



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH

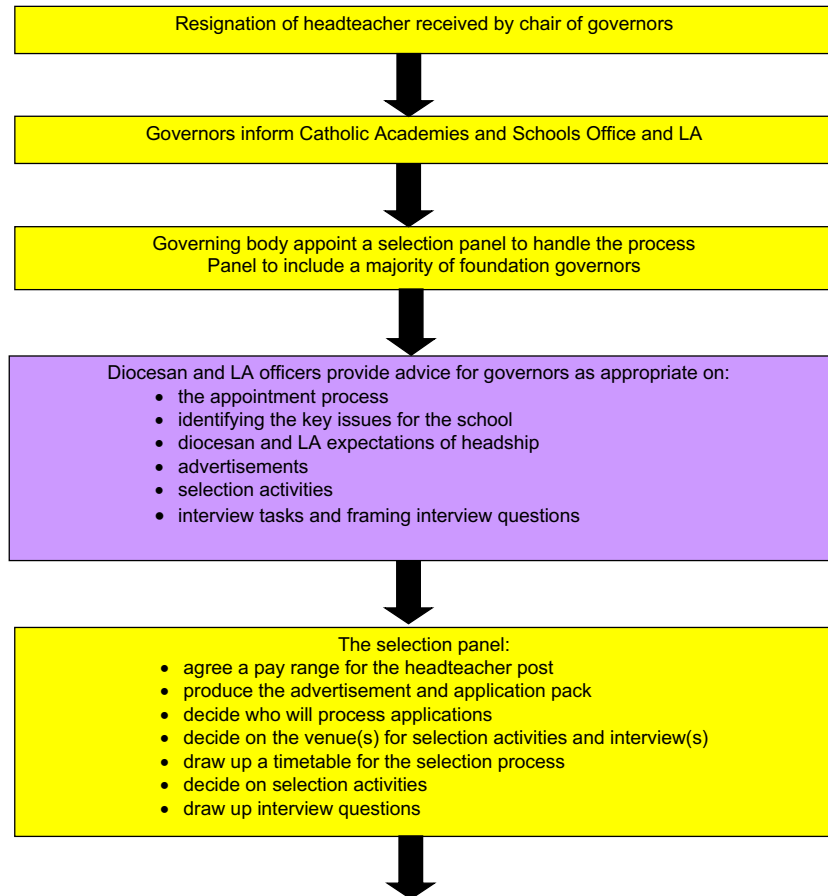
Appointment of Headteachers to Catholic Maintained Schools and Academies

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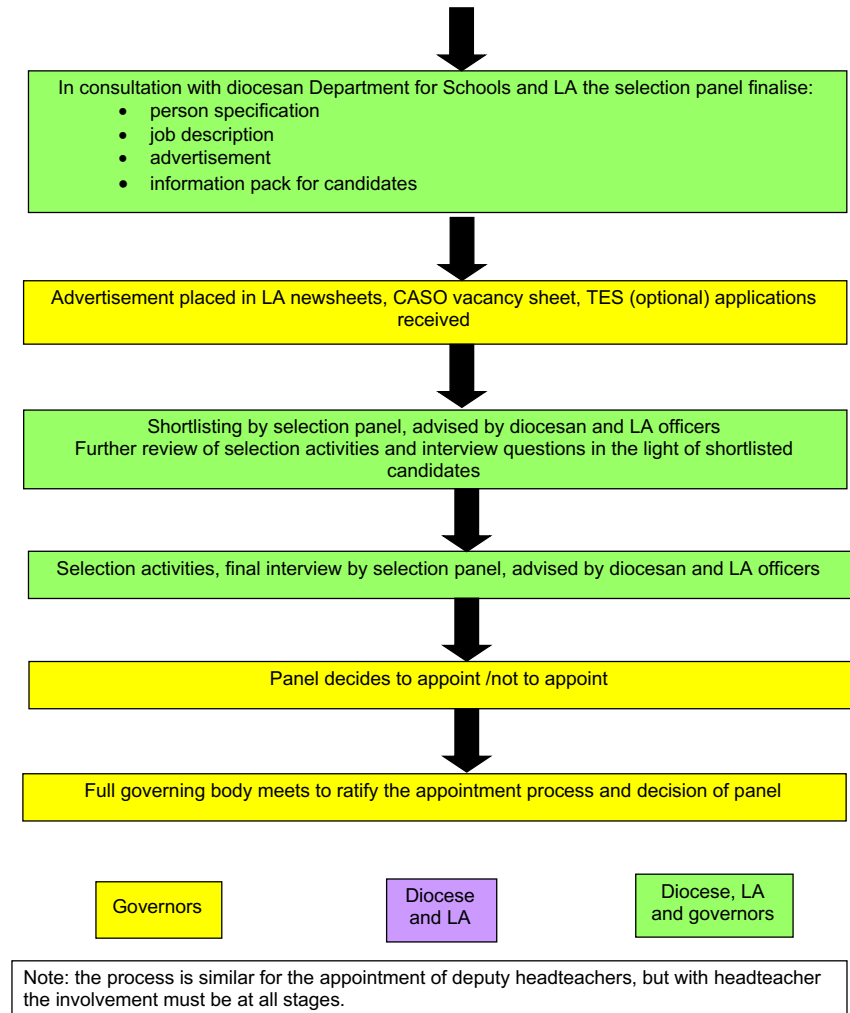
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PROCESS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF HEADTEACHERS TO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

