

Statement of Position on the Provision of Model Pay Policies for Schools

The CES has been asked to provide a statement as to why it does not include a model pay policy in the suite of model employment policy documents that it provides.

The role of the CES, as the education agency of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, is to promote and secure Catholic education on behalf of the Bishops and to provide support to dioceses. The CES provides model employment contracts to ensure the protection of the Catholic character of schools. The CES also provides certain model employment policies, where they are considered necessary to underpin the model employment contracts. These policies include matters which relate directly to provisions in the model contracts requiring employees to support the Catholic life of the school. The CES does not provide model policies which extend beyond these specific employment policies, and has long held the view that it would be neither appropriate nor possible for the CES to produce a model pay policy.

It is the view of the CES that it would not be possible practically to draft a model policy that would be applicable to all Catholic schools, either nationally or at a diocesan level. In relation to support staff, most voluntary aided Catholic schools have tended to apply the local pay arrangements agreed by their local authority. Recent changes have provided more flexibility for employers of staff in schools and the CES does not believe that it would be appropriate for the CES or a diocese to set parameters for schools to follow. A national or diocesan policy is unlikely to successfully meet the specific practical and localised needs of each school and their workforce, taking into account a school's own budgetary considerations that will need to be considered to ensure financial viability and sustainability. It has always been, and remains, the view of the CES that pay and pay policies are matters that are best left to be determined by an individual school's governing board as the employer.

I would also add a note of caution in relation to diocesan academies. As you will appreciate the Board of Directors of an academy trust company must act in the best interests of the company, and must have independence in making corporate decisions. Obviously, the Diocesan Bishop has rights relating to the oversight of diocesan academy trust companies. Dioceses must, however, be scrupulous that the oversight it exercises relates to matters within the jurisdiction of the Diocesan Bishop and does not stray into areas which relate to the day to day management of the company. For the diocese to attempt to do otherwise might lead to allegations that its academy trust companies are not acting in accordance with charity law or in keeping with the academies assurance framework.

This statement was approved and adopted by the Trustees of the Archdiocese of Birmingham Education Sub Committee 8th September 2017.