St Thomas More Roman Catholic Academy

Recruitment & Selection Policy Statement

All members of our community are given equal opportunities in line with the Single Equality Duty.

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Reviewed By Staffing Committee	01/12/09, 17/01/12, 12/06/12, 23/10/13, 24/02/16, 09/10/18
Adopted By Full Governing Body	**16/03/16, 12/12/18**

St Thomas More R C Academy
Mission Statement

St. Thomas More Roman Catholic Academy is a Catholic school, and as such we attempt to follow the example of Jesus Christ in our work, worship and relationships.

Our aims are:

• To be a community based on Christian values, notably Love, Justice, Peace, Truth and Tolerance, and to encourage individuals in their commitment to these ideals.

• To provide a secure, welcoming and ordered environment in which individuals learn to value and respect both themselves and others.

• To give individuals the opportunities to develop their full potential as human beings, and to encourage and challenge them to do so.

• To encourage everyone to strive to do their best and to strive for the highest standards in all areas of activity. To help children grow into confident, open, resourceful young people with a sense of responsibility and of service.



Introduction

At St Thomas More we believe that:

- The careful recruitment of staff for the Academy is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in education;

- The Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment;

- It is recognised that this can only be achieved through sound procedures, good inter-agency co-operation and the recruitment and retention of competent, motivated staff who are suited to, and fulfilled in the roles they undertake.

- The Governing Body are committed to attracting, recruiting and retaining staff and volunteers who will make a positive contribution to the School. The Governing Body recognise that a workforce with appropriate knowledge, skills, experience and ability to do the job is vital to a successful school and fundamental to the delivery of a high quality education service.

- The Board of Governors/Directors will keep this policy under review as part of a regular cycle of monitoring.

Principles

- The Academy recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce which includes people from different backgrounds, with different skills and abilities;

- The Academy is committed to ensuring that the recruitment and selection of all who work within the Academy is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient, effective and promotes equality of opportunity;

- The Academy will uphold its obligations under law and national collective agreements to not discriminate against applicants for employment on the grounds of age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, Trade Union / Professional Association membership or activity, together with any political view or affiliation, religion or creed;

  except that:

- By virtue of Section 60(5) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Board of Governors/Directors of the Academy may give preference in connection with the appointment, remuneration and promotion of teachers to persons:

    - whose religious opinions are in accordance with the tenets of the Roman Catholic Church; or

    - who attend religious worship in accordance with those tenets; or

    - who are willing to give to religious education at the Academy in accordance with those tenets.

- The Board of Governors/Directors may give preference in the appointment of non-teaching staff and those who are in sympathy with the Roman Catholic character of the Academy

- It is the requirement of the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle that any person appointed to be the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, RE Co-ordinator, Head of RE department, or a secondary teacher of RE in a Roman Catholic School must be a practising Catholic in good standing with the Church.

- The Academy is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all and ensuring that all stages of recruitment and selection are fair.

- Through its Single Equality Scheme the Academy will ensure that equality and diversity are part of the core business; both as an Academy and as an employer.

- All posts within the Academy are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all applicants will be required to declare spent and unspent convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as spent, and have a Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced Disclosure.

- The Academy is committed to ensuring that people who have been convicted are treated fairly and given every opportunity to establish their suitability for positions. Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position. This will depend on the background, nature and circumstances of the offence(s). The Academy's Recruitment Procedure outlines the considerations that will be taken into account when determining the relevance of a criminal record to the post.

- The Disclosure and Barring Service has published a Code of Practice and accompanying explanatory guide. The Academy is committed to ensuring that it meets the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service in relation to the processing, handling and security of Disclosure information.

- On receipt of their Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service, the successful candidate will be required to present their disclosure to the Head of Governance prior to commencing employment at the Academy.