In the case of academies, the local authority (LA) would not automatically be involved, unless the academy buys in their advisory and/or administrative services.



PROCESS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF HEADTEACHERS TO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BISHOPS OF ENGLAND AND WALES WITH REGARDS TO SENIOR APPOINTMENTS

The Memorandum on Appointment of Senior Leaders to Catholic Schools is an extremely important document, which has been issued by the Bishops of England and Wales and which sets out their collective requirement on all Catholic schools and colleges, including schools in the trusteeship of a religious order (which includes maintained schools, academies in England, independent schools, sixth-form colleges and non-maintained special schools) in relation to staffing and the use of CES contracts of employment, workplace policies and associated model employment documents for Catholic schools. **All Catholic school governing bodies must ensure that they have a copy of the memorandum and that they comply with it.**

The memorandum is on the Catholic Education Service website at: [Memorandum for appointment of Senior Leaders](#)

As a minimum requirement the Bishops' Conference (all Bishops of England and Wales) expect that the posts of:

- Headteacher / Principal / Head of School (which includes Executive Headteachers)
- Deputy Headteacher / Principal / Head of School
- Chief Executive Officer
- Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Head or Co-Ordinator of Religious Education (at both school and multi-academy trust company level)
- Chaplain (including Directors of Chaplaincy)
- Employees in multi-academy trust company central teams with responsibility for Catholic Life / Mission / Ethos
- Any role which requires the individual to have responsibility for the spiritual and/or liturgical life of the Catholic school or multi-academy trust company (for example, Prayer and Liturgy Co-ordinator and Director of Primary Education or Secondary Education where it would involve oversight of collective worship and Religious Education)

are to be filled by practising Catholics.

Whilst the leadership posts listed above are generally in use in Catholic schools the list above is not exhaustive and other senior leadership posts may exist in relation to which there is a requirement to be a Practising Catholic. The principle to be applied is that the requirement applies to the most senior leadership post i.e. the person with overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Catholic school or multi-academy trust company, the person who is the second most senior person in the leadership team whose duties include deputising for the most senior post, and any other person with responsibility for the Catholic life of the Catholic school or multi-academy trust company.

Other Leadership posts that directly affect the Catholic Mission of the school should, wherever possible, be staffed by skilled practitioners who are committed Catholics.

THE BISHOP, THE CATHOLIC ACADEMIES AND SCHOOLS OFFICE, THE GOVERNING BODY/TRUST BOARD AND THE LOCAL AUTHORITY: RELATIVE ROLES

The Bishop is represented by an officer of the Catholic Academies and Schools Office throughout the appointment process of the posts contained in the Memorandum, particularly for the two most senior positions in a school, with the exception of those employed in Chaplaincy roles where the Bishop will be represented by the Head of Educational Chaplaincies.

The CES has also produced a very useful document [Guidance for Governors – Recruitment](#) which can be found at [Recruiting: Catholic schools & academies](#) Governors should read and use this document.

The Local Authority is the maintaining authority for the school, and would, therefore, wish to be present during the appointment process for headteachers and deputy headteachers, in order to effectively carry out its role in ensuring high standards in its maintained schools.

The Governing Body or Trust Board, as the employer and the appointing body, should welcome the input and professional advice which experienced diocesan and LA officers can provide. Such advice can prove invaluable at all stages of the appointment process for senior staff.

