

Charitable Objects of St. Catherine's School - The Objects for which the Company is established are to promote and provide for the advancement of education by providing, conducting, governing, carrying on and maintaining in the United Kingdom, or elsewhere, a boarding or day school or schools for girls in which the teaching shall be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England.



St Catherine's School, Bramley
WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY
STAFF RECRUITMENT

The Whole School refers to all students in the St. Catherine's Preparatory and Senior Schools which includes: the Early Years/Foundation Stage (EYFS), Pre-Prep School (Key Stage 1), Prep. School (Key Stage 2); Middle School (Key Stage 3); Senior School (Key Stage 4) and the Sixth Form (Key Stage 5). This policy therefore relates to the recruitment of teaching and support staff in every area of the School.

A Staff Recruitment Procedure was first devised in 2002, updated in 2004 and 2006, completely rewritten and piloted in 2008, formalised as a Policy in 2009, reviewed in 2012, revised in February, June and November 2016, in line with additional regulatory requirements, and again in June and October 2019, July 2022 and June 2025. It complements a number of long-standing policy documents, including:

- The Child Protection Policy
- The Anti-Bullying in the Workplace Policy
- The Equal Opportunities Policy
- Disability Policy (SENDA)
- Induction of New Academic Staff
- ECT Induction Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy

The policy also embraces all the safeguarding requirements of The Children Act 2004, Every Child Matters 2005-11 (now discontinued though the spirit of the document remains very relevant), Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023, Prevent training, and the current edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024).

The policy refers to the recruitment of every member of staff of the School, including ancillary staff, contract/sessional staff, volunteers and supply teachers who will work with the girls as well as all teachers and classroom assistants.

THE WHOLE SCHOOL STAFF RECRUITMENT POLICY

Rationale

St. Catherine's School is committed to securing teaching and support staff of the highest possible calibre who will make the most significant contribution to the all-round education of the girls and ensure their welfare at all times. The safeguarding and proper education and development of our pupils is of paramount importance and safe recruitment practices will be rigorously enforced.

We seek staff who:

- share the School's ethos, aims, values, ways of working and aspirations for its pupils and the School community. These can be found in the Appendix to this policy along with the School's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion statement.
- are suitable individuals and best qualified to work with children and young people;
- meet the requirements of the safeguarding regulations and are ready to act to protect both pupils and employees within the establishment;
- understand the requirements within safeguarding and their subsequent responsibilities, accepting the need for regular training and updates in the areas of Safeguarding including 'Prevent' and Fire Safety;
- are suitably qualified and experienced to undertake the position advertised.

In pursuance of these aims and of its statutory duties, St. Catherine's School is committed to the principle of equality of opportunity and seeks to ensure that all candidates for employment are treated fairly, and that selection is based solely on the individual merits of candidates and on selection criteria relevant to the post. Job descriptions, including embedded person specifications, will be provided for all those interested in applying/who ask for details of any posts advertised.

As a Church of England School, St. Catherine's School is recognised under The Religious Character of Schools (Designation Procedure) (independent schools) (England) Regulations 2003 as being a School with a Religious Character.

Advertisements

Job advertisements will be well publicised as appropriate to each post so as to encourage applications from a broad range of suitable candidates. Such advertisements will also be posted internally in School and also on the relevant pages of the School's website.

All job advertisements placed on behalf of the School will state the School's commitment to the safeguarding of pupils and to equality of opportunity using the following form of words:

St. Catherine's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff to share this commitment. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers, the verification of references and an enhanced DBS and barred list check. The School is an equal opportunities employer.

Advertisements will give the contact details of the website to which, or the person to whom, a request should be made for a job description and application form/procedure for the post.

Job Descriptions

Job descriptions for posts, including embedded Person Specifications, will provide a detailed outline of the post to be filled, the qualifications and experience required of the applicant, and the specific duties involved. They will also restate the School's commitment to the safeguarding of pupils and to equality of opportunity and that further particulars will be made available in large print, on tape, or in other formats on request by an applicant with a disability.

Applications

- Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the St. Catherine's Application Form in full. This will be supplied with the Job Description. Supporting letters of application and CVs are also invited and accepted as a source of supplementary information which applicants might like to present. However, they will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms in the absence of good reason.

