



Headteacher

Candidate Information September 2026

A Message from the Chair of Governors

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Headteacher of Cardinal Newman Catholic High School, Warrington. Cardinal Newman is a school at which St John Henry Newman's motto, 'Heart Speaks to Heart', is authentically lived out by our committed staff and governors to ensure the young people in our school have the best possible experience. It is a school built on the solid foundations of our Catholic Values and ethos and is a place where students and staff are happy and supported by a highly committed and skilled Governing Body. Whilst about 50% of our student population is Catholic, the other half of our community has a variety of backgrounds and, as the most diverse secondary school in Warrington, we are enriched by that variety and diversity. The school is very much at the centre of the local community.

The post has arisen because the previous postholder, who had been at the school for 7 years, was promoted to the position of Principal in the Diocese's only Sixth Form College, with effect from September 2025. For this academic year, interim arrangements have been in place, with a Head of School who is supported by an Executive Headteacher. The staff team works extremely hard for our community, and many have been at the school for a number of years. We expect to be inspected by Ofsted and the Catholic Schools' Inspectorate in 2026-27.

Staff morale is high in the school, and as the last Ofsted report states, staff are 'proud to work at the school. They feel leaders consider their workload and wellbeing.' High quality professional development opportunities are provided and actively promoted, and in addition, the school benefits from strong links with the Diocese and the Local Authority. This means that staff flourish and are in a good position to make a real difference to the students and the school, and to further their own career path.

The school benefits from recent developments to the school site, including an all-weather 3G pitch for school and community use, which is in constant use during the school day and in the evenings and weekends, and refurbished science labs. The school is in a secure position financially, thanks to excellent management of funds.

Students benefit from a wealth of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities, and we are proud of their achievements in school and beyond. Our Wall of Fame for former students, celebrating their professional sporting achievements, is testament to this.

The school continually strives for the very best for its students, families, and staff, but we recognise that there remain some inconsistencies in outcomes at KS4, and in spite of the school's best efforts, there is still work to do to improve attendance, particularly that of vulnerable students.

Everyone who visits Cardinal Newman talks about its welcoming and supportive ethos, and this is something we are all proud of. We strive always to live by our school prayer, to be the 'link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.'

A Message from the Chair of Governors

If you would like to visit to see our school and meet with the Chair of Governors, please contact the Headteacher's PA, Mrs Michele Walker, on 01925 635556, who will be happy to arrange this.

Cardinal Newman really is a wonderful place to learn and work in, and we thank you for your interest in our school.

J.M. Johnson

Julie Johnson
Chair of Governors

Governors seek the following appointment for **September 2026** Headteacher (**Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32**)

The Governors of Cardinal Newman Catholic High School wish to appoint for September 2026 a committed, practising Catholic to the post of Headteacher to lead and inspire our school community to the next stage of its development.

We are looking for a leader who:

- is a practising Catholic, who demonstrates a strong Catholic faith and is committed to the Catholic ethos of the school;
- is inspirational, with a clear vision for the future of the school, building on its current successes;
- will be a strong communicator, who can engage all stakeholders in the next phase of the school's development;
- will ensure that the needs of every student are met, placing great importance on high quality pastoral care and support, enabling all to 'have life and have it to the full';
- has the determination and drive to ensure all students achieve, and has a continuous focus on school improvement;
- will be committed to the professional development of staff and self, being mindful of their welfare and well-being;
- will be committed to continuing and growing effective partnerships with families, parishes, feeder primaries, the Diocese of Shrewsbury and Warrington Local Authority, partner organisations and agencies and the wider community;
- is aware of the wider educational landscape and the challenges this brings in terms of change and future academisation.

Closing date for receipt of applications: Wednesday 11th February 2026 at 9.00am

Interviews to be held: Thursday 26th and Friday 27th February 2026

Start Date: September 2026

Please note the latest version of the CES application form and a Model Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 Form must be completed for this post.

Application forms for the post should be sent to: Mrs Julie English, PA to the Director of Schools, Diocese of Shrewsbury (Julie.English@dioceseofshrewsbury.org)

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Post is subject to an Enhanced DBS Disclosure and online searches.

Job Description

Headteacher (Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32)

Headteacher Job Description



Headteacher Job Description Catholic Voluntary Aided Schools Cardinal Newman Catholic High School

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 Catholic Church and the diocesan trust deed. At all times, the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ. The post is therefore reserved for 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 made by the governing body of the school and is subject to the terms of the Catholic Education Service contract signed with the governors as employers; the current conditions of service for Headteacher contained in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document as well as all other current education and employment legislation and statutory guidance.

