

Teacher of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

Required for January/April
2020

Recruitment Pack



St Helen's School
Eastbury Road, Northwood, HA6 3AS
Tel: (01923) 843210
Email: recruitment@sthelens.london



St Helen's School

Teacher of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics

Thank you for showing an interest in this post.

We hope that the following information about St Helen's and description of the responsibilities of the post will help you to decide that this is an application which you wish to pursue. We look forward to hearing from you.

The School



St Helen's is an academically selective independent girls' day school of more than 1100 students aged 3-18, set in over 20 acres of beautiful green space in Northwood, Middlesex. It draws pupils from a wide area of north-west London, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire with easy access by Underground from central London.

We aim to ensure that every pupil:

- is excited by learning and the opportunity to excel
- is intellectually curious and thinks independently
- is confident and able to lead as well as be a team member
- has integrity, celebrates diversity and respects others
- uses her talents, energy and enthusiasm for the benefit of the community
- has skills which enable her to become a leader of her community and profession

Our students achieve high academic standards and we encourage them to develop lifelong skills in a diverse range of areas, both within and outside the curriculum, and to pursue their individual ambitions. The School is proud of its tradition of providing a balanced and forward-looking education through which pupils can become confident, independent learners and leaders in their fields, their professions and their communities. Attention to the individual child is at the heart of everything we do and shapes the pastoral care, teaching and learning and the co-curricular opportunities on offer at St Helen's.

The successful candidate will be expected to embrace the culture of the School, which is deeply-rooted in its fine history and is also forward-looking and innovative.

Our twenty-year Estates Masterplan sets out our vision to develop and transform the School's facilities to meet the needs and challenges of education in the 21st century. In 2014 we opened The Centre, a multi-purpose performing arts, lecture and sports facility incorporating The Mint Café. The exciting new Prep School building for KS2 was opened in 2016, enabling us to use the former Junior School buildings to improve our Senior School learning and teaching facilities and to provide a single focal point for our Sixth Form.

Recently our Dining Hall was redeveloped, and an all-weather sports facility added to our impressive Sports facilities. In 2018 a state-of-the-art Mary Short School of Music building was opened and a new STEM building will open in September 2020.

The School was inspected by ISI in November 2016 under the new inspection regime and was found to be fully compliant with the Independent School Standards Regulations. We are delighted that the Quality of Education Inspection judged both the achievement of pupils and their personal development to be 'Excellent'. The full report is available on the School website: <http://www.sthelens.london/Inspection-Reports>

The Senior School

St Helen's Senior School caters for approximately 670 pupils from Year 7 to Year 13, including around 160 in the Sixth Form. We accept approximately 100 pupils into Year 7 each year, drawn from both our own Prep School and from a wide range of maintained primary and independent preparatory schools in roughly equal proportions.

The broad and balanced education which we provide caters for 'the whole child' in terms of academic excellence and emotional growth. Each pupil is encouraged to be a self-motivated and independent learner with the confidence to express her opinions firmly and respectfully, the ambition to aim high and the curiosity to develop broader interests both within and outside the classroom.

In Year 7 pupils engage with a broad and challenging programme of study: Mathematics, English, a bespoke skills-based Science course which prepares them for study of the three separate science subjects from Year 8, Computer Science, History, Geography, Drama, Art, Music, Design & Technology, Latin, Religious Studies, Physical Education, PHSCE and a choice of two modern foreign languages: French, German, Spanish or Mandarin.

Pupils take IGCSE examinations in the core subjects of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology in Year 11, as we believe that these currently provide the best preparation for study at A Level and university. Remaining subjects are a mixture of GCSEs and IGCSEs. Classical Civilisation, Classical Greek, Italian and Japanese are offered as new courses in Year 10, which lead to the GCSE qualification.

From September 2018 we redesigned our Sixth Form curriculum to enable students to tailor their experience to suit their strengths and needs. Depending upon the pathway they choose, students have the flexibility to study either three or four subjects to A level; many will take an AS qualification over two years; most will take on the Extended Project Qualifications; all participate in our unique St Helen's Programme, which includes a fortnightly lecture, University Preparation sessions, PE and a Personal Impact Programme.