- Applicants will be asked to give a full employment history on the Application Form, the reasons for any changes of position, full details of their relevant qualifications, and an explanation of any gaps in their CVs.
- Candidates should be aware that all posts in the School involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. Applicants should see the job description for the specific post.
- Accordingly, all posts are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as ‘spent’, must be declared and will be requested on the Application Form.
- The successful applicant will be checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service at the highest available level for the post concerned. If he/she has a very recent disclosure, this may be accepted initially, but the School will also ask for a new disclosure. The successful applicant may provide a portable DBS certificate if he/she has previously registered for the DBS update service which can therefore be checked online and includes a children’s barred list check instead of applying for a completely new certificate.
- Applicants from outside the UK or those not holding British passports will be asked to declare whether or not they have an appropriate/current visa/right to work in the UK.
- Applicants who have worked abroad in the past 10 years, usually for a period of 3 months or more, will also be subject to checks in that country (where applicable).
- Applicants should be aware that providing false information or withholding relevant information are offences and could result in the application being rejected (or in summary dismissal if the applicant has been appointed), and possible referral to the police and/or the DfE Children’s Safeguarding Operational Unit/Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Applicants will be asked to submit the names, addresses, email addresses and a landline and/or mobile telephone number of 2 or 3 referees, depending on the nature of the post.

Selection of candidates

The ability of each candidate to perform the role outlined in the Job Description will be compared objectively against the selection criteria/Job Description for that job by at least two people and all applications for a post will be processed in the same way.

As part of the shortlisting process, the School may carry out an online search, the results of which may be explored with the applicant at interview.

The School recognises its statutory obligation to make such adjustments to the workplace and to working arrangements as are reasonable to accommodate suitably qualified applicants who have a disability and those with protected characteristics.

References

We will seek two or three confidential references for candidates called for interview (depending on the position advertised) and these references will be requested as soon as a candidate is shortlisted. We will approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications before interview unless specifically requested not to approach a referee initially. (This tends only to apply for posts in the support staff areas and is in line with protocol in the business world. All teaching staff and those working in classrooms with teachers are obliged to disclose all referees and these are pursued immediately a candidate is short-listed.) However, no final appointment can be confirmed without our speaking to and verifying the identity of the previous employer. For all staff, there is an expectation that one referee will be the applicant’s current – or most recent - head teacher and, for all staff, the current employer. If the candidate is not currently working with children, then we will secure a reference from the relevant employer from the last time the applicant worked with children if applicable.

All references must be completed by a senior person with appropriate authority and, if from a school, must be verified by the Headteacher as accurate in respect to disciplinary investigations. Where there is no current employer, verification of the most recent period of employment and reasons for leaving will be obtained.

The two/three referees will be asked to confirm in writing:

- the applicant's suitability for the job advertised
- the quality and nature of the candidate's current work, commitment to the wider life of the School, and his/her character
- Whether the individual is considered suitable to work with children (If there is no relevant information to be given, the employer may answer Not Applicable but must not leave a blank response.)
- whether the individual has ever been or is currently under investigation under the terms of the 2004 Children's Act
- whether they know of any reason why the individual should not be employed to work with children
- whether there have been any complaints or disciplinary procedures against the individual of which they are aware
- that he/she has made no material misstatement or omission about the suitability of the individual for the post advertised.

In addition, the current employer will be asked to comment on any disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether the applicant has been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure, and whether he/she is satisfied that the applicant is not involved in extremism.

Open references are not acceptable.

Important Note: References may be submitted by email to facilitate the interview process but if the name of the referee is merely typed, the reference in question will also be required signed in person or electronically by the referee, and the current employer will also be contacted by telephone to verify the reference. Where a reference has an electronic signature, verification that it comes from a legitimate source will be required. In the case of boarding/resident staff, such telephone contact will be made, where feasible, with each previous employer involving work with children to check the reasons the employment ended. No contract of employment can be confirmed and signed without such printed/signed and verified references.

A handwritten note will be made on all references that are verified, giving the date of the call and a brief note of any relevant content of the conversation. This will then be signed by the HR Administrator or other interviewers, all of whom are trained in Safeguarding and Prevent.

Invitation to Interview

A short list of candidates will be drawn up based on the letter of application, the application form and any supplementary CV provided by the applicant. A minimum of two people will be involved in this process and short-listing criteria will be applied equally. Disclosed information will not be used as part of the short-listing criteria. Shortlisted candidates will be subject to an online check, including social media, before interview.

