



St Monica's Catholic Primary School, Milton Keynes

Appointment of Deputy Headteacher



General Information for Applicants



Key Post and School Information

School Group Size: Group 3

Salary: L 11 – L 17

Contract type: Full Time

Contract term: Permanent

Start date: 01 January 2025

St Monica's is a two form entry primary school. The school includes a nursery which offers half-day or 30 hour per week provision. Almost all the children transfer from the nursery to Reception at St Monica's annually. The current number of pupils on roll is 440.

Application and Interview Process: Key Dates

Deadline for Applications: Wednesday 18th September 2024 4.00pm

Shortlisting: Friday 20th September 2024

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted by e-mail to invite them for the interview day after the shortlisting meeting. If you haven't received an e-mail by Tuesday 9th July then you can presume that you haven't been included on the shortlist for interview. Shortlisted candidates will receive a timetable for the interview day and information about any preparation they need to do for tasks on the day.

Interview Day: Monday 30th September 2024

The structure and organisation of the interview day will be sent to you if you are invited for the day. The process will include panel interviews, a final interview, teaching a lesson, and leading an assembly.

Governors may decide to reduce the number of candidates who they wish to take forward to the final interview in the afternoon. This decision will be taken at lunchtime on the Interview Day.

Visits to the School: Visits to the school are welcome. Please contact the school office by phone (01908 606966) if you wish to arrange a visit or a conversation with a Governor/ Headteacher.



St Monica's: Our Vision for the School and its Values

St Monica's is a two form entry primary school in Milton Keynes.

We are a happy, caring, faith community that develops the potential of every child. Our aim is for all pupils to become independent, adaptable, caring and tolerant and to achieve their full potential. To this end, we ensure that pupils receive a broad and balanced education that provides them with the knowledge and skills to succeed academically but also the skills for life.

Everything we do is underpinned by our Catholic faith, and we work in partnership with parents and the Church to provide opportunities to develop the spirituality of our children. Our mission Statement, *'Let Trust, Respect and Love live here'* is at the heart of our Catholic ethos which permeates all areas of school life.

At St Monica's:

- Children are at the centre of our school life.
- We help them to love God and other people.
- We value everyone in our family, Parish and community.
- We teach and encourage everyone to develop their spiritual, academic and moral growth.
- We have fun and enjoy learning.

At St Monica's we pride ourselves on working together to create a community based on strong relationships and with this in mind we ensure that all children are welcomed and nurtured within a partnership of support between school, home and parish. We are supported by our parishes, our dedicated governing body and committed parents.

We know that children learn best when they feel happy, secure and well cared for, therefore our priority is the provision of strong pastoral care in a nurturing environment. We aim to develop in our children a passion and love of learning by providing an enriched, broad and balanced curriculum; that delivers a high quality, inclusive education for all, so that each may reach their full potential.

As a result of our strong community links, pastoral care and the curriculum we offer, we are a happy and successful school committed to providing the best education possible for all our children.



School Background and Information

Context and Current Position

St Monica's is a large two form entry Catholic Primary school (440 pupils, including 40 in Nursery) with a population that has changed significantly in recent years. We have a growing population of pupils from Ethnic Minority backgrounds. The current proportion of BME pupils is 84.8% with the largest grouping being African. The school percentage of girls is 52.5%.

Our school location and pupil base deprivation indicators are above average with us in the top 40% nationally. The stability of the pupil population significantly varies year on year. A recent decline in applicants for YR is consistent with the experiences of most schools in Milton Keynes over the last few years as the number of births has declined. We have a very wide catchment area spanning the whole of Milton Keynes, with very few pupils living near enough to walk to school. This could lead to disengagement by a few parents. In recognition of this, we organise events at times that are more convenient to parents dropping off or picking up. As a result, attendance at such events has increased significantly.

