

DIOCESE OF ARUNDEL AND BRIGHTON

GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNING BODIES AND HEADTEACHERS

On the appointment of reserved posts in a Catholic school:

- Headteachers
- Deputy Headteachers
- Heads of Religious Education

(Please see additional guidance for the appointment of school Chaplains)

January 2016

1. INTRODUCTION

This guidance aims to provide support for governors engaging in the process of recruiting a new Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, or member of staff seeking to take up a 'reserved' post in a Catholic school. (This includes Heads of Religious Education and School Chaplains).

It is imperative that everyone taking part in the appointment process for senior staff in a Catholic school shares a common commitment to preserving and promoting the distinctive nature of the school as a Catholic community. Catholic schools and colleges are established to support Catholic parents in their responsibility for the academic, spiritual, moral and religious education of their children in accordance with the teachings of the Church. This means that they are committed to promoting:

- the search for excellence
- the uniqueness of the individual
- the education of the whole person
- the education of all
- religious and moral principles

The following guidance is intended to lay out principles applying to all reserved post appointments. There is occasional reference to procedural variations which arise from the nature of the post.

- In order to avoid any conflict of interest when appointing a new headteacher, the governing body may not delegate significant tasks to, or be advised by, the current headteacher, as they would with other appointments. Instead, professional advice is provided by the diocese and the Local Authority (LA). The roles of their offers therefore become correspondingly greater.
- In the appointment of heads/coordinators of religious education, the diocese will be represented wherever possible by an officer or adviser with specialist knowledge of the management and teaching of religious education. Officers should be present even when the appointment is 'internal'.
- The diocese does not charge maintained schools for providing an advisory role in appointments. However, this is not a substitute for full personnel support on appointments. LAs offer such services through their personnel service level agreements, or, alternatively, on a 'buy in' basis. The diocese recommends that schools use these

services where available. LA and diocesan officers work together ensuring that schools can receive consistently good advice.

Links to more detailed information, guidance and support will be signposted throughout the document. In addition to this, a range of detailed exemplar documentation for adaptation by schools is available in the appendices. The 'Useful materials and references' section provides opportunities for further reading and additional sources of valuable information. Further advice and support is also available from the Education Service.

2. THE ROLE OF THE DIOCESE IN RESERVED POSTS

The governing body of every school has the legal responsibility for appointing their own staff. They must do this within the framework of education and trust law. Most voluntary aided (VA) schools operate under the trusteeship of the diocese. It follows that the trustees must have the opportunity to ensure that the governors appoint only persons who can realistically undertake to support the aim of the diocesan trust, which is 'the advancement of the Roman Catholic religion'. The diocesan officers must be put in a position to advise the foundation governors in particular as to how they can best carry out their responsibilities to the Bishop, who has appointed them to the governing body. Governors also share a statutory and corporate responsibility as the governing body of a school which has been designated as having a religious character. They are charged with the preservation and development of the Catholic character of the school.

The diocesan officer will offer advice on the appointment process in collaboration with any LA officer also advising on the appointment, including and agreeing key dates in the process, advising on salary, advertising and publicity material, advising on supporting literature including job and person specifications, application forms, the candidates' information pack and other aspects requested by the governors. Consideration should be given to any documentation and guidance provided by the diocese and the LA. This is intended to assist governors in making decisions on salary, advertisements, the contents of the information pack, the job and person specifications and the essential selection criteria. The diocesan officer will take specific responsibility for advising on the parts of

the procedure which relate to testing the candidates' suitability for the duties of Catholic leadership, religious education and worship, as appropriate.

Schools which do not come under the diocesan trust are strongly urged to have diocesan advisers attend senior appointments, especially in religious education, as supported in canon law. The diocese welcomes the opportunity to be represented and to provide assistance on a basis to be agreed with individual schools.

The Bishops of England and Wales have stated that posts of headteacher, deputy headteacher and head or coordinator of religious education 'are to be filled by baptised and practising Catholics' The right to apply this preference in church schools is recognised in law. The diocesan officers must be put in a position to advise the governing body on the question of whether the candidates meet the Bishops' requirement. Further information can be found on the CES website 'Guidance Note on the Recruitment of Staff for Governing Bodies, Version 2 - March 2013 (Amended July 2015), using the following link :

<http://cesew.org.uk/employment-documents/recruitment-process/item/1000049-memorandum-on-appointment-of-teachers-to-catholic-schools>

3. THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

3.1 Informing appropriate authorities

Once the headteacher gives notice to the chair of governors of his / her intention to resign, the chair of governors acknowledges receipt of the letter and then contacts the Director of the Education Service and the Local Authority to notify them of the vacancy.

3.2 Resignation Timeframes

Governors need to take account of these standard resignation dates when agreeing timescales and dates for advertising the post, closing date(s) and interview date(s)

Start date	Resignation date for those currently in headship	Resignation date for existing DHT / AHT / other teachers
1 September	30 April	31 May
1 January	30 September	31 October
1 May	31 January	28 (29) February

4. FULL GOVERNING BODY – INITIAL MEETING

4.1 Training and Advice

When appointing a headteacher, it is strongly recommended that the governors arrange a training session at the start of the process, so that they may begin with a common understanding of the nature and importance of various parts of the appointment process, of their own role and of the role of advisers. There are a number of other reasons to obtain external advice and training from the outset of recruitment:

- governors are close to the school and are likely to be close to the outgoing headteacher and this may affect their objectivity about where the school needs to go next;
- governors may be clear about their strategic plans for the school, but anxious about making a professional appointment;
- there may be differences of opinion on the Governing Body;
- governors may lack expertise in recruitment and selection for this type of post;
- governors may need help in understanding the complexities of equal opportunities;
- governors **must** understand their responsibilities with regard to safer recruitment.

External advice and guidance can provide governors with:

- Objectivity about the school's strengths and areas of challenge.
- Reassurance that they are complying with legislation and policy.
- Up-to-date information on the changing role of the headteacher and demands on schools.
- Experience of what works and what does not.
- Facilitation skills to support effective decision-making.
- A professional assessment of the experience and skills of candidates.

If no one on the governing body has had recent training on recruitment and selection, they will need to consider what training is needed and what is on offer, both from the LA and the Diocese. In many appointments an element of training is built into the planning meetings. In addition, training may provide the governing body with the opportunity to update their understanding of the changing role of the headteacher. The governing body should be sure to consider the individual needs of different governors on the panel: some may not feel as confident as others. The dates for such training will need to be agreed early with officers.

In the case of the appointment of a deputy head or a head/coordinator of religious education, diocesan officers will always offer the same level of training, advice and support to the head and governors as for a headship appointment. However, they also recognise that the school is likely to have an established and reliable appointment process with which the governors and head are familiar and comfortable. It may be sufficient, therefore, for the head to propose the arrangements in advance, so that the officer may offer advice if relevant. The officer may then recommend a training session if appropriate.

4.2 Employment and Discrimination Law

All employers have a duty to avoid unlawful discrimination. Unlawful discrimination can result in costly litigation which may discredit the employer. It is possible for a candidate who believes that the reason they have not been selected for employment as a result of discrimination to take an employer to an employment tribunal although they are not an employee.

It is against the law to discriminate on the grounds of:

- sex;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- marital status, including civil partnership status;
- gender reassignment;
- disability;
- race;
- age;
- sexual orientation;
- religion or belief;
- trades union membership or non-membership;
- status as a fixed-term or part-time worker.

In some circumstances, it may be legitimate to discriminate because of 'occupational requirement'. For example, the requirement of a Catholic school that the posts of Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Head or Coordinator of Religious Education and School Chaplain are 'to be filled by practising Catholics' who meet the Bishops' requirement, is

considered in law to be an occupational requirement. Further advice about the fair application of this requirement can be obtained from the Diocesan Education Service.

