



ST MARY'S SCHOOL ASCOT

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APPOINTMENT OF A DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD



# WELCOME TO ST MARY'S SCHOOL ASCOT



Thank you for taking an interest in joining us at St Mary's School Ascot. Ours is a warm and caring community where we are passionate about bringing out the full potential of each of our 390 pupils. We are proud of the strength of our academic achievements and work tirelessly to build on our tradition of excellence both in and out of the classroom. As a full boarding school, we offer a wealth of co-curricular opportunities, meaning that life at St Mary's is vibrant, exciting and always good fun.

St Mary's offers a stimulating and fulfilling working environment. Our staff are talented, friendly, and absolutely dedicated to the work they do. They enjoy supporting each other, and take pride in helping us to provide the very best all-round education for the pupils in our care.

We know that the successful candidate will love working here. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Mrs Danuta Staunton**  
Headmistress



# THE VISION AND ETHOS OF OUR SCHOOL

The school's Vision is 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.

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'.





# OUR KEY FEATURES

The Board of Governors defines the school through five features:

**A Roman Catholic school.** Over 97% of pupils and over 50% of staff are Roman Catholic. We have a full-time resident Catholic chaplain.

**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.

**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.

**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.

**An academic school.** St Mary's has a strong record of academic excellence. 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.



## ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's is a leading Roman Catholic girls' boarding school set in 55 acres of beautiful grounds in the Berkshire countryside, a 45 minute journey from London, and a 20 minute walk from Ascot train station. The school was founded in 1885 by the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, drawing on the inspiration of the Institute's foundress, Mary Ward, who dedicated her life to promoting girls' education across Europe in the 17th century. Mary Ward's belief, that 'women in time will come to do much', infuses the very fabric of St Mary's to this day.

St Mary's is a boarding school, with only a handful of day pupils who live nearby. The majority of our intake is at Years 7 and 9. Very few girls leave at the end of Year 11. The girls follow a full and challenging academic curriculum throughout the school day. In the afternoons and evenings and on weekends, they take advantage of a vast range of activities, including visiting speakers, academic support sessions, clubs and societies, sport and trips.

The school continues to invest in the development of first class facilities. These include a state-of-the-art performing arts centre, a purpose-built sports complex and all-weather athletics track, two libraries, a new pupil refectory, and most recently a sixth form boarding complex.

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).

For more information about the school, please visit our website: [www.st-marys-ascot.co.uk](http://www.st-marys-ascot.co.uk)





## ABOUT THE ROLE

St Mary's is seeking to appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for September 2024.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at St Mary's plays a pivotal role as a member of the school's Pastoral Leadership Team in ensuring the safety and welfare of all pupils with a particular focus on understanding the unique nuances of a boarding school environment. The Designated Safeguarding Lead works closely with the Headmistress and Pastoral Deputy Head to ensure a holistic approach to pupils' wellbeing as well as liaising with external agencies as required. Pastoral care is not just a part but the very foundation that shapes the school's ethos. St Mary's prioritises the wellbeing, emotional support and personal development of every pupil recognising that a positive, caring and nurturing environment is essential for academic success.

At St Mary's, we understand the importance of a holistic education that goes beyond the classroom particularly within a boarding school context. Our broad range of co-curricular opportunities and weekend activities are designed to provide a rich and fulfilling experience for all pupils, fostering personal development and a sense of belonging in a secure and caring community.

The DSL will lead on all aspects of safeguarding and pupil welfare ensuring the highest standards of care and support is maintained at all times. For clarity, this is a non-teaching role.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

We are seeking a highly dedicated and experienced individual to lead and coordinate all aspects of safeguarding within the school. They will have a substantial experience in a safeguarding or child protection role preferably within an educational setting. The successful applicant will be able to set the highest professional standards at all times in all aspects of their role. They will establish and maintain effective professional working relationships with pupils, parents and all staff. They will be resilient and have an ability to handle challenging situations with tact and empathy. The successful applicant will embody the school's vision, purpose, ethos and strong leadership values.

The successful applicant will have a high level of integrity and discretion in handling sensitive information. They will be an outstanding communicator, orally and in writing. They will have exceptional organisational skills and confidence in handling safeguarding and child protection issues with a high degree of sensitivity. An understanding and knowledge of the nuances and challenges specific to a boarding school environment is highly desirable.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will report into Pastoral Deputy Head, who will also act as a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. The DSL will also work closely with the Headmistress.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Working closely with the Pastoral Deputy Head, the responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead include but are not limited to the following:

- Champion and promote an outstanding safeguarding culture at all levels in the school;
- Assume a leadership role in the school for safeguarding, taking charge of all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection, assisting the Headmistress and all colleagues in fostering a culture of safeguarding across the school;
- As a member of the Pastoral Leadership Team, advise, update and train Governors on all matters pertaining to safeguarding;
- Take the lead in developing, implementing and monitoring effective safeguarding policies and procedures ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and guidelines;



