



Headteacher Recruitment

Information for Applicants

St John's Catholic Specialist School,
Church Street, Boston Spa, Wetherby,
West Yorkshire, LS23 5DF



01937 842144



www.stjohns.org.uk



Introduction from the Chair of Governors

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for taking the time to find out more about St John's Catholic Specialist School in Boston Spa, West Yorkshire, in the Diocese of Leeds.

The Governors of St John's are extremely proud of our thriving school and its long history of improving the life chances of young people with special educational needs.

As our long-serving outstanding Headteacher, Mrs Ann Bradbury, is retiring, we are seeking a new, practising Catholic leader to build on the school's success. The successful candidate will have the commitment, knowledge, and skills to inspire and motivate students and staff across the educational and residential settings.

We would like very much to meet you if you feel you have the qualities we are looking for.

We welcome and encourage visits to our unique school. Please contact our Business Manager Ms. Sarah Holt on 01937 842 144 sarah.holt@stjohns.org.uk to arrange a visit or if you require any further information.

Thank you for your interest and we look forward to receiving an application from you by 12 noon Monday 4th March 2024.

Claire Brookes
Chair of Governors



Headteacher position

Salary: (School Group 4) Leadership
Spine L21-L27 plus residential allowance

Contract: Permanent, full time

Commencing: September 2024

St John's Catholic Specialist School is a non-maintained school for young people up to 19 years with special educational needs. The school also offers residential provision Monday to Friday, term time only and the Headteacher takes part in the on call rota.

Founded in 1870, the school is a registered charity and supports young people with a range of different needs which include sensory impairments, communication and learning challenges and autism.

Our mission is to support our students to gain the knowledge and skills they will need to thrive in adult life.

The Governors are looking for an inspirational leader to build on the achievements of our outstanding retiring Headteacher and to rise to the challenges of the future. We wish to appoint a practising Catholic whose life and vocation will encourage each member of our community to live "life to the full" (John 10:10). Our supportive and committed staff, exceptional pupils and our strong Catholic ethos make our school a vibrant community 'where every voice is heard and celebrated'.

Nestled in the Yorkshire countryside, between Leeds, Harrogate and York, our school is dedicated to nurturing both the academic and spiritual development of our pupils. We are committed to fostering a warm and inclusive environment to empower pupils to become compassionate, well-rounded individuals who are ready to make a positive impact on the world.

In recognition of the need for the headteacher to be available to support the residential setting outside of normal school hours, the headteacher is required to live close to the school. The school can provide rent free accommodation in the form of a modern, detached, 4-bedroom family home next door to the school, or by agreement with the Governors, the successful candidate may reside in private accommodation close to the school.

We invite you to join our school so you can make a difference every day in a school culture that encourages everyone to be their best.

Visits to the school are encouraged and can be arranged by contacting our School Business Manager, Sarah Holt on **01937 842144** or sarah.holt@stjohns.org.uk who should also be contacted for full details and an application form.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expect all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) with a barred list check. Please note that in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, an online search will be carried out as part of our due diligence on shortlisted candidates.

This school is an equal opportunities employer.

Closing date: Monday 4th March 2024
12 noon

Interviews: 14th and 15th March

(Applicants may need to attend on both days)



Description of the school



St John's is a Catholic day and residential special school, founded in 1870 by a Belgian priest, Fr De Haerne, funded by donations. We greatly value our Catholic ethos but welcome young people from different faiths or none. The school is a non-maintained special school i.e. it is not maintained by the state but charges fees to local authorities on a non-profit-making basis. St John's is a registered charity (charity number 529319).

All pupils have significant special education needs and Education, Health and Care Plans. Historically, the school has catered for pupils with a hearing loss within the severe / profound range. In addition, these pupils had learning, multisensory and language impairments, autism and sensory processing difficulties. Over the last few years, some young people without a hearing loss have joined us who benefit from the school's expertise in developing communication and social skills. Local authorities are also keen to place pupils with emotionally based school avoidance at St John's because we provide high levels of pastoral support from a staff team with additional training in supporting young people's mental health. The school has been awarded the Specialist Provider Autism Accreditation and the Boarding School Mental Health Award at gold level. We use the Thrive approach throughout the school to help improve our students' wellbeing, self-esteem and resilience. After adopting the Talk for Writing approach to literacy two years ago, we are now a Talk for Writing showcase school.

The school roll is rising and in September 2024, is expected to be in the region of 85 students, supported by over 70 staff in a range of different roles such as teachers, support staff, residential care staff, speech therapists, a school nurse, audiologist as well as administration and maintenance teams.

