



# Application Pack

**Ref: WA320**

**Day Matron & Housekeeper**

**Salary: Dependent on experience**

**Advert date: Wednesday 19 June 2024**

**Closing date: Friday 28 June 2024**

**Westminster Abbey Choir School**



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# A Letter from the Headteacher

Dear Prospective Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in Westminster Abbey Choir School. Our school is an incredibly special place. I took over as Headteacher in January 2024, and the role of Day Matron & Housekeeper is a new role which I am introducing following the retirement of our residential Matron as part of a broader strategy to provide exceptional and unparalleled pastoral care for our boys. The pupils at our school are articulate, thoughtful and incredibly responsible young people. Their love of learning and exceptional musical talents mean that they are a joy to teach. As a full boarding community, the Choir School can often feel like an extended family and relationships between the boys are generally excellent. The staff team are an integral support network and work hard to ensure that all of our boarders cope with the significant demands of their busy schedule.

We are looking for an outstanding Day Matron & Housekeeper who is keen to fully embrace everything that working at Westminster Abbey can offer. It is an unusual role because with only 30 boys in your care, you become an integral part of their lives in a way that is impossible in a larger school. If you have any questions about the role, I would be delighted to answer them and I can be contacted through my PA, Jennifer Benjamin at [headteacher@westminster-abbey.org](mailto:headteacher@westminster-abbey.org). I can thoroughly recommend working at the Choir School – I may be biased, but I think it is a once in a lifetime opportunity!

Best wishes,



Dr Emma Margrett  
Headteacher



# About Westminster Abbey Choir School

Westminster Abbey Choir School is a remarkable school. It exists to educate and care for around 30 boy choristers of Westminster Abbey. Unique amongst choir schools, Westminster Abbey Choir School admits only singing boys, who are boarders in the relative peace and calm of Dean's Yard in the centre of London. It is thus a small, tightly knit community, with a strong sense of shared purpose both among pupils and between pupils and teachers. The school has a warm, cooperative atmosphere in which flexibility and teamwork are key to the smooth running of the boys' busy timetable.

Boys are selected by audition and academic test at the age of seven to start at the school in Year 4. At age 13 they normally move on to one of a wide range of leading schools, to which the great majority win music scholarships.

In addition to providing outstanding musical training, Westminster Abbey Choir School also maintains a full academic curriculum leading to the Common Entrance Examination at 13+, and in some cases to academic scholarships to senior schools. High standards are expected of both pupils and teachers. This inevitably makes for a busy weekly schedule in which academic and musical commitments have to be balanced.

The school is generously staffed with eight full-time and three part-time academic staff, eight support staff and over 15 peripatetic music staff. Next year, the number of full-time academic staff will increase to eleven. As a department of Westminster Abbey, the school forms part of the Abbey's overall administrative structure, drawing on its Works, Finance, IT and Human Resources departments. Next year, the number of full-time staff will increase to ten.

In a school of this size, staff get to know each boy very well indeed and several of the staff live on the premises. Central to the school's ethos is an informal, supportive atmosphere in which all of its members – pupils and staff – treat one another with consideration and respect. Indeed, this culture is common to the whole community of Westminster Abbey.

The close relationship with Westminster Abbey brings a special dimension to the school. The boys sing in the Abbey almost every day of the week and develop a special affinity and love for this church, which is both an ancient place of Christian worship and a high-profile national symbol. They are regularly called upon to sing at special occasions such as the state funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of HM King Charles III. They also give public concerts both here and abroad, and make recordings.

Outside the normal run of singing and academic lessons, there is a busy programme of extra-curricular activities. In addition to the usual array of sports, boys may be found in a range of pastimes, from sailing and rock-climbing to origami and chess. A special feature of the school year are the periods leading up to Christmas and Easter when the choristers are required to sing in Westminster Abbey. The boys eagerly look forward to these periods and the school continues with a programme of seasonal events.

The school is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Details of the safeguarding policy can be found on the Choir School website: <http://www.westminster-abbey.org/safeguarding-rse/> and a summary is provided in Appendix 1.

# About Westminster Abbey

Above all else, the Abbey is a church, a place of prayer and praise and holy ground at the heart of the nation. It is also a treasured part of Britain's heritage and a leading venue for tourism. The Abbey has occupied a central place in the celebration of great events for the nation and remains one of the most beautiful architectural masterpieces in Britain.

A living Church, Westminster Abbey is where the coronation of Kings and Queens has taken place since 1066, and where many of the Kings and Queens of England and of the United Kingdom are buried. Principal among them is St Edward the Confessor, King of England from 1042 to 1066, whose shrine is at the heart of the Abbey Church. Beside and around them are buried or commemorated many of the great women and men from almost every century of British history: statesmen and politicians, lawyers, warriors, clerics, writers, artists, musicians.

Neither a cathedral nor a parish church, Westminster Abbey (or the Collegiate Church of St Peter in Westminster to give it its correct title) is a Royal Peculiar under the jurisdiction of a Dean and Chapter and with direct accountability to the Sovereign. This relationship with the Sovereign dates back to the origins of the Abbey over a millennium ago, but its current form stems from the Charter granted to the Abbey by Elizabeth on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1560.