CONSIDERING KEY ISSUES FOR THE SCHOOL

Before embarking on the procedures for appointing a new headteacher, the governing body has the opportunity to undertake an analysis of their school and to focus on the current key issues for development. They will be assisted in this process by diocesan, LA officers or the Academy Trust CEO, who can provide advice on interpreting data and on evaluation criteria. They can also provide training sessions on the stages and tasks of the selection process.

These important preliminary discussions should consequently inform the advertisement, job description and person specification, which governors draw up.

Important source documents for governors at this stage are:

- School mission statement
- School improvement plan
- Most recent Ofsted inspection report
- Most recent Catholic Schools Inspection report
- Report of any review / monitoring exercise carried out by the LA
- Most recent published performance data
- National standards for headteachers [Headteachers' standards 2020 - GOV.UK](#)

ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

1. *How should we decide membership of the selection panel?*

- The panel should reflect the governing body in that foundation governors should be in the majority.
- At least one member of the panel should have completed the Safer Recruitment training online.
- The panel should consist of an odd number of governors (3, 5 or 7) to avoid the possibility of a tied vote.

2. *Can a staff governor be a member of the selection panel?*

- Yes. However, we would not recommend this. They could be involved in other activities such as those described for senior managers below.
- If a staff governor has the possibility of gaining materially from a particular appointment, e.g. by being promoted to a post at a higher level, that governor must not sit on the panel.

3. *What part can our current head and senior leadership team play in the process?*

- Your current headteacher should not sit on the appointment panel. You could involve head and senior leaders in the process by timetabling an opportunity for shortlisted applicants to meet them and ask questions about the school. Senior leaders could also take applicants on a tour of the school. However, you should make clear that such meetings are not part of the selection process, but for the applicants' benefit.

4. *How do we establish a pay range for the appointment?*

- You should use the following guidance to calculate the school group and determine the pay range. [School teachers' pay and conditions guidance](#)

5. *What arrangements should we make for processing applications?*

- As the appointing authority the governing body can decide to process applications in house, which involves sending out application packs and reference requests, receiving application forms and reference requests and duplicating and circulating these to the selection panel and advisers. If this is to be carried out in school it brings significant additional work to a school employee and can raise issues of confidentiality.
- Local authorities can generally provide this service for governing bodies at a cost.
- Academy Trust Boards may also take on this responsibility depending upon the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

6. *Where do we obtain application forms?*

- Application forms should be downloaded from the Catholic Education Service <https://www.catholiceducation.org.uk/resources/model-application-forms>
- CES application forms must be used because they are consistent with employment law relating to governing bodies of Catholic voluntary aided schools and academy Trust Boards for academies. If the LA is processing applications on your behalf you must ensure that they issue the CES forms.
- Independent Schools must also use the CES application forms and contracts.

7. *What should be sent to those called for interview?*

- Governors need to read the guidance from the CES and use the model letter provided. These can be downloaded from: [Model Letter](#)
- Candidates need to be provided with the documents outlined in the letter and a declaration sheet to say that they have received the materials.
- If the LA is processing the applications, the governors must ensure that the LA understands these requirements and that all these documents are sent out by the LA.

8. *Where should we hold the interviews and selection procedures?*

- The first part of the selection process should be held in the school. However, you may not have suitable accommodation for interviews and presentations, particularly when the school is in session.
- As a minimum you will need an interview room and a waiting room for candidates.
- Schools use various premises for this purpose, e.g. presbyteries, parish centres or accommodation provided by the local authority.
- Think about practicalities: place to sit on their own, refreshments, parking.

9. *Where should we advertise the appointment?*

- Headteacher posts must be advertised externally, so your vacancy should be advertised in LA publications, the CASO vacancy sheet, in parish newsletters and where appropriate in the Times Education Supplement.

10. *What are the resignation dates for prospective candidates?*

- The resignation dates for teachers in permanent posts are 31 October, 28 February and 31 May in each school year. For serving headteachers the equivalent dates are 30 September, 31 January and 30 April. These dates have a bearing on the timing of advertisements.

11. *When should we advertise the appointment?*

- It is important to have adequate time for what can be a lengthy process.

ADVERTISEMENTS

The advertisement should include the diocesan logo, the name of the diocese and the name of the LA if a maintained school. It must refer to the need to be a practising Catholic. The school is allowed legally to give preference to practising Catholics so do not put in an overarching "we are an equal opportunities employer" statement. Include a safeguarding statement and requirement for criminal records check and a data processing statement.

