



Controlled Schools' Support Council

Appointment of Schools' Support Officer

Application Pack

Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC)

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Application pack – section 1

The organisation - introduction

After a lengthy review of Education Administration in Northern Ireland the Education Act (NI) 2014, which became law in December 2014, provided for the establishment of the Education Authority to replace the five Education and Library Boards (ELBs) and their Staff Commission with effect from 1 April 2015. The Education Act (NI) 2014 also included a provision conferring power on the Department to pay grants to anybody recognised by the Department as representing the interests of controlled schools. The Minister and the NI Executive agreed to establish and fund a support body for schools in the controlled sector.

Whilst this centralisation of education administration replaced the five Education and Library Boards, the other education sectors continue to maintain their support bodies. It was therefore timely that the controlled sector should also receive such support. Since there was no specific support for the controlled sector in over 30 years there were obvious legacy issues which needed to be addressed especially in the areas of ethos, representation and advocacy.

These legislative changes offered an exciting and challenging opportunity to create a new body with the potential to play a key role in the further development of the largest sector within the education service in Northern Ireland.

CSSC was set up in September 2016. It seeks to enhance the quality of educational provision within the controlled sector, while working in constructive partnership with the Education Authority, other sectoral bodies and the Department of Education.

CSSC is a non-statutory body, currently classified as a third level organisation, providing services in supporting and representing the controlled schools sector. In fulfilling this role it employs staff, procures goods and services and performs contractual functions. It is funded by the Department of Education, but may receive funding for specific projects from other sources.

The CSSC is a company limited by guarantee with charitable status.

Currently 95% of controlled schools are members of CSSC.

The CSSC headquarters is at Stranmillis University College, Stranmillis Road, Belfast.

The organisation – key functions

CSSC seeks to support the interests of schools in the controlled sector through activities which focus on a number of key areas as outlined below. The summary of activities in each area is illustrative and not exclusive.

Advocacy

- Fulfilling a representational and advocacy role for the controlled sector
- Responding to consultation exercises from government, the Education Authority and other relevant agencies
- Promoting best practice in the controlled sector
- Acting as point of contact for interested parties and providing comment to the media on issues affecting the controlled sector
- Providing advice and support to controlled schools in responding to consultation on education policies, initiatives and schemes

Ethos

- Working with controlled schools, collectively and individually, to develop, promote and maintain the ethos of the sector
- Providing leadership support in relation to issues of ethos
- Providing support to staff and governors on religious education (RE), ethos and moral/ethical issues

Governance

- Identifying and nominating persons as potential school governors taking account of the nature and character of the school
- Responding to the Education Authority on proposed appointments to Boards of Governors of controlled schools
- Encouraging appropriate nominees to apply for governorship
- Supporting and training governors in relation to ethos, RE, collective worship and assemblies
- Providing advice to the Education Authority in the development of draft schemes of management for controlled schools
- Providing advice to schools on schemes of management
- Supporting governors in the appointment of senior staff by assisting in the training of assessors from an assessor pool

Raising Standards

- Working with the Education Authority to support schools in raising standards of school achievement

Estate Organisation, Utilisation and Planning

- Participating in the planning of the schools' estate
- Supporting the EA in the development of area plans for the controlled schools' estate in accordance with the vision, ethos and values of the sector

- Responding to consultations on development proposals for changes to school provision

External relationships

- Providing press and media briefings on behalf of the controlled sector
- Developing marketing and public relations on behalf of the controlled sector
- Working and co-operating with the support bodies of other sectors in matters of mutual interest and shared education
- Promoting the controlled sector

Business Management

- Acting as employer of staff
- Managing Council business efficiently and effectively
- Ensuring good governance is developed and maintained

In fulfilling these functions CSSC acts as a constructive and positive critical friend to controlled schools encouraging them to provide excellence for their pupils and communities.

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The controlled sector

The origins of the controlled sector began in the early 20th century, when schools managed mainly by the Protestant churches were transferred to the state. Together with schools provided directly by the state, they formed a non-denominational, church-related sector delivering free education for all children irrespective of background. From these beginnings of a historic faith context and a commitment to free public education, today's controlled schools provide for a more pluralist society through a diversity of schools with individual characteristics, but with core values and principles.

In many ways controlled schools are unique. The Education and Libraries (NI) Order 1986 defines a controlled school as 'a grant aided school under the management of a board' and the Education Act 2014 maintains this definition. In Schedule 4 of the 1986 Order, controlled schools have particular forms of governing bodies recognising their origins, history and the communities they serve. Article 21 of the 1986 Order defines that a seminal purpose of a controlled school is to deliver 'un-denominational religious education' and collective worship which forms a distinctive element of a controlled school's ethos.

