



Head of Science

Candidate Information

A message from the Head of School

Thank you for your interest in Cardinal Newman Catholic High School. We are a vibrant, ambitious and caring community, with students drawn from a variety of backgrounds. Everything that happens within our school is inspired by gospel values and Cardinal Newman's words that we are all 'a link in a chain. A bond of connection between persons.' Our most recent denominational inspection (2022) celebrated a 'genuine, loving and happy community in which each person is known and valued,' whilst our most recent Ofsted inspection (November 2022) concluded that we are a Good school where students 'learn and achieve well.'

September 2026

Dear Colleague

Thank you for taking the time to consider the opportunity to become Head of Science at Cardinal Newman Catholic High School.

Just over six months ago, I found myself in a position very similar to yours. I was interested in a role at Cardinal Newman, but naturally wanted to find out as much as I could before making such an important decision. Like many prospective candidates, I looked at the information available publicly, read inspection reports, considered performance data and tried to build as accurate a picture as possible of the school I hoped to lead. If you are considering applying for this role, I suspect you may be doing exactly the same thing.

The information that is readily available presents what I would describe as a somewhat mixed picture. Our most recent Ofsted inspection judged the school to be **Good in all areas**, which is something of which we are proud. However, that inspection took place in 2022 and we expect to be inspected again under the new framework this academic year. Likewise, our most recent Diocesan inspection resulted in **Outstanding judgements in two of the three areas inspected**, but again this was in 2022 and we are due a further inspection during the year ahead.

You may also notice that our website is looking a little tired. I would completely agree. It is in need of a significant refresh, both in appearance and content, and I can assure you that this is firmly on our improvement agenda this year.

When you look at our published outcomes, you will see that results have fluctuated considerably over the last three years. Consequently, it is difficult to identify a clear trend and, quite rightly, I fully accept that outcomes have not been as strong as they should have been. However, there is important context behind those figures.

The prior attainment of students joining Cardinal Newman is typically lower than that of students entering many other secondary schools across Warrington. Over the last two years, with league tables being calculated primarily using attainment measures alone, this has placed us at a significant disadvantage when comparisons have been made between schools.

A message from the Head of School

This is not presented as an excuse, nor is it something from which we shy away. We are ambitious for our students and absolutely committed to raising standards further. However, I believe prospective candidates deserve to understand the full picture when considering whether our school is right for them. Encouragingly, our 2026 Key Stage 4 outcomes showed a significant improvement and represented the strongest set of headline results we have achieved for four years. Provisional outcomes indicate an **Attainment 8 score of 44.2**, with **41.3% of students achieving Grade 5+ in English and Mathematics**, and **62.9% achieving Grade 4+ in English and Mathematics**. Whilst there remains much to do, these outcomes reflect the hard work of our students and staff and demonstrate that the school is moving in the right direction.

I am also particularly interested to see the return of progress measures in 2027. Whilst no single accountability measure can ever tell the whole story, I believe that progress data will provide a much fairer reflection of the work taking place in our school and will help present Cardinal Newman in a significantly stronger light than attainment measures alone.

Having said all of that, I also want you to know this. Since spending considerable time in the school during my preparation period, and having now led the school since the start of September, I can say with complete confidence that **Cardinal Newman is a wonderful Catholic school and community**. The students are a delight – confident, mature, and proud of their school. They are also keen for us to continue to improve as a community.

The other thing that struck me was the commitment and loyalty of the staff. Staff turnover is remarkably low. The average length of service is approaching ten years and, this September, only one new teacher joined our teaching staff. In a profession where retention is increasingly challenging, I believe that statistic speaks volumes. One of the very first things I did before taking up post was conduct a survey of all staff. I asked two simple questions:

What do you love about working at Cardinal Newman?

What do we need to improve?

The responses were reassuring, honest and incredibly informative. Staff overwhelmingly spoke about the strength of our Catholic ethos, the relationships they enjoy with colleagues, the sense of community that exists throughout the school and the privilege of working with our young people. They also identified an area requiring attention. A very small minority of students were having a disproportionate impact on the climate for learning, and this feedback was not ignored.

Over recent months we have acted decisively, raising expectations, strengthening systems and improving consistency. As a result, we are already seeing a significant improvement in behaviour, culture and the overall climate throughout the school. Staff and visitors have commented on the calm, welcoming atmosphere they experience, and we are determined to build on this momentum.

