



Thornhill College

Vice-Principal

Required for 2026/27 academic year
Salary Range (L20 – L24 which is £82,096 – £90,427)

School Background and Vision

Thornhill College is a long-established Catholic girls' grammar school located on the Culmore Road in Derry, Northern Ireland. Founded in 1886 by the Sisters of Mercy, Thornhill's ethos is reflected in its motto, "Adveniat Regnum Tuum" ("Thy Kingdom come"). The school's core aim is to instil values of mercy, integrity, care and compassion, humility, equality, achievement, leadership, and service to the community.

The College educates girls aged 11 to 18 and has an enrolment of approximately 1,400 students supported by around 140 staff. It is widely regarded as a first-choice grammar school, emphasizing academic excellence, pastoral care, Catholic values, and an inclusive ethos- a school where girls are inspired to achieve, empowered to lead, and nurtured to grow into confident, compassionate young women.

It is our belief that every girl who joins Thornhill College brings with her unique talents, aspirations, and potential—and it is our privilege to help her discover and develop these to the fullest as highlighted in our school vision: Belonging, Believing, Becoming. The staff and Governors are committed to improving outcomes for all students through an extensive programme of self- evaluation, school improvement and review resulting in a dynamic School Development Plan.

Thornhill College has a rich extracurricular tradition and well-established links with the Foyle Learning Community, tertiary education providers, employers, and the local community. These experiences help shape well-rounded individuals who are prepared not only for academic success, but for life beyond school as evidenced by our notable alumnae across politics, the arts, and many areas of public life.

The Post of Vice-Principal of Thornhill College

The Board of Governors invites applications for the post of Vice-Principal in our large, high-achieving all-girls post-primary Grammar school, renowned for its academic excellence, strong pastoral ethos, and commitment to developing confident, independent young women.

This is a key senior leadership role, offering an exceptional opportunity for an experienced, dynamic, and forward-thinking leader to help shape the strategic direction of the school. The

successful candidate will work in close partnership with the Principal, Senior Leadership Team, and wider school community to ensure the continued delivery of outstanding teaching and learning, high-quality pastoral care, and an enriching school experience.

The Vice-Principal will have a significant whole-school remit, which may include responsibility for areas such as curriculum and assessment, teaching and learning, safeguarding, pastoral leadership, pupil progress, staff development, school improvement planning, and operational management. They will demonstrate the ability to inspire staff and pupils, lead change effectively, and uphold the values, standards, and traditions of a Grammar school environment.

Applicants must have a proven record of excellent leadership at middle or senior level, a deep understanding of post-primary education in Northern Ireland, and a commitment to fostering an inclusive, supportive, and empowering school culture for girls aged 11–18.

This role requires a leader with vision, integrity, resilience, and warmth—someone who will champion the aspirations and wellbeing of our pupils, support staff professionally, and contribute positively to the life of this vibrant and ambitious school.

SHORTLISTING CRITERIA

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

Applicants for the post **must** at the closing date for applications:

1. Hold a teaching qualification which meets the requirements for recognition to teach in schools in Northern Ireland.
2. Hold an honours degree (**minimum 2.2** or above) or equivalent.
3. Have a **minimum of 7 years** post qualification teaching experience in post-primary education **and/or** equivalent experience in an affiliated educational body working in an area that relates to the post-primary sector **within the last 10 years.**
4. Currently hold or have held for a **minimum of 2 continuous years AND within the last 6 years either:**
 - A promoted post of a **minimum of Teaching Allowance 3** linked to leadership and management responsibility; **or**
 - A post of Principal or Vice-Principal; **or**
 - A post with leadership and management experience within an affiliated body.

The above promoted posts may be in an acting capacity. The above excludes Special Needs Allowances awarded **solely** for teaching pupils with Special Educational Needs.

DESIRABLE CRITERIA

In addition to the above, preference may be given to applicants who at the closing date for applications:

- Have successfully completed or pending completion an additional post-graduate (or equivalent or higher) qualification in Education.
- Demonstrate evidence of continued and current professional development in school leadership.
- Demonstrate evidence of leadership as a member of a school's Senior Leadership/Management Team or an equivalent school's support team for **minimum of 2 years in the last 6 years**.
- Demonstrate experience of leading self-evaluation in the work of a school, culminating in school improvement.
- Demonstrate evidence of leading staff team/s on an aspect of school improvement.

The Board of Governors reserve the right to enhance the essential criteria, if necessary, in order to facilitate a manageable shortlist.

Applicants must be registered with the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI) upon taking up employment.

Please note the onus is on candidates to provide sufficient detailed information on their application form in order to demonstrate how they meet each of 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.

An application pack including the job description, person specification and application form is available from the General Manager (chamilton426@c2ken.net) or maybe downloaded from the school website (<https://www.thornhillcollege.org.uk/vacancies>).

Completed application forms should be returned to the General Manager by 12 noon on Friday 24 April 2026.

Late applications will NOT be accepted. It is anticipated that shortlisting will take place on Friday 1st May 2026 and first interviews on Friday 8th May 2026.