



Supporting Acting Headship

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DIOCESAN EDUCATION SERVICE

Archdiocese of Birmingham Registered Charity No 234216

Making Christ Known Today

CONTENTS

Page

1	Section 1	Introduction
1	Section 2	Basic principles
2	Section 3	Process of recruiting an acting headteacher
10	Section 4	Initial steps
10	Section 5	Sources of information - documentation
12	Section 6	Planning – holding on to the vision
14	Section 7	Implementing – reflecting on skills
16	Section 8	Implementing – planning actions
17	Section 9	Managing the organisation
18	Section 10	Leading learning and teaching
19	Section 11	Working with others
19	Section 12	Securing accountability
20	Section 13	Strengthening community
21	Section 14	Creating the future
22	Section 15	Drawing on support
22	Section 16	Evaluation and feedback
	Appendix 1	Process flowchart (see attached sheet)
23	Appendix 2	Recruitment Criteria
26	Appendix 3a/b	Communication – statement for staff in receiving school
30	Appendix 4a/b	Communication – letter to parents in receiving school
32	Appendix 5a/b	Communication – statement for staff in providing school
36	Appendix 6a/b	Communication – letter to parents in providing school
38	Appendix 7	Sources of Information & Checklist for Documentation
39	Appendix 8	Some suggestions regarding possible tasks and activities
43	Appendix 9	Model letter of agreement

1. Introduction

1.1 This pack provides advice and guidance to governors and senior managers in managing the process of seeking and appointing an acting headteacher to a Catholic voluntary aided school in the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

1.2 For the diocesan school in question, fundamental to the process is the commitment to secure effective leadership. That leadership must be able to maintain and improve the quality of educational provision and standards achieved, set within the context of the Catholic ethos rooted in Gospel values, based on the person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the social and moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

2. Basic principles

2.1 The Diocesan Education Service (DES) aims to:

- protect and safeguard the interests of the Trustees and the requirements of the Trust Deed;
- provide quality buildings;
- help schools formulate suitable admissions policies;
- support governors, headteachers and other senior managers in providing effective leadership in diocesan schools in order to secure high quality Catholic education in accordance with the Trust Deed;
- exercise influence over diocesan schools and, working in partnership with Local Authorities (LAs), promote high standards, share best practice and secure school improvement;
- complement the support made available to school by LAs.

2.2 The governing body of a Catholic voluntary aided school is the employer and as such its responsibilities in its strategic role include:

- securing the requirements of the Trust Deed and fulfilling the governors' accountability to the Diocesan Trustees, including His Grace the Archbishop of Birmingham, through the education provided in schools;
- ensuring the Catholic ethos and religious character of the school is preserved and all provision is in keeping with the teachings and Canon Law of the Catholic Church;

- ensuring that the school provides a high quality education and secures good outcomes for pupils, and constantly pursues improvement;
- ensuring that the religious education, collective worship and the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are in keeping with the social and moral teachings of the Catholic Church;
- setting the broad strategy for the school's development and improvement, through the cycle of self-evaluation, performance assessment, target setting, action planning and review;
- ensuring the school's budget is used effectively and efficiently;
- ensuring effective leadership of the school;
- ensuring where possible committed Catholic staff are appointed;
- looking to the headteacher to provide professional advice and to lead and manage the school within the broad strategy for school development and improvement.

2.3 The Local Authority (LA) is the maintaining authority and as such its priority is to promote high standards of education. The LA's responsibilities include:

- holding the governors to account for the efficiency and effectiveness with which they carry out their functions in order to provide a quality education for pupils;
- challenging and supporting schools to secure improvement;
- supporting school self-evaluation;
- offering advice and support on all matters that impact on the quality of education, particularly the teaching and learning and leadership and management, provided by the school.

2.4 The LA has, as a last resort, formal powers of intervention to engage directly in making decisions about a school's conduct and operation. This approach should need to be used rarely and only in very exceptional circumstances.

3. Process of recruiting an acting headteacher

3.1 The process of recruiting and appointing an acting headteacher involves discussions and negotiations that need to be managed sensitively with discretion and confidentiality, with a variety of players. (For the purposes of clarity the term 'receiving school' will be used when referring to the school that needs an acting headteacher; the term 'seconding / providing school' will be used to define the school that is providing leadership.)

3.2 This section outlining the process should be read in conjunction with the flow chart shown in Appendix 1 (N.B. separate from the booklet). The numbering of the paragraphs corresponds with the text boxes of the flow chart.

3.3 Box 1

- The DES and LA will have local knowledge of potential candidates for acting headship. For its part the DES will use some basic criteria to establish a list of potential acting headteachers [see Appendix 2].
- The DES would want to exhaust all options of recruiting a practising Catholic before considering an equally effective but non-Catholic candidate. The reason for this being the need to ensure the Catholic ethos of the school is fully supported, particularly at a time when the school community may be vulnerable. Additionally, the need for an acting headteacher may continue for a year or more, so it is important that as well as maintaining and improving standards, the Catholic life of the school that should give rise to the standards, should also be maintained and improved.
- The DES would want to advise governors on the suitability of any candidate considered for acting headship. Anyone who considered himself / herself to be a practising Catholic would need to conform with the expectations published in the diocesan guidance *Catholic Schools and the Definition of a 'Practising Catholic'*.
- Clearly there is a need to recruit an acting headteacher who understands and supports a commitment to school improvement and raising standards. In some cases, it may be necessary to recruit someone with the willingness, skills and experience to offer support and challenge in order to move the school forward.
- The DES and LA will consider effective serving headteachers as well as a very small number of known individuals who have held headship posts previously and are retired. In certain circumstances the DES would definitely favour a very experienced and securely competent deputy headteacher being recruited because they may well be able to apply for the post if it were to be advertised. In general, candidates with experience of headship would be preferred.
- The advantages of recruiting a serving headteacher or deputy headteacher are that this option may provide the stimulus for the candidate to apply for the substantive headship. Therefore, the DES tries to recruit candidates who may provide long-term as well as short-term solutions.
- Increasingly, there is an emphasis on new models of leadership with a systems-leadership focus. For example, the White Paper "Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system", states in paragraph 19, "we will require governing bodies

to consider federations or executive headship before appointing a new head." Depending on the context and needs of the school the DES may well encourage governors to consider recruiting and appointing a local serving headteacher who could act as head in role as an 'executive headteacher'. Basically, this means appointing a serving headteacher who could continue to lead their school and your school by providing quality strategic leadership and distributing leadership within and possibly across the schools. This approach to acting headship could also be an opportunity to experience a federative approach that could then be the preferred solution.

- With respect to appointing an acting headteacher in the model of executive head it is worth noting that the governing body employs the headteacher, however, it is the headteacher responsibility to deploy staff, including themselves. In the case of an acting headteacher in the executive head model, he/she would decide how to deploy themselves in accordance with the needs of both schools. It would not be a question of doing 50% in each of the schools or a matter of 'clocking in and out'; the focus would be on the impact of their leadership and therefore the outcomes with would be expected to achieve.

3.4 Box 2

- '*Statutory Guidance for Schools Causing Concern*' provides advice and guidance to the Local Authority about developing strategies, structures and systems, which make the best use of the information available, in order to identify and commission the support schools require at an early stage. Consequently, as a matter of good practice LAs usually regularly share information on the performance of diocesan schools with the DES. Where possible this would include prior knowledge of the possible need for an acting headteacher.
- Various reasons can arise which determine the need to recruit and appoint an acting headteacher. The reasons may include:
 - failure to appoint through the normal process of recruitment;
 - late resignation;
 - absence due to ill-health or domestic circumstances;
 - performance issues;
 - opportunity to take time to consider the best leadership solution for the school, etc.
- In most cases the governors should be aware of the need to appoint an acting headteacher and it should not come as a surprise. The chair of governors has responsibility for the management of the process on behalf of the governing body.
- Clearly it is the responsibility of the chair of governors to inform the DES and LA as early as possible if he / she is aware of the need to

recruit an acting headteacher, so that time and opportunities are not wasted.

