



St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust

Chief Executive Officer (SEL) Candidate Pack

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Welcome Letter



Dear Candidate

On behalf of the directors of St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust (STCAT), I would like to thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive Officer (SEL) for our Trust. This role is central to the education of children and young people in the South of our Diocese of Northampton and is pivotal to the success of our academies.

We educate our children with faith and love to become active members of our communities and of society. The Glory of God is central to our ethos and the life of the Church is the bedrock of all that we do. Our staff, governors and parents all play a part in ensuring that the values and beliefs of our schools are protected, and that our children receive the best education we can possibly provide.

The Chief Executive Officer (SEL) role sits at the heart of this educational community and holds the effective and efficient management of schools, as well as their aspirations as Catholic environments, as key to their success.

I hope that the information contained in this candidate pack will encourage you to apply for this exciting, fulfilling and challenging career opportunity.

If you are enthused by the role and feel that you have the key beliefs, values, skills, strengths, attributes and experience that we are seeking, we look forward very much to receiving your application.

Yours faithfully

Catherine Davies
Chair, STCAT Board



“The Glory of
God is a
human being
fully alive”

About Us



Our Background

STCAT was formed with eight schools in 2020 from the merger of two other Diocesan Trusts which, with the subsequent addition of more Diocesan schools, currently consists of seventeen schools in the South half of the Diocese, with OLICAT being our sister CAT for the schools in the North of the Diocese.

The planned expectation is that three more Diocesan schools in Luton and Slough will join STCAT in the next few years to form a Trust of twenty schools with circa 12k pupils and circa 1.5k staff.

The STCAT Board of Directors reports to The Bishop of Northampton, The Duns Scotus Trustees and the Diocesan Trustees. We are supported by the Diocesan Education Director, who is our liaison point with the Diocese.

Our Mission

Our mission is encapsulated in the words of St Irenaeus - "The Glory of God is a human being fully alive." Human flourishing and the uniqueness of every individual as a child of God is at the heart of our Catholic educational enterprise.

In this context, a human being fully alive is one who is open to faith – to love – to joy – and to learning. They are daily becoming the person God created them to be and they are ready to delight in their God-given gifts, and to use them in the service of the Common Good.

Our Catholic Principles

We serve within the context of Catholic Social Teaching, seeking

- The common good - flourishing of all, especially the poor and disadvantaged
- Solidarity - one human family, thinking of the needs of others and responsible for all
- Subsidiarity - decisions at the lowest level possible, with everyone making a contribution
- Human dignity - everyone mutually respected, capable of love, loved and aware it is so

Our Aims

- Our Catholicity will be at the core of all we do and plain for all to see
- Every child will receive an excellent education and our schools known for their excellence
- We will recruit, develop, celebrate and retain the best people who will know they belong
- We will support our schools by providing exceptional central expertise and services
- We will be financially robust, provide great value for money and achieve more together

Our Core Values and Behaviours

- **Faithfilled** - inspired, hopeful, compassionate and positive
- **Truthful** - transparent, honest and authentic
- **Attentive** - humble and concerned
- **Generous** - selfless and service driven
- **Learned** - actively informed and research driven
- **Active** - visibility and walking with
- **Intentional** - ambition with integrity



Our Journey Together



Our Achievements

Some of our key achievements over the past four years include

- All of our schools are rated as good by OFSTED, with many increasingly demonstrating outstanding elements
- All but one of our schools are CSI inspection rated as good or outstanding with a strong Catholic ethos established across the schools and the central team
- The central team (School Improvement, Inclusion, RE and Chaplaincy, Training and CPD, Finance, Estates and IT) has grown and developed, including the recent appointment of a CFOO (Chief Finance and Operations Officer)
- The establishment of a financially sound Trust with a strong cashflow and balance sheet and an excellent track record of probity and strategic insightfulness
- Substantial progress in developing and implementing Trust wide systems and processes to support the performance of each school and achieve best value for money
- Enabling our spiritual, academic, behavioural and operational objectives to be kept on track despite the pressures of the pandemic

