



Our Lady's Abingdon

Independent Catholic day school for girls and boys aged 7-18



Head of Mathematics

(from September 2021)

Applicant Information Pack

Message from the Principal, Stephen Oliver

Thank you for your interest in Our Lady's Abingdon. I hope that what you read here will inspire you about our school and help you decide whether applying to join our community is the right move for you.

This is an exciting time to be working at OLA. Formerly a convent school run by the Sisters of Mercy, we are now fully coeducational and governed by a board of lay trustees. As such, we have a unique position in the Oxfordshire independent schools' landscape. Our Senior School offers a broad and balanced curriculum, with pupils taking ten or eleven subjects at GCSE/IGCSE. Pupils have a positive and purposeful approach to learning. Behaviour is excellent and our small class sizes mean we are able to challenge and support according to individual need. Our Sixth Form, which has grown in numbers in recent years, offers a curriculum that includes more than twenty A level choices, the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) and a well-planned enrichment programme.

Our Catholic ethos is at the heart of all we do. It inspires our mission, directs our work of teaching and learning and offers us a vision for the goal of human life. Across the curriculum respect is given to the dignity of every human person. We connect the teaching of the faith to the pupils' own lives through our programme of assemblies, retreats and liturgies, providing them with the opportunity to reflect on their personal experience of the love of God. We are proud of our distinctive family atmosphere, which fosters a tangible sense of community and happy relationships between staff and pupils.

OLA aims to develop the individual talents of each pupil, every child being seen as a unique human being, with gifts to be recognised, valued and nurtured. Pupils are encouraged to have high aspirations. They are expected to contribute fully to school life and participate in the wide range of enrichment opportunities on offer. As a result, pupils leave OLA as well-rounded, confident and well-qualified young people, ready to face the challenges of the adult world.

If you choose to apply for this post, we will give your application all the seriousness it deserves. OLA is a wonderful, vibrant and happy environment in which to teach, with a palpable sense of belonging among our staff. The role we are looking to fill is central to the flourishing of the school and I hope you will feel that you are the person to fill it.

Stephen Oliver
Principal



A profile of the Principal is available in the September 2018 issue of the Independent Schools magazine (p28-29), accessible via the link below:

<http://www.independentschoolsmagazine.co.uk/issues/files/downloads/September%20Magazine%20WEB.pdf>

JOB DESCRIPTION

An experienced, inspirational and forward-thinking teacher is required for September 2021 to take on the leadership of this outstanding department. The position is full-time. The successful candidate will have recent experience of teaching the subject to A Level, including Further Mathematics. He or she will have a proven track record of high-quality teaching, excellent management and leadership skills and will be able to demonstrate a commitment to innovation in teaching pupils across a wide range of ability.

The ability to innovate, raise standards and enhance the profile of Mathematics within the school is essential, as is a willingness to take an active part in the pastoral and co-curricular life of the School.

THE MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT

We are looking for a well-qualified Mathematician with both the enthusiasm and vision to lead our thriving and highly successful department across KS3, KS4 and KS5. The successful applicant will be committed to upholding our ethos of protecting and enhancing the self-esteem of all pupils in their study of Mathematics, yet remaining keen to inject fresh ideas and methods into our teaching and learning.

At present, the department comprises four full time members of staff, each with their own classroom. Pupils are placed in ability sets at the beginning of Year 7 and these are reviewed regularly. At KS4 all pupils follow the Edexcel IGCSE specification, with the majority entered at the Higher Tier, and with some pupils in the top set opting to study the AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics. Sixth Form numbers are strong, with 12 students in Year 12 and 6 in Year 13, studying the OCR A level specification, with 5 and 2 students respectively studying the OCR A level Further Mathematics specification.

We have achieved consistently high results over the last two years:

IGCSE	82%	grades 9 – 5
L2 Further Maths	85%	grades 9 – 7 / A ⁺ - B
A level	74%	grades A* – C
A level Further Maths	86%	grades A* - B

Each year the top sets compete in all three levels of the UKMT Maths Challenge gaining Gold, Silver and Bronze certificates, with some pupils qualifying for the Olympiad and Kangaroo rounds. We also take part in the regional Team Challenges.

The department is proud of its profile and involvement in wider school life which includes running Christmas and Easter Inter-House Maths Competitions for Years 7 and 8.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A HEAD OF DEPARTMENT AT OLA

The role of a Head of an academic department at OLA has many aspects, including inspiration, communication, management, co-ordination and administration. A Head of Department is responsible for monitoring and evaluating all the work of their subject area and completing an annual review which includes public examination analysis. This job description outlines the basic functions, but a Head of Department must also be prepared to cope with new challenges as and when they occur.