3.5 Box 3

- In practice the process of recruitment will require a good working relationship and sustained dialogue between the chair of governors, the LA and the DES.
- There is a need to discuss the context of the vacancy and the specific circumstances and characteristics of the school, so wherever possible there is a good match between the acting headteacher's knowledge, experiences and professional qualities and the particular needs of the school.

3.6 Box 4

- The representatives of the DES and LA may elect to approach the identified candidate(s) together or separately, depending on circumstances and time scale. Whatever is decided in specific cases DES and LA officers will explain that they are working in partnership with each other to resolve the matter on behalf of a diocesan school maintained by the LA.
- If the decision were made to approach a serving deputy headteacher then clearly there would need to be prior discussions with the headteacher of his or her school.
- At all times it is important to stress the confidentiality of preliminary discussions. It would be unhelpful if information were to 'leak' into either community before there had been proper professional discussions. It is also important that any potential acting headteacher who is approached and declines to progress the request ensures that the approach remains a private and confidential matter.
- Also, the governing body of the receiving school needs to understand that information about the potential candidate should not be shared with them until the candidate's own governing body have been informed.

3.7 Box 5

- If the potential acting headteacher is currently in post as a serving headteacher he / she may wish to consult with the deputy headteacher before coming to a final decision. Clearly this would be appropriate; the headteacher would need to stress with his / her deputy the confidentiality of the matter under discussion.
- DES and LA officers would want to secure a firm commitment from the potential acting headteacher before involving others in discussions. It is important therefore that officers counsel the candidate about seeking approval of family members where necessary, and being fully committed to progress matters further before other people become involved.

3.8 Box 6 / 8

- Once the potential acting headteacher has agreed in principle then it is possible to progress the process and involve other key players. If he / she decides to decline the option to take on acting headship at this stage then the DES / LA would be 'back to the drawing board' in considering who else could be approached.

3.9 Box 7 / 9

- At the point where a serving headteacher agrees to secondment / executive headship in principle, then he / she needs to speak with his / her chair of governors and request release to be seconded to / shared with another school.
- Clearly it is likely to be helpful if the DES and / or LA can speak with the chair of governors too and emphasise the importance of the request, particularly set in the context of offering support to another Catholic school in the diocesan family of schools, as well as support for the common good of the LA community.
- Recruiting a retired headteacher clearly would be more straightforward and the process would progress to Box 12.

3.10 Box 10

- Where a serving headteacher is involved, the chair of governors of that school would need to be assured and confident that the school would be appropriately led and managed during the period of secondment / sharing of the substantive head. Discussions with the LA concerned and the DES would be advisable at this stage.

3.11 Box 11

- The chair of the seconding / providing school would need to agree in principle before matters could be progressed. If the chair of governors of the potential acting headteacher's school were to say 'no' at this point then discussions would be concluded with a request to keep the matter confidential. The DES and LA officers would begin the process all over again with the next candidate on the list of potential acting headteachers.

3.12 Box 12

- If the chair of governors agrees to the secondment /sharing of a serving headteacher then it would be important for him / her to speak with the chair of governors of the receiving school and formally agree arrangements before progressing any further.

3.13 Box 13

- Discussions would include clarifying the terms and conditions of employment. Each of the 13 LAs in the diocese have an individual view about payment and it is wise to listen to their advice about local arrangements. Clearly, terms and conditions are open to negotiation within the parameters of School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD).

- The basic recommendation of the DES is that if a serving headteacher is seconded then it should be on their current salary + 1 point. A deputy headteacher would be seconded within the salary range for the receiving school. Note: a fixed term variation of contract must be issued by the providing school.
- In the case of a retired headteacher they would be paid in accordance with the ISR for the school, on no lower than the third point from the bottom of the scale.
- In the case of a serving headteacher acting in role as an executive headteacher the following would apply. Where the headteacher is appointed as acting headteacher of one or more additional schools the governing body of the headteacher's original school must, for the duration of such appointment, determine the individual school range (ISR) by whichever produces the higher of:
 - a) The application of the total unit score of all the schools calculated in accordance with the STPCD, or;
 - b) The determination of a headteacher group, that is up to two groups higher than the headteacher group of any of the schools.
- In such temporary arrangements, where the executive headteacher is appointed to more than one schools in a fixed term variation of contract must be issued by the providing school. This will specify that the headteacher, in addition to their substantive post, is for a fixed period employed additionally as head of the additional school(s). At the end of the fixed term variation the headteacher will revert to their substantive post.
- Note: Under the Collaboration regulations¹ the governing bodies may arrange for a joint committee made up of governors from both (all the) schools involved to be established to oversee the fixed term arrangements. This joint committee should have delegated power to deal with the pay and performance management of the headteacher and other relevant staffing issues. This joint committee should also have delegated power regarding the financial arrangements which will apply during the collaboration period. For example, the joint committee should determine any payment on the basis of temporary additional responsibility for teachers, other than the head, in each school, and the arrangements for reviewing and ending those payments.
- A serving headteacher (or deputy headteacher) would remain on the payroll of his / her own school and be paid directly from that school's budget. Thus there would be no break in service or

¹ The School Governance (Collaboration) (England) regulations 2003 SI 2003/1962; and The Collaboration Between Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2008

alteration to contractual arrangements. This is in line with the Catholic Education Service (CES) Contract.

- It would be necessary to discuss the time frame of the secondment / sharing and the potential acting headteacher's availability to engage with meetings and discussions in the receiving school prior to taking up appointment. Normally, the DES would say the arrangement is for one term in the first instance with the option to extend to two, and if necessary three. In some cases, it may be appropriate to make arrangements for the school year, but no longer than two.
- In specific circumstances accommodation and / or travel expenses may be agreed as part of the overall terms and conditions. This would depend entirely on the particular circumstances of the school and the personal circumstances of the recruited acting headteacher. For example, if an acting headteacher were to re-locate from another area of the country and needed to rent accommodation.

3.14 Box 14

- If all parties agree then matters can progress, if not, the DES and LA would begin the process all over again with the next candidate on the list of potential acting headteachers. The chairs of governors may progress the business under their emergency powers if the timescale is pressing, for example, making decisions in the last week of term. Normally the governing bodies could consider and approve the decision.

3.15 Box 15

- The chair of governors of the receiving school and the recruited headteacher need to agree statements to share with staff and with children, as well as the text of letters to parents and to governors to inform all the stakeholders of the arrangements to secure the leadership of the school. At this stage staff and pupils only need to be told basic information and there is no need to enter into discussions about detail. [See Appendices 3 and 4.]

3.16 Box 16

- If a serving head is recruited then the chair and head should agree statements to share with staff and with children, as well as the text of letters to parents and to governors to inform all the stakeholders of the arrangements to secure the leadership of the school in his / her absence, and explain the reason for the secondment / sharing. [See Appendices 5 and 6.]
- It is important that where two schools are involved that the information about the secondment / executive headship is released into their separate communities at the same time to prevent anyone within one of the communities hearing before anyone in the other!

3.17 Box 17

- Before any arrangements become public knowledge, out of courtesy it is important that the chair of governors of the receiving school inform the current headteacher, providing there is still a substantive head.

3.18 Box 18

- The parish priest of the receiving school should be fully informed and where possible a statement should be agreed with the chair of governors that can be published in the parish newsletter. The text of the letter to parents can form a useful starting point.

3.19 Box 19

- Where a serving headteacher is involved the parish priest of the school concerned should be fully informed and where possible a statement should be agreed with the chair of governors that can be published in the parish newsletter. The text of the letter to parents can form a useful starting point. Where two parishes are involved, it makes sense that the parish priests should liaise with each other about what is communicated and how, so that there is no confusion of message in the two parish communities.