This job description is based on the key areas identified in the National Standards for Headteacher (2020). These standards are in turn built upon the Teaching Standards (2012) which apply to all teachers, including Headteacher.

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

The governing body is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The Headteacher must ensure that the highest priority is given to following the guidance and regulations relating to safeguarding and child protection. Appointment is conditional upon receipt of satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks in relation to criminal and child protection matters.

A. The Core Purpose of the Headteacher

The core purpose of the Headteacher is to provide professional leadership and management of the school. This will promote a secure foundation from which to achieve high standards in all areas of the school's work. To gain this success, a Headteacher must establish high quality education by effectively managing teaching and learning and using personalised learning to realise the potential of all pupils. The Headteacher must establish a culture that promotes excellence, equality, and high expectations of all pupils. This will include ensuring that religious education is in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline, and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church.

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The 'preferred future', expressed in the strategic vision and development of a Catholic school, stems from the educational mission of the Church, which is reflected in the school's mission statement and school improvement plan.

The Headteacher, working with the governing body and others, is expected to draw on the person, life, and teachings of Jesus Christ to create a shared vision and strategic plan, which inspires and motivates pupils, staff, and all other members of the community. The vision should explore Gospel values, core educational values and moral purpose and be inclusive of stakeholders' values and beliefs.

The Headteacher is the leading professional in the school. Accountable to the governing body, the Headteacher provides vision, leadership and direction for the school and ensures that it is managed and organised to meet its aims and targets. The Headteacher, working with others, is responsible for evaluating the school's performance to identify the priorities for continuous improvement and raising standards; ensuring equality of opportunity for all; developing policies and practices; ensuring that resources are efficiently and effectively used to achieve the school's aims and objectives and for the day-to-day management, organisation, and administration of the school.

The Headteacher, working with and through others, secures the commitment of the wider community to the school by developing and maintaining effective partnerships with, for example, schools, other services and agencies for children, parishes, the diocese, the local authority, higher education institutions and employers. Through such partnerships and other activities, the Headteacher plays a key role in contributing to the development of the education system as a whole and collaborating with others to raise standards locally.

Drawing on the support provided by members of the school community, the Headteacher is responsible for creating a productive learning environment which is engaging and fulfilling for all pupils.

A. The Headteacher Standards 2020

1. Culture and Ethos

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 this work.

Critical to the role of headship is working with the governing body and others to create a shared vision and strategic plan which inspires and motivates pupils, staff, and all other members of the school community. This vision should express core educational values and moral purpose and be inclusive of stakeholders' values and beliefs.

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The Headteacher will:

1. Recognise the authority of the bishop in relation to the provision of education in the diocese and work within the school and parish community to create 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 community it serves.
2. Hold and articulate clear Catholic values and moral purpose focused on providing a world- class education for the pupils they serve and reflecting the Catholic foundation of the school.
3. Demonstrate optimistic personal behaviour, positive relationships and attitudes towards their pupils and staff, and towards parents, governors and members of the local church and wider community.
4. Lead by example, with integrity, creativity, resilience, and clarity, drawing on their scholarship, expertise and skills and that of those around them.
5. Sustain wide, current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems locally, nationally and globally, and pursue continuous professional development that reflects the needs of a Catholic school.
6. Work with political and financial astuteness, within a clear set of principles centred on the school's Catholic vision, ably translating local, national and diocesan policy into the school's context.
7. Communicate compellingly the school's vision and drive the strategic leadership , empowering all pupils and staff to excel thus ensuring a culture of high staff professionalism.

2. Curriculum and Teaching

In a Catholic school the Headteacher leads a learning community rooted in Catholic 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.

The Headteacher has a central responsibility for raising the quality of teaching and learning and for pupils' achievement. This implies setting high expectations and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of learning outcomes. A successful learning culture will enable pupils to become effective, enthusiastic, independent learners, committed to life-long learning.