Our Ambition for Excellence

Some of our key objectives over the next four years include

- Building on our OFSTED success to enable as many schools as possible to achieve an outstanding rating or to demonstrate more outstanding elements
- All of our schools to be rated by the CSI as outstanding, demonstrating a strong Catholic ethos and enabling us to fulfill the Bishop's mission
- Our schools are consistently and comfortably above national averages in all progress and attainment measures
- Continuing to develop the quality and effectiveness of central processes and the central team to provide outstanding services to our family of schools
- Implement our strategic plan to substantially improve the position of the Trust Estate so that all of our buildings are sound, fit for purpose and up to date
- To continue the journey of focusing our schools on delivering outstanding spiritual, academic and behavioural outcomes with the support of the central team

What We Are Offering

Our new Chief Executive Officer (SEL) can expect from us

- An open, empathetic, supportive Board of challenging friends with an egalitarian and collegiate culture
- A staff culture across our family of schools and the central team that is inclusive, positive and engaged
- A sound organisation with the key building blocks in place to enable ongoing success and achievement
- A substantial opportunity to achieve both organisational and personal growth and development
- An attractive negotiable salary starting circa 135k with enhancement for exceptional candidate
- An attractive remuneration package including Teachers' Pension enrolment

What We Are Seeking

Our new Chief Executive Officer (SEL) will

- Embody and exemplify the Trust's core values, beliefs and behaviours
- Lead, motivate and inspire our children and our staff to optimum success
- Engage with and positively influence our parents and other key stakeholders
- Provide outstanding spiritual mission, strategic vision and tactical delivery
- Enable the Trust's vision, aims and ambitions to be fully met or exceeded
- Ensure that all educational, financial and legal regulatory requirements are met





Primary Reading,
Writing & Maths = 70%...
10% above national

CEO (SEL) Job Description

Accountable to Trust Board of Directors

Responsible to Chair of Trust Board of Directors

Responsible for Trust Senior Leadership Team (Finance, HR, Quality, COO), Headteachers of all academies in the Trust and partnership school improvement leads.

Key Relationships Trust Board of Directors and its sub-committees, Local Academy Committees, Director of Schools for the Diocese of Northampton. Other key partners and stakeholders include (not exclusively) Department for Education, Education and Skills Funding Agency, Regional School Commissioner, Local Authorities and Trade Unions.

Context

St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust (hereinafter referred to as the Trust) is a Catholic Multi Academies Trust within the southern half of the Diocese of Northampton including the geographical areas of Buckinghamshire, Central Bedfordshire, Luton and Slough.

The Trust currently leads and manages seventeen schools

- 1 x infant school
- 2 x secondary schools
- 1 x junior school
- 1 x multi -site primary and secondary school
- 12 x primary schools