OFSTED 2018 'Parents describe the school as 'fantastic', 'safe' and 'amazing''

Achievement

St. Monica's is very proud of the work that has been done to ensure that pupils achieve to their full potential. Pupils make rapid and sustained progress in their classroom work in core subjects, and the wider curriculum, including English and Maths. The KS1 outcomes for Year 2 and the KS2 outcomes for Year 6 in 2023 are below:

KS2				
Expected Standard			Greater Depth	
Subject	St Monica's	National	St Monica's	National
Reading	84%	73%	35%	29%
GPS	88%	72%	55%	30%
Writing	80%	71%	12%	13%
Maths	80%	73%	35%	24%
RWM Combined	69%	60%		



KS1				
Expected Standard			Greater Depth	
Subject	St Monica's	National	St Monica's	National
Reading	62%	68%	20%	18%
Writing	60%	60%	20%	8%
Maths	62%	70%	16%	16%

Curriculum Organisation

Our Curriculum Intent:

At St Monica's the curriculum is underpinned by our school Mission Statement, '*Let Trust, Respect and Love live here*'.

Our curriculum offers a stimulating and inclusive experience with Christian values at its core. By modelling the virtues given to us by Jesus, our pupils become life-long learners, understanding that we are all unique and have a variety of talents. Our curriculum is a vehicle for teaching British values and develops in our pupils a sense of responsibility and duty, and as a result our pupils contribute positively to our school community, the wider local community and as global citizens.

Our curriculum is planned to ensure the development of core skills, creativity and curiosity within a cross curricular approach which considers the context of St Monica's and the richness of the local area. While focusing on subject specific knowledge, skills and understanding as set out in the National Curriculum, it is designed to be cohesive, relevant and inspiring to pupils. The approach within our curriculum is continually evolving to respond to the needs and interests of our current pupils which ensures it is meaningful, challenging and stimulates pupils to do the best that they can in writing and maths.

Our curriculum and provision demonstrate our commitment to each individual child, their mental health and well-being, and to ensuring that all pupils develop a positive attitude.

Our aim is for our children to be offered the richest experiences and to leave St Monica's with a sense of responsibility, ready to embrace the opportunities and challenges of the wider world.

The learning of pupils through the whole curriculum is supported by the Read Write Inc Phonics scheme in EYFS and KS1 and the use of Accelerated Reader in KS2.



Wider Curriculum

The school is committed to a broad and balanced curriculum and there has been considerable development of the wider curriculum over the last two years. This can be seen in the curriculum intent statement for History:

History is about understanding the history of our local area, Britain and the wider World. It is about understanding how one element of the past influences the next and how these can impact our lives today. Our History curriculum is designed to inspire pupils' curiosity about the past and what we can learn from it. Pupils gain clear knowledge and understanding of their World and the chronology of events that have led us to where we are today. Our curriculum ensures that pupils can recall key facts and information whilst also developing their historical enquiry skills. This is achieved through the analysis and interpretation of a range of information sources, along with ongoing questioning opportunities. Our curriculum is designed to inform adequately its contents to children and parents who origin is and/or education has taken place outside Britain.

Extra-Curricular Activities

There are a wide range of extra-curricular activities at St Monica's and this range reflects the school's commitment to the wider development of each child. Large numbers of children participate in extra-curricular activities. These activities include:

During School Clubs

- Colouring Club (YR)
- Just Dance Club (KS1)
- Science Club (Y3/4)
- Computing Club (Y3/4)
- Bible Club (KS2)
- Crafts Club (KS2)
- Computing Club (Years 5 and 6)
- Games Club (Years 5 and 6)
- Film Club (Years 5 and 6)
- Homework Club (Years 5 and 6)
- Gospel Mash Up Choir (Y6)



After School Clubs

- Rainbow Club – Wraparound care – 7.30 – 8.50 and 3.15 – 6.00
- Choir (KS2)
- Upper KS2 Football
- KS2 Handball
- KS1 Football
- KS1 Multi-sports

EAL

The proportion of EAL pupils on the school roll is now 61% with an additional 14% recorded as being of ethnic minority origin but not EAL as declared by parents, although many of those children do speak more than one language. This includes a number of pupils who join us, particularly in Early Years, with little or no English. To meet the needs of EAL learners, the school has put together an EAL team with specially trained language and communication support assistants and increased EMA service consultancy and training time.