In 2020/21 there were 552 controlled schools in Northern Ireland (49% of all schools), comprising nursery, primary, special and post primary schools and equates to Controlled schools are attended by 146,138 pupils, which represents 42.5% of all school enrolments in Northern Ireland. These figures demonstrate the scale and nature of the controlled sector, illustrating that it has the largest number and range of schools in Northern Ireland.

	Controlled schools	Controlled pupils
Nursery	64	4,110
Primary	382*	87,737
Non-grammar	53	33,786
Grammar	16	14,511
Total post-primary	69	48,297
Special	37	5,994
Total schools	552	146,138
Percentages	49.4% of NI schools	42.5% of NI pupils

* Includes one preparatory school which is not counted in the overall total of schools.

The modern controlled sector is a large, diverse and inclusive education system which is:

- church related
- diverse in provision and governance
- inclusive in making provision for children and young people from all backgrounds
- aspirational in seeking to provide the best possible education.

Controlled schools in Northern Ireland are owned and managed by the Education Authority. The Education Authority has a unique dual role; on the one hand they are closely associated with the controlled sector through ownership of premises and management, and on the other hand they have a duty to all sectors in making educational provision and support. The tensions between these roles means that the Education Authority is unable to act as advocates for the controlled sector solely or to represent that sector exclusively.

It is the opinion of many within the controlled sector that a deficit of support and advocacy existed for the sector. The proposals for arrangements following the implementation of the Education Act (2014) provided an opportunity to address these issues through the scope, staffing and structure of the Controlled Schools' Support Council.

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SCHOOLS' SUPPORT OFFICER

Job Purpose: To act as link officer for a number of schools and provide support to those schools; to provide expertise in a specific area of responsibility for the controlled sector and play a key part in contributing to the educational support role of the CSSC.

Responsible to: The Head of Educational Support

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- To play a significant role in delivering the key strategic educational objectives of the CSSC
- To act as the link person between the CSSC and up to 110 schools
- To act as a critical friend to these schools to discuss outcomes and school development
- To provide advice and support to school leaders through regular contact with school principals and chairs of governors
- To provide the lead role in a specific area for example
 - area planning of school provision
 - enhancing school performance
 - school governance
 - ethos and values
- To develop and maintain an up to date management information system in an area of expertise for which the post holder is responsible
- To research and formulate management responses to issues within the post holder's area of responsibility
- To manage the consultation process with schools on the post holder's area of responsibility and assist in the consultation process on any other issues when required

- To attend all meetings as required within the post holder's area of responsibility and act as the CSSC representative on EA's Area Planning Local Groups
- To attend governors' meetings as required to provide advice and support
- To assist EA, when appropriate, in the recruitment and training of assessors for the appointment of schools leaders (50 – 100 appointments per annum)
- To plan, manage and contribute to courses, conferences and training for school staff, school leaders and governors
- To contribute to the development of support materials for schools
- To draft responses to consultation exercises from DE, the Education Authority and other agencies
- To carry out investigations involving the leadership and management of schools
- To attend any Education and Research Committee established by the directors when required
- To compile and present reports to the directors
- To work in partnership with other education sectors including the development of proposals for shared working
- To assist EA and colleagues in the development of changes in school provision
- To respond to issues involving community planning within the area of responsibility
- To prepare bids for funding for projects involving shared working
- To work as part of a team, supporting other colleagues to deliver key strategic objectives
- To ensure that delegated work is managed effectively and efficiently
- To supervise staff and ensure the office is effectively and efficiently managed.

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

Applicants must, at the closing date for applications, meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Have a teaching qualification that enables them to register with the General Teaching Council of Northern Ireland (GTCNI). (Please detail the qualification held).
- Have a Bachelor's Degree (Regulated Qualifications Framework level 6 or equivalent).
- Have a minimum of 3 years' experience of working within a team established to achieve educational results.
- Have demonstrable experience of successful educational leadership at whole school level – e.g. Principal, Vice Principal, Head of Key Stage, Head of year group, Head of Department, Literacy/Numeracy co-ordinator, SENCO etc.
- Have demonstrable experience of developing expertise of an area of educational policy.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

In the event of a large number of applications meeting the above essential criteria the following desirable criteria will be applied in the order listed below to shortlist applications:

Priority One

- An additional relevant post-graduate qualification (Regulated Qualifications Framework **level 7 or equivalent**) **OR** a relevant professional qualification¹. *(Please note this should be an additional qualification to that listed under essential criteria 1 & 2)*

Priority Two

- Demonstrable experience of working in a team with responsibility for managing financial resources.