3.20 Box 20 / 21

- The chair of governors in the receiving schools should ensure that all paperwork regarding secondment / sharing and payment is completed appropriately and copied to the acting headteacher.
- Where the arrangements are within the same LA and both schools have SLAs with the LA, reimbursement can be authorised by the receiving governing body and administered by the LA.
- If a serving headteacher was recruited it is likely that staff in the seconding /providing school would be promoted temporarily in his / her absence. It would be the responsibility of the chair of governors of the school to ensure that the payments for those staff were administered correctly and details copied to the personnel concerned. In practice the substantive headteacher would be likely to manage this process.
- Where necessary the DES can prepare a CES contract for an acting headteacher and / or a letter of agreement [see Appendix 9].

3.21 Box 22 / 23

- The LA representative should be asked to ensure that the LA personnel / payroll section administered reimbursement on behalf of the governing body of the receiving school to the governing body of the seconding / providing school (and it may be a different LA).

4. Initial steps

- 4.1 Once the arrangements have been made public it is important that there is appropriate liaison regarding 'hand over' of leadership.

4.2 The prospective acting headteacher will need to observe the usual courtesies with the receiving school, and where the substantive headteacher is still in post be sensitive to the fact that he / she remains fully responsible for the school until termination of contract.

4.3 Wherever possible, the prospective acting head should arrange to meet with the:

- The chair of governors of the receiving school;
- The substantive headteacher, or whoever is acting headteacher;
- The LA adviser / inspector / officer for the school depending on the structures of deployment within the LA.

4.4 There will be a need to consider arrangements for meeting:

- The leadership team;
- The staff;
- The governing body;
- Parish priest.

4.5 Where a serving headteacher is taking over acting headship he / she needs to consider the leadership arrangements in his / her own school. Those with experience of secondment as acting headteacher usually report that it is wise to focus totally on leading and managing the receiving school and fully delegate the leadership of their own school in their absence. This provides a rich experience of stepping up to headship for the substantive deputy headteacher..

4.6 Clearly the secondment of the substantive deputy headteacher to 'acting headteacher' is a great opportunity for professional development and he / she needs to embrace the role in its totality to gain full benefit from the opportunity. Also it is important to the deputy, the governors, staff and parents that the seconded headteacher demonstrates 'trust' in his / her deputy to lead and manage the school in his / her absence.

4.7 Where a serving headteacher is taking over acting headship in the role of executive headteacher he / she needs to consider the arrangements to deploy his/herself and to distribute leadership in his / her substantive school as well as the receiving school.

5. Sources of information - documentation

5.1 The core purpose of headship is to:

" ... provide leadership and management for a school. This will secure success and improvement for the school, ensure high quality of education and ... high standards and achievement in all areas of the school's work".

(National Standards for Headteachers, DfES / NCSL)

5.2 Taking full account of the context of the mission of a Catholic school and its ethos rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church and Gospel values, the acting headteacher needs to be committed to and understand the dynamics of the 'school improvement agenda'. And it is important that the acting headteacher considers and reflects on what that means for a school where one exercises leadership for a time-limited period and what it looks like in terms of practice and evidence of impact of their work.

5.3 The acting headteacher will need basic documentation to enable him / her to be appropriately informed and prepared to take over the leadership of the school. In a Catholic school it is the responsibility of the chair of governors to make sure this happens. In practice the chair might ask the substantive headteacher where he / she is still in post to provide the necessary documentation. It is possible that the documentation may be made available through negotiation with the LA adviser / inspector / officer or with the substantive deputy headteacher in the school. Failing all else, the acting headteacher should exercise initiative in seeking the documentation they need to lead and manage the school effectively. The documentation can be categorised as follows:

5.4 Basic information that is known and shared in the local community

- School Prospectus
- School Profile
- Admission policy and criteria
- List of governors and responsibilities

5.5 Basic information known and shared in the school community

- School diary / calendar (if one exists)
- Staff Handbook
- Map of school (if necessary)
- List of staff (if not in any other documentation) and responsibilities
- Information about the parish / or / parishes the school serves, including names of clergy
- Most recent RAISEonline data
- Recent LA performance data and evaluation / categorisation of the school
- Any summary documents regarding school self-evaluation e.g. SEF, SIP reports
- School Development Plan and associated plans
- Summary budget statement
- Last Ofsted and RE Inspection reports

5.6 Basic information that will be useful on taking up post

- Job descriptions for all staff detailing their role and responsibilities
- Performance and assessment data including CVA
- Performance management data about teaching staff
- Long-term and medium-term curriculum plans

- Information relating to assessment policy and practice, pupil tracking and target setting in the school
- DSC Headteacher Handbook, which provides information relevant to a Catholic school

[For checklist of documentation see Appendix 7.]

6. Planning – holding on to the vision

6.1 The headteacher is the leading professional in the school and in a Catholic school there is the added responsibility of leading a school with a religious character. Working with and accountable to the governing body, the headteacher provides the vision, leadership and direction for the school and ensures it is managed effectively to secure its Catholic character and to meet its aims and targets.

6.2 During the period of secondment or executive headship the acting headteacher needs to 'hold on to' the vision for the school and focus on maintaining its Catholic character and ethos, the quality of education provided for its pupils, and securing improvement where necessary or possible.

6.3 Clearly the acting headteacher needs quickly to 'form a view' about the school; its strengths and areas for development and its priorities. This requires collecting and analysing evidence about the school.

6.4 Initially the acting headteacher will need to:

- review and evaluate the information to be gained from the documentation on the school;
- take account of information gained through meeting key players in the school;
- take account of information gained from the LA inspectorate / advisory service / officer support services;
- take account of information gained from the DSC and DDRE officers;

and

- as soon as possible, exercise his / her own professional judgement about the quality of:
 - teaching and learning;
 - the leadership of middle managers and senior managers;
 - the curriculum;
 and
 - the standards and pupil achievement.

6.5 Clearly there is a need to 'walk the school', assess the Catholic ethos, culture and climate and draw on evidence that focuses on relationships, behaviours, communication and practice. Evaluating all these sources of evidence, the acting headteacher needs then to determine the key, necessary and achievable priorities for the period of his / her acting headship.

6.6 It is expected that the acting headteacher will have a clear understanding of what constitutes a 'good' and 'outstanding' school with a perspective that would be understood by the LA fulfilling its monitoring function and Ofsted, since this would be one of the criteria for recruiting an acting headteacher. The list below draws on a summary published by NCSL with additional criteria that would apply to a 'good Catholic school'.

- A commitment to the Catholic mission of the school
- A fundamental belief that all members of the learning community are created uniquely in the image and likeness of God, have a God-given dignity and a right to learn to reach their potential as a child of God with an eternal destiny
- Religious education, collective worship and the provision for pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural education being central to the work of the school
- Clear educational aims
- High expectations of staff and pupils
- Clear targets with regard to learning outcomes
- A fundamental belief that all pupils can and want to learn
- A constant desire to develop and change
- A willingness to learn and improve practice
- A constant sense of confidence in risk taking and experimentation
- A supportive and strong leadership
- A clear focus on learning and teaching; with an emphasis on 'We are all learners together'
- An ability and willingness to view the pupil voice as an essential element of school improvement
- Whole school assessment, recording and reporting procedures, which acknowledge accountability to stake holders
- A commitment to secure, safe, orderly, supportive, healthy and spiritually nourishing learning environment
- An ability to create space for enrichment, relaxation and reflection
- An ability to create and maintain an inclusive atmosphere attractive to staff and pupils
- An ability to work in partnership with parents, parish and diocese

(Based on 'Implementing the Vision', NCSL)

6.7 Clearly the acting headteacher needs to adopt a realistic, rational and manageable approach to the strategic leadership and operational management of the school. He / she needs to bring a professional mental model of leading and managing a school to provide a 'framework' to his / her thinking in order to know what to do, in what order and how, and what to leave to the current or future substantive headteacher.

6.8 In planning priorities and determining tasks and activities, the acting headteacher should have an overview of the needs of key stakeholders at a time of possible vulnerability, uncertainty and change.