- Where the candidate is found to be on List 99 or the PoCA/PoVA List, or the DBS Disclosure shows she/he has been disqualified from working with children by a court or an applicant has provided false information, in or in support of, her/his application or there are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children, the facts must be reported to the police and/or the DFE Children's Safeguarding Operations Unit.

- The Academy has:

  (1) Implemented robust recruitment procedures and checks for appointing staff and volunteers to ensure that reasonable steps are taken not to appoint a person who is unsuitable to work with children, or who is disqualified from working with children, or does not have the suitable skills and experience for the intended role.

  (2) An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be made **conditional upon** the following:

  - receipt of at least two satisfactory references including current employer;
  - verification of the candidate's identity;
  - a check of DFE List 99
  - a satisfactory DBS enhanced disclosure;
  - verification of the candidate's medical fitness;
  - verification of qualifications;
  - verification of professional status where required eg QTS, NPQH
  - for teaching posts - verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)
  - verification of eligibility to work in the UK

  (3) An up-to-date single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, in line with DFE requirements.

  (4) Established that the terms of any contract with a contractor or agency requires them to adopt and implement measures described in the procedure. The Academy monitors compliance with these measures.

  (5) Procedures for requiring staff who are convicted or cautioned for any offence during their employment with the Academy to notify the Academy in writing of the offence and penalty.

Job Description and Person Specification

An accurate job description is required for all posts. A person specification, which is a profile of the necessary requirements for the post, is also required for all posts.

Selection process

The selection process will assess the merits of each candidate against the Job requirements, and explore their suitability to work with children and young people.

The process for people who will work with children and young people will always include a face-to-face interview even if there is only one candidate.

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the purpose of the process is to explore:

- the candidate's attitude toward children and young people;

- his/her ability to support the school's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- gaps in the candidate's employment history;
- concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate and/or a referee; and,
- ask the candidate if they wish to declare anything in light of the requirement for a DBS check.

Scope

- All School employees and governors responsible for and involved in recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers will refer to this policy.

- Where a Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher is being appointed the Governing Body will liaise with the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle about its recruitment process.

- The ultimate responsibility for recruitment and selection lies with the Board of Governors/Directors. In most cases a decision to recruit will be made via the staffing committee who having revisited the Academy's staffing structure will reach a decision on whether direct recruitment is the best solution or whether a change or new post is required in the circumstances.

- A decision will be taken on how the recruitment will take place. The potential to reach the best possible candidates available in the current market place will be considered along with costs and timescales. In some situations it may be decided to conduct the recruitment via internal methods. Where internal recruitment is used the procedure followed will be clear, open, consistent and fair.

- The Governing Body will delegate the responsibility to the Headteacher for appointing staff and volunteers other than appointments to the leadership group. The Governing Body would support the Headteacher in the practical element of the recruitment process.

- Only in exceptional circumstances, where external permanent recruitment is not the best course of action e.g. short-term cover, will the Academy make use of agency workers/contractors. In doing so the Academy will be mindful of its responsibilities to these groups of workers.

- At least one panel member will have received appropriate training on the safer recruitment and selection process as recommended by the DFE.

- Selection will be based on a minimum of completed application form, shortlisting, interview and satisfactory employment checks, as per Appendix 1 - Recruitment Checklist.

- All posts will normally be advertised.

- The Equality Act makes it a requirement to make reasonable adjustment to the recruitment process if an applicant makes the employer aware that they have a disability.

A minimum of two interviewers will form the interviewing panel, as

determined by the governing body standing orders, a panel of three is preferable.

The members of the panel will:

- have the necessary authority to make decisions about appointments;
- be appropriately trained, (one member of interview panel will have
- undertaken the training in accordance with the DFE Safer Recruitment Training).
- meet before the interviews to:

a) reach a consensus about the required standard for the job to which they are appointing;

b) consider the issues to be explored with each candidate and who on the panel will ask about each of those;

c) agree their assessment criteria in accordance with the person specification;

d) agree method of assessment – eg presentation, observation, panel interview.