Short listed candidates will be invited to an interview where they will have an opportunity to see the School, meet key staff and, where applicable, pupils. The format of the interview visit will be explained in advance and will be matched to the requirements of the job advertised. For example, applicants for teaching posts will be required to teach an observed lesson and complete a written or marking task. Applicants for more senior or

management posts may be required to complete in-tray and/or role-play exercises. At Senior Management level this will be a two-day selection process with an initial and final round and a governor will be involved.

Interviews will be conducted in person by no fewer than two persons representing the School, at least one of whom will be Safer Recruitment and Prevent trained and will seek to verify the statements made on the Application Form concerning the applicant's career history, experience and suitability for the post advertised. Any irregularities or gaps in the applicant's employment history will be raised and explanations sought. Questions will also relate to the job description, person specification and selection criteria.

Each candidate will be asked the same set of questions as starting points for discussion.

Interviews will also explore the applicant's suitability to work with or around children and will include questions that explore motives, attitudes and behaviour towards children and young people. They will explore the ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with young people; classroom management style; emotional resilience in working with occasional instances of challenging behaviours; attitudes to the use of authority and to maintaining discipline.

Any issues arising from references will be taken up and candidates will be asked if they wish to declare anything in the light of the requirement for a DBS check.

Where it is necessary to obtain information on personal circumstances (for example, in relation to a selection criterion such as flexibility to work irregular hours), questions about this will be asked equally of all candidates and, like other questions, will relate only to the job requirements.

In the case of applicants who have a disability, who identify themselves at the application stage, appropriate interview arrangements (such as accessible interview rooms or the assistance of a sign interpreter) will be offered to enable such candidates to compete on an equal basis.

A written record will be made of the interview.

All candidates invited to interview must bring with them:

- documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g., the original or certified copy of certificates including degrees and diplomas etc. – see the relevant sections of the Application Form). Where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body;
- a current driving licence (including a photograph) or a passport;
- a full birth certificate if possible and, where appropriate, any documentation providing evidence of a change of name, e.g., marriage certificate or other change of name documents;
- a utility bill or financial statement, not more than 3 months old, showing the candidate's current name and address;
- evidence of an existing work permit for the UK (for any member of staff who is not a British or Irish national). A share code will be requested to allow the school to complete a right to work check;
- evidence of checks provided by another country for an applicant who has worked abroad (if applicable).

Please note that *originals* of the above are necessary. Photocopies are not sufficient.

Conditional Offer of Appointment and Pre-Appointment Checks

The post will normally be offered by phone within 48 hours and the salary agreed. The school will advise candidates if this is not possible. Any offer to the successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- receipt of at least two (three in the case of full-time positions) satisfactory, verified references (if these have not already been received by the School);
- verification of identity and qualifications and professional status of the applicant (if not possible at the interview visit);
- a check from the Disclosure and Barring Service being completed, including the Barred List for Children;
- a satisfactory DBS Disclosure at the highest available level for the role concerned. For management positions in the academic, pastoral and business areas including HODs, Senior Pastoral posts, Senior Leaders and Head Teachers, the DBS check will include a check under the s.128 direction;
- where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas in the previous ten years, such checks and confirmations as the School may require in accordance with statutory guidance; (Note that when a person joins the School from abroad before the responses to the checks from other countries have been received/can be made in full, a risk assessment will be completed and measures put in place to ensure safeguarding);
- a completed School Medical Questionnaire which will be passed in confidence to, and approved by, the School Doctor and which will verify medical fitness, in accordance with the DCSF Circular 4/99 Physical and Mental Fitness to Teach for Teachers and Entrants to Initial Teacher Training;
- satisfactory completion of the six-month probationary period;
- Completing online Prevent training and in-person Child Protection training.

WARNING

Where a candidate is:

- found to be on the DBS Children’s Barred List, or whose DBS disclosure shows he/she has been disqualified from working with children by a Court; or
- found to have provided false information in, or in support of, his/her application; or the subject of serious expressions of concern as to his/her suitability to work with children,
- the facts will be reported to the **DfE, the TRA and the DBS**. In such circumstances the person concerned may not be able to take up the post and if already in post be asked to leave immediately.

The Offer Letter and Contract

An offer letter, enclosing two copies of the draft employment contract, will then be sent to the selected candidate within 5 working days of the post being offered by telephone. The applicant then accepts the post in writing and returns the signed contracts. The school will complete the signing of the contract when all checks have been successfully made and induction and all safeguarding training is completed. All staff appointed to the School will be added to the School’s Single Central Register of Employment, which is a statutory document, held by the Director of Staff (Senior School) and Deputy Head – Staff (Preparatory School) and overseen by them, assisted by the Senior HR Administrator.

