

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**Salary:** £81,350 to £96,263 (Under Review)

**Closing Date:** 5pm on 23 July

**Role Commencing:** 1 September 2025 or as soon as possible thereafter

## APPLICANT INFORMATION PACK

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The Council for Catholic Maintained schools (CCMS) is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), established through legislation in 1989. It is the managing authority of over 430 Catholic maintained schools in Northern Ireland, serving 40% of pupils, and the sector employs some 6,500 teachers.

CCMS's founding aim is to raise standards and its duties include promoting the effective management of Catholic maintained schools by their boards of governors, the planning of effective school provision, recruitment of teachers and school leaders, and providing advice on these matters to schools and other stakeholders.

As Chief Executive you will lead, and advocate on behalf of, the organisation and the Catholic maintained sector. You will drive innovation and continuous development to support the Council and our schools as they embrace new opportunities and challenges. You will work collaboratively with other partners and deliver shared objectives in the interests of all children and young people.

You will also work to foster and champion the ethos of Catholic education; including the value placed on inclusion, diversity, and enabling each child to reach their full potential.

Finally, as the designated Accounting Officer you will be accountable for the operations of the organisation and the safeguarding of allocated funds, and be required to deliver the personal responsibilities of the Accounting Officer role as set out in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI).

## CHAIR'S WELCOME

Thank you for your interest in the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS).

CCMS is an arms length body of the Department of Education and is the managing authority for over 40% of schools in Northern Ireland.

CCMS's founding aim is to raise standards and we are focused on providing exceptional support and leadership to, as well as empowering and challenging, our schools so that they achieve this outcome.

In this important and high profile role you will provide strategic leadership to the Council and schools, and champion the interests of our sector at the highest level.

You will also work with other stakeholders to shape educational strategy and policy in areas such as those outlined in the TransformED Strategy.



We are seeking applications from dynamic individuals with strong leadership and communication skills, the ability to think strategically and deliver results, and build relationships.

As part of a committed, values-driven team, you will use your initiative to help deliver our organisational priorities, whilst embracing innovation and driving improvement in service delivery in the context of a challenging operating environment.

CCMS is made up of individuals from a diverse range of backgrounds, united by our core purpose of raising standards and giving each child the best start in life. As an equal opportunities employer, we welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons.

If you feel you have the skills, experience and qualities required then we would be delighted to receive your application.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Donal McKeown".

Bishop Donal McKeown  
Chair, CCMS

## Job Description

**JOB TITLE:** Chief Executive

**RESPONSIBLE TO:** The CCMS Council and as Accounting Officer to the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education (as the Principal Accounting Officer)

**SALARY** £81,350 to £96,263 (Under Review)

**TERM:** 2 years, with possible extension to 3 years.

**STARTING DATE:** Candidates should be aware that the Council wishes the appointee to start on 1 September 2025, or as soon as possible thereafter.

## Main Duties & Responsibilities

### Overview

The role of the Chief Executive is to provide effective, strategic leadership and management of the organisation and its staff, and ensure fulfilment of the Council's duties, so that standards continue to rise across the Catholic maintained sector.

The Chief Executive as the principal advisor to the Council will be required to develop detailed knowledge of the vision, ethos and range of interests represented by the Council and its committees.

The Chief Executive will have responsibility for:

- Establishing, communicating and delivering the Council's strategic vision and priorities.
- Leadership and oversight of the Council's operations and staff.
- Management and accountability for the Council's allocated funds.

- Corporate governance, financial control and risk, and ensuring that the organisation operates effectively within its budget.
- Leading the drive to raise standards through the promotion of effective management and control by the Boards of Governors.
- In consultation with Trustees, and in conjunction with the Department and the EA, ensuring the planning of effective school provision and capital investment priorities.
- Strategic oversight of teaching recruitment and employment issues and negotiating with teaching trade unions on terms and conditions of employment.
- Provision of strategic & high quality advice to the Chair and Council of CCMS on all matters within the ambit of the organisation.

