ST MARY MAGDALEN’S RCVA PRIMARY SCHOOL

HEADTEACHER JOB DESCRIPTION

**INTRODUCTION**

The school has been designated by the Secretary of State as a school with a religious character. Its Instrument of Government states that it is part of the Catholic Church and is to be conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with Canon Law, the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. At all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ. The post therefore requires a practising Catholic who can show by example and from experience that he or she will ensure that the school is distinctively Catholic in all its aspects.

This appointment is with the governors of the school under the terms of the Catholic Education Service contract signed with the governors as employers. It is subject to the current conditions of service for Headteachers contained in the School Teachers’ Pay and Conditions document and other current education and employment legislation. In carrying out his/her duties the Headteacher shall consult, when appropriate: the governing body, the Diocese, the Local Education Authority, the staff of the school, the parents of its pupils, the parish/es served by the school and other local Catholic schools, particularly where collaboration or federation is being developed.

This job description is based on the key areas identified in the National Standards for Headship published by the Department for Education and Skills (October 2004).

The governing body and the Diocese acknowledge the importance of the role of the Catholic Headteacher and will actively offer long term support, encouragement, affirmation and realistic challenge to the successful candidate.

**The governing body and the Diocese are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and vulnerable adults and the Headteacher must ensure that the highest priority is given to following the guidance and regulations to safeguard them. The successful candidate will be required to undergo an Enhanced check for Regulated Activity from the Disclosure and Barring Service.**

**SHAPING THE FUTURE**

The strategic direction and development of the school stem from the educational mission of the Church. The Headteacher will ensure that his/her leadership demonstrates commitment to promoting and developing the school’s distinctive Catholic identity through the search for excellence in all areas of its work.

**Main tasks / actions**

* Work within the school and parish community to articulate and promote an educational vision and values for the school which take account of the school’s Catholic mission and of the diversity, values and experiences of the school and the communities it serves.
* Share this vision and the related values with all members of the school community, securing their understanding and commitment to acting upon them effectively.
* Model the vision and values in everyday work and practice.
* Translate the vision and values into agreed objectives, ensuring that the school’s planning, policies and procedures promote sustained school improvement.
* Motivate and work with others to create a shared culture and a positive climate consistent with the agreed educational vision and values of the school.
* Ensure creativity, innovation and the use of appropriate new technologies to achieve excellence and nurture human wholeness.

**LEADING LEARNING AND TEACHING**

In a Catholic school the Headteacher leads a learning community rooted in Christian belief and principles. The search for excellence is given expression in learning and teaching which recognise pupils’ individual worth as made in the image and likeness of God. The Headteacher will lead the school community in promoting positive attitudes to learning amongst pupils and staff which stem from Christ’s vision for humanity.

**Main tasks / actions:**

* Demonstrate the principles and practice of effective teaching and learning.
* Ensure a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on pupils’ achievement which reflects the agreed vision and values, using data and benchmarks to monitor progress in every child’s learning.
* Lead in accessing, analysing and interpreting information to inform planning for improvement.
* Initiate and support research and debate about effective teaching and learning.
* Develop relevant strategies for improvement.
* Ensure that learning is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management.
* Establish creative, responsive, and effective approaches to learning and teaching in line with the school’s agreed educational vision and values, which are embedded in a culture and ethos of challenge and support where all pupils understand their individual worth, can become engaged in their own learning and achieve success
* Demonstrate and articulate high expectations, promoting individual and community aspirations by establishing challenging targets for the whole school community.
* Implement strategies which secure high standards of behaviour and attendance and which reflect the school’s agreed values in their response to the needs of vulnerable individuals.
* Determine, organise and implement a diverse and flexible curriculum which takes account of the needs and aspirations of all pupils.
* Implement an effective assessment framework.
* Monitor, evaluate and review classroom practice and promote improvement strategies.
* Challenge underperformance at all levels and ensure effective corrective action and follow-up.
* Take a strategic role in the development of new and emerging technologies to enhance and extend the learning experience of pupils and staff.

**DEVELOPING SELF AND WORKING WITH OTHERS**

In a Catholic school the Headteacher’s leadership should take Christ as its inspiration. His/her relationships with pupils, parents/carers, governors and staff should demonstrate a belief in their unique contribution as individuals, valued and loved by God. He/she will recognise and act upon his/her own potential for growth and that of others.

