



# Appointing Headteachers in Church Schools

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# Introduction

*“The Christian way is a way that holds in creative tension steadfast faith and generous hospitality... we build an environment in schools that is able to honour God and also honour people of all faiths or no faith at all.”*

The Most Revd Stephen Cottrell Archbishop of York

The appointment of a new headteacher is one of the most important events of a school’s life. It is a time during which a school community may truly get to know itself – when the very essence of the school with all its joys and challenges will be distilled and the person identified to lead you on from here and into the future.

Recruiting a new headteacher should be part of governors’ strategic planning. It is the statutory responsibility of every governing body to ensure that their school is well led, and the Christian foundation of the school requires a consideration of how that leadership engages with the whole school community to live out its Christian vision.

In what follows, after highlighting some key issues of best practice, we map out six stages in the recruitment process. These are:

1. **Preparing** – getting ready to run an effective recruitment process
2. **Defining** – understanding and describing your ideal candidate
3. **Attracting** – getting the right people to apply
4. **Selecting** – choosing the best candidate
5. **Appointing** – securing your chosen candidate
6. **Inducting** – giving your new head a strong start

Six appendices will then provide you with additional information, document templates and directions to other resources that you will find invaluable in the task that lies ahead.

Appendix 1: Checklist for headship appointment process

Appendix 2: The role of advisers

Appendix 3: Activities and questions to help Stage 2 - Defining

Appendix 4: Sample person specifications

Appendix 5: Example letters for applicants

Appendix 6: Notes on interview questions

From the diocese we wish you every success in your forthcoming search and our team, along with your Link Adviser, will be ready to assist you at each point.

# Supporting Material

In addition to this booklet, these documents contain invaluable information:

## **NGA Toolkit**

<https://www.nga.org.uk/getmedia/75ae86ef-2efd-4a9f-a4c4-c62d8e40081c/NGA-Headteacher-recruitment-toolkit-October-2020.pdf>

## **Teachers' Pay and Conditions**

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

## **Headteachers' Standards**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-standards-of-excellence-for-headteachers/headteachers-standards-2020>

## **Keeping Children Safe in Education**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/835733/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf)

## **For specific faith criteria see:**

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=16&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj2rJHv-LroAhUlt3EKHYCsCtwQFjAPegQICBAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fresearchbriefings.files.parliament.uk%2Fdocuments%2F%2FSN06972%2FSN06972.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2qau8cHE2enXvN0-0sS3QP>

These other web resources may also prove useful

- Church of England Education Office - <http://www.churchofengland.org/education.aspx>
- Department for Education - <http://www.education.gov.uk/>
- National Governors' Association - <http://www.nga.org.uk>
- Ofsted - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>
- Look on your Local Authority website for support from your own governor services

# Best practice in the context of a church school

## **Working together with school, church and community**

The headteacher appointment process is an opportunity for the governors and the whole school community to work together, take stock and look to the future. Ideally, it should be led by governors with appropriate experience, in a prayerful manner with a sense of togetherness and open mindedness.

## **Honest self-evaluation combined with high aspirations**

Through its engagement in the SIAMS and Ofsted processes the governing board should have a working knowledge *of*, and understand *how*, the Christian foundation of the school is lived out. This will include honest, rigorous self-evaluation of all aspects of school performance and a deep understanding of both daily life and the strategic decision making in the school.

## **Clarity about the qualities needed for your new headteacher**

The appointment is a two-way process which goes beyond thinking merely in terms of the competencies, knowledge and skills of the candidates. As the prospective leader of your school community you should take seriously aspects of character and personality, and how the overall chemistry resonates with the school vision.

## **Reflecting the vision, values and ethos of the school**

During the process of headteacher appointment those involved will reflect and represent the vision and values of the school and the ethos of its Christian foundation. This is both a great privilege and a serious responsibility.

## **Safer Recruitment and selection**

At least one panel member **must** have completed safer recruitment training approved by the Secretary of State.

## **Some pitfalls best avoided:**

- Undue speed and creating a sense of rushing to appoint
- Insufficient regard for the Christian foundation of the school
- Well-meaning attempts that wish to precisely replicate past processes
- The desire to 'clone' a previous headteacher
- Adhering unthinkingly to a formulaic approach which restricts and suffocates reflection
- Being unprepared to **not** make an appointment in the absence of a suitable and appointable candidate!

## Stage 1 – Preparing

### a. Resignation

Headteacher's **written** resignation received by the chair of governors who informs the governing body, the ODBE School Link Adviser, the LA/MAT and the school's HR provider.