Priority Three

Demonstrable experience of having played a key role in strategic planning leading to specific outcomes.

¹ A relevant qualification is a qualification related to education, or the duties or responsibilities of the role.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES

The successful candidate should be able to demonstrate, through any or all of the selection processes, the following knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes:

1. The commitment and ability to promote the vision, values and ethos of the Controlled Schools' Support Council.
2. Established and proven leadership skills including the development and achievement of strategic, operational and financial performance objectives.
3. An understanding of governance arrangements in the public sector in Northern Ireland.
4. Demonstrable people skills.
5. The ability to define a vision and to think strategically and creatively in the context of organisational leadership.
6. Effective communication skills, including the ability to liaise and negotiate with a diverse range of individuals and organisations.
7. The ability to act as an effective and persuasive public spokesperson when required.
8. A commitment to quality management and organisational improvement within a culture of client service.
9. The ability to define key issues and balance priorities.

OTHER

- Access to a form of transport that allows the post-holder to undertake the duties of the role.
- Ability to work flexible hours in accordance with the needs of the post. This will include occasional weekend work and overnight stay

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Length of Contract

This role is offered on a fixed term part-time basis for 6 months, as a job-share arrangement, with potential for further extension and / or to be made permanent.

Salary

The salary for the post is NJC SCP 36 - 39: £39,880 - £42,821 (pro rata) (under review)

The successful candidate will be offered the range minimum; however if the successful candidate is leaving another post to take on this role, and is in receipt of a basic salary which is above the range minimum, then he/she will be offered next highest point on the CSSC scale*, subject to the range maximum not being exceeded.

**for salary to commence above scale minimum, the successful candidate would be required to provide proof of current earnings*

Pension

CSSC is a member of the NI Local Government Pension Scheme.

Annual Leave

As this is a part time post the annual leave entitlement for the post is 10 days per annum increasing to 12.5 days after 5 years of continuous service. In addition, there are 12 public holidays per year and the post holder would be entitled to 5 of these per annum based on the part time hours for this role.

Hours

This is a part-time job share role. The normal hours per week are 14.4 hours worked across two days, specifically Monday and Tuesday. The post-holder will be required to work the necessary hours to successfully carry out the duties and responsibilities of the role subject to a minimum of 14.4 hours per week.

Location

The CSSC headquarters is 2nd Floor Main Building, Stranmillis University College, Stranmillis Road, Belfast, BT9 5DY, Northern Ireland.

The post-holder may be required to travel across Northern Ireland to attend meetings and fulfil the full range of responsibilities. Travelling and subsistence expenses will be payable at agreed JNC rates.

NOTE: Due to Covid staff have been required to work from home for periods of time in keeping with the NI Executive guidance.

Contract of Employment

A contract of employment containing full terms and conditions will be issued to the appointed candidate. Conditions of service will be based on NJC terms and conditions negotiated through the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC).

Please note that for salary to commence above scale minimum, the successful candidate will be required to provide proof of current earnings prior to contract being issued.

Appointment is subject to the successful completion of pre-appointment checks including proof of eligibility to work in the UK, evidence of specified qualification(s), two satisfactory references and a satisfactory pre-employment medical check.

Child Protection

This post is a 'regulated position' as defined under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 and if appointed the successful applicant will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure of Criminal Background. CSSC will require an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from Access NI.

Please note that the successful applicant will be obliged to pay in advance for the cost of the check.

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THE SELECTION PROCESS AND HOW TO APPLY

- Application is by completion of the CSSC application form and the equal opportunities monitoring questionnaire. Please note that these forms should be completed electronically. We will not normally accept handwritten applications except where a reasonable adjustment is required. Should you require any assistance please contact the HR Officer on 028 95 313030.
- Please adhere to the word limit detailed in each part of the eligibility section of the form. Additional sheets and CVs will not be considered by the shortlisting panel. Application forms will be anonymised and applicants identified by a unique reference number at shortlisting stage.
- It is important in completing the application form that candidates align their experience to the role. Only those applicants who fully demonstrate how they meet all essential criteria will proceed to shortlisting and/or the next stage of the selection process. In the event of a large number of applicants we reserve the right to apply the desirable criteria to reduce the applicant pool to a manageable number for the interview / assessment stage.
- Further details in relation to the selection process will be provided to those candidates shortlisted. All correspondence will be via email.
- Please note that we may form a reserve list of suitable candidates to fill any vacancies that may arise for the same position within the following 12 months.

