

ST MARY'S SCHOOL ASCOT

Job Description and Person Specification

Head of Boarding



St Mary's School Ascot is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

1. **Title.** Head of Boarding
2. **Location.** St Mary's School Ascot, St Mary's Road, Ascot, SL5 9JF.
3. **St Mary's School Ascot** is a leading Roman Catholic girls' boarding school set in 55 acres of beautiful grounds in the heart of Berkshire. We are a friendly, stable and caring community, proud of our academic and sporting achievements and dedicated to realising the full potential of each of our 390 pupils. We are committed to full boarding, with spaces for a few day pupils who live nearby. We offer a stimulating range of co-curricular activities, including a diverse programme of sport, music and drama, which take place in the evenings and throughout the weekends. For further details see the website: www.st-marys-ascot.co.uk and Annex A of this document.

Our five key features:

1. **A Roman Catholic school.** Over 97% of pupils and over 50% of staff are Roman Catholic. We have a full-time resident Catholic chaplain.
2. **A girls' school.** St Mary's puts the interest of girls first, allowing them to reach their highest level of attainment in all that they choose to do.
3. **A full boarding school.** Over 95% of our pupils are full termly boarders and the rest are day boarders. All staff contribute to the boarding life of the school.
4. **A relatively small school.** We are proud to be a small school which enables us to provide first class and individual education and pastoral care to all our pupils.
5. **An academic school.** St Mary's has a strong record of academic excellence. In 2019 77% of all A levels were graded A* or A and 84% of all GCSEs were graded 9 or 8. There are over 120 pupils in the Sixth Form all following A Level courses, and all are supported to go on to higher education, including Oxbridge.

The Headmistress is a member of HMC (Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference), the GSA (Girls Schools Association), CISC (Catholic Independent Schools Conference) and the BSA (Boarding Schools Association). Further details and background about the School can be found at **Annex A**.

4. **Primary Role.** This is a significant management role and involves building excellent partnerships with other senior staff including the Heads of House, Bursar, Estates Manager, Housekeeper, and the nurses in the infirmary. The Head of Boarding is responsible for line-managing 11 residential staff and additional evening boarding assistants; taking responsibility for the day to day running of the boarding areas; maintaining a safe, supportive and homely environment for the girls; and assisting the Pastoral Deputy Head in overseeing all aspects of the boarding life of the school. The Head of Boarding joins the weekly Heads of House meetings, chaired by the Headmistress. She also acts as the Secretary and minute taker of the weekly Residential Staff meetings which are chaired by the Pastoral Deputy Head.

5. **Line Manager.** The Head of Boarding is line managed by the Pastoral Deputy Head. She is required to cover for residential staff, evening boarding staff or for a Head of House in their absence, as necessary.

6. **Core duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:**

- To live on site within the main building
- To take pride and care in the day-to-day details and management of boarding provision and staffing.
- To be responsible for the supervision of girls in the residential boarding areas of the school, as directed by the Pastoral Deputy Head, in order to maintain a supportive, well organised, happy and secure environment.
- To maintain a strong culture of safeguarding and health and safety within the boarding life of the school.
- To line manage 11 residential staff and additional evening boarding assistants, including recruitment, performance management, staff training, staff rotas and cover.
- To ensure the consistency of boarding provision in all areas in the evenings and at weekends.
- To be on duty for twenty weekends a year and to be the senior person in the main school building during these times (with other senior staff on call).
- To teach a quarter of a timetable as a subject specialist, or to contribute to school life in an equivalent way if not a teacher.
- To oversee boarders' attendance at, and support of, evening and weekend events.
- To liaise with the relevant staff to oversee the arrangements for medical escorts and other appointments in conjunction with the school nursing staff; to oversee the chaperone arrangements for girls travelling to activities under the School's care; and to oversee the travel arrangements of overseas girls at the start and end of exeat and holidays.
- To be a Year 7 tutor.
- To run one area of the co-curricular programme according to the interests of the candidate and the needs of the School.
- To organise and diarise a programme of socials for all year groups and to be the main point of contact with other schools for this, as well as sitting on the Socials Committee.
- To help prepare the boarding areas before the arrival of girls at the beginning of term.
- To be responsible for the smooth hand-back of boarding areas to the Housekeeper at the end of each term.

7. **Person Specification.** We are looking for an experienced female (GOQ) member of staff who has a genuine interest in, and liking for, young people. She will have warmth, a sense of humour and sound common sense. She will be robust, resilient, open-minded and flexible in her approach, be willing to take the initiative, and demonstrate good judgement. She will have excellent inter-personal and communication skills; she will lead by example; and she will have, ideally, a background in schools or other caring professions. She will be a confident manager of staff. She will be well organised and effective in the use of ICT as an organisational tool, including email, Word and Excel.

