



Geography Head of Department

TLR 2:3

Required for September 2025

That person is

like a tree

planted by streams of water, which

yields its fruit

in season and whose leaf
does not wither

whatever they do

prosper.

Psalm 1:3



A LETTER FROM THE HEADMASTER

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for expressing an interest in applying for the position of **Geography Head of Department** at St Christopher's. This vacancy will provide the successful candidate with the opportunity to work in a very strong department and an **Outstanding** 11-18 Church of England high school.

The successful candidate will join a joyful, flourishing and thriving school. The staff are hard-working, reflective and collegiate in approach. Our pupils are a delight and parents are very supportive.

We are always oversubscribed in Year 7 and the Sixth Form, although we take nothing for granted. This year, for example, well over 750 pupils applied for one of our 195 places. St Christopher's is a rewarding place to work and to develop professionally. The school engenders real loyalty from all who are associated with it.


The application form should be completed electronically and emailed to **vacancies@st-christophers.org**, marked for the attention of Mrs Grimshaw, my PA. It should be accompanied with a supporting letter of not more than two sides of A4 paper, in 11-point font, explaining your suitability for the post, including reference to your skills, experience and a flavour of your vision for teaching at St Christopher's.

The closing date for applications is **Monday 10th March (midday)** and interviews are planned for later that week.

If you would like to find out more about the school or position, or to organise a visit, please feel free to email my Mrs Grimshaw (c.grimshaw@st-christophers.org).

I took up my present position at St Christopher's in September 2013 and still recall the time and commitment required to go through the application process for a new post. If, having considered the supporting documents you feel you have the necessary qualities we require, I would be delighted to receive your application.

Yours sincerely,



R D Jones
Headmaster



"The clear Christian vision of the senior management team (SMT), ably led by the headteacher and well supported by governors and the director of spirituality, ensures that the academy is a caring and inclusive community in which learners flourish as 'children of God'."

ABOUT ST CHRISTOPHER'S

Introduction

St Christopher's is a highly successful and popular 11-18 co-educational Church of England single academy with 1,300 pupils and students on roll. We are situated in the Lancashire town of Accrington close to the Ribble Valley. Good motorway links mean that Preston, Burnley, Blackburn, Manchester, and North Yorkshire are all within a 30–40-minute car journey. The school is situated in a pleasant setting with views towards Pendle Hill.

Our pupils come from a wide catchment area. Pupils join us in Year 7 from over fifty primary schools, and the sixth form receives students from around thirty secondary schools. We enjoy an enviable reputation, built-up over many years, for providing high quality education for a comprehensive intake of pupils. Our reputation means that we are a popular school, and always over-subscribed. However, we do not allow ourselves to become complacent, always striving for higher standards in all areas. This year, for example, well over 750 applications were received for the 195 on offer. Ten per cent of our pupils are eligible for the Pupil Premium and 3% are from minority ethnic groups.

Our teaching comprises of 80 teachers and 12 teaching assistants. The core Senior Leadership Team is substantively the headmaster, two deputy headteachers, three assistant heads and the School Business Manager.

The school's commitment to learning extends to staff as well as pupils; there is a well-developed support structure for early career teachers and other new members of staff, and a strong culture of ongoing professional development among our teaching and support staff. We are continually looking to develop and further improve the quality of teaching and teachers are encouraged to think deeply about how pupils learn. Whilst we appreciate the contribution that technology can play in assisting learning, we remain committed to the idea that it is the teacher who makes the difference.

Academic results

Our pupils achieve very well with typically over 80% of Year 11 pupils gaining 5+ GCSE passes at grades 9-4, including English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils moving on to high quality destinations is the highest for any Lancashire secondary school. Our Sixth Form, which opened in 2010 and now has over 300 students studying A-level, continues to achieve impressive results, with 84% of students gaining A*-C. Attainment and progress are at record levels.

The school has grown significantly in recent years, but this period of change has been managed without compromising the high standards of pastoral care and academic achievement for which we are well known.

Curriculum

We offer a genuinely broad and balanced curriculum to all year groups rooted in a strong and coherently expressed sense of educational purpose and intent. Pupils acquire the skills, concepts, knowledge, and skills necessary to prepare them to take place their place as active and successful citizens of the 21st century.

At Key Stage 3, subjects are taught according to the National Curriculum guidelines and a wide range of proven learning styles are used to ensure that all pupils are engaged and able to progress. Teachers use their expertise to identify the key knowledge that pupils need, and this helps pupils to strengthen their ability to recall information and to deepen their understanding.