A message from the Head of School

The vacancy for Head of Science has arisen because the current postholder has secured an exciting opportunity abroad. It is therefore a genuine opportunity for a new leader to make their mark. There is substantial scope within the department for someone to shape the future direction of Science and share their expertise across the subject area. You will join a team of colleagues who care deeply about their students and who are eager to continue improving. The facilities in Science have also been extensively updated over the past two years. We have five fully refurbished laboratories that were designed by the department themselves and a dedicated Science teaching classroom, all of which are located closely together.

I have already encouraged all of our middle leaders to see themselves as the **headteacher of their area**. I believe strongly in distributed leadership and in empowering talented people to lead confidently. I am not looking for someone who simply maintains systems and processes. I am looking for someone who wants to shape them.

You may not yet have extensive leadership experience and, if that is the case, please do not let that put you off applying. Experience helps, but so do character, mindset, ambition and potential. We have substantial expertise within the school and a leadership team that is committed to nurturing and supporting colleagues as they develop professionally. If you have the right qualities and a desire to learn, we will invest in you. So, what are we looking for?

Someone with energy and enthusiasm. Someone committed to securing the very best outcomes for our students and supporting the staff within the Science department. Someone brave enough to embrace change, take measured risks and challenge established thinking when necessary. Someone who can bring people with them on that journey. Someone committed to their own professional development and passionate about developing others. Someone who values structure, clarity, attention to detail and effective communication. Most importantly, someone who believes every young person deserves an exceptional education and who wants to be part of a Catholic community that shares our mission statement that we all come to school to *'have life, and have it to the full'*.

Above all, I would encourage you to come and visit us. Recruitment packs, websites and performance tables can only ever tell part of the story. If you are interested in the role, I will happily clear my diary to make time for you. I want you to have the opportunity to meet me, meet colleagues, speak to students and walk around the school during a normal working day. Only then will you truly appreciate what Cardinal Newman feels like day-to-day. I believe that what you will find is a school with strong values, wonderful young people, dedicated staff, improving outcomes and an exciting future ahead.

I very much look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely

Simon Atkin
Headteacher



Governors seek the following appointment for **September 2026**

Head of Science (**Full Time, Permanent, MPS/UPS+ TLR 1B**)

We require an inspirational and committed Head of Science to lead this core department. This is a fantastic opportunity for a highly motivated professional to join our school Curriculum Leadership Team.

We are delighted to offer an exciting opportunity to lead our well-resourced Science Department at a key point in its development. We are seeking an ambitious and inspirational leader who will drive improvement, with a strong understanding of curriculum design, assessment, and raising standards at GCSE.

The successful candidate will have a clear vision for building and leading a strong, cohesive team, supporting staff to develop their practice and deliver high-quality teaching and learning. They will be passionate about ensuring that all pupils achieve their full potential, with a particular focus on improving outcomes at Key Stage 4.

They will be an excellent classroom practitioner with a genuine enthusiasm for Science, alongside high expectations of student achievement and behaviour. As a skilled communicator, they will inspire and motivate both students and colleagues, and their strong interpersonal skills will enable them to work collaboratively as part of a highly effective team. Applicants should have experience of teaching Science across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, with a secure understanding of curriculum requirements and strategies to raise attainment.

A commitment to the wider life and ethos of the School is essential.

This post is available for a January 2027 start.

Closing date of applications: 2nd October 2026

Interviews: Week of 5th October 2026

Please note a current CES application form and a Model Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 form must be completed for this post. Applications can be emailed to Mrs Michele Walker mwa@cardinal-newman.co.uk

The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Post is subject to an Enhanced DBS Disclosure and online searches.

JOB DESCRIPTION

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Leadership and Management

- Lead and manage the Science Department to achieve outstanding teaching and learning.
- Develop and implement a clear departmental vision and agreed set of improvement priorities aligned with the school's Catholic ethos.
- Line manage teaching and support staff, including performance management and professional development.
- Promote a collaborative and supportive team culture that facilitates the effective implantation of the school and department vision and improvement priorities.

2. Curriculum and Teaching

- Plan, implement, and review a broad, balanced, and ambitious science curriculum (KS3–KS4)
- Ensure schemes of work meet national curriculum requirements and exam board specifications
- Monitor and evaluate teaching quality, providing feedback and support where needed
- Promote innovative and evidence-based teaching strategies in line with school teaching and learning principles.

