Headteacher Recruitment

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**Introduction**

Appointing a headteacher is a significant responsibility for a governing body and it is important that the appointment and recruitment process is conducted in line with legal requirements and equal opportunity legislation.

Governors involved in the process should understand that the appointment of a headteacher will be one of the biggest decisions that a governing body makes and will have a lasting impact on the outcomes for children in the school.

For a Church of England school this has an additional focus on ensuring that whoever is appointed is able to both uphold and develop the school’s Christian vision.

In this document ‘church school’ includes church academies and ‘governing board’ relates also to the body responsible for the appointment in a church academy. ‘Diocesan’ representatives will be officers of the Chester Diocesan Board of Education or consultants appointed by the DBE to support the school.

**The legalities**

The legal framework regarding the appointment of a headteacher, and the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved, is laid down in the Staffing Regulations. All maintained schools must have a headteacher or a person appointed to carry out the functions of a headteacher during the absence of the headteacher or awaiting an appointment. Academies have greater flexibility regarding the leadership structure and many have an Executive headteacher or CEO with heads of school. The appointment of both the CEO/executive headteacher and heads of school are key decisions for the Trust. Who is involved in the appointments will be set out in the Trust Articles and should also be outlined in the scheme of delegation. For maintained schools it is the governing board that holds the responsibility of appointing a headteacher.

**Involvement of LA and Diocese**

Prior to the recruitment process the Local Authority LA and Diocese will support governing boards in considering alternative options to the appointment of a substantive headteacher.

If the decision is made to appoint then the LA will offer an adviser who acts as the representative of the local authority and, as such, will be involved through the process. Local authorities are entitled to make written representations to the selection panel of a maintained school if they consider that the panel is shortlisting an unsuitable person as head teacher.

The Diocesan office performs a similar role and will attend to advise governors throughout the process. The full governing body makes the appointment decision but is required to consider the advice of the representatives.

In the case of community and voluntary controlled schools, the LA is required to confirm the appointment in writing and will generally comply with the governors’ recommendation unless they fail the relevant employment checks.

Academies may choose to request support from their LA. Academy Trusts with church schools should ensure that a Diocesan adviser is present at both CEO/Executive heads appointments and those of heads of church schools.

**The process**

1. **The governing board receive the resignation**

Notice periods for headteachers are three months, or four months in the summer term, with employment terminating at the end of that term;

Notice periods for deputy headteachers or teachers are two months, or three months in the summer term, with employment terminating at the end of that term

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Existing headteacher | |  |
| Term defined as: | | Notice submitted by: |
| Summer | 1st May – 31st August | 30th April |
| Autumn | 1st September – 31st December | 30th September |
| Spring | 1st January – 30th April | 31st January |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Teacher or Deputy headteacher | |  |
| Term defined as: | | Notice submitted by: |
| Summer | 1st May – 31st August | 31st May |
| Autumn | 1st September – 31st December | 31st October |
| Spring | 1st January – 30th April | 28th/29th February |

On receiving the headteacher’s written resignation, the governing body should inform the local authority through their clerk to governors and the diocese through the Diocesan Director of Education, Chris Penn at [chris.penn@chester.anglican.org](mailto:chris.penn@chester.anglican.org) or 01928 718834 ext 222. Dates regarding proposed meetings should be discussed at this point to ensure Diocesan availability.

**2. The initial governor meeting - Exploring options**

A planning meeting should take place with the full governing board to discuss the resignation, the timings involved based on the notice periods, the financial situation and organizational structure of the school and possible further action prior to starting any recruitment process. Advice should be sought from the LA and Diocese.

**2.1 Financial sustainability**

When a headteacher offers their resignation, the governing board should take the opportunity to reflect on its organisational and leadership structure to identify whether the simple replacement of the headteacher is the most appropriate action to take. The Diocese and LA should be contacted immediately following the notification of the resignation and they will be willing to advise governing boards of other possible structures. Small schools with tight budgets are particularly encouraged to consider their options with the Diocese and LA willing to facilitate discussions and development work with other suitable schools.

The governing board should conduct a detailed, financial evaluation review, incorporating the last full year’s income and expenditure and modelling of the following three years estimated budget. This should include any measures (and the reasoning behind them) to improve the financial position. It is important that this process is completed prior to the appointment process commencing so as future affordability can be evidenced.

The review should include staffing costs to ensure that a substantive leadership post is affordable by the school for the long term.

Once a candidate is offered the post and a contract is signed, this forms the basis of a legal agreement with the member of staff which is accompanied by various legal protections in employment law.

Failure to consider the long-term financial viability of a substantive appointment could lead to a decision related to redundancy which could be avoided at this stage.

If there is any uncertainty about the financial position of the school, the decision to recruit should be delayed until it is proven that the post is affordable.

Decisions to proceed should never be made on the basis that ‘pupil numbers might increase’ or the number of classes can be reduced to create a saving in staff costs.

The DFE have provided guidance on how to identify the financial viability of your school and this guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-resource-management-top-10-planning-checks-for-governors#to-5-year-budget-projections>

**2.2 Leadership and organisational models**

Before the governing board decides to go ahead with the recruitment process, governors should carefully consider the needs of the school and the different types of leadership models which might be appropriate given the school’s finances, size, status, age-range, locality and school improvement position.

The following are examples of possible leadership structures for schools:

***Executive leadership***

Executive leadership or Executive Headship refers to a leader who is responsible for the leadership of more than one school. This can be achieved through federation, amalgamation or a Multi-Academy Trust but it can also be achieved using collaboration regulations where two governing boards agree to collaborate and share the costs of a headteacher.

***Head of School***

A ‘Head of School’ is not the same role as a substantive Headteacher and these leaders normally work under the oversight of an Executive Headteacher who will provide the strategic leadership on behalf of an academy or group of schools.

Head of School roles can be suitable for small schools where the school’s budget may make it difficult to be able to afford a substantive headteacher without sharing a role across more than one school.

Head of School can often be very effective, visible leaders who are responsible for the day-to- day operation and management of the school and will still be responsible for working with other senior leaders and teachers.

***Co-Headship***

Occasionally, it may be appropriate for Trustees to consider a Co-Headship arrangement when the duties and responsibilities are shared between two leaders who both hold the title of Headteacher, normally on a part-time basis.

Sometimes this model, may work as an interim solution for a school whilst it seeks to appoint a substantive headteacher or puts in place arrangements for future Executive Headship arrangements.

Before embarking on such arrangements, it is important that governing bodies seek specific advice from personnel/HR advisers and discuss this with the diocese.

***Substantive Headteacher***

Following the financial and organizational review the governing board may decide that the appointment of a substantive headteacher, full time employed headteacher, is the correct choice for the school and would then start the recruitment process.

If the decision is made to start the recruitment process the governing board will need to decide how the process will be administered and make arrangements to procure the relevant support.

**3. The decision is made to appoint**

**3.1 Principles of appointment**

Before commencing the appointment process for a new headteacher of a church school it is important that all governors including those appointed to serve on the appointment panel are aware of good practice and principles of appointment.

These include:

***Confidentiality***

All applicants have the right to know that their applications are treated as strictly confidential and are not shared beyond the strict membership of the appointment panel and advisers.

All application forms that are sent by e-mail must be password protected or sent via a secure system and that all documentation (other than the panel’s evidence forms and other paperwork kept centrally following retention guidelines) are destroyed/shredded immediately after the conclusion of the process.

All panel members and advisers are bound by a collective responsibility to ensure that the recruitment process remains strictly confidential and details of the selection and interview process are not shared with members of staff, parents, family or friends

Failure to respect confidentiality can lead to challenges from applicants which may lead to a recruitment process being deemed invalid.

All panel members should be reminded of confidentiality at the beginning and end of the recruitment process.

***Transparency***

All applicants and candidates should be entitled to accurate evidence-based feedback on their applications and if selected, their performance at interview, even if successfully appointed. Feedback should never be ambiguous or contradictory in nature and should be delivered sensitively taking into account the professional development needs of the candidate. Interview questions should be clear, succinct and always related to the job description, person specification and the context of the Church school.

