



Headteacher Candidate Pack









CEO's Welcome

Dear Colleague,

Post of Headteacher – St Michael's Catholic High School

Thank you for your interest in the post of St Michael's Catholic High School. The school is part of the Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust (DoWAT), which comprises 14 primary and secondary schools across North West London and Hertfordshire. The successful candidate will be joining a community of over 1200 employees who serve over 9000 pupils.

The next headteacher of St Michael's will be joining a vibrant and supportive professional community which highlights and shares best practice. DoWAT is an outward looking trust and is committed to delivering Catholic excellence through a self-improving school system. We have a commitment as a nationally leading Catholic Trust to bespoke DoWAT Headteacher support and professional development in a supportive and nurturing environment.

Our model is one of high autonomy, preserving the unique charism and context of each DoWAT school. The role of the Multi-Academy Trust is to support and challenge school leaders and local governing bodies to deliver educational outcomes.

The Local Governing body of St Michael's plays a key role and governors are experienced and committed to Catholic excellence. They have extensive knowledge of the school and are fully involved in its strategic priorities and direction.

Details of how to visit the school and arrange an informal conversation with myself and the Chair of Governors, Matthew Holt, are included on the job advert.

Thank you again for your interest in this wonderful school community and this Trust, with its bold vision for the future of Catholic education. We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Murden
Chief Executive Officer







Chair's Welcome

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Headteacher at St. Michael's Catholic High School. This is an exciting and significant opportunity for an inspirational and effective leader to join a high-achieving and ambitious school community rooted in Catholic values.

St. Michael's has enjoyed a very successful sixteen years under the leadership of Edward Conway, maintaining its 'Outstanding' status. We are now seeking a Headteacher who will continue to build on this success and lead the school into its next phase of development, ensuring that every student continues to learn, grow, and flourish in a nurturing, academically rigorous environment.

We are proud of our school's strong Catholic identity and inclusive ethos. Our Mission Statement 'Bringing Christ to All and All to Christ', Gospel values and Catholic Social Teaching are not only taught but lived across the community. The successful candidate will be someone who shares and can articulate this Mission, upholding the Catholic life of the school while delivering excellence in all areas.

Our Governing Board is deeply committed to the success of the school and the wellbeing of its students and staff. We work closely with the leadership team and maintain productive relationships with parents, the Diocese of Westminster, the Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust (of which St. Michael's is a proud member), and the wider community. We are confident that the new Headteacher will find in us a supportive and engaged Governing Board, working in strong partnership with DoWAT to ensure the continued growth and success of the school.

St. Michael's Catholic High School has a reputation for academic excellence, exceptional pastoral care, and outstanding behaviour. Our students are enthusiastic, respectful and aspirational, and they benefit from a dedicated and highly skilled staff team. The school manages resources carefully within budget to support student outcomes The school facilities are well maintained with plans progressing for improvements in the future. The school is situated in a peaceful area of South West Hertfordshire.

We hope that this application pack gives you a clear sense of our school and what makes it such a special place to work and lead. We warmly encourage you to visit us, meet our staff and students, and experience our vibrant school community first-hand. To arrange a visit, please contact Viki Baker at baker.v@stmichaelscatholichighschool.co.uk.

Thank you once again for your interest in this important role. We look forward to receiving your application and learning more about what you would bring to the leadership of St. Michael's Catholic High School.

Kind regards,

Matthew Holt

Chair of Governors





Our School

St Michael's is an excellent 11-18 mixed Catholic Comprehensive School operating in a highly competitive environment in South West Hertfordshire. There are numerous selective and partially selective schools in the area. The school is situated in the Leavesden Ward in Watford and draws its students from the South West Hertfordshire catchment area. Seven Catholic Primary schools provide the majority of our students. In 2025 the Catholic intake was close to 100% and the Catholic population of the school is about 98% including Sixth Form.

St Michael's Catholic High School was founded in 1955 by the Dominican Sisters of St Catherine of Siena, Newcastle, Natal and the school has grown steadily over the decades and now serves students aged 11 to 18 which includes a thriving Sixth Form.

St Michael's is a faith school with a mission statement "Bringing Christ to All and All to Christ". Our motto, in keeping with our distinctive Dominican roots and heritage is Veritas (Truth). The mission statement, motto and spiritual, moral, cultural and social education permeates the whole of school life. St Michael's, as a Catholic Dominican school, embraces Christ's option for the poor through its determination to challenge all expressions of egoism in society. In the school's quest for 'truth' each student is encouraged to preach, by their example, the Good News of the Gospel and display a commitment to Social Justice which literally transforms the lives of so many.