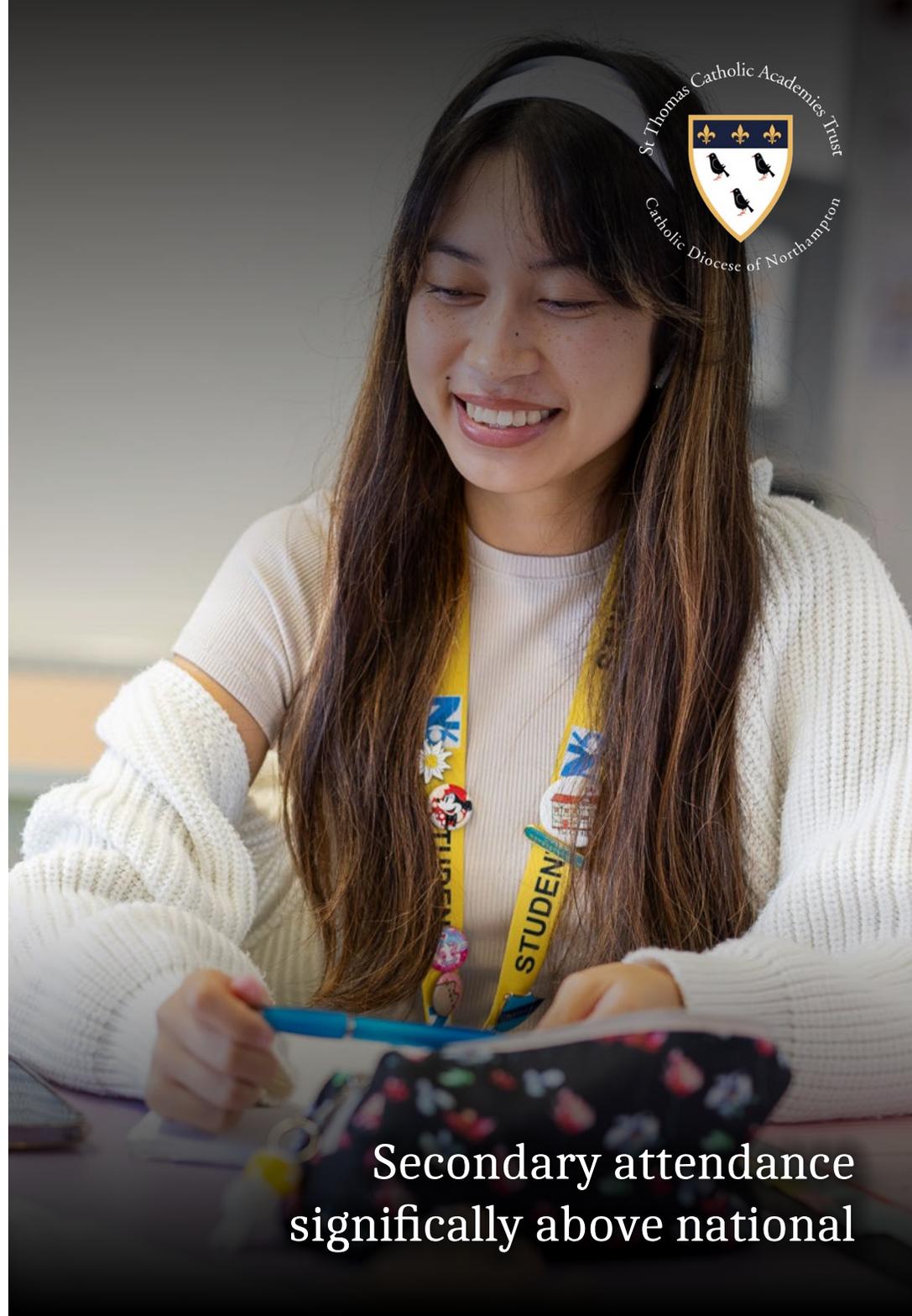
It is anticipated that the Trust will become a 20 strong school Trust over the next few years with the addition of three schools in Luton and Slough. The structure of the central posts, including the role of Chief Executive Officer (SEL), will be reviewed as the Trust develops.

Core Purpose

- Provide dynamic and strategic support and leadership to the Trust Board of Directors ensuring delivery of the Trust's strategic aims is efficient and effective.
- Ensure the highest standards of academic performance across all of the individual academies within the Trust.
- Co-ordinate opportunities for leadership development and sharing of best practice.
- Execute overall management accountability for the governance and operation of the Trust.
- Develop and uphold the Trust's values and vision, providing inspirational and visible leadership across the Trust to drive achievement of high standards in all areas of the Trust's work, particularly in ensuring the provision of sustainable, outstanding education through the preservation and development of its Catholic character.
- Be accountable as the Trust's Chief Accounting Officer, ensuring effective financial performance, long term financial sustainability and probity of the Trust.
- Hold Headteachers and members of the central team to account through involvement in the appraisal process.
- Be responsible for compliance with statutory requirements, including safeguarding, health and safety, data protection, equality and provision of quality assurance systems to monitor and evaluate effectiveness of the Trust and the academies within the Trust.

The Trust's objectives relate to the provision of Catholic education. All academies within the Trust are part of the Catholic Church and, as such, are to be conducted as Catholic academies in accordance with Canon Law, the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Northampton.

It is an occupational requirement (Equality Act 2010) that the post of Chief Executive Officer (SEL) must be filled by a practising Catholic who can show, by example and from experience, that they will ensure that the Trust and the academies within it are distinctively Catholic in all aspects. It is this duty to preserve and develop the Catholic character of the Trust and the academies within it that provides the context for the proper discharge of all the other duties and responsibilities of the Chief Executive Officer (SEL) post.