***Equality and fairness***

The recruitment and appointment process should be conducted fairly, without discrimination of any kind and taking into account any specific needs of the applicants and candidates.

Panel members should be aware of equal opportunity legislation and good practice in recruitment and ensure that judgements made on applications are always based on merit, taking into account the experience, qualifications and skills of the applicants.

Applications should be judged only against the person specification given to applicants at the time of application. This should be done as objectively as possible with the help and support of the advisers present.

Interview questions should be planned carefully and well in advance of the interview in order to avoid unplanned questions being asked by panel members. Supplementary questions can be asked and advisers can help with this to ensure that candidates are treated fairly.

Throughout the process the panel and advisers must be aware of any unconscious bias that may influence panel members. Advisers and panel members should ensure that this is challenged if identified.

**3.2 Protocols for appointments**

***Delegation and Ratification***

It is important to understand that it is the whole governing board that is responsible for approving the appointment of a headteacher.

Due to the size of governing boards it is good (and normal) practice to appoint a smaller selection panel from the members of the governing board. In a maintained school the panel must have a minimum of 3 members, 5 is a generally seen as the optimum number. Once the panel have conducted the selection process and made a decision on their preferred candidate, they then recommend the candidate to the governing board so that the appointment can be ratified. This ordinarily takes place in an extraordinary meeting following the interviews. Schools in Multi-Academy Trusts will need to check the ratification procedure with the Trust Board.

***Administration***

Effective administration is important throughout the process. The Diocese (and usually the LA) will offer advice throughout the process but the administration of the process itself will be a charged service. LA governor services, HR providers or external companies can provide this service at cost. Although it is possible to administer this internally the governing board must ensure that whoever administers the process is familiar with the legalities and HR responsibilities around it.

***External advertising***

The governing board should consider its context before choosing where to advertise and how much to budget for the recruitment process. A large school may well attract candidates nationally who would be prepared to move for the post whereas a small rural school requiring a teaching head may not and may be best advised to advertise within a more local context. LAs and the diocese offer the option of advertising on their websites, The Times Educational Supplement (TES) and other online recruitment companies can provide different options.

***Recruitment timescales and advertising rounds***

In order to ensure that the best candidate is appointed governing boards may need to be prepared to undertake a number of recruitment rounds. It can be tempting to appoint as there is a fear of leaving the headship post within an acting capacity for some time but the consequences of appointing the wrong candidate can be substantial.

It is not good practice to proceed with interviewing a single candidate for a role even if the candidate meets the person specification. It is possible for applications to be ‘held over’ by the panel and the timescales for applications to be extended in order to see if it is possible to attract a larger field of candidates.

***Safeguarding***

It is a legal requirement that at least one member of the appointment panel must have completed recent (within last three years) Safer Recruitment training. In addition, all adverts should clearly state and reference the safeguarding practice and DBS requirement for applicants.

The shortlisting meeting should identify any gaps in the employment history of candidates so this can be clarified ahead of the interview process. The selection tasks and interview questions must involve a reference to safeguarding to ensure that the candidates have a comprehensive understanding of safeguarding policy, processes and practice.

***References***

All applicants should provide at least two professional references, one of which should normally be their current employer or line manager. References are not normally considered by the panel at shortlisting meetings (unless there is a safeguarding concern) and will normally be considered by panel members after the interview process as part of their final deliberation.

For a voluntary aided school (or former voluntary aided school academy) appointment, the panel may decide to ask for a third reference from the parish priest, minister or church leader in order to ascertain the faith criteria. Governing boards will need to identify their expected commitment prior to setting the specification and the reference request should reflect this.

All offers of employment should always be made subject to references, appropriate medical checks, DBS checks and proof of qualifications and examinations (this should be done on the day of interview and photocopies taken for records). All application forms should require applicants to declare any previous criminal convictions.

***Conflicts of interests***

All panel members and advisers must declare any known conflicts of interest at the beginning of the process in order to ensure that any conflicts of interest can be managed appropriately.

An example of this might be that a panel member is a personal friend or family relative of one of the applicants in which case, the panel member would stand down from serving on the panel and be replaced by another panel member.

The application form for all applicants should also include an area where the applicant can report any conflicts of interests or declarations of interest which can then be considered by the appointment panel before the interviews proceed.

***The Role of the Diocesan Adviser***

Diocesan advisers are only present to provide advice. They do not have a vote. They do, however, have a wide range of experience of making appointments to teaching posts in schools and knowledge of other schools in the area that gives them an important external perspective. Where they are involved it is important that they take a full part in the process.

***The current headteacher***

The role that the existing headteacher (or acting headteacher) is allowed to play in the process of appointing their successor is limited and laid down in legislation. These regulations require that the existing headteacher should not be present at meetings “during the consideration and discussion of the appointment of a successor”. The governors may, however, ask the headteacher to offer assistance in other parts of the process e.g. gathering and preparing information for candidates, providing the governors with information, receiving and showing candidates around the school.

**4. The initial recruitment meeting**

Dates for the planned recruitment meetings should be agreed with the LA and Diocesan representatives to ensure their attendance and advice at the appropriate times. The Chair of governors should liaise with the administrator of the recruitment process, and the LA and diocesan advisers in order to manage the process.

* Confirm the vacancy
* Agree arrangements for the ratification
* Take note of:
  + Appointment procedure
  + Employment legislation
  + Equal opportunity policy
  + Confidentiality
  + Safer recruitment
* Agree salary range
* Agree the aims and objectives of the recruitment and key areas for the recruitment panel to include
* Agree the composition of the recruitment panel

**4.1 Setting the Salary range**

Determination of salary is a complex issue and is particular to the needs of the school.

Maintained schools must following the [School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-teachers-pay-and-conditions), (STPCD). Academies have greater freedom with regards to pay but will need to follow their pay policy. Factors influencing salary decision include:

* The responsibilities of the post
* The context of the school
* Whether the post may be difficult to fill

There is no longer a requirement for schools to have scale point system, however many schools have maintained such scales. Governing boards need to be familiar with their pay policy.

The DfE has published guidance on [implementing your school’s approach to pay](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/642525/Implementing_your_schools_approach_to_pay_Sept2017.pdf) which governors should read prior to making the decision regarding setting the pay range.

They suggest a three stage process in setting the pay of leadership when appointing to the post.

The three stages are:

• Stage 1 – Defining the role and determining the headteacher group

• Stage 2 – Setting the indicative pay range

• Stage 3 – Deciding the starting salary and individual pay range

***Stage 1****:* ***assigning the headteacher group***

For headteacher posts governing boards should assign the school to a headteacher group which will determine the appropriate broad pay range. This should be done by calculating the total unit score for the school in accordance STPCD.

The calculation is based on the size and age range of the school (there are also different unit allowances for special schools).

For maintained schools the units are calculated as follows:

Each pupil in the preliminary stage and in the first or second key stage = 7units

Each pupil in the third key stage = 9 units

Each pupil in the fourth key stage = 11 units

Each pupil in the fifth key stage = 13 units

The number of pupils on the school register, and the number of pupils at each key stage, must be determined by the numbers as shown on the most recent return of the Department for Education (DfE) School Census.

The total units then indicate into which group the school sits:

Up to 1,000 = school group 1

1,001 to 2,200 = school group 2

2,201 to 3,500 = school group 3

3,501 to 5,000 = school group 4

5,001 to 7,500 = school group 5

7,501 to 11,000 = school group 6

11,001 to 17,000 = school group 7

17,001 and over= school group 8

***Stage 2 – Setting the indicative pay range***

It is at this stage the governing board will need to consider the complexity and challenge of the role in the particular context of the school and make a judgement on pay in the light of this.

For headteacher posts it is expected that normally the total unit score fully captures the complexity of the headteacher role and that the relevant broad pay range is appropriate. It is where within this range the governing board may wish to place the starting salary. There is some flexibility in particular contexts.

***Stage 3 – Setting the individual pay range***

The first two stages provide the means for determining the appropriate pay range. The third stage is essentially about deciding on the starting salary for the individual who is to be offered the post. This will be within the range already indicated but it is deciding where to place the starting salary for the candidate of choice.

