) Interview day activities
    f) Responsibility for organising interview day(s)
    g) Invitation to interview – identity and qualification checks
6. Close of meeting

* **N.B.** If an online recruitment solution is used in your CET for your recruitment process and the names of applicants are anonymised for shortlisting, item 3 should be moved to the end of the agenda. The names of applicants can then be shared with the panel at the end of the meeting, when shortlisting is complete. This gives the opportunity for members of the recruitment panel to declare any interests once names are known.

SHORTLISTING MEETING

Before the meeting

An appropriate amount of time should be allocated to the meeting. The agenda and applications should be circulated prior to the meeting together with the criteria for appointment and copies of the shortlist working sheet for each candidate.

Agenda Items

Agenda item 3: Declaration of interest

Before shortlisting begins, the list of applicants should be checked to ensure that there is/are no conflict(s) of interest. A conflict of interest arises where the panel member has (or has had) a personal or working relationship with an applicant, or is related to, or has prior knowledge of the applicant outside of the work environment which could in any way affect the decision they make. It is a panel member's responsibility to declare any conflict of interest at any stage during the recruitment process to the chair. The chair will seek advice from the advisers.

The above paragraph also applies to any adviser involved in the appointment process.

Agenda item 4: Consideration of applications against criteria for vacant post(s)

The panel should decide after consideration of each application whether the candidate should be called for interview or rejected because they do not meet one of the essential criteria.

Agenda item 5: Procedural matters

a) **Agreement of shortlist and decision to proceed to interview.** The panel decides whether they have a sufficiently strong shortlist to proceed to interview. If the panel is unable to shortlist or wishes to readvertise to attract a greater field, then in discussion with the Diocesan recruitment adviser, they may decide to re-advertise. All decisions should be minuted. A record of the reasons why individual candidates have not been shortlisted should be retained for six months after the interview as it can be called in for scrutiny by a tribunal.

b) **References.** References are requested for those candidates who have been shortlisted. In line with the CES guidance, they are used 'to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions'. Only formal written references should be used. It is important to be clear about the information that is required in a reference. It is helpful if professional references specifically address the criteria for appointment. The use of a pro forma and standard letter requesting references is recommended as a means of obtaining precisely the information that is required and of ensuring that the same information is gained about each candidate. References allow the panel to:

- To comply with safer recruitment requirements.

- To ensure that the essential requirement of 'practising Catholic' is evidenced with a supportive priest reference.
- To ensure that the applicant is supported professionally with a positive recommendation from their current employer or headteacher.

References, as with application forms and other related materials, are strictly confidential and should not be distributed outside of those involved in the appointment process. Care should be taken over their storage and disposal during and after the process. Any queries regarding references should be discussed with the recruitment adviser.

c) **Feedback to applicants not shortlisted.** It is important to agree who will provide quality feedback and the reason why the applicant was unsuccessful. This can be delegated to the adviser.

d) **Confirmation of selection process.** The selection process can take between one to two days depending on the number shortlisted. It is usual to take all candidates through the whole process. This allows the panel to develop as fully an informed view as possible as well as being fair to the candidates. The venue, start time and the outline timetable should be decided on. Responsibility for detailed scheduling should be agreed. It is useful to refer sample timetables for interview days.

e) **Interview day activities.** A variety of activities can be used for the selection process. Task should be chosen to reflect the post advertised.
Examples include:
   - Tour of the school
   - Liturgical prayer
   - Data task/presentation
   - Presentations may be given in advance or on the interview day.
   - Taught lesson
   - Student panel
   - Opportunity to meet staff/local governors/priest with pastoral responsibility/directors
   - Formal interview with all the panel and advisers present. The question regarding Catholic practice must be asked of all candidates.
   - Shared lesson observation of a teacher together with an adviser with observed feedback
   - Shared work analysis of a selection of books together with an adviser
   - Carousel of panels
   - In-tray exercise
   - Roleplay e.g. chairing a meeting
   - Group discussion with all candidates present

f) **Responsibility for organising interview day(s).** Confirmation should be made of who will be responsible for all the arrangements. This includes the identity and qualification checks of candidates, booking the venue, arranging lunch, the production of a final timetable and arranging any changes to the school timetable to accommodate liturgical prayer, student meetings or lesson observations.