As a Catholic School, we aim to be a sign in the local community of the person of Christ who sought excellence in all things. We are committed to seeking to continually improve standards, leadership and management and the quality of teaching and learning.

In our pastoral structure, every student belongs to one of six houses, each named after a historic monastery: Fountains, Iona, Kells, Lindisfarne, Rievaulx, and Whitby. This system fosters continuity, enabling students to remain with the same tutor group as they move through the school. We firmly believe that a serene and happy student is one who will succeed at study, and our pastoral programme is directed to that end. We want every person who joins St Michael's to enter into a relationship with the living Christ who demands excellence whilst demonstrating compassion and forgiveness when necessary.



Our academic provision is broad, ambitious and well-supported. We offer a full, balanced curriculum through Key Stage 3 and 4, and a distinguished Sixth Form in which students are encouraged not only to excel academically, but also to assume leadership, mentor younger peers, and shape our school's future. In the latest Ofsted inspection (February 2025), our Sixth Form was rated Outstanding- a clear testament to the quality of teaching, pastoral care, and opportunity we provide for our older students.

Behaviour at St Michael's is excellent reflected in a calm, respectful environment and grounded in strong relationships. In the 2025 inspection, inspectors described behaviour and attitudes as Outstanding, and noted that our leadership and management are equally effective.

We take pride in our partnerships in the local area, especially with other schools and the Diocese which ensure that our students and staff are part of a broader community.

St Michael's is underpinned by a robust local governance structure supported by the Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust, combining strategic vision with a deep commitment to Catholic education. Our headteacher, Edward Conway, leads a dedicated team of staff who believe passionately in our mission statement 'Bringing Christ to all and all to Christ' and live it out on a daily basis.









Job Description

Indicative Salary Range: Group 7 / Fringe (£92,595 - £131,688)

Responsible to: The Chief Executive Officer of DoWAT / The Local Governing Board

Responsible for: All staff within the school ¹

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This appointment is with the Board of Directors of the Multi Academy Trust under the terms of the Catholic Education Service contract signed with the Board of Directors as employers. The Board of Directors will appoint a practising Catholic who, by personal example and professional leadership, will ensure that the Catholic ethos, rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church, permeates all aspects of the life of the school.
- 1.2 The appointment is subject to the current conditions of service for headteachers contained in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document and other current education and employment legislation. In carrying out his/her duties the headteacher shall consult, where appropriate, the Board of Directors, the diocese, the staff of the school, the parents of its pupils and the parish/es served by the school.
- 1.3 This job description may be amended at any time, following consultation between the headteacher and the CEO, with reference to the DoWAT Remuneration Committee, and will be reviewed annually.

¹ The term school is used throughout this document rather than academy, to indicate the individual institution to which the headteacher is appointed and to avoid confusion with the Multi-Academy Trust as a whole.

2. Core Purpose of the Headteacher

- 2.1 The core purpose of the headteacher is to provide professional leadership and management for a 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. Headteachers must establish a culture that promotes excellence, equality and high expectations of all pupils. This will include ensuring that:
 - the school is conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church and Canon Law, and in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Archdiocese of Westminster;
 - religious education is in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church;
 - religious worship is in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church;
 - the school provides high quality teaching and learning that leads to successful outcomes for pupils in terms of spiritual and moral growth, achievement, attitudes to learning, behaviour and personal development;
 - the school will promote and safeguard the welfare of all children, enabling every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to develop fully as persons and to recognise their own dignity and the dignity of others as children of God;
 - all statutory requirements are met and the work of the school is effectively monitored, evaluated and reviewed.
- 2.2 The headteacher is the leading professional in the school. Accountable to the CEO, with support and challenge from the local governing body, the headteacher provides vision, leadership and direction for the school and ensures it is managed and organised to meet the aims and targets. The headteacher working with others is responsible for evaluating the school's performance to identify the priorities for continuous improvement; 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.
- 2.3 As one of the headteachers in a multi academy trust, the headteacher will support the CEO and board in ensuring that they and their school collaborate with the other schools in the multi academy for their mutual benefit in enhancing the Catholic life of the multi academy and improving standards.
- 2.4 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, the local authority, higher education institutions and employers. Through such partnerships and other activities, headteachers play a key role in contributing the development of the education system as a whole and collaborate with others to raise standards locally.
- 2.5 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.