During an interview panel members should not ask questions, directly or indirectly, which seek to enquire into someone's marital / civil partnership status or whether they have or plan to have children. They should not seek to elicit information about a person's sexual orientation or belief (except where there is an established 'occupational requirement'), or ask questions about health, except to find out whether an applicant would be able to undertake a function that is intrinsic to the job.

Questions about disability should only be asked where they are relevant to the person's ability to do the job and any physical requirements of the job must be expressed clearly in the job profile from the outset. Any disabled candidates should be assessed on their ability to perform the role with reasonable adjustments made. Candidates should be selected on the basis of their ability to do the job by reference to the job profile and the selection criteria.

Employers must always be able to justify their recruitment decisions in case of an application to an employment tribunal. It is essential to keep clear and thorough records, and to ensure that the recruitment process has been fair throughout.

4.3 Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education

Schools are under a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Recruiting staff without following the guidance and statute puts the safety of pupils at risk. It is important that schools not only follow guidance, but are seen to be doing so. It is a statutory requirement that at least one member of the selection panel has successfully completed the Safer Recruitment training module. Use the following link: <https://www.education.gov.uk/e-learning/login/index/php> for further information on training.

The online materials provide a useful and practical source of information for recruiters and are invaluable in helping governors ensure that the school meets its obligations in respect of safeguarding children. All publicity materials, including the recruitment pack, job

description and person specification, advertisements and the school website etc. should include an appropriate statement, for example:

‘This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check’.

School staff is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. It is essential that all applicants complete an application form and provide information on any convictions, bind-overs or cautions they may have received.

Governors are recommended to obtain a copy of ***Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education*** (DfES 04217-2006BKT-EN) which came into force on 1 January 2007. This is available to download free of charge from the DfE at <http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutfe/statutory/g00213145/safeguarding-children-safer-recruitment>

This document sets out the:

- responsibilities of governors to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people;
- recruitment best practice, some underpinned by legislation, for the school and the local authority.

4.4 Budgeting for Recruitment

Recruitment can be a costly process. Governors are advised to anticipate this and budget for the recruitment, appointment, induction and retention of staff.

The production of information packs, hospitality, additional administration and associated costs in addition to the advertisement can be significant. Governors may also wish to consider reimbursement of candidate expenditure for subsistence, travel and accommodation to attend the selection process.

Governors should also make budget provision to support the continuing professional development (CPD) of new staff. The expenditure might include coaching, leadership

development courses, and any appropriate conferences to extend leadership skills and knowledge.

5. APPOINTMENT OF THE SELECTION PANEL

5.1 Selection Panel

The normal expectation is for the Headteacher to lead the process of making staff appointments outside the leadership group (i.e. other than headteachers, deputy headteachers and assistant headteachers) although in many of our aided schools, governing bodies agree staffing policies which provide for governor involvement in the interests of preserving the school's Catholic character and ethos. For all leadership group appointments, the governing body as a whole must determine the composition of the appointment panel.

The Full Governing Body must determine and appoint a selection panel comprising of no fewer than three governors, ensuring Foundation Governors are in the majority. The appointed selection panel will have overall responsibility for managing all aspects of the recruitment process.

The Clerk to the Governors should make a formal record of the appointment of a selection panel and of the governors appointed to undertake this task. Only those designated as panel members can vote in the subsequent appointment process. **The previous incumbent of the post should not play any part in the selection process**, but may be involved in providing information to the candidates.

Governors are reminded that it is strongly advised that one member of any recruitment panel should have completed safer recruitment training.

5.2 Equality

All governors, with the exception of the current headteacher and deputy headteacher are eligible to be panel members. It is essential that discussions take place without the presence of any deputy headteachers, senior teachers or other teachers who may be potential applicants for the post; otherwise the procedure could be challenged by another applicant before an employment tribunal.

Staff governors; teaching and non-teaching have equal rights to serve on appointment panels providing the individuals concerned have no vested interest in the appointment; for example, where an internal candidate's appointment would produce a vacancy for which the staff governor is eligible. It is less common, for staff governors to be on a selection panel for a headteacher.

5.3 Availability

It is essential that the panel members understand the time required to fulfil this vital responsibility. The Selection Panel must commit time to be available throughout all stages of the recruitment process. At interview, each of the candidates needs to have the same exposure to each panel member prior to any panel decision. It is not acceptable to agree that individual governors may just 'turn up and join in' or attend random parts of the selection. Ideally, the panel membership should be involved from start to finish. Introducing new members along the way, for example to make up for drop out, has been successfully challenged in law. The original membership needs to be large enough to allow for drop out, especially if the selection process is to be prolonged.

5.4 Conflict of interest

Conflict of interest should be explored with any potential panel member. For example, knowing an internal candidate (e.g. deputy headteacher) is not a conflict whereas being a personal friend is. If, once appointed to the panel, a member finds themselves unknowingly facing a conflict of interest, they should declare this to other panel members and be prepared to withdraw if necessary.

6. THE SELECTION PROCESS

6.1 Person Specification

It is strongly advised that at both the meeting of the governing body and the first meeting of the Selection Panel, time is devoted to considering the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes required in the new headteacher. In the light of the school's current performance data it is important to consider the future development of the school and to recognise that particular skills and attributes will be required to realise this development. Based on this, governors should formulate a clear idea about the current and future needs of the school

and analyse the skills and experience already in the leadership team, so that they can clearly define the skills and experience they will be seeking in the new appointment.

The person specification agreed by the Selection Panel is absolutely central to the headteacher appointment process. The rigour and the integrity of the process relate directly to the person specification. Prospective applicants will use it to decide whether to apply and how to shape their application. The shortlisting of applicants, and feedback to applicants not shortlisted, will be based on the agreed person specification: where applicants do not meet the essential requirements in the specification they cannot be considered. The selection activities and the questions used during the interview process derive from the agreed person specification, and it provides both the starting point and the final check before the decision is taken to recommend a candidate for appointment.

The Selection Panel will be aware that while professional qualifications are easy to measure many of the important competencies and behaviours are more difficult to assess. These include: conceptual thinking, analytical thinking, judgement, community engagement, the extent of the drive for improvement, resilience, flexibility, the ability to hold people positively to account, a passion for learning, respect for others, capacity as a team player, ability to inspire, ability to provide strong Catholic leadership.

Dividing the person specification into essential and desirable criteria can be helpful both to prospective applicants and to the Selection Panel. The process of deciding what is essential can help the Selection Panel to refine and sharpen its thinking and to come together as a team. Too many essential criteria can discourage potential applicants, whereas too few may result in difficulty in separating the candidates and may also result in a less than rigorous selection process.

6.2 Additional points to be added to the person specification to reflect the duties of leadership in a Catholic school.

The successful candidate will meet all, or most of, the following criteria:

- is a practising Catholic involved in the life of the Church at parish, diocesan and / or national levels;
- is able to demonstrate a sound understanding of the distinctive nature of the Catholic school and commitment to Catholic education;

- holds the CCRS or equivalent certificate, and has developed knowledge and qualifications in areas of particular relevance to Catholic education;
- has had senior management experience in a Catholic school, or can demonstrate a sound understanding of the aims, organisation, leadership and governance of a Catholic school;
- has proven leadership abilities and skills and sensitivities to lead and manage, at an appropriate level, each key area of the Catholic life of the school;
- can lead in the development and application of whole school policies in order to maintain the school's distinctive Catholic ethos;
- shows a full working understanding of the statutory role and duties of the governors of a voluntary-aided school.

Once complete the Person Specification must be ratified by the Full Governing Body.

6.3 Job Description

The job description for the headteacher post should be compiled after the developmental needs of the school have been considered by governors and after the headteacher's person specification has been agreed.