### b. Full Governing Board Meeting

A governing board meeting is called to give information and consider questions about the process. ODBE School Link Adviser and LA/MAT Adviser should be invited to attend this meeting, which will:

- Stress issues of confidentiality, safeguarding and equality of opportunity.
- Consider possible options for school leadership including collaboration, federation or continuing the present arrangements.
- Explain the six stages of the process.
- Consider buying into extra services for example from ODBE, LA, HR services, external recruitment agency.
- Nominate the Headteacher Appointment Panel (HAP) to whom the decision making is fully delegated. This group must be able to commit to the whole process.
- Ensure that at least one member of the HAP has been trained in *Safer Recruitment*.
- Advise that all members of the governing body are welcome to be involved on interview days.
- Agree a draft timetable, ensuring that the diocese and LA/MAT representatives are present at shortlisting and interview.
- Consider alternative interim provision if insufficient time is available for replacement or the process is not successful.

### c. The Headteacher Appointment Panel (HAP)

The HAP has the delegated authority to recommend an appointment to the full governing body. Three or five panel members is the optimum number; an odd number is always recommended. The HAP should contain a variety of governor designations, a gender mix and a proportion of foundation governors which reflects the school's designation ie, a majority in the case of a Voluntary Aided school. We strongly advise that staff governors do not form part of the HAP itself, but they should still be involved in other aspects of the process. Teaching cover may have to be arranged to facilitate this.

The HAP is given delegated powers to:

- Draw up a short list of applicants
- Interview selected applicants
- Choose to recommend appointment
- Choose not to recommend appointment

#### d. Safer Recruitment and Selection

Governing bodies have responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education which is why at least one member of the HAP needs to have accessed the relevant training.

**NB:** It is essential that governors refer to guidance which emphasises the importance of schools incorporating measures in their recruitment and selection procedures to help, deter, reject or identify people who might abuse children and young people or are otherwise unsuited to work with them. These requirements apply to all schools and to everyone that comes into regular contact with children including staff employed under contract of service and voluntary staff. Ensure that all current requirements are discussed with your HR provider. See the NGA Toolkit and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

#### e. Issues of Equality and Justice related to Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Law Ref NGA document

An objective and transparent process is a just and proper way to proceed bearing in mind the Christian foundation of the school. In short, governors need to ensure that discrimination does not occur on any grounds. The NGA Toolkit has full details.

#### f. Timescales for Recruitment and Selection

It usually takes about 13 weeks to appoint a headteacher. If governors decide not to appoint, the process will obviously need to be repeated.

These are the latest dates by which headteachers and deputy heads/teachers must give notice of resignation:

| Existing Heads | Deputy Heads/other Teachers | To start                |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 30 April       | 31 May                      | September               |
| 30 September   | 31 October                  | January                 |
| 31 January     | 28 February                 | April/May (summer term) |

#### g. The Outgoing Headteacher

The appointment process may be a challenging time for the outgoing headteacher. It is good practice to keep the outgoing head informed in general terms of the progress being made in the appointment of a successor, but they should **not** be involved in their recruitment. The chair should consult the headteacher to identify what their role may be, for example, in organising the interview days - many headteachers simply choose to work from home. Some schools give candidates who visit the school a chance to speak to the headteacher at that time, as noted elsewhere this discussion cannot form part of the appointment process.

## Stage 2 – Defining

### a. First Steps

Governors should formulate a clear idea about the current and future needs of the school and this may involve:

- Consultation with staff, pupils, parents and carers, clergy and church
- Discussion of the strategic vision of the school and the needs for the post

We have provided some materials in the appendices to help you work through these headings. This work should help you create your Person Specification and Job Description.

### b. The Person Specification

The person specification details the characteristics you are seeking in your ideal candidate. It will be informed by the preparation and information gathering work from stage 1 which should enable you to address questions such as:

- What personal qualities or values do we expect candidates to demonstrate and uphold?
- What abilities should they have?
- What should they be committed to?
- What attitudes will be important?
- What sort of experience might they have?
- What knowledge and skills should they have?

You need to be able to explain the need for these and be careful not to discriminate against any groups. Some person specification grids are included in the appendices.

A headteacher does not need to be a Christian to lead a Church of England school but it is expected that the headteacher actively supports core Christian values.

VA schools are able to ask for 'Christian commitment' as one of the criteria used in making staff appointments to ensure the religious character of the school is maintained.

In voluntary controlled and foundation schools, governors may also ask how potential headteachers will maintain and develop the Christian character and ethos of the school. (Section 60 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998)

**The criteria for appointment are those identified in the person specification.** These might reflect certain aspects of the job description.

### **The Question of NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headship)**

Applicants for headship are no longer required to have the NPQH qualification. However, we recognise the value of NPQH as the qualification of choice for anyone aspiring to headship. NPQH remains a mark of quality that governing bodies and academy boards can rely on when making appointments.



### c. The Job Description

The statutory requirements for the role of the headteacher are laid down in the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions*. Some specific areas of organisation and responsibility may be delegated to senior colleagues, but the headteacher retains ultimate legal responsibility for those areas and an oversight of the staff to whom specific duties are currently delegated.

Governors are advised to refer to the generic description of duties contained in the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions* document and to add a few items specific to their school (e.g. indication of teaching commitment) and include the **responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of pupils at the school**.

