

# ST MARY'S CATHOLIC ACADEMY

## Learning Support Assistant Application Pack



Closing date:  
Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025 –  
midday

Shortlisting date:  
Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Interview date:  
TBC



# Welcome to St Mary's Catholic Academy

Thank you for considering St. Mary's Catholic Academy for the next stage in your career. We are seeking to appoint a talented Learning Support Assistant (LSA) to support students in the learning support department at St Mary's. The role is permanent and offered for 32.5 hours per week, although we would consider applications for fewer hours. Working hours are Monday to Friday 08:30 - 15:30, on a term-time only basis to commence as soon as possible. This would be a fantastic opportunity to develop your experience working with young people and supporting their needs in our Academy. Further details of the post are outlined in this information pack.

Applications must be sent electronically to [admin@st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk) by midday on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

St Mary's is a highly regarded oversubscribed Catholic Academy in Blackpool in the Diocese of Lancaster. The school is very much a Catholic family where everyone works together to support and challenge one another to be the best they can be.

Our Catholic Ethos founded on the hallmarks of:

**Catholic**

**Caring**

**Community**

**Challenge**

is key to our success. Students and staff are all encouraged, as our mission statement states, to grow in wisdom, understanding, self-esteem and closeness to God. Many of our staff and students are Catholic or Christian, we are joined by a number of staff and students who aren't, anyone is welcome become and be part of our family as long as they are willing to support and contribute to the ethos and success of the Academy.

As Head Teacher, I believe that a happy, highly trained and well supported staff is the key to our success. Staff at St Mary's received a full induction programme and access our outstanding weekly professional development. All teaching staff also have 70 minutes of additional non-contact time per fortnight to focus on their own area of interest in enhanced professional development. New staff are also supported by regular, weekly coaching meetings and support from their subject areas; a range of leadership development programmes is also available.

St Mary's is designated as Blackpool's research school and provides staff with the opportunity to benefit from the latest research and evidence in education. Everything we do, whether that be our innovative key stage 3 reading programme; our approach to revision and practice homework; or the design of our professional development curriculum for teachers; is researched evidence based.

# Welcome to St Mary's Catholic Academy

Staff wellbeing is also a key part of our success as a school. A hard-working staff should be well supported and cared for to allow them to meet the demands made of teachers in a modern context. All staff are provided with their own personal laptop and extensive training and the support of colleagues. Staff are able to take advantage of the Schools Advisory Service Wellbeing package which offers access to Counselling, 24-hour GP helpline, Health advice and support, Physiotherapy advice and a range of other services. A well-resourced support team of IT technicians, admin staff, chaplaincy staff and site staff work hard to make sure the Academy runs smoothly and that teaching staff are well supported to focus on our core business of teaching. Workload issues are regularly discussed with our staff committee and policies around marking, assessment, reporting and home work are carefully designed to try and manage the workload for staff. An email protocol ensures staff are not disturbed by emails in an evening and small gestures like tea, coffee and biscuits served by our amazing housekeepers, free access to the school fitness suite; free annual flu jabs; a car valet service and regular staff social events all help to make our Academy and Trust a rewarding place to work. All of this work takes place in state of the art facilities. St Mary's was lucky enough to benefit from a 22.5 million point partial rebuild and refurbishment, we are so lucky to work in one of the best school building in the region.

Staff retention is high at St Mary's because staff are valued and in return work hard to ensure our students achieve the best possibly outcomes. If what you have read so far is exciting and you feel that St Mary's is a community in which you will thrive and make a positive contribution to our ethos and journey, then we would love to receive your application. You will find more information about St Mary's and information specific to this role and the application process in the rest of this document. You can also find further information out about the Academy on our website.

Yours faithfully,



Mr. Simon Eccles  
Headteacher

# CEO Welcome

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Learning Support Assistant at St. Mary's Catholic Academy. St. Mary's is part of the Blessed Edward Bamber Catholic Multi Academy Trust (BEBCMAT).