The school has a wide catchment area, pupils come from a number of different local authorities and some pupils access

the residential care provision Monday – Friday or for one or two nights each week. Residential students are supported by a well-established staff team who achieve exceptional outcomes in preparing young people for adulthood. Our care team develop students' social and communication skills as well as independence and emotional resilience.

Our school aims to provide a positive, fresh start in education for young people who have failed to make age related expectations in mainstream or other specialist settings. Some have been out of school for significant periods of time. We achieve this by constructing a calm, accepting environment with a focus on building young people's confidence and self-esteem.

A distinctive feature of the school is its great emphasis on promoting pupils' spoken and written communication enabling young people to express their needs and preferences. Pupils may require access to Makaton, Sign Supported English as well as electronic communication aids.

Some young people are able to achieve formal qualifications aged 16 and beyond, some will focus on a semi-formal pathway leading towards independence and vocational qualifications and those with complex learning needs will follow a personalised pathway aiming to maximise their autonomy in adulthood.

The school is registered for pupils aged 5-19 but currently, the youngest pupils are in KS2. We have a thriving sixth form which links with York and Askham Bryan Colleges where our 6th form students are enrolled on a wide range of courses. We are particularly proud that we have never had a NEET (a pupil not in education, training or employment on leaving school).

St John's is committed to continuous improvement and works closely with other educational partners such as the National Association of Special Schools (NASS), the Wharfe Valley Learning Partnership (WVLP) of 10 primary and secondary schools and COLDS (Communion of Leeds Diocese Secondary Schools): 14 Catholic high schools in the Diocese of Leeds.



Headteacher

Headteacher – Job Description based on Headteacher Standards 2020

Section 1: Ethics and professional conduct

Catholic Headteachers are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct inspired by Christ and His Beatitudes¹ and exemplified by the self-cultivation of virtues, those qualities of character fundamental to the Catholic tradition: faith, hope, love, justice, solidarity, temperance, fortitude and practical wisdom. Catholic Headteachers are expected to meet the teachers' standards and be responsible for providing the conditions in which teachers can fulfil them.

In addition, Catholic Headteachers uphold and demonstrate the Seven Principles of Public Life at all times. Known as the Nolan principles, these form the basis of the ethical standards expected of public office holders:

- selflessness
- integrity
- objectivity
- accountability
- openness
- honesty
- leadership

Catholic Headteachers are entrusted with the task of human formation in conformity with Christ and Church teaching, and so uphold ecclesial and public trust in school leadership and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour.

Both within and outside school, Catholic Headteachers:

- build relationships of mutual respect rooted in the belief that all are made in the image and likeness of God² and at all times observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position
- show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain enabling each person to play their full part in building and sustaining the Common Good
- uphold fundamental British Values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs understanding that such values are rooted in the

Catholic understanding of dialogue³ and the Church's Social Teaching⁴

- ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit their position, pupils' vulnerability or might lead pupils to break the law but are always orientated to the service of others in light of the Gospel.

As leaders of their Catholic school community and profession, Headteachers:

- serve in the best interests of the school's pupils
- conduct themselves in a manner compatible with their influential position in church and society by behaving ethically, fulfilling their professional responsibilities and modelling the virtues of a good citizen of the Kingdom of God.
- uphold their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- know, understand, and act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities
- take responsibility for their own continued professional development, engaging critically with educational research to further the Church's mission in education
- make a positive contribution to the wider education system within and without the Catholic sector

Section 2: Headteachers' standards

1. School culture

Headteachers:

- establish and sustain a Christ centred vision embodied in the school's Catholic mission, ethos and strategic direction in partnership with those responsible for governance and through consultation with the school community and diocese
- create a Christ inspired culture where pupils experience a positive and enriching school life enabling them to flourish
- uphold ambitious educational standards which reflect the distinctive characteristics of Catholic education⁵ and which prepare pupils from all backgrounds for their next phase of education and life
- promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment which recognises an individual's dignity as made in the image and likeness of God
- ensure a culture of high staff professionalism rooted in mutual respect, subsidiarity and the pursuit of excellence

¹ The Gospel of Matthew

² The Book of Genesis 1:26-27

³ Dialogue and Proclamation, (1991) Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue, Vatican.

⁴ Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 2004, Vatican.