6.9 Overall it may be useful to consider the various stakeholders' 'view of the world' and their emotional needs. For example:

- Pupils function best in a safe environment and purposeful working atmosphere that supports learning, which enables them to feel secure and confident and sets high expectations for behaviour and high aspirations of learning.
- Staff function best in an orderly community that sustains high levels of morale and motivation, and which enables all colleagues to give of their best and fulfil their role and responsibilities, through access to appropriate information, support, guidance, training, development and resources.
- Governors function best in a self-evaluating community that ensures they provide focused strategic direction for the work and improvement of the school, and which enables them to support, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school, and hold the school to account for the standards achieved and the quality of education and its Catholic character.
- Parents function best in a welcoming community that recognises the prime role of parents in supporting their children's learning and which enables them to play an effective role in realising the aims and mission of the school.
- Parish and the school community function best when there is a clear understanding of the relationship between the two and opportunities are sought to work together for the ongoing education and formation of all children educated in the Catholic school community.

6.10 Reflecting on these viewpoints can help the acting headteacher respond sensitively and deal skilfully with matters arising in the day-to-day work of the school. In a Catholic school it is important to consider the links with the parish community and the working relationship with the parish priest.

7. Implementing – reflecting on skills

7.1 On accepting the secondment / executive headship clearly there will be opportunities for the acting headteacher to meet with staff, children, parents and governors, both collectively and individually. Depending on the circumstances, for example, whether or not there is a substantive headteacher in post, the acting headteacher may decide to meet with any of these stakeholders at any time from the point where the secondment / collaborative leadership arrangements is / are made public.

7.2 The acting headteacher will be used to employing a range of skills, behaviours and personal attributes in a way that is almost 'second-nature' to him / her. So it is important that the acting headteacher

consciously considers 'how' he / she leads, communicates, uses evidence, makes decisions, manages change, empowers others and builds capacity within teams.

7.3 The acting headteacher would be sensible to reflect on 'the journey' he / she has made in his / her own school in terms of creating an ethos, raising standards, and managing change. The acting headteacher should take time to reflect on how he / she led on creating the (Catholic) 'ethos' in his / her current school, and how the shared understandings of 'how we do it here' became embedded and translated into expectations for the community.

7.4 The acting headteacher should have clear understanding of the nature and purposes of a Catholic school and be able to share this through the school aims and the work of giving educational direction to the school.

7.5 The acting headteacher will also be wise 'never to make assumptions' about what pupils, staff, governors and parents know, understand, think and will do in the receiving school.

7.6 For example he / she will need to consider doing the following:

- Articulate (where the acting headteacher is a Catholic) clearly his / her Catholic faith and the values and expectations that arise from the faith, at every opportunity.
 - This will mean consistently explaining, exemplifying and demonstrating.
 - Known as 'talking the talk'.
 - Rooted in the language of the Catholic faith.
- Model at every opportunity by leading by example, his / her values rooted in his / her Catholic faith and the kind of attitudes, behaviours, relationships and communication he / she wants to see in the school.
 - This will mean leading by example and seeing opportunities to show in action what he / she believes in and holds dear.
 - Known as 'walking the talk' and 'living the faith'.
 - Rooted in Gospel values.
- Communicate information effectively to support the day-to-day work of the school through questioning, listening, discussion, dialogue, consultation and negotiation.
 - This will mean communicating effectively orally and in writing to a variety of audiences.
 - This will require good structures and systems for holding and recording the outcomes of meetings (formal and informal) with stakeholders.
- Acknowledge good practice and positive contributions to the work and life of the school community through private and public means rooted in a belief that everyone has a right to learn and grow as a child of God.

- This will mean ensuring everyone feels valued and motivated.
- Collect, analyse and use evidence to inform making 'good' judgements that are consistent with the school's values and mission.
 - This will mean collecting a whole range of data and information, both written and verbal.
 - This will ensure a sound basis for decision-making.
- Consult, listen and negotiate where relevant and, where appropriate, take account of the voice of staff, pupils, governors, parents and parish.
 - This will mean making sure decisions are rooted in good judgements and that stakeholders feel confident, listened to and heard.
- Challenge poor performance or inappropriate behaviours or actions where necessary.
 - This means determining what is not negotiable in terms of the values and mission of the school as a Catholic community of faith.
 - It also means deciding what has to be tackled and cannot be ignored in the interests of children and the 'best interest' of the school. Fundamentally, it is asking the questions: why does this school exist? Who is it for? Who is running this school and in whose interests? What is being achieved?
- Build capacity in the school, at all levels, through appropriate devolution of responsibility, delegation of tasks, and appropriate briefing and training.
 - This means working with and through teams and individuals.
 - Embedding confidence in people's performance.

8. Implementing – planning actions

- 8.1 It is impossible 'to write the script' for the acting headteacher because each school is unique and therefore he / she will need to exercise good professional judgement about the priorities for the school.
- 8.2 An acting headteacher will need to assume responsibility for the work of the school and 'do what needs to be done'. What that will be, will vary from school to school.
- 8.3 Just because he / she is an acting headteacher does not mean that he / she should refrain from making long-term strategic decisions or engaging in pressing personnel matters, not least to do with performance issues. This is where good advice from the LA / DES should be helpful in determining what needs to be done and how.
- 8.4 A good 'rule of thumb' for the acting headteacher is to ask the question, *"How would I feel coming in as substantive headteacher if the decision made had been made without me having an opportunity*

to influence it, or determine the action that would result?'. Clearly sound basic advice about anything is, 'When in doubt – don't', or at least 'Seek advice first!' ... And the acting headteacher should be encouraged to be confident in his / her own knowledge, understanding, skills, abilities and judgement.

8.5 Actions will need to be taken, drawing on the following areas of work that constitute the National Standards for Headteachers:

- Creating the future;
- Leading learning and teaching;
- Developing self and working with others;
- Managing the organisation;
- Securing accountability;
- Strengthening community.

[See checklist of suggestions regarding possible tasks and activities Appendix 8.]

9. Managing the organisation

9.1 Headteachers need to provide effective organisation and management for the school they lead and seek ways of improving organisational structures and functions. Headteachers should ensure that the school and people and resources within it are organised and managed to provide an efficient, effective and safe learning environment. These management responsibilities imply reviewing and evaluating the roles and responsibilities of staff, managing available resources and ensuring value for money.

9.2 Acting headteachers should legitimately focus on substantial aspects of this area of a headteacher's work because the impact of the absence of a substantive headteacher on the smooth day-to-day running of the school must be minimised. It is important to sustain pupils' learning, staff morale, governor activity and parental confidence.

9.3 Clearly acting headteachers need to make specific, achievable, realistic and relevant decisions about the scope and scale of what they can aim to achieve, plan, do and evaluate in the time they are employed in the school.

9.4 Managing the organisation will require the acting headteacher carries out tasks in order to:

- manage the school efficiently and effectively on a day-to-day basis;
- deploy finances, staff and resources to best effect;
- recruit staff where necessary;
- ensure staff's conditions of employment are fulfilled and professional duties carried out;

- implement performance management where appropriate;
- ensure the school environment meets the needs of the curriculum and health and safety regulations;
- secure the Catholic life.

10. Leading learning and teaching

10.1 Learning and teaching is the core business of the school. Headteachers have a central responsibility for the quality of learning and teaching and for pupils' achievement. This implies setting high expectations and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of learning outcomes.

10.2 Acting headteachers should legitimately focus on the whole of this aspect of a head's work because it is vital that the impact of the absence of a substantive headteacher on pupils' learning and entitlement to a quality education must be minimised.

10.3 In a Catholic school attention needs to be given to the provision for religious education, collective worship, prayer, liturgy and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, as well as the planned subjects of the National Curriculum.

10.4 Clearly acting headteachers need to make specific, achievable, realistic and relevant decisions about the scope and scale of what they can aim to achieve, plan, do and evaluate in the time they are employed in the school.