Where a candidate is known personally to a member of the selection panel it will be declared before shortlisting takes place. It may then be necessary to change the selection panel to ensure that there is no conflict of interest and that equal opportunities principles are adhered to.

The selection process will avoid wherever possible subjective opinion and will instead be underpinned by a comprehensive, objective assessment of the candidate's suitability and their skills across the entire performance spectrum.

The "core competencies" required of the role will be identified from the person specification and a range of selection methods will be used to measure the candidate against these. For example depending on the role areas the panel may wish to measure: leadership ability, ability to use initiative, innovation, interpersonal skills or communication skills.

The panel will consider methods for assessment such as: work-simulation Test, Aptitude Test, Presentation, group exercise, panels, Structured Interview when forming its assessment procedure for the post.

The panel will consider the specific competencies of the post and develop interview questions - to extract information from the candidate about the extent they meet these requirements during a structured interview.

The panel will ask each candidate the same questions, and each candidate answers will be rated by the interview panel. Supplementary questions may be used which fit with the nature of the question.

The panel will be assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, and through the assessment processes and will explore with the candidate:

- their attitude towards children and young people;
- their ability to support the school's agenda for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- any gaps in the candidate's employment history;

- any concerns or discrepancies arising from the information provided by the candidate or from a referee

The panel will be attuned to answers that:-

- are vague or unrealistic
- show no or little understanding or appreciation of children's needs or expectations.
- fail to recognise the particular vulnerabilities of children from troubled backgrounds
- contain examples of inappropriate language about children;
- show signs that the applicant is unclear about appropriate boundaries when working with children.

Application Form

- The Catholic Education Service Application Forms for Teaching Staff and Support Staff will be used to obtain a common set of core data from all applicants. Other methods of applications eg in the form of CV will not be accepted.

References

- The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions. They will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee.

- References will be sought on all short listed candidates, including internal ones, and will 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 interview.

- The School will issue a standard reference proforma to referees for completion, example at Appendix 2.

Health questions

The panel will be aware of the legal requirement for employers not to ask any health questions prior to an offer of employment, either within the reference, application form or at the interview stage.

Guidance relating to this area, provided by the Schools HR Service is available at Appendix 3.

Decision making, feedback and conditional offers

An offer of appointment to the successful candidate will be made conditional upon:

- the receipt of at least two satisfactory references (it is vital that the references are obtained and scrutinised before a person's appointment is confirmed and before s/he starts work.)
- verification of the candidate's identity

- verification of eligibility to work in the UK
- verification of the candidate's medical check
- verification of qualifications
- verification of professional status where required e.g. QTS, NPQH;
- a check of DFE List 99 and a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure
- (for teaching posts) verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999); and,
- (for support posts) satisfactory completion of the 26 week probationary period.

The Local Authority's Human Resources will liaise with the School in order to follow relevant guidance if a Disclosure reveals information that a candidate has not disclosed in the course of the selection process.

All checks will be:
- confirmed in writing;
- documented and retained on the personnel file (subject to certain restrictions on the retention of information imposed by regulations);
- recorded on the school's central record database; and,
- followed up where they are unsatisfactory or there are discrepancies in the information provided.

Where:
- the candidate is found to be on List 99 or the PoCA/PoVA List, or the DBS Disclosure shows s/he has been disqualified from working with children by a Court; or,
- an applicant has provided false information in, or in support of, his/her application; or,
- there are serious concerns about an applicant's suitability to work with children,

The facts must be reported to the police and/or the DFE Children's Safeguarding Operations Unit. The school will liaise with Human Resources if this should be the case.

Those unsuccessful at interview will be advised by the Chair of the panel of the outcome of their interview and will be offered verbal feedback from the process.

The feedback provided will be descriptive and specific. Feedback will focus on behaviours the applicant can do something about, it will be clear and concise and sufficient and appropriate and sensitively delivered.