### d. Communication and the Wider Community

Many people are affected by the appointment; governors, staff, parents, pupils, applicants. It is a good idea to identify a single point of contact for all communication – bearing in mind that the headteacher should **not** play a role in the appointment as noted above.

- Members of staff will be anxious; the staff governor can act as a liaison. Governors must reassure the school community that they are maintaining careful control of the process – especially if there has to be a second (or even third) interview. Interview days are disruptive, ensure that everyone is thanked for their help and contributions, including all non-teaching staff, teaching assistants and volunteers.
- Parents too, need reassurance and to be kept abreast of developments, including parents in the process, as recommended above. This will ensure that they feel included in a decision which will have a profound impact on their children.
- Governors need information. While the HAP has delegated authority, all governors need to be aware of what is happening especially if they are to play a role in the interview day.
- The successful candidate's chair of governors will need to be contacted immediately after interview though it is important to discuss this with the candidate before making contact. A date for making an announcement should be agreed between the schools.

## Stage 3 – Attracting

### a. The Information Pack

The quality of the information pack will influence candidates about applying for the post. Remember they are looking for a good match for their aspirations, talents and skills.

The information pack should include:

- a welcome letter from chair of governors
- information about the post e.g. headteacher qualities from consultation with children and/or parents
- Person specification
- Job description
- Information about the school
  - general description
  - staffing structure
  - information related to the Christian foundation, parish and clergy
  - links to Ofsted and SIAMS reports
  - attainment data
- information about how to apply
  - give clear guidance about where applications are to be made
  - be specific about the form to be used – most schools and LAs do not accept CVs
  - **ensure that candidates are clear that their applications should address the criteria on the person specification**
- invite candidates to visit – this invitation can be included in the chair’s letter
  - identify a person or persons to act as guides to the school and to answer questions. As noted above the headteacher may have a role here
  - be clear with everyone that the visits do not form part of the selection process
  - some candidates cannot visit for various reasons – this is not a reason not to interview nor is it evidence of lack of interest

### b. Advert

Using the headlines from your person specification, craft an advert and organise its placement. **Only place your advert when all pack materials are complete.** The requirement to advertise in printed publication has been removed.

It can be very helpful to look at adverts currently in circulation. Do not use your previous advert as things change rapidly in the world of education and you need to make sure that the advert reflects current priorities, this is equally true for the information pack (see below).

A good and attractive advert should contain the following information:

- full school name
- logo .... school, diocese, LA
- address and post code, telephone number, email address
- individual Salary Range (ISR) - agree an ISR as per the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions* document, your HR provider can help with this
- number on roll
- starting date
- brief details about the school and the job
- SIAMS and Ofsted comments if desired
- what is the school offering to the successful candidate - your Unique Selling Point (USP)
- a summary of criteria ... someone who ....
- where to find application forms, further details
- closing date for applications/interview dates (may be one or two days, you should discuss this with your LA and ODBE School Link Adviser)
- how/where to return application forms (take HR advice on this)
- safeguarding statement
- link to school information pack

Allocate work to members of the HAP as appropriate and reach a final confirmation of shortlisting and planning dates before interviews.

NB The governing body must advertise a vacancy for a headteacher unless they have "good reason" not to do so e.g. the school has already advertised twice without success; it has explored other options such as federation; an Acting Head has been appointed through a formal process; the Acting Head has been in post a minimum of 2 long terms.

## Stage 4 – Selecting

### a. Shortlisting

- Remind all involved that copies of application forms received, and all discussions are to be treated in the strictest confidence, including your GDPR obligations.
- Prepare a shortlisting grid, using the person specification, to be ready for the HAP shortlisting meeting.
- Prior to the shortlisting, each member of the HAP should read the applications and then use the person specification grid to indicate if a candidate has met, partially met or not met aspects of the person specification.
- Following the shortlisting meeting, references should be sought.
- Following shortlisting, formally invite candidates to interview. Include dates and times, details of presentation and other appropriate information and request dietary requirements or any special adjustments.

Advisers from the LA/MAT and diocese should attend the shortlisting meeting. It is not a process which the HAP can undertake by e-mail. There may be questions that arise during the meeting which you would want to follow up at interview – ensure that these are noted.

### b. Planning the Interview

- Agree timetable by selecting and mapping activities against your person specification to ensure that all criteria have been covered. Your ODBE School Adviser and LA/MAT adviser will be able to guide you and may suggest some content and questions, for example:
  - panel interviews (Leadership and Management, Church and Community, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning)
  - observe and feedback on the learning in class
  - undertake a learning walk
  - lead collective worship
  - undertake teaching
  - report back to governors following an assessment information exercise
  - speak with the school council
  - make a presentation to the governing body
  - respond to a critical incident type of scenario
  - in tray exercise e.g. respond to a parental letter of complaint, write a school newsletter
  - take part in a discussion - goldfish bowl type of exercise
  - complete a psychometric test (this will be arranged via an external provider)
  - final interview
- Ensure that any queries about candidates from shortlisting are going to be answered through the choice of activities.
- Brief governors, children and staff so all are ready to participate.
- Ensure candidates are well provided for and generally made to feel as comfortable as possible - provide a room with refreshments. Provide any adjustments candidates have requested.
- Ensure sufficient rooms are available for every aspect of the day.
- Ensure someone takes responsibility to prepare the rooms e.g. water, paper, pencil, whiteboard, computer etc.
- Sufficient breaks are provided for all.