SEND

The proportion of pupils assisted by SEND support is now above the National average. Our SEND coordinator has been working on identification of and provision for SEND pupils, including staff training, to raise levels of progress and achievement further. The number of pupils identified by the school as having SEND is 64, which is 15% of our school population (nationally at January 2023 – 13%) We currently have 9 pupils with EHCPs.

As a staff, we have created a three tier system for SEND identification: EHCP, MK SEND Support and School Support. We have spent time analysing the SEND register and making decisions about whether the support children need can be met through Quality First Teaching, Targeted Support or Personalised Support. Of the 66 children on the SEND register, 9 children have EHCPs, 9 are waiting for assessment.

Due to the increasing level of children with a communication and interaction need (autism), the Treehouse (specialist SEND classroom) now has 10 children in and they are supported by 4 members of staff. The class teachers plan for the children in the Treehouse, teaching lessons their children at least twice a week and are involved in all assessments with the Treehouse staff. In line with the growing number of children who have an autism diagnosis or who are waiting for a diagnosis, we have a high number of children who need sensory provision and we have worked hard to develop a sensory room which can be accessed by all children who need it. We applied for a grant from MK Council and were awarded £2000 to buy resources to support children. This provision has been successful and is used daily by different groups of children.



We find it difficult to obtain Speech and Language Therapist support and have employed a therapist from a private company for one day a week. In order to support the children in school, the school invested in a programme called 'Wellcomm' which aims to develop language skills in children from Nursery through to Year 6. During the trial in the summer term in 2022 it was very successful and we are rolling the programme out through the rest of the school this year. Nursery staff are currently completing baseline assessments. Although this will not replace the need for a more SLT provision, it will assist children's progress in this area.

Disadvantaged Children

The proportion of disadvantaged pupils attracting Pupil Premium ('PP') funding is now above the national average at 36.7% (160 pupils), compared to the national average in January 2024 at 24.6%. In April 2020, there were 50 pupils eligible for pupil premium. This significant increase of PP children over the last couple of years is due to children moving into the school from elsewhere, more parents becoming entitled to relevant benefits due to COVID and our continuing to raise the profile of PP entitlement. We continue to raise the profile of this opportunity, particularly amongst parents of younger pupils, fewer of whom are claiming it.

Attendance and Behaviour

Our pupil attendance rates for the four years to end 2020 have been above national averages and our persistent absence rates are below. End 2020 attendance data was affected by COVID overall but, for the available Autumn 2020 term comparisons, we were in the lowest 20% of schools with a similar level of deprivation for overall and persistent absence. We have had no permanent exclusions in living memory.

In our most recent Parent survey, 100% of parents agreed that their children feel safe at the school and 97% agreed that there is a good standard of behaviour in the school.

OFSTED 2018 'Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that they have a strong understanding of how to stay safe in different situations... the vast majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire agreed that their children are well cared for and feel safe.'



Our Staff, Governors and Parish

We are a Parish school belonging to the Parishes of St Augustine's in Milton Keynes and St Bede's in Newport Pagnell which are now part of the St Barnabas Cluster of Milton Keynes Parishes. Our school Mission Statement 'Let trust, respect and love live here' is taken from our school prayer. All members of our school community try to live out this statement, which goes a long way towards creating a warm, inviting and stimulating ethos for us all here and our many visitors. Inspired by Christian values and teachings, we provide a caring, learning environment which affirms the unique importance of every individual in our school family. We strive to enable all our pupils to develop their individual talents so that they are fully prepared to be responsible global citizens.

OFSTED 2018 'You and your team have created a strong sense of community, based on Christian values.'

Here at St Monica's we have had loyalty shown to us throughout the years in the form of Governors, parents and ex-pupils. Two of our current Governors are former pupils as are two teachers. 13 of our Teaching Assistants are parents of current or past pupils showing the level of commitment, belief and support of our school ethos and values.