### Strategic Leadership & Operational Delivery

- Provide strategic leadership and direction for the Council and its staff.
- Establish the Council's Corporate/Business Plans and ensure agreed objectives & targets are met.
- Ensure effective liaison with Trustees on matters pertaining to the ethos and vision of Catholic education in the sector and liaising with the Catholic Schools Trustee Service (CSTS).
- Lead the senior leadership team to ensure they work collectively & flexibly to achieve the organisation's aims & objectives.
- Inspire and lead Council staff to deliver agreed outcomes and targets.
- Encourage and lead innovation and transformation to achieve greater effectiveness, efficiency and improve outcomes.





### **Financial Management and Governance**

- Ensure that the Council lives within its annual budget allocation.
- Act as Accounting Officer for the Council with personal responsibility to the Permanent Secretary.
- Be personally responsible for safeguarding the public funds and any other income received by Council and ensuring that all funds are used economically efficiently and effectively.
- Ensure that adequate internal management and financial controls are maintained; including effective measures against fraud and theft.
- Develop and implement effective corporate governance, risk management and assurance.
- Ensure proper financial records are kept, and the provision of timely forecasts and monitoring information on performance and finance.
- Ensure compliance with the Northern Ireland Public Procurement Policy.
- Ensure effective personnel management policies are in place & maintained.
- Ensure staff comply with the Council's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum and any other guidance issued by DE and/or DoF.

### **Communication and Influencing**

- Act as an advocate for and represent the Council and Catholic maintained sector effectively.
- Engage and negotiate with and provide information about the Council to a broad and diverse range of key partners and stakeholders.
- Represent the Council on external working groups as required.
- Develop and maintain positive and productive relationships with DE Officials and other stakeholders.
- Provide accurate timely and relevant briefings as required to DE and relevant Assembly Committees, or other audiences as required.
- Keep Council and staff aware of changes to the external and/or internal operating environment and develop strategies to meet the challenges which this may present.

### **Resource & Performance Management**

- Maintain a strategic overview of school finance.
- Negotiate with, and advocate for, with DE adequate levels of financial aid & investment.
- Ensure that financial and human resources are deployed effectively against business objectives.
- Ensure organisational structures enable delivery of the Council's objectives.
- Embed effective programme/project management, contract management.
- Embed effective performance management and promote continuous professional development.
- Maximise collaboration with other education bodies to deliver services in a more cost efficient and effective manner.

*In accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998), the Chief Executive is expected to promote Good Relations and Equality of Opportunity, and pay due regard to equality legislation, at all times. This job description is neither exhaustive nor prescriptive. CCMS reserve the right, in consultation with the post-holder, to amend the job description and the Chief Executive may be required to carry out such duties in keeping with the nature of the post as directed by and agreed with the Council.*



# PERSONNEL SPECIFICATION

Candidates must meet the following **essential criteria** at the closing date for applications:

## Qualifications, Experience and Attributes

1. An Honours degree (minimum 2:2) or equivalent higher third level qualification in a relevant management discipline or education.
2. A minimum of three years' experience of successfully leading, managing and developing an organisation of significant size or a service or function within an organisation of significant size[1].
3. Demonstrable ability to successfully manage financial, budgetary and accountability issues within an organisation.
4. Demonstrable ability to successfully lead the implementation of strategic objectives and transformation.
5. Demonstrable experience of ensuring effective corporate governance[2].
6. Demonstrable understanding of current developments in the education system, of CCMS policy and Catholic maintained education.
8. The postholder must have access to a form of transport to meet the requirements of the job.

[1] An organisation with an annual budget of at least £1 million and a minimum of 20 employees.

[2] Corporate governance can be defined as a system of rules, practices and purposes by which an organisation is directed and controlled.

## Skills and Behaviours

### 1. Strategy

- Strong strategic thinking capability with an orientation to challenge, innovate and drive change.
- Demonstrably effective decision-making and analytical skills.
- Ability to deliver strategy & policy regionally.
- Ability to provide professional advice to a Chair, Board or Commission on issues of strategic importance to the organisation.
- Ability to consider multiple perspectives and deliver appropriate solutions.