- Lunch arrangements are managed for all those participating - including staff.
- Seek and follow HR advice concerning the use of references.
- All governors might take part in *some* activities such attendance at the candidates' presentations.
- Activities such as observations and data analyses will need support and supervision from LA/MAT or ODBE School Advisers.

NB: members of staff can meet candidates over lunch, try to ensure that all are able to attend – this might take some imaginative planning on behalf of lunch supervisors. Take careful consideration about inviting governors to this lunch, it is best practice for the HAP **not** to attend the candidates' lunch.

### c. The Interview Process

It is important that the same questions are asked of each candidate, though supplementary questions can vary. The interview process concludes with a final interview with the HAP. The questions in this interview can be devised to pick out matters which have arisen earlier in the process.

The various elements of the interview process should be scored by panel members using a simple rating scale. The HAP should consider **all** the evidence that they have collected during the process. The diocesan and LA/MAT Advisers will provide a professional assessment by summarising the merits of each candidate and how these relate to the selection criteria. The HAP's discussion should focus on each candidate's strengths and weaknesses in the light of the selection criteria.

If it becomes necessary to vote, the HAP should seriously consider whether an appointment should be made at all.

If no candidate meets the criteria for the post, then it should be re-advertised.

At the end of the process all papers relating to the interview should be collected by the clerk or HR and stored securely for six months in case a problem or grievance arises regarding the appointment. A set of the papers relating to the successful candidate should be retained on their staff personal file.

### d. References

References should not normally be used until just before the final interview stage and might not be used until after the final interview and as part of the final selection discussion. The DfE guidance on this appears contradictory:

*'The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions' which is followed by 'Ideally, references should be sought on all short-listed candidates, including internal ones, before interview, so that any issues of concern they raise can be explored further with the referee, and taken up with the candidate at interview'*

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/350747/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/350747/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf)

The pragmatic approach would therefore be for the chair of the HAP to be aware of references ahead of interview and if there were any particular concerns that couldn't be resolved beforehand with the referee, the chair would need to raise them within the context of a specific interview question.

All references should be handled confidentially.

## Stage 5 – Appointing

- HAP decides on the candidate to recommend to the full meeting of governing body.
- The governing body ratify the decision. As noted elsewhere this does not involve a discussion of the relative merits of candidates – these are confidential to the HAP.
- The chair telephones the successful candidate and offers the post\*. This conversation should also include confirmation of salary. The figure should be agreed by governors before the chair phones.
- The chair telephones unsuccessful candidates and offers both thanks and feedback from professional advisers - diocesan or LA/MAT.
- The chair writes a brief letter to confirm the verbal offer with start date and salary.
- The chair writes to school community, staff and parents, mindful of the successful candidate's situation and the possible need to coincide announcement in both schools.
- **A contract needs to be issued and signed before the headteacher takes up the post.**
- The successful candidate is offered professional debrief.
- Induction for new headteacher needs to be arranged.

\* On very rare occasions the chosen candidate may decline the offer, despite having said that they are definitely interested at the final interview. In this case the process will usually have to begin again, the post does **not** have to be offered to the 'runner-up'. LA/MAT and ODBE School Link Advisers can help if this circumstance arises.

## Stage 6 - Inducting

Governors have a responsibility for the induction of the new headteacher and this should begin as soon as the appointment has been agreed.

Consideration should be given to the following:

- professional feedback from an adviser
- a conversation with the chair of governors a short while after the offer of appointment
- arrangements for further familiarisation visits to the school and church
- meeting the school community, including the clergy
- organising a service of welcome, commission and dedication in the parish church
- making links with the diocese and LA/MAT
- announcing the appointment to the wider community
- for first time church school headteachers – an invitation to the diocesan induction days
- choosing a mentor church school headteacher