g) **Invitation to interview – identity and qualification checks.** Confirmation should be made of who will send letters of invitation to interview (see model invitation to interview letter). The timetable and details of any presentations to be prepared should be included. Candidates should also be informed what documentary proof of identity and of qualifications they should bring. It is important that these are checked and photocopied at the beginning of day one.

THE INTERVIEW DAY

Welcome

All the candidates should be welcomed and introduced. If there is an internal candidate this should be made clear at the start of proceedings. It is vital that the panel conduct themselves impartially during the interview process.

Panel briefing

This takes place at the beginning of the day. Attendance of candidates should be confirmed. The panel should be familiar with the timetable. **It is at this point the references should be considered**. It is important to remind the panel that:

- It is recommended that candidates are kept for the full recruitment process rather than being eliminated.
- Notes should be objective and factual and, should be retained for six months after the interview as they can be called in for scrutiny by a tribunal.
- Candidates' performance should not be discussed until all have been interviewed although the panel will make their individual judgements (and the reasons) after each interview.
- Activities should be graded using proformas:

Grade:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
	lowest	→			**highest**

Presentations

The presentation proforma should be used by the panel to record their assessment of the candidates.

Formal interview questions

The advisers will help to formulate questions.

- All candidates should be asked the same questions (follow up questions in response to a candidate's response can vary).
- All candidates should have the same number of questions and the same allocated length of time for their interview.
- Questions that could potentially be interpreted as discriminatory are not permitted e.g., direct questions about age, marital status, family (see notes on illegal/improper questions in this document).
- Questions may be asked to clarify points raised in references.
- The proforma for recording responses should be used.
- The 'practising Catholic' question must be asked.

At the end of the interview, the candidate must be asked whether, if offered, the post will be accepted.

The decision

After all interviews are completed, the panel should make their own assessment of each candidate against the criteria for appointment. Ideally, they should do this by transferring evidence from their interview notes on the working sheet.

After this, discussion can be opened and decisions made, taking into account the professional judgements and guidance of the advisers. The panel should come to an agreed decision on each candidate and on which candidates are the strongest. A proposal to appoint a candidate should be made and formally seconded. Ideally the decision should be unanimous but sometimes a vote is necessary. Occasionally the chair has to use their casting vote.

The panel needs to clearly understand that once it has been decided to proceed to a vote no further discussions can take place. If the decision is not to make an appointment, then, in discussion with the Diocesan recruitment adviser, and if time allows, the panel may decide to advertise again. Otherwise, the Diocesan Department for Education must be consulted to advise on interim leadership arrangements.

After the decision

All copies of application forms, supporting statements and references should be collected by the HR adviser. The trust must retain a full set of all relevant paperwork for at least six months.

Arrangements for notifying candidates of the outcome should be confirmed. Notification will usually be via a telephone call, as it is usual to allow candidates to depart following the conclusion of the final interview.

Arrangements for the debriefing of unsuccessful candidates should be made. It is important that quality feedback is provided.

NOTES ON QUESTIONS

Illegal/improper questions

Illegal questions usually offend against the range of anti-discrimination legislation which not only promotes equal opportunities but also forbids discrimination. There are nine protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion and belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

It is illegal to ask questions in relation to these, e.g. it is not permissible to ask questions relating to intentions about getting married, starting a family, and coping with small children.
Failure to follow this can lead to a complaint to the Equal Opportunities Commission. The Diocesan Statement on Equal Opportunities in Employment indicates where and how the panel may discriminate between candidates.
The issue of improper questions is not so clear-cut. It is broadly accepted that questions about a teacher's politics or union activities are improper, but while religion and belief is a protected characteristic, the law of the land allows us to ask questions in the area in relation to appointment in a Catholic school.