- Pathway A: 3 A levels & EPQ plus Enhancement course and St Helen's Programme
- Pathway B: 3 A levels & EPQ plus AS level over 2 years and St Helen's Programme
- Pathway C: 4 A levels plus an optional EPQ and St Helen's Programme

Computer Science is a vital element in the curriculum: we possess several computer rooms and a fully-equipped Language Laboratory. All staff are provided with an iPad, and classrooms are equipped with Smart boards which enable innovative approaches to support learning and teaching. Science, Music, Art and Design & Technology are taught within well-equipped specialist facilities.

On joining Senior School, pupils are allocated to a tutor group of approximately 20 pupils, although Sixth Form tutor groups are considerably smaller than this. The form tutor plays a central role in the School's pastoral care, and is the first port of call for pupils, teachers and parents. The tutor is able to answer most questions pupils and parents have, or to refer them on as necessary. The tutor's main role, however, is to promote effective academic progress and complete engagement with our extensive co-curricular programme through our mentoring system, which enables every pupil to realise her full potential. The House system helps to build a sense of unity across the age range, and pupils take part in friendly House-based competitions in Sport and Performing Arts. The Houses also provide a focus for many of our charitable fund-raising activities throughout the year.

St Helen's pupils enjoy a broad range of activities beyond those available in the classroom. Many pupils take additional instrumental Music, Ballet or Speech & Drama lessons, and the school day is organised to accommodate a great many co-curricular activities, during lunchtimes as well as after school. Every day pupils engage in activities which genuinely broaden their experiences and horizons; from the Heath Robinson Inventors' Club, Model United Nations and Origami Club to a vast array of opportunities to get involved in élite and social Sport, Music and Drama. Our unique relationship with Merchant Taylors' School allows our pupils to enjoy joint ventures with the MTS boys, including the Phab programme and joint concerts and productions. Many of the pupils in the Upper School and Sixth Form (Years 10-13) are either a member of the Combined Cadet Force (run jointly with Merchant Taylors' School) or work towards The Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards. We have recently extended our Phab provision by providing a regular Phab Club for disabled guests, supported by pupils (and MTS boys) in Years 10 and 11.

The pupils' all-round educational experience is enhanced by a comprehensive programme of educational visits for every year group, and by visiting speakers who complement school-based activities. We promote the values of the St Helen's community through regular Assemblies and House meetings.

Staff report formally to parents in writing once a year and hold Parents' Evenings during which parents are able to discuss their daughters' overall progress. Parents are encouraged to visit the School frequently, to attend presentations, end of term concerts, charity events and displays of work. Staff support of concerts, plays and other events is expected.

The Department

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics at St Helen's

The Department currently has five full-time specialists and one part-time specialist. We follow a programme broadly based on non-statutory guidance for the subject but tailored to St Helen's students who come from a variety of religious and non-religious backgrounds. Academic standards are high and results are excellent. Colleagues use a range of teaching methods, with an emphasis on encouraging reflection, discussion and evaluation of different philosophical and ethical approaches to religious issues. There is a range of teaching material available, including: course books for all year groups, internet-based resources including access to video material via Planet eStream, posters and artefacts, and access to a well-stocked library. Currently, in Years 7, 8 & 9 (Middle School), students begin with a study of creation stories from around the world, their meanings and related lifestyles. They then study of lives of 'founders' and 'messengers' from several major religions before beginning a study of belief and practice in Judaism and Islam.

Upper School, or Years 10 & 11, allows pupils to opt for GCSE (AQA) Religious Studies in Christianity, Hinduism and a variety of philosophical and ethical themes, including medical ethics, the existence of God, relationships, and social justice. There are three groups in each year with 15-20 pupils in each group. Pupils who do not choose to take the GCSE follow a short course in Philosophy and Ethics.