⁵ The distinctive characteristics of Catholic education are 1. The search for excellence, 2. The uniqueness of the individual, 3. The education of the whole person, 4. The education of all and 5. Moral principles



Headteacher

2. Teaching

Headteachers:

- establish and sustain high-quality, expert teaching across all subjects and phases, built on an evidence-informed understanding of effective teaching and how pupils learn
- ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and approaches which respect the distinct nature of subject disciplines or specialist domains, and demonstrate how each discipline and domain contributes to the Christian vision of human flourishing to live life to the full⁶
- ensure effective use is made of formative assessment

3. Curriculum and assessment

Headteachers:

- ensure a broad, structured and coherent curriculum entitlement rooted in the distinctive characteristics of Catholic education which sets out the knowledge, skills, values and virtues that will be taught
- establish effective curricular leadership, developing subject leaders with high levels of relevant expertise with access to professional and diocesan networks and communities
- ensure that all pupils are taught to read through the provision of evidence-informed approaches to reading, particularly the use of systematic synthetic phonics in schools that teach early reading
- ensure valid, reliable and proportionate approaches are used when assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum

4. Behaviour

Headteachers:

- establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all pupils, rooted in love, justice and reconciliation and built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and pupils
- ensure high standards of pupil behaviour through the promotion of the virtues and courteous conduct in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- implement consistent, fair and respectful approaches to managing behaviour
- ensure that adults within the school lead by example and model and teach the virtues characteristic of a good citizen

5. Additional and special educational needs and disabilities

Headteachers:

- ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with additional and special educational needs and disabilities in light of the principles of Catholic Social teaching⁷
- establish and sustain ethos, culture and practices rooted in the distinctive characteristics of Catholic education that enable pupils to access the curriculum and learn effectively
- ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers, parish and professionals, to identify the additional needs and special educational needs and disabilities of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate
- ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice

6. Professional development

Headteachers:

- ensure staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities in all key and distinctive aspects, aligned to balance the priorities of whole-school improvement, team and individual needs
- prioritise the professional development of staff, ensuring effective planning, delivery and evaluation which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development
- ensure that professional development opportunities draw on expert provision from beyond the school, as well as within it, including diocesan and nationally recognised career and professional frameworks and programmes to build capacity and support succession planning

7. Organisational management

Headteachers:

- ensure the protection and safety of pupils and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of the duty of care and as the Designated Safeguarding Lead fulfil the statutory duties as defined in KCSIE 2023.
- prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds reflecting the school's Catholic mission

⁶ The Gospel of John 10:10

⁷ The relevant principles being: the Dignity of the Human Person, the Call to Community and Participation, Rights and Responsibilities, the Preferential Option for the Poor and Solidarity.



Headteacher

- ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload
- establish and oversee systems, processes and policies that enable the school to operate effectively and efficiently and that are rooted in a clear understanding of the Church's mission in education
- ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk

8. Continuous school improvement

Headteachers:

- make use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse complex or persistent problems and barriers which limit school effectiveness, and identify priority areas for improvement
- develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for improvement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's Catholic context
- ensure careful and effective implementation of improvement strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement over time

9. Working in partnership

Headteachers:

- forge constructive relationships beyond the school, working in partnership with parents, carers, the Parish, diocese and the local community
- commit their school to work successfully with other Catholic schools and other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual challenge and support
- establish and maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues across other public services to improve educational outcomes for all pupils

10. Governance and accountability

Headteachers:

- understand and welcome the role of effective governance, rooted in strategic stewardship of the Catholic mission in education, upholding their obligation to give account and accept responsibility
- establish and sustain a professional working relationship with those responsible for governance which is inspired by a Christ centred vision of human formation
- ensure that staff know and understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account
- ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties



Residential Care responsibilities

- To work closely with the Head of Care and ensure that all regulatory requirements such as National Minimum Standards for residential special schools are met
- To work closely with the Head of Care to prepare for and participate in the annual residential care inspection by OFSTED, achieving judgements of at least 'good'
- To work closely with the Head of Care to ensure the management of all aspects of the school's residential provision is run in accordance with the Statement of Purpose, including the programmes of care and placement plans, maintaining commitment to the ideals and principles of a person-centred approach
- To work with the Head of Care to ensure management of all aspects of the residential provision ensuring compliance with all legislation as a minimum, leading a team of care professionals to create both positive and measurable outcomes for every young person within a nurturing environment
- Maintain the highest standards of care within the guidelines, policies and procedures of St John's
- To develop relationships and to collaborate closely with external agencies and professionals to deliver the best possible outcome for each young person, ensuring effective, professional communication and working relationships at all times and acting upon recommendations from external inspections.



