



MONK'S WALK
SCHOOL

CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK



HEAD OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

SEPTEMBER 2025

EXCELLENCE FOR ALL

THIS POST



MONK'S WALK
SCHOOL

We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic and well qualified Head of Social Sciences who will continue to build on the high standards and popularity achieved so far in Religious Studies, Health and Social Care, Psychology and Sociology.

A generous relocation package is available for candidates moving house to take up this post; please see our website for details.

Closing date for applications is noon on Monday 10 February 2025.

KEY FACTS ABOUT MONK'S WALK

ALL ABILITY

For students aged 11-18 of all abilities.
Over 1400 students

POPULAR & OVERSUBSCRIBED

729 applications (197 first preference) for 240 places in Y7. 89% of parents say they would recommend the school (Parent survey June 2024)

STRONG ETHOS

Inclusive ethos with focus on mutual respect and good behaviour. We aim for our students to be co-operative, courteous and kind.

ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL

Well above average Progress 8 score (+0.25) for Year 11 students in 2023 and an average A Level grade of B-

BROAD CURRICULUM

24 courses at KS4 and 26 at KS5, including all three sciences

BROAD EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME

A wide programme of activities, trips and visits and enrichment activities

POPULAR SIXTH FORM

268 in the sixth form and a member of the Welwyn Hatfield consortium.

STRONG FOCUS ON WELLBEING

For both staff and students. 93% of staff say they enjoy working at MWS (Staff Survey July 2024)

STRONG FOCUS ON STAFF DEVELOPMENT

We are committed to staff development including Initial Teacher and Early Career Framework training.

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL



We are a mixed school of about 1,400 11-18 year old students in Welwyn Garden City, a Hertfordshire new town on the outskirts of London.

Transport links are superb – direct rail links to London in less than 30 minutes; M1, A1(M), M11 and M25 all minutes away. WGC is a pleasant place to live – it even has John Lewis! The school is situated in a greenbelt area in the prosperous northwest corner of the city. Our grounds are magnificent and the view from the school is lovely. In September 2020 we opened a new teaching block to replace one of the more rundown ones. The DfE have just agreed funding for a new sports hall for the school.

Monk's Walk is a genuinely all-ability school. The number of students with learning challenges is in line with the national average, with 17% supported at SEN Support or with an Education and Healthcare Plan (EHCP). Our support for students with SEND is a real strength of the school.

We have a small number of blind or partially sighted students who receive specialist support. We also work very closely with Knightsfield School, a special school for deaf children on our campus.

We do not pursue academic achievement at the expense of the wider development of the individual, however. Form tutors, heads of year and heads of house all have important roles in the social, personal and academic support of individuals. Our house system is strong, providing a range of all-ability competitions and activities for mixed age groups. Recently we have become the first school in the country to have a recycling machine with the credit going as house points. All members of staff are allocated a house, except me who has to try to stay impartial of course.

Parental confidence in the school is high; there were 729 applications for 240 places in Year 7 for September 2024,

with 197 of those as first preference. Each year we hear appeals for students wishing to join the school.

The school has an extremely effective behaviour policy and in general behaviour is very good indeed. Our students want to learn and our parents are, on the whole, extremely supportive. Attendance is high, although in common with most schools affected by COVID. Our aim is for our students to be co-operative, courteous and kind.

There is a genuine 'buzz' around the school and we have a very strong reputation in the city. In September 2023, the school was judged by Ofsted to be 'good'. We were really pleased with the comments made by inspectors.





GCSE exam results in 2024 were very good . 53% of students gained the strong basics (grade 5+ in both English and Maths) and 74% standard basics (grade 4+ in English and maths). Our attainment 8 was 50.2 and progress 8 +0.25. All well above national. Students of all abilities did better than would have been expected, given their starting points. Disadvantaged students made the progress that would have been expected given their starting points – unlike in most other schools in Hertfordshire where it is often well below. Students with SEND did phenomenally well. To look at the school’s results in the league tables google’school performance tables 2024:

In terms of progress, disadvantaged and SEND students do better in the school than they do nationally. BAME students attain very well and have good progress, as do each of the ability groups. We pride ourselves on the fact that Monk’s Walk is an inclusive school.

The school has about 268 in the sixth form and this is the largest sixth form the school has ever had. We are also a member of a consortium with four other schools which provides a wide range of opportunities for students. Monk’s Walk has the largest sixth form of the five schools and currently we have 82 guest students in Year 12 and 61 in Year 13. At Monk’s Walk we concentrate on providing A Level only (with the exception of iMedia), with decent numbers of students studying the facilitating subjects. Vocational programmes can be taken at Oaklands College or in other consortium schools.

A Level results in 2024 were also very good , with average point score per grade at 36.2 equivalent to B-. In 2024 almost all students who applied made it to their first or second choice university, high quality apprenticeship or employment.