- Provide expert advice and support to staff on all matters relating to safeguarding, ensuring a proactive and preventative approach;
- Be the main point of contact for all safeguarding concerns, coordinating and liaising with relevant internal stakeholders and external agencies;
- Provide guidance, support, training and workshops to staff to raise awareness of safeguarding issues and ensure compliance with relevant policies;
- Work closely with the Pastoral Deputy Head to manage and escalate safeguarding cases as needed;
- Foster a culture of openness and vigilance to safeguarding concerns among all staff;
- Be a highly visible presence within the school community, leading by example to inspire and motivate pupils and staff;
- Liaise on a regular basis with the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads and share best practice;
- Work closely with the Pastoral Deputy Head to address pupil welfare issues, sharing information related to safeguarding, child protection and general wellbeing matters;
- Establish and maintain effective communication with external agencies involved in safeguarding ensuring a shared and informed approach to pupil wellbeing;
- Oversee all communications with parents relating to safeguarding and wider pupil welfare matters as appropriate;
- Liaise closely with the Director of HR regarding safeguarding requirements when appointing staff across the school;
- Liaise closely with the Heads of House, attending regular Pastoral meetings;
- Keep up to date with safeguarding legislation and best practice and keep the Pastoral Deputy Head informed in a timely manner;
- Ensure all staff receive induction training in safeguarding and have an understanding of the Code of Conduct and Anti Bullying policies and procedures;
- Ensure that all relevant policies, including the ICT Acceptable Use and E-Safety policies are compliant with the requirements regarding Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE);
- Ensure that all staff receive the relevant policies and up to date training on these;
- Ensure efficient and careful record keeping of any pastoral or safeguarding incidents;
- Work closely with the school's counsellors;
- Be the Senior Mental Health Lead for the school;
- Monitor the retention, confidentiality and storage of records in relation to child protection which are kept separate from pupil records;
- Liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where appropriate;
- Liaise with the Headmistress to inform her of all issues especially any ongoing enquiries;
- Undertake Prevent awareness training and keep up to date with any developments;
- Be alert to the specific needs of vulnerable pupils;
- Have a good understanding of the unique risks associated with online safety and work with the Director of Network Services to keep pupils safe whilst they are online at school;
- Liaise with staff on matters of safety and safeguarding including online and digital safety;
- Be responsible for safeguarding and child protection training and resources for staff, Governors and pupils;
- Encourage a culture among all staff of listening to pupils and taking into account their emotional wellbeing

## Other duties:

This job description sets out the main duties of a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). No job description can be fully comprehensive and a DSL will be required to support the Headmistress in any work reasonably required to support the operation of the school.



## WORKING AT ST MARY'S

**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 Catholic but all staff at the school are expected to be sympathetic to the religious and boarding character of the school.

**Full-Time/Part-Time.** This is a full-time, term time appointment.

**Accommodation.** The post holder is required to be resident on site and accommodation is offered with this role.

**Salary.** A competitive salary based on experience will be offered.

**Working Days and Hours.** This is a full-time, term time appointment. The role requires being On Duty in school on two evenings per week, with agreed late starts twice per week to accommodate this schedule. They will be required to be On Call some evenings and overnight as needed. Additionally, the DSL will be On Call on exeat weekends.

**Additional Days.** The Designated Safeguarding Lead is required to attend one day of new staff INSET and a further six full days of INSET per year which are currently scheduled in the week before the start of each term. The DSL is required to attend the school's annual Open Day which currently takes place on a Saturday during the summer term.

**Holidays.** The DSL will take holidays during school holidays and they must not clash with INSET.

**Probationary Period.** The first six months of employment is a probationary period and during the probationary period the notice period by both the post holder and the school is one calendar month.

**Notice Period.** On successful completion of the probationary period, the notice period for both the job holder and the school will be three months.

**Pension.** The DSL will be automatically enrolled into the school's workplace pension scheme provided by The People's Pension.

**Meals.** Staff are currently able to enjoy lunch in the staff refectory. When on duty, the DSL may also choose to eat breakfast and supper in school. This privilege is currently provided free of charge, but this is kept under review and the school reserves the right to change the arrangement.





## HOW TO APPLY

A short letter of application addressed to the Headmistress, Mrs Danuta Staunton, a completed application form and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of three referees (including the current or latest employer) should be sent by **9am** on the closing date of **Wednesday 21 February 2024** to:  
[recruitment@st-marys-ascot.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@st-marys-ascot.co.uk)

Interviews will take place in the week commencing **Monday 26 February** and **Monday 4 March 2024**.





## ST MARY'S SCHOOL ASCOT

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