OFSTED 2018 'All staff and governors are working hard to live up to the school's mission, 'Let respect, trust and love live here.'

Due to teachers moving on for promotion, we have had 3 new teachers and a new leadership team since September 2023. We are keen to retain and develop our current team, including by providing them with effective CPD, support in developing their teaching practice and being considerate of their well-being, including the management of their workload.

OFSTED 2018 'Staff morale is high. There is a strong sense of teamwork, and all staff feel proud to be a member of the school.'

Links with others

We currently work in the St Paul's Liaison group for Milton Keynes Catholic Schools, with one secondary school and four other primary schools. We meet as leaders and teachers to develop opportunities for teaching and pupils e.g. cross school moderations, sports opportunities, INSET, curriculum opportunities including for more-able and talented pupils and worship opportunities and plans for the use of capital funding. We have a good relationship with Milton Keynes Council as our local authority, including through specialist advice and intervention regarding SEND and EAL pupils, school improvement services (through their core offer but also buying in the ongoing services of our school improvement partners), INSET, moderation and admissions.



St Monica's was judged as good by OFSTED at our last inspection in November 2018. They identified the following areas for development: -

- recent improvements to the teaching of reading are embedded further so that pupils' progress in key stage 2 reading matches the progress they make in writing and mathematics.
- they improve the progress pupils make in reading, particularly that of disadvantaged pupils.

As part of our work towards these targets, our end KS1 results have been above national at expected and greater depth for the three years to end 2019, having been at or below national before that. This improvement has been sustained in 2023.

Our end of KS2 results have been above national at expected for the four years to end 2019 and above national at greater depth for two of those years. This has been sustained in 2023 at expected Standard and Greater Depth except for Reading at Expected Standard.

Although we have had a Section 8 inspection recently, the report has not been finalised and therefore we have included extracts from the last section 8 Ofsted report in this document because we feel that these are as representative of the school now as they were in 2018.

OFSTED 2018 'The changes you have made to the teaching and assessment of reading are having a positive effect on pupils' progress in reading.'



We have had our RE inspection in June 2023- our first under the new inspection regime. We received Outstanding for (a) Catholic Life and (b) RE and Good for (c) Collective Worship.

Strengths identified included: -

- Senior leaders and governors have a clear shared vision for Catholic education and have been relentless in their drive for improvement. The mission statement is at the heart of the school.
- Scaffolding of the religious education curriculum supports pupils who have special educational needs or disability and less able pupils to make particularly strong progress.
- Staff training is extensive, well planned and thorough.
- Prayer and liturgy are integral to the life of the school and scripture is used as a matter of course.

Our Targets going forward are: -

- Ensure more children are attempting the more challenging tasks so that they can go beyond age related expectations.
- Develop prayer and liturgy to involve more variety in ways of praying, for example symbol, silence, meditation, and reflection.

The school is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Northampton. Many schools in the Diocese are currently considering becoming members of Multi-Academy Trusts. Governors and leaders have a responsibility to evaluate any such Diocesan wide proposals considering any structural change being the best route to ensuring financial security, maintaining and improving standards, continuing to provide the appropriate level of attention to the spiritual and personal development of pupils as well as living out our Mission Statement. The Governors have considered becoming an academy, and work continues within this area. In the meantime, we remain committed to supporting the work of the Diocese and its schools through the Catholic Schools Liaison Group in Milton Keynes.

Finance

The governors have a rolling 5-year financial plan which shows that the school will have a balanced budget during the first four years of this plan and can maintain the financial reserves that it currently has. These projections will be further informed by any further reduction in the number of children in the school, including in admission numbers to YR.



Buildings and site

In line with our Asset Management plan, we have during the period covered by previous School Development Plans carried out extensive decoration works (including to toilets), works to the roof, updating our fire protection, including signage and internal doors, works to increase the height of our fencing around some of the school site, extending six classrooms, installation of an SEND Base (the Treehouse) and work to external doors, canopies and fascias. Work for which we have bid for capital funding to be carried out during this SDP period include further work to toilets, increasing water pressure to some parts of the building and further updating our fire protection. We have invested in a site manager with a greater level of skills which has developed the quality of school maintenance while reducing sums paid to external contractors.

