

Candidate Information Pack

School Secretary

(Temporary Full Time until 30 June 2027 with possibility of extension)

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OVERVIEW

Acorn Integrated Primary and Nursery School is looking for an experienced, warm and highly organised School Secretary to join our team on a temporary, full-time basis until 30 June 2027, with the possibility of an extension. As the welcoming face and voice of the school, the School Secretary is often the first person our pupils, parents and visitors meet, and plays a key part in the day-to-day life of our school community.

The postholder will keep the school office running smoothly, manage admissions, pupil records and school payments, and support the Principal as their PA. We are looking for someone with strong administrative experience and good IT skills, who stays calm and kind when the office is busy and treats confidentiality and safeguarding as second nature. School experience and knowledge of SIMS would be an advantage. Above all, we are looking for someone who shares our commitment to an inclusive, integrated school where every child is valued, and who will enjoy being part of a supportive, close-knit team.

ABOUT ACORN IPS

Acorn Integrated Primary and Nursery School is an all ability, co-educational primary and nursery school situated in Carrickfergus. At Acorn we value all our pupils as individuals and respect their right to be different and to excel in different ways. Our pupils are treated fairly, regardless of sex, colour or creed. We expect our pupils to work hard to keep the school's fair rules, and for our parents to support us in these aims. The school endeavours to help each child realise their potential, within a positive and caring learning environment.

The school has a current population of around 200 pupils from P1-7 and a 26 place nursery. The school takes pupils from the immediate locality and up to a 15-mile radius from the school.

We are a diverse school community made up of children, staff, and parents from both of the main faith/cultural traditions as well as those from other or non - faith backgrounds and ethnicities. Our school is all ability and inclusive of all socio-economic backgrounds.

OUR INTEGRATED ETHOS

Acorn Integrated provides a learning environment where children from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds as well as those of other faiths and non- faith backgrounds, can learn with, from and about each other. The promotion of good relations extends to everyone in the school and to their families regardless of their religious, cultural or social background. Integrated education is value driven and child centred. It is delivered through a holistic approach with an emphasis on developing every aspect of a child's potential.

Our ethos is informed by the NICIE Statement of Principles. The core principles enshrined in this document are: Equality, Faith and Values, Parental Involvement and Social Responsibility.

As an integrated school we aspire to achieving a religious balance within our pupil population and within our staff team. Our school is usually over-subscribed and in line with the religious balance recommended for integrated schools, we allocate places on the basis of 40% Roman Catholic, 40 % Protestant and 20% Others.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title:	School Secretary (Senior Clerical Officer) – Temporary
Reporting to:	The Principal
Status:	Fixed Term until 30 June 2027 with potential for extension
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4pm — 35 hours per week
Grade/Scale:	NJC Points 11-14 (£14.9919-£15.7367 per hour)

Main Job Purpose

The School Secretary runs the school office and is the first point of contact for pupils, parents, staff and visitors. The postholder manages the school's administration, admissions, records and school money, and acts as PA to the Principal. They do all of this with care, discretion and in line with the school's integrated ethos.

Main Responsibilities

Office Management

- Run the day-to-day work of the school office and keep it organised, stocked and welcoming.
- Help develop office systems, procedures and policies.
- Manage office spending within an agreed budget.
- With the leadership team, manage service contracts, licences and insurances.

Reception & Communication

- Welcome visitors and callers and deal with enquiries promptly and politely, in person, by phone and by email.
- Make sure all visitors follow the school's signing-in, security and safeguarding procedures.
- Handle concerns and complaints with tact and sensitivity, passing them on as appropriate.
- Contact parents and the relevant authorities in an emergency.

- Send letters, texts and other communications to parents using systems such as BromCom, EduSpot, C2K Systems, Microsoft.

Pupil admissions & Records

- Manage the admissions process, waiting lists and the allocation of places in line with the school's admissions criteria.
- Coordinate induction arrangements for new pupils.
- Keep pupil records accurate and up to date on SIMS and other C2k systems. Record attendance.
- Produce reports and data returns when needed (for example, the school census).

School Money

- Manage the school payment system for dinners, trips and other payments.
- Record and bank money accurately and in line with the school's financial procedures.

Staff Administration Lead

- Keep the staff absence record and arrange cover administration as directed.
- Book training for staff.

- Support recruitment administration, including adverts, application packs, medicals and AccessNI checks.
- Check that staff and external providers have completed the relevant risk assessments for trips and activities.

Support to the Principal & Leadership Team

- Act as PA to the Principal: manage the diary, correspondence and meetings, and prepare documents.
- Help organise the school calendar, trips and events, working with staff and the Parents' Council.
- Keep the school website up to date and help promote the school.

Data Protection & Confidentiality

- Keep records in line with the school's retention schedule and UK GDPR.
- Support the school to meet its data protection duties.
- Maintain strict confidentiality at all times.