Practising Catholic question

Applicants must be asked the following question in the final formal interview. This question must be asked by the adviser appointed by the Diocese:

> *Can you confirm that you are a practising Catholic and that you are able to comply will all of the essential criteria in the job description and with the requirements outlined in the* ***Diocesan Briefing Note and 'Catholic Schools and the Definition of a 'Practising Catholic' – 2009 Diocesan Education Service, Archdiocese of Birmingham*** *on what constitutes a practising Catholic?*

POST INTERVIEW TASKS

These are the responsibility of the panel.

The successful candidate's application form, supporting statement and references in the school's personnel files should be retained.

Confirm the appointment in writing, including starting date and salary, should be sent. The person appointed is issued with two copies of the letter of appointment. They should return one copy, signed, to the school. The candidate should retain the second copy for their own records. The person appointed needs to be informed of the arrangements for:

- Enhanced check for Regulated Activity from the Disclosure and Barring Service
- Health clearance

The post will be offered and confirmed in line with Scheme of Delegation. The person appointed is issued with the two copies of the appropriate CES contract. The candidate should sign both copies and return one to you for the school's files. They should retain the second copy for their own records. **Please note that a CES contract must be issued.**

Communication of the appointment

The chair of the panel needs to communicate the confirmation of the appointment with staff and parents, as soon as possible. A common timeline may need to be agreed with the 'providing' school. The recruitment adviser will advise the chair of the panel on this aspect of the process.

Induction support

The panel has a duty to ensure that the new senior leaders are able to access the induction support provided.

APPENDIX GENERAL DOCUMENTS AND CHECKLISTS

- Advertisement and Application Pack Checklists
- Model Equality Act 2010 reasonable Adjustments Statement
- Model Invitation to Interview Letter
- Request for Faith and Character Reference Pro Forma
- Request for Faith and Character Reference Letter
- Request for Professional Reference Pro Forma
- Request for Professional Reference Letter
- Interview and Post Interview Board Checklist
- Liturgical Prayer Working Sheet
- Presentation Working Sheet
- Interview Working Sheet
- Model Job Offer Letter

ADVERTISEMENT and APPLICATION PACK CHECKLISTS

Advertisement Checklist

'The board must advertise any such vacancy or post in such a manner as it considers appropriate unless it has any good reason not to.'[1]

The advertisement is the first point of contact with potential applicants. It should be eye-catching, easy to read and engaging. It is the first opportunity to present the school and create an impression that will attract people to apply.

The key to a successful advertisement is to balance brevity with sufficient information about the school to interest and motivate potential applicants. An overlong advertisement does not catch the eye and can be difficult to read. Examples can be obtained from the recruitment adviser.

Advertisement Content

The advertisement should include:

For school based posts:	**For Trust based posts:**
▪ The heading: 'The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle' (for academies) ▪ Diocesan, school and Trust logos ▪ Name of school and name of Trust ▪ 'Applications are invited from practising and committed Catholic teachers for the post of…. at (name of school)' ▪ Address of school ▪ Start date ▪ Contract type (e.g. full time, part time) and contract term (e.g. permanent, fixed term) ▪ Group of school and number on roll ▪ Salary information ▪ Brief description of school ▪ If appropriate and recent, a phrase from Catholic School Inspection Report summarising the school ▪ Indication of what the school can offer ▪ Indication of potential candidate the board wish to appoint ▪ Contact information (name, address, telephone number and website address if	▪ The heading: 'The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle' ▪ Diocesan and Trust logos ▪ Name of Trust ▪ 'The Directors of …… Trust invite applications from practising and committed Catholics for the post of…. ' ▪ Address of Trust ▪ Start date ▪ Contract type (e.g. full time, part time) and contract term (e.g. permanent, fixed term) ▪ Salary information ▪ Brief description of Trust ▪ Indication of what the Trust can offer ▪ Indication of potential candidate the board wish to appoint ▪ Contact information (name, address, telephone number and website address if relevant) ▪ An indication of whether informal visits are welcome prior to making application and who to contact to arrange.

