



Appointment of Headteacher

Information for Candidates





Welcome from the Chair of Governors

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Headteacher at St. Francis Catholic Primary School, Braintree.

At St. Francis, our children are at the heart of everything we do. We are proud to have created a happy, purposeful, and stimulating environment where every child can achieve the highest possible standards of educational, personal, and spiritual development.

Our pupils' behaviour and relationships are rooted in our mission statement:

“Following in the footsteps of St Francis; we love God, learning together as a community, using our hands, our heads, and our hearts.”

Our dedicated and specialist staff, supported by committed governors, work tirelessly to provide the best education for all our children.

We are very proud of our school. Our most recent Ofsted inspection (June 2024) stated:
“St Francis is an inclusive school where pupils are happy. They love coming to school and are proud to talk about the values and virtues they learn.”

Our children achieve well academically. In 2025, 83% of Year 6 pupils met the national standard in Reading, Writing, and Maths, with 17% achieving greater depth.

Visits to the school are warmly welcomed by prior arrangement. If you wish to schedule a visit, please contact Sue Miller, School Business Manager, via the school office. We believe you will experience the ethos of St. Francis from the moment you arrive.

Yours Sincerely

Lucy Clayton
Chair of Governors





Our Catholic School

Ethos & Values

Following in the footsteps of St. Francis we love God, learning together as a community, using our hands, our heads and our hearts.

As a Catholic School, St. Francis is an educational community, where Christian religious and moral values are the basis for all its activities. The aims of the school are:

- To provide a curriculum based on Gospel values that is varied, challenging and inspiring and which enables every individual to fulfil their potential to the highest possible standard.
- To have a school with a clear sense of purpose and direction – with procedures being constantly subject to monitoring and evaluation to ensure a well-resourced, progressive environment.
- To create and maintain a happy, stimulating and productive working environment where the children can become independent and active learners.
- To strengthen the home, school and parish communities to enable the children to acquire the highest spiritual and moral values.
- We believe that our children will learn best
 - In a spirit of praise and encouragement
 - When we develop their independence
 - When we set high expectations
- We expect our children
 - To do their best
 - To be polite with high standards of behaviour
 - To think of others
- Our work with children requires us at all times to ensure
 - That every child is safe and secure.

Virtues

At St Francis, we follow the *Virtues to Live By* programme which allows the children to explore virtues sourced from the Christian tradition but common to all faiths and cultures. Learning focuses on a different virtue every three weeks (four in each term) through circle time sessions, whole class discussions and through prayer and worship. It complements both our Religious Education and PSHE (including RSE) teaching and is very much part of the Catholic Life of the school.



St Francis Catholic Primary is a Voluntary Aided school serving the Catholic parishes of Braintree, Halstead, Great Dunmow and surrounding villages. Our mission is to offer Catholic education, spiritual and moral teaching to the children in our care. Religious education lies at the core of everything that we do. Collective acts of worship for the whole school take place four times a week and in individual classes on the remaining day. Our clergy visit our school regularly celebrating Mass, visiting classes and conducting the Sacrament of Reconciliation. In addition to this, prayer is important at all times both collectively and individually.

Our Peace Garden is a focal point for prayer within our school. It is used by the children for both individual and class prayer, as well as being a whole school gathering place for our annual May Procession. The children look after the Peace Garden throughout the year, keeping it tidy and well-presented. It is a very special place for our school.

Prayer of St Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love.

Where there is injury, pardon.

Where there is discord, unity.

Where there is doubt, faith.

Where there is error, truth.

Where there is despair, hope.

Where there is sadness, joy.

Where there is darkness, light.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek

To be consoled as to console.

To be understood as to understand.

To be loved as to love.

For It is in giving that we receive.

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned.

It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

“The school promotes an atmosphere of welcome where every person is valued as a unique gift from God and where everyone’s gifts and talents are recognised and celebrated. Pupils behave exceptionally well; they are extremely respectful and appreciate all the school has to offer. The school promotes exemplary partnerships between the school, the parish and the home which make a significant contribution to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. Staff act as excellent role models in promoting the Catholic life of the school.”

Catholic School Inspectorate Report (May 2023)

Contextual Information

St Francis Catholic Primary School is a diverse community, served by an established, experienced and dedicated staff.