3. General Duties and Responsibilities

3.1 To carry out the duties of a headteacher as set out in the current School Teachers' Pay & Conditions Document.

Key Areas of Responsibility:

4 Creating the Vision

- 4.1 The 'preferred future', expressed in DoWAT's vision, values, mission and strategic plan, stems from the educational mission of the Church, which is reflected in the school's improvement plan.
- 4.2 The headteacher, working with the CEO, local governing body and others, is expected to draw on the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ to implement the Trust's vision and strategic plan, which inspires and motivates pupils, staff and all other members of the community. The vision should embed the Trust's Gospel values, moral purpose and be inclusive of stakeholders' values and beliefs.

Actions:

- Ensure the Trust's vision for the school is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted upon effectively by all.
- The vision must reflect its distinctive Catholic character, in accordance with the provisions of the Diocesan Trust Deed, based on what it means to be fully human as revealed in the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ.
- Work within the school community to translate the vision into agreed objectives and operational plans, which will promote a self-improving school system.
- Establish a commitment amongst pupils, staff and parents to the school's Mission in partnership with the CEO and the local governing body and through personal conviction.
- Demonstrate the vision and values in everyday work and practice. Motivate and work with others to create a shared culture and positive climate.
- Create a distinctively Catholic ethos that is inclusive and applies Gospel values, attitudes and practices in all aspects of school life, and that life is lived explicitly and consciously in the presence of God.
- Ensure there is planned worship, and appropriate liturgy in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.
- Ensure creativity, innovation and the use of appropriate new technologies to achieve excellence.
- Ensure that the strategic planning takes account of the diversity, values and experience of the school and community at large.

5 Leading Teaching and Learning

- 5.1 In a Catholic school the search for excellence is expressed in learning and teaching, which responds to the needs and aspirations of all its pupils and acknowledges their individual worth as children of God.
- 5.2 Headteachers have a central responsibility for raising the quality of teaching and learning and for pupils' achievement. This implies enabling pupils to achieve their God-given potential, 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.

Actions:

- Ensure a consistent and continuous school-wide focus on pupils' achievement, using data and benchmarks to monitor progress in every child's learning.
- Ensure that learning is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management.
- Secure high-quality religious education for all pupils in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church.
- Ensure high quality Personal, Social, Cultural, Moral and Values Education 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, purposes and aims of the school.
- Establish creative, responsive and effective approaches to learning and teaching.

- Create and maintain an effective partnership with parents to support and improve pupils' achievement and personal development and further the distinctive Catholic nature, purposes and aims of the school.
- Develop effective links with the parish and wider Catholic community, including local partnership arrangements, to extend the curriculum and enhance teaching and learning.
- Ensure a culture and ethos of challenge and support where all pupils can achieve success and become engaged in their own learning.
- Demonstrate and articulate high expectations and set stretching targets for the whole school community.
- Implement strategies that secure high standards of behaviour and attendance.
- Determine, organise and implement a diverse, flexible curriculum and implement effective assessment framework.
- Take a strategic role in the development of new and emerging technologies to enhance and extend the learning experience of pupils.
- Monitor, evaluate and review classroom practice and promote improvement strategies.
- Challenge underperformance at all levels and ensure effective corrective action and follow-up.

6 The Self-Improving School System and Working with others

- 6.1 In a Catholic school the role of headteacher is one of leadership of a learning community rooted in faith. The headteacher's leadership should take Christ as its inspiration. The headteacher's management of staff should demonstrate an awareness of their unique contribution as individuals, valued and loved by God.
- The headteacher must manage themselves and their relationships well. Being a headteacher is about building a professional learning community, which enables others to achieve their potential as a child of God. Through performance management and effective continuing professional development practice, the headteacher should support all staff to achieve high standards. To equip themselves with the capacity to deal with the complexity of the role and range of leadership skills and actions required of them, headteachers should be committed to their own continuing professional development.