This is a fabulous opportunity for you to join us and work with a fantastic group of committed staff who believe strongly in education and working to improve the life chances of our children and young people.

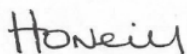
The core principles of the Trust are to educate the whole person, aiming for excellence and working together for the Common Good. Through collective responsibility, united in our Catholic faith, the Trust strives to enable each school to thrive spiritually, academically and financially so that all of the children and young people can 'belong, engage and become' – and reach their full potential by realising their God-given talents.

The Trust works in partnership as one family of schools, whilst maintaining and celebrating the uniqueness of each individual school and the community it serves. We are a values-driven Trust. Our core values of Trust, Respect, Faith, Hope and Service are our hallmarks. These values underpin all of our relationships; between staff, pupils, families, our wider parishes and local communities.

In our Trust, we welcome people who share our vision and our absolute commitment to our pupils, our staff, our families, parishes and the wider communities we serve.

If you believe you have the knowledge, skills and experience to make a positive contribution then we would welcome an application from you.

Yours sincerely,



Helen O'Neill  
Chief Executive Officer

# What others say about St. Mary's

## **OFSTED**

A full Ofsted Inspection of St Mary's in May 2022 was extremely positive and confirmed that St Mary's Catholic Academy continues to be good in all areas. Inspectors noted in relation to curriculum that: "Leaders have ensured that pupils follow a suitably ambitious curriculum. Pupils achieve well overall. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Students in the sixth form receive an especially strong quality of education." They were also pleased to see in relation to behaviour that: "Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and well mannered. They enjoy positive relationships with one another." We were pleased that inspectors noted the strength of personal development: "Pupils benefit from a strong programme of personal development. This includes age appropriate relationships and sex education and health education. Pupils learn about other cultures and beliefs. Teachers prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain." and our focus on the well-being and development of staff: "Leaders are passionate about supporting the wellbeing of staff. They put a strong emphasis on professional development, including research. They care for their staff. Teachers appreciate the efforts made by leaders to reduce their workload. Staff enjoy working at the school."

You can read full copy of the report here: <https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50187176>

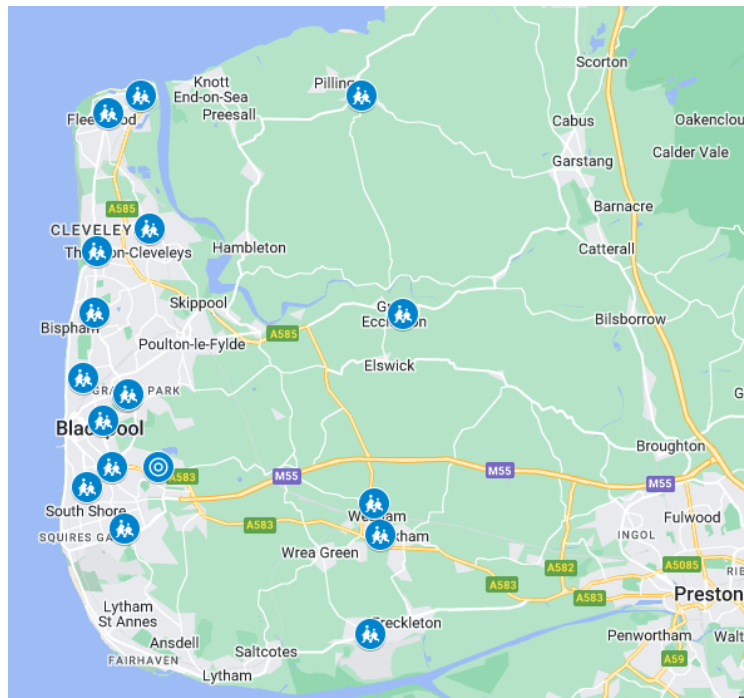
## **Diocesan Section 48 inspection**

Our 2023 Diocesan Inspection Report in graded us as "Good". The Academy was graded as "Outstanding" in Catholic life and mission and Collective worship. A copy of the full report is available on the Academy website. Some of the inspector's findings were:

- The school has exceptionally high standards of pastoral care and support for its students. Through the extensive range of services, student welfare is given the highest priority.
- Provision for chaplaincy, as well as the impact this team make on the lives of the students and staff, in and beyond the school is outstanding.
- Sixth form core religious education is very strong and strengthens the distinctive offer to Catholic students.
- The headteacher, leadership team, governors and trust board show a great dedication to the development of St Mary's as an inclusive and caring school. The highest priority is given to Christian formation and academic success.
- A very strong commitment to Catholic social teaching is evident throughout this community and students proactively engage in charity work.
- The strong sense of community is a defining characteristic and visitors often remark on the warm and inclusive atmosphere, extending to individuals of all faith backgrounds, making them feel part of the Catholic community.

# Trust Schools

	Christ the King Catholic Academy		Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Blackpool
	Holy Family Catholic Primary School, Warton		Our Lady of the Assumption Catholic Primary School
	Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School		St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School
	St Cuthbert's Catholic Academy		St John Vianney Catholic Primary School
	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School		St Kentigern's Catholic Primary School
	St Mary's Catholic Academy, Blackpool		St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Fleetwood
	St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Great Eccleston		St Teresa's Catholic Primary School
	St William's Catholic Primary School		St Wulstan's & St Edmund's Catholic Primary School
	The Willows Catholic Primary School		



# What we offer - Benefits

## Living Wage Employer



As an employer, we pay the real Living Wage so you can always be sure that you'll earn no less than the current rate.

## Pension Scheme



Teaching staff: You will be enrolled into the Teachers' Pension Scheme.  
Non-teaching staff: You will be enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme.

## Health and Wellbeing



We offer access to free and confidential wellbeing services including GP service, counselling, mindfulness support and physiotherapy.

## Death in Service



Should the worst happen, your nominated beneficiary will receive a payment of 3 x your annual salary if you are part of the pension scheme (TPS or LGPS).

## Flu Jab



Our Trust offers all employees a flu vaccination. Employees can arrange their own vaccination and reclaim the cost up to the value of £15.00.

## Travel to Work Scheme



We offer discounted travel via Blackpool Transport for the use of buses and trams.

# How to apply

Application process:

Candidates should complete a CES application form (attached to the advert on the Academy website: <https://www.st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk/recruitment-homepage/>) and a letter of application, the details of which can be found below. Please do not include a CV as this will not be considered as part of the process.

Evidence will be drawn from:

- Letter in support of application.
- Application Form.
- Task.
- Response to questions during interview.
- References.

Letter of application should:

- Be clear, concise and well presented.
- Demonstrate how you meet the person specification.
- Describe how you think your role will support students with SEND at St Mary's.
- Be no more than two sides of A4 in length.

Your application should be addressed to the Headteacher, Mr. S. Eccles and can be submitted electronically to [admin@st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk)

We will acknowledge receipt of your application.

Closing date for applications: **Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025 – midday**

Shortlisting date: **Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

Interview date: **TBC**

**Post Details:**

**Grade: NJC pay Grade B, scale point range 3 to 4**

**Salary: £17,744.00 - £18,022.00 actual pro-rated salary**

**Contract: Permanent, Term Time only**

**Hours: 32.5 per week (08:30-15:30, Monday-Friday)**

**Start Date: As soon as possible**



# Information for candidates

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The post is paid at NJC pay Grade B, scale points 3 - 4 – the approximate actual pro-rata starting salary on point 3 is £17,744.00.

## HOURS OF WORK

The hours of work each day are 08.30am to 3.30pm with 30 minutes for lunch each day, Monday to Friday.

This post is subject to:

- The CES (Catholic Education Service) form of contract,
- To DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) formerly the CRB,
- Medical clearance and
- Verification of your qualifications and National Insurance number.