## Appendix 1:

### Checklist for Headship Appointment Process

| Stage                | Action   | Timescale  | Completed |
|----------------------|--|--|-----------|
| <b>1. Preparing</b>  | a. Resignation - inform LA/MAT, Diocese and HR provider  | Immediately  |           |
|                      | b. Full governing body meeting   | ASAP   |           |
|                      | c. Headteacher Appointment Panel (HAP) appointed, delegated powers agreed and early meeting arranged | ASAP   |           |
|                      | d. Safer recruitment and selection - at least one governor must have appropriate training            | ASAP   |           |
|                      | e. Equal opportunities and anti-discrimination processes in place                                    | ASAP   |           |
|                      | f. Timescales for recruitment and selection  | ASAP   |           |
|                      | g. Outgoing headteacher - agree and communicate role in process                                      | ASAP   |           |
| <b>2. Defining</b>   | a. First steps - assess current and future needs of the school                                       | Do not rush - allow sufficient time for this                         |           |
|                      | b. Personal specification  | Allow time to get this right   |           |
|                      | c. Job description   | Allow time to get this right   |           |
|                      | d. Communication with the wider community - establish protocols and make initial announcement        | ASAP   |           |
| <b>3. Attracting</b> | a. Information pack  | Must be ready prior to advert going live                             |           |
|                      | b. Advert goes live  | Allow 2-3 weeks before closing date                                  |           |
| <b>4. Selecting</b>  | a. Shortlisting  | Circulate HAP with applications one week prior to meeting            |           |
|                      | b. Planning the interview  | Allow candidates one week's notice of interview and any agreed tasks |           |
|                      | c. The interview process   | Concurrent with planning the interview                               |           |
| <b>5. Appointing</b> | Communicating the outcomes and feedback to candidates  | Within a week of the interviews                                      |           |
| <b>6. Inducting</b>  | Agree process with governors and appointee, including timeframe                                      | ASAP after the appointment   |           |

*\* NB: ensure that all the indicated bullet points in the main document have been addressed before marking a step as completed.*



## Appendix 2: The Role of Advisers

Noted below are some of the key differences related to appointments

| Voluntary Controlled (VC)  | Voluntary Aided (VA)   |
|--|--|
| Local Authority (LA) is the employer   | The governing body is the employer   |
| LA is entitled to attend all proceedings related to the appointment of staff   | The governing body may accord advisory rights to the LA for the purposes of advice <i>(strongly recommended)</i>   |
| Appointment of headteacher: In VC schools 'the governing body may take into account any candidate's suitability and ability to preserve and develop the religious character of the school' | Appointment of headteacher: 'the governing body may give preference to any candidate whose religious opinions and worship are in accordance with the tenets of the religious denomination of the school' |
| The governing body may extend advisory rights to the diocesan authority <i>(strongly recommended)</i>  | The diocesan authority should have the same advisory rights as the LA  |

In **Academies** the trustees will make their appointments subject to the current conditions of service contained in the *Academy Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD)* and according to statutory guidance in the *School Standards and Framework Act 1998*. Such appointments will require notice to be taken from the statutory Standards for Qualified Teacher status and to other current employment legislation. Ensure that you have discussed this with your HR provider.

Both the ODBE School Link Adviser and LA advisers offer governors professional and impartial advice on the entire recruitment and selection process. They should be involved as soon as the vacancy is known.

## Appendix 3:

# Activities and questions to help Stage 2 – Defining

These are the overarching questions that you need to address and some further questions to help you dig a little deeper. In collating the answers to these questions, you may choose to use one or more of the activity sheets on pages 10 - 12. You may wish to ask your ODBE School Link Adviser to facilitate the discussion of the responses, answering some of the questions may need professional advice.

- What is special about our school? What is our unique selling point (USP)?
- In what direction would we like to develop the Christian foundation of our school?
- How would we best describe the community we serve?
- What do we consider the most important challenges and opportunities our school faces?
- What do we wish to improve or build upon over the next, say three years?

### Example questions for discussion

#### What is special about our school - background and position

- What are current levels of pupil achievement?
- What is the view of the school's overall performance?
- What are the characteristics of learners at our school?
- What is staffing like in the school? (*consider: experience and seniority, morale*)
- What are strengths, skills and needs of the current senior leadership team? (*consider their style as a team, cohesion, expected turnover, need for future support?*)

#### The Christian foundation of the school

- To what extent is the Christian foundation of the school evident both in the daily life of the school and in the big picture thinking?
- To what extent is our vision inclusive yet distinctive?
- To what extent does the school meet the needs of all learners through its distinctiveness?
- What is the impact of collective worship on the whole school community?
- What is the place of spiritual development in our school?

#### How would we best describe the community we serve?

- What is the school's relationship with its community including the clergy and the church?
- Are there any recent events that stand out as important?
- Are pupil numbers growing, static or declining?
- How healthy is our budget?
- Are any major new initiatives planned?
- What are the views of parents and carers?

#### What are our challenges?

- Does the school have an Ofsted grade of requires improvement or special measures?
- Is data below floor?
- Is the school fully staffed?
- Are there budget concerns?
- Has the governing board chosen to move to becoming an academy?

You may choose to include parents, staff and children in these discussions or canvas views through a series of individual meetings or questionnaires.

# SWOT Analysis

This groups ideas and suggestions under the headings of strength, weakness, opportunity and threat. This will give indication as to the skillset that the school's leader will need and suggest questions that you may wish to ask at interview.

| Strengths     | Weaknesses |
|---------------|------------|
|               |            |
| Opportunities | Threats    |
|               |            |

# Self-Evaluation Activity

## Where is the school now?

| Successful areas of the school | Areas needing development |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                |                           |

**This suggests we need someone who.....**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

## Planning Activity

What is our vision for the next 3-5 years?