It is not a requirement of this post that applicants should be Roman Catholic, but all staff at the School are expected to be sympathetic to the religious character of the School.

8. **Terms and Conditions of Employment.**

The residential staff are part of a team that provides support to the Headmistress to run the School. There may occasionally be a requirement for residential staff to work more broadly in order to support the aims of the school. The Head of Boarding may therefore have to perform other duties as reasonably required by the Headmistress.

Probationary Period and Notice. The first six months of employment will be a probationary period during which notice by either side will be 4 weeks. The Head of Boarding will be required to give one term's notice after completion of the probationary period.

9. **Accommodation**

The post is residential and year around accommodation is available in a furnished self-contained rent-free flat in the main school building. The accommodation is suitable for a married couple.

10. **Holidays**

The post is term time only although the Head of Boarding is required to attend six days of INSET per annum and to attend the New Staff Induction Day prior to the Michaelmas term.

11. **The Working Week**

The role involves a light teaching (or equivalent) timetable, and being a strong presence in the School. The timings in the table below are provisional and for guidance only. There are regular exeats every fortnight or three weeks which run from 14.15 on Friday to 20.00 on Sunday where nearly all girls leave the School. The Head of Boarding finishes at 16.00 on exeat Fridays and returns to school for 17.00 on Sundays after exeats and holidays and is otherwise off on exeats (even when there are girls staying in School).

	Morning 07.30 – 12.30	Afternoon 12.30 – 18.00	Evening from 18.00	Overnight
Monday	On	On (off 15.00 – 18.00)	On until 23.00	Off
Tuesday	On	On (off 18.00 – 20.00)	On until 23.00	Off
Wednesday	On from 10.15	On (off from 16.30)	Off	Off
Thursday	Off	Off	Off	Off
Friday	On	On (off 16.30 – 18.30)	On until 21.00	Off
Saturday	Off	On (off 16.00 – 18.00)	On until 23.00	On
Sunday	Off	On (off 16.00 – 18.00)	On until 23.00	On

The Head of Boarding has approximately 36 consecutive hours off duty each week to include one full day and the two nights either side of this, which may be taken off site.

12. **Remuneration**

If the Head of Boarding is a teacher then the salary is paid in accordance with the St Mary's salary scale. The position on the scale will reflect the individual's qualifications and experience. If the Head of Boarding is not a teacher then their salary will reflect the individual's qualifications and experience.

13. **Pension**

If the Head of Boarding is a teacher then she is able to join the Teachers' Pension Scheme. If the Head of Boarding is not a teacher then she is able to join the school's workplace pension scheme provided by The People's Pension.

9. **Application Details.** A short letter of application, completed application form, including the names, addresses and telephone numbers of three referees (including the current or most recent employer) should be sent by Tuesday 26 November 2019 to Mrs Danuta Staunton, Headmistress, St Mary's School Ascot, St Mary's Road, Ascot SL5 9JF.

First interviews will be held in school on Wednesday 4 December.

ST MARY'S SCHOOL ASCOT

ANNEX A

BACKGROUND



History of St Mary's School Ascot

St Mary's was founded in 1885 by members of the English Province of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (IBVM), now called the Congregation of Jesus (CJs). This Institute had itself been founded in the early 17th century by Mary Ward, an English woman born in Yorkshire during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. CJ schools are to be found in Germany, Austria, Italy, Spain, Eastern Europe, Latin America, India, Korea, Zimbabwe and Israel. In England the former IBVM schools in York, Hampstead, Cambridge and Shaftesbury have been handed over to Catholic lay trusts.

The original St Mary's Convent in Ascot started with only eight nuns and seven pupils. Gradually the School grew, both in terms of the number of pupils and the range of facilities. In the 1980s, as the members of the Convent's community of nuns diminished in number, a separate trust was established for the School with a board of governors responsible to the trustees. In 1995 the School's Trust purchased the Ascot property from the IBVM in order to ensure the long term security of the School. The School retains very strong links with the CJ order. Mrs Danuta Staunton became the second lay headmistress in September 2019.