## THE LEARNING SUPPORT DEPARTMENT: PERSONNEL

The team is made up of the following staff:

Mrs Hayley Stansfield	SENDCo/Head of Learning Support
Mrs Ruth McKay	Lead Learning Support Assistant (LLSA) & Specialist Assessor
Mrs Claire Nickeas	Lead Learning Support Assistant (LLSA)
Mrs Maggie Austin	LSA
Mrs Karen Drop	LSA
Mrs Mary Hunter	LSA
Ms Anna Klimowicz	LSA
Ms Suzanne Little	LSA
Mrs Sylvia McMahon	LSA
Miss Bailey Scott	LSA
Ms Monika Taraszkiewicz	LSA
Miss Tia Tomlinson	LSA
Miss Laine Wainwright	LSA
Mrs Ruth Whiting	LSA

# Information for candidates

## LEARNING SUPPORT AT ST MARY'S

The Learning Support Department is the champion for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) though we do not work in isolation. The St Mary's approach for students with SEND is based on communication, collaboration and co-production. The whole Academy community aspires to ensure that all our students, irrespective of ability or disability, and regardless of anyone's doubts, achieve their full potential academically, spiritually, socially and emotionally. We pride ourselves on being inclusive, accommodating and welcoming. We strive to provide opportunities and experiences for all students, including those with additional needs, which build a sense of belonging, give enjoyment and develop high self-esteem and strong self-concept. We are committed to a whole Academy culture of high expectation and aspiration for all students which is based on the core Gospel values that are at the very heart of the St Mary's Way. We recognise that some students will struggle and stumble along the way; it is precisely at these times that our intentions are put into practice. We reach out, walk alongside and support our young people towards greater independence and with an increased hope for their future.

The person appointed will be joining a friendly and welcoming department where everyone pulls together to ensure that some of our most vulnerable and low attaining students can access the curriculum and make good progress in school. The work of the department is to support individuals and groups of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is mainly done through in-class support, targeted withdrawal intervention, support with exam access arrangements (EAA) and mentoring. In addition, the department provides games and homework clubs during social times.

To support inclusion at St Mary's we also have a student services team including Behaviour Manager and a Family Support Worker, whose role is to work with vulnerable children and their families. In addition we have a Pupil Welfare Officer who deals with issues related to attendance and 2 Key Workers who support students at risk of suspension. We also have a Head of Year, Assistant Head of Year and a Pastoral Manager linked to each year group and a team of Lay Chaplains.

This post of Learning Support Assistant will involve working closely with the Lead Learning Support Assistants and the SENDCo in supporting individuals and groups of children with SEND. We welcome applications from candidates who have experience in one or more of the following areas of need:

- Cognition and Learning
- Communication and Interaction (Speech, Language and Communication Needs)
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Sensory and/ or physical difficulties

