

ST MARY'S SCHOOL ASCOT

Job Description and Person Specification

Details – French Assistant



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.** French Assistant
2. **Location.** St Mary's School Ascot, St Mary's Road, Ascot, SL5 9JF.
3. **Background.** 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 bringing out the full potential of each of our 390 pupils. We are committed to full boarding, with spaces for a few day pupils living nearby. We offer a stimulating range of co-curricular activities which take place in the evenings and throughout the weekend. For further details see the website: www.st-marys-ascot.co.uk
4. **The Appointment.** The role of French Assistant is for a fixed term from the start of September 2022 to early July 2023. Genuine Occupational Qualification woman. There are 10 teachers in the Modern Languages Department, 5 of whom teach French.
5. **Line Manager.** The Line Managers are the Head of Boarding and the Head of Modern Languages.
6. **Job Description.** The French Assistant will have responsibility for the following:

Supporting Academic Staff:

- To teach French oral lessons to U6, L6 and those pupils preparing for GCSE (an exam taken at the end of year 11). This will be in small groups, during the school day, and some evening or Saturday mornings.
- To team-teach classes of bilingual pupils.
- If necessary to accompany the year 8 girls on their week long visit to France.
- To assist the other MFL teachers if needed in the preparation of materials or supporting pupils with learning difficulties.

Pastoral and Boarding Duties: To act as a member of the school's boarding and residential staff team. This will include -

- To do boarding duties, working one evening a week (Saturday 6-11pm), to include supervising junior boarders in common rooms and overseeing bedtime routines. To occasionally escort girls to medical appointments, airports and train stations and other individual commitments and dealing with any associated paperwork;

- To attend chapel and house meetings when on duty;
- To carry out other administrative duties as directed by the Head of Boarding including covering school reception when required;
- To be 'on call' on rotation on exeat Fridays, half terms and end of terms with the graduate assistants until 6pm;
- To work on exeat Fridays taking oral sessions/team teaching until 2.15pm. From 2.15pm to work with graduate assistants to tidy the school and check rooms.

Co-curricular/Trips:

- To accompany and sometimes help to organise school trips;
- To assist with co-curricular activities such as drama, sport or music either as part of a timetabled lesson, or in the evenings or at weekends;
- To initiate, lead and organise activities, as appropriate;
- To assist with weekend activities and trips.

7. **Person Specification.** The successful candidate must be a responsible and enthusiastic person who may wish to pursue a career in teaching. It is an enriching experience which demands commitment, dedication and a serious approach to hard work, and a willingness to be involved in both the academic and boarding sides of the school.

Specialist knowledge and experience

- Native French speaker.
- Educated to degree level.
- IT skills in order to use Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook.

Planning and organising

- Able to organise time effectively, prioritise workload and meet deadlines.
- Able to organise events and create and monitor plans.

Problem solving

- Able to take responsibility for own actions and make decisions without referring to others.
- Able to analyse issues and break them down into their component parts.
- Able to retrieve and absorb information quickly.

Resilience

- Able to remain calm and self-controlled under pressure.
- Able to demonstrate perseverance and stamina.

Communication

- Able to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing, adapting style to suit the audience.

Team Working

- Able to develop effective and supportive relationships with colleagues in a cheerful manner.
- Is considerate towards them and creates a sense of team spirit.

Commitment, motivation and flexibility

- Enthusiastic and motivated approach.
- Able to adapt to changing demands and conditions.
- Commits self to work hard towards goals.

8. Conditions.

Salary: £18,100 per annum (pro rata) plus accommodation while employed, from the start of September 2022 to early July 2023.

Hours: Working days will be split into mornings, afternoons and evenings and there will be at least four hours off duty each working day. There will be one full day and night off per week during the week. Weekends will vary depending on School activities but will always include some time off during the day if the evening is to be worked. Graduate assistants will be required to work until all residential duties have been completed on exeat and half-term Fridays, on the evening before the last day of each term, and on the last day of each term. All Graduate assistants will be expected to work on Sundays when the girls return to school after holidays for no more than 5 hours, even if not usually scheduled to work on Sundays during term time.

The French Assistant is expected to attend 7 INSET days – 4 before the start of the Michaelmas term, 2 before the start of the Lent term and 1 before the start of the Summer term.

Other: Breakfast, lunch and evening meal are available free of charge during term time. St Mary's School is an entirely non-smoking site.

9. A Catholic School

Nearly all pupils and about 50% of the staff are Roman Catholic. It is not a requirement of this post that applicants should be RC but all staff at the school are expected to be sympathetic to the religious and boarding character of the school.