Sixth Form students who choose Religious Studies for (OCR) AS and A level study Philosophy of Religion, Religious Ethics and Development in Christian Thought. Typically, two groups each comprising 5-10 pupils will study this course in Years 12 & 13.

The Department also contributes to relevant aspects of the PSHCE Programme across Senior School.

The School has good relations with local synagogues and Year 9 pupils attend Holocaust Memorial Day events in January or February each year. Pupils may also visit local places of worship or participate in conferences and excursions. Sixth Formers studying Religious Studies have an annual opportunity to attend specialist lectures relevant to their course.

The Role

St Helen's is keen to appoint an enthusiastic teacher of Religion, Philosophy and Ethics to join the dedicated team in the Senior School from January 2020 or April 2020. A willingness to teach this subject to KS5 is essential. We would welcome applications from NQTs.

Teaching at St Helen's

All teachers are expected to ensure the highest standards of teaching and learning by:

- Preparing and delivering challenging and differentiated lessons
- Setting homework in accordance with the School's homework policy
- Marking work in accordance with the School's marking policy
- Using all available data and information to ensure that each student is provided with an appropriate programme of study
- Having a good understanding of the schemes of work they are following and how these fit into the overall scheme of work for the subject they are teaching
- Keeping up-to-date with developments in the teaching of their subject

Person specification

The successful candidate will have:

Essential:

- A good honours degree in a relevant or associated subject
- Experience of teaching Religious Studies across the secondary age range and demonstrable passion for the subject
- Detailed understanding of current developments in the secondary curriculum and assessment
- A clear motivation to work with young people
- The ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and boundaries with young people
- Commitment to further professional development

Desirable:

- a teaching qualification such as a PGCE
- Ability to teach an additional Humanities subject.

The teacher should also have knowledge and understanding of:

- Effective learning and teaching styles
- Theory and practice of providing effectively for the individual needs of all children (e.g. classroom organisation, planning, teaching strategies and removing barriers to learning)
- Monitoring, assessment, recording and reporting of pupils' progress
- An appreciation of how assessment supports effective learning
- The need for high quality pastoral support to complement the academic experience of pupils aged 11-19
- Legislation and best practice concerning Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety, Individual Learning Needs and Keeping Children Safe in Education

The teacher will be able to:

- Promote the School's aims, ethos and 'whole school' approach to learning
- Develop effective relationships with pupils, parents, staff and governors
- Create a happy, challenging and effective learning environment
- Communicate effectively (both orally and in writing) to a variety of audiences
- Work collaboratively with others
- Work in a fast-paced and stimulating environment
- Promote and safeguard the welfare of children

The teacher will be able to demonstrate:

- Willingness to participate in the wider life of the School
- Willingness to make a significant contribution to the School's extensive co-curricular programme
- Commitment to participation in the School's expanding programme of educational visits

Benefits of working at St Helen's include:

- Competitive salary scale with the opportunity to apply for Contribution Awards
- Membership of the Teachers' Pensions Scheme
- Access to the School's swimming pool and fitness suite
- On-site parking and excellent public transport links
- Free lunch and refreshments
- Generous sick pay and maternity pay
- A beautiful working environment – the School is set in a conservation site in excess of 20 acres
- A supportive community of highly motivated students and staff

The application process:

Applications for this post close at **9.00 am on Wednesday 25th September** and a selection day will be held on Wednesday 2nd October 2019.

Applicants should complete an application form and supplementary application form downloadable from the School website (www.sthelens.london/staff-vacancies).

Please submit your application by email to recruitment@sthelens.london

The selection process:

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to spend the day with us and will be asked to teach a one-hour lesson to a class in Senior School. Details of the lesson will be sent out in advance. The lesson will be observed by appropriate members of the School's Leadership Team.

Candidates will be interviewed and the interview panel will include members of the School's Leadership Team.

Candidates will also have the opportunity to tour the School and to meet members of the Department staff informally.

The post is subject to various recruitment checks which will include:

1. Enhanced DBS clearance
2. A minimum of two references obtained prior to the selection day
3. Proof of right to work in the UK