**Main tasks / actions**

* Treat all people fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect to create and maintain a positive school culture in line with the school’s agreed vision and values. Manage conflict effectively, seeking positive outcomes.
* Build a collaborative learning culture within the school and actively engage with other schools, especially other Catholic institutions, to build effective learning communities.
* Develop and maintain effective strategies and procedures for staff induction, professional development and performance review.
* Ensure effective planning, allocation, support and evaluation of work undertaken by teams and individuals, including clear delegation of tasks and devolution of responsibilities.
* Acknowledge the responsibilities and celebrate the achievements of individuals and teams.
* Develop and maintain a culture of high expectations and aspirations for him/herself and for others, taking appropriate action when performance is unsatisfactory and giving and receiving effective feedback.
* Regularly review his/her own practice, set personal targets and take responsibility for his/her own personal development.
* Give and accept support from colleagues, governors, the diocese and the Local Authority.
* Have regard for the well-being of him/herself and others, managing his/her workload to promote a healthy work-life balance and encouraging and enabling others to do likewise.

**MANAGING THE ORGANISATION**

The management of a Catholic school should be clearly influenced by the Gospel message and Church teaching. In particular, it should be a place where Christian principles such as justice, truth, respect and reconciliation are at the heart of its life and work. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that such principles are priorities for the school and are evident in its organisation and management.

**Main tasks/actions**

* Create an organisational structure which reflects the school’s Catholic values, and enables the management systems, structures and processes to work effectively in line with legal requirements.
* Produce and implement clear, evidence based improvement plans and policies for the development of the school and its facilities.
* Ensure that policies and practices take account of national and local circumstances, policies and initiatives and of Diocesan priorities.
* Manage the school’s financial and human resources effectively and efficiently to achieve the school’s educational goals and priorities.
* Recruit, retain and deploy staff appropriately, managing their workload to enable achievement of the vision and goals of the school.
* Implement successful performance management processes with all staff.
* Manage and organise the school environment efficiently and effectively to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum, health and safety regulations and reflects the distinctive characteristics of Catholic education.
* Ensure that the range, quality and use of all available resources is monitored, evaluated and reviewed to improve the quality of education for all pupils and provide value for money.
* Use and integrate a range of technologies effectively and efficiently to manage the school.

**SECURING ACCOUNTABILITY**

In a Catholic school the Headteacher fulfils his or her responsibilities in accordance with the Instrument of Government. He/she supports the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities to the Diocese under Canon Law as well as in accordance with national legislation. The Headteacher accounts to the governing body, parents/carers and the school community for the fulfilment of the school’s Catholic mission and its educational success.

**Main tasks / actions**

* Work with the governing body, enabling it to meet statutory responsibilities by giving objective professional advice and regular accounts of the school’s progress.
* Develop systematic and rigorous procedures for school self-evaluation which are appropriate for a Catholic school and enable everyone to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding, celebrate success, accept responsibility for outcomes and use the outcomes of evaluation to further improve the school.
* Ensure that all available data are used to identify strengths and weaknesses of the school and to inform planning for improvement.
* Ensure that individual staff accountabilities are clearly defined, understood and agreed and are subject to rigorous review and evaluation.
* Develop and present a coherent, understandable and accurate account of the school’s performance to a range of audiences including governors, parents and carers.
* Participate in arrangements for review of his/her performance, reflecting on his/her personal contribution to school achievements and taking account of feedback from others.

**STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY**

In a Catholic school the Headteacher is responsible for the mission of the school to the local and wider Catholic community and beyond. He/she will collaborate with the parish and other Catholic organisations, as well as with the wider educational system, for the benefit of his/her own community and others. He/she will demonstrate a belief that community and school are interdependent and that engagement with the community promotes school development.

**Main tasks / actions**

* Ensure that effective strategies, systems and support are in place to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people in the school and co-operate and work with relevant agencies for the protection of children.
* Act as the public face and main advocate of the school, representing effectively its interests and those of the pupils.
* Build a school culture which takes account of the richness and diversity of the communities served by the school and of the global community.
* Enable pupils to develop an understanding of their responsibility to others and provide the means for them to respond positively to this.
* Create and implement positive strategies for promoting understanding that everyone is equal in the eyes of God, and in particular for challenging racial and other prejudices and for dealing with racial harassment.
* Ensure the provision of learning experiences for pupils which are linked into and integrated with the wider community, including community based learning.
* Collaborate with other agencies in providing for the academic, spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural well-being of pupils and their families.
* Create and maintain an effective partnership with parents and carers to support and improve pupils’ achievement and personal development.
* Seek opportunities to invite stakeholders (parents and carers, parish/community figures, businesses, Catholic and other organisations) into the school to enhance and enrich the school and its pupils and their value to the wider community.
* Engage in dialogue with all stakeholders to build partnership and understanding of shared values, beliefs and responsibilities, reflecting on and taking account of their views.
* Contribute to the development of the education system by sharing effective practice, working in partnership with other schools and promoting innovative initiatives, especially with other diocesan schools.

NB. Reference to parish and community covers parishes and communities where schools draw pupils from more than one parish or local community.