Actions:

- Treat people fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect to create and maintain a positive school culture consistent with the Catholic ethos of the school and its Mission.
- Build a collaborative learning culture within the school and actively engage with other schools to build effective learning communities.
- Develop and maintain effective strategies and procedures for staff induction (including understanding the nature of the school as a Catholic community), professional development and performance review.
- Ensure effective planning, allocation, support and evaluation of work undertaken by teams and individuals, ensuring clear delegation of tasks and devolution of responsibilities.
- Acknowledge the responsibilities and celebrate the achievements of individuals and teams.
- Develop and maintain a culture of high expectations for self and for others and take appropriate action when performance is unsatisfactory.
- Regularly review own practice, set personal targets and take responsibility for own personal development.
- Manage own workload and that of others to allow an appropriate work/life balance.

7 Creating Systems and Processes to Manage the Organisation

7.1 In a 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.

7.2 The headteacher needs to provide effective systems and processes which are fit for purpose and which uphold the principles of transparency, integrity and probity. The headteacher should also seek to build a successful organisation through effective collaboration with others.

Actions:

- Create an organisational structure which reflects the school's values, and enables the management systems, structures and processes to work effectively in line with legal requirements.
- Produce and implement clear, evidence-based improvement plans and policies for the development of the school and its facilities.
- Ensure that, within the Catholic ethos, policies and practices take account of national and local circumstances, policies and initiatives.
- Manage the school's financial and human resources effectively and efficiently to achieve the school's educational goals and priorities.
- Recruit, retain and deploy staff appropriately and manage their workload to achieve the vision and goals of the school, implement rigorous and fair systems for managing the performance of all staff, addressing any underperformance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice.
- Manage and organise the school environment efficiently and effectively to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum and health and safety regulations.
- Ensure that the range, quality and use of all available resources is monitored, evaluated and reviewed to improve the quality of education for all pupils and provide value for money.
- Use and integrate a range of technologies effectively and efficiently to manage the school.

8 Ensuring Accountability

- 8.1 In a Catholic school the headteacher fulfils his/her responsibilities in accordance with the Mission of the school. The headteacher supports the board of directors in fulfilling its responsibilities under Canon Law to the Diocesan Trustees and in accordance with national legislation.
- 8.2 With Gospel values at the heart of his/her leadership, the headteacher has a responsibility to the whole school community. In carrying out this responsibility, the headteacher is accountable to a wide range of groups, particularly pupils, parents, carers, governors, the DFE and the DES. He/she is accountable for ensuring that pupils enjoy and benefit from a high-quality education, for promoting collective responsibility within the whole school community and for contributing to the education service more widely. The headteacher is legally and contractually accountable to the board of directors for the school, its environment and all its work.

Actions:

- Fulfil commitments arising from contractual accountability to the CEO and the board of directors.
- Develop the Catholic ethos so that everyone understands the Mission of the school, which enables everyone to work collaboratively, share knowledge and understanding, celebrate success and accept responsibility for outcomes.
- Ensure individual staff accountabilities are clearly defined, understood and agreed and are subject to rigorous review and evaluation.
- Work with the CEO and the local governing body (providing information, objective advice and support)
 to enable it to meet its responsibilities, including securing the distinctive Catholic character of the
 school.
- Develop and present a coherent, understandable and accurate account of the school's performance to a range of audiences including governors, parents and carers.
- Reflect on personal contribution to school achievements and take account of feedback from others.

9 Building Community

- 9.1 In a Catholic school there is a special relationship with the parish and the church, as well as the local community with its distinctive social context.
- 9.2 The headteacher needs to commit to engage 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, carers and across multiple agencies for the well-being of all pupils. The headteacher shares responsibility for leadership of the wider educational system and should be supportive of a self-improving school system.

Actions

- Build a school culture and curriculum, based on Gospel values and the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church, which takes account of the richness and diversity of the school's communities.
- Build a relationship with the local church and parish communities, seeing participation in the celebration of the Eucharist as a crucial point of reference and stability.
- Create and promote positive strategies for challenging racial and other prejudice and dealing with racial harassment.
- Ensure learning experiences for pupils are linked into and integrated with the wider community and promote commitment to serving the common good and communion with the wider-world.
- Ensure a range of community-based learning experiences.
- Collaborate with other agencies in providing for the academic, religious, spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural well-being of pupils and their families.
- Create and maintain an effective partnership with parents and carers, as the prime educators, to support and improve pupils' growth in the knowledge and love of God and neighbour, their achievement and personal development.
- Seek opportunities to invite parents and carers, the parish, community figures, businesses or other organisations into the school to enhance and enrich the school as a faith community and its value to the wider community.
- Contribute to the development of the education system by, for example, sharing effective practice, working in partnership with other schools and promoting innovative initiatives.
- Co-operate and work with relevant agencies to protect children.