3. Achievement and Standards

- Track and analyse student progress and attainment across all key stages regularly transforming information into improvement action.
- Implement targeted interventions to raise achievement and close gaps
- Ensure all students, regardless of ability or background, can succeed in science
- Prepare students effectively for GCSE examinations

4. Catholic Ethos and Values

- Support and uphold the Catholic mission of the school in all aspects of leadership
- Encourage reflection on ethical issues in science (e.g. stewardship, care for creation, bioethics)
- Contribute to the spiritual and moral development of students
- Participate in and support liturgical life and collective worship
- Treat everyone in our community fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect.
- Maintain a positive school culture and profile.

5. Staff Development

- Identify training needs and support continuous professional development within the department.
- Mentor early career teachers and trainee teachers.
- Share best practice and promote professional collaboration.
- Regularly review your own practice participating in the school appraisal cycle.
- Actively engage with the school CPD offer.

6. Resources and Environment

- Manage the departmental budget effectively.
- Ensure laboratories are safe, well-equipped, and compliant with health and safety regulations.
- Oversee the work of science technicians.

7. Other specific duties

- All teaching staff are expected to meet the relevant Professional Standards of Teachers.
- All teachers will engage with pre-school, break and after school supervision as assigned.
- All staff members will promote and safeguard the welfare of students.
- Any other duties consummate with your role and responsibilities.

Person Specification

Head of Department

Faith Commitment

		Essential	Desirable	Source
1.	Practising Catholic		D	A/I/R
2.	Involvement in parish community		D	A/I/R

Qualifications

		Essential	Desirable	Source
4.	Qualified teacher status	E		A/CC
5.	Degree level qualification	E		A/CC
6.	Degree level in Science		D	A/CC
7.	CCRS/CTC or commitment to obtaining the certificate		D	A/CC/I

Person Specification

Head of Department

	Essential	Desirable	Evidence
Qualifications 1. Relevant degree or equivalent 2. Teaching qualification 3. Enhanced DBS	✓ ✓ ✓		Application Form Application Form Application Form
Experience 1. Experience of teaching across the age and ability range within a successful Science department. 2. Proven track record of securing good student progress and attainment. 3. Experience of working with a tutor group 4. Experience of working with colleagues to ensure students' individual needs are met. 5. Experience of using a range of teaching and learning styles to ensure students learn effectively. 6. Experience of innovation and developing practice 7. Experience of working with colleagues to help them develop good practice.	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	Application Form/ Letter/Interview Letter/Interview Letter/Interview Letter/Interview Letter/Interview Letter/Interview/References
Interpersonal 1. Ability to work co-operatively with a wide range of staff and lead a team effectively. 2. Ability to relate positively to students, and show a fundamental commitment to them and their development. 3. Ability to work in partnership with Governors, Partner schools, parents and the community. 4. Enthusiasm for subject area and ability to communicate this 5. Sense of humour. 6. Commitment to continuing to develop professionally 7. Willingness to contribute to the school's programme of extra-curricular activities. 8. Willingness to support and contribute to school's Catholic Ethos.	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓	Letter/References/Interview Letter/References/Interview Letter/Interview Letter/Interview Letter/Interview Interview Letter/Interview Letter/Interview
Knowledge/ skills 1. Clear expectations on pupil behaviour and discipline. 2. Excellent subject knowledge and awareness of national curriculum subject requirements. 3. Outstanding classroom practitioner. 4. Understanding of the characteristics of outstanding teaching and effective learning. 5. Ability to secure effective behaviour for learning. 6. Share our commitment to the personal development of our students. 7. Willingness to contribute to the curricular enrichment programme of the school	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓		Letter/References/Interview Letter/References/Interview Letter/Interview Letter/References/Interview Letter/Interview Letter/Interview Letter/Interview
Safeguarding 1. Commitment to the highest standards of child protection	✓		Letter/References/Interview

The extra curricular
life of our school is
flourishing with
a wide **variety**
of **enrichment**
opportunities



Michele Walker
Headteacher's PA
01925 635556

Cardinal Newman Catholic High School
Bridgewater Avenue, Latchford, Warrington, WA4 1RX

Email: mwa@cardinal-newman.co.uk

Web: www.cardinal-newman.org.uk