Headteacher



Based on the 2020 DfE Headteachers' Standards published to articulate the additional responsibilities of headship in addition to the requirements of the teachers' standards but reflecting the ethos of the Catholic school and the vocational role of a Catholic headteacher in upholding the mission of the Church

This job description sets out the duties and responsibilities of the post at the time it was drawn up. St John's is continually striving to improve our provision, therefore duties may vary with time, but will always be of a level commensurate with salary. At times it may be necessary for the Headteacher to be required to work additional hours as shall be necessary to discharge properly the duties and responsibilities outlined in this job description.

This job description should be regarded as a guide to the duties required and is not definitive or restrictive in any way. The duties of the post may be varied from time to time in response to changing circumstances.

This job description does not form part of the contract of employment.

- To ensure that each student is provided with the appropriate opportunities to develop life skills and positive and constructive social activities commensurate with their age, interest and abilities
- To ensure that diversity is taken into account by creating and maintaining an ethos where equality and diversity is fully embedded.
- To ensure that the provision is adequately resourced within budget with an appropriate mix of skills, experience and personalities, and that rotas are managed effectively to maintain a safe and well led provision.
- Undertake on-call duties as required, maintaining appropriate records, working in conjunction with management colleagues.
- In recognition of the need for the headteacher to be available to support the residential setting outside of normal school hours, the headteacher is required to live close to the school. The school can provide rent free accommodation in the form of a modern, detached 4-bedroom family home next door to the school, or by agreement with the Governors, the successful candidate may reside in private accommodation close to the school.



Headteacher Specification



St John's is a non-maintained special school and a registered charity. It has a strong religious character as a Catholic school conducted in accordance with Canon Law and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

This person specification is intended to assist both candidates and governors in the appointment process. It highlights the particular qualities for Headteachers of Catholic schools in ensuring that they meet the same expectations of Headteachers of all schools while serving the mission of the Church in education.

The core purpose of the headteacher of any school is to provide professional leadership and management. In our Catholic school, that professional leadership is provided in the context of a community rooted in the Catholic faith. Thus it is an essential requirement that applicants have a deep rooted, strong, personal faith and recognise the opportunities and challenges facing Catholic education as a vibrant part of the mission of the Church in education.

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

The governing body acknowledges that the criteria reflect the evolving role of headship in the early 21st Century and that they apply as much to experienced Headteachers as they do to aspirant Headteachers. The successful candidate will be encouraged to participate in the diocesan induction programme.

What is the objective definition of a 'practising Catholic' for appointments to key posts in Catholic Schools?

To objectively define what a 'practising Catholic' is when assessing applicants for key leadership posts within a Catholic school, it is necessary to understand that there are general obligations as well as essential components that constitute 'practice' of the faith in the teaching of the Catholic Church.

The Church's general obligations for its members require that they strive to live lives of holiness by being faithful to the teaching of the Gospel, by trying to uphold the values proclaimed in the Beatitudes, by assisting in the Church's mission to make Christ known to all peoples, by upholding privately and publicly the Church's moral and social teaching, by endeavouring to follow an informed conscience and by making every effort to keep the precepts of the Church. This is the 'practice' of the Catholic faith in its widest and all-encompassing sense. At the heart of these general obligations though, there are essential components for "full communion" with the Catholic Church. These are sacramental initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist) and the bonds of profession of faith, the sacraments and ecclesiastical governance. The preservation of this full communion is not limited to purely religious activity but is to be an integral part of the whole pattern of behaviour of a member of the Church. It is what essentially constitutes being a committed and 'practising Catholic'.

For further information including examples where there may be a reason why somebody is not in a position to take up a key responsibility in a Catholic school, please see 'Christ at the Centre' by Mgr. Marcus Stock, CTS Publications ISBN 978-1-86082-843-0

CONFIDENTIAL REFERENCES AND REPORTS	Essential or Desirable	Evidence
A positive and supportive written faith reference from a priest where the applicant regularly worships	E	R
A positive recommendation from current employer or Headteacher	E	R
A second professional reference	E	R



Job Specification

Please note source of evidence of fulfilled criteria:

Application Form - A Letter – L References – R Interview - I

QUALITIES AND KNOWLEDGE	Essential or Desirable	Evidence
Practising Catholic who can show by example and from experience that he or she will ensure that the school is distinctively Catholic in all aspects	E	I/R
Qualified Teacher Status	E	A
Degree	E	R
Post graduate qualification in special educational needs	E	A
NPQH or similar	D	A
Teaching and senior leadership experience in special educational needs provision	E	A/I/R
Knowledge and experience of the operation and regulatory frameworks of non-maintained special schools	E	A/I/R
Knowledge and experience of the operation and regulatory frameworks of residential provision in non-maintained special schools	E	A/I/R
Ability to promote and market the school to attract pupils	E	A/I/R
Lead by example and be a positive role model with excellent communication skills	E	A/I/R
Ability to articulate a clear vision and purpose for Catholic education and to share their Catholic Faith with a range of colleagues who may or may not be Catholic themselves	E	A/I/R
Personal impact and presence	E	I/R
Participation in a Parish Community	E	A/I/R
Ability to lead the spiritual development of staff and pupils	E	I/R
Understanding of current educational provision and the wider school systems	E	A/I
Political and financial astuteness	E	A/I/R
Demonstrate an experience of working alongside clergy and faith leaders	E	A/I/R



Job Specification

PUPILS AND STAFF	Essential or Desirable	Evidence
Have ambitious standards and high expectations for all pupils	E	A/I/R
Excellent understanding of high quality teaching and learning	E	A/I/R
Extensive understanding of a wide range of special educational needs and the design and implementation of provision to meet these needs	E	A/I/R
Knowledge of the implementation of legislation relating to special educational needs including EHCP reviews and the SEN and Disability Code of practice	E	A/I/R
Promote the development of the whole child	E	A/I/R
Use data analysis to effectively drive whole school improvement	E	A/I/R
Encourage all staff and pupils to develop their unique potential, character and virtue	E	A/I/R
Identify emerging talent, develop excellence and clear succession planning	E	A/I/R

SYSTEMS AND PROCESS	Essential or Desirable	Evidence
Efficient strategic leadership and astute financial planning	E	A/I/R
Ensure the safety of all staff and pupils at all times	E	A/I/R
Promote excellent behaviour and positive attitudes to school life	E	A/I/R
Systems for performance management to hold staff to account	E	A/I/R
Ability to challenge under-performance	E	A/I/R
Understanding of strong governance to hold the school to account	E	A/I/R
Ensure budgets and resources are deployed in the best interests of pupils	E	A/I/R
Promote distributive leadership throughout the school	E	A/I/R

SELF IMPROVING SCHOOL	Essential or Desirable	Evidence
Knowledge and experience of working with other schools and organisations	E	A/I/R
Effective partnerships with a range of professionals	E	A/I/R
Use well evidenced research to achieve excellence	E	A/I/R
Provide high quality opportunities for staff development	E	A/I/R
Confident, entrepreneurial, and innovative approach to school improvement	E	A/I/R
Source of inspiration and encouragement for all in the school community	E	A/I/R



Job Specification

CHILD PROTECTION	Essential or Desirable	Evidence
Ensure that the child protection policies and procedures adopted by the governing body are fully implemented and followed by all staff	E	A/I/R
Ensure that sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable staff to discharge their child protection related responsibilities effectively	E	A/I/R

Develop a Catholic school ethos	Essential or Desirable	Evidence
Fulfil commitments arising from contractual accountability to the Governing body	E	A/I/R
Develop a Catholic school ethos	E	A/I/R
Ensure individual staff accountabilities are clear, understood, agreed, reviewed and evaluated	E	A/I/R
Work with the Governing Body to enable it to meet its responsibilities	E	A/I/R
Develop an accurate and understandable account of the school's performance for a range of audiences	E	A/I/R
Personally contribute to school achievements taking account of feedback from others	E	A/I/R

STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY	Essential or Desirable	Evidence
Build a school culture and curriculum which takes account of the richness and diversity of the community's Catholic Christian faith	E	A/I/R
Create and promote strategies for challenging racial and other prejudices	E	A/I/R
Ensure learning experiences for pupils are linked into and integrated with the wider community	E	A/I/R
Ensure a range of community-based learning experiences	E	A/I/R
Collaborate with agencies in providing for the academic, spiritual, moral, social emotional and cultural well-being of pupils and their families	E	A/I/R
Create and maintain an effective partnership with parents and carers	E	A/I/R
Invite local community into school to enhance and enrich the school	E	A/I/R
Share effective practice working in partnership with other schools	E	A/I/R



Job Specification

APPLICATION FORM AND LETTER	Essential or Desirable	Evidence
Application form to be completed in full and legible	E	A
Supporting statement to be clear, concise and related to the specific post and appointment criteria no more than 2 sides of A4 in font size 11	E	L