**This suggests we need someone who...**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

# Headteachers' Standards Activity

Refer to the *National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers* document:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-standards-of-excellence-for-headteachers/headteachers-standards-2020> and read the characteristics under the ten standards

in section 2. Think of your school and focus on the 5-6 key characteristics you would like a Headteacher of your school to have.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Standard 1: School Culture</b>  |
| What we would like:  |
| <b>Standard 2: Teaching</b>  |
| What we would like:  |
| <b>Standard 3: Curriculum and Assessment</b>                                 |
| What we would like:  |
| <b>Standard 4: Behaviour</b>   |
| What we would like:  |
| <b>Standard 5: Additional and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities</b> |
| What we would like:  |
| <b>Standard 6: Professional Development</b>                                  |
| What we would like:  |
| <b>Standard 7: Organisational Management</b>                                 |
| What we would like:  |
| <b>Standard 8: Continuous School Improvement</b>                             |
| What we would like:  |
| <b>Standard 9: Working in Partnership</b>                                    |
| What we would like:  |
| <b>Standard 10: Governance and Accountability</b>                            |
| What we would like:  |

## Appendix 4: Sample Person Specifications

These examples give some indication of what your specification might look like. In drawing your person specification up, you need to balance the number of criteria against practical considerations, too long a list can be over daunting. Avoid including obvious statements ('must be willing to work with children...') or using multiple statements. Similarly take care over the essential/desirable distinction, in general the fewer essential statements the better – make sure that they really are essential. The first example does not use this distinction at all.

### Person Specification - Example 1

#### Qualifications and training

|                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| Recognised Qualified Teacher Status  |
| NPQH                                 |
| Management training or qualification |
| Evidence of significant CPD          |

#### Experience

|   |
|---|
| A minimum of three years in a senior leadership role  |
| Proven ability and excellence as a teacher in EYFS/KS1 or KS2   |
| Experience of teaching in more than one school  |
| Experience of successfully leading and managing whole school change initiatives   |
| Experience of raising achievement   |
| Experience of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning   |
| Experience of developing relationships with the wider community, including constructive links with the church and the diocese |
| Experience of whole school budget management  |

#### Professional knowledge and understanding

|  |
|--|
| Sound up-to-date knowledge of developments in education, teaching and learning and best practice       |
| Sound understanding of the primary curriculum and its assessment                                       |
| Ability to analyse and interpret statistical data, evaluating and applying findings                    |
| Understanding of how high-quality performance management for all staff is linked to school improvement |
| Up-to-date knowledge of child protection requirements and able to put this into practice               |
| Basic knowledge of health and safety and employment law  |

## Competencies

|   |
|---|
| A willingness and ability to organise and lead collective worship, promoting the Christian ethos of the school  |
| A commitment to lead and promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development within the school            |
| Skilled leader and team player able to plan, organise, communicate and delegate effectively                     |
| Ability to develop professional partnerships with all stakeholders  |
| A good understanding of SEN issues with a commitment to a culture of inclusion, diversity and access            |
| The ability to promote challenge and support for more able children   |
| An understanding and commitment to the effective use of Information Technology in management and the curriculum |
| The ability to manage the school environment efficiently and effectively  |
| Demonstrate the personal enthusiasm for commitment to the learning process for the whole community              |
| Ability to achieve high standards of pupils' personal and social development                                    |
| Ability to achieve high standards of pupil behaviour through a caring, supportive and positive approach         |
| Demonstrate experience of working with a governing body to enable it to meet its statutory responsibilities     |

## Personal Attributes

|  |
|--|
| Presence which inspires confidence and trust   |
| Awareness and understanding of the spiritual aspects of life   |
| Commitment to own professional development and that of others  |
| Approachable and caring with good communication and interpersonal skills                             |
| A good, sensitive listener who demonstrates integrity, diplomacy and confidence                      |
| Commitment to provide an appropriate work/life balance for self and others                           |
| Ability and skills to challenge, influence and motivate others to attain high goals                  |
| The ability to support teachers in all matters of classroom organisation and management              |
| Demonstrate a commitment to collaborative working in and beyond the school                           |
| Skills to maintain and promote the school's positive ethos and effective team working                |
| Demonstrate the ability to foster an open and fair culture   |
| High standard of written communication skills  |
| Satisfactory Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure/Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service Check |