We are a welcoming community, but also complex and multi-faceted, with nearly 600 highly committed employees and volunteers. We have deep respect for the heritage of which we are the custodians, but we evolve continuously to meet the opportunities of the future. In recent times this has included the creation of new departments to focus on transforming our digital presence and delivering a significantly expanded programme of public and community engagement. In addition, our newly created Employee Engagement Forum and Social Engagement Statement is helping us to support and develop our staff and volunteers. We have also reshaped our governance arrangements, including a new Strategic Board to help us navigate the challenges and opportunities of the coming decades.

## **Westminster Abbey's mission is:**

- To offer daily divine Worship to Almighty God and resource the Church in this vocation;
- To serve the Sovereign;
- To proclaim the Gospel to the nation and Commonwealth, celebrating the distinctive witness of the Christian faith and engaging with the public square;
- To provide a safe, welcoming and inspiring environment for all who come to the Abbey;
- To act as responsible stewards of God's gifts.

## **Our Values:**

As one we serve each other, our visitors and the wider world in all we do with:

- Truthfulness
- Integrity
- Empathy
- Excellence

Following the State Funeral of Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, which were broadcast to national and international audiences in their millions, interest in the Abbey is very strong. We attract over a million visitors from around the world every year, and our summers and peak period are incredibly busy. However, we receive no regular income from the State, the Church of England or the Crown, and rely almost entirely on income from visitors.

**It is an exciting time to join the Abbey, and we look forward to receiving your application and if successful, welcoming your contribution to the Abbey's history.**

## **SUMMARY JOB DESCRIPTION:**

### **FULL-TIME DAY MATRON & HOUSEKEEPER**

Westminster Abbey Choir School is seeking to appoint a highly motivated, pastorally aware, Day Matron & Housekeeper to join the staff team in a one of England's foremost Choir Schools. You will work closely with the teaching staff and the Activities Co-ordinator & Resident Assistant Matron to lead the provision of medical care and the smooth running of the domestic side of the residential aspect of the school. This is a new role which has been created as part of a restructure of the existing pastoral arrangements for pupils to ensure that the boys have the very best pastoral and medical support at all times.

# Job Description

**JOB TITLE:** Day Matron & Housekeeper

**ACCOUNTABLE TO:** School Business Manager

**SUMMARY:** Westminster Abbey Choir School exists to educate and care for the 30 boy choristers of Westminster Abbey. All staff have an important pastoral and educational responsibility to ensure high academic standards in happy secure children who often have remarkable talents.

**Work pattern:** All year round from 09:00 – 17:00 Monday – Friday including public holidays during the Christmas and Easter Period to ensure that the facilities and boys' clothing are well-maintained.

## **MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

### **The health and well-being of the boys, including:**

- Daily routine care of the boys.
- The running of the sick-bay.
- Making decisions on admission to and discharge from the sick-bay and on restrictions on visiting while boys are in the sick-bay.
- Ensuring that all pupils are registered with the designated School Doctors' Surgery and liaise with choir school parents in relation to their child's medical needs.
- Contacting the School Medical Officer as and when appropriate and complying strictly with any directions or advice given by the Medical Officer or any other Specialist or Medical Practitioner consulted in a particular case.
- Accompanying the boys to the hospital should an emergency visit be required when on duty.

### **Mealtimes**

- Advising the boys about diet. (For which purpose you will be entitled to have sight of the menu in advance and to comment and discuss these menus with the caterers as necessary.)
- Encouraging the boys to make good food choices when assisting with supervision at meal times.

### **The boys' clothing, including:**

- Care of the boys' clothing: washing, ironing, repairing, packing and unpacking.
- Ordering of and care for blazers, cassocks, surplices and cloaks.

### **Dormitories and household linen, including:**

- Supervision of the dormitories at all times when on duty, and for ensuring that the boys are properly turned out and the dormitories are presentable.
- Care of household linen and bedding including mattresses in current use in the School and annual inspections for the purposes of repair and/or replacement in collaboration with the Headteacher.

### **The hygiene of the School and boys, including:**

- Supervision of the cleaning of the whole School in conjunction with the Premises Manager
- Supervision of the school cleaners in conjunction with the Premises Manager
- Ordering and care of all household equipment and supplies for example pain medication, first aid supplies, sewing materials.
- To chaperone the boys as needed when they are rehearsing or performing in the Abbey.

**Other Duties:**

- You are responsible for arranging the work for yourself and the Activities Co-ordinator & Resident Assistant Matron in order to ensure that your respective duties are fully performed and to agree the division of duties with the Headteacher.
- In discharging your duties, you are subject to the general overall direction of the Headteacher with whom you will attend weekly meetings and to whom you are expected to report at regular intervals on any matters concerning your department and immediately in the case of emergency.
- Upholding both the School and the Abbey codes of conduct
- You may, if you so required, consult with the Headteacher for help and advice and also, if you so desire, you may consult the School Business Manager.