10.5 Leading teaching and learning will require the acting headteacher carries out tasks in order to:

- reach a view on how well teachers teach and how well children learn;
- monitor teaching and learning, e.g. lesson observation, scrutiny of work, interviews with pupils, etc.
- assess and monitor pupil progress using data and benchmarks;
- provide colleagues with feedback, advice, guidance and support about teaching and learning and the curriculum.

11. Working with others

11.1 Effective relationships are important in headship as headteachers work with and through others, including, pupils, staff governors, parents and other members of the community. Headship is about building a professional learning community, which enables others to achieve. Through performance management and effective continuous

professional development, the headteacher supports all staff to achieve high standards.

11.2 In a Catholic school we believe that our rights as human beings are rooted in the fact God created us uniquely and He has a plan for each one of us on a journey in faith. With these rights come responsibilities and duties to our fellow human beings. Fulfilling our human potential and helping others to do so becomes therefore a central value of the Catholic school.

11.3 Acting headteachers should legitimately focus on this aspect of a head's work because the impact of the absence of a substantive headteacher on staff development and professional entitlement must be minimised.

11.4 Clearly acting headteachers need to make specific, achievable, realistic and relevant decisions about the scope and scale of what they can aim to achieve, plan, do and evaluate in the time they are employed in the school.

11.5 Working with others will require the acting headteacher carries out tasks in order to:

- share leadership, build capacity, work through teams;
- promote a culture that 'we are all learners here';
- work co-operatively and collaboratively;
- plan, allocate, support and evaluate work undertaken by teams and individuals ensuring clear devolution of responsibilities and delegation of tasks.

12. Securing accountability

12.1 The commitment of the acting headteacher to his / her Catholic faith should be at the heart of his / her vision for the school that they set out to lead and to which offer stewardship. Headteachers have a professional responsibility to the whole school community. Headteachers are accountable to a wide range of groups, particularly pupils, parents, governors, the LA and Diocesan Trustees.

12.2 Acting headteachers should legitimately focus on this important aspect of a head's work because the impact of the absence of a substantive headteacher on the school's accountability for its performance and sustaining its Catholic ethos must be minimised.

12.3 Clearly acting headteachers need to make specific, achievable, realistic and relevant decisions about the scope and scale of what they can aim to achieve, plan, do and evaluate in the time they are employed in the school.

12.4 Securing accountability will require the acting headteacher carries out tasks in order to:

- engage the school community in systematic and rigorous self-evaluation of the work of the school;
- collect and use data to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the school;
- ensure individual staff accountabilities are clear and understood;
- work with the chair of governors to enable the governing body to meet its responsibilities for securing effective teaching and learning and improved standards of achievement;
- combine the outcomes of school self-review with external evaluations to develop and improve the school.

13. Strengthening community

13.1 Headteachers should engage with the internal and external school community, thus modelling the principles of equity and entitlement. Headteachers should encourage and engage in collaboration with other schools in order to bring positive benefits to their own school and share expertise more widely. Headteachers should also ensure collaboration and collective responsibility for children with parents and carers across a range of agencies.

13.2 In a Catholic school consideration needs to be given to the parish community.

13.3 Acting headteachers should legitimately focus on specific features of this aspect of a head's work because the impact of the absence of a substantive headteacher on the school's relationship with the community must be minimised.

13.4 Clearly acting headteachers need to make specific, achievable, realistic and relevant decisions about the scope and scale of what they can aim to achieve, plan, do and evaluate in the time they are employed in the school.

13.5 Strengthening the community will require the acting headteacher carries out tasks in order to:

- engage with dialogue with parents and carers, the parish community and other partners to promote consensus on values, beliefs and shared responsibilities;
- build and maintain effective relationships with parents, the parish, other partners and the community to enhance the education of the pupils.

14. Creating the future

14.1 Critical to the role of headship is working with the governing body and others to create a shared, strategic vision and plan which inspires and motivates pupils, staff and all other members of the school community. In a Catholic school the Catholic faith and Gospel values are at the heart of everything and permeate every facet of its work.

14.2 Acting headteachers should legitimately focus on this vital aspect of a head's work because the impact of the absence of a substantive headteacher on the mission of a Catholic school and the quality of educational outcomes achieved must be minimised.

14.3 Clearly acting headteachers need to make specific, achievable, realistic and relevant decisions about the scope and scale of what they can aim to achieve, plan, do and evaluate in the time they are employed in the school.

14.4 Creating the future will involve the acting headteacher carries out tasks in order to:

- ensure the vision and values of the school as a Catholic school are sustained and developed appropriately
- ensure the vision of high quality educational provision is clearly articulated, shared and understood
- ensure the schedule to implement the school improvement plan is maintained wherever possible and appropriate
- ensure any other operational plans are maintained wherever possible and appropriate
- make a contribution to the school's self-evaluation process for example:
 - carrying out monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities
 - offering professional views and judgements on the quality of education provided and the outcomes achieved, based on the collection, analysis and evaluation of a variety of evidence
 - acting as professional adviser to the governing body.

14.5 Clearly the acting headteacher must be mindful to consult with the governors and the LA inspector / adviser / officer for the school in the process of arriving at judgements and suggesting response and actions that would impact on the strategic management of the school.

15. Drawing on support

15.1 The LA, as the maintaining authority responsible for monitoring the quality of education provided within the school, should be the first port of call when there are any queries, concerns or need for advice.

15.2 The DES will always be prepared to offer support and guidance, working in partnership with the LA.

16. Evaluation and feedback

16.1 At the end of the period of acting headship, the acting headteacher will be asked to review the experience gained through offering leadership to a school in need of an acting head. This will be done in the first instance by letter. The focus will be on what they have learned and what they would do differently as a result. This feedback should help inform an annual review of this pack, as well as policy and practice at the DES.

Margaret Buck
September 2009

Minor revisions August 2012

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP – Recruitment Criteria

Person specification

Faith commitment	A practising and committed Catholic
	Secure understanding of the distinctive nature of the Catholic school
	Able to articulate a philosophy for Catholic education
	Understanding of leadership role in spiritual development of pupils and staff
	Understanding of the school's role in the parish and wider community
Experience	Substantial experience as an effective headteacher (or very experienced effective deputy headteacher)
Professional development	Evidence of continuing professional development relating to school leadership and management, school improvement and curriculum development
Strategic leadership	Ability to articulate and share a vision of education within the context of the mission of a Catholic school
	Evidence of having successfully translated vision into reality at whole-school level
	Ability to inspire and motivate staff, pupils, parents and governors to achieve the aims of Catholic education
	Evidence of successful strategies for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating school improvement
	Ability to analyse data, develop strategic plans, set targets and monitor and evaluate progress towards these
	Knowledge of what constitutes quality in educational provision, the characteristics of effective schools and strategies for raising standards and the achievement of all pupils
	Knowledge of the statutory framework for education and other relevant legislation
Teaching and Learning	A secure understanding of the requirements of the Curriculum Directory for Religious Education and the National Curriculum and Early Years development
	Knowledge and experience of a range of successful teaching and learning strategies to meet the needs of all pupils
	A secure understanding of assessment strategies and the use of assessment to inform the next stages of learning
	Experience of effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning
	Secure knowledge of statutory requirements relating to the curriculum and assessment
	Understanding of the characteristics of an effective learning environment and the key elements of successful behaviour management

Leading and managing staff	Substantial successful experience of working in and leading staff teams
	Ability to delegate work and support colleagues in undertaking responsibilities
	Successful involvement in staff recruitment, appointment and induction, and understanding of the particular needs of a Catholic school
	Experience of appraisal and supporting the continuing professional development of colleagues
	Understanding of effective budget planning, resource deployment, and how financial and resource management enable a school to achieve its educational priorities

Accountability	Ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing to a range of audiences – e.g. staff, pupils, parents, governors, parishioners and clergy
	Experience of whole-school self-evaluation and improvement strategies, including the evaluation of a Catholic school
	Ability to provide clear information and advice to staff and governors
	Secure understanding and experience of using strategies for performance management