**4.2 Establishing the recruitment panel**

The interview panel must comprise of at least three governors. Whilst the panel could include all governors, the recommendation is that it should be an odd number between three and seven with five as the optimum number.

It is mandatory for at least one governor on the panel to have undertaken and passed safer recruitment training.

Unless a governor stands to gain (either directly or indirectly) from the appointment, or is related to a candidate, all governors have an equal right to be considered for the selection panel. The diocese however strongly recommends staff governors and anyone working with the school for a fee should not be included in the interview panel.

The panel should include foundation governors to ensure that the church school foundation and a candidate’s ability to uphold and develop it is tested throughout the process.

For a governor to be a member of the interview panel, they must be available for the shortlisting meeting and interviews.

It is good practice that if a governing body chooses an interview panel, members of that panel should be in attendance at **all** meetings relating to the appointment.

The LA and Diocesan adviser will sit on the interview panel and can offer advice, although they do not have a vote.

The following actions can be delegated to the panel at a further meeting.

**5. Recruitment panel meeting**

At this meeting the recruitment panel will manage the detail of the process. It is important the advisers are present at the meeting in order to guide the panel. They will also be able to provide example documentation.

Activities undertaken should include:

* Agree job description
* Agree person specification
* Agree use of confidential references
* Decide how to advertise the post
* Give early consideration to timescales for the process (shortlisting, visits to school, any visits to candidates, the number of interview days and types of activities)
* Decide on application pack

The Chair of governors should have already discussed possible timelines with the LA and diocesan advisers who will provide example job specification etc. The Diocesan adviser will be able to provide both general guidance and also particularly advice on the church school requirements.

**5.1 Deciding the Job Description**

The LA and Diocesan advisers will provide guidance on the job description and examples are available.

The job description should incorporate the [National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers (2015)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/396247/National_Standards_of_Excellence_for_Headteachers.pdf), the Church foundation of the school and the particular context of the school and its community.

The governing board may wish to use the Church of England’s Vision for education as a basis for the job description incorporating the national standards within this.

The National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers are set out in four domains, beginning with a Preamble. There are four ‘Excellence As Standard’ domains:

• Qualities and knowledge

• Pupils and staff

• Systems and process

• The self-improving school system

With each domain listing six key characteristics linked to it.

**5.2 Deciding the person specification**

This is where the detail of the requirements is listed. The general specifications would include:

* Qualifications
* Training
* Experience
* Knowledge and skills
* Personal qualities
* Interests and motivation relevant to the job.

The decision needs to be made about what experience and skills are needed for this particular post and context (eg if the school serves a disadvantaged area then an experience of working in schools like this might be included). It is important to remember that if the decision is made for the criteria to be ‘Essential’ then candidates should only be progressed if this is demonstrated. Governors should also be aware of equalities legislation when setting criteria. They should also be aware of the right in a VA school may discriminate in favour of candidates who can demonstrate a positive commitment to the Christian faith.

Governors need to be clear and in agreement about the definition of Christian commitment and make sure it is very clear in the documentation they send out.

Do they require someone who is:

* A communicant member of C of E?
* A practising Christian / Anglican preferred?
* A member of church in membership of Churches Together. www.cte.org.uk ?
* Can articulate a philosophy for church school education?
* Can provide spiritual leadership?

Governors need to consider this in relation to the type and level of commitment required to promote the church foundation and comply with the Trust Deed and Mission Statement of the school. Example specifications are included in the annex.

**5.3 Deciding where and how to advertise the post**

The governing body is asked to agree the wording for an advertisement which will be informed by the criteria for the post. It is important to include the church school aspects and any faith commitment expected in the advert wording so that candidates are immediately made aware of the context.

Essential elements to include in an advertisement are:

* name, address, contact number for school;
* effective start date;
* salary range;
* group size and number on roll (NOR);
* information regarding what the governors require from their new headteacher (this is where the church school aspects should be included and what the school can offer;
* that visits to the school are welcome (and who to contact to arrange this or the dates already set);
* closing date for applications;
* interview dates;
* where information packs can be obtained from;
* reference to the setting’s commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and that the successful applicant will need a DBS.

Governors will need to decide where to advertise the post as well as agree the wording. This will depend on the school’s context.

There is no requirement to advertise nationally and governors will need to balance the benefits of reaching a wider audience and budget constraints. Also there needs to be an understanding of whether the post is of a level that would encourage candidates to move areas. Most candidates look online and so the use of social media as well as online advertising is a good option.

**5.4** **Application packs and procedures**

The decision needs to be made about what goes into the application pack and how it will be made available to prospective candidates.

The recruitment pack is an opportunity to tell potential applicants about the school and encourage them to apply for the vacancy. The outgoing headteacher may be able to contribute to this in suggesting information that they think potential candidates might find useful.

The pack can take the form of a printed publication, however, it is common for schools to have the pack available electronically in PDF format that can either be emailed to interested parties, or downloaded from a website.

The following should be included in the pack as a minimum:

* Letter of introduction from the chair of governors, including details of how to apply for the post and what the governing body are looking for (ethos). The pack should specify that CVs will not be accepted
* A statement of the employer’s commitment to safeguarding children
* Information about the school including links to: website address, school self-evaluation, financial statement, etc
* Information about the church ethos of the school and links with the Diocese and local church
* Job description
* Person specification
* Terms and conditions of employment, including salary range
* The name of the person to be contacted for additional information about the post (including details of any arrangements for visits).
* The closing date for the post.
* Selection process, including dates

There is a difference between the core factual information and what makes the school desirable. You may wish to consider the following:

* What is it that makes your school and the post of headteacher challenging, stimulating, exciting, rewarding or special?
* What is special about your school and its community?
* Have you made good use of input from pupils?
* Is the information honest and realistic about your school?
* Is your website up to date and does it give the right impression of the school?
* Is it likely to encourage the most suitable candidate to want to work at your school?
* It would be worth including the additional support offered by the Diocese in a church school and the additional networks this brings.
  1. **Actions to be undertaken following the meeting**

Chair of Governors to:

* confirm advert wording etc with the administrators
* ensure any documentation required is forwarded to the administrators to arrange an interview venue
* check whether any governors not involved in this meeting are to be involved in future parts of the process
* send all governors notification of the ratification meeting (schools in MATs will need to check the ratification procedure with the Trust Board)
* forward the ‘letter from the chair to the candidate and other information for inclusion in the packs

Administration to:

* place advert
* send out packs on request (hard copy or email if they are not available for download)
* Securely send copies of all applications to all governors and advisers following the closing date
* Securely store applications and follow retention guidelines

Advisers and Governors to:

* comment on the draft pack prior to its publication.
* examine each application, the form and the letter of application, against the criteria agreed at the initial meeting in preparation for shortlisting
* consider feedback for unsuccessful candidates

1. **The shortlisting meeting**

In preparation for the shortlisting meeting, governors will be sent the following:

* A copy of the agreed job description and person specification as sent to the candidates
* A copy of each candidate’s application.  
  Governors should examine each application, the form and the letter of application, against the criteria agreed at the initial meeting

**Note:** Governors should not convene any additional meetings (formal or informal) for the purpose of considering applications without notifying the Local Authority and the Diocese.

The shortlisting meeting should be minuted and include:

* A reminder of confidentiality/equal opportunities
* Agreement of the shortlisting procedure (Advisers can provide examples)
* An Initial screening conducted to exclude any candidates who do not meet essential criteria
* Consideration of all other applications against the agreed selection criteria and a decision made whether to create a shortlist or re-advertise
* Finalising the selection procedure, including:
  + Identification of Tasks/activities
  + Use of references
  + Practical arrangements

**6.1 Consideration of applications**

Following the initial screening where those who do not meet the essential criteria are excluded the other applications should be considered against the desirable criteria and ranked in the format chosen by the board (examples are included in the appendix).

This should be done individually at first and then the panel come together to compare scores and discuss.

Note should be taken of any areas on individual applications (gaps in employment history – frequent moves – criminal background) that will require individual questions in the final interviews.