## Person Specification - Example 2

| Job Requirements  | Essential  | Desirable  |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Qualifications</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualified teacher status</li> <li>• NPQH</li> <li>• Headteacher or experienced deputy</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent and relevant in-service training</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Shaping the future</b><br><br><b>Experience, skills and knowledge</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and secure a commitment to a clear vision for an effective school</li> <li>• Plan strategically with a sense of priorities</li> <li>• Initiate and manage change and improvement</li> <li>• Ability and willingness to support maintain and develop the Christian ethos of the school</li> <li>• Communicate effectively to a wide audience both orally and in writing</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person with a clearly articulated vision for the future development of a distinctive and effective CE school</li> <li>• Experience of writing and working with a School Development Plan</li> </ul> |
| <b>Strengthening the community</b><br><br><b>Experience, skills and knowledge</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to build and maintain effective relationships with all members of the school community</li> <li>• Working constructively with governors</li> <li>• Work constructively with the local community, diocese and the Local Authority</li> <li>• A commitment to develop partnerships with other educational providers</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of being a governor</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Leading learning and teaching</b><br><br><b>Experience, skills and knowledge</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skilled primary classroom practitioner</li> <li>• Experience of core subject leadership</li> <li>• Promote and secure the success of pupils of all abilities and needs</li> <li>• Understanding of special needs issues and practice with a commitment to a culture of inclusion, diversity and access and positive strategies to promote these</li> <li>• Experience of raising standards through assessment</li> <li>• Understanding of Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2 Curriculum</li> <li>• Understanding of how children learn and a keen interest in the development of teaching methods</li> <li>• A clear understanding of current curriculum and management initiatives</li> <li>• Commitment to lead and promote pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development</li> <li>• Manage pupil behaviour effectively through a caring, supportive and positive approach</li> <li>• Recognise and promote effective teaching</li> <li>• Ability to monitor, evaluate and develop teaching for learning</li> <li>• Willingness and ability to lead Christian collective worship, promoting the Christian ethos of the school</li> <li>• Thorough understanding of ICT and experience in its use in management and educational contexts</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICT co-ordinator</li> <li>• SENCo experience</li> <li>• Experience of teaching mixed age classes</li> </ul>   |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <p><b>Managing the organisation</b></p> <p><b>Experience, skills and knowledge</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good leadership and management skills</li> <li>• Demonstrate high level organisational skills</li> <li>• The ability to work in a team with shared accountability</li> <li>• Experience of school self-evaluation</li> <li>• Experience of school budget management</li> <li>• Ability to analyse performance data, establish benchmarks and set targets for improvement</li> <li>• Leading Performance Management and staff development</li> <li>• Delegate responsibilities and monitor practice to see they are being carried out</li> <li>• Deal sensitively with people and resolve conflict</li> <li>• Ability to ensure that resources are efficiently and effectively used to achieve school's aims and objectives</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three years senior management experience</li> <li>• Experience of leading, developing and managing a high performing team</li> <li>• Demonstrate the use of appropriate leadership styles in different situations</li> <li>• The ability to investigate, solve problems and make decisions</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Secure accountability</b></p> <p><b>Experience, skills and knowledge</b></p>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the headteacher's responsibilities and accountability to pupils, governors, parents, LA, diocese and wider community</li> <li>• Thorough understanding of the statutory framework for education and the legal framework that underpins school management</li> <li>• Demonstrate experience of working with a governing body to enable it to meet its statutory responsibilities</li> <li>• Understanding of Ofsted and SIAMS Inspection</li> <li>• Understanding safeguarding policies</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management experience of preparing for Ofsted and SIAMS Inspections</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Qualities</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person who values and has high expectations of each child</li> <li>• A positive role model for staff and pupils</li> <li>• Enthusiasm and sense of humour</li> <li>• Personal impact and presence which inspires confidence and trust</li> <li>• A good, sensitive listener who demonstrates integrity, diplomacy and confidence</li> <li>• Commitment to provide an appropriate work/life balance for self and others</li> <li>• Integrity</li> <li>• Self Confidence</li> <li>• Energy, vigour and perseverance</li> <li>• Adaptability to changing circumstance and new ideas</li> <li>• An ability to foster an open and fair culture</li> <li>• A commitment to own personal development</li> </ul>                              |  |

## Appendix 5:

### Example letters for applicants

#### a. Invitation to attend interview

Dear

**Headteacher St XYZ CE (Aided) Primary School**

Thank you very much for your recent application for the above post.

I am very pleased to be able to invite you to attend the interview / selection day which will be held at the school on Thursday 25th February, starting at 0830.

During the day you will be required to do the following:

- Conduct an Act of Worship of up to 20 minutes on the theme of “Treasure”. This will be with approximately one third of the school including children from Foundation Stage to Year 6. A laptop and projector will be available.
- Give a 10-minute presentation to the governors addressing the question:  
*“As Headteacher how would you fulfil the St XYZ’s vision of being a thriving and inclusive church school?”*

The presentation will be followed by a discussion with the Appointment Panel of up to 15 minutes. There will be a digital projector available if you wish to use PowerPoint.

- Meet with the staff and other governors over lunch. (Lunch is provided, please let us know of any dietary requirements)

A full timetable for the interview day will be given to you on arrival.

In the meantime, we will be taking up formal references and would be grateful if you could ensure that you read the attached interview information sheet. From this you will see that you need to bring with you proof of identity, qualifications, and any other information required when you attend the selection interviews.