In Years 10 and 11, all pupils follow a core curriculum of English, mathematics, science, RE, PSHE and RE. In addition, pupils select courses from a wide range of GCSE options. Pupils are encouraged to study the EBacc suite of qualifications, with the most able following separate science courses.



Nearly thirty A-level courses are offered in the Sixth Form. Most students continue to study four subjects for most of the Lower Sixth and continue with three of these in the Upper Sixth. All sixth formers participate in our extensive enrichment programme. A wide range of options are available including pre-professional work experience, sports academies, archery, and dance. Most students progress to university with many making successful applications to Russell Group universities including Oxford and Cambridge.

The curriculum is based around five sixty-minute periods per day, organised as a two-week 48 lesson timetable.

Extra-curricular activities

Pupils are encouraged to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities including the largest school-based Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme in Lancashire, an award winning eco group, and a vibrant music department which enjoys a national reputation. Opportunities for foreign travel are numerous, including, in recent years, visits to India, Iceland, USA, Paris, Rome and Barcelona.

All staff are encouraged to participate to the extra-curricular life of the school and contribute in any way they can.

Pastoral care

The Heads of Year and Form Teachers (Personal Tutors in the Sixth Form) have responsibility for the welfare, academic progress, and discipline of the pupils in their care. Time is set aside each day to enable form teachers to get to know each pupil as an individual.

Pupils are offered many opportunities to accept positions of responsibility in addition to the senior roles of prefect, Head Boy, and Head Girl. Pupil Voice is active and encouraged and most notable through the work of an active School Council.

Spiritual care and worship

St Christopher's opened in 1958 to educate the children of Church going families of east Lancashire. Admission to the main school is primarily based on parental patterns of worship at churches recognised by Churches Together or the Evangelical Alliance.

The school motto of 'Ad Gloriam Dei' informs all that we do. We try to establish caring attitudes and lasting values through worship and work done in the classroom, as well as, on a more practical level, supporting charitable appeals.

Each school day begins with an act of worship within the Anglican tradition. A Chaplaincy Team supports our worship and pastoral work, each year group having its own chaplain.

At the last SIAMS inspection (2024) the school was judged to be 'inspirational'.

Ofsted

The school was inspected by Ofsted in December 2016 and was judged to be Good with several Outstanding areas. Inspectors reached some telling judgements.

- **'Leaders have created an ambitious culture. Pupils are expected to become the best they can be, both academically and socially.'**
- **'Pupils' attendance is excellent.'**
- **'The work the school does to keep pupils safe is exemplary.'**
- **'The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.'**
- **'Tolerance and respect are strongly evident throughout the harmonious school community and the warm and inclusive ethos permeates every aspect of the school's work.'**
- **'Pupils are proud of their school. Pupils of all abilities demonstrate resilience and enthusiasm in lessons.'**
- **'Attainment is at record levels.'**

These judgements were confirmed in our Section 8 report which was published in May 2022.

We all work hard to ensure that every child at St Christopher's is known, supported, and challenged. In the words of one of our former students...

"I am still not sure what I want to be but after studying at St Christopher's I know who I want to be."

"St Christopher's Christian virtues give all pupils a caring, structured environment in which we flourish into capable and successful young adults. Our school ethos establishes a compassionate atmosphere that guides us to become positive, appreciative members of the St. Christopher's family."

Daniel - Head Boy

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO WORK AT ST CHRISTOPHER'S?



Linda (main scale teacher of science)

"St Christopher's saved my teaching career! My last job in teaching left me feeling demoralised and wanting to get out of the profession but here I feel supported and appreciated. The staff are unbelievably welcoming and the pupils are hard-working, conscientious and respectful."

Margaret (reprographic technician)

"My work-life balance has flourished since taking on this role. The staff form a great team and are dedicated to inspiring all pupils. I know that I am valued and enjoy every day working at St Christopher's."



Rebecca (Wellbeing and Senior Mental Health Lead)

"Joining the staff team four years ago I instantly recognised that St Christopher's is a school that cares for its staff. I feel privileged to work alongside an array of skilful colleagues whose shared goal is to maximise the potential of our pupils. At St Christopher's we all flourish."

Scott (ECT Science)

"St Christopher's has provided me with the skills and knowledge to thrive in the classroom since starting as an ECT. Teaching is tough and so it is good to know that my wellbeing is considered and that I am provided with the autonomy to try out new ideas and approaches, safe in the hands of supportive middle leaders and senior leadership team."