Factor	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total
Total pupils (current)	26	29	30	30	30	31	29	205
Free School Meals	15.4%	10.3%	3.3 %	13.3%	6.7%	9.7%	13.8%	10.2%
EAL	19.2%	17.2%	30.0%	40.0%	20.0%	25.8%	17.2%	24.4%
Pupil Premium	15.4%	10.3%	3.3%	13.3%	6.7%	9.7%	13.8%	10.2%
Medical conditions	7.7%	10.3%	3.3%	10.0%	3.3%	12.9%	17.2%	9.3%
EHCP	0%	3.5%	0%	6.7%	3.3%	0%	0%	1.95%
SEN support (K)	3.9%	6.9%	6.7%	10.0%	10.0%	0%	13.8%	7.3%

At St Francis, pupils are supported to access the key cultural, historical, artistic, linguistic, mathematical, technological and scientific knowledge necessary to make connections and informed decisions; to become life-long learners prepared for life in 21st century Britain and the wider world.

The curriculum is designed to develop creativity, to foster the ability to solve problems, to enable learners to become responsible members of the community and to become effective communicators. Emphasis is placed on embedding the skills pupils need for future learning, including resilience, adaptability, self-reliance and self-regulation.

Pupils are enabled to build strong and positive relationships to embrace the character and resilience needed to deal with future challenges. Pupils learn about the importance of positive personal attributes – such as self-worth, honesty, kindness and a sense of justice and are encouraged to become respectful, focussed and caring.

The broad and balanced curriculum incorporates the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and a range of other experiences and opportunities which best meet the learning and developmental needs of pupils. Individual subject disciplines ensure that subject specific knowledge, vocabulary and skills help to secure prior learning, develop and extend future learning and build cohesively towards clear end points (end EYFS, end KS1, lower KS2 and upper KS2).

The curriculum aims to provide pupils with memorable experiences, investigative and enquiry based learning activities, purpose, audience and relevance for learning and rich opportunities from which they can learn and develop a range of transferable skills. The inclusive environment, where learners demonstrate high levels of enjoyment in their education, enables pupils to make good progress in a range of subjects and areas of learning.



School	Number of Pupils at End of Year 6	% of Pupils Meeting Expected Standard	% of Pupils Meeting a Higher Standard	Average Score in Reading	Average Score in Maths
St Francis Catholic Primary School, Braintree	30	83%	17%	107	107
Cressing Primary School, Braintree	29	79%	7%	105	107
Lyons Hall School, Braintree	60	73%	18%	108	107
Notley Green Primary School, Braintree	59	66%	7%	106	106
White Court Primary School, Braintree	87	64%	6%	106	106
Bocking Primary School, Braintree	26	62%	12%	105	103
John Ray Junior School, Braintree	108	62%	6%	105	103
Beckers Green Primary School, Braintree	45	60%	11%	104	104
Great Bradfords Junior School, Braintree	89	56%	4%	105	103
John Bunyan Primary School, Braintree	69	55%	1%	104	102
St Michael's CofE Primary School, Braintree	58	52%	9%	104	103
Rayne Primary School, Braintree	27	48%	7%	104	101
Stisted CofE Primary School, Braintree	15	47%	20%	106	105



"St Francis is an inclusive school where pupils feel happy."

"They love coming to school and are proud to talk about the values and virtues they learn."

"Pupils feel part of a community where everyone is valued."

"Pupils are safe, and say without hesitation, that they feel safe in school."

"Pupils learn a rich and broad curriculum. They achieve well."

"They enjoy reading regularly and love spending time in the school libraries."

"Children in the early years make a positive start to school. The early years curriculum supports children well to develop their learning." "Well-planned activities and high-quality resources actively engage children in their learning."

"Children are naturally curious and highly motivated to learn."

"There are high expectations for behaviour. Staff apply these to make sure that classrooms are productive places for thinking and learning." "Consequently, there is very little disruption to learning in the school."

Ofsted (June 2024)

Resources

Our school is well resourced, our buildings and premises are well maintained. The school year on year maintains a viable financial position.

The Future

Under the leadership of our retiring Headteacher of 11 years, along with her dedicated leadership team and staff, supportive parents and our Catholic community, St Francis Catholic Primary School is a secure school.

The school and parish community is ready to welcome our new Headteacher with the loving arms of God as we continue following in the footsteps of St Francis.

A Headteacher who will maintain and build upon our current successes and bring with them a vision and focus for further development, learning together as a community, using our hands, our heads and our hearts.

The Governing Body welcome applications from practising Catholics with good standing in the community and experience of leadership within primary education.



Job Description

HEADTEACHER

St. Francis Catholic Primary School, Braintree.

Leadership Scale: L15 – L21 (£73,105-£84,699)

Responsible to: The headteacher is an employee of the Governing Body and is required to carry out professional duties as detailed in this job description, and in Canon Law, the Trust Deed and Instrument of Government for the school.