If there is only one applicant, it is still reasonable to proceed to interview as long as the candidate has demonstrated that they may be able to satisfy the appointment criteria. However it is better to interview more than one candidate to give governors a clearer picture of the candidates.

**6.2 Finalising the selection procedure**

When setting the job description and person specification the panel will have identified key areas that are important to their school and will then choose a selection process that will best test these.

Activities that may be used include:

* presentations;
* observation of teaching/act of worship;
* observed group work;
* learning walk;
* data analysis exercise;
* simulation exercises, including in-tray exercises/evaluation tasks;
* observing a lesson and providing feedback to the teacher;
* Budgeting/Financial activities;
* pre-prepared report;
* Group exercises with all other candidates;
* narrow focus panel interviews;
* final interview.

These could take place over two days with activities on the first day and interviews on the second day or all on one day.

It is important that the letter to candidates makes it clear how the first day of the 2-day process is used for the selection procedure.

Governors may also choose to follow a two-stage process if there are a large number of candidates with a smaller number going on to the final stage.

Whichever method is chosen, it should be clear which part these tasks play in the overall decision-making process. For example, as part of a fair and transparent process it should be clear whether a learning walk is simply an opportunity for candidates to see around the school and meet some staff and pupils, or if it will form part of the final decision-making assessment.

The final section will be interview questions which should complement the activities and allow the panel to question around other areas and skills. A comprehensive list of possible questions is included in the appendix and the LA adviser may be able to provide further questions.

**6.3 References**

Requests for references must be made immediately after shortlisting and sufficient time allowed for responses before the interview date.

* At least two written references should be sought including from a candidates' current or most recent employer with their prior permission. A third ‘faith’ reference can be sought for voluntary aided schools or academies that were voluntary aided.
* For safeguarding purposes references should specifically ask whether the referee is completely satisfied of the applicants suitability to work with children and should also request details of any substantiated safeguarding allegations.  It should be noted that references should not ask about allegations which are unsubstantiated / unfounded or malicious.
* In accordance with the School Staffing Regulations maintained schools are required to pass on information to prospective employers about teachers and Headteachers, who have been subject to formal capability procedures. Therefore, when requesting a reference governors may enquire whether a candidate has been subject to their school’s capability procedure in the 2 years prior to the date the reference is requested.
* A reference may ask about any current formal disciplinary warnings but cannot ask about expired sanctions or informal warnings.
* Referees have a duty to ensure any information provided is a true, accurate and fair representation.  References should offer objective facts and not opinions and the referee should be able to objectively justify any negative comment which are made.

References should not be used within the decision making process and so should not be considered by the panel until the decision is made. However advisers or the Chair of the panel should read them and advise on any aspects that need to be followed up.

**6.4 Practical arrangements**

It is important that the interview process is well planned, to ensure that the candidates are given the best opportunity to show their qualities but also to highlight the strengths of the school and its governors.

The practical details need to be confirmed with responsibilities clearly identified.

Agree any arrangements to observe candidate teaching or leading worship within their own school if used as part of the process. It is not always necessary to undertake this depending on the context of the school and the planned tasks taking place on the interview days. If it is then governors should use an adviser to support this.

Governors need to consider the logistics for the days of interviews in respect of:

* rooms available for the interview process;
* a room for candidates to use as a base;
* catering arrangements for the day;
* car parking issues;
* dovetailing with the school day to minimise disruption;
* in the case of some schools, the need to find a venue off-site in which to   
  conduct the interview.

The panel needs to ensure that school staff are made aware of outline for the day and those helping with administration and candidate welfare are given clear details.

**6.5 Actions to be taken following the meeting**

Chair of Governors to:

* confirm arrangements for any pre- interview visits and contact schools as appropriate
* confirm with the full governing board the ratification arrangements

Administrators:

* Confirm arrangements with the panel and school/venue
* write out to all short-listed candidates inviting them to interview and asking them to bring ID and qualification evidence
* request confidential references (including faith references if required)
* check any reasonable adjustments required by candidates to allow them to access the interviews

Governors to:

* re-read the person specification and job description
* consider important areas to be covered at interview
* consider areas for questions

**7. The Interviews**

Depending on the structure agreed, activities could take place the day prior to the interview with interviews taking place the next day or all activities and interview panels could take place on the same day. Example questions are provided later in the pack. The number and choice of questions will be influenced by the candidates shortlisted as well as the context of the school and position.

**7.1 Preparation**

In preparation for the interview day governors should:

* Re-visit the agreed person specification form, noting the essential and desirable criteria.
* Re-examine each application against the information requested, noting areas requiring further explanation / information.
* Re-read the school information pack and any other material relating to the needs of the post.
* Consider areas for questions.

At the start of the day:

* Confirm arrangements for the day including the roles of governors and advisers
* Agree the process to check identity and qualifications
* Identify questions, order and questioner (remembering there should be at least one question regarding safeguarding) – examples will be given by advisers and should include questions regarding the church school nature for both VA and VC schools and may include personal faith questions for VA schools or academies that were VA schools depending on what was agreed in the person specification.
* Decide how candidates will be graded for tasks and questions

Arrangements should be made for the candidates to be welcomed as they arrive at the school and to be shown to their base room for the day. Refreshments should be provided along with information about the day and who to contact with any queries.

**7.2 The interview panel**

The schedule will often place the main panel interview as the last activity in the assessment process.

For the Main Panel Interview – The Chair of the Panel should:

* Introduce the candidate to the panel and confirm the interview process
* Confirm to the candidate the decision-making process, how long this should take and how the candidate wishes to be contacted
* Advise the candidate that they will be able to ask questions at the end of the interview

Individual members of the panel should keep their own notes of the interview to:

* Act as a reminder of what the candidate said (one person will not be able to remember everything)
* Inform the score/grade given to the candidate
* Assist when deliberating with other members of the panel over the final scores that will apply
* Provide evidence in the event that a recruitment decision is challenged, including a legal challenge
* Assist in providing feedback to candidates

After the last panel interview the Chair should initiate a discussion, once it is clear that all members of the panel have finished individual scoring. Each candidate is assessed in respect of their performance at interview and other activities. The outcome of this discussion should be recorded. When all scoring is completed the scores should be compared to determine who has scored highest and whether they have scored sufficiently high to be offered the post.

All paperwork for the interview should be gathered together and retained securely for a period of at least six months. Thereafter any recruitment papers not needed should be disposed of in a confidential manner.

The decision then needs to be taken as to who will contact the unsuccessful candidates and provide feedback.

**8. After the interview**

Once the Recruitment Panel has agreed to appoint one of the candidates the following actions should take place:

* The Chair of the Panel should contact the candidate the Panel wishes to appoint. The candidate should be informed that the Panel will recommend them for appointment.
* The Chair should confirm that the individual accepts the offer of the post and that it is subject to Governing Board ratification and normal pre- employment checks (schools in MATs will need to check the ratification procedure with the Trust Board). The candidate will want to know the salary that is being offered and this should be discussed by the Panel before the contact is made with the candidate.
* The Chair or LA/Diocesan Adviser should then contact unsuccessful candidates to thank them and to offer the opportunity for feedback. The panel will decide who will provide feedback.
* The paperwork along with written confirmation from the Chair of the Governing Body of the appointment, starting date, salary and any other relevant information to be sent to the HR provider, including a note about the need for Church of England contracts for VA schools and academies <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/church-schools-and-academies/staff-contracts-schools-and-academies>
* Assuming the decision is ratified, the Chair should then provide a written conditional offer, making sure it is subject to any outstanding employment checks which will include; medical, satisfactory references (if not all received at this stage), check of qualifications, CRB/DBS check, ID check, financial and right to work in UK check.
* There will be a lot of paperwork held by individual governors following the final interviews. It is helpful if this is all collated by the Chair of the panel and placed into three groups:
  + Those documents that relate to the successful candidate and need to be sent to the HR provider and placed in the employee file
  + Those documents that relate to the decision taken by panel which should be kept for 6 months in case of challenge
  + Those documents which are copies/duplicates and can be disposed of as confidential waste.

