



St Mary's Catholic School

Lay Chaplain

Applicant Information Pack



Enquiries and applications to: Recruitment@stmarys.net

Closing Date: Monday 8th January 2024 10.00 a.m.

Interviews: shortly thereafter

Start date: Spring 2024

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Letter from the Headteacher

Dear Prospective Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in this very important position as Lay Chaplain at St Mary's Catholic School, which is the secondary school within the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust. We very much hope that you will enjoy reading the information in this pack, and therefore be encouraged to apply.

Formed in 2021, the St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust is a family of 8 schools within the Lea Valley Deanery.

St. Mary's is a genuinely unique school – it combines the very best features of Catholic education in order to produce: a distinctive, incredibly friendly, supportive and respectful atmosphere amongst and between students, staff and parents; a strong determination to provide the very best possible academic, personal and faith-life development for every member of our community; a school which is steeped in Gospel Values, uniting around the vision to deliver excellence for all through developing fully formed young people to become responsible, generous and caring members of society.

Whilst each school retains its own distinctive ethos and mission, we share one overarching vision:

To deliver a Catholic education excelling in the academic, pastoral and spiritual life, and which produces fully flourishing pupils who are inspired by the charism of St Francis.

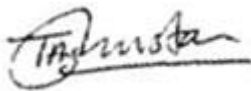
At the heart of our mission and purpose is the belief that every child has a right to educational excellence through high quality teaching and pastoral care. We aim to develop the highest quality Catholic Life in our Schools.

Through our support for the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development of each child, we will ensure their intellectual growth, progress and achievements meet their aspirations

Our S48 inspection is published on our website and sums up the current spirit of our school perfectly: Students enjoy coming to a school in which there is a very strong Catholic ethos with a deep foundation and a strong sense of inclusion and belonging. Our school facilities have undergone a transformative £7 million refurbishment over the last 6 years, resulting in 7 new Science labs, new Maths, RE, MFL departments, a new DT block and workshops, a new reception area, dining rooms, school kitchen, student facilities, Sixth Form common room and study rooms to mention but a few improvements!

The school is a founding member of the St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust, educating almost 3,000 pupils aged 4 -18. The Trust opened in September 2021 and is formed of 7 Catholic Primaries together with St Mary's Catholic School as the Secondary School in the Deanery of the Lea Valley.

If you are ready for the next challenge in your career and can see yourself joining our Catholic family as Chaplain, then we welcome your application.



Tom Johnston

Headteacher

Letter from our Chair of Governors, Mr Paul Carroll

Dear Prospective Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in our school.

St. Mary's is a very special place to work, and I do hope you get a sense of that from this brochure. I also hope that I get a chance to meet you in our forthcoming interview process.

The school community is a strong, vibrant, and secure environment, including financially, educationally and most importantly in our Catholic Life. Our school is a very family-orientated community which knows and cares for all its members.

If you feel you have the faith and passion to fulfil this important role for the benefit of our Catholic community, then we sincerely want to hear from you.

On behalf of the Governing Body I welcome your interest.

Mr Paul Carroll

Chair of Governors, St Mary's Catholic School





Ethos

Our school is built upon an ambitious mission for each and every young person: to fulfil academic potential; to be fully developed in the personal, social and spiritual areas of life; to achieve excellence in every area of life; and to be underpinned by Gospel Values, enabling each person to value individuals and contribute positively to society. We work in partnership with parents and the wider community to ensure that this mission is accomplished in the lives of all our young people, and in so doing, enable those young people to live life to the full.

Catholic Life

St Mary's Catholic school has prayer as the heartbeat of the school. Developing and nurturing the spiritual life of each child is our mission and ensuring our young people grow to be examples of Gospel values in their words, actions and service. As a community we work collaboratively with our student and staff led Chaplaincy teams to deliver a wide variety and range of liturgy and prayer opportunities that are student led and student planned with our Chaplaincy team to ensure a reflective and spiritual experience for all.