The job description should not seek to describe in detail the job tasks, but rather the key areas of activity and outcomes expected from those activities.

While seeking to ensure that the job description is based around the present and future needs of the school, the Selection Panel should also bear in mind the current national documentation relating to national standards and pay.

For reference purposes the documents are the *DfE's National Standards for Headteachers* and the *annually revised DfE's School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document* and the associated *Guidance on School Teachers' Pay and conditions*. Also included are statements that take account of *Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment in Education, DfES 2006*, guidance governing bodies are required to have regard to in drawing up arrangements for carrying out their functions.

6.4 National Standards for Headteachers

The National Standards for Headteachers, developed by the National College for Teaching and Leadership, embody three key principles, namely that the work of the headteacher should be: learning-centred, focussed on leadership and reflect the highest possible professional standards. The job description and the Person Specification should be supported by, and adhere to, the National Standards for Headteachers, as this will support selection panels and candidates in identifying key attributes necessary to perform the role.

6.5 NPQH

From September 2012, prospective headteachers will be able to take a new enhanced qualification to prepare them for school leadership. The National College, working with key stakeholders including existing head teachers, has revised the content of the new NPQH:

- All participants will have to pass five modules of which three are compulsory and focus on leading pupil behaviour, developing leadership skills and managing teacher performance.
- Trainee headteachers will be required to undertake a school-based and a placement related assignment and spend more time on the placement, increasing from a minimum of five days to nine days.
- It will place more emphasis on the role of an applicant's line manager in providing a reference and 'sponsoring' the applicant through the programme as research suggests that the best way to spot a future head teacher is to watch them working, and handling a range of leadership issues.
- The NPQH now links more closely to Masters and other postgraduate qualifications and so allow trainee heads to move more seamlessly onto a higher degree if they wish.

Governors already consider the broad range of experiences and qualifications offered by candidates. The Bishop and Diocesan Trustees strongly recommend that all governing bodies adopt a preference approach when advertising a headship vacancy, stating that the NPQH is at least a desirable criterion in the person specification. This does not preclude aspiring heads who do not have this qualification but it underlines governors' interest in those who have taken advantage of the best leadership development available.

7. LEADERSHIP GROUP PAY

7.1 Salary Range / Pay Scales

It is important, prior to advertising the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher position, to consider the appropriate scale range on the headteacher's / deputy headteacher's pay scales for the individual who will be appointed to the new post. A number of factors need to be considered by the governing body, among them the question of what the school can afford and the level of salary that might be needed to secure the calibre of applicant that governors are looking for.

The 2014 School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document included a number of reforms to Leadership Pay. Primarily, it is no longer necessary for governing bodies to determine a 7 point ISR (individual salary range) for headteachers, or a 5 point ISR for deputy head or assistant headteachers.

The leadership pay spine will become an open pay range from September 2014, mirroring the change to classroom teachers' pay spines from September 2013. The school group sizes used as the basis for determining headteachers' pay will, however, remain as 'broad bands' within the overall pay range and the school group size will be calculated in the same way. In future, therefore, only the minimum and maximum of the overall range and the broad bands will be published. It of course remains open to schools to retain the previous spine points (or some other variation) as reference points.

Pay ranges for headteachers should not normally exceed the maximum of the headteacher group. However, the headteacher's pay range (where determined on or after 1 September 2014) may exceed the maximum where the relevant body determines that circumstances specific to the role or candidate warrant a higher than normal payment. The governing body must ensure that the maximum of the headteacher's pay range and any additional payments made does not exceed the maximum of the headteacher group by more than 25% (unless in exceptional circumstances and where supported by a business case with external advice taken).

The maximum of the deputy or assistant headteacher's pay range must not exceed the maximum of the headteacher group for the school. The pay range for a deputy or assistant headteacher should only overlap the headteacher's pay range in exceptional circumstances.

These new arrangements will only impact on appointments made **on or after 1st September 2014**, not appointments made before that time (even if the individual will not be starting until September or later). There is no requirement to reassess the pay or allowances of existing leadership teams in September 2014 as a result of these changes.

Schools may, however, choose to review the pay of all of their leadership posts under the new arrangements if they determine that this is required to maintain consistency either with pay arrangements for new appointments to the leadership group or with pay arrangements for a member or members of the leadership group whose responsibilities significantly change on or after 1st September 2014.

7.2 Review of the school's individual salary range (ISR)

Guidance on how to do this can be found in the current School teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. It is available to download from the Department for Education's website <https://www.gov.uk/.../school-teachers-pay-and-conditions>

7.3 Advertising the post

The 2009 School Staffing Regulations specify that the Governing Body must advertise the vacancy or post in such a manner as it considers appropriate, unless it has good reason not to. The Governing Body should consider the most appropriate way of advertising for the post. It should decide the best way of reaching its target audience, taking into consideration the type of media to be used and the level of exposure the advertisement will receive. **A decision not to advertise should only be taken if the Governing Body can demonstrate there is good reason not to and that it does not leave them open to challenge.** All decisions should be documented fully, as the Governing Body will need to demonstrate that it has acted reasonably if challenged.

It is recommended that the Governing Body seeks advice from their LA and the diocese before deciding not to advertise. The diocese would always recommend advertising in the national press to ensure the best candidates apply and are interviewed. It is also essential

that the appointment process is conducted in a fair and open manner that does not contravene any discrimination legislation and includes safer recruitment measures.

Governors might find it useful to look at a range of advertisements in recent copies of the Catholic Teachers' Gazette or Times Educational Supplement, to consider what the different styles of advertising convey about a school. It is a specific requirement that both the advertisement for the post and the supporting information for candidates should state:

- that the post is reserved for practising Catholics;
- that the school operates under the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton.

These requirements will stand clearly alongside other essential personal and professional specifications.

The advertisement / information pack should include a statement about the governing body's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, together with a reference to the need for the successful candidate to undertake an enhanced criminal record check via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). In addition to the usual details of the post and salary range, an indication of the key qualities and attributes that the governors are seeking in a successful candidate and the date when the post commences should be included.

- most advertisements are processed electronically, directly with the advertising agency;
- it is recommended that the advertisement be sent to the LA's Personnel Consultant who will advise on the necessary statutory content and lay-out;
- the school will need to provide a copy of the school logo, plus any additional logos that are used by the school on its notepaper;
- advertisements must include group size, individual salary range (ISR), numbers on roll, name and address of school, closing date for applications and interview dates, the name – and address – of the person from whom the application form can be obtained and who the Selection Panel has delegated to receive applications on their behalf;
- **if the school has its own website, ensure it is up-to-date, informative and well presented – prospective candidates will visit it once the advert is published!**

8. THE RECRUITMENT PACK

8.1 Preparing the recruitment pack

The recruitment pack is key to informing potential candidates about your school. It should be carefully developed and presented in a way that will interest and entice candidates to want to apply for the position at your schools. The quality of the material you assemble, and the way in which you communicate with candidates by letter, telephone or in person, all need to make a professionally positive impression.

The information pack serves two purposes. It tells candidates how to apply, and it also tells them more about the school than can be fitted in an advertisement. This is the governors' opportunity to sell the school.

Defining your requirements is critical. If the school has challenges, the governors must be honest about this. If the school is highly successful, you must avoid creating an impression that the present head will be a hard act to follow! In addition, you need to make prospective candidates aware of the support that will be available to them. Candidates want to show what they can offer the school and know what the school can offer them.

8.2 Letter from the Chair of Governors

The chair of governors' letter to potential candidates is a highly significant document. It should thank the candidates for their interest in the post and give clear instructions about filling in the application form, where to return it and when by. The chair's letter should also say what applicants should address in their covering letter. They should be asked to address the governors' person specification so that the information can be used in the shortlisting process.