It should be noted that the above list of duties is not necessarily an exhaustive statement of the final responsibilities of the post. It is intended to give an overall view of the position and should be taken as guidance only. The post holder may be required to undertake any other reasonable task requested by the Headteacher for a Matron and Housekeeper, which fall within his or her capabilities, and which are in accordance with the usual practice of an Independent Boarding and Day School. All staff are expected to promote safeguarding and child protection as a fundamental part of their role and will be supported in this respect by ongoing professional development.

# Person Specification

This section outlines the knowledge, skills and abilities the jobholder needs in order to fulfil the requirements of the post. 'Essential' criteria are those that the jobholder absolutely must have in order to do the job. 'Desirable' criteria are those qualities that would be either useful, or an advantage or those which the jobholder can be trained to do.

## **The postholder will:**

- Have appropriate experience of and training in nursing or medical care.
- Hold an advanced First Aid Qualification as a minimum and be confident to administer first aid as an initial point of contact when required.
- Have excellent pastoral skills and experience of supporting boys through adolescence.
- Illustrate initiative and imagination in approaching challenges.
- Have excellent inter-personal and organisational skills.
- Be an effective team player able to operate in different roles within the team as required and with demonstrable experience of delivering on key objectives through team working.
- Be blessed with patience and a warm and personable manner.

## **Desirable skills, aptitudes, knowledge & experience**

### **It would be desirable for the successful candidate to:**

- have experience of working in a boarding school.
- have the ability to drive a minibus or a willingness to learn.

## **Safeguarding**

The school is committed to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Details of the safeguarding policy can be found on the website: <http://www.westminster-abbey.org/safeguarding-rse>

# Working for us

## **Salary**

Starting salary is based on experience and in accordance with the Westminster Abbey Choir School Scale. The scale takes into account the requirements of working in central London.

## **Working Hours**

These are 40 hours per week between Monday and Friday.

## **Annual Holidays**

Full-time holiday entitlement of 31 days per annum including recognised public holidays, rising to 33 days per annum in the fifth year of service. There is a requirement to work during the Christmas and Easter Period to ensure that the facilities and boys' clothing are well-maintained.

## **Pension**

Eligible staff will be able to join the Abbey's Group Personal Pension plan. Alternatively, staff who qualify to opt into the Teachers' Pension Scheme, may join that instead.

## **Appointment, Induction and Probation**

Shortlisted candidates will be required to provide proof of their identity and right to work in the UK when attending for interview.

All appointments are subject to satisfactory health clearance, and those appointed will be required to provide documentary evidence of all qualifications claimed.

All appointments will be subject to satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS and a minimum of two references satisfactory to the Choir School. Applicants should note that the school's policy is always to contact referees for verification of references and, in addition, follows best practice to ascertain the reasons for the termination of any previous employment in all cases where a candidate has worked with children.

All new teachers will have the benefit of guidance by an experienced mentor whose role will be to help them through the first months of their employment. The school believes in, supports and resources an extensive system of professional development and training. The role will be subject to a probationary period of one term.

## **Additional information**

Due to the close-knit environment in a full boarding community, applications from close family members of current choristers will not be considered.

## **Equality statement**

Westminster Abbey aims at all times to recruit the person who is most suited to the job. Qualifications, skills and experience will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.

The Abbey and the Choir School will ensure that their shortlisting, interviewing and selection procedures avoid discrimination in any way, including on grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status or civil partnership, race, nationality or ethnic origins, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Please ensure the equality section of the online form is completed. This will help us monitor our recruitment practice. The equality form will not be seen by the people making the selection decision.

**Safeguarding**

Westminster Abbey is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk. To prevent them from harm, we undertake appropriate checks on staff and volunteers and require them to complete relevant safeguarding training. Offers are subject to a relevant level of criminal record check, receipt of references satisfactory to Westminster Abbey, right to work in the UK, proof of professional qualifications and medical clearance, which will include a work health assessment through our occupational health provider.

# How to Apply

## Application Materials

Your online application should include:

1. The online completed application form;
2. Fully completed online supporting statement showing how you meet the requirements listed in the Person Specification;
3. Please also include your particular interest in this post within the supporting statement section of the online application form.

As well as your previous work experience, tell us about other relevant experience and your leisure and other interests. Clear information on how you meet the overall requirements of the job, with relevant examples, will help us with shortlisting, and we may not be able to shortlist you for interview if you do not provide this.

*Please note that, unless you advise otherwise, we will normally seek to contact referees prior to interview.*

As well as completing the online TES application form, if you have any queries about the recruitment process, please send them to: [applications@westminster-abbey.org](mailto:applications@westminster-abbey.org).

The closing date for applications is noon on: **Friday 28 June 2024**

## The Recruitment Process

Interviews are most likely to be held on **4 or 5 July 2024**.

If you would like to learn more about the post before applying then you are very welcome to contact the Headteacher of Westminster Abbey Choir School, Dr Emma Margrett, via her PA on 020 7654 4918 or email: [headteacher@westminster-abbey.org](mailto:headteacher@westminster-abbey.org)

Please also note that the school website contains further information which informally give an insight into life at the Choir School: <http://www.westminster-abbey.org/choir-school>.