Secondary attendance
significantly above national

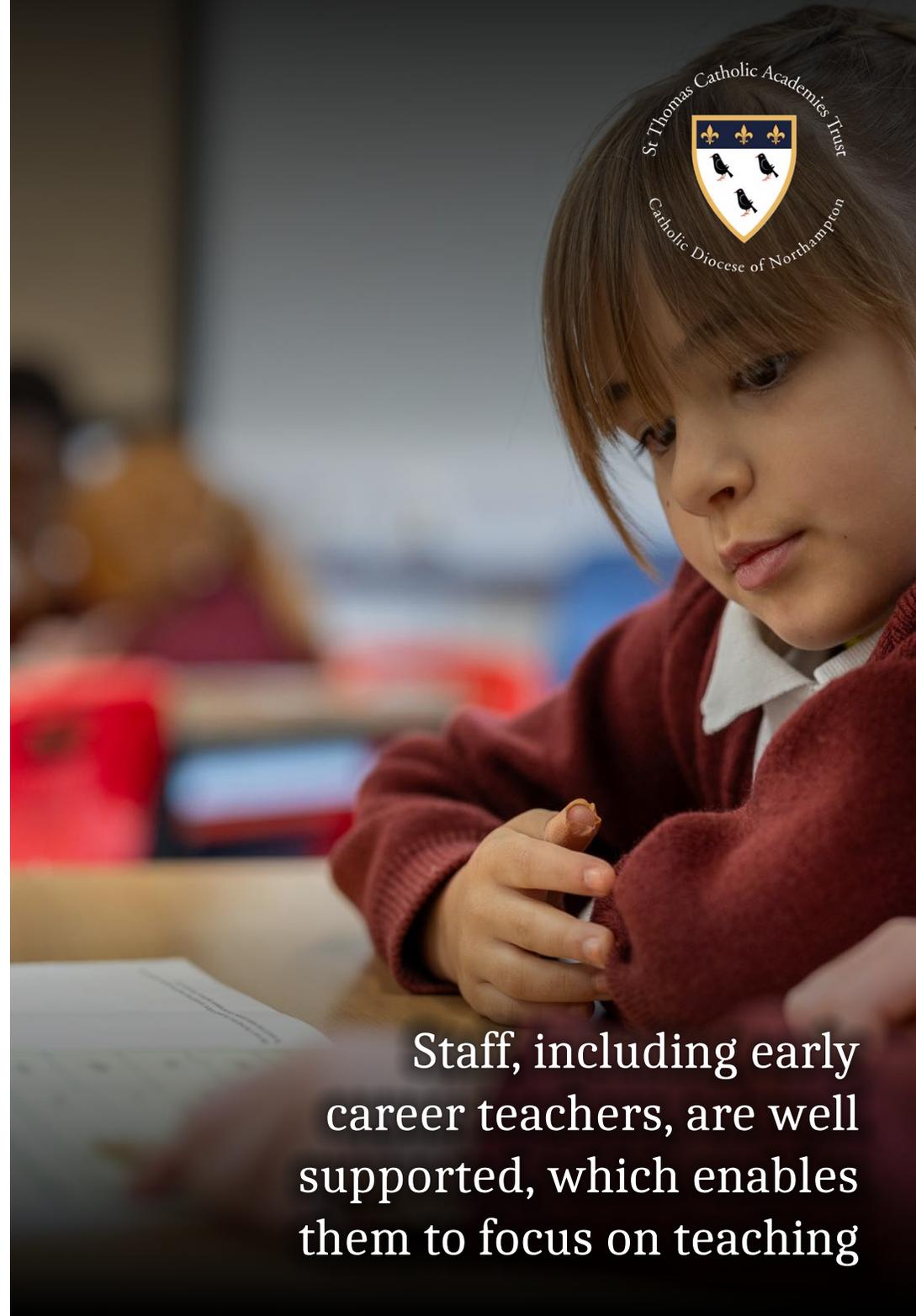
Main Duties

Preservation and Development of the Catholic Character of the Trust

- Preserve and develop the Catholic character of the Trust and the academies safeguarding the teachings of the Catholic Church by ensuring the Catholic character of all academies is reflected in every aspect of school life, particularly the curriculum, day-to-day organisation of the academies, staff development, staff and pupil relationships and the partnership between school, parents and parishes.
- Work in partnership with the Director of Schools for the Diocese of Northampton and the Chief Executive Officer (SEL) for the other Diocesan MAT to deliver the vision for Catholic Education across the Diocese.
- Ensure each academy within the Trust is able to meet its responsibilities in relation to specific requirements of governance in a Catholic academy.
- Act at all times in accordance with the determinations of the Bishop of Northampton and ensure any directives which may be issued by him are upheld in all academies.