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Headteacher (Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32)

In accordance with the school's Catholic ethos, the Headteacher will:

1. Demand ambitious standards of achievement and attendance for all pupils, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality, instilling a strong sense of accountability in staff for the impact of their work on pupils' outcomes. Ensure high quality personal, social, health education and citizenship in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church. Ensure quality provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education in line with the distinctive Catholic nature, purpose and aims of the school.
2. Secure excellent teaching through an analytical understanding of how pupils learn and of the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design, leading to rich curriculum opportunities and pupils' well-being, taking full account of the school's Catholic foundation.
3. Establish an educational culture of "open classrooms" as a basis for sharing best practice within and between schools, drawing on and conducting relevant research and robust data analysis.
4. Create an ethos based on Catholic values within which all staff are motivated and supported to develop their own skills and subject knowledge, and to support each other.
5. Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders in a climate where excellence is the standard, leading to clear succession planning. Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice.

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Headteacher (Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32)

3. Organisational effectiveness

In the Catholic school all deployment of staff, finance, material resources, time and energy should promote the common good of the community in accordance with the school's Mission Statement.

The Headteacher needs to provide effective organisation and management of the school and seek ways of improving organisational structures and functions based on rigorous self-evaluation. The Headteacher should ensure that the school and the people and resources within it are organised and managed to provide an efficient, effective, and safe learning environment. These management responsibilities imply the re-examination of the roles and responsibilities of those adults working in the school to build capacity across the workforce and ensure resources are deployed to achieve value for money.

The Headteacher should manage themselves and their relationships well. Headship is about building a professional learning community which enables others to achieve. Through performance management and effective continuing professional development practice, the Headteacher supports all staff to achieve high standards. To equip themselves with the capacity to deal with the complexity of the role and the range of leadership skills and actions required of them. The Headteacher should be committed to their own continuing professional development.

The Headteacher should work in partnership with others. 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 community for the benefit of the school's community and others. He/she will demonstrate a belief that community and school are interdependent and that engagement with the community promotes school development.

The Headteacher should commit to engaging with the internal and external school community to secure equity and entitlement. The Headteacher should collaborate with other schools in order to share expertise and bring positive benefits to their own and other schools. The Headteacher should work collaboratively at both strategic and operational levels with parents and carers and across multiple agencies for the wellbeing of all children. The Headteacher shares responsibility for leadership of the wider educational system and should be aware that school improvement and community development are interdependent.

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Headteacher (Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32)

In accordance with the school's Catholic ethos, the Headteacher will:

1. Ensure that the school's systems, organisation and processes are well-considered, efficient and fit for purpose, upholding the principles of transparency, integrity and probity within the Catholic context. Ensure arrangements for the daily Act of Collective Worship and the spiritual life of the school. Ensure the diocesan policy for Religious Education *and RSHE are fulfilled.*
2. Provide a safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all pupils and staff, focused on safeguarding pupils and developing their exemplary behaviour in school and in the wider society.
3. Establish rigorous, fair and transparent systems and measures for managing the performance of all staff, addressing any under-performance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice.
4. Welcome strong governance and actively support the governing body to understand its role and deliver its functions effectively – in particular, its functions to set school strategy and hold the Headteacher to account for pupil, staff and financial performance.
5. Exercise strategic, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure the equitable deployment of budgets and resources, in the best interests of pupils' achievements, the school's sustainability and its Catholic character.
6. Distribute leadership throughout the organisation, forging teams of colleagues who have distinct roles and responsibilities and hold each other to account for their decision making.

Working in a spirit of collaboration to secure Catholic principles of equity and entitlement, the Headteacher will:

7. Create an outward-facing school which works with other schools, organisations and the local community, in a climate of mutual challenge, to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all pupils. Build a school culture and curriculum based on Gospel values, the teaching of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church, which take account of the richness and diversity of the school's communities.
8. Develop effective relationships with fellow professionals, colleagues in other public services, parents/carers and the parish community to improve academic and social outcomes for all pupils.
9. Challenge educational orthodoxies in the best interests of achieving excellence, harnessing the findings of well-evidenced research to frame self-regulating and self-improving schools.
10. Shape the current and future quality of the teaching profession through high quality training and sustained professional development of all staff.
11. In the context of the school's Catholic ethos, model entrepreneurial and innovative approaches to school improvement, leadership and governance, confident of the vital contribution of internal and external accountability.
12. Inspire and influence others, within and beyond schools, to believe in the fundamental importance of education in young people's lives and to promote the value of education especially within a Catholic context.

This job description forms part of the contract of employment of the person appointed to the post. It reflects the position at the present time only and may be reviewed in negotiation with the employee in the future. The appointment is subject to the current conditions of employment in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document as they relate to Headteacher.