Unfortunately, some schools are making cuts in creative subjects such as Art, Music, Drama and PE and even some DT specialisms. At Monk’s Walk, these subjects are strong as we see these areas providing important learning opportunities for our students. All of these subjects are running at GCSE and A Level. Science subjects are among the most popular subjects at A Level.

We have a full orchestra (as well as other musical groups), thriving Art, Music, PE and Sport and an outstanding Drama department. Members of other departments involve themselves in extra-curricular activities in Music, Sport and Drama.

Knightsfield School (a special school for deaf children) is co-located with Monk’s Walk School. We have an outstanding partnership arrangement; at key stage 3 Knightsfield students join classes in Art. A few students are also integrated into GCSE groups. Knightsfield students join ours for lunch every day in our canteen in B Block. One of our music teachers teaches at the school.

The school became an academy in September 2012. The decision to convert was purely pragmatic and trustees have no intention to make changes to teachers’ pay and conditions beyond those made as part of national agreements.

Induction, training and continuing professional development have a very high priority in the school. All staff have an induction programme on joining the school.



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THE SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT



The Social Sciences department is one of our most popular departments. I am incredibly proud of the work of the department and the results are testament to the talent, hard work and commitment of our teachers. The department delivers psychology, sociology and Religious Studies at A level, in addition to Religious Studies and Sociology at GCSE and BTEC Level 1/ Level 2 Tech Award in Health and Social Care. The department has a history of consistently good exam results that fall above national averages.

The Department is a strong team with a wealth of experience, knowledge and expertise that are hardworking, innovative and always looking at ways of improving the delivery of the curriculum whilst raising student achievement. Our teachers are highly passionate and are always keen to share this enthusiasm with the students and encourage students to love the subjects as much as they do. The team is very friendly, approachable and they work very closely to support each other.

Religious Studies is taught to all students at key stage 3, the year is organised into three diverse units of work with a clear long-term plan that follows the Herts Agreed Syllabus. Schemes of work are fully resourced and are updated regularly in order to maintain students' interest.

At key stage 4 Religious Studies, Sociology and BTEC Level 1/ level 2 Award in Tech Health and Social Care are option subjects and students are taught in mixed ability classes. All subjects are a popular choice for students and the AQA specification for both the Religious Studies and Sociology reflect both students' interest and academic ability by providing opportunities for students to explore and understand different aspects of the world.

In addition, the Health and Social Care BTEC Tech Award provides a comprehensive introduction to the health and social care sector that supports progression to higher education or training.

Sociology and psychology are popular choices at key stage 5. Students study the AQA specification and enjoy the opportunity to develop critical thinking skills and the ability to analyse complex ideas and theories. The A level Religious Studies is taught in partnership with one of our consortium schools. This A-level follows the OCR specification and is a popular and exciting option for our students.

The department has a large office with plenty of space to work. Most teachers have their own teaching room and display area. All classrooms have projectors and visualisers, and the classrooms are all situated in the newly built C Block.

SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding at Monk's Walk takes precedence over any other activity in the school. It's vitally important to us that students feel safe in school so they can learn and thrive. As part of the recruitment process, we will ask about safeguarding students and obviously questions about candidates' suitability to act as tutor. References will be sought and an enhanced criminal records check will be undertaken for this position.

BEING AN ECT



If you are an ECT you would be offered the opportunity to spend 3 weeks with us in July and be paid for it. The three weeks gives you the chance for a really comprehensive induction programme. You will meet and observe some of your teaching groups and find out about your form. If you are a Year 7 form tutor, you will also take part in the transition day when Year 6 come up to the school. You will get to know the senior leadership team, your head of department and the members of your teaching team. Simple things, such as learning about the school's management information system and having a log-in, as well as becoming familiar with the staff and the school's facilities, will help you to have a flying start to your career when September comes. Hopefully, being familiar with the school will help you to have a restful holiday, free of any concerns, so that you can have a proper rest after your teacher training!

We also offer the full two-year ECT induction programme, offering a blend of face-to-face and online training for ECTs and their mentors, based on the Education Development Trust's DfE accredited provider materials. This provides training on key aspects of teaching such as assessment and behaviour for learning, as well as providing a local network of support with other ECTs in similar subject areas through the Alban Teaching School Hub. Additionally, all staff have access to a bespoke CPD programme which has learning and teaching at its centre. We know too that there is much to take on board when starting at a new school and provide a bespoke programme of six well-timed training sessions for ECTs and those new to the school to ensure that you are supported and fully informed about the procedures of the school.