If you require any special arrangements to be made in order to take a full part in the interview, please let us know and we will endeavour to provide assistance.

Yours sincerely

**b. Not selected to attend interview**

Dear

**Headteacher St XYZ CE (Aided) Primary School**

Thank you very much for your recent application for the above post.

Unfortunately, after careful consideration, we shall not be taking your application any further at this stage.

However, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your interest and to wish you every success in finding a suitable position.

Yours sincerely

## Appendix 6:

### Notes on interview questions

- At the start of the interview, you should put the interviewee at ease through the use of warming up questions. The answers to these questions will still provide you with valuable information but most importantly allow the candidate to relax and give of their best. A typical question might be 'What attracted you to this specific role', or 'What appeals to you particularly about this school?'
- Panel members should ensure that they have agreed what a good answer to questions might include.
- Ask open-ended questions. 'How?', 'What?', 'Why?', 'Where?' or 'Tell me about...?'
- Questions should not contain assumptions as these may bias or shape the candidate's response, affecting the quality of information collected at interview.
- Similarly, early snap judgements based on just a couple of responses or the candidate's appearance can easily distort the rest of the interview by causing the interviewer to seek and accept only information which fits in with assumptions.
- The closed question should be used as little as possible. A closed question invites only a 'yes' or 'no' answer which does not inform the panel of much, unless of course you are seeking confirmation or clarification of something.
- The use of supplementary questions is a helpful technique. Begin with a broad open-ended question such as "Tell me about your main duties in your current role'. The interviewer can select a relevant area to be probed further and follow the initial question with 'give me an example of that aspect of your job...' or 'What does that involve?'
- Hypothetical questions can sometimes be used but these can be difficult to interpret. These can be used to describe a scenario which the candidate is then asked how they would act. There is often quite a difference between how the interviewee 'would' deal with it, as opposed to how they actually dealt with certain situations. It is therefore better to ask the candidate to describe their actual experience. Therefore, 'Give me an example of...' may be more useful than 'What would you do if...?'
- Avoid asking leading questions. This is probably the most obvious fault in selection interviews, where the interviewer makes it explicitly clear in their questioning, what they think an acceptable answer would be.
- Avoid multiple or double-headed questions – where more than one question is asked in the one sentence and usually only one is answered.
- Interviewers must ask only one question at a time and listen to the replies. They should not be tempted to answer the question themselves or be tempted to jump to the next question if there is a silence.
- Towards the end of the interview, 'Now, what questions would you like to ask of us?' is a good question to ask as it shows that the interviewer is genuinely interested in answering any such questions.
- Another useful closing question could be 'Is there anything else you would like to add which you have not already covered in your answers?'

- At the end of the final interview it is advisable to ask the candidate 'If this role was offered to you, would you accept it?' to avoid any confusion or delay the selection panel's decision-making process unnecessarily.

#### Other useful pointers

- Make the candidate as comfortable as possible, eg ensure the room is well ventilated, the chair comfortable and water provided.
- The questioner should concentrate on the interviewee and what is being said; pass the questions around the panel and only make notes during other members' questions. The interviewer's behaviour influences the responses of the interviewee. If the interviewer appears attentive, the interviewee will respond better and produce material that helps the interviewer to be more attentive and so on.
- Restating or reflecting back 'Have I understood this...?' is a useful way of testing the interviewer's attention. The key is accuracy, perception, and willingness to be corrected if not entirely accurate. Reflecting back on what is heard will improve the interviewer's empathy with the candidate.
- Interviews should contain a balance between factual questions about the candidate's experiences and subjective questions about the candidate's thoughts, views and attitudes.
- At the end of the interview, the chair of the panel should ensure that the candidates know what will happen next, when decisions will be made and when they can expect to hear from you.
- Candidates should leave the school believing that even if they have been unsuccessful, it is still a good organisation to work for.

#### Legal Aspects

In order to comply with the law and to ensure the recruitment of the best candidate, when making and processing the final selection, the selection panel should:

- Make their decision solely on evidence collated during the interview, the criteria defined in the person specification and the needs of the job.
- Note that the HAP **cannot** use 'evidence' or views of governors from candidates' pre-interview visits to school.
- Ensure that a candidate is not rejected solely because of the panel's assumptions based on grounds of gender, disability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or other generalised grounds.
- No candidate should be rejected for any reason other than his/her assessed ability, relative to the person specification and meet the requirements described in the job description.
- So far as the law is concerned, the selection panel acts as the 'employer' and its actions and decisions can commit the school and the Council contractually.
- Contractually, the verbal offer of employment and the acceptance by the successful candidate constitute a binding contract of employment. Subsequent documentation merely confirms this contract. Therefore, too casual a verbal agreement with the successful candidate about terms (eg starting salary point) can cause problems.
- Please note that if you express a verbal offer of employment which is subsequently accepted and then decide against employing this person, the candidate will be able to pursue compensation for breach of contract.