Skills, qualities and abilities	High quality teaching skills
	Strong commitment to the aims and purposes and mission of a Catholic school
	Commitment to their own spiritual formation and that of pupils
	High expectations of pupils' learning and attainment
	Strong commitment to school improvement and raising achievement for all
	Ability to build and maintain good relationships
	Ability to remain positive and enthusiastic when working under pressure
	Ability to organise work, prioritise tasks, make decisions and manage time effectively
	Empathy with children
	Good communication skills
	Good interpersonal skills
	Stamina and resilience
	Confidence
	Confidentiality
Ability to provide high quality liturgically based worship for pupils and staff	

School Specification

Quality of education	A school where results of statutory tests / assessments and CVA is at least 'good'
	Last Ofsted report judged the school to be at least a 'good' school and leadership and management of the headteacher to be at least 'good' if not 'outstanding'
	A school where there is sufficient capacity in terms of leadership and management experience, skills and abilities grown and developed within the school leadership team to enable the headteacher to be released on secondment without 'threat' to the school
	Inspected by Ofsted in the two previous years / or unlikely to be inspected by Ofsted in the next 12 months

N.B. In the case of an acting headteacher who is not currently serving as a substantive headteacher apply the person specification.

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP IN A DIOCESAN SCHOOL SECONDMENT MODEL

Communication – statement for staff in receiving school

- To be used to inform a face to face briefing with staff and to be published in the staffroom.
- It is wise this is displayed in the staffroom so that any member of staff who is absent has access to the actual statement shared with staff in their absence.
- It is important that there is an emphasis on positive messages.
- Clearly there are very valid reasons why a 'good' school needs an acting headteacher, for example, the unexpected illness of the substantive headteacher.
- Note: In certain circumstances there may be 'sensitive' issues in the receiving school that underpin the need for an acting headteacher but no mention should be made of these, or any confidential matters, in any communication. The focus is on protecting the long-term interests of the school and not communicating any cause for concern about the school's performance, provision or future.

To all staff of [*insert name*] School

As chair of governors, and with the support of the governing body, I wish to share with you the following news.

[As you know] [*insert name*] is [retiring / has resigned / is absent due to ill health / is absent for domestic reasons / is going into hospital / OR / alternative statement agreed with DESand LA] and so we need to secure the leadership and management of the school. Above all we need to ensure that children's education continues smoothly.

So we need a headteacher [as soon as possible / from (*insert date*)] and [*insert name*] [from (*insert name*) School / who used to be a headteacher] has been approached by both the Diocesan Education Service and the LA, working in partnership, to take on the acting headship of our school.

[*Insert name*] is willing to undertake this secondment [and (his / her) governors are willing to release (him / her) to us as a temporary arrangement]. So we are pleased to welcome [*insert name*] to our school. [*Insert name*] will be in school on [*insert date*] to meet with staff and governors.

At this stage that is all I wish to say and know that [*inset name*], working with the governors, will be communicating further information to you as soon as possible.

Clearly this information remains confidential until letters can be sent out to parents.

So children will be told [in assembly / by (*insert name*) going round the classes] [today / tomorrow / OR state day] and there will be a letter home to parents informing them [this evening / tomorrow evening / OR state date].

Additionally we expect that a statement will be published by Father [*insert name*] in the next parish newsletter.

Signed: Chair of Governors

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP IN A DIOCESAN SCHOOL EXECUTIVE HEADSHIP MODEL

Communication – statement for staff in receiving school

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To all staff of [*insert name*] School

As chair of governors, and with the support of the governing body, I wish to share with you the following news.

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So we need a headteacher [as soon as possible / from (*insert date*)] and [*insert name*] from (*insert name*) School has been approached by both the Diocesan Education Service and the LA, working in partnership, to take on the acting headship of our school.

[*Insert name*] is willing to undertake this role as well as continuing to be the headteacher in [*insert name*] School, [and (his / her) governors are willing to share (him / her) with us as a temporary arrangement]. So we are pleased to welcome [*insert name*] to our school. [*Insert name*] will be in school on [*insert date*] to meet with staff and governors.

At this stage that is all I wish to say and know that [*inset name*], working with the governors, will be communicating further information to you as soon as possible.

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Additionally we expect that a statement will be published by Father [*insert name*] in the next parish newsletter.

Signed: Chair of Governors

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP IN A DIOCESAN SCHOOL SECONDMENT

Communication – letter to parents in receiving school

Dear parents / guardians / carers

[As you know / I am writing to tell you as chair of governors][*insert name*] is [retiring as from (*insert date*) / leaving as from (*insert date*) to (*insert reason*) / is absent due to ill health / is absent due to domestic reasons / OR other statement agreed with DES and LA] .

[Currently we are / soon we will be] in the process of seeking to appoint a new headteacher. However, until that has been achieved we need a temporary headteacher for a limited period of time.

The Diocesan Education Service, which oversees Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham, and the Local Authority have worked in partnership with the governing body to secure an effective acting headteacher. As a result of their advice and efforts [*insert name*] [from (*insert name*) School] is willing to take on the acting headship at our school and sees this as an opportunity to make a wider contribution to Catholic education in the Archdiocese, as well as offering direct support to our children, staff, governors and parents within the Diocesan family of Catholic schools.

Governors have agreed to welcome [*insert name*] here temporarily while [we appoint a new headteacher / (*insert name*) is absent]. This secondment will take place from [*insert date*].

We are confident that this arrangement means that our school will [continue to] be in good hands and work well. I wish to assure you that the governors and staff will continue to do its best for your children; they are our first priority.

I am sure that you will join me in welcoming [*insert name*] and wishing [him / her] well during [his / her] period of acting headship in our school. We are extremely grateful to the governing body of [*insert name*] School for being prepared to release their headteacher and thank them for their support. We will keep you informed of matters in the school and I know that you will have an opportunity to meet [*insert name*] soon.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP IN A DIOCESAN SCHOOL EXECUTIVE HEADSHIP MODEL

Communication – letter to parents in receiving school

Dear parents / guardians / carers

[As you know / I am writing to tell you as chair of governors][*insert name*] is [retiring as from (*insert date*) / leaving as from (*insert date*) to (*insert reason*) / is absent due to ill health / is absent due to domestic reasons / OR other statement agreed with DES and LA] .

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The Diocesan Education Service, which oversees Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham, and the Local Authority have worked in partnership with the governing body to secure an effective acting headteacher. As a result of their advice and efforts [*insert name*] [from (*insert name*) School] is willing to take on the acting headship at our school, whilst also continuing to be the headteacher at [*insert name*] School. [He / She]sees this as an opportunity to make a wider contribution to Catholic education in the Archdiocese, as well as offering direct support to our children, staff, governors and parents within the Diocesan family of Catholic schools.

Governors have agreed to welcome [*insert name*] here temporarily while [we appoint a new headteacher / (*insert name*) is absent]. This leadership arrangement will take place from [*insert date*].

We are confident that this arrangement means that our school will [continue to] be in good hands and work well. I wish to assure you that the governors and staff will continue to do its best for your children; they are our first priority.

I am sure that you will join me in welcoming [*insert name*] and wishing [him / her] well during [his / her] period of acting headship in our school. We are extremely grateful to the governing body of [*insert name*] School for being prepared to share their headteacher and thank them for their support. We will keep you informed of matters in the school and I know that you will have an opportunity to meet [*insert name*] soon.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP IN A DIOCESAN SCHOOL SECONDMENT

Communication – statement for staff in seconding school

- To be used to inform a face to face briefing with staff and to be published in the staffroom.
- It is wise this is displayed in the staffroom so that any member of staff who is absent has access to the actual statement shared with staff in their absence.
- It is important that there is an emphasis on positive messages.
- Clearly there are very valid reasons why a 'good' school needs an acting headteacher, for example, the unexpected illness of the substantive headteacher.
- Note: In certain circumstances there may be 'sensitive' issues in the receiving school that underpin the need for an acting headteacher but no mention should be made of these, or any confidential matters, in any communication. The focus is on protecting the long-term interests of the school and not communicating any cause for concern about the school's performance, provision or future.