[1] Regulation 15 (2) The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009

relevant) ▪ An indication of whether informal visits are welcome prior to making application and who to contact to arrange. ▪ How to request/download application pack ▪ Closing date for applications, name and address of person to whom applications should be sent, statement that applications sent by email will be accepted but will require a real signature on the day of interview, dates for shortlisting and interviews ▪ Safeguarding statement	▪ How to request/download application pack ▪ Closing date for applications, name and address of person to whom applications should be sent, statement that applications sent by email will be accepted but will require a real signature on the day of interview, dates for shortlisting and interviews ▪ Safeguarding statement

Application Pack Checklist

The pack should have high impact but not contain too many documents. As its purpose is to sell the school, the quality of its contents and presentation are very important in encouraging people to commit to making an application. The information provided should give an accurate picture of the school as well as some feel for its distinctiveness. A personalised letter from the chair and/or headteacher can be used to encourage applications. We would encourage schools to make the application pack available via the school's website.

Essential contents:

- Letter encouraging applications (this will depend on the post being advertised but could be from the chair of directors, the CEO, the chair of governors or the headteacher)
- CES application form **(most up to date version)**
  [see CES website for most recent version of the application form
  https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/resources/model-application-forms

  Please note that schools are required to add their details to the *Request for your Consent to Process Your Data* sections of the application form, consent to obtain references form, recruitment monitoring form and rehabilitation of offenders act form, in order to comply with GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 requirements. For their job application to be accepted, applicants can only use the CES form provided by the school, with the school details inserted, and cannot download a blank form direct from the CES website.
- Other CES forms **https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/resources/model-application-forms**
  - Application Forms – Notes to Applicants (insert school/CET/DPO details)
  - Recruitment Information Form (Recruitment Monitoring)
  - Consent to Obtain References Form **(insert school/CET/DPO details as for application form)**
  - Disqualification policy **(if applicable)**
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 – Disclosure Form **(insert school details as for application form)** will be required but this is sent out after shortlisting, only to applicants invited for interview. The completed form is brought to interview in a sealed envelope and only the envelope for the successful candidate is opened, the others are destroyed. If you send the form after shortlisting, you will need to add the name of this document to the list of documents stated as enclosed in the model invitation to interview letter (see section C of this guidance)

- In line with CES guidance, the Diocesan Department for Education recommends that the Catholic Education Trusts undertake online searches for all vacancies and recommends that each Trust has a published policy. The 2022 update of Keeping Children Safe in Education includes a new step in the shortlisting process as follows (CES emphasis):

  *"as part of the shortlisting process schools and colleges **should consider** carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school or college might want to explore with the applicant at interview".*

  The purpose of these searches is to uncover information which may indicate that the individual is unsuitable to work with children and/or where, if the information were discovered by students or parents it could lead to significant reputational damage for the School.

  (see CES **Guidance on recruitment of staff for Governing Boards***, October 2023).*

- Job description and Person Specification
- Diocesan Briefing Note on Practising Catholic (including the document ***'Catholic Schools and the Definition of a 'Practising Catholic' - 2009 Diocesan Education Service, Archdiocese of Birmingham**)*
- Diocesan Statement on Equal Opportunities
- Safeguarding policy
- Copy of the advert including closing date for applications, name and address of person to whom applications should be sent, statement that applications sent by email will be accepted but will require a real signature on the day of interview, dates for shortlisting and interviews

Optional contents:

1. Brief description of school, its history, location and main strengths
2. Catholic school inspection summary report
3. Ofsted inspection summary report
4. Recent newsletter to parents/parishes

MODEL EQUALITY ACT 2010 REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS STATEMENT

We understand that some disabled applicants may, due to the nature of their disability, find some parts of the recruitment process challenging. We aim to ensure that all applicants are provided with the same opportunities during the recruitment process and, to that end, we strive to comply with the duties placed upon us to make reasonable adjustments as prescribed by the Equality Act 2010.

