

Headteacher's Introduction

Thank you for your interest in our Deputy Headteacher post which, I believe, is a great opportunity to join St Leonard's at a very exciting time. The role of Deputy Headteacher in a Catholic school is a vitally important one. It is a challenging but very rewarding job. The successful applicant really will be at the heart of the leadership of the school, with specific lead responsibilities but also with significant involvement in every aspect of school life. The post will provide excellent preparation for headship, for those who aspire to lead a school as Headteacher. As our advert makes clear, we are very keen to hear from candidates seeking their first deputy headship but also from serving deputies looking to take on a fresh challenge and gain excellent preparation for headship. We are genuinely open minded about this and are just looking for the best candidate for the job.

This post arises as a result of the continued growth of the school roll. Our current leadership team members have experience in various aspects of school life and are flexible about lead responsibilities. Indeed, this flexibility is an important requirement of the job of a senior leader in our school. Thus, the precise, lead responsibilities of the post will be agreed with the successful candidate, on appointment, taking into account experience and interests, as well as the needs of the school. A background in pastoral leadership, catholic life and curriculum development in particular will all be relevant preparation for this post. The Job Description outlines the main generic responsibilities of the post and the Person Specification summarises the key qualities required.

St Leonard's is a great place to work, first and foremost because of our fantastic students. The majority come from our Catholic partner primaries and a sizeable minority from other schools across the city and beyond, including some from overseas. The majority are Catholics but we welcome equally students from many Faith backgrounds. This diversity within the student body is one of the many positive features of St Leonard's and it is very rewarding to serve these wonderful students in a happy and inclusive community. The school roll is expected to be around 1450 by September 2021. The Sixth Form will have around 250 students in September 2021, but will grow to around 300 in the next couple of years, as the strongly academic year groups move up into Sixth Form.

St Leonard's benefits from having excellent staff, both teaching and support. The staff are the school's greatest asset and, therefore, the task of appointing staff to new roles is always given great importance. Governors are really committed to the school and are very supportive of staff, as are parents. We also enjoy a very strong partnership with our family of primaries, all of whom are fully supportive of St Leonard's. Links with parishes are strong, as is our partnership with Diocesan and Local Authority schools.

We are proud to be a member of the newly formed Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust. Our Trust will eventually grow to a community of over 50 schools working in partnership in all areas of school life.

St Leonard's was judged Good by Ofsted in 2020 and Outstanding by the Diocese in 2017. I would encourage you to read our inspection reports and the school prospectus, to get a sense of some of the school's many strengths.

Our students' attainment is very strong.

- In 2018, 70% of pupils achieved a Standard Pass (level 4) or better in English and Maths GCSE
- 50% of pupils achieved a Strong Pass (level 5) or better in English and Maths GCSE
- 40% of A Level grades in 2018 were A*-A, with 60% at A*-B. 100% pass rate.

High standards of academic achievement are, however, just one element of our mission to provide our students with the best possible holistic education. Their all-round development is vitally important. As a Catholic school, nurturing children's spiritual development is central to everything we do. Teachers and school leaders need to be committed to understanding and actively promoting the school's distinctive Catholic/Christian ethos in their daily work. We have an excellent climate for learning in school. Students are extremely well behaved in and out of lessons. This is a further key ingredient in the school's on-going success and popularity with parents.

Detailed information about the school can be found on the school website at <http://www.st-leonards.durham.sch.uk>. As well as links to past inspection reports and current school policies, you will find here the school's latest Prospectus which gives lots of information about our ethos, academic achievement, primary school links, school climate, the taught curriculum and extra-curricular activities, as well as the spiritual life of the school. A separate Sixth Form Prospectus and school Newsletters can also be found on the website.

I hope that once you have had the chance to read the information in this pack and find out more about the school, you will be keen to apply. Should you be successful, I can assure you that you will be given wide-ranging responsibility and unstinting support. To apply, please complete the CES application form, and include a supporting letter outlining the experience, skills and attributes which you will bring to the post. Your letter should be no more than 1,300 words. **Please note there is no need to complete section 8, the supporting statement section of the application form, as your supporting letter should outline your suitability for the post. Could I ask all applicants to include in the qualifications section of the form, details of their degree class and division, as well as A Level grades, as the CES form, which we cannot alter, does not make this clear.**

Your completed application form and letter, along with your completed disclosure form, should be returned by post or emailed to Elizabeth Turnbull (Headteacher's P.A.) by **9am on Monday 19th April, 2021**.

Chris Hammill
Headteacher