About the Senior Leadership Team

The successful candidate will be joining an experienced Senior Leadership Team who are deeply committed to the school and its mission to ensure our students' development enables them to *'live life to the full'* (John 10:10).

Alongside the Headteacher, the team comprises of a sole Deputy with responsibility of 'Quality of Education', and four Assistant Headteachers who between them oversee Pupil Progress, Behaviour and Attendance, Teaching and Learning, and Personal Development and Safeguarding. In addition, as a school which seeks to offer development opportunities for all staff, we also have a seconded Associate Assistant Headteacher.

The team works collaboratively to support one another and, whilst individual roles are challenging, the team leads by example in creating a climate where staff feel that 'leaders consider their workload and wellbeing' (Ofsted 2022). We are an outward facing school, with all SLT members willing to contribute to external networks and community events. The team is adaptable, evaluative and good-humoured, with each member striving to ensure that they live out the school values of Service, Compassion, Forgiveness and Truth in all they do.

Headteacher (Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32) Person Specification

Faith Commitment

		Essential	Desirable	Source
1.	Practising Catholic	E		A/I/R
2.	Involvement in parish community		D	A/I/R

To be able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the following in the context of a Catholic school.

		Essential	Desirable	Source
3.	Leading school worship	E		A/I
4.	Ways of developing religious education and worship	E		A/I
5.	A commitment to strategic thinking and planning that builds, communicates, and carries forward a coherent and shared vision for the Catholic ethos of the school.	E		A/I
6.	How relationships should be fostered and developed between the school, parish and its community and Diocese of Shrewsbury	E		A/I
7.	Has completed the Catholic Leadership Programme or other approved Catholic leadership training, or has a commitment to do so		D	A/I/CC

Qualifications

		Essential	Desirable	Source
8.	Qualified teacher status	E		A/CC
9.	Degree	E		A/CC
10.	CCRS/CTC or a commitment to obtain the certificate		D	A/CC/I

Headteacher (Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32) Person Specification

Professional Development

		Essential	Desirable	Source
11.	Evidence of appropriate professional development for the role of headteacher	E		A
12.	Evidence of recent leadership and management professional development	E		A
13.	Up to date safeguarding training and knowledge of legislation for the protection of young people	E		A/I/CC
14.	Has successfully undertaken Designated Safeguarding Lead training		D	A/I/CC
15.	Has successfully completed approved Safer Recruitment Training or has a commitment to do so within 12 months	E		A/I/CC

School leadership and management experience

		Essential	Desirable	Source
16.	Recent successful leadership as a headteacher		D	A/I/R
17.	Recent successful leadership as a deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher	E		A/I/R
18.	Evidence of successfully leading school improvement	E		A/I/R
19.	Evidence of the application of strategies to review, implement, evaluate and improve learning and teaching	E		A/I/R
20.	Experience of curriculum leadership and development	E		A/I/R
21.	Experience of working constructively with parents	E		
22.	Experience of monitoring staff performance	E		A/I/R
23.	Experience of effective budget management and financial analysis		D	A/I/R
24.	The ability to provide advice and support to the Governing Body to enable it to meet its responsibilities	E		A/I/R
25.	An understanding of strategic financial planning in relation to its contribution to school improvement, curriculum development and pupil achievement	E		A/I/R
26.	To have experience of guiding, coaching, mentoring or training individuals or teams	E		A/I/R
27.	Is able to demonstrate a good awareness of current national education policy and strategy	E		A/I/R

Headteacher (Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32) Person Specification

Experience and knowledge of teaching

		Essential	Desirable	Source
28.	Experience of teaching in a Catholic school	E		A
29.	Successful teaching of students in the secondary phase	E		A/I/R
30.	Experience of teaching in more than one school		D	A/I/R
31.	To have a working and current knowledge and understanding of the Key Stages in the secondary phase	E		A/I/R
32.	Displays commitment to the protection and safeguarding of children and young people, showing an awareness of legislation, and working with other agencies where appropriate	E		A/I/R
33.	Experience of providing professional challenge and support to others through the performance management process	E		A/I/R
34.	To be able to effectively use data and assessment to raise standards/address weaknesses	E		A/I/R
35.	To be able to exemplify how the needs of all pupils have been met through high quality teaching	E		A/I/R

