Role Profile

Principal

Sacred Heart School, Westport

This role profile includes the statutory requirements, the contractual obligations and sample core competencies.

Statutory Requirements

Section 22 of the Education Act 1998 sets out the functions of the Principal. These functions specify that the Principal shall:

(a) encourage and foster learning in students

(b) regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the evaluation to the students and their parents

(c) collectively promote co-operation between the school and the community which it serves, and

(d) subject to the terms of any applicable collective agreement and their contract of employment, carry out those duties that are assigned to him or her by the Board.

Section 23 of the Act specifies that, in addition to the above functions, the Principal shall:

(a) be responsible for the day-to-day management of the school, including guidance and the direction of teachers and other staff of the school, and be accountable to the Board for that management,

(b) provide leadership to the teachers and other staff and the students of the school,

(c) be responsible for the creation, together with the Board, parents of students and the teachers, of a school environment which is supportive of learning among the students and which promotes the professional development of the teachers,

(d) under the direction of the Board and, in consultation with the teachers, the parents and, to the extent appropriate to their age and experience, the students, set objectives for the school and monitor the achievement of those objectives, and,

(e) encourage the involvement of parents of students in the education of those students and in the achievement of the objectives of the school.

Articles of Management

The Principal has overall authority under the authority of the Board of Management / Manager for the day to day management of the school as provided for under Article 22 of the Articles of Management, which states:

> *Subject to such direction as may be given from time to time by the Board, the Principal shall control the internal organisation, management and discipline of the School, including the assignment of duties to members of the teaching and non-teaching staff. The Principal shall submit, in writing, to the Board all such statements and reports affecting the conduct of the School as the Board shall require.*

Attendance of the Principal

1. The Principal will be required to be in attendance for days during the school year when the Board of Management / Manager of the school determines that the school should be open for pupils and in accordance with Department of Education and Skills regulations.

2. The Principal will be required by the Board of Management / Manager to be present in the school for periods during the State Examinations and for other reasonable periods outside of the normal opening hours and days of the school such as may be necessary from time to time. The Principal shall enter into an agreement with the Board of Management in respect of arrangements for such attendances.

3. Before the beginning of the school year the Principal shall be available as reasonably required to ensure that all necessary preparations are carried out for the re-opening of the school and shall inform the Chairperson of the Board of Management of the preparations involved.

4. The Principal shall ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the reception and distribution of Leaving Certificate examination results and for consultation with students and parents.

Day-to-Day Duties

In addition to the above, the obligations of the Principal in general terms are as follows:

1. The Principal controls the internal organisation, management and discipline of the school, including the assignment of duties to members of the teaching and non-teaching staff.

2. The Principal ensures that the Board of Management's policies, procedures, guidelines and requirements are adhered to.

3. The Principal submits to the Board all such statements and reports affecting the conduct of the school as the Board requires.

4. The Principal is responsible for day-to-day financial administration and reporting as provided for in the Financial Support Services Unit Guidelines.

5. The Principal is required to be fully familiar with the Child Protection Guidelines and it is normal for the Principal to be the Designated Liaison Person (DLP). The Principal shall uphold and be responsible for upholding the characteristic spirit of the school as determined by the Patron/Trustees of the school.

6. The Principal of a recognised school and the teachers in a recognised school, under the direction of the Principal, shall have responsibility for the instruction provided to the students in the school and shall contribute, generally, to the education and personal development of students in that school.

This list of duties is not intended to be exhaustive and is subject to change.

Competencies Summary

A review of the JMB framework of competencies for Principal and for Deputy Principals was commenced in November 2018 in the light of feedback from members of selection committees, Principals, Chairpersons of Boards of Management, Trustees representatives and the Department of Education & Skills.

During this review it was decided to redefine four of the six competencies to more explicitly include the four domains identified in the Department of Education and Skills published document, *LOOKING AT OUR SCHOOL 2016: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools (LAOS).* This document identified two key areas or dimensions of the work of a school, namely, Teaching and Learning, and Leadership and Management. Within the dimension, Leadership and Management, which is the dimension most relevant in the recruitment of Principals and Deputy Principals, four domains are identified:

Domain 1: Leading Learning and Teaching
Domain 2: Managing the Organisation
Domain 3: Leading School Development
Domain 4: Developing Leadership Capacity

The document goes on to identify *standards* under each domain, each with a set of *statements of effective practice* and *statements of highly effective practice.*

The JMB review group drew on three strands: the previous collaborative work with Principals, Deputy Principals, Chairpersons of Boards of Management and representatives of Trustees that identified the

original framework; the aforementioned feedback from selection committees; and, the DES publication *LOOKING AT OUR SCHOOL 2016: A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools (LAOS).*

The review group identified the following key competencies, which include the domains from LAOS, as being essential for the effective performance of the role and function of a Principal in a faith school:

A. **Leadership of a Faith School**
B. **Promotion of a Holistic Development Culture including Leading Learning and Teaching**
C. **Interpersonal Relationships including Developing Leadership Capacity**
D. **Management & Administration including Managing the Organisation**
E. **Strategic Management including Leading School Development**
F. **Self-awareness & Self-management Skills**

While there is not congruence between the six competency areas and the four DES identified domains, all of the domains and their respective standards are included in the revised competency framework.

