



THE ORATORY

HEAD OF SCIENCE Closing date – 24 February 2020

The Oratory School

The Oratory is an HMC independent school, currently for boys aged 11 to 18. In September 2020, we will be becoming co-educational, with intakes of girls at 11+, 13+ and 16+. We aim to provide an all-round education of quality and purpose within a nurturing, joyful environment.

We offer small class sizes and outstanding facilities on a wonderful South Oxfordshire country estate and yet we are within easy travelling distance of London, major motorways, railways and airports.

The Oratory School has high academic standards, however we believe that an education is about more than statistics. We have a clear vision to ensure that each pupil flourishes and fulfils their maximum potential both in and far beyond the classroom. To this end a wide variety of co-curricular activities enrich the pupils' learning and all pupils get the opportunity to develop their specific talents to the full. The Oratory is not a large school, and this enables each and every pupil to be known, valued and stretched as an individual within our nurturing community.

Founded in 1859 by John Henry Newman – recently made a Saint of the Church - we are a Catholic school which welcomes pupils of all faiths or none. Visitors often comment on the inclusive community atmosphere of our school which we believe nurtures confidence, self-expression and a desire to learn and grow.

A Message from the Head Master, Mr Joe Smith

Thank you for your interest in potentially joining us as a colleague at The Oratory School. I'm delighted that you are considering applying for this post and hope very much that, once you have read through the application pack, you will decide to do so.

We are acutely conscious that for busy professionals it takes a considerable commitment to apply for a new role. In return you can expect us to expend a similar amount of time and energy in considering your application and over the selection process.

We are very proud of our school's history. The Oratory School was founded by Cardinal – now Blessed - John Henry Newman – one of the greatest figures of the 19th Century - in Edgbaston, Birmingham in 1859 as a response to numerous requests to start a school for the education of the sons of Catholic gentlemen. Having spent time at Caversham on the outskirts of Reading (now the BBC monitoring centre) the school moved to its present site, Woodcote House in 1942.

Currently approximately half of our pupils are Catholic - and a similar proportion of teaching staff – but the Catholic vision of an all-round, holistic education pervades all we do. All staff, Catholic or not, are expected to uphold and support the school's Catholicism, and all teaching staff are expected to attend Mass and other services with the pupils.

I urge you to spend some time looking at our website, which I hope will give you a flavour of our school. The school is in very good heart and we are improving our provision all the time. We currently have approximately 250 boys at the school and this number will rise to closer to 300 when the school becomes coeducational in September 2020. Class sizes are small and facilities impressive: we are in the process of creating an ambitious plan for the next stage of the school's development. As an avowedly all-round school our aim is that everything we do – be it teaching, sport, music, drama, art, boarding or pastoral care – is done to the very highest standard. As a result of our success in this endeavour the current reputation of the OS is high, although we are anything but complacent about maintaining this popularity, hence the importance of attracting and retaining high quality staff, both in the classroom and beyond it.

If offered a place at the school, the children of staff enjoy a very generous fee remission at The Oratory. Our salary scale is competitive and for senior staff the school has its own Leadership Scale. The school owns a significant amount of staff accommodation, both on site and in the village of Woodcote, for which benefit resident staff undertake duties in a boarding house.

The Common Room are a wonderful, supportive, professional and good humoured team, and the atmosphere of the school as a whole is often described as warm and positive, as well as purposeful.

The Oratory has a fine reputation and tradition, in the local area, nationally and abroad. Many members of staff have moved on from the OS to senior roles at other prestigious schools. I do hope that you will apply and I hope to meet you in due course and discuss the possibility of your coming to join us at The Oratory.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JHN' followed by a flourish and a period.

The Post

The school is looking to appoint a Head of Science for September 2020. This a new role, bringing together the three sciences under a cohesive and collaborative leader. The Head of Science will be both dynamic and energetic in leadership so as to take advantage of this opportunity to drive the sciences forward as a department.

Science is taught throughout the School from 1st Form (Year 7) to Upper 6th. 1st and 2nd Form are taught in mixed ability classes and according to the separate sciences. Starting in 3rd Form (Year 9) the classes are set according to the Maths setting and continue to have separate Biology, Chemistry and Physics lessons. At the end of Year 3, the pupils opt for either two or three separate Sciences at GCSE and follow the AQA GCSE specification. At A Level, Biology, Chemistry and Physics are offered, whilst in addition science teachers may also contribute to the teaching of PE and as well as to the teaching of Psychology (once introduced in 2020). The Head of Science will also oversee the delivery of the Psychology A Level.