**Example Job description**

**A. The Core Purpose of the Headteacher in a Church school**

The headteacher is the prime mover in creating, inspiring and embodying the Christian character and culture of this Church school, securing its vision statement with all members of the school community and ensuring an environment for teaching and learning that empowers both staff and students to achieve their highest potential and live life in all its fullness.

Thus, the core purpose of the headteacher is to provide professional leadership and management for the school within the context of the Trust Deed and the Church of England’s vision for education. This will promote a secure foundation from which to achieve high standards in all areas of the school’s work. To gain this success the headteacher must establish high quality education by effectively managing teaching and learning and using personalised learning to realise the potential of all pupils. The headteacher must establish a culture that promotes excellence, equality and high expectations of all pupils within a strong Christian ethos to enable them to ‘live life in all its fullness’ (John 10:10). In leading this church school, the headteacher will ensure that it is educating for wisdom, knowledge and skills; for hope and aspiration; for community and living well together; and for dignity and respect (Church of England’s vision for education).

The headteacher is the leading education professional in the school. Accountable to the governing board, the headteacher provides, leadership and direction for the school and ensures that it is managed and organised to meet its aims and targets. The headteacher, working with others, is responsible for evaluating the school’s performance to identify the priorities for continuous improvement and raising standards; ensuring equality of opportunity for all; developing policies and practices; ensuring that resources are efficiently and effectively used to achieve the school’s aims in accordance with its mission statement, and for the day-to-day management, organisation and administration of the school.

The headteacher, working with and through others, secures the commitment of the wider community to the school by developing and maintaining effective partnerships with, for example, local churches, local and wider diocesan schools, other services and agencies for children, the Local Authority, Diocesan officers, higher education institutions and employers. Through such partnerships and other activities, headteachers play a key role in contributing to the development of the education system as a whole and collaborate with others to raise standards locally.

**Main Duties**

**Qualities and Knowledge**

Within the school’s Christian character the Headteacher will:

* Hold and articulate a clear Christian vision, founded on Christian values and moral purpose, focused on providing a world-class education for the pupils they serve ensuring they grow in wisdom.
* Demonstrate optimistic personal behaviour, positive relationships and attitudes towards pupils and staff, and towards parents, governors, the Diocese, the Parish and members of the local community.
* Lead by example - with integrity, creativity, resilience, clarity and spirituality - drawing on their own scholarship, expertise, skills, and wisdom and that of those around them.
* Sustain wide, current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems locally, nationally and globally, and pursue continuous professional development that reflects the needs of a Church of England school.
* Work with political and financial astuteness, within a clear set of principles centred on the school’s Christian vision, ably translating local, Diocesan and national policy into the school’s context.
* Secure knowledge and understanding of church school distinctiveness, keeping up with national and diocesan developments and, in particular, ensure high quality RE and collective worship.
* Communicate compellingly the church school’s vision and drive the strategic leadership, empowering all pupils and staff to excel in their pursuit of wisdom.
* Lead creative Christian collective worship that engages with the school’s Christian vision and values enabling the community to flourish and grow spiritually.

**Pupils and Staff**

Within the schools’ Christian character the Headteacher will:

* Demand ambitious standards for all pupils, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality, instilling a strong sense of accountability in staff for the impact of their work on pupils’ outcomes.
* Secure excellent teaching through an analytical understanding of how pupils learn and of the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design, leading to rich curriculum opportunities and pupils’ well-being.
* Establish an educational culture of ‘open classrooms’ as a basis for sharing best practice within and between schools, drawing on and conducting relevant research and robust data analysis.
* Create a Church School character within which all staff are motivated and supported to develop their own skills and subject knowledge, and to support each other.
* Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders in a climate where excellence is the standard, leading to clear succession planning.
* Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice within the Christian character of the school.
* Establish, promote and respect an inclusive culture that promotes equality and an understanding of diverse cultures, faith groups’ languages and ethnic groups.
* Act as a spiritual as well as professional leader to staff and pupils.
* Celebrate achievement in the development of the whole child and not only those matters that are measured externally.

**Systems and Process**

Within the school’s Christian character the Headteacher will:

* Ensure that the school’s systems, organisation and processes are well considered, efficient and fit for purpose, upholding the principles of transparency, integrity and probity within a Christian context.
* Provide a safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all pupils and staff, focused on safeguarding pupils and developing their exemplary behaviour in school and in the wider society as they develop self-worth and an understanding of the worth of others.
* Establish rigorous, fair and transparent systems and measures for managing the performance of all staff, addressing any under-performance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice.
* Welcome strong governance and actively support the governing board to understand its role and deliver its functions effectively – in particular its functions to set this Church School’s strategy and hold the head teacher to account for pupil, staff and financial performance.
* Exercise strategic, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure the equitable deployment of budgets and resources, in the best interests of pupils’ achievements and the school’s sustainability and its Christian character.
* Distribute leadership throughout the organisation, forging teams of colleagues who have distinct roles and responsibilities, are given the opportunity to innovate and who hold each other to account for their decision-making.

**The Self-Improving School System**

Within the school’s Christian character the Headteacher will:

* Create an outward-facing church school which works with other schools and organisations, including the Diocesan Education team and Diocesan schools- in a climate of mutual challenge - to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all pupils.
* Develop effective relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues in other public services, parents/carers and the church community to improve academic and social outcomes for all pupils.
* Challenge educational orthodoxies and respond critically and constructively to education initiatives in the best interests of achieving excellence, harnessing the findings of well-evidenced research to self-regulate and improve the school.
* Shape the current and future quality of the teaching profession through high quality training and sustained professional development appropriate to the church school context for all staff at the school.
* Model entrepreneurial and innovative approaches to school improvement, leadership and governance, confident of the vital contribution of internal and external accountability.
* Inspire and influence others - within and beyond the school - to believe in the fundamental importance of education in young people’s lives and to promote the value of education in human flourishing.

**Accountability**

The Headteacher will:

* Provide information advice and support to the governing board to enable it to meet its responsibility for securing the church school foundation, effective teaching and learning, improved standards of achievement and value for money.
* Lead on compliance and regularity changes such as GDPR or other statutes.
* Present an account of the school’s performance in a form appropriate to a range of audiences – governors, parents, Diocese, local community, OFSTED, the Local Authority.
* Ensure that parents and pupils are well informed about the wider curriculum and targets for Improvement.

**Community**

The Headteacher will, with the support of the governing body:

* Promote a close relationship with local churches and facilitate appropriate use of school premises.
* Work closely with local groups and stakeholders to maximise the contribution made by the school within the community.

**Additional Requirements**

This job description outlines the main duties of the post, incorporating the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers, but does not exclude other duties which may be undertaken to ensure the efficient operation of the school. Other duties required will be consistent with those listed above and appropriate to the title and grade of the post.

The appointment is subject to the current conditions of employment of Headteachers, contained in the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions document and other current educational and employment legislation

**The applicant will be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The Headteacher is expected to demonstrate this commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and is expected to hold all staff and volunteers accountable for their contribution to the safeguarding regulations.**

**Example Advert**

**School Logo and name**

**Headteacher  
Required Date   
L.. to L.. (£.. - £…..)   
Full time, permanent post**

**The Governing Board is seeking to appoint a new leader to ………**

**The successful candidate will:**

(main points from job description)

**School context:**

(brief summary of the school’s context)

**How to Apply:**

The job description, person specification, school information and application forms are available from …….