10. Applications:

A short letter of application addressed to Mrs Danuta Staunton, Headmistress and completed application form should be sent by 12 noon on 10 February 2022 to recruitment@st-marys-ascot.co.uk.

First interviews will take place during w/c 21 February 2022.



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 and Cambridge 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.

VISION

To provide a modern and holistic Catholic education of outstanding quality for young women to inspire and empower them to play their full part in the global community.

ETHOS

The school's Ethos to realise this Vision is:

- Nurturing in each pupil a sense of their own worth and talents by fostering their intellectual, spiritual and personal development.
- Developing in each pupil a love of learning and independent thought through a rigorous academic education.
- Promoting a strong sense of personal responsibility, kindness, cooperation and social justice founded in respect for the diverse needs of others in a global community.
- Encouraging each pupil to enjoy the full sacramental life and spiritual richness of the Catholic Church.
- Fostering a partnership between parents, school and the wider community.
- Inspiring in each pupil the confidence to collaborate and to lead through an enriching and fulfilling boarding experience.
- Following in the spirit of Mary Ward who cherished 'freedom of spirit, sincerity, and a cheerful disposition'.

FEATURES

The Board of Governors defines the school through five 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 full potential 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 individual education and pastoral care to all our pupils.
5. **An academic school.** St Mary's has a strong record of academic excellence. In 2021, 88% 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 in their journeys into higher education, including Oxbridge.

1. Roman Catholic

The Chapel is at the heart of the school, both in a physical and spiritual sense, and the school 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. 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 Diversity Discussion Group, the Food Committee, the Cyber & Technology Committee, the Socials Committee, the Wellbeing 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. These events include social evenings such as Scottish dancing or wine tasting as well as debating, academic societies, 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 attendance for all weekends other than the scheduled 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.

Pupils from Years 7 to 11 are housed in the main school building and sleep with their year groups under the care of residential staff. Pupils in the Sixth Form are resident in townhouses of 10-12 girls, the Lower Sixth in the Mary Ward Courtyard and the Upper Sixth in the Mary Breen Courtyard. Residential boarding staff live in both courtyards, and boarding duties are also undertaken by some academic staff, Evening Boarding Assistants and Graduate Assistants. All staff who are tutors also contribute two evening duties in school per term. The Infirmary is located within the main building and is staffed 24 hours a day by qualified nurses who are always on call to give medical advice and assistance. Heads of House and the Chaplain are key members of the pastoral team. We are committed to refurbishing much of our boarding accommodation and have recently installed new bathrooms and showers in Year 7 as part of this rolling programme.

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 productions, 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. In Art, the girls benefit from a generously equipped art complex and opportunities 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 and Session Bands 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, *Antigone*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and a socially distanced *Jane Eyre*. 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. Sport is celebrated at St Mary's on an annual basis at the annual Celebration of Sport 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, fencing, 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 all-weather athletics track with associated field event facilities, tennis and netball courts, two floodlit Astro turf 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. Thanks to its location, the school shares in a wide variety of activities with other independent schools, including Eton, Harrow and Winchester, and the boys often join the girls for dinners, dances and reeling. We also enjoy close links with local schools in Ascot, as well as many local charities and community projects. Some of our families have been at St Mary's for many generations and we enjoy a very warm relationship with our alumnae.

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 girl'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 and School Counsellor, the school nurses and the school doctor. There is a sixth separate House for the Upper Sixth girls, the Mary Ward House.

The 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 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. The older girls are in double or single rooms with all girls in Year 11 and above in 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 which fosters a real love for learning, with an exceptional record of success 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. In 2021 at I/GCSE our results were 62% grade 9, 84% grades 9 and 8 and 95% grades 9 to 7. 48% of the pupils gained 10 or more grades at 8 or 9 and those awarded 8-12 grades at 9 or 8 made up an impressive 72% of the year group. At A Level 58% of grades were at A*, including 22 candidates who gained 3 A*, and 88% 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 2021, 10 offers from Oxford and Cambridge colleges (18%) and 80% of pupils taking up places at Russell Group Universities and an additional 5 pupils going to St Andrews. Among the Upper Sixth UCAS applicants, 87% of girls secured their first-choice placement and 96% of girls secured a place at their first or insurance choice. 5 girls went to universities in the USA, to Pomona, Georgetown, UCLA, Dartmouth and Columbia. 2 girls are studying Medicine at the University of Hong Kong and 3 girls are heading to universities in Paris or Madrid.

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.