Each of these competencies is defined in a school context below.

Leadership of a Faith School: The Principal promotes the building of a school community in its religious tradition and in accordance with the values of the school's mission statement and expressed philosophy. As a significant occupational requirement of Principalship the successful candidate will be called upon to understand, protect and promote the stated characteristic spirit of the school. He/she will be committed to the demands implied in such protection and promotion. He/she will operate in accordance with the quality of action, function and presence laid down by the Board of Management on behalf of the Trustees, as necessary for the carrying out of this role.

This competency will include the ability to articulate clear objectives for faith development in the school, placing faith development appropriately within the whole school planning and review process.

Included within this competency is the expectation that the successful candidate would:

- Demonstrates an understanding of Catholic education and an understanding of its specific characteristic spirit, its traditions, ethos and founding intention as expressed in core documents. The candidate must grasp how this relates to and is relevant for the lives of students and teaching staff and for the overall curriculum, culture and climate of the school.
- Demonstrates the capacity to challenges actions, behaviours and practices that do not accord with the school's Catholic ethos and ethical standards. (Domain 2).
- Demonstrates familiarity with the language, strategies and dynamics involved in leadership of a Catholic school that protects and promotes characteristic spirit.
- Demonstrates comfort, familiarity and enthusiasm around the specific characteristic spirit as laid down for this particular school in its core documents.

- Demonstrates the sincere willing dispositions necessary to protect and promote the school's Catholic ethos and has demonstrated such willing dispositions in past undertakings and achievements.
- Demonstrates the capacity to be a motivational leader of staff in relation to Catholic education and is committed to reflective practice, the ongoing professional development of staff and to the leadership role of others in this regard.
- Demonstrates an ability to foster a commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and the holistic development of each student as part of our Catholic values. (Domain 1)
- Contributes to the shaping and implementation of a vision based on high expectations, for the all-round development, including appropriate academic success, for each student who is seen as a unique child of God.
- Demonstrates an ability to clearly communicate the guiding vision for the school as a Catholic school to all key partners and lead its realisation, working with the patron/ trustees and board of management. (Domain 3)
- Places faith development appropriately within the whole school planning and review process.
- Demonstrates a resolve that is tempered with moderation, flexibility and compassion around the issues and conflicts that our Catholic faith can experience in an increasingly diverse and secular society.

Promotion of a Holistic Development Culture including Leading Learning and Teaching: The Principal creates and promotes a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching, and assessment, managing the planning and implementation of the school curriculum. He/she fosters a commitment to inclusion, equality of opportunity and the holistic development of each student through the formal Curriculum together with Co-Curricular and Extra Curricular subjects and activities, all of which are informed by and contribute to the school's characteristic spirit. He/she fosters teacher professional development that enriches teachers' and students' learning, promoting the achievement of high educational outcomes.

Included within this competency is the expectation that the successful candidate would:

- Promote and support a culture of continuous professional development for staff in a range of areas to support high-quality teaching and/or to address the identified needs of the school (Domain 1)
- Promote a culture of improvement, collaboration, innovation and creativity in learning, teaching and assessment (Domain 1)
- Show commitment to on-going evidence-based school self-evaluation for the achievement of high educational standards and demonstrates capacity in implementing strategic improvement planning in teaching and learning
- Establish and support the development of 'staff teams' in all areas of school life in support of the achievement of the school's aims and objectives, empowering staff to take on and carry out leadership roles (Domain 4)
- Be personally familiar with what is required to improve the quality of teaching and learning

- Promote and facilitate the development of student voice, student participation and student leadership (Domain 4)

Interpersonal Relationships including Developing Leadership Capacity: The Principal critiques his/her practice as leader and develops his/her understanding of effective and sustainable leadership. He/she collaboratively builds and maintains professional and respectful relationships with staff, students, parents and other support agencies, including building professional networks with other school leaders. The Principal establishes, builds and leads staff teams in all areas of school life. He/she promotes and facilitates the development of student voice, student participation, and student leadership. The Principal uses appropriate communication skills to empower staff to take on and carry out leadership roles. He/she appropriately anticipates, addresses and manages the conflictual challenges that inevitably accompany this role. The Principal also encourages and fosters the building of leadership capacity among staff in all areas of school life that support the achievement of the school's mission and vision as articulated by the Board of Management.

