



ST MARY'S SCHOOL ASCOT

APPOINTMENT OF A HEAD OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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



ABOUT THE ROLE

St Mary's is seeking to appoint a full-time Head of Religious Studies for September 2025.

THE RELIGIOUS STUDIES DEPARTMENT

The department consists of seven members of staff. Religious Studies is taught up to and including GCSE which is compulsory for all pupils. Theology and Philosophy is taught at A Level and Sixth Form pupils participate in a weekly General RS programme.

The Head of Religious Studies will provide leadership in the Catholic life and mission of the school, working closely with the School Chaplain and Senior Deputy Head and the Ministry Team. As a practising Catholic they will demonstrate by example and professional leadership that the Catholic ethos permeates all aspects of the life of the school. They will be confident in contributing to staff training in matters related to Catholic life and Mission, attend Diocesan events and training for Heads of Religious Studies. They will play a pivotal role in preparing the school for Catholic Inspection. The Head of Religious Studies will assist in planning and contributing to the liturgical life of the school including the Confirmation programme, alongside the School Chaplain.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Head of Religious Studies will be a well-qualified and experienced teacher with a proven track record, who is ready to move into a position of leadership. They will have a love of the subject and be able to inspire both their pupils and staff by sharing their passion with them. They should be efficient and well organised, and be computer literate and keen to make the good use of ICT within lessons. Our public examination results are excellent and we are looking for a keen Head of Religious Studies to build upon this success. They should be able to manage a team effectively and aim to get the best from each teacher in the department. We are seeking a person with vision, drive, good judgement, enthusiasm and commitment for this vital position in the school.

The Line Manager for the Head of Religious Studies is the Academic Deputy Head.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the role include but are not limited to the following:

- Promote Religious Education within the school;
- To ensure the Religious Education curriculum meets the requirements of the Religious Education Curriculum Directory (RED) of the Bishops' Conference of England & Wales and is at the core of the curriculum.
- Support tutor colleagues in the preparation of Collective worship and liturgies;
- Maintain high standards by overseeing members of the department, ensuring effective and appropriate teaching and assessment methods at all levels from KS3 to A Level;
- Supervise and advise on all aspects of classroom teaching, particularly guiding new teachers and newly qualified teachers and managing the department induction programme for new teachers;
- Arrange regular departmental meetings with an agenda provided beforehand and minutes circulated afterwards;
- Attend Heads of Department meetings;
- Provide guidance, advice and support for department colleagues;
- Provide guidance, advice and support to new teachers and newly qualified teachers including supporting ECTs as the Induction tutor;
- Supervise the provision of INSET for the department;
- Appraise members of the department;



- Ensure that appropriate cover work is provided when absent or when a colleague in the department is absent and be prepared to cover for staff absence;
- Choose examination specifications and prepare schemes of work;
- Ensure that schemes of work are kept up to date and take responsibility for planning new schemes for KS3, GCSE and A Level, as appropriate;
- Keep efficient records of all lessons and homework assignments and set and mark homework regularly;
- Organise regular assessments for all year groups and prepare and mark internal and entrance examinations;
- Liaise with the appropriate members of staff in matters relating to internal and external examinations;
- Organise any centre assessed examinations and moderation as required by the examination boards;
- Report to the Headmistress and Academic Deputy Head on public examination results;
- Assess and report on pupils' progress according to the school's systems and policies, adhering strictly to deadlines;
- Oversee the quality of all subject reports produced by the Religious Studies Department;
- Teach Year 7 to A Level and communicate an enthusiasm for the subject;
- Plan lessons carefully according to the Key Stage 3 schemes of work and GCSE and A Level specifications, as appropriate;
- Teach and support pupils of all abilities and provide appropriate levels of work for pupils with special educational needs;
- Support the whole school provision for pupils with special education needs and liaise with SENDCo as appropriate;
- Prepare pupils for university courses of study, including Oxbridge;
- Support Sixth Form enrichment provision, in particular the programme of electives and the EPQ, as reasonably required;
- Being able to teach another subject is desirable but not essential;
- Take responsibility for pupil welfare and discipline in lessons, within the framework of whole school policies;
- Promote ICT as a learning tool throughout the department and keep up to date with developing the use of ICT in the classroom;
- Liaise with the appropriate member of staff regarding timetabling;
- Manage the departmental budget and the effective allocation of resources;
- Oversee rooms, resources and associated areas within the department;
- Plan for the development of the department on a short, medium and long-term basis within the annual Department Development Plan;
- Ensure the department is up to date with paperwork for inspection including maintaining an up-to-date Departmental Handbook containing details of all departmental procedures and policies;
- Encourage pupils to aspire to careers related to Religious Studies;
- Keep informed of current developments in Religious Studies;
- Attend relevant courses in the interests of staff development;
- Organise external speakers, visits and trips which relate to the Religious Studies curriculum;
- Plan for and lead the Year 9 Super Curriculum project;
- Maintain an attractive and well-ordered environment;
- Attend Open Mornings for prospective parents and pupils;
- Conduct the 16+ entrance interviews for Theology and Philosophy;
- Liaise with and advise the Headmistress on appointments within the department;
- Attend relevant parent teacher meetings as shown in the school diary;
- Be involved in co-curricular activities depending on interests and experience;



