GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS IN SECURING A FAITH REFERENCE

You have applied for a position in one of our Catholic schools reserved for a practising Catholic. This means that the Person Specification will state that is **essential** that you meet this criterion, and you must be able to evidence this with a positive faith reference from the priest(s) of the parish(es) where you attend the Sunday Eucharist and receive the sacraments. It is also vital that this reference is **current** and that the priest's knowledge of your practice is not historical. It is vital that the priest can verify your attendance at the Sunday Eucharist and is not simply the priest linked to the school that you currently work in.

The Governing Body will be seeking to appoint a practising Catholic who joins in the parish celebration of the Sunday Eucharist and receives the sacraments regularly.

At a time when priests are increasingly assuming responsibility for larger pastoral areas it is becoming increasingly common for priests not to know parishioners as well as they might have in the past. In the light of this we offer the following advice when seeking faith references **prior to making an application**.

Speak to the priest before completing your application and ask if he agrees to your including him as a referee. (Do not simply email or leave a message on the parish answer phone)

- Provide him with an outline of:
    - your involvement in parish life e.g., Eucharistic minister, reader, etc (it may be that currently you are not heavily involved in parish life due to other commitments)
    - your present post – school, areas of responsibility
    - the post to which you are applying – name of school, post, etc
- If you worship in more than one parish, then in order to satisfy weekly attendance of Mass you may need to specify more than one referee.
- By following the above advice, you are able to prepare the priest for the reference request and so ensure it will be completed as fully as possible.

Invitation to interview

If you are shortlisted, and receive an invitation to interview, then the governors will have made the **assumption** that your practice will be evidenced **prior to interview** by a supportive priest's reference. We therefore advise that on receiving notification of an interview you contact the priest again to check that he has received the reference request and he is still able to support your application. If the governors are not in receipt of a positive faith reference **prior to interview** then they will deem that you have not met one the essential criterion and will have to **withdraw** the invitation to interview. If there are circumstances that may prevent the priest replying within the given time frame (holidays, illness etc.) then please inform the relevant Diocesan officer as soon as this is known.