Professional Development

We regard the development of staff as a high priority at St Monica's. There is a well-established appraisal system in school for all staff which aims to provide professional and career development as well as identifying training needs and this includes a strong ECT programme. Many of these needs are met by in-house programmes of training.

Community

There is a central staffroom for staff use. There is administrative support and computer access to the school network and beyond. Each member of staff has a username and password together with an e-mail address. Each teacher is given a laptop for curriculum use during the time they are employed at St Monica's.

The school operates a non-smoking policy.

General Conditions

Conditions of Service – Teaching Staff

All appointments will be governed by the Conditions of Service for schoolteachers in England and Wales and staff have a contract with the Governors using the standard Catholic Education Service contract form. The person appointed to the role of Headteacher will have a contract with the Governors using the standard Catholic Education Service contract for a Headteacher in a Catholic school.



Safer Recruitment

- **References**

We will take up references before the interview date. One of your referees must be your current or most recent employer and one must be your parish priest. Three satisfactory references must be received before we confirm any offer of an appointment. The information we request will relate to salary, length of service, sickness absence record, skills and abilities, suitability for the job, disciplinary record and suitability to work with children. Copies of references or references that are addressed “to whom it may concern”

will not be accepted. On receipt of references, your referees may be contacted to verify any discrepancies, anomalies or relevant issues as part of the recruitment verification process.

- **Disclosure & Barring Service Check (DBS Disclosure)**

St Monica's Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Employment is subject to an enhanced check with the Criminal Records Bureau. Checks will also be made against the DCSF List 99. All such checks must be satisfactory before we confirm any offer of an appointment. Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exemption Amendment) Order 1986, there are a number of jobs where we must take account of convictions, even though they are 'spent'. All posts at this school are regarded as such. However, spent and/or unspent convictions may not necessarily make you unsuitable for appointment.

- **Validation of Qualifications (Teaching Staff and Specified Support Staff Roles)**

All shortlisted candidates will be asked to bring original certificates of relevant qualifications to interview. These will be photocopied and kept on file and may be confirmed as genuine with the relevant awarding bodies.

- **Right to Work in the United Kingdom**

Under the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, it is a criminal offence to employ anyone who is not entitled to live or work in the United Kingdom. Applicants can expect us to ask for proof of this at interview stage, where you will be asked to provide some original documentation (Workers' Registration Scheme) to confirm that you are eligible to work within the UK. Photographic proof of identity will also be required.



- **Medical Assessment**

A confidential pre-employment health declaration will need to be completed by all those who receive an offer of employment. A satisfactory medical assessment may be required before we confirm any offer of an appointment.

- **Child Protection**

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We have a designated senior member of the Leadership Group who is responsible for referring and monitoring any suspected case of abuse. All members of staff will receive training in line with our child protection policy.

- **Whistle Blowing**

We recognize that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so. Therefore, our policy is to ensure that all staff are made aware of their duty to raise concerns about any inappropriate attitude or actions of colleagues.

- **Code of Conduct and Personal Behaviour**

The school believes that it is essential for standards of conduct at work to be maintained to ensure delivery of quality services and to protect the wellbeing of all people in the community. The governing body regards everyone working at our school as a role model to our pupils. As such employees should conduct themselves with integrity, impartiality and honesty. Furthermore, everyone in the school has an absolute duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children. The Headteacher is bound by the codes and professional values of the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers. Registered teachers are in addition bound by the codes and professional values set out in Part 2 of the Teacher Standards. While registered teachers are bound by the Standards, the school considers the principles to apply to all staff employed at the school.

- **Equal Opportunities**

We are committed to promoting best practice in our efforts to eliminate discrimination and to create a working and learning environment where all are treated fairly and with respect. We take action to ensure that nobody is treated less favourably than anyone else because of their colour, race, ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age.