The letter should include an honest and objective description of the school community and any significant features that make the school different. It should describe the standards within the school, particularly:

- pupil behaviour;
- parental support;
- quality of teaching; the physical condition of the school;
- changes that have taken place in the last two years; and

- planned or expected changes in the next two to five years.

The final paragraph should outline how to apply for the post, the closing date for applications and the dates and times for interviews. Governors may also include an invitation to make an informal visit to the school.

The recruitment pack should also provide for applicants the following information about the school:

- its mission statement and aims;
- a brief history, its location, accommodation and facilities,
- number of pupils and expected future trends;
- the area served and nature of the pupil intake,
- staffing (teaching and support staff);
- finance and the governing body;
- management structure, academic and pastoral structure, links with parishes, parents and other schools;
- map of the intake area and plan of the school;
- any recent Ofsted Section 5 and Section 48 inspection reports;
- the latest set of school performance statistics;
- a summary of the school development plan;
- comparative house prices within a radius of 25 miles;
- the person specification and job description for the post;
- the application form and instructions for its completion and return, including the closing date for receipt of applications;
- information about the appointment process and key dates;
- information about the Diocese and its schools;
- information about the LA.

8.3 National Standards

The National Standards for Headteachers, developed by the National College for Teaching and Leadership can be downloaded from

<http://publications.education.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/NS4HFinalpdf.pdf>

8.4 School website

Schools should upload all recruitment information on their own website. The school website is a valuable resource; most applicants will go to the website to get a feel for the school. The website can give prospective candidates an opportunity to see the school as it currently is, it will be an opportunity to make a good impression. Governors need to ensure that the school's website meets all statutory requirements and accurately reflects the school.

8.5 Application Form

The diocese recommends that the CES application form and the CES contract and terms of employment are used (as LA forms may not contain essential questions, information and conditions). Candidates need to be advised that the CES model grievance, disciplinary and capability procedures will apply to the post. (In this connection, the governing body needs to ensure that all procedures on which it seeks to rely have been formally adopted).

The CES contract makes explicit the requirement that the successful candidate will uphold the Catholic character of the school and the aims of the Trust. This commitment must be fully tested during the selection process. For this purpose, the diocesan officer will make available to the school sample job and person specifications, suggestions for selection activities and questions, with specific reference to ascertaining the competence of the candidates in Catholic school leadership and, if relevant, the leadership of religious education, and their commitment to upholding the Catholic character of the school and the aims of the Trust.

It follows that the supporting information provided for candidates must also include full details of the Catholic life of the school and should make it clear that the successful candidate will be expected to provide practical and effective leadership of the school as a Catholic community, referring to any specific duties that attach to the post. Potential applicants who wish to have advice on whether they satisfy the Bishops' requirement should consult the Chancellor of the Diocese at Bishop's House, Hove.

It is usual for potential candidates to be invited to visit the school. For reasons of equal opportunity and fairness, this cannot easily be made part of the selection process, as the conditions of the visit are often unpredictable and some candidates may not be able to visit for practical reasons. Candidates should be informed whether and when they could be

removed from the selection after a preliminary stage. This information may affect their outlay on expenses and their preparation plans.

8.6 Use of technology

All documents in the recruitment pack should be uploaded and made available to candidates on the school website. Requests for details and application packs can be made directly to the designated named person electronically. Applicants can then complete and return application forms electronically to a designated person. This means that information can be more effectively distributed to interested candidates by email. The successful applicant will need to sign a hard copy if accepting the appointment.

9. SHORTLISTING

9.1 Shortlisting Process

Preliminary administrative vetting of the factual parts of applications needs to be carried out before shortlisting. It is essential that sufficient time is available between the closing date for applications and shortlisting for a priests' and other references to be obtained in respect of each candidate. In the case of a headteacher appointment, the Chair of Governors will need practical assistance with these tasks from someone other than the retiring head. The purpose is to ensure that all the relevant information has been supplied and that there are no objective reasons to reject an application (but the appointment panel must still have access to all applications).

At the shortlisting meeting, individual members of the Selection Panel will discuss and refine their judgements in order to arrive at the list of applicants to be invited for interview.

During the selection process, shortlisted candidates will be assessed against the full range of knowledge, aptitudes, behaviours and skills highlighted in the person specification. Whilst a talented candidate may not yet have had the full range of experiences of a serving headteacher, s/he will be expected by the Selection Panel to show a strong and engaging grasp of what is essential and the potential for and awareness of all that is desirable in the full headteacher specification.

Applicants will also be expected to write an appropriate letter in support of their application that provides evidence of how they meet the essential criteria stated on the person specification and of the positive impact they have had in their current and previous schools. This letter, together with the completed application form, will be used in the shortlisting process.

9.2 Shortlisting Activities

The integrity of the shortlisting process depends upon the timely distribution of key documentation, and the careful scrutiny of this documentation by individual members of the Selection Panel and by diocesan representatives and local authority officers before the shortlisting meeting. Members of the Selection Panel, the diocesan officer and local authority officer should receive hard copies of the following documents several days before the shortlisting meeting.

All applications should be copied for use by the selection panel, **ensuring that the equal opportunity form has been removed** and kept in a secure confidential place for monitoring purposes. It is **essential** that no members of the selection panel have sight of this document.

The delegated person(s) responsible for the administration of the recruitment process must ensure:

- All application forms and accompanying letters of application that have been received by the published closing date for applications.
- Sufficient copies of a shortlisting matrix, compiled from the published Headteacher person specification, to allow each panel member to have assessed each applicant against the person specification by the time of the shortlisting meeting.
- Hard copies of a priest's references in respect of each candidate should be sent to the chair of governors and the diocesan representative.

Except in relation to a reference from the priest of the parish where the applicant normally worships, it should be noted that it is not policy to request or use references to inform the shortlisting process. Applicants are generally considered on the basis of their application, with careful account taken of how they have addressed the published requirements of the post and how closely their experience, attributes and skill match the published person specification.

A diocesan officer will attend the initial consideration of applications to advise on the suitability of candidates to be called for interview. The officer will also advise on whether a strong enough field of applicants has been attracted. It is important that all applications received are treated in exactly the same way. Therefore, no pre-selection should occur before the meeting. However, it is always helpful if some initial professional scrutiny has occurred before the shortlisting. This might consist of:

- (1) applying to each case the objective criteria for appointment and summarising the outcomes for the panel,
- (2) highlighting any areas in which objective evidence is lacking, and
- (3) applying the more qualitative criteria to reveal any areas where closer examination of individual cases is warranted.

The results of such an analysis should be made available at the start of the meeting, so that the panel can make the best use of the available time.

Members of the appointment panel must declare any significant prior contact with, or knowledge of, a candidate, which could reasonably bring their impartiality into doubt. In some cases, this might lead to withdrawal from the panel. Officers and panel members are not expected to declare that they have interviewed a candidate before. They should not bring up evidence concerning a candidate's performance at previous appointments. Only evidence directly available to the panel should be considered.

All candidates must be judged by the same criteria. Internal candidates must not be given advantageous treatment or face special tests. Governors who know candidates, for example, because they are or have been on the school staff, must open themselves to new perceptions by weighing the evidence at the appointment. This does not mean that the school's experience of its staff has no influence on their promotion. The school's performance management and professional development procedures are the legitimate means of taking into account an internal candidate's prior performance, strengths and weaknesses. Candidates known to be weak should never be included in selection processes as a matter of courtesy or internal politics.

If staff or governors who are not on the appointment panel lobby individual members with views or information about candidates, they should be asked to approach the chair of the panel formally. The chair should be informed of any lobbying that has occurred. As a rule, such approaches are strongly discouraged.