Mission statement

Whilst at St Mary's, the girls are supported to become "capable and fit to do God's service" in whatever walk of life they follow as women in the 21st century. The School's mission statement, remaining faithful to the mission of Mary Ward, reflects this ethos:

- to foster the intellectual, spiritual and personal development of girls and women within the context of a Catholic boarding school;
- to encourage in each pupil a sense of her own worth and talents so that she is prepared to lead others and to enrich the world;
- to develop each pupil's ability for independent thought and to search for truth through a rigorous academic education;
- to promote a strong sense of responsibility, co-operation and tolerance based on a Christian awareness of the needs of others;
- to provide the opportunity for each pupil to enjoy the full sacramental life and spiritual richness of the Catholic Church;
- to form women of conscience, competence and compassionate commitment;
- to create and foster a partnership between parents, school and the wider community;
- to follow in the spirit of Mary Ward who cherished "freedom of spirit, sincerity, and a cheerful disposition".

The School

As a school, we pride ourselves on our five key features:

1. Roman Catholic

The Chapel remains at the heart of the school, both in a physical and spiritual sense, and the School's community comes together on most mornings to pray, sing and worship. The girls and staff all contribute to worship in a variety of ways, including by serving, reading in Chapel and being Eucharistic ministers for whole school Masses. House Masses are also celebrated, giving the girls the opportunity for worship in a more informal setting. All pupils once a year have a one or two day retreat. This is a time set aside from normal lessons and activities for quiet prayer and reflection. The School has a resident chaplain who is also a governor of the school. Every year the sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated with the confirmands being prepared for the sacrament by members of the School's community.

2. All Girls

The School is passionate about single sex education and the opportunities that this provides for our pupils. Throughout the School, girls are given leadership opportunities through the many pupil-led committees such as the School Council, the Eco Committee, FemSoc, the Food Committee, the Cyber & Technology Committee, the Socials Committee and the Pet Welfare Committee. St Mary's prides itself on its links with boys' schools which allow girls to meet and interact with boys both academically and socially throughout their time at the School. These events include social evenings such as Scottish dancing or wine tasting as well as Oxbridge and medic interview practice days and Confirmation preparation days.

3. Boarding

St Mary's School Ascot is a full boarding school and the pupils are in School for all weekends other than the programmed exeat weekends, when the majority go home. This means that the School remains a vibrant and busy environment throughout the evenings and weekends. The girls take part in a wide range of clubs and activities as well as drama, music, sport, lectures and academic support sessions. Even the few girls who are not resident take a full part in the boarding life of the school and are known as "day boarders", reflecting the full boarding nature of the school.

St Mary's is a very welcoming and open community and parents and siblings are warmly invited into the School for many events such as Sunday Mass, sports fixtures, drama shows, concerts, dance shows, parents' retreats and a series of talks for parents. We aim to make it feel like a home from home, with comfortable bedrooms and the girls can even bring their small pets to have with them at School in the Pet Shed.

The co-curricular provision at St Mary's is outstanding. The girls benefit from a generously equipped art complex and the opportunity to work with a wide variety of media, including ceramics, textiles, photography, print-making, painting and drawing. Girls are encouraged to use the art facilities in the evenings and at weekends and pupils' work is exhibited throughout the school.

St Mary's enjoys a thriving music department which inspires great enthusiasm in the girls. There are regular opportunities to showcase musical talent, including informal lunchtime concerts, the annual Voices by Candlelight concert, three carol services and the Vocal and Orchestral Concert. There is also a thriving Rock Soc as well as regular Open Mic nights involving girls of all ages. The girls also organise their own major events and the Summer Soirée, a concert designed by Sixth Form pupils to encourage younger girls to perform, is another highlight.

Drama plays a major role in nurturing the girls' self-confidence by developing their creative, social and communication skills. As well as academic drama lessons, girls develop their skills both on stage and behind the scenes in a wide range of productions including, recently, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Antigone*, *The House of Bernarda Alba* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The state-of-the-art performing arts centre, the Rose Theatre, is situated at the heart of the School and hosts full orchestral performances, major

musicals and theatre productions, as well as small scale dramas, lectures, debates, cinema presentations and theatre in the round, all with professional sets and technical equipment.

Sport is another major feature of St Mary's life and the pupils are encouraged to participate in a wide programme of sport and fitness activities to enable them to develop their strengths and talents. The School regularly produces county champions and sees pupils compete at county, regional and national levels. Sport is celebrated at St Mary's on an annual basis at the annual Sports Awards event when girls and their parents meet and are inspired by professional sports men and women. The variety of sporting activities on offer includes the major sports of hockey, netball, tennis, swimming and athletics, as well as a full dance programme, and other activities such as trampolining, self-defence and yoga.