Opportunities for spiritual growth and serving the Common Good are planned regularly throughout the academic year. Each student will experience an Advent Service at the end of the Autumn Term, a Lenten Service at the end of the Spring Term, Years 11 and 13 celebrate Leavers' Services in the Summer Term and Mass is celebrated for year groups in our local parish church. The experience of prayer is an integral part of Religious Education and school life with Mass being the key corner stone of our liturgical calendar.

At St. Mary's, we believe in forming the full person, both in education and in well-being and faith. In school we provide times in which students can partake in a time of reflection and faith-building, in forms of liturgy, retreat, daily prayer opportunities and much more.

Community worship is at the heart of our religious life, so in unity we can remember we are here to walk this life together in faith, hope and love while we are a student or staff member at St Mary's.

We strive to involve as many members of the school in the liturgies to encourage the liturgies to be a community effort predominantly student lead, and guided by staff. Students are encouraged to use their gifts and talents to help the whole community of St. Mary's to access liturgy through different media e.g. music, dance, art, drama, ICT and so on – we all learn and reflect in a variety of ways and so see the need to experience liturgy presented to us in different ways.

As a Catholic school we have a responsibility not only to teach students about the Catholic Faith, but to give them opportunities to experience the Catholic Faith which we do through celebrating Mass on Holy Days of Obligation, to marking important events in the life of the school and participating in liturgies which celebrate important events in the Church Calendar. Some examples of this include Advent Services, Ash Wednesday Services, Penitential Services, Holy Week Liturgies, Form Masses, Form Prayer Time, attending retreats and Pilgrimage. These acts of worship help to promote the school's Catholic identity and bring us together as a faith community.

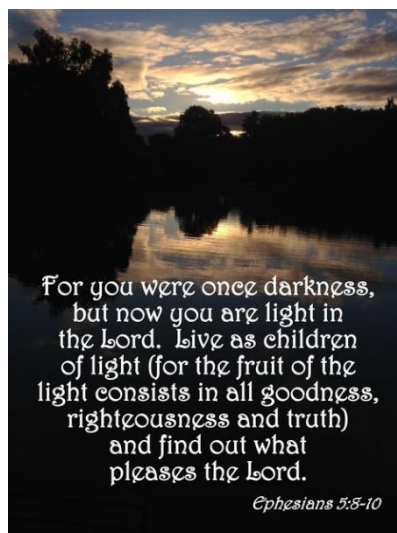
We have a beautiful chapel, which is used weekly for form mass. It is used a place of reflection during liturgical seasons, setting up prayers stations to help us engage in the season in different ways. Liturgy is an important part of our outreach. Parents and family members are invited to Form Masses/Eucharistic Services and we have had great pleasure in welcoming them when they join us to celebrate Mass in the Chapel. In addition to this, the annual Advent Service which the school holds in St. Joseph's and English Martyrs Parish Church helps to strengthen ties between Parish and school alongside joining the parish for their daily masses throughout the year.

Throughout the students time at St Mary's we encourage them to continue to serve their local church and this community in leadership by partaking in optional Sixth form Eucharistic Minister training, and also Ks4 students teaching younger pupils how to altar serve for St Mary's community masses.

St. Mary's received an Outstanding S48 inspection report in December 2017 and was judged as Outstanding in all 11 categories.

"The school has a rich and vibrant Catholic life which supports pupils academically, socially and spiritually. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very proud to be a part of the community."

"('our very strong sense of service and mission'...) colours all management decisions and policy making. As a result, the school has a very strong Catholic ethos with deep foundations".



Vision for the Catholic Life of the School

St Mary's Catholic School is part of the mission of the Catholic Church, which places the educational process in this setting. This means that the 'Catholic life of the school' is not an 'add-on' or 'optional extra' but is fundamental to our identity as a Catholic school. Within this framework, the Catholic life seeks to embrace and contribute to the Mission of the Church, to proclaim the Gospel of Christ and bring each person closer to our loving Father, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The aims of those involved in facilitating the spiritual life of the school are to enable all members of our community to:

1. Experience God the Father as Creator and to recognise the God-given dignity of all people as 'made in the image and likeness of God' (Genesis 1:26)
2. Encounter God the Son, both in Word and Sacrament, and to recognise opportunities to follow and imitate Christ (Mark 8:34), and to contribute towards the 'Common Good'.
3. Be open to God the Holy Spirit, embracing the Fruits of the Spirit, as they help us to love and serve others (Galatians 5:22-23)

Prayer 'the greatest wireless connection'

Prayer is at the very heart of St Mary's, integrated into all parts of our school day. We as a community embrace the need for us to come before our heavenly Father and spend time with him as you would a family member or friend. As seen in the story of Mary and Martha, we can be "worried and upset about many things", and we must not forget the need to spend time with Jesus in prayer.