Applications should be submitted to:

Closing date:   
Interview dates:

School visits:

*…………. School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and external agencies to share this commitment. Successful candidates will be asked to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service.*

**Example Person specification**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FAITH COMMITMENT** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| A practising and worshipping member of a church affiliated to Churches Together in Britain and Ireland |  |  |
| A committed Christian who is an active member of the church he/she attends |  |  |
| Fully supportive of the school’s Christian values and committed to developing links between the parish church and school |  |  |
| Has an understanding of the importance of collective worship and RE in a church school |  |  |
| A commitment to strategic thinking and planning that builds, communicates and carries forward a coherent and shared vision for the Christian ethos of the school |  |  |
| Has an understanding of how relationships should be fostered and developed between the school, local Church and its community and the Diocese |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **QUALIFICATIONS** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Honours degree |  |  |
| Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) |  |  |
| Evidence of personal and professional development |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **EXPERIENCE** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Substantial and successful experience in a senior leadership role including curriculum development, monitoring and assessment |  |  |
| Successful implementation of strategies to improve teaching and learning to raise the standards of achievement for all pupils |  |  |
| Evidence of managing or making a substantial contribution to the  effective management of change. |  |  |
| Experience of working effectively and in partnership with Governors, parents and the wider community |  |  |
| Experience of developing further systems for school self-evaluation, effective monitoring and inspection. |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **KNOWLEDGE** |  |  |
| Good knowledge and  understanding of what constitutes an  effective school and have the  necessary skills of leadership and  management to help create such a  school |  |  |
| Knowledge of the statutory  requirements and other relevant  legislation relating to school  leadership and management |  |  |
| Knowledge of statutory education  frameworks, including governance |  |  |
| Knowledge of the statutory  requirements and other relevant  legislation relating to child  protection procedures and  safeguarding. |  |  |
| Knowledge of ways to build,  communicate and implement a  shared vision |  |  |
| Knowledge of strategic planning  processes |  |  |
| Knowledge of new technologies,  their use and impact including social media |  |  |
| Knowledge of the work of other  agencies and opportunities for  collaboration |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **SKILLS & ABILITIES** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Ability to have a vision of the overall  aims and direction of a successful  school and be able to communicate  these in order to inspire and motivate others |  |  |
| Ability to manage and monitor budgets and deploy human resources. |  |  |
| Ability to access and analyse  relevant data and to use this  information to set priorities and  determine school action |  |  |
| Ability to work under pressure, determine priorities and meet deadlines, communicating effectively to all stakeholders |  |  |
| Ability to lead with optimism, continually building and developing positive relationships |  |  |
| Ability to help create and maintain  a school that ensures the health  and safety of staff and pupils and  which presents a stimulating and  attractive learning environment for  pupils |  |  |
| The ability to relate positively to all stakeholders and inspire high quality teaching, learning and behaviour |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **LEADING LEARNING & TEACHING** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| In-depth knowledge of EYFS and Key Stages 1 & 2. |  |  |
| An outstanding classroom practitioner, who will lead by example and inspire staff to improve and develop. |  |  |
| A good understanding of what  contributes to successful learning and the ability to promote the most effective teaching strategies to bring this about |  |  |
| Ability to acknowledge teaching excellence and challenge any underperformance across the school to improve the quality of learning |  |  |
| Ability to motivate and engage pupils to maximise learning opportunities and outcomes, ensuring equal opportunities for all |  |  |
| Knowledge of how assessment  strategies and target-setting are used to inform learning in order to help all pupils make progress |  |  |
| Proven ability in raising achievement for all pupils including those with high prior attainment, rapid learners and those requiring SEND provision |  |  |
| Ability to secure excellent pastoral care, behaviour and good attendance for all |  |  |
| Evidence of developing and implementing strategies for school improvement, including data analysis, target setting and strategies for improving the quality of teaching and learning for all pupils |  |  |
| Engaged in the use of performance appraisal, performance related pay and managing effective professional development |  |  |
| Understanding of effective financial management across all aspects of school life |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING THE SCHOOL’S ETHOS** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Commitment to preserve and develop the distinctive Christian character and ethos of the school |  |  |
| Ability to share the future by building and articulating a shared vision and engaging people to secure a successful future |  |  |
| Commitment to participate in school and community activities |  |  |
| Commitment to the creation of a climate of open communication where people feel able to express opinion and know their views will be respected |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **LEADERSHIP & COLLABORATION** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| A genuine all-rounder, able to flex to the needs of the school, thinking creatively to find opportunities and solutions |  |  |
| An excellent communicator, diplomatic, confident and able to quickly build trust with all stakeholders |  |  |
| Ability to deal sensitively with people with very different and demanding  expectations, demonstrating an ability to avert and resolve conflict |  |  |
| A highly visible presence and good role model who inspires confidence and trust, empowering and motivating all stakeholders |  |  |
| Committed to engaging with the local church and wider community to build partnerships, share resources, promote collective events and ensure advocacy for children and young people |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **MANAGING THE ORGANISATION** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Able to demonstrate an inspirational and supportive style of leadership |  |  |
| Plan, organise and exercise sound judgement and communicate and delegate effectively |  |  |
| An understanding of and commitment to the requirements of safeguarding children and an ability to maintain a culture of vigilance |  |  |
| A strategic decision maker with the ability to take a brave and courageous approach to initiating, implementing and monitoring policies and practices. Being able to pioneer new ways of thinking for the good of children |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **SECURING ACCOUNTABILITY** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Committed to working with the Governing Body, LA and Diocese to enable it to meet its statutory responsibilities |  |  |
| Able to present an accurate and understandable account of the school’s performance to stakeholders |  |  |
| Develop a school ethos underpinned by inclusive Christian values that enables everyone to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding, celebrate success and accept responsibility for outcomes |  |  |
| Demonstrate political insight and be aware of a range of school improvement strategies which accelerate progress for all children |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **SAFEGUARDING** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children |  |  |
| Ability to maintain and develop a ‘culture of vigilance’ with regard to safeguarding and child protection |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **PERSONAL** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| Ability to prioritise and manage time appropriately, being able to work under pressure and in changing circumstances |  |  |
| Is self-motivating and achieves challenging professional goals. |  |  |
| Demonstrates enthusiasm for, and commitment to, the role; along with reliability, integrity and a passion for education. |  |  |
| Demonstrates:  ● Emotional self-awareness  ● Accurate self-assessment  ● Self confidence  ● Empathy  ● Organisational awareness  ● Emotional self-control  ● Transparency  ● Adaptability  ● Optimistic  ● Inspirational leadership  ● Good team worker and  collaborative |  |  |

**Recruitment task examples**

**Presentations**

A presentation to the panel within a specified length of time. This can be an unseen presentation, with candidates given a short period of time (30 mins) for preparation. This can also be a seen presentation when candidates are provided with the title beforehand, either the day before, often at the end of day 1 or when candidates are contacted to invite them to attend for interview and where the schedule of the interview is shared.

The title of the presentation can be an opportunity for candidates to share their vision and short/long term strategy for the school. It can alternatively be used to ask candidates to share their thoughts and ideas on a very specific topic that is pertinent to the school context or a key priority e.g. Disadvantage, or standards in writing.

**Leading Collective Worship**

Candidates to lead an act of Collective Worship. For organisational reasons this is often to a smaller group of the school, such as a class or year group to accommodate all candidates during the day. Candidates may be given the theme of the worship and the age group of the audience.

**Observed group work**

Candidates may be set a task relating to school leadership and the candidates invited to work together to discuss possible solutions / outcomes. This is an opportunity to see how candidates relate with each other, observing effective use of inter-personal and communication skills, as well as strategic thing relating to the task.

**Learning walk**

Candidates to conduct a learning walk that can be accompanied either by a member of staff and/or a governor or to conduct it on their own. This is an opportunity for candidates to see learning taking place across the school as well as viewing the classroom and school environment. This can be used to enable candidates to refer to their experience in other tasks as part of the interview schedule or may result in being set a task sharing/recording their observations concluded from the learning walk, either verbally or as a short written report.

**Data analysis exercise**

Analysis of school performance data summary, identifying the key headlines and proposing strategies for addressing them. This can be the school's own data or an anonymised data set which is also better suited when there may be an internal candidate.

**Simulation exercises, including in-tray exercises/evaluation tasks and scenarios**

Candidates may be given a scenario or a number of issues and asked to prioritise as well as indicate how they would manage each one. This can provide an insight into how candidates would manage certain situations, their ability to prioritise and rationalise the decisions taken.

**Observing a lesson and providing feedback to the teacher**

This activity focusses on candidates' knowledge and skills regarding teaching and learning and the quality and manner of delivering constructive feedback identifying strengths and areas for development.