Sian (upper pay range teacher of English)

“Joining St Christopher’s helped me fall back in love with teaching. This is a school which is committed to creating well-rounded pupils and which takes its responsibilities at the centre of the community very seriously. While the school maintains its reputation for academic excellence, it is this emphasis on the wider impact of education which makes St Christopher’s a unique and special place to work.”

Devaki (PSHE and Careers Lead)

“The school is more than just a place to work. St Christopher’s is a school community in every sense of the word, where staff genuinely care about the well-being and personal development of the pupils and students in their care, and support one another in doing so.”



Peter (Catering Manager)

“I came to St Christopher’s having worked in schools and for a multi-academy trust and I’ve been delighted with the warmth of the welcome that I’ve received. From the headmaster down there is a deep sense of connectedness and desire to pull together for the sake of the whole community. St Christopher’s has given me the trust and encouragement to deliver positive changes across my area of responsibility, improvements that have allowed the children to thrive and grow.”

Ebony (middle leader and teacher of mathematics)

“St Christopher’s is a fantastic place to work. It is more than just a school, it is a community of pupils and staff who look out for each other and strive to be the best version of themselves. I have worked here for four years and been offered great opportunities to advance and progress.”



JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title: Geography Head of Department

Salary: TLR 2:3

NJC Conditions: Full-time / Permanent

Responsible to: Mr R O'Doherty (Deputy Headteacher)

Main Purpose

To lead the Geography Department in order to produce the best possible outcomes for all pupils and to make a contribution to the ongoing development of the whole school.

Leading the Department

- Establish the aims and objectives for the department in line with the school's mission statement, its aims and objectives
- Motivate, empower and support staff to secure ambitious pupil outcomes
- Motivate and work with others to foster and promote the Christian ethos of the school
- Evaluate the performance of the department, formulate and deliver plans for ongoing improvement
- Keep up to date with national and local educational strategies and developments and communicate these to staff as necessary
- Chair regular departmental meetings and ensure an official record is maintained
- Work with the headmaster to ensure the effective recruitment, appointment and induction of new staff
- Promote the subject and encourage links between the school and other establishments (pre 11 and post 16)
- Fulfil commitments arising from contractual accountability to the governing body
- If appropriate –
- To help devise a responsibility structure within the department and to help draw up suitable job specifications
- Line manage teachers with subject responsibilities and, where necessary, support staff

Leading Teaching and Learning

- Be a passionate advocate for outstanding teaching and learning
- Monitor, evaluate and improve classroom practice throughout the department
- Promote a culture of challenge for all pupils, enabling them to be engaged in the subject and experience success
- Use assessment information to inform planning and maximise progress. Ensure that PP funding is effectively targeted and evaluated

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- Monitor marking across the department, ensuring that pupils are provided with constructive feedback and set appropriate work to maximise progress
 - Develop and evaluate (along with colleagues), syllabuses and schemes of work, designed to meet the needs of all pupils

Developing Oneself and Working with Others

- Review one's own practice, set professional targets and take responsibility for one's own professional development
- Manage one's own workload and that of others to allow an appropriate work/life balance
- Treat people fairly, equitably, with dignity and respect, to create and maintain a positive culture within the department and wider school
- Develop and maintain a culture of high expectations for all and take appropriate action when performance gives cause for concern

Managing the Department

- Produce, implement and evaluate evidence based improvement plans which address department and school priorities
- Conduct and complete the annual appraisal of allocated staff
- Manage the department's capitation in such a way that improves the education of all pupils and offers value for money
- Ensure that CPD provision is fit for purpose, cost effective and secures excellent outcomes
- Accept responsibility for the conduct and behaviour of pupils within the department and to be available to help members of department as problems arise

Securing Accountability

Fulfil commitments from contractual accountability to the governing body.

Strengthening the Community

Create and maintain effective partnerships with parents and relevant agencies to support pupils' academic achievement, in addition to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Other Department Responsibilities

Adhere to policies and procedures relating to Safeguarding, Child Protection, Health and Safety, Confidentiality and Data Protection, reporting all concerns to the appropriate persons.

This job description forms part of the contract of employment of the person appointed to this post. It reflects the position at the present time only and may be changed in the future at the discretion of the School management. The appointment is subject to the current conditions of employment in the current School Teachers' Pay and Conditions.

"St Christopher's offers a friendly and supportive environment, where teachers strive to support each individual pupil to fulfil their potential. The varied curriculum and rich opportunities provided ensure that pupils flourish both socially and academically."

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Criteria to be determined from application form and supporting statement.