Strategic Leadership

- Provide inspirational and effective leadership, vision and strategic focus to achieve the highest levels of performance as determined by the Trust Board.
- Report regularly to the Trust Board and ensure that the Board is appropriately informed in order to effectively carry out its functions.
- Support the Trust Board of Directors in the formulation, development and review of strategy and ensure that all decisions made by the Trust Board are fully implemented
- Ensure a culture of continuous improvement and continuous professional development within the Trust.
- Ensure all academies in the Trust are fully inclusive.
- Ensure that expectations for progress and attainment for all pupils are consistently high across the Trust in line with expectations for all areas of the Trust.
- Develop the Trust, its mission and values together with implementing efficient infrastructure allowing the Trust and its academies to focus on achieving excellence.
- Form strategic partnerships with national bodies, other educational institutions, the Diocese of Northampton, business and the wider Catholic and local community and use these to achieve and influence positive outcomes for the Trust and Catholic education within the Diocese of Northampton.



Staff, including early career teachers, are well supported, which enables them to focus on teaching

Teaching and Learning and School Improvement

- Lead the Trust's educational vision by drawing on the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ and ensure that this vision is understood and supported by employees of the Trust at every level as well as parents, pupils and the wider community.
- Provide effective, inspirational and Christ-centred strategic leadership for all academies, inspiring and motivating all those engaged in the activities of teaching and learning by ensuring that school improvement is at the core of every decision taken in fulfilment of Canon 806 (2) which requires that all Catholic schools are 'at least as academically distinguished as other schools in the area' so that each school meets all national targets/performance measures.
- Provide strategic direction and be accountable for all aspects of Teaching and Learning and professional standards across the Trust.
- Lead the Trust wide school improvement strategy to ensure each academy's performance is identified, analysed, appropriately costed and prioritised solutions are developed and secured.
- Responsible for developing and leading school improvement across the Trust providing quality assurance and accountability achieved by a rigorous and robust system of target setting, regularly reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer (SEL) and reported to the Trust Board.
- Set measurable and aspirational targets for improvement.

Finance and Resources

- Act as the Trust's Accounting Officer and ensure that robust systems are in place so that all funds within the Trust are managed efficiently, effectively and in accordance with the Academies Trust Handbook.
- Ensure the Trust's financial viability is secure, firmly based on accurate analysis, proper stewardship of funds, optimum use of resources and the generation of sufficient surplus funding to meet development needs.
- Review and approve each academy annual budget within the Trust and ensure all budgetary targets are met and efficiencies maximised.
- Accountable for managing large scale asset/major capital projects across the Trust estate and ensure all Trust assets and facilities are managed appropriately and consistently
- Ensure efficient and effective procurement systems are established to negotiate and agree optimum services to achieve economies of scale and value for money.
- Lead and advise on the allocation of resources (financial, staffing and physical) across the Trust.
- Develop and maintain a Trust-wide communications and marketing strategy to guide the Trust and staff in their communications both internally and externally including liaising with stakeholders, local and national media and social media.



Leaders are highly skilled. Governors and trustees, for example, know the school's strengths and support the school effectively.

Compliance and Risk

- Ensure the Trust complies with all legislative and regulatory requirements to meet its statutory responsibilities including Health and Safety, Safeguarding, requirements of Companies House, the Charity Commission, Data Protection & Copyright, Equality and Inclusion.
- Ensure that the Trust meets all requirements laid down in Canon Law.
- Ensure compliance with the Funding Agreement(s) and Trust Scheme of Delegation.
- Be responsible for ensuring the implementation of all policies across the Trust.
- Ensure robust and appropriate proactive risk mitigation is managed for the Trust and align the Trust risk strategy to academy/school risk strategies.
- Ensure there are clear quality assurance systems embedded across the Trust that drive consistency and improvement in performance.