- Carry out break and lunchtime duties according to a rota;
- Invigilate public and internal examinations as and when required;
- Liaise with other departments as appropriate;
- Attend school functions, training or fulfil other duties as required by the Headmistress.

Other duties:

This job description sets out the main duties of the Head of Religious Studies. No job description can be fully comprehensive and the Head of Religious Studies will be required to support the Headmistress in any work reasonably required to support the operation of the school. Each member of the teaching staff is a tutor or assistant tutor and a member of one of the Houses.



WORKING AT ST MARY'S

A Catholic school. Nearly all pupils and about 50% of the staff are Roman Catholic. As a 'reserved post' it is a requirement for the candidate to be a practicing Catholic.

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

Accommodation. The post holder is not required to be resident on site and accommodation is not offered with this role.

Salary. The salary for this role will be paid in accordance with the St Mary's Pay Scale. All teaching staff enjoy an additional St Mary's Allowance which in 2024/25 is £5,680 per annum which reflects the additional commitment required of teaching staff in a full boarding school.

Working Days and Hours. A full-time teacher will be required to work Monday to Friday during term time. The school day begins at 8.10 am and lessons finish at 4.30 pm. The post holder will be expected to deliver a weekly session beyond the timetabled school day up to around 6.00 pm to contribute to the co-curricular offering and/or departmental support. All teachers are also expected to do an evening duty twice per term and to do one day of weekend duties on six weekends per year. There are no lessons on Saturday mornings at St Mary's.

Additional Days. The Head of Religious Studies 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 Head of Religious Studies is required to attend the school's annual Open Day which currently takes place on a Saturday during the summer term.

Holidays. Holidays must be taken during the school holidays and must not clash with INSET.

Pensions. All teachers are auto-enrolled into the Aviva Pension Trust for Independent Schools (APTIS) defined contribution scheme.

Probationary Period. The first year of employment is a probationary period during which the notice period by both the post holder and the school is two months.

Notice Period. Following the successful completion of probationary period, the notice to terminate employment by either side will be one full term.

Meals. Teachers are currently able to enjoy lunch and, for staff on duty, a supper meal in the refectory. 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 online application form with the names, addresses and telephone numbers of three referees (including the current or latest employer) should be sent to by **noon on Friday 31 January 2025** to recruitment@st-marys-ascot.co.uk. Interviews will be held in weeks commencing Monday 3rd and Monday 10th February 2025.

We reserve the right to interview suitable candidates before the closing date or to close the vacancy prior to closing date if deemed appropriate. Interested applicants are advised to submit their application as early as possible to avoid missing your opportunity to apply. **Applicants must have a valid right to work in the UK.**

St Mary's School Ascot is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers, the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and social media checks.





ST MARY'S SCHOOL ASCOT

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