It is essential as a Catholic Community that we learn that we can pray, that it isn't for someone else to do it for us but that it is purely, as said by St Teresa 'on being on terms of friendship with God'.

Form Registration morning and afternoon and assemblies are our most regular time in the week to pray together as a community.

Throughout the year as a community we meet together to remember and celebrate different seasons, including Advent, Lent, Easter and any Holy Days of Obligation that fall on a normal school day. This gives staff and students opportunities to get involved in contributing to the Catholic life of the School and to help us worship together. Involvement can be creating the content with our Chaplaincy department, reading the Word of God, Altar Serving, or simply helping with the logistics of a liturgy.

At St Mary's we give our students the opportunity to train as Altar servers and the Sixth form students have the opportunity to train as Eucharistic Ministers.

There are opportunities for Staff Prayer and Reflection weekly in staff briefing and INSET. Form tutors pray with their forms daily and our Chapel is available for use by all during the day and has form class meditations to enable students to experience a wide range of prayer and worship opportunities. We encourage our students to take an active role in the prayer life of the school as our young people grow in their faith to be ambassadors of the Gospel.

Retreats

We strive to have a retreat take place in every year of a student's time in school, starting in Year 7 & 8 whereby all the students are taken off timetable for a full school day, which is created and delivered by our Chaplain and Sixth Formers. They lead games, team building exercises, small group discussions and facilitate input on the theme of the retreat, giving the students a moment to reflect on their journey and faith.

Pilgrimage

Our students in Year 9 have in the past had an opportunity to go on pilgrimage to **The Basilica of Our Lady of Walsingham**, the only Basilica in the country. This is the country's national shrine to our blessed Mother Mary. During this day we have the opportunity to deepen our understanding of pilgrimage, prayer, Our Lady of Walsingham's story and our lady's love for us. We celebrate Mass as a community in the Shrine Chapel, visit the Anglican shrine too and have an opportunity to wander around the shops in Little Walsingham.

To go on pilgrimage is not simply to visit a place to admire its treasures of nature, art or history.

“To go on pilgrimage really means to step out of ourselves in order to encounter God where he has revealed himself, where his grace has shone with particular splendour and produced rich fruits of conversion and holiness among those who believe.

Pope Benedict XVI

This then follows into Year 9 where they have the opportunity to visit a retreat site for a day lead by the ministry team at the venue. Following into Year 10 – Year 13 whereby they have an opportunity to have a residential retreat for minimum of 1 night stay. The places we have been in the past are spread over many different dioceses:



Extra-Curricular and Personal Development

Our St Mary's Award evidences exceptional student participation by all pupil groups across the many opportunities we value as a Catholic Community. Students earn badges in recognition of their support of the Common Good, charity events, participation in inter-house events and clubs. The Award also recognises excellent progress and attendance, alongside leadership, liturgies and library events.

Feast Day supports students on their faith journey with music, meditation and memorable visits from inspirational speakers.



Our annual Charity Week teaches students to lead and work together to raise awareness and funds for those less fortunate. Charities which we have a special affiliation to at the present time are Across, Caritas Ukraine and the Cardinal Hume Centre.

St Mary's won the 2022 Catenian Public Speaking Competition and students enjoy success at Science and Maths Challenges, Rotary Competitions, Art, National Theatre, Climate Change Competitions, Poetry recitation, Prayer writing and 125th Anniversary Prize Essay contests.



