



TOMORROW'S
LEADERS
TODAY

What are we learning about... recruiting leaders for faith schools?

Evidence Into Practice Guide



National College for
School Leadership

What are the challenges for school leadership recruitment in faith schools?

There are around 6,850 faith schools in England – accounting for around a third of all schools in England, serving about 1.7 million students. The majority of these are either Church of England or Catholic schools – with a small number of schools in the maintained sector linked with other faiths.

Numbers of schools and pupils by school faith, as at January 2007, England¹

		Church of England	Catholic	Methodist	Other Christian faith	Jewish	Muslim	No religious character	Other
Primary	No. of schools	4,441	1,696	26	58	28	4	11,106	2
	% of schools	25.6	9.8	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.0	64.0	0.0
	No. of pupils	767,323	404,354	4,486	11,537	8,685	1,148	2,909,512	631
	% of pupils	18.7	9.8	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.0	70.8	0.0
Secondary	No. of schools	205	343	–	41	9	3	2,796	2
	% of schools	6.0	10.1	–	1.2	0.3	0.1	82.3	0.1
	No. of pupils	175,313	318,591	–	37,114	6,083	1,197	2,782,443	793
	% of pupils	5.3	9.6	–	1.1	0.2	0.0	83.8	0.0

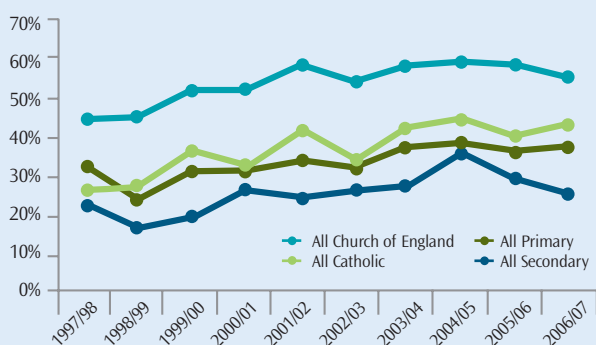
For many years, Education Data Surveys (EDS) has gathered information from schools placing advertisements for leadership posts and collected data on the outcome of school recruitment exercises. In headline terms, survey results confirm the perception that Catholic and Church of England schools appear to face a more challenging recruitment market than community schools. Anecdotal evidence suggests that other types of faith schools face similar challenges, although the numbers are too few to enable statistically significant analysis.

For 2006–7, EDS reported that 43 per cent of all Church of England schools advertising for a headteacher went on to re-advertise². The parallel figure for all Catholic schools was 55 per cent – down from a peak re-advertisement rate of 60 per cent in 2004–5. Amongst all faith schools, the recruitment challenges were greatest in the primary phase. This data compares with national re-advertisement rates in 2006–7 of 25 per cent amongst all secondary schools and 37 per cent amongst all primary schools seeking a new headteacher.

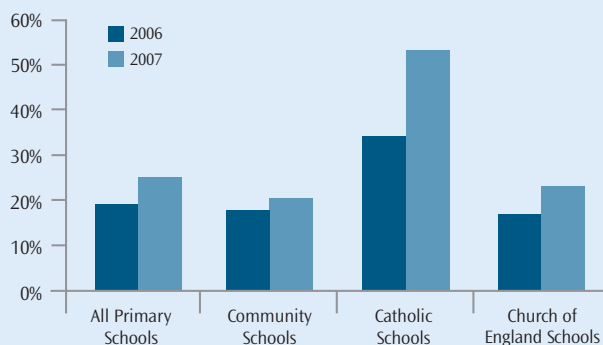
Faith schools are also disproportionately represented amongst so called ‘hard-to-recruit’ headships – defined as those schools having to re-advertise twice or more in order to secure a headteacher. A statistical analysis of headteacher vacancies between 1997 and 2005 suggested that about 6 per cent of all headteacher vacancies might be defined as ‘hard-to-recruit’³. Amongst vacancies for Church of England headships over the survey period, between eight and nine per cent fell into the hard-to-recruit category, whilst amongst Catholic schools the comparable figure was 15 per cent. It is important to remember, of course, that 15 per cent of Catholic schools – whilst a high rate – equates to a smaller number of schools than 6 per cent of the much larger population of community schools.

Looking beyond headteacher posts, data suggest that a recruitment challenge may also exist in the market for deputy headteachers in the primary phase. There is some evidence that fewer primary schools advertising for a deputy headteacher were able to make a successful appointment in 2006–7 – with faith schools reporting a higher incidence of difficulty than community schools. This underlines the need for succession planning to take account of the whole leadership team⁴.