Complaints
- Should an external individual submit a formal complaint regarding the School's treatment of them during a recruitment process the complaint should be handled via the School's Complaint Policy and the individual concerned provided with a copy.

Expenses

- The Board of Governors/Directors will not reimburse candidates with expenses incurred for travelling and or subsistence relating to the interview.

- The Board of Governors/Directors do not usually offer assistance with relocation costs for successful candidates appointed to such designated posts. Should any post be

designated as offering relocation assistance this will be included in the pack issued to candidates.

Record keeping

- Panel members' notes of the recruitment will be kept from the date of the interview for a period of 6 months and will then be destroyed in a confidential manner (eg shredded).

Post Appointment Induction/Probationary period

- The Headteacher will ensure an induction programme is created for use at the Academy.

- The Headteacher may delegate to line managers the responsibility to deliver the induction to the newly appointed staff.

There will be an induction programme for all staff, governors and volunteers newly appointed to the school, regardless of previous experience. In some cases where a current member of staff is appointed to a new role requiring a move to a new site or department of the School there may be the need for an induction at the new location if there are significant changes in practice etc.

The Headteacher will ensure an induction programme is created for use at the School. The key elements of the induction programme will be the same for all new starters; however any detailed guidance or training for the specific role may be varied as required.

The Headteacher may delegate to line managers the responsibility to deliver the induction to newly appointed staff/volunteers within the School as appropriate. The Headteacher will make arrangements with the Chair of Governors for the induction of newly appointed Governors of the School.

Separate to the above induction all newly appointed support staff must satisfactorily complete a 6 month probationary period.

This applies to new support staff employees to the school including:

(a) employees rejoining who have had a break in service

(b) employees joining from another school/education establishment/local authority

The probationary period (for support staff) will consist of assessment at week 10 and week 20 with ongoing supervision throughout the six-month period. All supervision should be recorded and, where necessary, action plans devised to ensure all parties are aware of what action is required from them.

The written assessment at weeks 10 and 20 should clearly identify whether:

(a) The assessment has been successful

or

(b) An action plan of steps to be taken to support the employee

If any immediate concerns are identified the line manager will highlight any concerns as they arise and not wait until the 10 or 20-week assessment.

An extension of the probationary period can be considered where:

- sufficient progress has been made to date but small concerns still remain
- a genuine absence has been required of a specific period of time
- lack of support and guidance is identified

Advice should be sought from HR Business Partner in these circumstances.

In cases where it is likely a new employee will not have their employment confirmed during the probationary period advice should be sought from the School HR Business Partner.

Reporting

- The Headteacher will provide to the Governing Body reports with regard to staffing at the school e.g. turnover and appointments, advertising expenditure etc and any issues arising from such matters.

Appendix 1

Recruitment Checklist

	NOTES
Panel formed – dates, availability checked and confirmed – available for shortlist and interview	
Training: confirm that at least one member of the above panel have carried out the safer training	
Planning: Timetable decided, job description reviewed and updated as necessary.	
Advertising: The advert must include reference to the policy statement of safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and young people	
Application Forms: Candidates must provide information on employment history and if appropriate adequately explain the reasons for any gaps. The candidates must complete, sign and date the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act Declaration Form.	
Shortlisting: same panel members that shortlist must interview. v	
References: References must be requested prior to interview. Chase if not received. Check and scrutinise references on receipt – any discrepancies or concerns should be taken up with applicant at interview or the referee.	
Invitation to Interview: Interview invitation letters must include relevant information and instructions contact number for any requirements	
Interview: The panel should have at least 2 but preferably 3 members and should have the authority to appoint. They must meet prior to interview and agree issues, questions, assessments, criteria and standards. At least one member must have completed the safer recruitment training.	
Conditional Offer of Employment: Offer of employment must be subject to satisfactory completion of the following pre-employment checks:	
Identity: This should be verified on the day of interview and copied.	
Right to work in UK: This again should be verified on the day of interview and documentation copied.	
References: If not received and scrutinised prior to interview.	
Qualifications Checked: This should be verified on the day of interview – original certificates must be submitted and copied.	
DBS: An enhanced level DBS disclosure will be required.	
List 99: This is part of the DBS disclosure check	
Medical check: advice with regard to any restrictions or adjustments	
QTS – for teacher only. The candidate should provide original documentation to prove that he/she has obtained QTS.	
Teachers Pensions – all teachers are automatically members of the scheme unless they have previously opted out (proof of this must be provided).	
Local Government pension – all support staff are automatically members of the scheme but have the right to opt out.	