The personal circumstances of applicants should never be revealed to a wider audience than is necessary. They are always to be treated in the strictest confidence. Governors should be aware not only of the legal requirements on data protection but also of the possibility of unlawfully damaging a person's reputation. The principle of revealing personal information only to those who 'need to know' is especially applicable to the treatment of the priest's reference.

9.3 Recording of evidence against Person Specification

Once the panel has agreed the format of the shortlisting meetings, it may be appropriate to remind panel members of their responsibilities, especially under equalities legislation.

Each candidate's application should be rated against the selection criteria by the panel members working on their own in the first instance. Once this is done, panel members should discuss their initial findings from the data in the application forms. It is helpful to code these initial views into three categories.

1. Candidates who fully meet the criteria for shortlisting (FM)
2. Candidates who partially meet the criteria – further discussion
/ evidence is needed (PM)
3. Candidates who do not meet the criteria (NM)

Where there is agreement about candidates to be eliminated at this stage, it is important to discuss and record reasons for doing so. The same then can take place for candidates all members wish to include in a shortlist.

9.4 Invitation to interview / Unsuccessful candidates

When the list has been agreed, the Chair of the Selection Panel may wish to contact shortlisted candidates personally by telephone to invite them for interview. The school or the school's HR / Personnel Team, whichever is decided, will send out the formal letters inviting shortlisted candidates for interview and will include details of the programme for the day(s).

It is the role of the professional adviser to debrief those applicants who are not shortlisted for interview and who request feedback on their applications. The Selection Panel will need to agree the basis and rationale for their decisions to inform the debriefing process.

9.5 Governor Ratification Meeting

Immediately following the shortlisting meeting, the Chair of Governors / Chair of the Selection Panel should write to all governors giving details of the interview day(s) and providing an agenda for the governors' ratification meeting at the end of the final day of interviews.

9.6 Preparing for interview days

At the end of the shortlisting meeting it is helpful to finalise details for the interview programme and timetable. Final planning for practical arrangements and facilities needed should be confirmed. Those responsible for administration and hospitality, as well as the supervision of activities not involving members of the selection panel (e.g. in-tray exercise, written tasks, lesson observations etc) need to be fully briefed.

The purpose of the selection process is to identify the candidate who, besides meeting all the essential criteria, presents the best fit to the requirements of the post and who most closely complements the skills of the leadership team.

The recruitment process should assess, as objectively as possible, each candidate's ability to do the job that has been advertised. Selection activities and interview questions should explore meticulously the qualities, attitudes and attributes that the governors have indicated they are seeking, and must be structured around the person specification and job description and the details of each application.

The professional advisers will be able to provide suggestions for key areas of questioning in relation to national development, leadership, curriculum, teaching and learning and Catholic distinctiveness and ethos.

It is possible for local authorities to incorporate psychometric or other ability testing into the process if asked for, together with feedback for both candidates and the Selection Panel, but there is usually a charge for this service.

During each interview or activity, notes should be taken by each member of the Selection Panel to help to review each candidate against the relevant selection criteria at a later stage in the process. Panel members should be aware that any notes they make may need to be disclosed to the applicant if requested and so should be fair and relevant.

Prior to the day of the interview the Selection Panel should decide:

- the composition of panels, topic areas and activities;
- how long each interview or activity will last;
- who will act as chair of each panel and keep time;
- who will bring the candidates to the activities / interview panels;
- in what order candidates will take part;
- where the interviews / activities will take place and the furniture layout;
- when the Governing Body will meet to ratify the decision of the Selection Panel;
- how the candidates will be informed of the decision;

Some important principles should be observed in devising and carrying out the selection activities. Each activity should be chosen for its potential to add some additional relevant evidence about the candidates. Thus, a process consisting entirely of question and answer sessions tests a narrow range of skills, whereas the job demands many more. It is better to have a range of activities including interviews, meetings with potential colleagues, simulation of job activities (paper tasks, interacting with pupils, etc), formal presentations or group interaction exercises.

Where staff and pupils are engaged in meeting or working with candidates during the selection activities and they are subsequently asked for evidence about their performance, this fact should be made known to the candidates so that they are fully aware that they are in a selection activity. Those giving evidence to the panel must be given criteria against which to report. They should not be asked to offer informal 'votes' on the candidates ('I could/could not work with this person').

It is the role of the professional advisers on behalf of the diocese and local authority to take responsibility for the robustness and the integrity of every stage of the Headteacher recruitment process. In the case of other leadership group appointments, this is the responsibility of the Headteacher.

In the case of headships, the professional advisers will liaise with the school to ensure that all practical arrangements for the interview and selection process are made.

These include:

Organising all house-keeping arrangements, including:

- who will welcome and brief candidates, and facilitate their movement between the different activities;
- where the candidates and the Selection Panel(s) will be accommodated and which rooms are to be reserved for the different activities;
- where refreshments for candidates and the Selection Panel(s) will be available;
- where the candidates will be accommodated.

Ensuring a manageable but robust programme of activities, e.g.

- making sure that there are appropriate refreshment breaks for candidates and the Selection Panel(s);
- ensuring there is sufficient time for summative discussions and decision making and key intervals.

In the case of headship appointments, it is the specific responsibility of the professional advisers to ensure that:

- the identity and qualifications of all shortlisted candidates are checked to fulfil the requirements of safe recruitment;
- references have been received and scrutinised by professional advisers (but not by other members of the Selection Panel) prior to the interview days. As well as clergy references, one referee will be the current Chair of Governors / Headteacher; the current or previous local authority is also likely to provide a reference, particularly if the candidate is a serving

headteacher. In cases where references are requested from other sources it is essential to verify the career history of the applicant;

- the outcomes from all activities are clearly recorded, accurate notes compiled and application forms, references and other correspondence are returned for safe storage.

In the case of other leadership group appointments, it is for the Headteacher to ensure these are managed. When preparing for the day(s) of selection activities and interviews, it is essential that the Selection Panel agree with their advisers how best to map out how each aspect of the agreed person specification to be assessed and the outcomes recorded during the interview and selection process.

In the case of a headship appointment, the local authority and diocesan officers should:

- clarify the key areas which governors wish to explore with candidates; they will also advise on important areas that need to be included;
- ensure that the interview and selection procedures comply fully with governors' responsibilities relating to child protection, safe recruitment and equality;
- ensure that governors are reminded to include a note in the invitation letter to shortlisted candidates that they bring documentation providing proof of identity and qualifications, and are informed that a successful appointment will be subject to a DBS disclosure request;
- draw up an appropriate and robust programme which may involve several interview panels and other participants such as pupils and staff of the school, together with a manageable timetable for the day(s);
- draw up a bank of possible questions from which different panels may wish to select questions / areas for discussion;
- draw up standardised frameworks to record responses and observations about each candidate.

The structuring of the selection activities must be scrupulously fair to each candidate (using lots to decide order, agreeing in advance the areas on which questions will be concentrated for all candidates, ensuring that there are no interruptions or delays to the activities, ensuring that each candidate has the same time, and allowing time for the panel or sub-panel to

discuss, assess, record and report back on performance in a uniform and agreed manner). Panel members should refrain from discussing the candidates privately outside of the appointed sessions.

A careful check needs to take place on the range of questions to be used across all the activities. This serves a number of purposes. Questions can be allocated so that there is even coverage of topics without duplication, and that each panel member has a role with which they are comfortable. Improper, illegal and pointless questions can be eliminated. It is extremely important to avoid questions which breach equal opportunities requirements, because they could be used to discriminate on grounds of sex, race, disability or ethnicity. Areas for supplementary questions can be agreed. The timing of replies can be estimated and the criteria for judging the response can be agreed. Candidates should be given an idea of the structure of each interview, for example, of the broad areas to be covered, the time that is available and any opportunity to ask questions of the panel.