Percentage of all headteacher posts requiring re-advertisement, by faith group and by phase, 1997–2007²



Proportion of advertisements for primary deputy headteacher posts which resulted in non-appointment, by school type, 2006 & 2007⁴



WHAT IF... We could tap into different recruitment pools?

Of course, the description 'faith school' is a broad term which covers a diverse range of organisations, each with different requirements of their school leaders and different recruitment criteria. Catholic schools, for example, require their heads to be Catholic and to take responsibility for leading the school as a Catholic community. This has obvious implications for their recruitment strategy.

Earlier Evidence into Practice Guides^{5,6,7} have explored research into the career motivations of potential school leaders as well as perceived barriers and also attractions to headship in general. The guides outline strategies which take account of such challenges. Those findings can be useful to all school settings.

In schools with a religious character, the headteacher's responsibility for leading a faith community as well as providing professional leadership may appear daunting to some candidates. Potential applicants may not appreciate the support that will be available to them to help them meet such challenges once in post. Successful recruitment marketing plans take account of this, emphasising post-appointment support programmes for incoming heads and encouraging suitable applicants to apply from other career backgrounds.



We expect our schools to be distinctively Christian and we are looking for leadership which will underpin that. That does not necessarily mean that the head has to be the focus of Christian leadership in the school – that can come from chaplaincy or other directions.



Nick McKemey, Head of School Improvement,
Church of England Education Division



CASE STUDY – Taking on leadership of a faith school

Having built her career in community schools, Tricia Sheard moved to the headship of St Catherine's Catholic High School in North Halifax in January 2008. Although Catholic herself, Tricia had not seen herself leading a Catholic school.

As a deputy head of a community school in Calderdale with twelve years experience, Tricia had not actively been seeking headship. She was keen to take on new challenges, however, and had been providing consultancy support on inclusion and special needs to neighbouring schools, at the request of the local authority. This is how she first came into contact with St Catherine's, after the school went into special measures.

When the school's Interim Executive Board initiated a recruitment process for a new headteacher, Tricia felt that she had developed her understanding of the school. She looked at St Catherine's with the eyes of an educationalist and could see that the character of the school and the job that needed doing suited her skills and interests. She applied for the post and was appointed.

Since taking up post, Tricia has been able to identify the specific benefits to leading a faith school:

- There is a clear and explicit moral foundation which is supported by parents and which provides a basis for building a positive culture for student achievement.
- Collective worship enables the school community to express its shared values, underpinning the aim of ensuring that all its young people are valued as individuals and are able to develop and achieve to their full potential.
- The use of prayer enhances the spiritual dimension of school life – for example, creating a context for events such as the Year 11 leavers celebration which provides a more meaningful rite of passage for students.

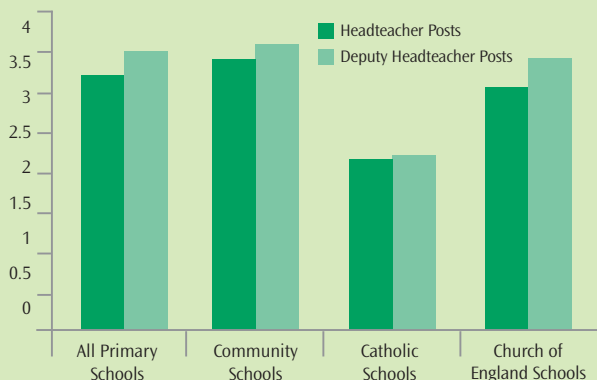
Tricia's advice to others moving into faith schools in general includes: be sincere in being prepared to promote that faith, even if you are not of the faith yourself (which could be the case with some faith schools); be sensitive to parental requirements of the school in faith matters; be mindful that there is another layer of support (and accountability) in most faith schools in the form of a diocese.

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Are leadership recruitment patterns different in faith schools?

Across **all** schools in 2007, the average number of applications per headship post was 4.9 in the primary phase and 15.2 amongst secondary schools⁴. Data demonstrate that faith schools attracted fewer headship candidates on average than community schools – a trend that is also mirrored for deputy headship posts across both primary and secondary phases. This is not surprising for those faith schools which require school leaders to have a specific faith commitment and are therefore seeking to recruit from a smaller number of eligible candidates.

Primary headteacher and deputy headteacher posts: number of candidates shortlisted per recruitment process by school type, 2007⁴



Beneath the headline trends in numbers of applications, detailed leadership recruitment data reveal other differences in appointments made by faith schools.