Safeguarding, health & safety

- Follow the school's child protection, health and safety and security policies, and report any concerns to the Designated Teacher.
- Contribute to the school's integrated ethos and its commitment to equality and good relations.

Other

- Undertake all other reasonable duties as may be required.

This job description outlines the role as it is currently constituted and provides a broad overview of the duties involved. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all responsibilities. The school reviews job descriptions periodically to ensure they remain aligned to operational needs and will seek to agree any reasonable changes with the post holder following consultation.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate must demonstrate they meet the following Essential criteria. If many people apply, the panel may also shortlist using the desirable criteria, in the order listed above.

Category	Essential Criteria	Assessed	Desirable Criteria	Assessed
Qualifications	5 GCSEs at grade C/4 or above, including English and Maths, or equivalent	Application Process	NVQ Level 2 or above in Business Administration, or equivalent	Application Process
Experience	At least 2 years' paid experience in an administrative or clerical role	Application Process & Interview	Experience of working in a school or education office	Application Process
	Experience of dealing directly with the public, customers or parents	Application Process & Interview	Experience of using SIMS or another school information system	Application Process
	Experience of using Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook	Application Process & Interview	Experience of managing a school or online payment system	Application Process
	Experience of handling money, payments or financial records	Application Process & Interview	Experience of updating a website or social media	Application Process
Personal Skills	Clear, friendly and professional communication, spoken and written	Interview		
	Good IT skills with accurate typing and data entry	Interview		
	Ability to organise and prioritise work and meet deadlines under pressure	Interview		
	Understanding of confidentiality and data protection in a school setting	Interview		
	Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	Interview		
Other	Commitment to the school's integrated ethos and to working as part of a team	Interview		

VACANCY SUMMARY & BENEFITS

Role:	School Secretary
Reporting to:	The Principal
Status:	Fixed Term until 30 June 2027 with potential for extension
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4pm — 35 hours per week
Grade/Scale:	NJC Points 11-14 | £14.9919- £15.7367 per hour
Other Benefits:	NILGOSC Pension Scheme Attractive Annual Leave (Term Time) Occupational Sick Pay Convenient On-Site Parking

HOW TO APPLY

If you believe you have the skills and experience required to undertake this key role, please apply as follows:

Application Process

- Email jfuller051@c2kni.net for the Candidate Application Form
- Complete the application form, clearly outlining how you meet the skills and experience required for this position.
- Email your completed application form and any supporting information to jfuller051@c2kni.net quoting "Secretary Recruitment" in the subject line.
- Please also submit a completed Fair Employment Monitoring Form.
- Please note that CVs submitted without a completed application form will not be accepted.

Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted under any circumstances. Please apply at your earliest convenience as applications will be constantly assessed and early application encouraged. It is your responsibility to ensure applications reach us by the notified deadline.

Canvassing

Canvassing any member of the Board of Governors or the selection panel will disqualify you.

SAFEGUARDING

This post is regulated activity under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007. The successful candidate will need an Enhanced AccessNI check with a check of the children's barred list. The fee is £32 and is paid by the school. Two satisfactory references are also needed. One must come from your current or most recent employer.

SHORTLISTING & INTERVIEW PROCESS

Selection methods will be objective, promote equality of opportunity and guard against bias in line with the Equality and Diversity policy. Applicants will be shortlisted based on the relevance and applicability of their professional attributes and personal qualities specified by the role. Essential and desirable criteria are published in the Person Specification for this role. We reserve the right to enhance the essential criteria if necessary to facilitate a manageable shortlist.

Please note the onus is on candidates to provide sufficient detailed information in their application to demonstrate how they meet all the criteria. Failure to do so may result in a candidate not being shortlisted since selection panels cannot make assumptions in the absence of essential information.

All correspondence regarding the selection process will be sent to you via email. It is important that the email address you supply in your application is your preferred email address for any correspondence.

The selection process will comprise a formal panel interview and may include a practical exercise. Full details of the selection process will be provided to shortlisted candidates in the invitation to interview.

Any offer of appointment will be subject to verification of the candidate's right to work in the UK, receipt of satisfactory references, and provision of evidence confirming any essential qualifications required for the position.

Please find details on acceptable Right to Work documentation here: www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work

KEY DATES

Dates to be confirmed.

Closing date:	5pm Friday 30th October 2026
Shortlisting:	Week Commencing 2nd November 2026
Interviews:	Friday 6th November & week beginning 13th November

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

We are committed to a healthy work-life balance, celebrate diversity, and are committed to building an inclusive and supportive environment for all employees. We welcome applications from all suitably qualified people, whatever their religious belief, political opinion, sex, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, or whether they have dependents or not.

We strive to make our recruitment process fair, accessible and inclusive for all applicants. Please let us know if you require any reasonable adjustments to support you during the application or interview stages.

PRIVACY NOTICE

We use your information only to manage this recruitment, in line with our Recruitment Privacy Notice and in accordance with UK GDPR. Candidates are encouraged to read the Recruitment Privacy Notice before submitting their application.