INFORMATION PACK FOR APPLICANTS

Governors need to prepare an information pack for applicants for the headship. The pack should contain all or most of the following:

- Introductory letter from chair of governors
- Information about the school, including recent developments, achievements and any imminent projects / developments
- The school mission statement
- The school improvement plan
- The school prospectus
- Most recent Ofsted report or summary
- Most recent Catholic School Inspection report
- Any recent LA/Academy Trust review
- Other information about the diocese and its support for schools and their headteachers is available to download from the diocesan website: [Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth - Home](#)
- Information about the LA or Academy Trust and its support for schools and headteachers
- Information on where to find all the relevant application forms, documents etc.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

Nowadays job descriptions and person specifications are often built around the national standards for headteachers. Examples obtained from the LA may take this approach. While governors might use parts of LA documents in constructing their own job descriptions and person specification, LA documents alone will not make any specific reference to the nature and purpose of the Catholic school or the distinctive nature of leadership in a Catholic school. Governors need to ensure that their job descriptions and person specifications emphasise these important points. The person specification should not be overly long.

Governors also need to decide which part of the process will be used to provide evidence for various aspects. See extract on following page from a person specification for a secondary school:

	Essential	Desirable	Evidence
Applicant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A practising Catholic • Good interpersonal skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active involvement in local parish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form • Interviews • Three references, to include current employer and parish priest
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualified Teacher Status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher degree or equivalent • CTC/CCRS or equivalent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form • Interviews

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of further professional study • NPQH 	
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant teaching and management experience within the primary/secondary phase • Up to date knowledge and understanding of all 3 primary/secondary key stages • Has successfully undertaken appropriate safeguarding training for current role • Has had active involvement in school self-evaluation and improvement planning, with proven impact, including 'closing the gap' for disadvantaged pupils and realising the potential of more able pupils, while driving high standards for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the voluntary aided sector • Has experience of Ofsted inspection of own school at senior leadership level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form • Interviews
Faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have a clear vision of the mission of Catholic education • To model personal faith values to all members of the school community • To cherish the uniqueness of each child and recognise and realise their own potential • To have high expectations of all members of the school • To develop relationships with the parish and work in partnership with faith and local communities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application form • Presentation exercise

SHORTLISTING

It will be helpful to set out criteria taken from the person specification and have a grid where governors can score the candidates, using information from the application forms; see extract below:

1 = poor . . . 5 = excellent

	Candidate 1	Candidate 2	Candidate 3
A practising Catholic (reference from parish priest) Parish involvement			
QTS / higher qualifications			
Significant teaching and management experience			

Also, has the candidate shown awareness and understanding of your school, its challenges and successes or is it just a 'general' application?

CALLING FOR INTERVIEW

Governors need to read the guidance from the CES and use the model letter provided. These can be downloaded from: [Recruiting: Catholic schools & academies](#) [Model Letter](#)

Candidates need to be provided with the documents outlined in the letter:

- The Catholic Education Service Model Contract of Employment
- Memorandum for appointments to key posts
- Equality Act 2010 Reasonable Adjustments Statement
- (Primary only) Disqualification Policy for Staff; a signed copy of which must be returned to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the school, should you wish to accept an offer of a post.
- The candidate's declaration form to say he/she has received the materials

If the LA is processing the applications, the governors must ensure that the LA understands these requirements and that all these documents are sent out by the LA.

REFERENCES

Once governors have finalised the shortlist, they should request references without delay. Three references should be obtained, one of which must be from the current or most recent employer and one should be from the parish priest or priest in charge of the church where the applicant worships regularly (See Appendix 2).

In the past reference requests have typically asked for information on attendance and health record, time-keeping, whether the applicant has been the subject of a disciplinary or capability procedure, reasons for leaving and whether the referee would re-employ the applicant. The DCSF (now DFE) booklet 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (paragraph 4.31) advises that the purpose of references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions and "so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview".

The chair of the panel should read the references before the interview and is responsible for ensuring that any issues or discrepancies stemming from the references are established and explored at interview. In practice the LA adviser or diocesan officer supporting the process should be asked for their advice and asked to pursue any concerns.

If written references are not available in time for the interview, the selection panel should make any offer to a candidate subject to receipt of satisfactory references and should postpone ratification.