People Management

- Ensure implementation of the requirements set out in the Bishops' Memorandum on the Appointment of Teachers in Catholic Schools in respect of staffing and the appropriate use of Catholic Education Service employment documentation taking into account any requirements specified by the Diocese of Northampton and employment legislation.
- Ensure the Trust has an effective workforce strategy providing the efficient and effective deployment of all staffing resources and the ability to develop capacity for succession planning.
- Ensure the Trust has an effective and consistent system of performance management that provides for the continuous development of all employees and which in particular is successful in developing future Catholic leaders of education.
- Ensure that the Trust has high quality employment practices promoting equality, diversity and inclusion including ethical practices of recruitment and retention of staff.
- Ensure the Trust has an effective HR strategy delivering expert HR advice to the schools/academies on recruitment and retention, pay and conditions of service, staff performance, employee relations, health and wellbeing and staff development supported by legally compliant HR policies, processes, procedures and internal management controls.
- Line manage and support the Trust SLT, Partnership School Improvement leads and all Head teachers.
- Coach and mentor Head teachers, as required, providing advice, guidance and development strategies to enhance their leadership skills, working with partnership school improvement leads.
- Support the Board of Directors with the recruitment and performance management of Head teachers within the Trust.



**Governors and the Trust
have given critical support
to the school leadership;
as a result, leaders excel at
promoting the Catholic life
and mission of the school.**

The post-holder must carry out their duties with full regard to the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy in relation to employment and service delivery.

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to satisfactory references which will be requested prior to interview, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, medical check, evidence of qualifications plus verification of the right to work in the UK.

The Trust is committed to ensuring that it complies with all legislative requirements on safeguarding and child protection and that the Trust actively values and promotes diversity, unity and community cohesion and that it supports pupils to become successful, compassionate citizens. The Trust will ensure a continual focus on equality as measured by pupil progress and outcomes.

Whilst every effort has been made to outline the key duties and responsibilities of the role, it is not an exclusive list. The duties and responsibilities of the role may vary from time to time and the post holder may be required to undertake other duties and responsibilities commensurate with the role.

Additional Information Relating to the Post

Start date: 1st September 2025

Salary: Circa 135k, with enhancement for exceptional candidate

Contract: Permanent

Pension: Teachers' Pension Scheme

Terms and Conditions

Expenses: Work-related expenses will be paid as per the Trust Expenses Policy

Annual Leave: 35 days during non-term time, plus bank holidays

Notice Period: 6 months

DBS: Enhanced DBS required

Travel: The Chief Executive Officer (SEL) will be required to travel between, and work at the Trust Office based in Luton and academies of the Trust and other geographical locations associated with the Trust and Diocese. It is essential that the Chief Executive Officer (SEL) holds a valid UK driving license.

References: In addition to 2 professional references a positive and supportive reference is required from a priest where the applicant worships regularly.

Medical: The successful applicant will be required to complete a Medical Questionnaire



100% of schools good or better - Ofsted

Chief Executive Officer (SEL) Person Specification



Assessment via: A – Application form; I – Interview; R- Reference

A - Training and Qualifications	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Educated to degree level	•		A
Qualified Teacher Status	•		A
Catholic Certificate of Religious Studies or equivalent		•	A
National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH)		•	A
National Leader in Education/Local Leader in Education		•	A
Trained Ofsted and/or Diocesan Inspector		•	A
Management training or qualification	•		A
Evidence of commitment to continuing professional and personal development of self and others	•		A
B - Faith Commitment			
Practising Catholic in full communion with the Catholic Church	•		R
Able to articulate a clear philosophy for Catholic education	•		I
Commitment to leadership role in spiritual development of pupils and staff	•		I
Understanding of and commitment to curriculum Religious Education in a Catholic school	•		I
Understanding the importance of sensitivity in working with other denominations and faiths in the local community	•		I
C - Experience of Educational Leadership & Management			
Experience of leading a Multi Academy Trust preferably within a Catholic school setting		•	A
Significant experience of headship in a Catholic school with demonstrable impact on outcomes for pupils	•		A
Experience of working collegiately with other Professional experts (e.g. Finance, HR, Estates, Operations) to deliver an organisational strategy	•		I
Demonstrable experience of successful system leadership/school improvement across a wide and diverse range of schools leading to rapid and sustained improvement	•		A/I
Demonstrable use of successful strategies for raising pupil achievement and advancing effective teaching and learning	•		I
Evidence of leading strategic planning and financial management, including identifying and addressing strategic risks and building organisational resilience and sustainability	•		I
Experience of successfully leading and managing whole school change initiatives	•		I
Experience of working cross educational phases between other academies/schools		•	I
Experience of developing partnership working across a Multi Academy Trust		•	I