Appendix 2

ST THOMAS MORE ROMAN CATHOLIC ACADEMY



REFERENCE REQUEST FORM

Name of Applicant:	
Post Applied for:	

1. **Please describe your relationship with the candidate, how long you have known the candidate and in what capacity?**

2. **Taking into account the enclosed job description, please indicate whether you are satisfied that the candidate has the ability to undertake the job in question. Please include specific comments about the applicant's suitability for the post and the applicant's performance and conduct in your organisation** (*please continue on a separate sheet if necessary*)

3. **Please confirm the following details regarding the applicant:**	
(a) The applicant's current post/salary:	
(b) The applicant's start date:	
(c) If former employee, the applicant's leaving date:	

4. **Please confirm whether you are completely satisfied that the candidate is suitable to work with children: YES / NO** **If NO, please provide the specific details of your concerns and the reasons why you believe the candidate might be unsuitable.**
5. **Has the applicant been subject to disciplinary procedures involving issues related to the safety and welfare of children or young people, including any in which the disciplinary sanction has expired? YES / NO** **If YES, please provide details and the outcomes:**
6. **Has the applicant been subject to any allegations or concerns that relate to the safety and welfare of children or young people or behaviour towards children or young people? YES / NO** **If YES, what was the outcome of those concerns eg whether the allegations or concerns were investigated, the conclusion reached, and how the matter was resolved:**

7. **Additional Comments**
**Please tick the most appropriate.*

General Organisation		***Work Rate & Commitment***	
Meticulous	☐	Highly professional	☐
Adequate attention to detail	☐	Hardworking, good stamina	☐
Disorganised & unsatisfactory	☐	Adequate	☐
		Not always satisfactory	☐
As a Member of Staff		***Initiative & Leadership***	
Extremely positive & constructive	☐	Outstanding, innovative, highly effective	☐
Pleasant, good humoured, sociable	☐	Above average, moves things forward	☐
Average	☐	Prefers to be directed	☐
Can be negative, discouraging	☐	Unable to solve problems	☐
Destructive, undermining	☐		
Character and Personality		***Resilience***	
Outstanding role model for children	☐	Thrives under pressure and challenge	☐
Mature and reliable, steady	☐	Steady and reliable	☐
Variable	☐	Sometimes find work and environment	☐
Not wholly satisfactory	☐	stressful	☐
		Easily 'phased'	☐
Punctuality			
Excellent	☐		
Satisfactory	☐		
Poor	☐		

Would you reemploy this person? Yes / No. If not please state why:

Signed:	**Print Name:**
Position in Organisation:	**Date:**

It is the responsibility of the person providing the reference to ensure that the reference is accurate and does not contain any material misstatement or omissions.

Relevant factual content of the reference may be discussed with the applicant at interview.

Appendix 3

Guidance for Interview Panels – Health Questions

Under the Equality Act 2010, employers are prohibited from asking health questions before making an offer of employment to the applicant. An exception to this rule is in respect of reasonable adjustments and occupational requirements (functions intrinsic to the role). [1]

Schools are therefore advised that any questions asked at interview should
be in line with the below guidance and strictly in line with the occupational requirement of the role for which the interviews are being held. For example you would not ask a teacher if they could climb ladders etc as this would not be a normal occupational requirement of the role. The questions would need to be changed for each role's requirements and should be limited to those strictly necessary for the occupational requirements of that role specifically.