It is vital that a clear plan is followed for the processing of evidence from sub-panels. Diocesan and LA officers need the opportunity to communicate assessments in their specialist areas, which are often made in sub-panels examining areas such as leadership in religious education and Catholic ethos. There must be an opportunity for all panel members to hear the outcomes of these key assessments. Candidates often perform differently from one activity to another and from day to day. While sharing evidence, the panel should keep an open mind and not attempt a judgement until all activities have been completed and collectively evaluated.

10. REQUESTING REFERENCES

10.1 Parish Priest reference

The governors have a duty to decide whether each candidate meets the Bishops' requirement, which is an essential criterion. The application form asks the candidate to supply 'the name of the priest of the parish where you normally worship'. This must be followed up by the school by means of a written request for information from the priest about the candidate's religious practice and commitment. The purpose is to allow an informed decision to be made about whether the candidate fulfils the requirement. Adverse

inferences should not be drawn if a candidate worships in a parish other than the one in which they live.

Candidates should be reminded that they should gain the advance consent of all their referees. This is especially important in the case of priests who are being asked to attest to the candidate's religious commitment and practice. It is advisable to include a copy of these documents along with the supporting information, so that candidates can be clear at the earliest stage about the nature of this requirement.

The priest's reference should be treated *in two stages*. The first stage offers maximum confidentiality to applicants. One person (preferably the chair of governors – or the headteacher in the case of other leadership team appointments) should be nominated to receive all priests' references. Before the shortlisting begins, the nominated person and the diocesan officer should scrutinise the references and decide if any candidate fails to meet the Bishops' requirement. Where clarification is needed, the diocesan officer will consult with the Chancellor of the Diocese and will consider whether a particular applicant matches the Bishop's requirement. The priest should be contacted if the reference lacks the necessary detail for a decision to be made. The candidate should be contacted if the priest they have nominated is unable or unwilling to respond fully to the governing body or school's request.

The second stage applies to candidates proceeding to the selection activities. Such candidates will be assessed on their potential to contribute to the Catholic life of the school. The priest's reference will have relevant information on this point. Consequently, priest's references *for those candidates who pass to the interview stage* will be released to the panel along with other references.

If, after any necessary enquiries at the first stage, it appears that the Bishops' requirement is not met, the candidate should be contacted and asked to confirm the facts on which the decision is to be made. If it is finally concluded that the candidate does not meet the Bishops' requirement, the candidate should be informed that they have not been called for interview because, on the evidence available, they have failed to meet the criterion of religious practice, which is an essential criterion for appointment to the post. Some

candidates may welcome being put in touch with someone who can give further specialist advice. This can be arranged through the diocesan officer.

There needs to be ample opportunity for candidates to verify that they satisfy the Bishops' requirement. All matters of this kind must be resolved within the selection process. Governors should include in the information pack written guidance on the interpretation of the Bishop's requirement, along with the name of a person who can offer independent, confidential consultation and advice. Applicants should be asked to say in their personal statement whether they believe that they fulfil the Bishops' requirement.

Diocesan courses on preparation for senior posts include briefing on the Bishop's requirement. Although diocesan officers may know a candidate applying from within the diocese, they do not research the personal backgrounds of candidates in order to attest whether they satisfy the Bishops' requirement. Nor will they reveal personal information to the panel that is unconfirmed by the candidate.

10.2 Professional References

Reference request letters, for those invited to interview, should be sent immediately following shortlisting. It is advisable to send these via email as well as by post, and also to ensure that whoever is handling the administration of the recruitment process has a diary note to check that all references have been received in advance of the date set for interviews and chase missing references.

Wherever possible, all personal and professional references should be assembled prior to the day of the interview and retained by the chair of the selection panel. References should not be shared with other panel members until after the selection process is complete. However, the chair of the panel may share them with both diocesan and LA advisers.

References are used to endorse, not drive the other elements of the selection process.

- They should be held by the Professional Adviser / Chair of the Selection Panel / Headteacher and the content discussed at the appropriate time – usually before final interviews in case the Selection Panel needs to explore further issues with the candidate.

- References sought before interview should not ask any questions relating to the health of the applicant, including how many days of sickness that have taken. This can only be sought for a candidate who has been made a conditional offer of appointment.
- Referees should be sent the job description and person specification as a guide. The school will need to determine who will undertake this task.
- The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They should always be sought and obtained directly from the referee. Governors should not rely on references or testimonials provided by the candidate, or 'open references' and testimonials, e.g. "To whom it may concern". There have been instances of candidates forging references. Open references or testimonials might be the result of a compromise agreement and are unlikely to include any adverse comments.
- Ideally references should be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal ones, and should be obtained before interview so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at final interview. In exceptional circumstances it might not be possible to obtain references prior to interview, either because of delay on the part of the referee, or because the candidate strongly objects to their current employer being approached at this stage, **but this should be the aim in all cases**. It is up to the Selection Panel to decide whether to accede to a candidate's request to approach his or her current employer for a reference only if s/he is the preferred candidate after the interview, but it is not recommended as good practice.
- In all cases where a reference has not been obtained on the preferred candidate before interview, the prospective employer must ensure that it is received and scrutinised, and any concerns are resolved satisfactorily, before the person's appointment is confirmed.
- All requests for references should seek objective verifiable information and not subjective opinion. The use of reference proformas can help achieve this. Some local authorities advise the use of model proformas provided by their Human Resources Departments. Where such advice is provided, the local authority's model proforma should be used.

A copy of the job description and person specification for the post should be included with all reference requests, and every request should ask:

- about the referee's relationship with the candidate, e.g. do they have a working relationship? If so what? How long has the referee known the candidate, and in what capacity?
- whether the referee is satisfied that the person has the ability and is suitable to undertake the job in question, and for specific comments about the candidate's suitability for the post, and how s/he has demonstrated that s/he meets the person specification;
- whether the referee is completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children, and, if not, for specific details of the referee's concerns and the reasons why the referee believes the person might be unsuitable.

and should remind the referee that:

- they have a responsibility to ensure that the reference is accurate and does not contain any material mis-statement or omission; and
- relevant factual content of the reference may be discussed with the applicant.

In addition to the above, requests addressed to a candidate's current or previous employer should also seek:

- confirmation of details of the applicant's current post and salary;
- specific verifiable comments about the candidate's performance history and conduct;
- details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to in which the disciplinary sanction is current;
- details of any disciplinary procedures the applicant has been subject to involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children or young people, including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired, and the outcome of those; and
- details of any allegations or concerns that have been raised about the applicant that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people, and the outcome of those concerns e.g. whether the allegations or concerns were investigated, the conclusion reached, and how the matter was resolved; and

- except where the reference has been provided for a serving headteacher all references provided by a school should be either signed or countersigned by the headteacher at that school.

References should be checked to ensure all specific questions have been answered satisfactorily. If all questions have not been answered or the reference is vague or unspecific, the referee should be contacted and asked to provide written answers or amplification as appropriate. The information should also be compared with the application form to ensure that the information provided about the candidate and his or her previous employment by the referee is consistent with the information provided by the applicant on the form. Any discrepancy in the information should be taken up with the applicant.

Any information about past disciplinary action or allegations should be considered in the circumstances of the individual case. Cases in which an issue was satisfactorily resolved some time ago, or an allegation was determined to be unfounded or did not require formal disciplinary sanctions, and in which no further issues have been raised, are not likely to cause concern. More serious or recent concerns, or issues that were not resolved satisfactorily are more likely to cause concern. A history of repeated concerns or allegations over time is also likely to give cause for concern.