Included within this competency is the expectation that the successful candidate would:

- Demonstrate an active involvement in professional networks with other school leaders and demonstrates a willingness to contribute to and learn from such networks. (Domain 4)
- Build and maintain relationships with parents, with other schools, and the wider community (Domain 3)
- Set up teams and empower staff to take on and carry out leadership roles, thus building leadership capacity within the school
- Develop and implement a system to promote professional responsibility and accountability (Domain 2)
- Have the ability to manage challenging and complex situations in a manner that demonstrates equity, fairness and justice (Domain 2)
- Promote a clear understanding of change processes and manages this change in a collaborative, flexible and sensitive manner.

Management & Administration including Managing the Organisation: The Principal manages the school's human, physical and financial resources so as to create and maintain a learning organisation, managing challenging and complex situations in a manner that demonstrates equality, fairness and justice. The Principal leads the school in on-going evaluation of the school's activities and relationships in the light of its goals as established by the Board of Management and as identified as part of School Self-Evaluation (SSE). He/she uses a range of relevant planning and organisational techniques and systems to set priorities, goals and timetables that ensure effective use of time and resources. He/she establishes an orderly, secure and healthy learning environment, and maintains it through effective communication. He/she develops and implements a system to promote professional responsibility and accountability.

Included within this competency is the expectation that the successful candidate would:

- Display the capacity and or/experience to manage the design, planning and implementation of the school curriculum (programmes, subjects and activities) which support the achievement of the school's goals and objectives, in line with DES requirements and arising out of School Self Evaluation (Domain 1)
- Demonstrate an understanding of the relevant systems and policies to foster a safe place of learning and teaching for the whole school community e.g. Health & Safety; Child Protection; Pastoral Care; Code of Behaviour etc. These systems and policies will be reflective of the Characteristic Spirit of the school and will be in keeping with legislation (cf. Domain 2)
- Demonstrate evidence of engagement with the whole school community in the development and review of school policies as appropriate
- Provide evidence of managing school's human, physical and financial resources in an effective and efficient manner to create and maintain a learning environment. (Domain 2)

Strategic Management including Leading School Development: The Principal demonstrates the ability to manage, lead and mediate change to respond to the evolving needs of the school and to changes in education including the legislative framework in which schools operate. This involves working with all stakeholders to communicate the characteristic spirit and guiding vision for the school and lead its realisation. The Principal leads the school's engagement in a continuous process of self-evaluation and strategic planning. He/she builds and maintains relationships with parents, with other schools, and with the wider community.

Included within this competency is the expectation that the successful candidate would:

- Lead the school's engagement in a continuous process of self-evaluation (Domain 3)
- Have an understanding of the detail of relevant legislation
- Manage, lead and mediate change to respond to the evolving needs of the school and to changes in education (Domain 3)
- Understand the long term needs of the school and demonstrate a vision for working towards meeting those needs.
- Demonstrate a willingness and capacity to develop strategies for the future and think through the consequences of actions taken.
- Have the ability to reflect on and analyse how the school might best serve the educational needs of the local community

Self-awareness and Self-management Skills: The Principal demonstrates an awareness of his/her strengths and areas for improvement and has the capacity to manage them appropriately. The Principal receives and gives feedback; he/she models and promotes a culture of self-reflection. He/she attends to his/her own wellbeing as well as assisting others to attend to their own wellbeing. The Principal demonstrates the capacity to manage his/her own difficult emotions and is self-aware enough to know when to seek support particularly when dealing with challenging situations. He/she

is able to motivate himself/herself and attend to developing his/her self-awareness and self-management skills.

Included within this competency is the expectation that the successful candidate would:

- Have a clear knowledge of his/her personal strengths and challenges and the ability to understand their impact on others
- Recognise the importance, and display a willingness, to regularly critique his/her professional practice with the leadership team and develop his/her understanding of effective and sustainable leadership (Domain 4)
- Recognise the role that emotions can play in thinking and cognitive activity
- Demonstrate a caring outlook and expresses concern in a positive and healthy way.
- Look to their own wellbeing

Specific Context of this school …

- The person appointed to the position is expected to actively support the school ethos and the CEIST Charter Values and to continue the work of the Board of Management and staff of Sacred Heart Secondary School in focussing on learning and teaching, raising expectations and promoting enrolment in the school.
- Specific details will be discussed with the successful candidate in the light of the consultative process. These specific duties will be reviewed by the Board of Management from time to time.