Should you have a disability and require a particular adjustment to be made to allow you to fully participate in the recruitment process, please ensure that this is made known to the person identified in the invitation to interview letter when confirming your availability to attend interview as our duty to make reasonable adjustment only applies where we know about, or ought reasonably to know about, your disability (contact details of the relevant person to contact will be provided in your invitation to interview letter).

Below is a non-exhaustive list of some of the types of adjustments that we may make to ensure that the recruitment process is fair to all applicants, if it is reasonable to do so in all the circumstances:

- Modification to documentation – this may include providing documents in large print, in Braille format or on audio CD and/or providing oral instruction on documentation for those applicants with a learning disability;
- Modification of procedures for testing and/or assessment – this may include allowing an applicant to provide oral answers as opposed to written where the applicant has, for example, a disability which affects their manual dexterity. Conversely, an oral test may be completed in writing where the applicant has a disability which affects their speech;
- Provision of a reader for a visually impaired applicant;
- Provision of auxiliary aids – for example, a person to guide a visually impaired applicant around the interview venue;
- Provision of special equipment – for example, adapted keyboards for applicants whose disability may affect their manual dexterity and/or large screen computers for applicants with visual impairments;
- Provision of a sign language interpreter for an applicant with a hearing impairment;
- Where interviews are being conducted by telephone, provision for interview by textphone for an applicant with a hearing impairment;
- Provision of vehicle parking as proximate to the interview venue as reasonably practicable for an applicant with a mobility impairment;
- Modification of interview premises – for example, in order to ensure that an applicant who uses a wheelchair can gain access to the building where the interview is being held, the school/college

may consider using ramps, holding interviews on the ground floor (if there is no adequate lift), considering the placement of furniture and rearranging if necessary etc.

MODEL INVITATION TO INTERVIEW LETTER

INSERT APPLICANT'S NAME HERE
INSERT APPLICANT'S ADDRESS HERE

INSERT DATE HERE

Dear INSERT APPLICANT'S NAME HERE

Re: INSERT POST TITLE - DEPARTMENT HERE

Thank you for submitting your application form for consideration for the above post.

I am delighted to invite you to attend an interview on INSERT DATE HERE at INSERT TIME HERE to be held at INSERT VENUE HERE . On arrival you should report to INSERT NAME OF PERSON/RECEPTION ETC HERE .

Interview details
Details regarding the format for the day are enclosed.

Documents enclosed with this letter
Enclosed with this invitation to interview letter are the following documents:-

1. The Catholic Education Service Model Contract of Employment for DELETE AS APPROPRIATE: SENIOR LEADERSHIP GROUP 1/SENIOR LEADERSHIP GROUP 2/TEACHER/SUPPORT STAFF/LAY CHAPLAIN which will be the contract of employment offered to the successful applicant;
2. Our Diocesan 'Briefing Note' which sets out our understanding and expectations of what it means to be a 'practising Catholic' which we believe will assist applicants to understand our Catholicity requirements as indicated in the post advertisement and/or the application form and notes to applicants;
3. Equality Act 2010 Reasonable Adjustments Statement;
4. [Disqualification Policy for Staff; a signed copy of which must be returned to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school should you wish to accept an offer of a post.] DELETE THIS PARAGRAPH WHERE NOT RELEVANT.
5. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 – Disclosure Form.
6. Applicant declaration

You will be required to bring a signed applicant declaration to the interview, confirming that you have received, read and understood the content of this letter and the enclosures thereto.

