



Diocese of Lancaster
Education Service

Euntes in mundum



Headteacher of St Margaret Mary Catholic Primary School

January 2026



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St. Margaret Mary Catholic Primary School

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School Mission Statement

'Love one another as I have loved you' (John 13:24)

With Christ at our heart, we are a loving, caring family where each individual is nurtured in mind and spirit to fully become the person God created. In learning together and guided by prayer, we encourage each child to grow in knowledge and are committed to helping them reach their full potential in a safe, respectful, and stimulating environment where all are valued and respected. Our mission is to create a supportive Catholic community that nurtures hearts to serve with compassion, and hands that act with kindness, inspiring each individual to live as the hands, feet and heart of Christ in our world.

Our mission, with Christ at the centre of all we do, is to:

- Love our children
- Promote service and prayer
- Endeavour to live out Gospel Values
- Deliver the best possible education for all of our children
- Be a warm, welcoming, compassionate family where all are equally loved and valued for who they are
- Provide an inclusive environment where everyone reaches their full potential



Welcome from our Chief Executive

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming the next Headteacher of St Margaret Mary Catholic Primary School, one of the 16 schools in the Mater Christi Multi Academy Trust.

We know that choosing the right school to lead is an important decision, and we want to offer you a clear and genuine picture of who we are, where we stand, and what we aspire to become.

In October 2024, the school was inspected and found to be inadequate; the school is following a well-designed rapid recovery plan, supported by the Trust and by the new DFE RISE programme.

Our school is at a pivotal moment. Recent evaluations have highlighted that whilst the school is improving, we are under no illusion that the journey ahead will require determination, clarity, and strong leadership. That said, we also know that within our community lies enormous potential. Our pupils are eager to learn, our staff are committed to doing their best, and our families care deeply about their children's education. What we need now is the right Catholic leader to bring these strengths together and shape a positive and ambitious future.

We are searching for someone who wants their Catholic Faith to radiate across their school community; who is excited by challenge, has bounds of energy, and who is also compassionate, loving and caring. The new post holder will be supported by staff, and Governors who are focussed and united in their ambition for St Margaret Mary.

St Margaret Mary is situated in Carlisle and has been serving the Carlisle community, and beyond for over 50 years.

In September 2021, St Margaret Mary joined the Mater Christi Trust, a growing Trust of 16 schools across the Diocese. The new Headteacher will join our school leaders in developing our Trust as it grows.

St Margaret Mary has a rich history of educating generations of local families. There are currently 217 students on roll.

The Chair of Governors, Mr James Davis, is available to meet candidates to tour the school and I am available to speak to candidates who wish to discuss the post.

This is an exciting opportunity for the right candidate to work with the Local Governing Body and the Trust, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Jacky Kennedy

**Chief Executive Officer,
Mater Christi Trust**



The current Trust Schools are:

- Dean Gibson R.C Primary School, Kendal
- Our Lady and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Maryport
- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School, Carnforth
- Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, Dalton
- Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Barrow-in-Furness
- St Bernard's Catholic High School, Barrow-in-Furness
- St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, Penrith
- St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Carlisle
- St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Wigton
- St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School, Windermere
- St Gregory's Catholic Primary School, Workington
- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Lancaster
- St Joseph's Catholic High School, Workington
- St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Ulverston
- St Margaret Mary Catholic Primary School, Carlisle
- St Pius X Catholic Primary School, Barrow

Our Trust Values



LOVING
TOGETHER



LEARNING
TOGETHER



EXCELLENCE
TOGETHER



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 Local Governing Body and the Trust Board and is subject to the terms of the Catholic Education Service contract; the current conditions of service for Headteachers are outlined in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, along with relevant 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 Trust, Local 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.



Job Description

Job Title	Headteacher
Contract	Permanent
Salary Range	L14 – L20
Reporting to	Director of School Improvement and Development

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.

The 'preferred future', expressed in the strategic vision and development of a Catholic School and a Catholic Multi Academy Trust, 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 Chief Executive Officer and the Local 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 Local Governing Body, the Headteacher provides the 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, Headteachers play a key role in contributing to the development of the education system as a whole and collaborate 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.



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 Trust, Local 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.

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 educational vision and values which take account of the 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 to 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, effectively 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 Christian 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.

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 support of 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.

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.

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 is 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 Local 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.



Person Specification

The school's 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 teaching of the Roman Catholic Church and the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Lancaster. At all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ. The post therefore requires 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.

St Margaret Mary's Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

The applicant will be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Source Key: A = Application Form I = Interview R = References CC = Checking Certificates

Note: Candidates failing to meet any of the essential criteria will automatically be excluded

[A] Faith Commitment

	Essential	Desirable	Source
Practising Catholic	E		A/I/R
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
Leading school worship	E		A/I
Ways of developing religious education and worship	E		A/I
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
How relationships should be fostered and developed between the Diocese of Lancaster as well as within the Mater Christi Trust.	E		A/I
Has the commitment to enrol on the North West Dioceses Catholic Leadership Programme or equivalent. The Trust will support the appointee to do so within a time to be determined.	E		A/I/C C



[B] Qualifications

	Essential	Desirable	Source
Qualified teacher status	E		A/CC
Degree	E		A/CC
CCRS/CTC or commitment to obtaining the certificate within a time to be determined.	E		A/CC

[C] Professional Development

	Essential	Desirable	Source
Evidence of appropriate professional development for the role of Headteacher (in a Catholic school).		D	A
Evidence of recent leadership and management professional development e.g. subject leadership.	E		A
Up to date safeguarding training and knowledge of legislation for the protection of young people.	E		A/I/CC
Has successfully undertaken Designated Safeguarding Lead training or is committed to do so.	E		A/I/CC