**Budgeting / Financial activities**

Candidates to demonstrate their understanding of finance and interpretation of the school budget. Analysis of the information provided, identifying key headlines and proposals to reduce costs and/or generate increased income. This can be the school's own figures or an anonymised school's budget.

**Pre-prepared report**

Candidates requested to write a brief report responding to some school information provided. This could be the outcomes and recommendations from a recent external report, e.g. Ofsted or SIAMs, or from a set of school data, or a work/book scrutiny with a specific focus.

**Group exercises with all other candidates**

Candidates to work together on a given task that can be linked to a school scenario or current situation relevant to the school. This can be a practical task or discussion and presents an opportunity to observe inter-personal and communication skills, as well as strategic thing relating to the task.

**Narrow focus panel interviews**

Candidates may be interviewed by several small panels, each with a specific focus, such as Curriculum, Leadership and Management, Community. The questions asked relate directly to the focus of the panel. Panel members share the outcomes from the interviews with the full panel at the end of the interview session.

**Final interview with full panel**

Candidates are asked a series of questions by the full panel. These usually relate to the different areas of the headteacher standards and can also specific questions relating to such areas as the school's context, individual characteristic and current key priorities.

**Example interview questions**

This is not an exhaustive list and questions should be chosen that are relevant to the context of the school. Questions relating to the Church school ethos should be included. When interviewing for a headship in a Voluntary Controlled school it must be kept in mind that it is not counted as a genuine occupational requirement to be a practicing Christian, however they would be expected to develop and support the Christian ethos and vision of the school.

They are not in order of preference.

**Openers**

What attracted you to teaching/this post/this school?

Why this particular school and why now?

How did you find your interview with the School Council?

During your visit to the school did you identify any strengths or potential weaknesses?

**Faith commitment**

Tell us about your own personal involvement in Church. How do you express your faith in your daily life?

Please tell us about your faith and its place in your life?

Can you tell us something about your current place of worship?

**Experience**

We are looking for a headteacher who is also an excellent classroom practitioner. What makes you an excellent practitioner?

I am a visitor to your school. If I looked through your classroom door what would I see?

Outline for us a whole school initiative that you have led that has contributed to the raising of standards in your current school?

Looking back over your career can you identify a particularly successful initiative you introduced? What made it successful?

Describe any specific improvements you have made to curriculum development in your

school during the last 2-3 years, how this has led to improved performance and what contributed to the improvements.

Tell us how you have used school improvement through self-evaluation to review current practice.

Talk us through a situation of change that has been met with hostility and you have had to manage. What action did you take? What was the outcome? On reflection, what would you do differently?

Talk us through a situation in which you had to manage a parent? Did you reach a successful outcome and how was this achieved?

Everyone makes mistakes and mistakes can be part of the learning process. Describe a mistake you have made in your career and what you learnt from that experience.

**Knowledge**

Please give your views on a recent and significant development within the Primary sector of education.

What do you think are the main messages of the Church of England’s vision for education?

What are your thoughts about the most recent Ofsted/SIAMS inspection framework?

**Leading learning & teaching**

How can a broad and balanced curriculum be maintained in school when we are faced with so many external pressures?

Talk us through the process of curriculum planning and its links with assessment.

How can the curriculum be planned to ensure high standards of teaching and learning?

Tell us how you would develop curriculum co-ordinators as critical friends.

How would you sum up, briefly, your approach to learning and teaching?

In your view what makes effective teaching?

When is learning most effective?

Describe the features of an excellent lesson.

How do you meet the needs of the different pupils?

How do you use different learning styles to develop potential?

Would you tell us something about how children learn and how you create a school learning environment for children?

What strategies would you employ as a role model for teaching and learning within the school?

How do you create a learning environment that develops the child, not just academically, but as a whole person?

Describe how you have led a change in your school which has brought about an improvement in teaching and learning.

What strategies would you use to enhance the quality of learning and how would you judge if they were successful?

What is the potential impact of monitoring on the process of teaching & learning?

As a head teacher how would you ensure that quality teaching and learning was taking place across classes and how would you recognise it?

How would you encourage children to develop self-confidence and become motivated to acquire and develop their knowledge and skills?

What approaches have you used to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching, learning and standards?

What, in your opinion, is the key data to enable you to judge whether a child's progress is effective?

What intervention strategies would you use to ensure ALL pupils achieved their potential?

What do you understand by the term 'personalised learning'? How can this benefit pupils?

How can learners develop enthusiasm for their learning?

*For small schools:*

How will you balance the teaching and leadership roles here in order to raise standards and further develop the quality of education?

Tell us about the special challenges of teaching a class with mixed ages and how these challenges may be met.

**Maintaining and enhancing the school’s ethos**

How would you ensure this church school enabled all of its pupils and adults to flourish?

How would you ensure that this church school was ‘Deeply Christian, serving the common good’?

What should a child receive from a Church school that they do not receive from a community school?

How would/have you ensure/d diversity is embraced/celebrated?

What should the school expect from the Church and what can the Church expect from the school?

What do you understand by "inclusion" in the context of a Church school?

What do you believe is the school's responsibility for its place in the community? How would you further develop the school as a centre for the community?

What steps would you take as headteacher to ensure that the school reflects the needs of the community it serves?

Describe a recent successful act of collective worship which you have led. How do you know it was successful? What did the children gain from it?

How would you as headteacher develop the partnership with the Church?

What would you see as the role of the local vicar in the life of the school?

How would you as headteacher contribute to the distinctive nature of this school?

**Leadership & collaboration**

What is the difference between leadership and management? How would you convince us that you have qualities in both?

How have you developed the role of coordinators in your present or previous posts?

How would you seek to develop your senior leaders?

When you undertake classroom monitoring, how do you know that quality teaching and learning and is taking place? How can governors be assured that this is so?

Expand on your view about the role of the headteacher, including your leadership style.

What are the key elements of the Strategic School Development Plan and how do you ensure that all stakeholders in the school have ownership of it?

As the new headteacher of the school, how would you establish morale and confidence in your leadership within the whole school community?

What is your vision for the school in five years’ time and how will you achieve that?

lf you are appointed, what would be your key priorities during the first two or three months in post?

How would you describe an effective team in terms of primary school leadership?

Inspirational leadership and effective management skills are two significant factors in any successful school. Demonstrate how you have both and how they have impacted positively on children in your current school.

What would you do to develop the school from where it stands at present and how would you go about it?

Can you give us one or two examples of achievements or actions taken in your present post which best illustrate your leadership skills?

How would you establish working relationships with the staff in order to gain their confidence and support?

Change can sometimes be threatening. How would you ensure all staff felt comfortable with new initiatives?

How do you inspire others to strive for excellence?

**Managing the organisation**

What would be your priorities in the first term?

What would you hope to have achieved by the end of your first year?

Just as school is beginning you are confronted with a very angry parent complaining that her child is being bullied and demanding immediate action against the culprit. What would you do?

What is your philosophy on managing pupil behaviour and how would you best support staff when faced with children whose behaviour is unacceptable in and out the classroom?

A teacher is finding difficulty on maintaining classroom discipline. 'What support systems could be put in place?

What strategies do you use to promote children's positive behaviour?

Tell us about your experience of managing children who exhibit challenging behaviour.

What are the key features of a successful behaviour management policy?

How would you allocate financial resources within the school?

What place does the Strategic School Development Plan play in the organisation and operation of the budget?

How would you secure effective financial management to underpin the school's agreed priorities?

What experience do you have in determining best value for services? What are the essential processes?

What are the implications for schools' management as a result of falling school rolls?

Considering the ever-increasing workload on staff what should a headteacher put in place to reduce the bureaucratic burden?

What responsibilities have you had in managing finances and the experience of procurement in terms of best value?

You have had some background to the budget process for the school:

(a) What would be your priorities if the budget was under serious pressure?

(b) How would you support the governing body and staff through a potential redundancy process?

How would you secure effective financial management to underpin the school's agreed priorities?

How would you approach the task of identifying and meeting the professional development needs for your staff?