E = Essential | D = Desirable

Training, qualifications and experience	
Qualified teacher status	E
Recognised subject specific degree or equivalent	E
Subject related higher degree	D
Professional development over the last three years in aspects of subject development and pedagogy	E
Professional development over the last three years in aspects of leadership	E
A successful record as a classroom teacher	E
A successful and sustained track record of raising levels of attainment and progress	E
A successful track record of raising levels of participation	E
Strong commitment to extra-curricular provision	E
Experience of teaching A-level	D
Teaching experience in more than one secondary school	D
At least four years teaching experience in the secondary phase (upon taking up post)	E
Professional knowledge and understanding	
Current educational issues especially related to the curriculum at KS3, KS4 and KS5	E
Current teaching, learning and assessment issues relevant to the needs of the department	E
Effective strategies for leading and managing departmental evaluation and improvement	E
The management of staff, including professional development	D
Financial planning and budgetary management	D
Vision and values	
Christian commitment as indicated by membership of a church in Churches Together, Evangelical Alliance or The North West Partnership	D
A willingness to support and uphold the school's Christian ethos. This would be most evident in the positive contribution made to the school's prayer and worship life	E
Personal and professional qualities	
Build and maintain effective relationships	E
Inspire and motivate others to carry the school's vision forward	E
Prioritise, plan and organise themselves and others	E
Demonstrate commitment to the leadership process and professional development	E
Listen to and reflect on feedback	E
Good attendance and punctuality record and a high level of stamina and enthusiasm	E
Good communication skills and a positive outlook	E
Good communication skills and a positive outlook	E

Confidential references

Professional references should show a strong level of professional support and a positive recommendation from the applicant's current employer.

SUBJECT PROFILE: GEOGRAPHY

The Geography Department is a high performing department and has a strong record of success within the school. It is one of the strongest option choices at KS4, with well over half the year group studying the subject. We pride ourselves in high expectations, diverse lesson activities and a caring commitment to the pupils and students that we teach.

Number of staff: Three full-time teachers with one full-time vacancy

Departmental structure: Head of Department supported by Head of KS5 Geography

Examination courses for KS4: AQA

Examination courses for KS5: AQA

GCSE examination results:	9-7	9-5	9-4	9-1	P8 (Internal)
2024	13%	52%	74%	100%	+0.04

A-level examination results:	A*-B	A*-C	A*-E
2024	58%	92%	100%

Accommodation: Four classrooms in main school, one in Sixth Form

Structure of timetable:

- KS3 Y7 and Y8 - three hours; Y9 - four, hours (lessons) per fortnight.
- KS4 Five hours (lessons) per fortnight.
- KS5 Nine hours (lessons) per fortnight.
- KS5 teaching is split between Physical and Human Geography specialists

Geography is a wide ranging and challenging course offered to all pupils throughout the school. At KS3, the Department follows a diverse 3 year programme that offer pupils the chance to experience all facets of Geography and improve their skills as well as their knowledge. Our curriculum falls in line with the National Curriculum but is not limited by it. Curriculum Outline and Provision documents are available on the school website. Fieldwork is encouraged at as many opportunities as possible, and each year group has a planned fieldwork activity around the school premises that ties in with their topical learning. Classes are mixed ability and so we get a range of opinions and viewpoints on subjects!

"I was a bit nervous on my first day, but afterwards I knew that somebody would always be there for me if I needed help."

SUBJECT PROFILE: GEOGRAPHY

At KS4, the Department has one of the strongest uptake of pupils for an optional subject in the school. Classes are smaller and good progress is generally made in Geography, having a positive value added in all years since COVID. We follow the AQA course which offers a good breadth and depth of subject content. Pupils are given key milestone assessments to align their progress and are assessed through two PPEs. Fieldwork is undertaken through local trips to Sabden for a river study, and Accrington for their Human fieldwork, and the Department also runs an international trip every year for KS4 pupils.

The subject is also a popular choice at KS5 with 2 classes per year. Again, we follow the AQA course which steps up from KS4 to provide new units, and build on and improve skills from previous learning. We run a 2-day fieldwork introduction trip to Wales, and then students are given optional trips to complete their NEAs in Y13. Students tend to study a wide range of Physical and Human topics for the NEA. The Department again runs a successful international trip to Iceland, organised by the Head of KS5.

The Department works as a team which includes 3 experienced teachers with excellent track records who always strive to put their pupils first. Excellent teaching is embedded, but staff are always challenged to reflect on how we can improve our work with our pupils. The Department is generally well resourced although there is some scope for developing this in your own manner. Each member of staff has their own classroom with touch screen facilities and appropriate paper and other resources. You will be joining a Department that is successful, humble, heavily involved in school activities and also ready to be led and challenged to improve standards for our pupils.