Record-keeping

Notes will be taken by all those involved during the interview procedure. Details of candidates and of selection decisions (including the rationale for selection or rejection) will be kept for six months after an appointment has been made.

Unsuccessful Candidates

All unsuccessful interview candidates will be notified in writing. The School will supply reasonable oral or written feedback to unsuccessful candidates on request during that period.

After the Appointment

Statutory ECT induction and mentoring is provided where appropriate, and all new staff will be given appropriate induction, Safeguarding, Prevent and fire safety training in addition to advice on lifting heavy

objects. A colleague mentor will also be allocated. Preliminary visits to the School will be arranged for essential meetings with line-managers ahead of the new colleague beginning work.

A Note on Volunteers:

Any volunteers supporting the School staff or the girls will be asked to complete a New Volunteer Form which supplies evidence of any period living or working overseas in the past 10 years, details of two referees, documents to enable an identity check, and complete a short medical declaration form. They then attend an interview in line with the procedure above conducted by a minimum of two colleagues, at least one of whom will be trained in Safeguarding/Safer Recruitment and Prevent. Notes will be kept on the interview and filed. Safeguarding checks, including a DBS check, will be made at the appropriate level on all those who volunteer before they join the School

A Note on Resident Staff Appointments

There is a requirement to carry out an enhanced DBS check on the spouse or children (aged 16 or over) of all resident staff if they are going to be living within School.

Staff Training and Development

The School is committed to the continuing professional development (CPD) of all its staff and responsibility for this area lies with:

- The Director of Staff - Senior School - teaching and administrative staff
- The Deputy Head (Staff) - Prep. School - teaching staff and Prep administrative staff
- The Chief Operating Officer, Financial Controller and Estate Manager - Support and Finance staff

All staff will be given a regular review of their work by their line manager as part of the Staff Review Policy and further CPD/INSET will be discussed arising out of this process. Whole Staff or Area INSET training is organised each term and covers a wide variety of topics. Safeguarding and Fire Safety Training is updated (via a formal presentation) by every member of staff in line with the current recommendations in KCSIE.

Signature of Headmistress:

Mrs A M Phillips

Signature of Headmistress of Preparatory School:

Miss N Bartholomew

Signature of Chief Operating Officer:

Mrs Chloe Stoneham

Date:

THIS POLICY IS DUE TO BE REVIEWED IN 2027-2028 OR SOONER IN THE LIGHT OF ANY CHANGES TO THE LAW OR ISI REGULATIONS

WHOLE SCHOOL STAFF RECRUITMENT POLICY

APPENDIX

Our Ethos

St. Catherine's is about education in its broadest sense. Moreover, as a girls' school, St Catherine's ensures that its students develop in an environment which suggests to them in everything they see around them that there is nothing that a woman cannot achieve.

We believe that St Catherine's girls are well placed to pursue their education when they leave school at eighteen as independent, sensible, caring and competent young women who will have much to offer in life. We provide sound advice and guidance on further education and careers and we prepare them to take their place as citizens of the world.

Academic results are important - the school is comfortably placed in the infamous league tables - but we believe that there is much more to an all-round education for the young women of the 21st century.

Our hallmarks are the breadth of opportunity afforded to our students and the special atmosphere of support and encouragement. The philosophy that happiness at school is the key to success and enjoyment for each individual underpins everything we do.

Please do read our recent Inspection Reports which you can find in full on the website. We are justly proud of the excellent/outstanding findings. While there are many quotable comments, these, in particular best sum up what St Catherine's is about:

"Educational provision, in the full sense of these words, is outstanding because, above all, St Catherine's is a learning school in which a state of satisfaction with anything but the best is not on the agenda." (ISI 2006)

'The strong focus on the value of the individual enables pupils to grow rapidly in self-esteem and confidence.' ... 'Pastoral care is excellent, based on the mutual respect between pupils and staff and the teachers' very good knowledge and understanding of their pupils.' (ISI 2010)

The Ethos of St. Catherine's School is embedded in its Aims which are:

- to provide an exceptional all-round education which will prepare girls for happy and fulfilling lives
- to create a safe and healthy school environment in which our pupils enjoy their education
- to provide excellent academic teaching, up-to-date facilities and a wide range of extra-curricular activities
- to foster the personal, social, spiritual, cultural and physical development of our pupils as well as their academic potential
- to recognise each girl's unique character and encourage her to see herself as an individual
- to encourage our pupils to treat everyone with respect and courtesy and show concern for the needs of others, fostering team work and community spirit
- to give our pupils the right guidance and self-belief to help them develop fully their own talents and abilities, both in and out of the classroom

- to encourage a love of learning and an ability to think creatively and independently
- to encourage Christian values, thoughts and deeds
- to encourage each girl to develop the skills of leadership and a sense of responsibility towards others, within School and beyond
- to develop a strong partnership between staff and parents to support the girls throughout their school years
- to encourage the girls to embrace the inclusive spirit of St. Catherine's as active members of the St Catherine's Association for life.

In order to preserve our Ethos and achieve our Aims, the School seeks to:

- recruit Staff of the highest quality and with outstanding qualifications who demonstrate a commitment to our shared vision for St. Catherine's
- ensure that all Staff feel valued as individuals and as part of the whole school family/community
- ensure that all Staff receive appropriate and effective induction training and mentoring when they join the School and are aware of their duties, the School's policies and its procedures
- provide Staff with appropriate resources and facilities to enable them to do an excellent job
- offer further professional development and training opportunities to Staff whenever appropriate
- have a sensitive and thorough system of staff review
- ensure that staff feel comfortable to approach their line managers, members of the Senior Management Team and the Headmistresses
- create a culture of communication, consultation and professional dialogue between staff at all levels and in every area of the School

At an INSET in 2014 the Staff discussed the underlying values that we believe we hold most dear and wish to inculcate in the girls as they grow up. Group discussions among the whole teaching staff in both Schools produced lists which made it very clear which values were most important to us all. These were then summarised by Jonathan Worthen, Head of English (Senior School) as follows:

Values

St Catherine's girls should appreciate and cultivate the following:

1. Politeness –*Courtesy to everyone always.* [The first of The Traditions of St. Catherine's]
2. Kindness
3. Honesty
4. Open-mindedness
5. Humility
6. Humour

7. Diligence
8. Perseverance
9. Courage
10. Self-confidence
11. Adaptability
12. Imagination
13. (Intellectual) Curiosity
14. Orderliness
15. Awareness of, and respect for, the school community and the wider world.

What was clear from the discussions and the notes taken was that staff also value a number of skills and feel strongly that these, too, should be taught to all the girls throughout their education at St. Catherine's. These were summarised as follows:

Skills

St Catherine's girls should be taught – and encouraged - to strive to do the following:

1. Read appreciatively and thoughtfully
2. Write correctly and clearly
3. Speak coherently and persuasively
4. Listen attentively
5. Understand and apply mathematical principles intelligently
6. Use IT effectively
7. Cultivate a good memory
8. Think through problems
9. Learn from others
10. Learn from past errors
11. Work in a team
12. Think independently and critically
13. Evaluate risks and take them when necessary
14. Manage time well
15. Lead others confidently and sensitively.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Pupils are inquisitive, thoughtful, and will be passionate about the things that matter to them. They are also tolerant, inclusive, and interested in what makes each of us different. Equality is important to all of us in the St Catherine's community.

Pupils readily promote an understanding of their own and other cultures at the school. They are tolerant of others and respect differences, particularly those who have particular needs or characteristics. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the cultural diversity of the school community.

Discrimination of any kind is therefore not tolerated here. Students are encouraged to be who they are and to explore who they may become.

It is important that St Catherine's provides an environment to support everyone. Staff and students are working together to build on our foundation to create an even more inclusive culture.

Each academic department reviews its schemes of work to provide as much diversity as possible and will take opportunities in displays and presentation to embrace difference.

Beyond the curriculum, students are being encouraged to contribute by developing discussion groups and links across the School. The Straight and Gay Alliance ('SAGA') is an example of what our students are doing – self-organised and self-maintained. Dedicated EDI Sixth Form prefects work with staff and students in promoting diversity issues and programmes.

St Catherine's aims to support all our students equally. We are delighted to welcome students with disabilities and our Learning Support team provides detailed support to those with specific learning needs or neurodiverse profiles.

We want all students at St Catherine's to feel valued and to feel that who they are is important. Dialogue between students, parents, and School staff is welcomed.

Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.