DW/CP

January 2023

Dear Applicant,

**Head of RE**

Thank you for your interest in the above position at St Thomas More Catholic High School.

We are an 11 – 18 mixed, converter academy serving the Catholic community of the Tynemouth Priory Partnership (Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle). On December 1st 2020 we joined the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust which comprises of all of the North of Tyne Catholic schools. We have a well-balanced, genuinely comprehensive intake, which is one of our great strengths. The ability profile on entry is above the national average and free school meals uptake is below the national average. We have an excellent reputation locally and nationally for the quality of our ethos, teaching and learning, high achievement, and sustained improvement over time.

Ofsted last inspected the school in October 2017**,** confirming its status as ‘Good’ - “*Pupils make good progress because of their positive attitudes to learning, and the strong relationships they have with staff… The values of respect, tolerance and humility permeate the school and leaders’ active promotion of pupils’ social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is tangible and exceptional… There is a philosophy of continuous improvement in the school.”*

The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle also inspected the school in December 2014 under section 48 of the Education Act judging the school to be ‘Outstanding’- “*The Catholic Life of St Thomas More Catholic Academy is outstanding in the way it lives out its mission to the school and wider community*.” This is reflected in strong parental support for and confidence in the school. The school website will give you an insight into our work and ethos: [www.stmacademy.org.uk](http://www.stmacademy.org.uk) .

**ACHIEVEMENT**

**High levels of achievement at GCSE, and A Level, and across the full ability range.**

**In 2022:**

* **4+ English and Maths 80%**
* **4+ EBacc 46%**
* **4+ RE 85%**
* **30% of all GCSE grades awarded were 9-7 grades**
* **KS5 Average Points per entry: Academic 40.4, Vocational 38.8**
* **48% A\*/A, 69% A\*-B, 99.8% A\*-E**

While we are proud of the achievement levels, we are constantly striving to continue to improve in all areas. Results are based on excellent classroom practice, a strong focus on teaching and learning, high expectations, a culture of aspiration, and a commitment to continuous improvement. Our ethos, values and belief in human potential are central to all our work and to our success in academic terms.

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We have succeeded in establishing a very strong culture of learning, development and improvement among staff.

This has been recognised regionally and nationally and is reflected in our involvement in local Teaching School Alliances and the full range of professional development for all staff, with a particular emphasis on classroom practice and on developing leadership at all levels. Our work is characterised by staff working together as teams, using observation extensively for developmental purposes, collaboration and sharing good practice, and mutual support. Our collaborative approach also extends to working with other schools. We have dedicated professional developmental time each Tuesday afternoon and there are many opportunities for staff to deliver CPD activities both within school and at local level. The establishment of the Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust has created excellent opportunities for our leaders to work with colleagues from other schools to shape the way Trust operates. We see great potential in working with both secondary and primary schools and we would expect the successful candidate to play a leading role in this.

**PASTORAL AND ACADEMIC ORGANISATION**

In Year 7 children are in mixed-ability form classes, and they remain in the same class for pastoral and social purposes throughout the main school. This provides security, stability and continuity. They are taught in their mixed-ability class for all subjects in Year 7, except Maths where setting is introduced in the Autumn Term. From Year 8 onwards subject ability grouping is introduced in several areas, and these arrangements are extended and refined as students move through the main school. It is designed to keep expectations high for all students, to avoid negative labelling, and to ensure that all are supported and challenged to reach their full potential. Our current pastoral structure comprises a Head of Year and Assistant Head of Year for each year group, an Assistant Headteacher Pastoral, an Assistant Headteacher Head of Sixth Form, a Senior Assistant Headteacher Pastoral and a Deputy Headteacher with overall pastoral responsibility. In addition we have a Pastoral Support Team, which includes Learning Mentors, School Counsellor/Social worker, Pastoral Support Clerks, Home Liaison Officer. We also have a full-time School Chaplain who plays a key role in the life of the school.

Please refer to the application pack list of documentation enclosed with this letter.

The closing date for application forms is **3pm on Tuesday 31st January 2023**. Shortlisting will take place on **Thursday 2nd February 2023** and interviews will take place on **Tuesday 14th February 2023.**

Applications should be sent to Mrs C Palgrave at school or via email recruitment@stmacademy.org.uk (a signature will be required at interview for applications submitted via email).

If you would like to arrange an informal discussion about the post or a visit to the school then please contact Mrs Palgrave.

Yours sincerely



Mr D Watson

Headteacher

Encs.