The primary duties of the Head of Department are to guide and manage the staff, the curriculum and the resources of the department and actively to promote the highest academic standards. The Head of Department is ultimately responsible to the Principal. He/she will work closely with the appointed LT Line Manager, keeping them fully briefed on all matters relating to the subject.

The School is committed to giving the successful appointee all necessary support to help them make a success of this extremely important role.

KEY ASPECTS OF THE ROLE

Standards

- Seek to achieve the highest possible standard of teaching and learning within the department.

Curriculum

- Pay close attention to curriculum developments in the subject area.
- Choose the schemes of work and specifications to be followed for the subject throughout the school.
- Ensure that the departmental handbook is kept up to date.
- Organise the setting and marking of examination papers as required for Years 7 – Sixth Form and for the school's entrance examinations.
- Participate in arrangements for preparing pupils for public examinations, assessing pupils and recording and reporting all assessments.
- Take overall responsibility for meeting the requirements of external examinations.
- Put in place strategies to ensure standardisation of attainment data across a year group, e.g. common testing, moderation procedures, etc.
- Maintain central departmental records of pupils' progress and make them available as required.
- Ensure that tracking data is sent to the Deputy Head when required.

Staff

- Participate in the appointment of new staff in the department.
- Make recommendations concerning the deployment of teachers and support staff within the department in the best interests of the pupils.
- Organise a subject-specific induction for new members of the department, meeting with them weekly to monitor their progress and advising the LT line manager about this each half-term. When the member of department is a newly qualified teacher, liaise with the Deputy Head over their professional development and formal induction year.

- Offer advice and support to the staff of the department, encouraging their professional development and carrying out their performance review.
- Regularly monitor the work of all members of the department, ensuring that they are following the correct specifications and are adhering to the school and departmental marking policy.
- Monitor the quality of teaching in the department by regular lesson observations and checks on the standard and frequency of marking.
- Monitor the provision for all pupils, including the More Able and those with special needs.
- Draw up the teaching schedule and discuss it with each member of staff concerned before submitting it to the Deputy Head.
- Organise regular departmental meetings: prepare agendas, chair the meetings and produce minutes, copies of which should be sent to the Line Manager.

Liaison

- Attend Heads of Department meetings and disseminate information to the department as necessary.
- Liaise with other Heads of Department on cross-curricular matters when necessary.
- Keep the Line Manager, Deputy Head and Principal informed of any relevant matters within the department.

Resources

- Submit an annual budget proposal for the department and monitor departmental spending through the year.
- Audit and manage departmental resources, including book stocks, equipment, etc.
- Organise the provision of books and necessary resources for staff and pupils.
- Make appropriate library provision for the subject.

Health & Safety

- Ensure that staff are aware of current health, safety and security requirements.
- Produce and review departmental risk assessments annually, or more frequently as required.

Other Duties

- Prepare a departmental development plan and submit it to the Principal. This plan should be reviewed annually with the department and the Principal should receive an updated version.
- Write and regularly update the departmental handbook and schemes of work for the department.
- Take final responsibility for outings and other departmental activities and ensure that all formalities, school policies and health and safety procedures are adhered to.
- Provide information on the department as requested e.g. for publicity purposes, options choices, school magazine, Prizegiving, etc.
- Liaise with the Heads of Sections regarding holiday work. Where relevant ensure the uniformity of holiday work across Year Groups.
- Participate in administrative and organisational tasks related to any of the duties described above.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE POST

All teachers are expected to share in supervision duties, attend relevant parents' evenings, staff/departmental meetings, Open Days etc. and to contribute to the co-curricular life of the school.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
A good degree in Mathematics or a related discipline	X	
PGCE or equivalent	X	
Evidence of continuing professional development	X	
Experience		
Recent teaching experience across the full age and ability range at KS3	X	
Recent teaching experience across the full age and ability range at KS4	X	
Recent experience of teaching A level Mathematics and Further Mathematics	X	
Skills/ Knowledge and Abilities		
Outstanding and enthusiastic classroom teacher	X	
Track record of motivating learners and raising achievement	X	
Ability to use assessment data to inform planning and set targets	X	
Ability to lead and inspire a departmental team	X	
Excellent written communication skills	X	
Excellent organisational skills	X	
Excellent oral communication skills with staff, students & parents	X	
Positive, enthusiastic, flexible with a pro-active 'can do' attitude	X	
A commitment to using ICT to develop learning	X	
Excellent IT skills	X	
Previous involvement in departmental planning		X
Personal Qualities		
A sense of humour and genuine understanding and liking for our students	X	
Excellent interpersonal skills	X	
Enthusiasm	X	
Creativity	X	
Approachable, open and honest	X	
Dedicated, conscientious and hard-working	X	
Commitment to safeguarding and the welfare of students	X	
Understanding of and commitment to OLA's ethos	X	

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

OLA is a Catholic, co-educational day school located close to Oxford in the heart of Abingdon, welcoming pupils of all faiths and none. We successfully combine excellent academic achievement with huge strengths in the creative and performing arts and a broad range of opportunities beyond the classroom. Exceptional pastoral care and an innovative, inclusive culture underpin all that we do. This provides pupils with the individual focus, resources and confidence to realise their potential in a happy and secure environment, enabling them to become successful members of society.