Chief Executive Officer (SEL) Person Specification *Continued*



D - Professional Experience and Knowledge	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
Understanding of the Catholic MAT's role	•		
Current and up-to-date knowledge and understanding of effective governance systems in MATs		•	
Demonstrable up-to-date knowledge of developments in education	•		
Proven experience of strategic financial management, including budget formulation, medium-term financial planning, monitoring and control	•		
Evidence of strategic planning which has brought about significant organisational change	•		
Evidence of ability to build effective leadership teams and experience of partnership working of leadership teams across a Trust	•		
Evidence of robust performance management resulting in improvement in standards and building leadership capacity	•		
Experience in monitoring, analysing and reporting on an organisation's activity, outcomes and impact to Directors or Governors	•		
Experience of risk management and producing proactive risk mitigation strategies	•		
Understanding of equal opportunities and able to put this into practice, including the need to prepare pupils for life in a multi-faith, multi-cultural society	•		
Experience of promoting equality and diversity in relation to employment and service delivery	•		
Proven success in building effective partnerships with the Diocese, DfE, EFSA and local authorities		•	
E - Professional Competencies			
Ability to think strategically and develop a vision for the MAT underpinned by a strong Catholic ethos and values	•		
Ability to cultivate a sense of community within the MAT	•		
Ability to build positive organisational culture, encourage reflection, delegate responsibility, build teams, strive for continuous improvement and inspire staff to achieve their full potential	•		
Ability to maintain positive and constructive relationships with Headteachers, governors, parents, local parishes and with other individuals and agencies associated with the MAT	•		
Ability to think analytically, making informed use of inspection, benchmarking, KPIs and research findings	•		
Ability to investigate problems, evaluate options, identify solutions, make and implement plans and monitor outcomes	•		
Ability to work effectively and pragmatically within policies and procedures	•		A/I
Well-developed written, presentation and public speaking skills including the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of audiences	•		A/I
Strong IT skills, ability to identify where technological innovation could make systems/processes more efficient and/or effective	•		
Ability to organise work, prioritise tasks, make decisions and manage time effectively providing calm and mature leadership in the context of a dynamic and fast environment	•		R
Ability to manage conflict effectively	•		R/I

Chief Executive Officer (SEL) Person Specification *Continued*



F - Personal Attributes	Essential	Desirable	Assessed
To be capable of being the public face of the MAT and influencing strategic partners and other external bodies for the benefit the MAT and Catholic education in the Diocese of Northampton	●		I
Able to bring presence and gravitas to the role whilst remaining approachable and professional at all times	●		I
Demonstrate a variety of leadership styles and management approaches	●		I
To have emotional resilience	●		I
To have the ability to self-evaluate and reflect	●		I
Able to adapt to changing circumstances and new ideas	●		I
Visible and approachable, empathetic and enjoys engaging with children of all ages, staff, parents and the wider community	●		R
Commitment to equality of opportunity and inclusion within a Catholic ethos	●		A
To be an inspiring role model for staff and pupils	●		R/I
G - Safeguarding			
Have a comprehensive knowledge of safeguarding in educational settings	●		I
Have significant practical experience as a designated safeguarding lead in an educational setting		●	A/I

How to Apply

For more information about this attractive role, or for an informal discussion, please contact our retained consultant at Academicis, Ross Laird at: rlaird@academicis.co.uk or **01223 907979** or **07901 585959**.

If it would assist you in your decision making, informal discussions with the Trust Chair, Catherine Davies, and/or with the incumbent CEO (SEL), Joe Richardson, may also be arranged via Ross Laird.

Closing date for applications: Monday 3rd March 2025

Shortlisting date: Friday 7th March

Interview dates: Thursday 13th March and Friday 14th March 2025

To apply for the role please contact: Ross Laird at rlaird@academicis.co.uk



Registered Office

St Thomas Catholic Academies Trust
St Martin De Porres Catholic Primary School,
Pastures Way, Luton,
Beds, LU4 0PF