1. Introduction

1. This appointment is with the governors of the school under the terms of the Catholic Education Service contract signed with the governors/trustees as employers. The governors 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 life in the school.
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.
3. This job description may be amended at any time, following consultation between the Headteacher and the Governors and will be reviewed annually.

Core Purpose of the Headteacher

4. To set the context, 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.
5. The core purpose of the Headteacher is to ensure 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 Diocese of Brentwood;
 - 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: be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; achieve economic well-being; 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.

General Duties and Responsibilities

To carry out the duties of the Headteacher as set out in the current School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

Key Areas of Responsibility

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

Actions:

- Create and maintain a distinctively Catholic ethos that is inclusive and applies Catholic values, attitudes and practices in all aspects of school life, recognising that life is lived explicitly and consciously in the presence of God. The ethos and strategic direction should be established and sustained in partnership with the governing board and through consultation with the school community.
- Ensure there is planned worship, and appropriate liturgy in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.
- 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.
- Create a culture where pupils experience a positive and enriching school life



- Uphold ambitious educational standards of excellence which prepare pupils from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life
- To work with and motivate others to ensure creativity, innovation and quality, including in the use of appropriate new technology, to achieve excellence and nurture human wholeness.
- Promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment
- 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.
- Ensure a culture of high staff professionalism

Teaching **1.1** In a Catholic school, the search for excellence is expressed in learning and teaching, which responds to the needs and aspirations of its pupils and acknowledges their individual worth as children of God.

Actions:

- Establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn
- Secure high quality religious education for all pupils in accordance with the doctrines and teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Ensure high quality Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church.
- Ensure high quality Relationship, Sex and Health Education in accordance with the teachings and doctrines of the Catholic Church.
- Ensuring quality provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education in line with the distinctive Catholic nature, purposes and aims of the school.
- Ensure teaching is supported by high levels of subject expertise
- Ensure effective formative assessment

Curriculum and assessment

Actions:

- Ensure a broad, structured and coherent curriculum which sets out the knowledge, skills and values that will be taught
- Establish effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional networks and communities



- Ensure that all pupils are taught to read through the provision of evidence-informed approaches to reading, particularly the use of systematic synthetic phonics in schools that teach early reading
- Ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils

Behaviour

Actions:

- Have high expectations for pupils' behaviour, built upon relationships, rules and routines, based on Gospel Values which are understood clearly by all staff and pupil including courteous conduct in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- Manage behaviour consistently, fairly and respectfully
- Ensure that adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen

Additional and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Actions:

- Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils
- Create a culture and practices that enable pupils to access the curriculum and learn effectively
- Ensure the school works effectively with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties under the SEND code of practice

Professional development

Actions:

- Ensure staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities
- Prioritise the professional development of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation which is consistent with the standard for teachers' professional development
- Ensure that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school, as well as within it, including nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes to build capacity and support succession planning

Organisational management

1.1 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.

1.2 The Headteacher provides effective organisation and management of the school and seeks ways of improving organisational structures and functions based on rigorous self-evaluation. The Headteacher deploys people and resources efficiently and effectively to secure the school's



1.3 aims and mission through meeting specific objectives in line with the school's strategic plan and financial objectives.

Actions:

- Ensure the protection and safety of pupils and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding
- Prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds
- Ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload
- Establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently
- Ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk
- To ensure stewardship of the buildings and grounds in relation to Diocesan requirements
- To provide a safe and secure environment for all who work in and visit the school

Continuous school improvement Actions:

- Identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit school effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement
- Develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context
- Ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement over time

Working in partnership

In a Catholic school, the headteacher shares responsibility for the mission of the school and the wider Diocesan educational system and is therefore called to work in collaboration with others including, parents, clergy, religious, diocesan officers, colleague headteachers and agencies set up by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, as and when appropriate

Actions:

- To recognise the authority of the Bishop in relation to the provision of Catholic education in the Diocese and to work with Diocesan authorities to provide them with such information as they require
- Forge constructive relationships with parents to support and improve pupils' achievement and furthering the distinctive Catholic nature, purposes and aims of the school
- Develop effective links with the parish and wider Catholic community. Work successfully with other schools, including other

Catholic schools, and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support

- Create working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all pupils

Governance and accountability

Actions:

- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, upholding their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- Create professional working relationships with those responsible for governance
- Ensure that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account
- Ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties



PERSON SPECIFICATION
Appointment of Headteacher

Please write your supporting statement /letter giving evidence of how you meet each of the essential criteria.