[D] School leadership and management experience

	Essential	Desirable	Source
Recent successful senior leadership e.g. a deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher or acting headteacher	E		A/I/R
Evidence of successfully leading school improvement	E		A/I/
Evidence of the application of strategies to review, implement, evaluate and improve learning and teaching	E		A/I/R
Experience of curriculum leadership and development	E		A/I/R
Experience of working constructively with parents	E		A/I/R
Experience of monitoring staff performance	E		A/I/R
Experience of effective budget management and financial analysis		D	A/I/R
The ability to provide advice and support to the Local Governing Body to enable it to meet its responsibilities		D	A/I/R



	Essential	Desirable	Source
Understanding of accountability to the CEO and CFO within Mater Christi Multi Academy Trust in the Diocese of Lancaster		D	A/I/R
An understanding of strategic financial planning in relation to its contribution to school improvement, curriculum development and pupil achievement		D	A/I/R
To have experience of and ability to contribute to staff development. (E.g. coaching, guiding, mentoring or training individuals or teams, leading INSET)	E		A/I/R
Ability to demonstrate a good awareness of current national education policy and strategy		D	A/I/R

[E] Experience and knowledge of teaching

	Essential	Desirable	Source
Successful teaching of pupils/students in the primary phase.	E		A/I/R
Experience of teaching in more than one school		D	A/I/R
To have a working and current knowledge and understanding of the three Key Stages in the primary phase.	E		A/I/R
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
Experience of providing professional challenge and support to others through the appraisal process		D	A/I/R
To be able to effectively use data and assessment to raise standards/address weaknesses	E		A/I/R
To be able to exemplify how the needs of all pupils have been met through high quality teaching	E		A/I/R



[F] Professional Attributes

	Essential	Desirable	Source
Be able to demonstrate an understanding, awareness and empathy for the needs of the pupils at the school and how these could be met e.g. PP, SEND, EAL, FSM.	E		A/I/R
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
To have excellent written, presentation and oral communication skills (which will be assessed at all stages of the process)	E		A/I
To be a leader of learning demonstrating, promoting and encouraging outstanding classroom practice	E		A/I/R
Show a good commitment to sustained attendance at work	E		A/I/R

[G] 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

[H] 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.
- Show compassion, love and faith in day-to-day leadership decisions.
- 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.

[I] 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 or Trust, if possible, or a further supportive professional reference.	E

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

[J] Application Form and Supporting Statement

- Please fully complete the application form via [MyNewTerm](#)
- Include a supporting statement, no longer than 1300 words.

In compliance with Safer Recruitment Guidelines, CVs will not be accepted.

The supporting statement should be clear, concise and related to the specific post, *following the guidance outlined in section G above*.

Closing Date:

Applications must be received via [MyNewTerm](#) by **Monday 23rd February 2026 at 12pm**.

A date for shortlisting is to be confirmed.

Interviews will be held on **Friday 20th March 2026**

Safer Recruitment

Mater Christi Multi Academy Trust adheres to the statutory guidelines provided in the Department for Education document "Keeping Children Safe in Education" and therefore, prospective candidates applying for posts at the Trust must complete the information requested fully. Successful candidates who are provisionally offered a post with the Trust will not be able to start work until two satisfactory references, an enhanced DBS check, health check and other pre-employment checks, including safeguarding checks are in place.



Attendance at a mandatory safeguarding training session will also be a pre-requisite on starting work.

Please note that in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, an online search will be carried out as part of our due diligence on shortlisted candidates.

Candidate Privacy Notice

A copy of our candidate privacy notice can be viewed on our website.

Safeguarding

The Mater Christi Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its academies. The Trust complies with the statutory legislative requirements and guidance that seeks to protect children including 'Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance'.

In order to meet this responsibility, we follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants. Safer Recruitment Job descriptions and person specifications make reference to safeguarding and child protection and all posts are subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate (DBS).

All advertisements include our safeguarding statement and commitment.

All applicants are scrutinised to verify identity and are asked to provide evidence of academic or vocational qualifications. Professional references are requested using our standard proforma for short-listed candidates.

As a minimum, references should be from the two most recent employers and a Parish Priest, if applicable.

References are checked against previous employment history and gaps in employment. Our standard reference proforma makes reference to suitability to work with children and young people. Professional references must be obtained from professional email addresses.

The application form requires applicants to complete a disclosure of any criminal convictions.

Shortlisting

Only those candidates meeting the criteria outlined in the person specification will be shortlisted. Shortlisted candidates will take part in an in-depth interview and selection process.

Candidates will be asked to address any discrepancies, anomalies or gaps in their employment history on their application form.

Candidates are subject to DBS checks and will be reminded of their responsibility to disclose criminal convictions that if they have not already done so on the application.

Proof of right to work in the UK must also be provided at interview. On appointment an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate (DBS) will be required for all appointed posts and other pre-employment compliance checks will also be carried out.

A fitness to work declaration will be required following appointment.



Inclusion on the Single Central Record (SCR), barred list checks and prohibition from teaching checks will also be carried out.

For leadership positions, section 128 checks will be performed. All staff will receive a comprehensive induction programme covering all aspects of safeguarding and health and safety.

Equal Opportunities

We recognise the value of, and seek to achieve, a diverse workforce. We take positive steps to create an employment culture in which people feel confident of being treated with fairness.