Monk's Walk School's 'coaching culture' ensures that all ECTs are supported by experienced and trained instructional coaches, as well as by their Heads of Department and department colleagues. We provide opportunities to observe other colleagues, both within and across departments, as well as provide opportunities, Covid-permitting, to visit other schools.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post Title:	Head of Social Sciences
Job Detail:	Full time
Job Grade:	Teachers' Pay Scale + TLR 1C
Responsible to:	Kate Simmonds, Assistant Headteacher

Job Purpose

- To deliver the provision for Social Sciences including planning schemes of work, and ensuring that teaching and administration resources are in place
- To ensure that standards of teaching and delivery are as high as possible
- To lead other teachers to provide the best possible learning experience for our students
- To undertake lead internal verifier training so to ensure the effective co-ordination of appropriate aspects of the subject
- To teach designated classes according to the requirements of the school timetable.

Key Processes

All middle leaders are expected to contribute to the following processes:

- The safety and safeguarding of students
- Continuous drive for the improvement of all aspects of the school
- Lead by example in teaching and learning
- Strategic planning
- Standards monitoring, performance tracking and intervention
- Personnel leadership/management
- Effective deployment of resources
- Supervision
- Administration/Co-ordination
- Promotion of the school
- Celebrating success.

Key Areas of Accountability

The postholder will be accountable for:

1. Ensuring standards are as high as possible in Social Sciences.
2. Providing professional subject leadership to other teachers to ensure high quality teaching and learning and consistent implementation and improvement of courses/schemes of work.
3. Ensuring that robust procedures are in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning outcomes.
4. Implementing effective assessment policies within the framework of those for the whole school.
5. Contributing significantly to planning (both short and long term) through the annual development plan which contributes to the School Development Plan to reflect both the department and school's commitment to improvement, high achievement, effective teaching and learning, and inclusion.

This job description is in addition to the generic teachers' job description.

This job description sets out the duties of the post at the time it was drawn up. The Headteacher may vary the duties from time to time without changing their general character or the level of responsibility entailed.

Monk's Walk is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This post is classed as having a high degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. A Disclosure and Barring service check will be sought as part of the school's pre-employment checks. If you are invited to an interview, you will receive more information.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

1. Educational Qualifications

- Honours degree in appropriate subject
- DfE recognised Qualified Teacher Status
- Strong academic profile
- Higher Degree (D)

2. Professional Experience

- Ability to teach to GCSE and perhaps to A Level
- Proven track record in raising standards of student achievement
- Experience of constructive co-operation with parents (D)
- A portfolio of training and continuing professional development

3. Professional Knowledge and Understanding

- Safeguarding policies, procedures and practices
- Strategies for raising student achievement
- Effective practice and approaches to teaching and learning
- Current educational trends and thinking

4. Personal Qualities and Skills

Ideally, we are looking for someone who:

- Is robust and resilient.
- Has the ability to think strategically with imagination, vision,

creativity and originality

- Is reflective, self-critical, motivated and ambitious
 - Is a self-starter, plans well and then sees things through
 - Enjoys working with a highly effective team
 - Can come up with good ideas based on previous experience or research
 - Has an eye for detail, including high standards of literacy
 - Is hard-working and willing to give of their time
 - Has a strong track record of effecting improvement in themselves and others
 - Can lead, motivate, enthuse and inspire staff and students, and win the confidence of parents
 - Is an effective communicator and presenter
 - Has passion and believes that every student can succeed at Monk's Walk School
 - Can plan and organise
 - Has a good work/life balance
- That's all! (D = desirable, all other essential)

YOUR ROLE IN OUR FUTURE

Monk's Walk School is a thriving, vibrant, learning community where our aim is to bring the best out of everyone. It is a very good school with the ambition and plans to be even better.

We are not complacent though – we know all schools have room for improvement! We set ourselves high standards and ambitious targets to enable us to reach our goal. I hope this information has given you a flavour of our school. Please read the Ofsted report and visit our website and Facebook page – Monk's Walk School Official - for more information. If you feel you can contribute to the Social Sciences department or the school and would like to join us, then please apply.

HOW TO APPLY

I really hope the information we have provided makes you want to apply to join us. If you would like to talk about the post in a bit more detail before applying, please contact Kate Simmonds. Kate is Assistant Headteacher and is the senior leader with line management responsibility for the Social Sciences department. Her e-mail address is: KSimmonds@monkswalk.herts.sch.uk.

Please apply, via the My New Term website. You should also write a letter of application. In your letter of application, please can you explain how you demonstrate that you fulfil the requirements of points 2, 3 and 4 on the person specification (page 9 in this pack). Shortlisted candidates are likely to be able to show how their work has impacted on students' achievements, experiences or attitudes – all in about 2 sides of A4! I am interested in appointing someone who is, or has the potential to be, a highly effective practitioner.

The deadline for us to receive your application is noon on Monday 10 February 2025.

We look forward to hearing from you.

We will shortlist for this post and then we will contact shortlisted candidates by telephone or e-mail to invite them for interview. We reserve the right to ask candidates for an earlier interview if appropriate. We will ask referees of shortlisted candidates to complete our reference form, a copy of which can be found on our website for your reference.

Matt Grinyer

Headteacher
January 2025

