

Interview essentials

Present your best self and make the conversation two-way

Before the interview

1. Arrive prepared

Aim to arrive 10 minutes early. Check the location, timing and practical details before the day.

2. Dress professionally

Choose an outfit that helps you feel confident, comfortable and ready to represent yourself well.

3. Research the school

Review the website, annual report and newsletters. Know its community, priorities, programmes and language.

4. Prepare predictable questions

Practise concise answers about your strengths, experience, teaching approach and motivation for the role.

A useful answer length

Aim for **one to two minutes** for most responses. Give a clear example, explain what you did and finish with the outcome or learning.

In the room

5. Stay engaged

Listen carefully, maintain attention and show genuine interest throughout the conversation.

6. Clarify when needed

If a question is unclear, ask for clarification. It shows maturity and helps you give a useful answer.

7. Be confident, not arrogant

Be warm, friendly and enthusiastic. Stay positive about previous schools, colleagues and experiences.

8. Ask thoughtful questions

An interview is also your chance to assess whether the school is right for you.

Connect your answers to the role, the school's language and your research.

Know your evidence

Practise saying what you can contribute, naturally and confidently

9. Name five strengths

Write down your top five professional strengths and one specific example for each. Practise aloud until the words feel natural, not boastful.

10. Connect to the role

Link your strengths to what the school is looking for. Use the language you found in the position description and school research.

11. Think about support

Ask about mentoring for new staff, team collaboration, professional learning and how the school supports work-life balance.

12. Read the room

Stay attentive, respond to the question asked and allow the conversation to develop rather than rushing through memorised answers.

Questions you could ask

About the role

What would success look like in the first term?
What support is available for a new staff member?
How does the team collaborate?

About the school

How does the school approach professional learning?
What programmes or priorities are most important this year?
How would you describe the school community?

After the interview

If you request feedback, wait until you have received the official outcome, then allow a day or two before making contact. Whether you are successful or not, feedback can identify useful areas for growth.

Check your online presence

Hiring managers may review social media before inviting you to interview. Audit your profiles and review your privacy settings before applying.

Based on Crafting Your Path to Success session notes, presented by Switch Education.