10 Safeguarding Children & Safer Recruitment

10.1 This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people as required under the Education Act 2002 and outlined in the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education document and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Actions

The headteacher should ensure that:

- The policies and procedures adopted by the DoWAT board of directors are fully implemented and followed by all staff.
- Sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the designated person (DSL) and other staff to discharge their responsibilities, including taking part in strategy discussions and other inter-agency meetings, and contributing in the assessment of children.

All staff and volunteers feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice in regard to children, and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed disclosure policy.





Person Specification

Please ensure that you provide evidence to address the criteria on the person specification.

Evidence will be gathered from the application form (A), at interview (I) and through references (R). Certificates of professional qualifications must be brought to interview.

QUALIFICATIONS & TRAINING					
ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	Α	1	R	
A practising Catholic		Χ		Х	
Educated to Degree Level	Educated to Masters level or equivalent	Х			
QTS	Professional development or training undertaken in preparation for leadership	Х			
	Completion of NPQH or similar leadership programme	Х			
Evidence of continued and current CPD		Х	Х		
EXPERIENCE					
ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	A	_	R	
A distinctive vision for an outstanding Catholic school		Х	Χ	Х	
Experience in leading collective worship			Х		
Understanding of the central place of religious education as a core subject in the school's curriculum		х	Χ	Х	
Understanding of cultural educational issues, including national policies, priorities and legislation and any implications for Catholic Schools		Х	Х		
Evidence of prior successful leadership and management at DHT or equivalent level	Leadership experience in a Catholic school	Х	X	Х	
Evidence of raising student progress and attainment		Х	X	Х	
Led a school staff team on an aspect of school improvement		Х	X	Х	



Experience of monitoring teaching and learning, evaluating and target setting		Х	Х	Х
Participating fully as a reviewer in performance management		Х	Х	Х
Involvement in the induction of new staff	Have experience of leading and evaluating CPD and its impact on standards across a group of staff	Х	Х	
Experience of student tracking data		Х	Х	
Effective pastoral experience		Х	Х	
KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS				
ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	Α	ı	R
Understands safeguarding requirements and their application across the curriculum		Х	Х	Х
Understands and demonstrates what constitutes outstanding teaching and leading		Х	Х	Х
Knowledge and understanding of effective teaching strategies		Х	Х	Х
Uses coaching techniques to improve the teaching of others		Х	Х	
Knowledge of the characteristics of outstanding leadership		Х	Х	Х
Can articulate the strengths and areas of development of their own leadership style			Х	
Knowledge of SEND code of practice		Х	Х	
Knowledge of local and national statutory guidance, educational initiatives and trends			Х	

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Understands the process of school improvement		Χ	X	
Able to evaluate school policies and procedures			Х	
Is able to use the tracking of pupil progress and achievement to raise standards			X	
Knowledge and practice of effective behaviour management strategies		Х	X	Х
PERSONAL QUALITIES				
ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	Α	_	R
Enthusiastic, high expectations, resilient, sensitive and positive			Χ	Χ
An excellent personal and professional role model who puts Catholic values into practice			Х	Х
Demonstrates commitment to collaborative leadership and effective team working		Х		Х
Able to motivate, develop, empower and lead students, individuals and teams		Х		Х
Able to delegate and support effectively		Χ		Χ
Excellent communicator and listener with the ability to manage conflict successfully		X	X	
Proficient in the use of IT		Χ	Х	
Demonstrates a positive commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion			X	Х
Demonstrates a strong commitment to CPD for self and others			X	Х



How to apply

School visits and informal conversations with the CEO and Chair of Governors are strongly advised.

To arrange a visit to the school, please contact the Headteacher's PA, Viki Baker: **Baker.V@stmichaelscatholichighschool.co.uk**

To arrange an informal telephone or Teams call with the Trust CEO and St Michael's Chair of Governors, please contact the CEO's PA, Lee Bromfield: **Ibromfield@dowat.co.uk**

Applications for the role will only be accepted via MyNewTerm.

Closing Date: 16th January 2026 2pm Shortlisting: 20th January 2026 Interviews: 27th & 28th January 2026

School Details

- **6** 01923 673 760
- www.stmichaelscatholichighschool.co.uk
- Migh Elms Lane, Garston, Watford, WD25 OSS



