



Information for Applicants

Thank you for requesting information and an application form for a post at our school. We hope these notes will be of use to you. Applications are welcomed from all suitably qualified and enthusiastic teachers willing and able to make a positive contribution to the Catholic ethos of Saint Augustine's. This post is offered under the terms of the Governors' Equal Opportunities Policy and the successful candidate will be required to sign the Catholic Education Service contract.

Saint Augustine's is an oversubscribed mixed 11-16 Roman Catholic High School with 1,130 pupils on roll. From our original intake of 450 pupils in 1963 we have grown steadily in popularity and are now one of the largest Catholic high schools in Lancashire. Our location is enviable. Surrounded by fields, with Pendle Hill as a backdrop, we enjoy a beautiful rural setting. Billington is a short walk from the ruined twelfth century Cistercian abbey of Whalley, one of the most attractive villages in the Ribble Valley. The school is also a short drive away from the market town of Clitheroe, dominated by its little castle, and the Pendle villages associated with the seventeenth century witchcraft trials. The Ribble Valley is a lovely part of the world, often listed in the "Best Place to Live in the UK" surveys, and despite being largely rural, its population is rising.

St Augustine's has a large catchment area. We have ten partner primaries, four of which are small rural schools. About 90% of the Year 6 pupils in our partner primaries move on up to us. Due to the distances involved, nearly all of our pupils are bussed in and out of Billington. We draw children from the villages of Dunsop Bridge, Hurst Green, Sabden, Langho, Osbaldeston, Rishton and Great Harwood. A large number travel from Clitheroe, Padiham (near Burnley) and from the edges of Blackburn. The socio-economic profile of our intake is diverse and reflects our comprehensive nature. It is, however, over 85% Catholic and over 95% European heritage.

Our children are enthusiastic, well-mannered and biddable. We have clear rules and expect them to be kept by children and upheld by colleagues. Because staff enforce them and the vast majority of pupils comply with them, the effect, paradoxically, is that the atmosphere is relaxed and informal. We also have very supportive parents. Given our rural location, the huge range of extra-curricular activities we offer is dependent on the willingness of parents to ferry pupils to and from various after-school activities and this is always forthcoming.

Our staff is made up of 68 full-time teachers and a further contingent of part-time teachers, support staff, and colleagues with site, technical and administrative responsibilities which brings the total to about 140. Staff turnover is relatively low, but we have a regular and very welcome intake of new colleagues who are provided with an excellent induction programme and settle in very quickly. We have a comprehensive CPD programme and are very proud of our strong track record for St Augustine's staff being promoted elsewhere.

The school has a strong academic record and has been identified over a number of years as a centre of excellence. In December 2023 we were pleased to be judged by OFSTED as "a good school". The report comments on the "strong sense of community" and that students are "polite

and respectful to each other and move around school calmly". Our Section 48 Salford Diocesan Inspection was conducted in May 2019 and the report describes St Augustine's as "an outstanding Catholic school".

The main reason we are oversubscribed is because of the high expectations we have of our young people, whatever their abilities. We want to raise these expectations even further. The extra-curricular life of the school is outstanding. We have traditionally offered a wide range of activities in music, sport, public speaking and drama, and other activities ranging from residential retreats and long-haul overseas visits to dancing and enterprise activities. We hope that all of these opportunities will become available again as we recover from the pandemic and expect our staff to support the wider life of the school.

During the COVID lockdowns staff developed their skills in remote education and we have utilised Office 365 and Microsoft Teams as our platform. We expect that the gains in online teaching and learning will be built upon in the future and staff are expected to have a good level of proficiency in this area.

In December 2022 St Augustine's joined the Romero Catholic Academy Trust, one of the three multi academy trusts established by Salford Diocese. You can find out more at <http://romerocat.org/> . From Easter 2023, a new Headteacher, Mrs Claire Hunt, will be leading the school.

If you are the successful candidate, you will be a welcome addition to our school. You will be part of a strong, stable and supportive community held in affection and high regard by the local community. Our staff hold deep loyalties to St Augustine's and willingly go that extra mile for our children. Many, including myself, are parents of our pupils. We in turn have much to learn from new colleagues who come to us with fresh ideas. In return for the contribution you will make to St Augustine's, we offer you a commitment to your professional development in an affirming and forward-looking working environment. Our school website, www.sarchs.com , has a wealth of information about life at St Augustine's so do please take a look at it if you would like to learn more about our school.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Michael Wright
Headteacher