OLA's values and ethos enable pupils to develop in mind and spirit. The strong moral standards we promote encourage pupils to be polite and articulate with a high degree of self-worth. Outstanding pastoral care ensures that pupils flourish academically and in all the activities they undertake. We provide an all-round education, within a broad curriculum, which results in a sound and balanced foundation for the world beyond school. Excellent facilities and small class sizes make this possible, meaning that our pupils, whatever their talents, are stretched to do their very best to succeed.

Our co-educational ethos provides an atmosphere where pupils are at ease with one another and natural relationships are fostered. OLA is a purposeful, outward-looking school with a happy, family atmosphere which gives children the freedom to develop within a structured framework. As our school motto says: *age quod agis* – whatever you do, do it well.



OLA offers outstanding pastoral care to all its pupils. We have a justified reputation for being a caring and nurturing school with a calm, purposeful environment that gives all pupils the opportunity to thrive. Pupils at OLA feel safe, well-cared for and known by all their teachers. We place great value on care and support for the individual and our pupils interact with each other positively and with genuine care and compassion.

Academic and personal progress is closely monitored throughout a child's time in the school to ensure that the experience of all pupils is a happy and positive one. Year 7 has a dedicated pastoral head in charge of transition to senior school life, after which pupils are placed in the care of a Head of Middle School who guides them through their time in Years 8 and 9, and a Head of Upper School who takes them through to GCSE. In this way they receive the best possible individual support, enabling them to make the most of their GCSE years. Alongside this they receive expert guidance from our Careers staff and form teachers as they make important decisions about the subjects they wish to study for A Level.

Hand in hand with pastoral care goes spiritual nourishment, promoted by all staff but particularly by our dedicated chaplaincy team who arrange retreats, assemblies and liturgies. Our beautiful school Chapel is a real centre for prayer and our Catholic ethos ensures all pupils, whatever their background, have opportunities to step back from the busy school day to enjoy times of quiet and reflection.

OLA prepares children for life. Students leave us at 18 as young men and women not only equipped academically for university, but as well-balanced individuals with the confidence to make their way successfully in the world beyond school. Following their chosen path with enthusiasm, they can use the skills they have acquired at OLA to exploit their abilities and make them count in society.



WORKING AT OLA

Salary

OLA has its own salary scale. Experience and qualifications are taken into account when considering starting salaries.

Benefits

Lunch is provided at no cost during term time, with tea and coffee available throughout the day. Snacks and light meals are provided to staff who are required to work in the evening for school events.

Free on-site parking.

CPD and training are encouraged and the school has an exciting annual INSET programme for staff.

There is a well-equipped, attractive Staff Room at the centre of the school along with quiet departmental workspaces throughout the school building.

Staff have access to the school's 25 metre indoor swimming pool during designated sessions.

Pension

The School participates in the DfE Teachers' Pension Scheme and also offers a generous contributory pension scheme for all support staff.

School Fee Reduction

Teaching staff benefit from a staff discount on basic tuition fees of 50% for full-time staff, pro rata for part-time staff, and qualify for this benefit after the completion of two years service.

Non-contractual benefits are given at the discretion of the Governing body and can be withdrawn without notice.

LOCATION

The school is located in Abingdon-on-Thames, an historic market town situated eight miles to the south of Oxford with its world-renowned reputation as a centre of academic excellence. The town supports a mixed, international community which enjoys a good selection of restaurants, cafes and bars situated a just few minutes' walk away from the river and gardens of Abbey Meadows. The town benefits from excellent bus links to Oxford, which is just a 15 minute ride away and provides a wealth of social and cultural opportunities.



SELECTION PROCESS

- Applicants are asked to submit a completed application form online via the TES website (<https://www.tes.com/jobs/employer/-1030286>). No other form of application will be accepted.
- **Applications will be reviewed upon receipt and interviews held accordingly. Interested parties are therefore encouraged to apply as soon as possible.**
- Please ensure that your application form is completed in full, and that no gaps are left in your employment history.
- When explaining why you should be considered for the role please refer to the information provided in this document.
- Two referees should be provided, one of whom must be your current or most recent employer. References will be requested prior to interviews taking place.
- Applicants will be required to prove their right to work in the UK at interview. The School is unable to offer sponsorship to candidates who do not have worker status.
- The successful candidate will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, in addition to other necessary safeguarding measures.
- Please address any outstanding queries to principalspa@ola.org.uk



Our Lady's Abingdon is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.