Copies of references should not be given to candidates by the receiving school. Where employment has been refused on the basis of the content of the reference and the candidate indicates they would wish to see a copy of the information they should be referred to the author of the reference.

Detailed checks (e.g. on identity, academic and professional qualifications, attendance and medical fitness, DBS check and Childrens Barred List check, previous employment history) are normally carried out by the LA officer (in the case of headships), with the offer of employment being conditional on their satisfactory completion. However, applications for DBS checks should be made promptly as the DBS may take some time to process them.

11. INTERVIEW

11.1 The interview stage

This is likely to last between 1 and 2 days and to involve activities such as specialist panel interviews, a presentation by the candidates, leadership of an act of worship, an 'observed' lesson observation and feedback, participation in group discussion, teaching class or subject groups, and a final interview. Further techniques for identifying potential leaders might also include psychometric tests, table-top exercises on financial management or staff deployment, the interpretation of school improvement data and the requirement to respond to a range of interest groups such as pupils and parents, community and church groups. Meticulous record-keeping is a vital component of this stage of the process.

11.2 Final Interview

It is usual for the questions to be asked at the final stage to be chosen in order to allow any unresolved issues for each candidate to be explored. Old ground should not be covered. For that reason, if final set piece presentations are used, they should be devised so that they assist in the exploration of relevant issues for the remaining candidates.

In making their final decision the panel needs to assess and record the balance of strengths and weaknesses of each candidate against the key criteria for the purposes of feeding back to the candidates. It is often helpful for the officers to present their assessments after panel members have spoken, in order that members do not feel unduly led. The panel can make best use of its time by assessing first whether any candidates have little or no support from members. Comparatively more time can then be spent on assessing the other candidates. Before the final vote, officers should also be asked to declare whether any candidate has failed to show enough evidence of their fitness for the post and should not, in their view, be appointed.

The aim of the final interview is to draw out, through questioning, the full range of professional competencies and to explore the experience, attitude, values and attributes of the candidates. Additional areas may be recommended by the diocesan officer to ensure candidates have the capacity and commitment to preserve and promote the distinctive nature of the school as a Catholic community.

Key areas upon which to focus should include:

Leadership

- the ability to outline and secure commitment to a vision / motivating others
- capacity for complex levels of analysis and strategic planning
- the ability to co-ordinate and delegate appropriately
- capacity for enabling and developing others
- the ability to make judgments, anticipate outcomes and manage conflict

National and curriculum development

- the ability to take full account of national developments and decide on the appropriate direction for the school at its present rate of development
- capacity for developing an appropriate, challenging and fulfilling curriculum, including the wider curriculum, for the school and its pupils
- the ability to recruit and develop staff to ensure effective delivery of a high quality curriculum

Teaching and learning

- the ability to create the climate for effective and enjoyable teaching and learning
- capacity for putting in place systems to develop and monitor the quality of teaching and learning and to develop all staff
- capacity to tackle underachievement effectively and to promote high standards in every area of school life

Management of resources

- the ability to create and develop an organisational structure for the effective day-to-day running of the school
- potential to manage and be accountable for the appropriate deployment of staff, finances, building and community resources

Personal qualities

- personal impact / presence / spiritual intelligence
- ability to communicate / inspire / show sense of audience
- capacity for taking both creative and tough decisions
- resilience / humour / emotional intelligence
- analytical intelligence and able to grasp complex issues

Candidates should have the opportunity to ask questions to clarify their understanding of the post and salary and it is helpful for governors to advise them of the time they have allowed for questions.

Every final interview should conclude with the question from the Chair of the Selection Panel – ***“Do you remain a firm candidate for the post of ** at ** (school name) and would you accept the post if offered?”*** At the end of the final interview, the candidate should be advised that all candidates will be contacted later by telephone after the Governing Body ratification meeting.

11.4 References at final interview

It is recommended practice for candidates’ references to be released to the panel only after a provisional decision has been made. This ensures that the panel decides on its own evidence, rather than relying on the views of others. This helps to ensure fairness and equal opportunities. Alternatively, a designated member of the panel may check references earlier to ensure that they give clear evaluation against the criteria. If any further enquiry or clarification is then sought from a referee, it must be made clear that anything said will be reported to the panel as part of the formal evidence for the appointment. The panel would not be able to defend any decision made on the basis of ‘off the record’ evidence. In justice, referees must be prepared to stand by any comments that they make.

12. FORMAL OFFER

After the final selection activities and interview, it is the responsibility of the professional advisers – in the case of headships – and the headteacher in other appointments to coordinate the Selection Panel in the process of considering the evidence and making the final decision.

At every stage the person specification provides the criteria against which each candidate’s performance is gauged. Governors may be invited first to summarise their impressions about the suitability or otherwise of each candidate.

In the case of headships, it is normally the local authority adviser who is responsible throughout the interview and selection day(s) for collating information on the scores and

reactions of candidates to all aspects of the selection process. This information is extremely important at the decision-making meeting because it provides objective evidence to sit alongside the impressions and value judgements that have been forming in the mind of each member of the Selection Panel. The objective evidence collated by the professional adviser about each candidate can then be considered to confirm or challenge emerging views.

When the governors, supported by their professional advisers / headteacher, believe they have identified the best candidate, the professional adviser / headteacher will provide details of the references to assist the final stage of the decision-making process.

Where specific details of the reference of the preferred candidate are requested by other members of the Selection Panel at the decision-making meeting, it is suggested that one of the professional advisers (in the case of headships) and the headteacher (in other appointments) reads aloud the reference once the preferred candidate has been identified. In so doing, the professional adviser / headteacher should focus on the final judgement sentence. If the reference does not include a final judgement, then the content of the reference should be carefully matched with evidence against the person specification.

The successful candidate will then be offered the post conditional on the satisfactory completion of checks and unsuccessful candidates will have the opportunity to arrange a time to receive detailed feedback from the professional advisers.

If there is no candidate who meets the person specification and commands the confidence of the Panel, then an appointment should not be made. The professional advisers in the case of a headship and the headteacher (in other appointments) will alert the Chair of the Selection Panel as early as possible in the process if s/he believes that there is no suitable candidate from among the applicants for the post.

All notes made at all stages of the appointment process must be collected either by the Chair or the local authority officer to be retained for 6 months. Usually, the professional advisers are responsible for the subsequent debriefing of unsuccessful candidates, and will need to retain a summary of each candidate's scores and performance to provide detailed feedback when the debriefing takes place. In cases where the appointment of a

headteacher is not being dealt with, it is for the school's headteacher to provide safe storage of notes / records and manage the debriefings.

13. RATIFICATION OF THE APPOINTMENT BY THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

13.1 Decision Making

At the conclusion of the interviews and decision-making process, the Selection Panel is required to recommend to the full Governing Body a candidate for appointment to the post of headteacher (or deputy headteacher). The ratification meeting should take place immediately after the Selection Panel has reached a decision on who to recommend for appointment. The quorum of governors needed is a number equal to half the governors currently in post.

In practice, because the Governing Body had delegated the selection process to a Selection Panel, the endorsement of the recommended candidate should be entirely straightforward. It would be wholly inappropriate for the Governing Body to try and replay the selection and interview process just completed. Similarly, for the Governing Body to seek to overturn the recommendation of the Selection Panel would not only be seen as inappropriate but is likely to be deemed contrary to law and may be challenged in an Employment Tribunal where the Governing Body would have to justify their decision not to appoint the Selection Panel's recommended candidate. The ratification meeting is a formal meeting of the Governing Body and, as such, requires proper notice, with an agenda and minutes. The meeting should also be formally clerked.

The following model agenda may prove useful to governing bodies:

Full Governing Body Meeting

A meeting to ratify the appointment of a Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher of the school will be held in Room at the school on ** (date)

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. To receive a report and recommendation from the Selection Panel for the appointment of, as Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher for the school.
3. To ratify the appointment and start date of the new Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher.