SELECTION ACTIVITIES

Different activities can be used during the selection process to test different skills, abilities and knowledge. A range of such activities is listed below. Governors may wish to choose from this list. It is not recommended that all are used. However, the Catholic Academies and Schools Office would expect that leading an act of worship, making a presentation and the final, formal interview would always be included in the selection process.

It is important to avoid 'overkill' and not to overburden both candidates and governors.

Activities should not be finalised until after shortlisting when areas for investigation may emerge.

Small panel interviews	In-depth exploration of key requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding of distinctiveness of Catholic schools • understanding of Catholic school leadership • religious education in the Catholic school • understanding of contemporary curriculum • management of teaching and learning • management of staff
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Interview by pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to interact with pupils
Presentation on a specific topic (governors set theme)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to address and hold adult audience • Ability to communicate information at the appropriate level
Deliver an act of worship (governors set theme and year/key stage)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to address large pupil audience • Ability to communicate the school's Catholic mission
Learning walk and book scrutiny and report back on next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation skills • Ability to identify strengths and weaknesses • Ability to determine actions to address weaknesses • Giving feedback
Analysis of attainment data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to analyse data • Ability to identify trends • Ability to use data to inform planning
In-tray exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work under pressure • Ability to prioritise and to make decisions
Group discussion ('Fishbowl')	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interaction with others • Ability to take account of the views of others • Ability to lead/move discussion on

INTERVIEWS

The interviews should be seen as **conversations with a purpose**.

The purpose of the selection process is to test the candidates' ability to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post. As an integral part of this process the interviews and other selection activities should explore how well each candidate meets **the person specification**. Interview questions in the main should gather proven evidence about what candidates have done rather than ask too many hypothetical questions. All candidates should be asked the same questions, though it is permissible for different follow-up questions to be asked in order to clarify initial responses. At every stage, the diocesan officer and LA must be given the opportunity to ensure certain questions are asked of candidates.

Governors should not ask inappropriate questions that contravene equalities legislation.

The final, formal interview is the governors' opportunity to delve further. Governors will already have collected a range of material and this interview is a chance to fill in any gaps and address any specific matters relating to individual candidates.

In preparing for the interviews the following should be considered:

- The environment: interview room, arrangement of seating, availability of water etc.
- Who will lead/chair interview session, welcome candidates and introduce candidates to panel?
- Structure for interview:
 - introduction
 - prepare questions before interview; decide who is asking which questions and order of questions
 - conclusion of interview should allow for any questions from the candidate.

Before each candidate leaves the room at the end of the final interview, ask him/her whether he/she is still a firm candidate, fulfils the diocesan definition of a practising Catholic and has read the CES contract which he/she will be required to sign if appointed. Remember to give the candidate a copy of the declaration form if not sent out earlier and also to collect in the signed copy.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Having identified elsewhere in this guide the key characteristics of Catholic schools and their leadership and having provided sample person specification and job description, we have not provided specific questions. Following training sessions governors should determine the wording of the questions to suit the particular needs of their school.

The following general advice should assist governors in the process:

- The questions should relate directly to the person specification.

- A good starting point for drawing up questions is to consider the sort of answers you are looking for in the key areas of your person specification.
- The purpose of your key prepared questions is to open up relevant areas in the person specification. Straightforward **open questions** will often do this for you. If necessary you can then probe individual candidates further, using supplementary clarifying questions, to gather the information you need.

TYPES OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- ◆ **OPEN** – to invite information, to probe further
 “Can you tell me about...?”
 “Can you give me an example of...?”
 “What is your opinion of...?”
- ◆ **CLOSED** – used to check facts or to rein in a loquacious interviewee
 “Did you complete the programme?”
- ◆ **SUMMARISING** – to check understanding
 “You felt that was effective because...?”
- ◆ **HYPOTHETICAL** – to explore reactions, but use sparingly and beware of text book answers.
 “What would you do if...?”

AVOID

- ◆ **LEADING QUESTIONS** – answer is in the question!
- ◆ **MULTIPLE QUESTIONS** – confusing for candidates

It is sometimes necessary to regain control of the interview / return focus to your key criteria. The interviewee should not be allowed to lead the interview. Clarifying questions can be used for this purpose, e.g. “...coming back to my original question...”, “...can you summarise for governors...”