To all staff of [*insert name*] School

As chair of governors, and with the support of the governing body, I wish to share with you the following news.

As chair, I have been asked by the Diocesan Education Service, which oversees Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham, and the Local Authority if the Governing Body would be prepared to release [*insert name*] for a secondment to another school as acting headteacher.

[(*Insert name*) school is currently in the process of seeking to appoint a new headteacher. [The headteacher at (*insert name*) is currently absent due to ill health / domestic reasons. / The headteacher is leaving in (*insert date*) and as yet governors have not been able to begin the process of appointing a new headteacher. / OR other statement as agreed with DES and LA.]

[*Insert name*] is willing to take on the acting headship at [*insert name*] and sees this as an opportunity to make a wider contribution to Catholic education in the Archdiocese, as well as offering direct support to children, staff, governors and parents in another community in the family of Catholic schools.

Governors have discussed and agreed to release [*insert name*] to move to [*insert name*] temporarily while [they appoint a new headteacher / (*insert name*) is absent]. This secondment will take place from [*insert date*].

This means that in [*insert name*] absence [*insert name*] will be acting headteacher and [*insert name*] will be acting deputy headteacher. [OR

insert a paragraph agreed with DES and LA.] Consequently the school will continue to be in good hands and work well. It is also an opportunity for other senior staff to gain further invaluable experience in leading and managing an effective school. I know you will continue to do its best for our children; they are our first priority.

I am sure that you will join me in wishing [*insert name*] well during [his / her] period of secondment and to other senior staff in [his / her] absence. At this stage that is all I wish to say and know that [*inset name*], working with the governors, will be communicating further information to you as soon as possible.

Clearly this information remains confidential until letters can be sent out to parents.

So children will be told [in assembly / by (*insert name*) going round the classes] [today / tomorrow / OR state day] and there will be a letter home to parents informing them [this evening / tomorrow evening / OR state date].

Additionally we expect that a statement will be published by Father [*insert name*] in the next parish newsletter.

Signed: Chair of Governors

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP IN A DIOCESAN SCHOOL EXECUTIVE HEADSHIP MODEL

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As chair, I have been asked by the Diocesan Education Service, which oversees Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham, and the Local Authority if the Governing Body would be prepared to share [*insert name*] with another school to be their acting headteacher, whilst also continuing to be the headteacher of our school.

[(*Insert name*) school is currently in the process of seeking to appoint a new headteacher. [The headteacher at (*insert name*) is currently absent due to ill health / domestic reasons. / The headteacher is leaving in (*insert date*) and as yet governors have not been able to begin the process of appointing a new headteacher. / OR other statement as agreed with DES and LA.]

[*Insert name*] is willing to take on the acting headship at [*insert name*], whilst continuing to be headteacher here and will work with the leadership teams in both schools to promote partnership and collaborative practice. [*Insert name*] sees this as an opportunity to make a wider contribution to Catholic education in the Archdiocese, as well as offering direct support to children, staff, governors and parents in another community in the family of Catholic schools.

Governors have discussed and agreed to share [*insert name*] temporarily while [they appoint a new headteacher / (*insert name*) is absent]. This arrangement will take place from [*insert date*].

In [*insert name*] absence [*insert name*] will be deputising for the headteacher as usual. [OR insert a paragraph agreed with DES and LA.] Consequently the school will continue to be in good hands and work well. It is also an opportunity for other senior staff to gain further invaluable experience in leading and managing an effective school. I know you will continue to do its best for our children; they are our first priority.

I am sure that you will join me in wishing [*insert name*] well during [his / her] period of exercising leadership in this way.

At this stage that is all I wish to say and know that [*inset name*], working with the governors, will be communicating further information to you as soon as possible.

Clearly this information remains confidential until letters can be sent out to parents.

So children will be told [in assembly / by (*insert name*) going round the classes] [today / tomorrow / OR state day] and there will be a letter home to parents informing them [this evening / tomorrow evening / OR state date].

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Signed: Chair of Governors

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP IN A DIOCESAN SCHOOL SECONDMENT MODEL

Communication – letter to parents in seconding school

Dear parents / guardians / carers

As chair of governors, I have been asked by the Diocesan Education Service (which oversees Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham) and the Local Authority, if the Governing Body would be prepared to release [*insert name*] for a secondment to another school as acting headteacher.

[(*Insert name*) school is currently in the process of seeking to appoint a new headteacher. [The headteacher at (*insert name*) is currently absent due to ill health / domestic reasons. / The headteacher is leaving in (*insert date*) and as yet governors have not been able to begin the process of appointing a new headteacher. / OR other statement as agreed with DES and LA.] *

[*Insert name*] is willing to take on the acting headship at [*insert name*] and sees this as an opportunity to make a wider contribution to Catholic education in the Archdiocese, as well as offering direct support to children, staff, governors and parents in an other community in the family of Catholic schools.

Governors have discussed and agreed to release [*insert name*] to move to [*insert name*] temporarily while [they appoint a new headteacher / (*insert name*) is absent]. This secondment will take place from [*insert date*].

This means that in [*insert name*] absence [*insert name*] will be acting headteacher and [*insert name*] will be acting deputy headteacher. [OR insert a paragraph agreed with DES and LA.] Consequently the school will continue to be in good hands and work well. It is also an opportunity for other senior staff to gain further invaluable experience in leading and managing an effective school. I wish to assure you that the school will continue to do its best for your children; they are our first priority.

I am sure that you will join me in wishing [*insert name*] well during [his / her] period of secondment and to other senior staff in [his / her] absence.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP IN A DIOCESAN SCHOOL EXECUTIVE HEADSHIP MODEL

Communication – letter to parents in seconding school

Dear parents / guardians / carers

As chair of governors, I have been asked by the Diocesan Education Service, which oversees Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham, and the Local Authority, if the Governing Body would be prepared to share [*insert name*] with another school as acting headteacher, whilst also continuing to be headteacher of our school.

[(*Insert name*) school is currently in the process of seeking to appoint a new headteacher. [The headteacher at (*insert name*) is currently absent due to ill health / domestic reasons. / The headteacher is leaving in (*insert date*) and as yet governors have not been able to begin the process of appointing a new headteacher. / OR other statement as agreed with DES and LA.]

[*Insert name*] is willing to take on the acting headship at [*insert name*] whilst continuing to be headteacher here and will work with the leadership teams in both schools to promote partnership and collaborative practice. [*Insert name*] sees this as an opportunity to make a wider contribution to Catholic education in the Archdiocese, as well as offering direct support to children, staff, governors and parents in an other community in the family of Catholic schools.

Governors have discussed and agreed to share [*insert name*] with [*insert name*] School temporarily while [they appoint a new headteacher / (*insert name*) is absent]. This leadership arrangement will take place from [*insert date*].

In [*insert name*] absence [*insert name*] will deputise for the headteacher as normal [OR insert a paragraph agreed with DES and LA]. Consequently the school will continue to be in good hands and work well. It is also an opportunity for other senior staff to gain further invaluable experience in leading and managing an effective school. I wish to assure you that the school will continue to do its best for your children; they are our first priority.