The following is an example of adequate minutes of a Headteacher ratification meeting:

Minutes of the meeting of the full Governing Body

held on * (date) at the school.

1. Apologies for absence
2. Appointment of Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher

The Selection panel appointed by the Governing body at the meeting on * (date) for the purpose of selecting a suitable candidate for the position of Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher of the school recommended that be appointed to the position with effect from * (date) on a starting salary at point * on the Leadership Pay Spine, currently £..... .

It is recommended that the Chair of Governors / Headteacher (in the case of Deputy Headteacher appointments) telephones all the candidates after the Governing Body ratification meeting to offer the position to the successful candidate or to advise unsuccessful candidates that the local authority's Lead Officer, or Diocesan Director / Education Officer / Diocesan Adviser will provide them with detailed feedback.

After the verbal offer of employment, it is recommended that the Chair of Governors / Headteacher writes to the successful candidate formally offering the post conditional on the satisfactory completion of the following pre-appointment checks:

- References (if not obtained and scrutinised previously)
- Identity (if that could not be verified straight after the interview)
- Qualifications / QTS (if not verified on the day of interview)
- DBS – where appropriate satisfactory DBS clearance still required
- Medical clearance – the candidate is medically fit

13.2 Letter to confirm appointment

Although the diocesan officer may know the outcome of the selection, the school needs to inform the Education Service at the earliest opportunity that the candidate has formally accepted the post and that the governing body has confirmed the appointment. This allows the appointment to be announced to other schools in the next issue of the Bulletin. The LA should also be informed as soon as possible.

All unsuccessful candidates are entitled to receive feedback from LA and diocesan officers on their performance and on why they have not been appointed. They should be encouraged to do so. For headteacher appointments, the chair of governors may also wish to be involved in feedback. In appointments of deputy heads and heads or co-ordinators of religious education, feedback is usually given by the head and the diocesan and LA officers.

The release of information about the new appointment needs to be arranged after liaising with the successful candidate's current school's Governing Body / Headteacher. Staff at the school to which the successful candidate has been appointed should be advised by the Chair of Governors of the need to treat the news as confidential until general release of the information has been agreed between the two schools.

13.3 Record Keeping

Evidence must be recorded and collated systematically throughout the selection process against the selection criteria so that there is an agreed feedback to the candidates on their performance. Those allocated to feeding back to candidates, whether heads, governors or officers, must therefore share and agree their intended feedback with the panel so that it is as consistent and accurate as possible. Diocesan officers should be in a position to give broad feedback, not just comments on matters relating to Catholicity. Their 'specialist' feedback is also checked because it is communicated on behalf of the whole panel. Particularly since candidates for senior appointments in our schools often apply for a number of posts in other schools within the diocese or the province, they need to be debriefed carefully so that they benefit from consistent and reliable advice.

13.4 Freedom of Information

Governors must have regard to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). All records will be sealed in a confidential file for six months. Governors need to know that candidates are entitled to scrutinise notes made at all stages in the process.

14. POST INTERVIEW SUPPORT

14.1 Once the contractual and administrative details have been finalised, it is recommended that the chair of governors makes contact with the headteacher designate to plan a programme of induction to the school prior to taking up their appointment.

The programme might include the following:

- An opportunity to attend a governing body meeting to meet governors.
- An opportunity to meet with the school's staff and in particular the School Leadership team (SLT).
- A series of handover meetings with the current headteacher.
- Involving the new headteacher in major financial and staffing decisions which need to be made prior to the commencement in post.
- Consider a communication to parents providing some background and opportunities to meet with the new headteacher in the new term.

14.2 Headteacher well-being guidance / maintaining a work-life balance

It is good practice for a governing body to adopt and monitor a well-being at work policy which applies to all staff employed at the school, with the headteacher being responsible for its implementation. However, the governing body has particular responsibility for ensuring the well-being of the headteacher and managing the governing body's own demands on the headteacher.

Employers have a common law duty of care to their employees and a legal duty under the health and safety legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and related legislation, and the Working Time Regulations 1998. The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2009 also states that:

'All teachers and headteachers should enjoy a reasonable work-life balance....In relation to headteachers, specific provisions have been put in place through regulations made under section 21 of the Education Act 2002 which put a responsibility on the relevant body (normally a school governing body or LA) to have regard for the work-life balance of the headteacher.'

This duty is incorporated into the current School Teachers' pay and Conditions Document 2013. In addition, Phase 3 of the National Workforce Agreement places responsibility on the governing body for:

- Ensuring that *'their headteacher has a reasonable workload, in support of a reasonable work/life balance, having regard to their health and welfare.'*

- Providing headteachers with a *'dedicated time that recognises their significant leadership responsibilities for their school!'*

What is a reasonable work/life balance?

What constitutes a reasonable work/life balance differs for each person and is different for people at various times in their life. Headteachers have a responsibility themselves for their own work/life balance, but do not always recognise this. Governing bodies need to be proactive in exploring this issue with their headteacher, to challenge them and watch out for contra-indications such as health issues, stress, reduced attendance etc.

Actions for the governing body to consider

When appointing a new headteacher, the governing body should take the opportunity to review its structures and processes.

- What could the governing body do to reduce the number and length of meetings?
- Are meetings strategic and timetabled for the whole year?
- Has the governing body considered its committee structure?
- Consider the timing of meetings to be flexible to meet all governors' needs.
- Does the format of the headteacher's report enable governors to fulfil their roles?

14.3 Dedicated headship time

'Headteachers must have dedicated time to lead their schools, not just manage them.'

National Agreement

Since September 2005, governing bodies have had a statutory responsibility to ensure that the headteacher has dedicated headship time during the school week. It is particularly important that governors take an active role in strategically monitoring the use of this time where headteachers have a heavy teaching timetable.

The headteacher needs time to focus on the important, rather than the urgent, in order to develop the necessary vision and direction to improve the quality of education and raise

standards. There is no prescribed amount of, or guidance on, a reasonable amount of dedicated headship time (it is suggested 10% of the working week).

What is the time for?

- School improvement
- Raising standards
- School development / improvement
- Improved monitoring and evaluation
- Improved well-being of staff and pupils

Dedicated headship time should not be interrupted by

- Routine matters
- Phone calls or enquiries in person
- Requirements to cover
- Visitors – internal or external

Headteacher appraisal

Governing bodies of maintained schools have a statutory duty to appoint an external adviser for the headteacher / principal appraisal process. Although this does not apply to free schools and academies it is recommended as best practice to support the appraisal process for the headteacher.

Governing Bodies need to satisfy themselves that the appointed adviser has the skills, experience and objectivity to provide the level of support and advice required to ensure the headteacher appraisal process is robust.

The adviser will:

- Support the governing body and headteacher in conducting the appraisal process.
- Ensure the headteacher understands the standards against which performance will be assessed.
- Provide the governing body with the appropriate support and guidance on setting objectives.

15. CORE INDUCTION PROVISION

15.1 As part of a year-long Diocesan Induction programme, new headteachers are offered:

- A 'New Headteachers' induction afternoon' to meet the Education Service and learn more about diocesan vision and priorities;
- A carefully selected 'Diocesan Professional Partner Headteacher' who will work closely with them on a bespoke programme as agreed by both parties;
- Appropriate professional development and support to enable new headteachers to become fully effective in their role as Catholic Leaders;
- Pastoral visits from the Education Service Director / Deputy Director
- Diocesan Induction and Leadership training (including Retreat and Reflection Days) for new and experienced headteachers;
- Primary and Secondary Headteacher networks and Deanery groups will also provide important and valuable additional support mechanisms.