If follow-up questions are necessary it is useful to be systematic in questioning. The SOAR method is an example:

S = establish a relevant <u>situation</u>	“Give an example of...” “Tell me about...” “Describe a situation when...”
O = clarify the <u>objective</u>	“What were the reasons for...?” “What were you hoping to achieve...?”
A = what <u>actions</u> were taken?	“What did you do to...?” “How did you organise...?”
R = establish the <u>result</u>	“What was the outcome...?” “How did you measure the success of...?”

APPOINTMENT

Governors must listen carefully to the advice of the diocesan officer and LA before reaching a decision on whom to appoint. References should be used as a check that there is no apparent reason why a particular candidate should not be appointed.

Candidates should not normally be asked to wait at the school for a decision which may be made after a lengthy discussion.

The full governing body will need to approve the decision of the selection panel of governors. **The ratification is a legal requirement.** As soon as possible following the interviews, but certainly on the same day, the selection panel should make their recommendation to the governing body. Usually this is a brief meeting, where the selection panel outlines who the preferred candidate is and the process used to select that candidate. This is followed by an endorsement vote of all governors. Once the full governing body has ratified the decision of the appointment panel, the governors will need to make their offer of appointment to the chosen candidate and inform the unsuccessful applicants of the outcome of their application.

The clerk or chair will need to keep a copy of the successful candidate’s application form and references. After the interview the clerk, or LA if they are providing clerking support, must write to the successful candidate, confirming the offer of appointment and asking him/her to sign the CES contract.

FEEDBACK TO CANDIDATES

High-quality feedback at the end of the interview is really important, so governors should think through how as a panel they gather materials for this during the process. It is good practice for governors to ask one of the advisers to give feedback in case anyone chooses to appeal the decision.

All copies of documentation used by governors must be retained in case of future query or challenge.

APPENDIX 1: TIMELINE

START Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting of full governing body with diocesan officer and LA adviser or CEO of the Academy Trust to begin process Selection panel agreed and salary range set
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional meeting of selection panel to agree: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> job description and person specification advertisement provisional discussion of selection activities
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External advertisement of post
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closing date for applications Panel reads applications Shortlisting meeting Selection activities finalised Candidates invited to interview
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview days Appointment

APPENDIX 2: MODEL REQUEST FOR REFERENCE FROM A PRIEST

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL



Name of priest:

Address:

.....

.....

.....

Date:

Dear Father

Re:

Name of applicant:

Address:

.....

.....

Post applied for:

School:

----- has applied for the above post and has given your name as a referee. I enclose a copy of the job description and the person specification. I should be grateful if you would complete the attached questionnaire and return it to me in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope by -----

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Name: -----

Title: -----

Enclosed/attached:

Job description, Person specification, stamped addressed envelope

REFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL



Name of applicant:
Post applied for:

School:

1. To your knowledge, is this person a practising and committed Catholic? Yes / No
2. Is this a person in whom you would have full confidence as the leader of a Catholic school?
Yes / No
3. From your knowledge of the person's faith and religious practice, are you able to recommend him / her without reservation for this post? Yes / No
4. Any other comments?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Signed:

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

Date:

APPENDIX 3: ACT OF WORSHIP OBSERVATION (or use the CSI template)

CANDIDATE:

SCHOOL:

DATE:

Please indicate how well the candidate delivers the act of worship and how well the pupils respond by inserting a number 1 – 4 (1 = outstanding . . . 4 = unsatisfactory)

Theme/topic is clear	
Theme/topic is appropriate for the liturgical season	
Strategies used are appropriate to gain and hold pupils' interest	
Theological content is appropriate to age of pupils	
Language used is appropriate to age of pupils	
Materials used e.g. music, candles, artefacts, enhance presentation	
Pupils listen attentively	
Pupils are actively engaged in the act of worship	
Pupils are given the opportunity to reflect	
Pupils are able to participate in prayer	
Pupils' behaviour is good	

Notes:

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW FOR HEADSHIP – RECORD FORM

CANDIDATE:

SCHOOL:

DATE:

Please indicate how well the candidate meets the selection criteria by inserting a number 1-4 against each criterion. 1 = meets the criterion very well. 4 = does not meet criterion

	CRITERION	Grade	Notes
CATHOLICITY	Practising Catholic		
	Understanding of the nature and purpose of a Catholic school		
	Understanding of the Catholic school's role in the parish and wider community		
QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE	Suitable qualifications		
	Experience as teacher, middle manager and in senior leadership group		
<i>Add your person specification areas here</i>			