### 2. Leadership

- Ability to lead, performance manage, motivate and inspire people in a time of change.
- Ability to lead multi-disciplinary teams.
- Ability to create and embed culture and values.
- Personal resilience and confidence to work effectively in a public-facing role subject to scrutiny.
- Ability to lead effectively through change process and financial pressures and deliver results.
- Ability to lead and advocate on behalf of others.

### 3. Working with others

- Ability to develop effective working relationships with internal and external stakeholders through engagement, negotiation and influence.
- Ability to communicate effectively with a broad range of stakeholders including staff, Council Members, other stakeholders and the media.
- Negotiation and influencing skills in complex and difficult situations, across conflicting agendas and an ability to bring about solutions and secure agreement.
- Political acumen.
- Confident communication skills with the ability to establish and maintain strong, influential relationships with a range of people and organisations

### 4. Delivery

- Continuous review, improvement and innovation in services.
- Delivery of excellence.
- Highly developed analytical skills including the ability to work with complex information and identify issues.
- Management of complexity and ambiguity.
- Demonstrable awareness of the principles of managing public money.
- Evidence of strong financial, governance and budgetary accountability.
- A track record of delivering results on time, within budget and to a high standard.
- Excellent ICT skills

## Key Terms and Conditions of Appointment

### Salary

The salary range for this post is £81,350 to £96,263 (Under Review)

The annual increase to include revalorisation and progression as recommended by CCMS will be restricted to public sector pay policy limits. In order to advance under the performance element of pay progression a level of satisfactory performance and delivery of objectives must be attained. An individual who has been in post for a period less than 6 months at the date the appraisal comes due is not eligible for the progression element of the uplift.

Upon appointment the CEO will enter the pay range at the minimum. If the current salary of the successful applicant in their substantive post is higher than the minimum, they may be offered a starting salary capped at their current salary plus 1%. The starting salary cannot breach the maxima of the salary range.

### Term of Appointment

2 years with possible extension to 3 years.

Secondments (on the terms and conditions of the role) will be considered. Seconded from NICS will retain their NICS terms and conditions.

### Hours

The normal hours of work are 36.25 per week. The post-holder will be required to work flexibly subject to the requirement to ensure that the full range of responsibilities of the role are carried out successfully. Applicants should expect some evening and weekend work.

### Pension Scheme

The CCMS pension scheme is provided through NILGOSC. All employees are automatically enrolled into the NILGOSC Pension Scheme if their contract of employment is for more than 3 months. For further information on NILGOSC visit: <http://www.nilgosc.org.uk/>

### Annual Leave

The post attracts 28 days per year annual leave increasing to 34 days after 5 years' service. In addition there is normally a further 12 public and statutory holidays in any leave year.

The leave year extends from 1 April to 31 March. As a new entrant, you will be entitled to leave proportionate to the completed months of service during your first year of entry.

### Location

The post is currently based at CCMS Headquarters in Lisburn. This may be subject to change in the future, as required.

CCMS currently operates a hybrid model of working (subject to review). Senior Leadership are expected to provide a visible presence at the CCMS office.

### Other Benefits

All staff benefit from access to the Vivup Staff Benefits scheme.

On-going performance management and in-service training programmes.

Officers can claim travel and subsistence in line with the Council's agreed travel and subsistence policy, the overriding principle of which is to fairly reimburse employees for those expenses wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in undertaking their work in the employment of CCMS.

- Wholly: the entire expense is for a work related purpose
- Exclusively: there is no personal advantage in incurring the expense
- Necessarily: the individual's job could not be performed properly without incurring the expense

CCMS participates in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) in which the majority of public sector bodies share information to assist in the prevention and detection of fraud. This involves sharing of information on the payment of salaries and other expenses.

## Application Process

**Please submit a CV evidencing how you meet the requirements for the role (see *personnel specification*) to:**

[angela.armstrong@ccmsschools.com](mailto:angela.armstrong@ccmsschools.com)

**Please quote the job title & reference:**  
CEO, HQ/2507/004

**You must include details of your current role, employer, salary and notice period.**

Candidates who are experiencing difficulties submitting a CV because of a disability should contact Heather Alexander by telephone on 028 92013014 or by emailing:

[heather.alexander@ccmsschools.com](mailto:heather.alexander@ccmsschools.com)

**Closing date =  
5pm on 23 July 2025**

The post is open to any individual who meets the eligibility and essential criteria set out in the Applicant Information Pack.

