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Dear Applicant

Introduction to the Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust

The Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning trust (the Trust) comprises nine schools situated in four local authorities. The schools are geographically spread, serving diverse communities. They face a range of challenges. Three are small rural schools. Four are situated in areas of socio-economic deprivation resulting from their coastal location or a historic decline in manufacturing and mining. Most have to compete with local schools for pupil numbers. This has an impact on income and subsequent investment in staffing and professional learning. Nevertheless, the Trust has grown from only three academies at its incorporation in 2017, attracting Church schools that recognise the benefit of collaboration and professional support. The Trust exists to enable Church of England Schools to continue to achieve educational excellence through Christian based ethos and values. The Trust changed its name (from the Durham Diocesan MAT) and its structures to also include the Newcastle Diocesan area in 2020 providing an opportunity to expand and support schools further. The economy of scale offered by this growth enhances the Trust's capacity to realise its ambition for educational excellence.

The Trust has quickly developed its capacity for school-to-school support and is subsequently developing a reputation for school improvement. One academy, for example, joined the Trust after Ofsted judged that pupils did not receive an adequate standard of education. There has since been significant improvement as a result of new leadership, governance, and the challenge and support provided by the central team and partner academies. Committed to enabling school improvement, the Trust prioritises leadership and staff development. Partnerships established between experienced serving head teachers and those new to the role or their school, is enabling them to lead with impact. Investment in curriculum leadership, the lead learners programme, support for National Professional Qualifications, and the deputy head teacher network have all seen a positive impact. Curriculum design and implementation, for example, is developing strongly, resulting in improvements in Early Years, History, Geography, and RE.

Trust governance arrangements ensure the board of directors' support and challenge local academy councils to ensure high levels of accountability. Both the Trust and the academies undertake internal and external review to ensure high standards across all aspects of its work. The rigorous programme of challenge and support (CISP) given to the Trust's academies have been instrumental in identifying training needs, targeting support and evaluating impact.

As a Trust we firmly believe that every child matters and no child should ever be left behind. Our Trust schools should be beacons of excellence in their community and we now have an opportunity for the right person to join our Trust and lead St Mary's C of E Primary School.

St Mary's C of E Primary is small school with 112 children on role and a 30 place nursery (15FTE) but has the potential to grow even further. In the last three years prior to COVID standards were amongst the top of primary schools in Stockton and indeed the North East of England.

We see our greatest resource to be our staff and our leaders. As a leader of a DNLT School you can expect outstanding levels of support and challenge through our CISP programme and access to a wide resource base from within the Trust and partnering schools. We firmly believe that each of our schools is unique and therefore our Scheme of Delegation is designed to allow our Head Teachers and Academy Councillors the autonomy to meet the needs of the children and community you could be serving.

We welcome applications for this post from serving and aspiring head teachers. I strongly recommend an informal discussion with myself prior to application – this can be arranged by contacting Susie Taylor susie.taylor@drmnewcanglican.org

Yours sincerely



Paul Rickeard
Chief Executive Officer
Durham and Newcastle Diocesan Learning Trust