What would your approach be if a member of staff was failing to follow an agreed policy/ies?

How would you balance financial restrictions with raising standards?

How would you ensure that the allocation of money for curriculum areas is appropriately prioritised?

If you identified that a 'member of staff (not necessarily a teacher) was not performing as well as expected, how would you address the problem?

**Securing accountability**

How do you use assessment data to raise expectations and improve standards of attainment? How would you present the data to best inform parents and governors?

lt becomes obvious that confidential information is being shared with parents, how would you deal with these issues?

Tell us about your experience of school improvement through self-evaluation. How do you ensure it is rigorous? On what criteria and by what processes would you identify priorities?

As a headteacher how would you know that *every* child is achieving as well as they can and deriving maximum benefit from everything that school offers?

What is your understanding of the term 'Inclusion'? How would you know it was embedded in practice? (What characterises an inclusive school?)

Explain what process you would follow if you had increasing concerns about a teacher's capability in the classroom?

A member of staff is not implementing an agreed policy (e.g. marking, behaviour). What do you do? After you have tried everything to be supportive, what next?

How would you manage the contribution of parents in supporting children's learning?

In your experience, what are the most effective ways of securing the involvement and support of parents in the life and work of the school? What experiences have you had in involving parents in the life of the school?

How would you promote good home/school links?

How would you account to the Governing Board for the educational standards achieved and the quality of education and care provided by the school?

Tell us about a situation where you have worked closely with a governor/governors? What outcomes were you looking for and how was that achieved?

How would you engage the school community in school self-evaluation?

How would you ensure all staff were accountable for the progress of all pupils?

What systems would you put in place to 'narrow' the achievement gap?

The budget is predicted to be in a deficit of £24,000 how would you support the governing body and staff through managing this and any potential redundancy process?

**Safeguarding**

An allegation has been made by a pupil against one of your staff, how would you respond to this?

When do you think it is appropriate to intervene physically in a situation involving young people?

What makes a school safe and caring?

What policies are involved to support a safe environment?

What are staff's responsibilities in protecting children?

How do you define an appropriate staff/pupil relationship?

Give examples of what you would consider to be appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

If a child discloses confidential information of a serious nature how would you deal with it?

**Personal**

How do you think children, parents, colleagues and the community see you within your current school?

Why do you think the governors should appoint you to the deputy headship/headship of our school? For instance, tell us about the qualities you possess which you feel make you the best person for this post.

The role of headteacher is a difficult one. What personal qualities do you feel you have to bring to the post and to cope with the pressures the job entails?

Looking back over your career, briefly highlight those landmarks which form your key strengths in terms of your suitability to this post.

What personal and professional skills and qualities would you bring to the school/that (would) make you an effective headteacher?

What achievement are you most proud of outside school?

What training and support will you need to be a successful headteacher?

What do you consider are your own personal/professional development needs?

How would you like to see this post develop you personally?



**APPLICATION FOR HEADTEACHER APPOINTMENT**

Thank you for your interest.

Please complete all sections on this form. If any sections do not apply to you, please enter ‘not applicable’. The information provided on the form will be considered by the short-listing panel who will decide whether you proceed to the next stage of the selection process.

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| **Application for appointment of headteacher at:** |

**Personal Details**

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| --- | --- |
| **Title** |  |
| **First Name** |  |
| **Surname** |  |
| **Former name(s)** |  |
| **NI Number** |  |
| **Address** |  |
| **Post Code** |  |
| **Email address** |  |
| **Telephone number** |  |
| **Mobile number** |  |

**Present or most recent employment**

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| **Post held** |  |
| **School / Establishment** |  |
| **Number on roll** |  |
| **Gross salary** |  |
| **Start date** |  |
| **End date / period of notice** |  |
| **Reason for leaving** |  |
| **Description of key duties**  **and responsibilities** |  |

**Previous teaching experience**(Please give details of all previous positions you have held since leaving school, starting with the most recent first)

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| **Name of school and**  **authority** | **Type of school**  **including age range** | **number on roll** | **Post held** | **Date from** | **Date to** | **Reason for leaving** |
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**Previous other employment**

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| **Name of employer** | **Post held** | **Reason for leaving** | **Date from** | **Date to** |
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| **Please give details of any gaps in your employment history** |
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**Qualifications**

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| **Name of educational establishment** | **Qualification taken** | **Grade** | **Date** |
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| **Teacher reference number:** |  | **Date:** |

**Training and Development**Please provide details of all training and development undertaken relevant to this position within the last three years. Please include details of any membership of professional relevant to this position.

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| **Year Course Taken** | **Course Title** | **Date** | **Outcome** |
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**Criminal Convictions**

**For positions working with children, families and vulnerable adults only.**

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| All posts involving direct contact with children are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. However, amendments to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provides that when applying for certain jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered ‘protected’. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account. Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found on the [Ministry of Justice](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-guidance-on-the-rehabilitation-of-offenders-act-1974) website.  Shortlisted candidates will be asked to provide details of all unspent convictions and those that would not be filtered, prior to the date of the interview. You may be asked for further information about your criminal history during the recruitment process. If your application is successful, this self-disclosure information will be checked against information from the Disclosure & Barring Service before your appointment is confirmed.  **Please note that** **it is an offence to apply for the role** **if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.** |

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| Are you related to or have a close relationship with any existing employee of the School or Governors? Yes/No  **If yes, please provide details of their name, job title and your relationship with them.** |

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| **We check that potential employees are eligible to work in the UK:**  Do you have the right to work in the UK? Yes / No |

I confirm that I am not included on the (ISA List 99) of people formally barred from working in schools, disqualified from working with children, or subject to sanctions imposed by a regulatory body. I certify that the information given by me on this Application Form is true to the best of my knowledge and I understand that if I am appointed and such information is subsequently found to be materially incorrect, the governing board will be entitled to terminate my employment without notice.

To comply with the Equality Act 2010, we have not requested information about your sickness absence record. You should be aware that regular attendance at work is an essential requirement of this role and therefore we will be seeking confirmation of your sickness absence record with your current or past employer should you be offered the position.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**References**

Please give details of two referees, one of whom must be your present and/or last employer and the other from a previous employer. Your referees must have knowledge of your work and character. Both referees should ideally be senior people in your organisation.

To comply with safer recruitment practices, references will be taken up on all shortlisted

candidates.

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| **Referee one – current or previous employer** | | |
| If you are invited for interview may we approach this referee without further reference to you? | | Yes / No |
| Title and Name |  | |
| Address |  | |
| Telephone number |  | |
| Email address |  | |
| Occupation |  | |
| Relationship to you |  | |

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| **Referee two** | | |
| If you are invited for interview may we approach this referee without further reference to you? | | Yes / No |
| Title and Name |  | |
| Address |  | |
| Telephone number |  | |
| Email address |  | |
| Occupation |  | |
| Relationship to you |  | |

**For Voluntary Aided Schools or Academies that were previously voluntary aided only**

Governors give particular consideration to your application on the grounds of your religious commitment. Please give the name and address of your Vicar/Rector/Minister, or other suitable person who may be asked for a reference on these matters.

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| **Referee three** | | |
| If you are invited for interview may we approach this referee without further reference to you? | | Yes / No |
| Title and Name |  | |
| Address |  | |
| Telephone number |  | |
| Email address |  | |
| Occupation |  | |
| Relationship to you |  | |

**Data Protection**

The information supplied on this form is being collected as part of the school’s recruitment and selection procedures. If you are successful with your application the information will also be used for the determination and payment of salary and to produce a Statement of Particulars. When you complete this form you are giving your consent to the school to hold and use personal information for these purposes. The information you provide may also be disclosed to relevant statutory bodies. The application forms of successful candidates will be retained for six months, after which time they will be destroyed.

**Relevant skills and experience**

Please use the space below to explain why you are applying for the position and how your experience, personal qualities and skills help to make you a suitable candidate. **It is essential that you provide us with details that demonstrate how you meet the criteria for knowledge and experience, technical skills and personal/behavioural attributes on the person specification. You must demonstrate you meet all the essential criteria on the person specification as a minimum.**

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