I am sure that you will join me in wishing [*insert name*] well during [his / her] period of exercising leadership in this way.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Chair of Governors

Appendix 7

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP IN A DIOCESAN SCHOOL

Sources of Information Checklist for Documentation

	Tick
Basic information that is known and shared in the local community	
• School Prospectus / School Profile	
• Admission policy and criteria	
• List of governors and responsibilities	
Basic information known and shared in the school community	
• School diary / calendar (if one exists)	
• Staff Handbook	
• Map of school (if necessary)	
• List of staff (if not in any other documentation) and responsibilities	
• Most recent Raise online data	
• Recent LA performance data and evaluation / categorisation of the school	
• Any summary documents regarding school self-evaluation e.g. SEF, SIP reports etc	
• School Development Plan and associated plans	
• Summary budget statement	
• Last Ofsted and RE inspection reports	
Basic information that will be useful on taking up post	
• Job descriptions	
• Performance and assessment data and CVA	
• Performance management data	
• Long-term and medium-term curriculum plans	
• Information relating to assessment policy and practice, pupil tracking and target setting in the school	
• DES Headteacher Handbook	

SUPPORTING ACTING HEADSHIP IN A DIOCESAN SCHOOL

Some suggestions regarding possible tasks and activities

- There will be a range of tasks and activities that need to be done that will depend on the individual circumstances of the school and the point in the school's calendar.
- It is not suggested that the acting headteacher will need to undertake work in relation to all of these areas, and the list is by no means prescriptive or exclusive.
- It is suggested that this checklist is used to prompt reflection on what may need to be done and how, in relation to each of the suggestions.
- It might be helpful to use the checklist to make notes and consider when these tasks or linked activities may best be carried out, if at all.
- Some of these tasks / activities are 'one-offs', others will require re-visiting and some will need sustained attention, and some will not need to be done at all. It will depend on the particular circumstances and needs of the school.
- Ensure that processes, procedures, protocols and proformae are in place to provide effective systems for administering / managing / communicating tasks and activities related to:
 - Managing the organisation;
 - Leading teaching and learning;
 - Working with others;
 - Securing accountability;
 - Strengthening community;
 - Creating the future.

Managing the Organisation

- What do you need to think, say or do about the following?
 - Guided tour of school
 - Meeting staff and governors
 - Keys
 - Key holders
 - Contact details for key staff, governors and LA officers / advisers / SIP
 - Staff details including support staff – names, roles and responsibilities, line management information
 - Emergency contacts and arrangements re: emergency call-out, 'break-in', heating, gas, electricity, water, sewerage

- Site / staff holiday arrangements
- Alarm / security details
- 'Call out' / access procedures
- Clarity regarding the structure and organisation of the school day
- Administration of the school roll / LA returns etc
- Management of admissions
- Organisation of pupils into classes
- Allocation of staff to classes
- Organisation of registers and class lists
- Class / staff / pupil timetables
- Organisation of teaching and support staff's duties
- Required returns to the LA / DfES etc
- School diary
- School calendar
- School planner
- Planned training and development for staff
- Briefings (verbal and written) to staff
- Budget
- Plans for first day / week
- Routines and rhythms of the school generally
- Staff access to resources and materials
- Building projects
- Refurbishment / redecoration plans

Leading Teaching and Learning

- What do you need to think, say or do about the following?
 - Stress on the importance of keeping the school focused on learning and pupil achievement
 - Ensure monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is scheduled and maintained:
 - e.g. lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, interviews with pupils, monitoring of planning, assessment data, etc
 - Clarify expectations of pupils regarding:
 - attitudes to learning, behaviour that supports learning and personal development
 - Clarify expectations of staff regarding:
 - modelling behavioural expectations for pupils and maintaining the behaviour policy / code of conduct for the school
 - Revisit the agreed characteristics of effective teaching and learning to clarify expectations for staff and pupils
 - Clarify expectations of support staff duties and responsibilities regarding lunchtimes, etc
 - Clarify expectations of middle leaders in leading subject areas in relation to school policies and school improvement plan priorities
 - Ensure any key priorities relating to teaching and learning are on track

- Policy and practice regarding medium / short term planning
- Ensure statutory and non-statutory target setting processes are on track
- Assessment for learning / recording / summative assessment
- Policy and practice regarding pupil tracking
- Analysis of data

Working with others

- What do you need to think, say or do about the following?
 - Set the 'tone' for the community for the period of the secondment
 - Model Gospel values
 - When necessary draw attention to the mission statement
 - Sustain the Catholic ethos and promote prayer and liturgy
 - Promote a positive 'can do' culture
 - Works with and through other individuals and teams
 - Ensure induction of new staff
 - Ensure planned continuous professional development programme is on track
 - Ensure commitment to accredited qualifications is honoured e.g. NPQH and other NCSL leadership programmes
 - Ensure performance management schedule is on track
 - Job descriptions are in place
 - Administration of staff's contractual information / details
 - Challenge and support regarding unsatisfactory performance
 - Appoint staff where necessary

Securing accountability

- What do you need to think, say or do about the following?
 - Encourage a climate of accountability
 - Work with chair of governors to provide information, advice and support to the governing body to fulfil their statutory duties
 - Ensure the SEF is updated and maintained
 - Meeting with representatives e.g. health and safety / unions
 - Report in the Headteacher's Report to Governors
 - Ensure written reports to parents as scheduled
 - Ensure planned 'parents consultation evenings / days' take place
 - Ensure work on new prospectus/ profile is progressed
 - Ensure pupil tracking is sustained
 - Ensure policy for monitoring, evaluation and review is sustained
 - Promote a culture of personal responsibility

Strengthening community

- What do you need to think, say or do about the following?
 - Clarify the purpose and practices of agencies working in the school
 - Ensure co-operation and collaboration with external agencies
 - Ensure 'partnership with parents' is sustained
 - Meet PTA/Friends of the School representatives as necessary
 - Ensure all necessary information is communicated to parents
 - Publish planned newsletters / brochures / website information etc
 - Communication and relationship with parish priest and parish community

Creating the future

- What do you need to think, say or do about the following?
 - Hold on to the vision
 - Articulate the vision, high expectations, good practice and a 'aspirational' culture wherever possible
 - Progress work on the school improvement plan as scheduled
 - Training and development days

Appendix 9a

**Secondment Agreement
Diocesan Voluntary Aided Catholic Schools**

This is an agreement between:

The governing body of the seconding school,School,
and

The governing body of the receiving school,School,
in respect of:

the secondment of.....[name of employee]

as

Acting Headteacher ofSchool.

The secondment will start on[dd/mmmm/yyyy]and run initially until[dd/mmmm/yyyy]

Any extension of the secondment would be by mutual agreement of both governing bodies and the employee.

The governing body of the receiving school,School, have prepared a contract to define the pay and conditions of service of[name of employee] atSchool. The governing body of the seconding school,School, agree to retain the substantive post of.....[insert post], pending the return of [name of employee] at the end of his/her secondment at [name of receiving school].

..... [name of employee] will be paid (pro rata) a salary of £..... per annum as per spine point L...

(Insert here the mechanism for payment. Usually this will be:

The governing body of the seconding school,School, will instruct their payroll provider to pay the agreed salary. The governing body of the receiving school,School, will arrange a monthly transfer of payments to reimburse the seconding school for these salary payments.)

Signed

Chair of Governors ofSchool (the seconding school)

Signed

Chair of Governors ofSchool (the receiving school)

Executive Headship Agreement
Diocesan Voluntary Aided Catholic Schools

This is an agreement between:

The governing body of the providing school,School,
and

The governing body of the receiving school,School,
in respect of:

the leadership arrangements for.....[name of employee]
as

Acting Headteacher ofSchool.

The arrangements will start on[dd/mmmm/yyyy]and run initially until[dd/mmmm/yyyy]
Any extension of the arrangements would be by mutual agreement of both governing bodies
and the employee.

The governing body of the receiving school,School, have
prepared a contract to define the pay and conditions of service of
.....[name of employee] whilst employed at
.....School and maintaining [his / her] contract at
.....School.

..... [name of employee] will be paid (pro rata) a salary of £.....
per annum as per spine point L...

(Insert here the mechanism for payment. Usually this will be:

The governing body of the providing school,School, will instruct
their payroll provider to pay in full the agreed salary. The governing body of the receiving
school,School, will arrange a monthly transfer of payments to
reimburse the providing school for these salary payments, i.e. 50% of the total basic salary
and where agreed the full cost of any enhancements).

Signed

Chair of Governors ofSchool (the providing school)

Signed

Chair of Governors ofSchool (the receiving school)

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