# Job Description

<b>Role Title</b>	<b>Typically reports to</b>
Teaching Assistant 1	SENDCo
<b>Information sources</b>	<b>Date of profile</b>
Agreed by School Working Party Job Evaluation Panel	150711
<b>Purpose of the role (job statement)</b>	
To work with teachers to support teaching and learning, providing general and specific assistance to pupils and staff under the direction, guidance and direct supervision of the classroom teacher.	
<b>Responsibilities</b>	
Key duties:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work with individuals or groups of pupils in the classroom under the direct supervision of teaching staff and provide feedback to the teacher</li> <li>2. Support pupils to understand instructions support independent learning and inclusion of all pupils</li> <li>3. Support the teacher in behaviour management and keeping pupils on task</li> <li>4. Support pupils in social, health and emotional well-being, reporting problems to the teacher as appropriate</li> <li>5. Prepare and clear up learning environment and resources, including photocopying, filing and the display and presentation of pupils work and contribute to maintaining a safe environment.</li> <li>6. Responsible for the careful and safe use equipment, such as play and standard ICT equipment</li> <li>7. Maintain confidentiality and adhere to safeguarding procedures</li> <li>8. Demonstrate and adhere to the schools health and safety policies and procedures</li> </ol>	
Teaching Assistants in this role may also:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Record basic pupil data</li> <li>2. Support children's learning through play</li> <li>3. Assist with break-time supervision including facilitating games and activities</li> <li>4. Assist with escorting pupils on educational visits</li> <li>5. Support pupils in using basic ICT</li> <li>6. Invigilate exams and tests</li> <li>7. Assist pupils with eating, dressing and hygiene, as required, whilst encouraging independence.</li> <li>8. Demonstrate own duties to new or less experienced staff</li> </ol>	
<b>Indicative knowledge, skills and experience</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Level 2 NVQ and Level 2 certificate in supporting teaching and learning on the Qualification and Credit Framework.</li> <li>● Knowledge and compliance with policies and procedures relevant to child protection and health and safety.</li> <li>● Good interpersonal skills</li> </ul>	
Roles at this level do not deliver “specified work” as defined in the guidance to Section 133 of the Education Act 2002.	

# Safeguarding Information

## Introduction

The Blessed Edward Bamber Catholic Multi Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its schools. The Trust complies with the statutory legislative requirements and guidance that seeks to protect children, including 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance. In order to meet this responsibility, we follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants.

## Safer Recruitment

Job descriptions and person specifications make reference to safeguarding and child protection. All posts are subject to satisfactory completion of enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate (DBS) checks. All advertisements include a safeguarding statement and commitment.

## Application Stage

All applicants are scrutinised to verify identity and academic qualifications, Professional references are requested using our standard pro-forma for short-listed candidates. As a minimum, references should be from the two most recent employers and a Parish Priest if applicable. References are checked against previous employment history and gaps in employment. Professional references must be obtained from work email addresses. Our standard reference proforma makes reference to suitability to work with children and young people. The application form requires applicants to complete a disclosure of any criminal convictions.

## Short listing

Only those candidates meeting the criteria outlined in the person specification will be shortlisted. All short-listed candidates will be subject to an online search as part of our safer recruitment due diligence.

## Interview

Shortlisted candidates will take part in an interview and selection process. Candidates will be asked to address any discrepancies or gaps in their employment history. Candidates will be reminded of their responsibility to disclose any criminal convictions if they have not already done so. Proof of identity, qualifications and right to work in the UK must also be provided at interview.

## Appointment

An enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate (DBS) will be required for all appointed posts. Other pre-employment compliance checks will be carried out. This post is subject to satisfactory references which will be requested prior to interview, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, online searches, medical check, evidence of qualifications plus verification of the right to work in the UK. For teaching positions, barred list checks and prohibition from teaching checks will also be carried out. For leadership positions, section 128 checks will be performed. All staff will receive a comprehensive induction programme covering all aspects of safeguarding and health and safety.

## Probation

All new staff will be subject to the trust probation procedures for a period of 6 months. The probation period is to enable the assessment of an employee's suitability for the job and which includes a review of the performance of new staff in relation to duties, skills, qualifications and experience outlined in the job description and person specification. This will also include an employee's suitability to work with children and young people and their commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

## Equal opportunities

BEBCMAT recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve a diverse workforce. BEBCMAT takes positive steps to create an employment culture in which people feel confident of being treated with fairness, dignity and respect, irrespective of their differences. The Trust is committed to the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to the promotion of good relations between all.

## General Data Protection Regulation

BEBCMAT is committed to ensuring that the privacy of an individual is protected. By signing a contract of employment, the employee is agreeing to the Trust processing their personal data, including 'sensitive personal data' as defined in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), for the purposes of the operation, management, security and/or administrations, as well as complying with applicable laws, regulations and procedures. The information you provide (except Equality Monitoring Information) may be shared with partner organisations that provide services to the Trust. A full list of these organisations is available on request from the CFO.