For example, data⁴ suggest that Catholic schools generally offer higher starting salaries to newly appointed school leaders, compared with other schools. In 2007, this was true for new primary and secondary headteachers of Catholic schools. It was also true for newly appointed deputy heads in the Catholic **primary phase** – but it was **not true** for appointments to deputy headships in Catholic secondary schools. This may be evidence of a more buoyant recruitment market for potential deputy heads in Catholic secondary schools. In fact, in 2007, the average number of applications to Catholic secondary schools deputy headteacher posts actually rose slightly, against the overall trend.

Amongst Church of England schools, in 2007 newly appointed secondary headteachers attracted starting salaries broadly in line with non-faith schools. Newly appointed primary heads, meanwhile, attracted starting salaries below the average of

Secondary headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher posts: number of applications by school type, 2007⁴

School Type	Role	Number of Applications		
		Mean	Min	Max
Community	Headteacher	17	(3)	(46)
	Deputy headteacher	19	(4)	(42)
	Assistant headteacher	23	(1)	(60)
Church of England	Headteacher	12	(3)	(21)
	Deputy headteacher	10	(4)	(15)
	Assistant headteacher	25	(3)	(40)
Catholic	Headteacher	6	(2)	(12)
	Deputy headteacher	11	(3)	(23)
	Assistant headteacher	14	(1)	(29)

their counterparts in non-faith schools. This may be because of the relatively large number of small rural Church of England primary schools and be a function of school size.

Appointments data⁴ for 2007 also suggest (when compared with the average for all schools):

- Catholic and Church of England primary schools have a slightly higher propensity to appoint internal candidates to headships – and to appoint younger candidates to deputy headship roles. Over 60 per cent of deputies appointed by Catholic primary schools were under 35, for example, compared with 46 per cent of newly appointed deputies under 35 in community primary schools.
- Catholic secondary schools also appeared more likely to appoint younger candidates to deputy headteacher posts.
- Both Church of England and Catholic secondary schools were more likely to appoint female candidates to deputy headteacher posts (compared with community schools).

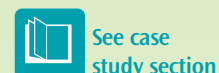
WHAT IF... I could develop new talent?

A national survey of provision for leadership and management development⁸ carried out by NCSL, the Catholic Education Service and the Church of England Education Division, identified a number of key priorities for supporting and developing leaders in schools with a religious character, including a need for:

- A more strategic approach to leadership and management development throughout a teacher's career, including early leadership development and succession planning for headship.
- Understanding and making effective, through training and development programmes, the distinctiveness of faith-based schools, including middle level leadership and specific knowledge and skills for headteachers.
- Faith-based activities to nourish teachers and leaders personally as well as professionally.

- The creation of effective models to strengthen community leadership.
- Support for school and network-based training and development through coaching and mentoring, consultancy and better e-learning, strengthening links with higher education, particularly the network of Church Colleges and Universities.
- More effective marketing of NCSL programmes and activities within the context of Anglican and Catholic schools and the communities that they serve.
- More inter-diocesan and regional opportunities.

NCSL's guide **What are we learning about...NPQH graduates?**⁵ explores specific strategies for helping school leaders to make the step to headship – for example, by offering opportunities to act up into the headteacher role, to undertake short-term placements and secondments or to join headteacher shadowing programmes.



How are faith schools and dioceses responding to the succession challenge?

The **Evidence into Practice Guide What are we learning about...the school leadership labour market?**²⁶ explores practical options which local authorities and dioceses have used in response to the succession challenge. These include strategies for: improving retention; developing new school structures; and establishing different patterns of leadership roles. These approaches can be relevant to all schools, and have been adapted and enhanced by groups of faith schools to underpin succession planning within their own context.



CASE STUDY – Retaining leaders – Diocesan sabbatical programme

Recognising that retention of effective headteachers is just as important as the development of new leaders, the Church of England Dioceses of Bradford and Ripon & Leeds have established a short sabbatical programme for serving heads. The programme enables headteachers to be released from their post for four weeks, during which they have no contact with their school. This frees them to reflect on their practice and refresh their vision for the future. Heads taking part in the scheme meet as a group at the beginning and end of the programme, shaping their own schedule of activities in between. Options include visits to other schools, a chance to spend time with a confidential counsellor and quiet days – recognising that time for reflection is part of the revitalisation process. As such, the programme is designed to cater to the pastoral needs of school leaders, providing an opportunity for spiritual renewal and development.



CASE STUDY – New school structures, different patterns of leadership

St Peter's and St Wilfrid's, two Catholic VA primary schools in Stoke-on-Trent, have been in a soft federation since February 2007 and are currently considering the next steps in moving towards a hard federation.