The profile of sport at St Mary's is reflected in the range of impressive sports facilities which includes a 400m athletics track with associated field event facilities, tennis and netball courts, two floodlit AstroTurf hockey pitches and a 25m indoor heated swimming pool. The Orchard Centre includes a full-size indoor sports hall, a fitness suite, two squash courts and a mirrored dance studio.

The School's co-curricular programme is wide ranging with pupils choosing from a breadth of clubs, societies, talks and activities. Girls are involved in a range of activities with creative options including life drawing, jazz band, creative writing and technical theatre, and recreational sporting options ranging from football and karate to ballet, street dance, aerobics and squash.

This boarding environment provides breadth and depth to the girls' academic studies through, for example, the Academy programme whereby selected pupils attend additional evening lectures and follow challenging academic programmes beyond their normal class curriculum. Other pupils benefit from teacher led extra support sessions, even on Sunday afternoons, to guide them in their preparation for public examinations. The School's Inspirational Women programme of evening lectures is another example of how the boarding environment allows the girls time to broaden their educational experience at St Mary's.

4. Relatively small

Pupils at St Mary's benefit from being part of a small and nurturing full-boarding community where staff know every girl. Each pupil's progress and development are carefully monitored by key staff who share this information with each other and work together in partnership with parents to enable the girls to flourish.

Every girl is placed in one of five houses when she arrives in Year 7, Year 9 or the Lower Sixth. The houses are not physical buildings but vertical communities of pupils under the care of their Head of House. The Heads of House have overall responsibility for the academic development and pastoral care of each pupil in their charge. They also enjoy close relationships with parents, forming a strong partnership of care between the School and home. Heads of House are supported by Tutors, Year Co-ordinators, Deputy Heads of House, residential members of staff, the School's Independent Listener, the school nurses and the school doctor. There is a sixth separate house for the Upper Sixth girls.

Heads of House live in private houses on the school site, and not in the main building or amongst the girls (with the exception of the Head of the Upper Sixth House). Residential members of staff live in flats within the main building and are responsible for the care of the pupils overnight. Additional Evening Boarding Assistants and Graduate Assistants also help with the care of the girls in the evenings. Accommodation for the pupils is organised by age group, with the younger girls sleeping in dormitories and shared bedrooms, and the older girls in double and single rooms. Each year group also has a common room where they enjoy evening snacks and can relax together.

5. Academic

St Mary's is an academic school with an exceptional record in public examinations, regularly placing it amongst the best schools in the country. The School provides a broad and balanced curriculum to GCSE, with girls also participating in the Skills for Life programme which is part of the School's commitment to personal, social, health and citizenship education.

In Years 10 and 11, girls typically take ten subjects to I/GCSE. In the Lower Sixth girls begin with four A Levels and continue with three into the Upper Sixth. In addition to their A Level subjects, girls may choose to do the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). The Sixth Form programme includes a general course in Religious Studies, academic support sessions and a series of events to extend Academy pupils.

Our outstanding public examination results and the consequent university places that are offered to our pupils belie our broad intake and are evidence of the significant value added achieved across all subjects. The academic results in 2019 were a typical year where at I/GCSE we had 59% grade 9 (the new grade above the A*), 84% grades 9 and 8 (A*) and 95% grades 9 to 7 (A*/A). 25 I/GCSE pupils gained 10 or more grades 9 or 8 and those awarded 8-11 grades 9 or 8 made up an impressive 75% of the year group. At A Level, 38% of grades were at A*, including seven candidates who gained 3 A* and two candidates who gained 4 A* grades, and 77% of grades were awarded A*/A.

Our Upper Sixth leavers all continue to universities or other forms of higher education. University offers always cover a wide range of subjects from a variety of leading universities in the UK and beyond including, in 2019, seven offers from Oxford and Cambridge colleges (11%) and forty-three girls (70%) taking up places at Russell Group Universities. Seven girls are heading to universities abroad including Notre Dame, Boston College, Columbia, Georgetown, NYU, ICADE, and Trinity College, Dublin.

School governance and finances

The school is a registered charity (number 290286) and a company limited by guarantee (number 01844327). The Council Members, who meet annually, act as guardians of the ethos of the School and delegate the strategic leadership, management and administration of the school to the Board of Governors who meet termly. The School's formal relationship with the Congregation of Jesus is now limited to their welcome representation on the Council and the Board of Governors.

Despite the relatively small size of the School, the School's finances are very strong with a healthy operating surplus generated on an annual basis. The School has invested significantly over the last thirteen years in a series of major capital projects culminating in the new Upper Sixth boarding house (the Mary Breen Courtyard) which includes a pastoral centre and associated staff accommodation which all opened in September 2018.