	Essential	Desirable
Faith Commitment		
1. Practising and committed Catholic in good standing with the Church	✓ R	Evidence of participation in parish or Catholic community life
2. A secure understanding of the distinctive nature of the Catholic school	✓ AI	
3. Understanding of the headteacher's role as pastor	✓ AI	
4. Understanding of the school's role in the Catholic and wider community	✓ AI	
5. Ability to demonstrate care, compassion and reconciliation	✓ A	
6. Ability to lead acts of worship in the Catholic school	✓ I	
Qualifications and Training		
1. Degree + QTS	✓ AD	
2. Evidence of continuing professional development in preparation for HT post	✓ A	NPQH Post Grad level qualification MA in Catholic School Leadership
3. Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies (CCRS)		✓ D
4. Willingness to undertake CCRS within 2 years of appointment	✓ A	
Experience		
5. A record of substantial, successful teaching experience, including teaching more than 1 Key Stage in the primary age range.	✓ ARI	Exper.in a variety of schools
7. Experience as a successful Headteacher, Head of School, Deputy or Assistant Headteacher	✓ ARI	
2. Experience of effecting change in teaching, learning or curriculum either at phase or whole school level	✓ ARI	
3. Experience of leadership role within a primary school;	✓ ARI	



Professional Knowledge and Understanding		
4. Understanding the expectations in the Ofsted Framework about what makes an effective school.	✓ AI	Understanding of the expectations of the S.48 denominational Inspection
5. Working knowledge of school planning, evaluation, assessment and accountability	✓ ARI	The ability to role model excellent teaching
6. Ability to analyse data, develop strategic plans, set targets and achieve desired outcomes	✓ AI	
7. Thorough knowledge and understanding of current educational issues	✓ AI	
8. Ability to develop policies and procedures that demonstrate the Catholic ethos of the school and a commitment to equal opportunities for all	✓ AI R	
Promoting the welfare of children		
9. A good understanding of up to date policy and practice with regard to Safeguarding. Commitment to the safeguarding and well-being of staff and pupils	✓ I	
Professional Skills and Abilities		
10. Evidence of working effectively with the Headteacher , staff, governors and parents	✓ RI	
11. Ability to communicate effectively in writing and orally to a range of audiences including pupils, parents, staff, governors, clergy, fellow professionals and the media	✓ AI	
12. Ability to produce clear reports, information and advice to staff and governors and to provide clear information to the Diocese and the CES when required	I R	Understanding the criteria for evaluating a Catholic school
Personal Qualities		
13. Evidence of leading by example, demonstrating good interpersonal skills, with the ability to enthuse and motivate others and develop effective partnerships.	✓ RI	
14. Stamina, energy and resilience; confidence	RI	
15. Optimistic outlook	R	
16. Commitment to own work/life balance as well as that of others	AI	
Other		
17. Understand and support the Catholic ethos of our Catholic School, including the spiritual development of the pupils and the school's role within the community.	✓ AIR	
18. Evidence of a strong commitment to Catholic education;	✓ AIR	



A – Application form
D – Documents
I – Interview
R - References

References

- Positive and supportive reference from the Priest where the applicant regularly worships; in good standing with the Church; reference without reservation.
- Positive recommendations in professional references, without reservation.

APPLICATIONS

We warmly welcome and encourage applicants to contact our school and speak to Mrs Sue Miller, School Business Manager to obtain further information and arrange a date to tour the school. An application pack is available on request.

Completed applications should be sent to the school, marked:

FAO: Lucy Clayton (Chair of Governors)

St Francis Catholic Primary School

Gilchrist Way

Braintree

CM7 2SY or via email to admin@st-francis.essex.sch.uk

Closing Date: 2nd February 2026

Shortlisting date: 11th February 2026

Interview Date: 25th February 2026

Please note that we do not accept CVs or applications from agencies. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. ***This is a reserved post and is open to practising Catholics only, please review the document produced by the Diocese of Brentwood "Definition of a Practising Catholic for Reserved Posts" for further information***



St Francis is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We will ensure that all our recruitment and selection practices reflect this commitment. The successful candidate will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, along with other relevant employment checks. Please note that this will also include a check of life online.

Applications should be on a **CES application form**, and sent to the school (applications not submitted on the CES application form will not be considered). Any electronic applications will have to be signed by the applicant attending an interview.

Supporting Documents

- Consent to obtain references (from Parish Priest and Professional Referees)
- CES Model Application Forms and Supplementary Forms - Notes to applicant
- Recruitment monitoring form