The federation arose out of St Peter's offer to share their headteacher with St Wilfrid's, when there was a need for intervention after failure to recruit a head. In August 2004 the previous, long-serving and well-respected headteacher of St Wilfrid's, Tunstall, had retired. The governing body experienced great difficulty in recruiting a new headteacher, employing four acting headteachers until February 2007, when the headteacher of St Peter's, Cobridge, was also appointed as the headteacher to St Wilfrid's. She had been acting headteacher since January 2007, carrying out her duties in role as executive headteacher of both schools.

The governors at St Wilfrid's had found it challenging to adapt to the current recruitment climate. Initially the governing body had a strong view that they would find it easy to recruit because they had been a Beacon school, failing to appreciate that the changing circumstances in which they were recruiting a headteacher were very different compared to their last experience resulting in them advertising unsuccessfully six times.

The diocese was anxious to protect and secure the future of Catholic education locally and worked well with the deputy director of children's services and the chair of governors and headteacher of St Peter's to set up an arrangement of support for the school, which quickly evolved to the soft federation of the two schools with the leadership of the one headteacher.



We're very open to different models. Of the 36 voluntary-aided schools in our community, seven have non-Jewish headteachers. One secondary school has a (non-Jewish) executive headteacher who runs the national curriculum and a Head of Jewish Studies who runs the Jewish Studies programme.



Jeffrey Leader, Director of Education, Agency for Jewish Education.

The cost of the programme is around £1,500 per school – considerably less than the cost of recruiting a new headteacher. Governing bodies have seen the scheme as a way of demonstrating their commitment to support a healthy work-life balance for school leaders. In the future, if presented as an entitlement, the scheme could also be used as an incentive to aid recruitment.

The scheme is still in its early stages and the sample of participants is still too small to provide quantitative evaluation. Qualitative feedback has been very positive, however, with headteachers reporting that they are returning to school with greater confidence, energy and vitality – and has resulted in at least one head postponing plans to leave their post early.

Contact: Clive Sedgewick, Diocesan Director of Education, Dioceses of Bradford and Ripon & Leeds, admin@brleducationteam.org.uk

The chair of governors of St Peter's was also appointed to the governing body of St Wilfrid's and has now also been elected as the chair of governors at St Wilfrid's.

The executive headteacher and the chair of governors of both the schools have been vital to the success so far. They have been able to share a vision of the schools working collaboratively in a federation and been able to exercise leadership by taking the communities with them on the journey of change, so that both school communities now realise the benefits of a formal relationship.

Expectations are that in the next school year, consultation will begin within the DCSF's model of 'Steps 1 to 8' to achieve a hard federation.

Key learning points

- Think of federation as a positive way of leading education for the future, not a deficit model. Federation should be viewed as an option open to schools with equal ranking alongside recruiting an individual headteacher for a single school.
- The school's advice for others is to go for hard federation from the outset. It can be argued that this is the best option to support both schools work through the challenging issues in a fair, transparent and equitable manner. In a sense it creates a 'partnership' where a single governing body gives equal strategic leadership, care and consideration to 'its' schools, rather than two separate governing bodies seeking the interest of 'their own' school in a federated arrangement.

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How are faith schools and dioceses responding to the succession challenge? – (Continued)



CASE STUDY – Different patterns of leadership

Hasmonean High School is a centre of educational excellence serving the Orthodox Jewish community of north-west London.

The school has an executive (non-Jewish) head who is in overall charge of two sites, one a boys school and one a girls school, with a headteacher on each site responsible for the day-to-day running of the two schools. The girls' site also has a principal – a female head of Jewish studies, while the boys' site has two heads of Jewish studies. Both are rabbis.

The model of executive head at Hasmonian came about following advice from independent educational consultants. The school has always achieved excellent results but the governing body wanted to drive change to enable Hasmonian to become even more effective in its ambition to be one of the leading comprehensive schools in the country. Meetings were held with significant personnel to ensure that an executive headteacher with the appropriate experience, skills and knowledge was found and that this person had a clear insight and understanding of the Jewish nature of the school and its catchment community.

By having an executive head, Hasmonian has in place someone who can concentrate fully on the school's strategic development and who can quality assure and monitor the day-to-day work of the two sites through the two headteachers and the executive leadership team.