Disclosure and Barring Service check
This post is conditional upon satisfactory completion of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. You will be required to submit to DBS checks should your application be successful and you have indicated your consent to such DBS checks being made in your application form.

Right to work in the UK
Under the provisions of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, we are legally required to verify that you have permission to work in the UK. Therefore, please bring **original** documentary evidence of such to the

interview. Examples of evidence required can be found in the *Notes to Applicants* which were provided with your application form.

Evidence of identity

As part of the DBS checks we are required to gather three forms of evidence to confirm your identity. You should, therefore, bring with you to the interview three original documents from the following list (please note that you **must** provide at least one form of evidence from Group 1 and, where you provide any documentary evidence from Groups 2a or 2b, at least one of those must state your current address):

Group 1: Valid Passport/Biometric Residence Permit (UK)/Current Driving Licence (Full or Provisional) (UK/Isle of Man/Channel Islands)/Birth Certificate (UK and Channel Islands) – issued at time of birth.

Group 2a: Current UK Driving Licence (old style paper version)/Current Non-UK Photo Driving Licence (valid for up to 12 months from the date that the applicant entered the UK)/Birth Certificate (UK and Channel Islands) – issued after the time of birth/Marriage Certificate (UK and Channel Islands)/Adoption Certificate (UK and Channel Islands)/HM Forces ID Card.

Group 2b: Mortgage Statement (UK and EEA) (not more than 12 months old)/Bank or Building Society Statement (UK and Channel Islands and EEA) (not more than 3 months old)/Bank or Building Society Account Opening Confirmation Letter (UK)/Credit Card Statement (UK and EEA) (not more than 3 months old)/Financial Statement e.g. pension/ISA etc (not more than 12 months old)/P45 or P60 (UK and Channel Islands) (not more than 12 months old)/Council Tax Statement (UK and Channel Islands) (not more than 3 months old)/Work Permit or Visa (UK) (UK Residence Permit)/Utility Bill (UK) – not mobile phone bill – (not more than 3 months old)/Benefit Statement (not more than 3 months old)/A Document from Central or Local Government, a Government Agency or a Local Authority giving an entitlement (UK and Channel Islands) (not more than 3 months old)/EU National ID Card/Cards carrying the PASS accreditation logo (UK and Channel Islands).

Evidence of qualifications

You will be required to bring to your interview all evidence of any relevant qualifications and grades attained as indicated by you in your application form. Please bring **original** documents.

Special requirements

We are committed to ensuring that all applicants are able to fully participate in the recruitment process as far as is reasonable and, to that end, we enclose our *Equality Act 2010 Reasonable Adjustments Statement* which sets out some examples of the types of adjustments we may be willing to make, where it is reasonable to do so, to ensure fair access to disabled applicants.

Should you require any additional arrangements and/or adjustments to be made in order to fully take part in any part of the interview process please contact INSERT NAME HERE , INSERT JOB TITLE AND CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER HERE with your requirements.

Confirmation of attendance

Please contact INSERT NAME HERE , INSERT JOB TITLE AND CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER HERE to confirm your attendance at interview.

INSERT ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION HERE IF APPROPRAITE. DELETE THIS PARAGRAPH WHERE NOT RELEVANT.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

INSERT NAME ETC HERE

Applicant Declaration

Applicants are required to sign the CES applicant declaration form.

APPLICANT DECLARATION

I, ……., confirm that I have been provided with a sample copy of the model Catholic Education Service (CES) contract of employment particular to the post at the school/academy for which I am applying. I confirm that:

- I have read and understood the invitation to interview letter and its enclosures;
- I have read the sample CES contract of employment;
- I have been afforded an opportunity to ask questions about the terms of the CES contract; and
- Where relevant, my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Signed:	
Print name:	
Dated:	

REQUEST for FAITH and CHARACTER REFERENCE LETTER

This letter should be sent together with the pro forma on the following page and a copy of the *Diocesan Briefing Note on Practising Catholic* by the chair of the board to the parish priest whose name and address are given on the application form.