There are many opportunities for students to lead, and tutors encourage participation from all pupil groups. We prepare students for their next stages through careers week, interview practice, work experience and UCAS preparation sessions. Our most able students secure places at the very best universities.



Recruitment process



The St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will require an enhanced disclosure from the DBS.

For more information please find below and attached:

- CES Job Description – Chaplain
- CES National Standards for Chaplains
- Child Protection Policy
- Keeping children safe in education.

Equality and Diversity

St Mary's Catholic School values all its stakeholders, irrespective of gender, race or disability. It aims to live according to the values of Jesus Christ – to love thy neighbour as thyself. We see all learners, and their parents and carers, as of equal value. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate and will take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background.

Applications

Please see the Chaplain Job Description and Person Specification below.

Please complete the Support Staff Application Form and ancillary documents, CVs will not be accepted, and also enclose a letter of application outlining how your skills and experience meet the requirements of the person specification. Applications should be sent to:

Chair of Governors c/o Rebecca Faulkner
St Francis of Assisi Catholic Academy Trust
c/o St Mary's Catholic School
Bishop's Stortford
Herts
CM23 2NQ

Or by email to recruitment@stmarys.net

Application closing date: Monday 8th January 2024 10.00 a.m.

Interview Dates: Shortly thereafter



St Mary's Catholic School

SECONDARY SCHOOL MODEL JOB DESCRIPTION - CHAPLAIN

INTRODUCTION

The school has been designated by the Secretary of State as a school with a religious character. Its Instrument of Government states that it is part of the Catholic Church and is to be conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with Canon Law, the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the Trust Deed of the Diocese of Westminster. At all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ. The post therefore requires a practising Catholic who can show by example and from experience that he or she will ensure that the school is distinctively Catholic in all its aspects.

This appointment is with the governors of the school/board of academy directors under the terms of the Catholic Education Service contract signed with the governors/directors as employers and should be endorsed by the Bishop or his representative. It is subject to the current conditions of service for support staff and other current education and employment legislation.

The governing body and the Diocese acknowledge the importance of the role of the chaplain and will actively offer long term support, encouragement, affirmation and realistic challenge to the successful candidate.

SCHOOL CHAPLAIN

This job description should be read alongside the National Standards document for School Chaplains. In this document, "Chaplain" refers to both ordained and lay Chaplains. The Chaplain, through his/her work and witness, will contribute to the spiritual and pastoral care of all members of the school community. He/she will have a central role in implementing the school vision statement and work with the Head Teacher in leading and developing the Catholic life of the school. He/she will nurture the faith formation and liturgical life of the school community. The Chaplain may also work to enhance the Religious Education curriculum where appropriate.

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chaplain as witness

- Help people to recognise God's love for them and their need of God
- Inspire through example
- To encourage staff and pupils to live the faith by being involved in projects relating to social justice and global citizenship

The Chaplain as pastor

- Be visible and approachable around the school
- Accompany people at particular stages of their journey through life
- Get to know people individually and use every opportunity for contact to the best advantage
- Support the Head Teacher in his/her role as faith leader in school
- To play a central role in the pastoral system

The Chaplain as leader

- Support and further develop the spiritual, religious and liturgical life of the school.
- Use a collaborative style of ministry that encourages a team approach to chaplaincy to develop and lead a chaplaincy team.
- To offer opportunities of prayer for staff and students.
- If a priest, celebrate Mass and the sacraments regularly in school; if not, plan for the same to occur with local clergy
- Develop suitable activities to mark and celebrate the major feasts and seasons of the Church
- To support staff and pupils in their planning, preparation and leading of liturgies and collective worship
- Help with the provision of suitable resources for the prayer life and worship of the school
- Ensure the school environment and displays reflect the school's Catholic Christian identity.
- Promote and care for the Prayer Room/Chapel as a sacred space
- Develop a school retreat programme for pupils
- Support students to participate in the sacramental life of the Church, where appropriate.
- To celebrate and share the faith life of the school with the wider community
- To include the local parishes in school celebrations, where appropriate
- Help with sensitive issues, advising on the Church's teaching