One of the significant roles of the executive head is the development of leadership skills at all levels in the school, particularly at senior level to ensure that quality succession planning is in place to ensure Hasmonian's continued development in the future. For example, one of the headteachers is now a qualified Ofsted inspector and an accredited SIP and is using these skills not only for the benefit of Hasmonian but also in the support of other schools. The other headteacher is applying for Ofsted training. A senior leader is about to start a NCSL leadership course. Other middle leaders are having leadership training and the executive head is also working with new headteachers across the community to further develop succession planning.

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Leading a Catholic School: Resource materials

Leading a Catholic School: the Best Job in the World is a specially commissioned DVD and supporting booklet which aims to support governing bodies and dioceses in their roles of appointing leaders and nurturing potential leaders, not only for their own schools but for other schools too. It explores alternative models of leadership, providing information for governors about succession planning nationally to help them make informed decisions in the context of their own schools.

The resource was commissioned by the Catholic Education Service with support from NCSL.

The DVD and associated training materials draw on the experience of successful serving heads and those aspiring to headship in order to provide an insight into the role of headship. The title reflects the view of the heads filmed during the making of the DVD, who emphasised the joy of leading a school with a special, distinct Catholic character (while not avoiding the challenges).

Leading a Catholic School: the Best Job in the World (DVD and supporting material) is available to order via the Catholic Education Service website at: www.cesew.org.uk

Case Studies



CASE STUDY – Growing future leaders – Diocesan development programme in Southwark

The Anglican Diocese of Southwark has developed an all-through career approach to training and development which spans the needs of newly qualified teachers through to newly appointed headteachers. The diocese has run programmes for aspiring leaders for almost ten years, with separate programmes for prospective deputies and potential headteachers.

Each programme takes the form of a two-day residential assessment centre. Participants experience a range of assessment activities to familiarise themselves with the deputy and headteacher selection process. They have the opportunity to judge their own readiness for moving forward and to prepare their personal action plan.

Assessment processes draw out both general school leadership issues as well as distinctive church school requirements.

Residentials include a period of reflection to enable participants to make realistic assessment of themselves in relation to others. Participants also have the chance to role play a selection panel of governors, seeing headship from another perspective.

The programme enables the diocese to take a joined – up approach to succession planning – from talent spotting, to liaising with schools and building relationships with prospective future leaders. Most of the recent appointments to headship and deputy headship in the diocese have come from individuals who have attended the development programmes.

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We don't have a shortage of people well qualified to be headteachers. What we have is a shortage of people wanting to put themselves forward.



Oona Stannard, Chief Executive and Director,
Catholic Education Service.

Sources

- 1 DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families), June 2008, The Composition of Schools in England
- 2 Education Data Surveys, January 2008, 23rd Annual Report of Senior Staff Appointments in Schools
- 3 Hay Group, Education Data Surveys, 2007, Making The Match, Research Into “Hard To Recruit” Headship Posts, NCSL, (unpublished)
- 4 Education Data Surveys, June 2007, The State of the Labour Market for Senior Staff in Schools in England and Wales
- 5 National College for School Leadership (NCSL), April 2008, What are we learning about...NPQH Graduates?
- 6 National College for School Leadership (NCSL), April 2008, What are we learning about...the school leadership labour market?
- 7 National College for School Leadership (NCSL), July 2008, What are we learning about...recruiting primary school headteachers
- 8 National College for School Leadership (NCSL), Leadership and Faith: Working With and Learning From School Leaders

Further Information

Church of England Education Division
www.cofe.anglican.org/info/education

Catholic Education Service
www.cesew.org.uk

Agency for Jewish Education
www.aje.org.uk

What are we learning about... recruiting leaders for faith schools?

About this guide

This guide examines what we know about recruiting school leaders for faith schools. Although the information may be of interest to individual school leaders and governing bodies, it is designed for people who work across groups of schools in local authorities, dioceses and other local partnerships to secure enough high-calibre school leaders.

The guide asks three key questions:

- What are the particular challenges for school leadership recruitment in faith schools?
- Are leadership recruitment patterns different in faith schools (compared with other maintained schools)?
- How are faith schools and dioceses responding to the succession challenge?

The guide explores some of the facts and figures to help succession planners develop their own answers to these questions and brings together key intelligence about recruiting leaders of faith school to inform local strategy.

A range of additional online resources, which include more case studies and practical tools, are available at:

www.ncsl.org.uk/tomorrowsleaderstoday

Evidence into Practice Guides

This is one in a series of guides that share intelligence and insights into the leadership succession challenge facing schools. Guides will be published during 2008 and 2009 as local strategy develops. Guides currently available can be downloaded from: www.ncsl.org.uk/tomorrowsleaderstoday

Finding, developing and keeping great headteachers

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