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Father

(Name and address of applicant)

_____has applied to this school for the post of _____ and has consented to me seeking a reference from you. I should be grateful if you would answer all of the questions on the attached questionnaire in as much detail as you are able. In the interests of fairness the board has decided that only written responses will be accepted.

It is a requirement of this post that the candidate meets the requirements of 'practising Catholic' in line with the Diocesan Briefing Note.

Please ensure that the statement provided is reliable, and based on a careful and accurate assessment with full and frank disclosure of all relevant matters. I hope the questionnaire helps you in this respect.

As additional information, which you may find useful, I enclose a copy of the job description and criteria of appointment for the post.

I am enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for your reply.

The selection interviews will be held on _____. Please supply the information by _____.

I thank you in anticipation for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

(Name)
Chair of the board

REQUEST for FAITH and CHARACTER REFERENCE

CONFIDENTIAL

Applicant's name:	
Address:	
School and post applied for:	

1. To your knowledge, does the applicant meet the requirements of 'practising Catholic' as outlined in the Diocesan Briefing Note?
2. To your knowledge does this applicant attend Mass and receive the sacraments regularly?
3. To the best of your knowledge is this applicant's personal life in keeping with the teachings of the Church?
4. Is there any evidence of the applicant's practice of the faith in parish life? If so, please indicate:
5. In your opinion would this applicant be able to witness to the faith as a leader in a Catholic school?

6. Are you able to recommend this person for consideration for this post?
7. Are there any other observations you would wish to make about this person which you believe are relevant to the post?

Name of referee:		**Designation:**	
Address:			
Signature:		**Date:**	

REQUEST for PROFESSIONAL REFERENCE LETTER

This letter should be sent with the proforma on the following page.

Dear

(Name and address of applicant)

_____ has applied to this school for the post of _____ and has consented to me seeking a reference from you. I should be grateful if you would give your confidential professional assessment of *(name)'*s suitability for the post by answering all of the questions on the attached questionnaire. I enclose a copy of the criteria for appointment and would particularly ask that you comment on *(name)*'s significant strengths or achievements in the experiences, skills and qualities specified within that document.

Please comment on the candidate's experience and commitment to their duties/responsibilities and their knowledge and experience of safeguarding.

Finally, I would be very grateful if you could state whether you recommend this person for appointment without reservation.

The selection interviews will be held on _____. Please supply the information by _____.

I thank you in anticipation for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

(Name)
Chair of the board

REQUEST for PROFESSIONAL REFERENCE PRO FORMA

Applicant's name:	
Address:	
School applied for:	
Post applied for:	

1. How long have you known this person?
2. In what capacity do you know this person?
3. Has this person ever been the subject of any disciplinary action (including investigations) whilst in your employment?
4. If yes to 3, please state the outcome and date (and whether safeguarding concerns):

5. Since this post is considered exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order 1986), it would be in order for you to reveal any information you have about any convictions against this person. Please give details if applicable.

6. Do you have any concerns regarding the candidate working directly with children and young people?

7. Are you aware of any reason which renders the applicant unsuitable for this position?

8. If the person has left your employment, please indicate reason and date of leaving:

9. Would you re-employ this person in the same capacity within your organisation?

10. Please refer to the person specification and give your assessment on the following:

a) The applicant's personal qualities and experience:

b) The applicant's abilities and skills:

c) The applicant's work performance:

d) Please give details of any areas of weakness in the candidate's performance:

11. Please comment on the candidate's effective working relationships with:

a) Line manager:

b) Colleagues:

c) Other professionals:

d) Parents:
12. Do you have confidence in this person as a leader in a Catholic school?
13. Please add any additional comments which could assist in deciding whether to employ this candidate:
14. State whether you recommend this person for appointment without reservation:

Name of referee:	
Position:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Name and Address of Referee's Organisation:	
Telephone:	
Email Address:	