The Chaplain as educator

- To support and enhance the RE curriculum, where appropriate

The Chaplain as professional

- Have input into the school development plan, its operation and review
- Advise the Senior Leadership Team, where appropriate
- Challenge and support on standards, morals and the values of the Christian life
- To meet regularly with the line manager
- To engage in a regular process of appraisal
- To report to and work with Governors/Directors to promote the Catholic ethos and distinctive nature of the school.
- Attend where possible staff meetings and any other meetings as appropriate
- To engage with Continual Professional Development (CPD) relevant to the role of chaplain.
- To avail of opportunities for enhancing his/her own spiritual well-being
- To lead school based CPD for staff in relation to the Catholic life of the school.
- To be a member of ACCE and use the opportunities the organisation offers for professional and spiritual development.
- To be a member of the Diocesan Chaplaincy Group or its equivalent, attending meetings regularly
- To liaise with Diocesan agencies, groups and individuals, where appropriate

**CES/St Mary's Catholic School
12 December 2023**



CES NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR CHAPLAINS WORKING IN SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

National Standards for Chaplains working in schools and academies are divided into five key areas:

1. The Chaplain as witness
2. The Chaplain as pastor
3. The Chaplain as leader
4. The Chaplain as educator
5. The Chaplain as professional

The Chaplain as witness

The Chaplain should:

- a. be a practising Catholic in full communion with the Church;
- b. set a good example to all members of the school community in terms of living a Christian life by:
 - i. being a person who prays and makes prayer an important feature of decision making and who intercedes on behalf of the community they serve;
 - ii. speaking of their own faith and relationship with Christ;
 - iii. living a life which exemplifies Gospel values;
 - iv. treating all members of the community with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to the chaplain's professional position;
 - v. showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others;
 - vi. demonstrating a commitment to Catholic Moral and Social Teaching.

The Chaplain as pastor

The Chaplain should:

- a. be attentive to the needs of all members of the school community
- b. support other staff in school who share the responsibility of the pastoral care of pupils, including the Head Teacher;
- c. accompany the whole community in their highs and lows, celebrating with them in their joys and consoling them in their sorrows;
- d. be able to relate to a wide range of individuals and establish levels of trust where problems can be shared;
- e. focus on the marginalized and the vulnerable within the school community as their special care.

The Chaplain as leader

The Chaplain should:

- a. have a good understanding of the liturgical life of the Church and be able to lead pupils and staff into a fuller appreciation of its richness and beauty;
- b. know how to prepare a space for prayer;
- c. have the skills of a well-trained sacristan and know how to both prepare a space for the celebration of Mass;
- d. care for any sacred space in school, especially where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved;

- e. be skilled in engaging children and young people in prayer, worship and the sacramental life of the Church, particularly the Eucharist and the sacrament of reconciliation, where appropriate;
- f. support class and whole school based worship through the provision and creation of appropriate worship resources;
- g. help pupils and staff to develop confidence in leading prayer and worship independently;
- h. provide opportunities for staff and pupils to deepen their spiritual life, for example, through the organizing of retreats and days of reflection.

The Chaplain as educator

The Chaplain should:

- a. have a good knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith to:
 - i. support school catechetical programmes (where they exist);
 - ii. support the formal and informal learning that takes place across school life;
- b. ensure that structured time with pupils is well-planned, delivered and evaluated;
- c. support the professional development of staff in terms of the Catholic life of the school.

The Chaplain as professional

The Chaplain should:

- a. if a priest, celebrate Mass and the sacrament of reconciliation regularly in school;
- b. if not a priest, make arrangements for the regular celebration of Mass and the sacrament of reconciliation within school with the priest(s) of the local parish or deanery;
- c. form good working relationships with the nearby priest(s) and parishes and facilitate partnership working between parish/deanery/diocese and school.
- d. maintain good working relationships with other members of staff, governors/directors and school leaders;
- e. observe professional standards in terms of appearance, punctuality and full participation in the working life of the school;
- f. have regular performance appraisal;
- g. have regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions;
- h. Contribute to self-evaluation processes in readiness for inspection.