Applicants should be aware:

- Information received after the closing date will not be considered.
- It is applicants' responsibility to demonstrate how, and to what extent, they meet the criteria and qualities in the personnel specification. If you do not provide sufficient detail, including any appropriate dates needed to meet the requirements, you will not be shortlisted. Only those whose responses meet the high standard expected for this role will be shortlisted.



## Selection Process

### 1. Initial Eligibility Check

All CV's will be screened to check they are complete and that candidates meet the eligibility requirements.

### 2. Shortlisting

A desktop shortlisting will be completed to identify those candidates the Council believes best meet the requirement of the role.

### 3. Interview

Candidates will be asked to attend an in-person interview w/beginning 4 August (tbc).

These timings are indicative and candidates will be given as much notice as possible. Please note, it will not be possible to reschedule interviews.

Any offer of employment will be subject to a satisfactory criminal record check.  
References may also be sought.





## Equality & Safeguarding

### Equality

CCMS is committed to equality of opportunity and all applications for employment will be considered on the basis of merit. CCMS welcomes applications from all suitably qualified candidates irrespective of belief, gender, disability, race, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or whether or not they have dependants. As part of its affirmative action plan, the Council has identified under-representation of the Protestant community and disabled people at this level and would particularly welcome applications from those people.



### Safeguarding

Posts involving working with children and young people in educational establishments are subject to the provisions of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007.

Applicants invited for assessment and/or interview will be required to bring proof of relevant qualifications and proof of identity. Applicants must disclose if there is any reason why they cannot work in regulated activity (as defined by AccessNI). For further information on regulated activity please refer to the AccessNI website

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/accessni). Any offer of employment is subject to a satisfactory criminal record check

**CCMS IS COMMITTED TO EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN EMPLOYMENT AND WELCOMES APPLICATIONS FROM ALL SUITABLY QUALIFIED CANDIDATES IRRESPECTIVE OF BELIEF, GENDER, DISABILITY, RACE, POLITICAL OPINION, AGE, MARITAL STATUS, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, OR WHETHER OR NOT THEY HAVE DEPENDANTS. ALL APPLICATIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT WILL BE CONSIDERED ON THE BASIS OF MERIT. AS PART OF ITS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN, THE COUNCIL HAS IDENTIFIED UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF THE PROTESTANT AND DISABLED COMMUNITY AND WOULD THEREFORE PARTICULARLY WELCOME APPLICATIONS FROM THESE COMMUNITIES.**



### Commitment to Public Service

All Council Officers should be fully committed to the core values and aims of Catholic maintained schools, the communities they serve, and to the ethos of Catholic education.

Council officers will be required to adhere to the 7 Principles of Public Life, commonly known as the **"Nolan Principles"**:

- **Openness** - Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty** - Holders of public office should be truthful.

- **Leadership** - Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.
- **Selflessness** - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity** - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity** - Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this

In addition, to the 7 principles of public life, members also bear an obligation to disclose important information and should disclose any information which may be of relevance, have any bearing, or negative impact on, or be related to, Council business. This information should be brought to the attention of the Chair, Council or a representative thereof, immediately upon exposure or receipt of same.



## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

For more information on the work of CCMS visit our website at **[www.ccmsschools.com](http://www.ccmsschools.com)**

If you need assistance with the application process, please contact: [heather.alexander@ccmsschools.com](mailto:heather.alexander@ccmsschools.com).

If you would like to know more about the role itself, please contact: [Alison.Russell@ccmsschools.com](mailto:Alison.Russell@ccmsschools.com).



## CCMS

**Phone:** 028-9201-3014

**Write:** Linen Hill House, 23 Linenhall Street, Lisburn, BT28 1FJ



**CCMS**  
Council for Catholic  
Maintained Schools