INTERVIEW and POST INTERVIEW BOARD CHECKLIST

At interview, has the applicant provided original evidence of:

Identity (three forms)	☐
Right to work in the UK (this may overlap with evidence of identity)	☐
Qualifications obtained	☐
At interview, has the applicant signed a copy of the invitation to interview letter to confirm that they have read and understood the content of that letter?	☐

If you are ready to make an offer of employment, should that offer be conditional upon receipt of:

Satisfactory DBS checks	☐
Reference from current employer (if not previously obtained)	☐
Satisfactory health checks	☐
Any other document required but not yet provided by the applicant or a third party	☐
Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 – Disclosure Form	☐
Disqualification Policy for Staff	☐

Note: you **must** have obtained evidence of identity and right to work in the UK **before** you allow a successful applicant to **commence** employment.

LITURGICAL PRAYER WORKING SHEET

Candidate's name:	
Liturgical Prayer theme:	

	✓	Notes
Introduction Opening courtesies/tone/manner Creates prayerful atmosphere		
Content Relevant to the theme Appropriate choice of scripture Appropriate use of liturgical colours, artefacts Shows knowledge Creativity, for example appropriate use of prayer styles, music, ICT		
Leading Liturgical Prayer Skills Personal impact and presence Commands credibility as future faith leader Engages with all pupils Shows enthusiasm Speaks clearly Manages the time well		
Structure Gather Word Response Mission - all clearly defined		

Grade:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

lowest → highest

PRESENTATION WORKING SHEET

Candidate's name:	
Presentation topic:	

	✓	Notes
Introduction Opening courtesies/tone/manner Outline purpose and approach		
Structure of the presentation Easy to follow		
Content Relevant to the title Appropriate vision and philosophy Shows knowledge Focuses on role of headteacher/deputy headteacher Shows enthusiasm Identifies range of challenges/opportunities		
Presentation skills/technique Personal impact and presence Commands credibility as future headteacher/deputy headteacher Engages with audience/interesting Speaks clearly Manages the time well		
Conclusion Summarise key points		

Grade:	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

lowest → highest

INTERVIEW WORKING SHEET

(The board may find it helpful to have two copies per candidate)

Candidate's name:	
Collective Worship theme:	

Question number	Notes	Grade

Grade:	1	2	3	4	5

lowest → highest

MODEL JOB OFFER LETTER

INSERT APPLICANT'S NAME HERE

INSERT APPLICANT'S ADDRESS HERE

INSERT DATE HERE

Dear (INSERT APPLICANT'S NAME)

(INSERT POST TITLE HERE)

On behalf of the board, I am writing to offer you the post of INSERT NAME OF POST at INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL which will be conducted in accordance with the rites, practices and traditions of the Roman Catholic faith.

This offer is conditional upon satisfactory completion of Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks and health checks. Please complete and return the enclosed forms as directed.

(IF REQUIRED REFERENCES HAVE NOT BEEN RECEIVED, STATE HERE THAT THE OFFER IS CONDITIONAL TO RECEIVING THESE)

(IF THE CANDIDATE FAILED TO PROVIDE ORIGINAL DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF QUALIFICATIONS AND EVIDENCE OF RIGHT TO WORK IN THE UK STATE ARRANGEMENTS FOR HIM/HER TO BRING THIS TO SCHOOL TO BE CHECKED)

You have presented yourself at interview and as a practising Catholic who is fully committed to promoting the Catholic ethos of the school and as a person professionally competent to fulfil the position. It is in these terms that the governing body found you a suitable candidate for appointment.

The board, as your employer, will offer you a contract of employment which is a model drawn up by the Catholic Education Service after consultation with Teaching Associations and appropriate local authority bodies. The details of your conditions of service will be supplied to you through the local authority in the near future.

Please sign the second copy of this letter confirming your acceptance of the post and return it in the envelope provided.

Yours sincerely,

Chair of the board

I accept the above position.

Signed……