There is often an interest from pupils to study Medicine and other Science-related disciplines at a range of prestigious universities and the ability to advise and assist accordingly where relevant is important.

The Department currently has seven members of staff, one of whom is part-time, whilst staff from other departments also assist in the teaching of PE. Two highly valued technicians also support the teaching staff. There are separate laboratories in the three science areas of the teaching block with space for storing resources and displaying work. All rooms are equipped with PCs and whiteboards. The Sciences are core curriculum subjects taken by all students up to GCSE and by a high proportion at A level.

The school has an active Science co-curricular programme and the post holder will be expected to take an active part in managing and organising this, with the opportunity to develop it further. In addition, pupils are encouraged to take part in competitions outside school. The appointment of a Head of Science is a new opportunity for cross-science collaboration and planning. The Head of Science should have stamina, good humour and demonstrate strong organisational skills. Competent ICT skills are also essential.

Staff play a crucial part in the marketing of the school and attend all Open morning events, as well whole school events. The Head of Science has the opportunity to play a significant role in arranging the promotion of the sciences.

The Oratory Schools Association Registered Charity No. 309112 is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants must be willing to undergo checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Responsibilities of the role:

Academic Leadership

1. General organisation of the science subjects in the school and leadership of the department as a whole.
2. Taking a lead in setting and maintaining the school's advancement of scholarship and academic standards.
3. Assisting in the formulation of school academic policy.
4. Being prominent in advising boys and their parents on academic matters, including subject choices and university courses.
5. Monitoring of weaker examination candidates.
6. Writing a Departmental Development Plan to be reviewed on an annual basis.
7. Reviewing performance annually, and agreeing targets to be set for the next year.
8. Reporting regularly to the Deputy Head - Academic, as 'line manager', on matters affecting the department.
9. Bringing to the attention of senior staff any significant problems, whether involving staff or boys, where support or intervention is likely to be needed, or where communication from parents is likely.

Leading a team of Colleagues

1. Participating in the selection of new members of the department, in conjunction with senior staff.
2. Arranging the induction and mentoring of all new members of the department.
3. Overseeing the progress of and NQTs or PGCE students within the department, including completion of the statutory framework.
4. Monitoring the teaching of members of the department, in particular through regular lesson observations.
5. Monitoring the assessment of pupils by members of the department.
6. Participating in the appraisal of colleagues, as required.
7. Providing advice on the professional development of departmental colleagues.
8. Arrangements for a departmental programme of in-service training, whether provided internally or externally, in accordance with the identified needs of the department and individual staff.

Administration

1. Writing and annually updating a department handbook for staff, and schemes of work.
2. Organizing the setting and marking of internal examinations, and entrance tests to the school as required, and the provision of results.

3. Supervision of coursework arrangements, ensuring that criteria are fulfilled and deadlines are met.
4. Putting the pupils into sets, as required, in conjunction with the Timetable Manager and Deputy Head Academic.
5. Managing the resources and finances of the department.
6. Ensuring the integration of appropriate ICT within departmental schemes of work.
7. Holding regular departmental meetings, and submitting the minutes of these meetings to the Deputy Head Academic for the records.
8. Choice of books and teaching materials and, subject to the approval of the Deputy Head Academic and the Head Master, examination syllabuses.
9. Provision of an annual written report on the department – including its examination results - in September, prior to a review in the early part of the autumn with the Deputy Head Academic and the Head Master.

Links beyond the Department

1. Liaising with the Head of Curriculum Support about the particular needs of pupils.
2. Liaising with the Librarian about suitable material to be purchased for the library, and ways of encouraging use by pupils.
3. Liaising with the Examinations Officer about pupil entries, including checking entries, providing grade predictions, and suggesting re-marks of units.
4. Liaising with relevant colleagues at the Oratory Prep School.
5. Keeping informed of changes in syllabuses, teaching materials and methods, and other issues affecting the teaching of the subject, and bringing these to the attention of other colleagues as is appropriate.
6. Contributing as necessary to the work of the Heads of Faculty committee, or other working groups which promote academic development within the school.

Some departments will have particular needs, entailing additional duties, which will usually be discussed at the time of appointment to the post.

Extra-Curricular

In any school, and particularly in a boarding school, the emphasis is on total education and we provide a wealth of opportunities for our boys. The school is therefore keen to appoint teachers who would wish to be involved in activities outside the classroom, provided that their teaching duties permit this.

Applications

Please send your applications together with a covering letter to Human Resources Department, The Oratory School, Woodcote, Reading, RG8 0PJ. Alternatively, you may email them through to humanresources@oratory.co.uk. For any queries please phone 01491 683506.