CES/St Mary's Catholic School
12 December 2023

Lay Chaplain Person Specification (H7)

The ideal candidate will have some or all of the following skills, attributes, qualifications or experience:

Skills & Experience	Examples	Essential	Desirable
Personal Characteristics	Be a practicing Roman Catholic who has an understanding of the Church, its teaching and mission in the world and be able to relate and interpret this especially to the particular needs of the 11-18 group	✓	
	Be able to deal with difficult situations. Maintaining appropriate confidentiality and being sensitive to the needs of individuals whether they are students or members of staff.	✓	
	The courage and conviction to make a difference.	✓	
	High inter personal skills with the ability to motivate others and implement a shared vision for the development of whole school spiritually		✓
	Ability to offer spiritual support and guidance to staff and students.	✓	
	Effective leadership worker: helpful, friendly and able to make good judgements and lead when required	✓	
	Approachable, flexible, calm and caring with a 'can-do' attitude	✓	
	Have common sense, enthusiasm, energy, vision and creativity, with the skill to motivate students and staff.	✓	
	Be comfortable enough with their own faith journey to support and encourage others at whatever stage they may be at in their own journey of faith.	✓	
	A knowledge and understanding of liturgy and worship and have the skills and confidence to lead the school community at particular celebrations.	✓	
	Understands the importance of confidentiality and discretion	✓	
Communication	Ability to work cooperatively and communicate (written and verbal) effectively with staff, students and parents/carers.	✓	
	Have strong listening skills; be able to empathise with people and communication effectively verbally and in writing.	✓	
	Be able to work under pressure, plan and be organised and yet be flexible if the need arises.	✓	
	The competence and confidence to lead large or small, formal or informal, groups of students and staff.	✓	
	Able to use information technology with confidence	✓	
	Have good networking skills, especially in relation to the priests and pastoral workers and catechists of the local Deanery.	✓	
	Ability to demonstrate problem solving, listening skills.	✓	
	Excellent communication skills, both written and oral.	✓	
General	Eager to learn and to develop skills and experience over time.	✓	
	A positive approach to Health and Safety.	✓	
	Understanding of the Schools ethos and values.	✓	
	Enthusiastic, conscientious and self-motivated to work independently	✓	
	Adaptable, organised and able to work with minimum supervision	✓	
	Honest, reliable, hardworking and well organised	✓	
	Demonstrates resilience, motivation and commitment to high standards of work and achieving excellence	✓	
	An awareness of the need for personal development and a willingness to participate in INSET and appraisal.	✓	
	Demonstrated attention to detail, planning and organising.	✓	

Skills & Experience	Examples	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and Experience	A degree in theology or religious studies, or other experience or qualification that can bring knowledge and understanding to the role of chaplain or a willingness to commit to further study and training.	✓	
	Have an awareness and appreciation of the educational environment in a secondary school setting.	✓	
	Awareness and understanding of liturgical seasons, scripture and Church teachings to support the Catholic life of the school	✓	
	Awareness of wider Church documents such as encyclicals and apostolic exhortations from the Holy Father with the ability to explore them with pupils.		✓
	Involvement in parish life and sacramental preparation.		✓
	Experience of preparing and leading collective worship.		✓
	Experience of leading liturgical music or other ways of supporting children and young people in forms of worship.		✓
	Level 1 Safeguarding.		✓
	Willing to learn new skills and undertake training, including those for statutory requirements.	✓	
	Experience in working with young people and a commitment to supporting students' overall development.		✓
	Be able to reflect on experience and be open to change.		✓
Responsibilities	Ability to use own initiative and resolve simple problems and work calmly under pressure without close supervision	✓	
Working with children	Good interpersonal skills and confident in dealing with both adults and young people.		✓
	The post holder must be committed to the safeguarding and welfare of all pupils.		✓
	Understanding of key factors likely to impact on a pupils behaviour or well being.		✓
Working with others	Flexibility and sensitivity to the needs of a wide range of users of the school, including children, parents, governors and staff	✓	

The duties and responsibilities listed above describe the post as it is at present. The post holder is expected to accept any reasonable alterations that may from time to time be necessary.

12 December 2023