Professional Attributes

		Essential	Desirable	Source
36.	Be able to demonstrate an understanding, awareness, and empathy for the needs of the pupils at the school and how these could be met		D	A/I/R
37.	Be able to demonstrate a clear rationale for behaviour management and a proven track record of the effective implementation of a range of behaviour management strategies	E		A/I/R
38.	To have excellent written and oral communication skills (which will be assessed at all stages of the process)	E		A/I
39.	To be a leader of learning demonstrating, promoting, and encouraging outstanding classroom practice	E		A/I/R
40.	Show a good commitment to sustained attendance at work	E		A/I/R

Headteacher (Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32) Person Specification

Professional Skills

(Based on the National Standards for Headteachers 2020)

The headteacher is expected to have a good knowledge of the National Standards for Headteachers (2020) upon which the job description is based and be willing to work towards the achievement of these standards. In addition, the Headteacher will be expected to work with the governors to set annual personal objectives within the framework of these standards:

- Culture and Ethos
- Curriculum and Teaching
- Organisational effectiveness including Governance and Accountability

Candidates are therefore asked to structure their supporting statement under the above headings

Personal Qualities

All of the following are considered essential for the post and will be assessed through interview and reference:

- Continue to promote the school's strong educational philosophy and values
- Inspire, challenge, motivate and empower teams and individuals to achieve high goals
- Demonstrate personal enthusiasm and commitment to leadership aimed at making a positive difference to children and young people
- Build and maintain quality relationships through interpersonal skills and effective communication
- Demonstrate personal and professional integrity, including modelling values and vision
- Manage and resolve conflict
- Prioritise, plan and organise themselves and others
- Think analytically and creatively and demonstrate initiative in solving problems
- Be aware of their own strengths and areas for development and listen to, and reflect constructively and act upon as appropriate, feedback from others
- Demonstrate a capacity for sustained hard work with energy and vigour
- Uphold the 7 Nolan principles of public life

Headteacher (Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32) Person Specification

Confidential References and Reports

A positive and supportive faith reference from a priest where the applicant regularly worships.	E
Positive recommendation from all referees, including current employer.	E
A supportive reference from the Local Authority, if possible, or a further supportive professional reference	E

The governors reserve the right in exceptional cases to seek additional references from other former employees where this seems appropriate.

The governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of an interview should a positive and supportive faith reference not be received.

Headteacher (Full Time, Leadership Spine 26-32) Person Specification

Important advice regarding faith references

You have applied for a position in one of our Catholic schools which is reserved for a practising Catholic. This means that the person specification will state that it is essential that you meet this criterion, and you must be able to evidence this with a positive faith reference from the priest(s) of the parish(es) where you attend the Sunday Eucharist and receive the sacraments. It is also vital that this reference is **current**, and that the priest's knowledge of your practice is not historical. Priests will be asked to confirm a minimum of **12 months continuous practice**. A period of 12 months practice will also be required for those recently received into the Church.

It is vital that the priest can verify your attendance at Sunday Mass and is not simply the priest linked to the school that you currently work in.

We are seeking to appoint a practising Catholic who joins in the parish celebration of the Sunday Mass and receives the sacraments regularly as well as living in accordance with the teachings of the Church.

At a time when priests are increasingly assuming responsibility for larger pastoral areas it is becoming increasingly common for priests not to know parishioners as well as they might have in the past. In the light of this we offer the following advice when seeking faith references **prior to making an application**.

1. Speak to the priest before completing your application and ask if he agrees to your including him as a referee. (Do not simply email or leave a message on the parish answer phone)
2. Provide him with an outline of
 - your involvement in parish life e.g., Eucharistic minister, reader, etc (it may be that currently you are not heavily involved in parish life due to other commitments)
 - your present post – school, areas of responsibility
 - the post to which you are applying – name of school, post, etc
3. If you worship in more than one parish, then in order to satisfy weekly attendance of Mass you may need to specify more than one referee.

By following the above advice, you are able to prepare the priest for the reference request and so ensure it will be completed as fully as possible.

Application Form and Supporting Statement

The form must be fully completed. The supporting statement should be clear, concise and related to the specific post.

The CESEW Leadership Application Form must be fully completed. The supporting statement should not exceed 1300 words in length, be clear, concise and related to the post and setting applied for.

The extra curricular
life of our school is
flourishing with
a wide **variety**
of **enrichment**
opportunities



Michele Walker
Headteacher's PA
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