RETURNING YOUR APPLICATION FORM

- It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the application form and applicant declaration are fully and correctly completed and that all relevant information in support of their application is included.
- Completed applications must be returned to recruitment@csscni.org.uk. Please note completed applications must be received by **12 noon on Monday 07 June 2021**. Late applications will not be accepted. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that their completed application has been received by closing date and time.
- We accept no responsibility for checking forms upon receipt and/or notifying candidates if forms are unreadable or incomplete for technical reasons, or otherwise.

- Please make sure that all questions are fully answered before returning your application form to us as we cannot accept any additional or supplementary information after the closing date for receipt of application forms.
- If you have any queries regarding the recruitment and selection process or require any assistance in relation to the submission of your application form please contact recruitment@csscni.org.uk for assistance.

INDICATIVE TIME SCALE

Closing date for applications:	Monday 07 June 2021 @ 12noon
Shortlisting:	week commencing: 07 June 2021
Interview and assessment:	week commencing: 21 June 2021

DATA PROTECTION

Job Applicant Privacy Notice

The Controlled Schools' Support Council (CSSC) is a Data Controller under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) for the personal data it processes relating to job applicants. Processing data from job applicants allows the Council to manage the recruitment process, assess and confirm an applicant's suitability for employment and decide to whom to offer a job. It may also need to process data from job applicants to respond to and defend against legal claims.

If you apply for this job, you will be providing your personal data to CSSC whose lawful basis for processing it is for the performance of a task carried out for the organisation's legitimate interests. In some cases, CSSC will also need to process your data to ensure it is complying with its legal obligations. For example, to monitor applicants' sensitive data for equal opportunities purposes and to check applicants' eligibility to work in the UK before employment starts. The CSSC will collect a range of information about you, including:

- your name, address and contact details, including email address and telephone number
- details of your qualifications, skills, experience and employment history
- information about your current level of remuneration, which may include benefit entitlements
- whether or not you have a disability, or if your first language is not English, so that it can make reasonable adjustments, as required, during the recruitment process; and
- information about your entitlement to work in the UK

The CSSC will collect this information in a variety of ways e.g. by application forms, through forms of assessment and/or interview or from your identity documents. It may also collect personal data about you from third parties, such as references, but it will only seek this data if you have been recommended for appointment to the post and it will inform you that it is doing

this. Your personal data may be shared internally within CSSC with those who are involved in the recruitment process and, where necessary, between internal departments for the purpose of ensuring a fair, systematic and objective recruitment and selection process is in place. It will also be shared with external consultants for the purposes of candidate attraction and selection, where appropriate.

Your personal data will not be shared or disclosed to any other organisation without your consent, unless the law permits or places an obligation on CSSC to do so. Your data will be stored in a range of different places including the recruitment file, the HR information management system and other IT systems such as email. It will be held and stored by CSSC in a safe and secure manner in compliance with Data Protection legislation and in line with CSSC's Records Information Asset and Document Retention Policy.

As a data subject, you have a number of rights. These include your right to:

- access and obtain a copy of your personal data on request;
- require CSSC to change incorrect or incomplete personal job applicant data; and
- require CSSC to delete or restrict processing your data.

Full information on your rights as a data subject is available from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

<https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/individual-rights/>

If you have any queries regarding the processing of your personal data in relation to this application, please contact our Human Resources Officer on 02895 313033. If you have a data protection query please contact our Corporate Services Officer on 02895 313037.

Individuals have the right to make a complaint at any time to the Information Commissioner's Office, the UK supervisory authority for data protection issues. The ICO's details are as follows:

The Information Commissioner's Office – Northern Ireland

<https://ico.org.uk/>

3rd Floor
14 Cromac Place,
Belfast
BT7 2JB

Telephone: 028 9027 8757 / 0303 123 1114

Email: ni@ico.org.uk

CANVASSING

Canvassing means contact or communication at any time in any manner with any official or member involved in the recruitment of the post for which the person has applied which could be deemed or perceived to be for the purpose of advancing that application. Any applicant who is found to have approached a panel member regarding a post with a view to seeking favourable treatment will be disqualified.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

CSSC is an Equal Opportunities Employer. CSSC will provide equality of opportunity to all persons regardless of their religious belief, political opinion, sex, pregnancy or maternity related issues, race, age sexual orientation, whether they are married or in a civil partnership, whether they are disabled, or whether they have undergone, are undergoing, or intend to undergo gender reassignment.

CSSC does not discriminate against job applicants or employees on any of the grounds listed above. We aim to select the best person for the job and all recruitment decisions will be made objectively.

CSSC contact details:

Controlled Schools' Support Council
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Stranmillis University College
Stranmillis Road
Belfast BT9 5DY
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www.csscni.org.uk

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