Suggested question to be asked at interview

Part 1 - *To assess whether you will be able to perform a "function" of the job which is "intrinsic" to the work concerned;*

Part 2 - *Do you feel you require any modifications/adjustments to the job you have applied for to help you carry this out, with specific reference to the requirement to [insert requirements of the role] ?*

How should this information be recorded?

- Notes taken in relation to the above question should be strictly factual.
- Notes should not include anything regarding health/medical conditions.
- Notes should include reference to if the panel have had to stop the candidate talking about medical/health issues. (This will help to defend a claim of disability discrimination)

Discussions regarding health/medical issues

Please note that interview panels are reminded that employers are prohibited from asking health questions before making an offer of employment to the applicant. If a candidate starts to talk about health/medical issues, interview panels are advised to stop the conversation and point out to them that we are not allowed to ask health questions. Candidates must be advised that health/medical issues can only be discussed should the candidate be successful at interview.

Examples of functions intrinsic to the role

This following list of examples may be used when preparing interview questions. Below is a non-exhaustive list of examples of when you may wish to consider the following reasonable

[1] Please note it is the responsibility of the appointments panel to ensure that they are working within the Equality Act 2010. This guidance note is only intended as a starting point to assist panels in planning for interviews appropriately. If panels are unsure as to whether they are working within the Equality Act 2010 they should consult with their HR Business Partner who will give appropriate specific advice linked the particular interview circumstance.

adjustment question be asked. As per the above, interview panels should select the requirements for the role which relate only to the role being interviewed.

Please note it is the responsibility of the manager to determine whether the task is intrinsic to the role before embarking on a route of questioning with regards to this.

In addition to asking questions with regards to intrinsic functions of the role the information below may assist in outlining information which you need to share with candidates as part of the selection process so that they are fully aware of the requirements of the post.

Physical Requirements of the role	
Ability to Work at Height/use of ladders	Clearing pathways in snowy/icy conditions
Manual Handling	Cleaning/Maintenance
Bending	Carrying our minor repairs
Driving	Operating machinery
Setting up of rooms for assemblies /functions	Heavy use of keyboard/computer
Repetitive Tasks	
Mentally/Emotionally Demanding requirements of the role	
Work that involves high levels of ongoing conflict e.g dealing with stakeholders who may be unhappy with your involvement with them	Work that involves dealing with very emotionally charged issues e.g death, significant ill health, child or elder abuse
Concentrating for long periods of time	Dealing with conflicting demands

Other requirements of the role	
Working early/late – for purpose of lettings/hire of premises etc	Use of medical equipment /provision of first aid
Lone working	Working with chemicals

Below are some examples of the areas, which you may consider asking in relation to the reasonable adjustment question above;

Caretaker

- Ability to Work at Height/use of ladders
- Cleaning/Maintenance
- Operating machinery
- Clearing pathways in snowy/icy conditions
- Manual Handling
- Bending
- Lone working
- Working with chemicals
- Working early/late – for purpose of lettings/hire of premises etc
- Carrying our minor repairs
- Setting up rooms for assemblies/functions

Teaching Assistant

- Ability to Work at Height/use of ladders,
- Working with special needs children
- Providing support for distressed pupils
- Bending (working with young children/carpet work)
- Manual handling (carrying equipment/books)
- Use of medical equipment/provision of first aid
- Dealing with child protection issues

Office Manager/Administrator

- Dealing with conflicting demands
- Managing conflict
- Repetitive tasks
- Heavy use of keyboard/computer
- Concentrating for long periods of time

Teacher

- Dealing with conflicting demands
- Concentrating for long periods of time
- Providing support for distressed pupils
- Dealing with Child protection issues
- Working with special needs children
- Bending (working with young children/carpet work)