



# TEACHER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

**START DATE: SEPTEMBER 2023**



SCHOOLS ACHIEVING SUCCESS TOGETHER



SHERBORNE AREA SCHOOLS' TRUST

January 2023



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for expressing an interest in the post of Teacher of Religious Education at The Gryphon School.

Accompanying this letter is information about the School and the Department, which we hope, will provide you with everything you need to know to apply for the post.

We are seeking to appoint an ambitious, creative, and inspiring teacher or ECT with energy, enthusiasm, and a love of Religious Education to join our team. . This is a permanent, full-time post, commencing on 01 September 2023.

Our new recruit will join a team of professional, experienced and able specialists, dedicated to continuing to provide the high level of teaching to which our students have become accustomed.

The successful candidate will have:

- a strong subject knowledge and passion for all aspects of Religious Education
- the ability to embrace and contribute to the vision and direction of the team
- the ability to play a full role in maintaining and enhancing the current high standards in the Department
- the ability to support, challenge and inspire our students, encouraging them to achieve the best they can through the promotion of outstanding teaching and learning
- excellent communication skills and the ability to celebrate and promote high quality teaching and learning
- the ability to be a team player who will go the extra mile to support students and who will enjoy the challenges of this role

The Gryphon is a wonderful place to work and has a special atmosphere and feel. It became a founder member of the Sherborne Area Schools' Trust (SAST) a multi-academy trust established in June 2017. The Good Schools Guide 2023 concludes that 'A big school with a small school feel is exactly right. No child goes unnoticed and teachers seem to be genuinely motivated to see pupils progress to the best of their ability. An impressive capacity to cater for extremely different academic needs in a nurturing environment. No wonder it's over-subscribed'.

We are an outward looking school with exceptional community links as well as strong relationships with other good and outstanding schools across the South West and nationally.

We are a comprehensive school serving a diverse community. Our high quality support staff make a real difference to our students. Teaching is often outstanding, and consistently at least good across all subjects and key stages. Teachers are provided with the resources to make lessons stimulating and practical and have excellent subject knowledge. They make sure students are very clear about what is demanded of them and how to improve. The School's very positive entry in the Good School Guide describes pastoral care and discipline as 'excellent'. Students are reflective, behave with great courtesy, and are heavily involved in working with staff to improve the school and the welfare of others.

The Gryphon gains high results for its students at both GCSE and A Level. Our large Sixth Form of 380 students is exceptional. We have an outstanding record of success in university entrance, including places at Oxford, Cambridge and other Russell Group universities, as well as for training places and apprenticeships.

Our 2022 GCSE exam results were, once again, excellent. 24 students achieved ten or more 7s, 8s and 9s with many staying on to attend The Gryphon Sixth Form.

Additionally, our A level results were excellent with 29 students receiving straight A and A\* results including three students heading off to Oxford and Cambridge, and three students going on to study medicine.

In May 2022 our inspection as a Church School (SIAMS) judged us to be Excellent. Our most recent Ofsted visit, in November 2017, was very positive and confirmed our status as a “good school”. Our focus, which reflects our Church School status, is that we should be a “10:10” school; where students and staff experience life in all of its fullness. So for us education is more than just exam results – we place great value on the personal development of each student. We aim for them to leave school as well-rounded young people with a strong sense of what is socially, morally and culturally acceptable, and to feel that they have a contribution to make to the wider community. Digital learning is important at The Gryphon School including the use of mobile technology; we want our young people to use technology responsibly and to enhance their learning.

In summary, we are a true team with a great sense of pride in what we collectively achieve and we embrace the challenge for achievement to be even higher. Our special culture and ethos focuses on enabling students to be the best that they can, both personally and academically, supported by the tremendous work and care of all our staff. We continue to strive to be outstanding in all aspects of school life.

We are looking for someone with high expectations, a love of their subject, the ability to inspire and also laugh whilst enjoying the challenges of this role. You need to be a team player with the inner determination to develop continually, picking up the best ideas from around the world in education. In return, you will join a Department that is full of activity, rewarding and friendly. We have a great record for supporting and developing all of our staff through our own training and links with NCSL providers.

You are very welcome to visit us in advance of an application or to contact us to find out more.

Very best wishes,

*N J Edwards*

Canon Nicki Edwards  
Headteacher

# THE ADVERT & APPLICATION PROCESS

We look forward to receiving your application by **9am, Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

The interviews will be held as soon as possible after the closing date

**Salary:** Teachers' Pay Scales  
**Contract:** Permanent, full-time

We are seeking to appoint an ambitious, creative, and inspiring teacher or ECT with energy, enthusiasm, and a love of Religious Education. This is a full-time, permanent post, commencing in September 2023. This is a wonderful opportunity to join a large, successful, and supportive team.

The successful candidate will

- A strong subject knowledge and passion for all aspects of Religious Education
- The ability to teach up to and including A-level Religious Education
- Excellent communication skills and the ability to celebrate and promote high quality teaching and learning
- The ability to support, challenge and inspire our students, encouraging them to achieve the best they can through the promotion of outstanding teaching and learning
- The ability to be a team player who will go the extra mile to support students and who will enjoy the challenges of this role
- The ability to embrace and contribute to the vision and direction of the Department
- The ability to play a full role in maintaining and enhancing the current high standards in the Department

You are asked to provide the following:

- A completed application form
- A letter of application of no more than 2 sides of A4 detailing your experience and expertise

Completed applications should be returned either by post, marked 'Confidential' to HR Recruitment Team, Shaftesbury School, Salisbury School, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 8ER or by email to:

[recruitment@sast.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@sast.org.uk)

Should you wish to arrange a visit to view the School, please do not hesitate to contact Caroline Rabbetts, Office Manager on [caroline.rabbetts@gryphon.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:caroline.rabbetts@gryphon.dorset.sch.uk) or at 01935 810101 who will be happy to arrange this.

*SAST will conduct online searches of shortlisted candidates. This will be part of safer recruitment check, and the search will purely be based on whether an individual is suitable to work with children. All aspects of social media and internet searches will be conducted. As care must be taken to avoid unconscious bias and any risk of discrimination, a person who will not be on the appointment panel will conduct the searches and will only share information if and when findings are relevant and of concern*

*The Gryphon School, part of the Sherborne Area Schools Trust, has an absolute commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The Trust and School follows the national and Somerset policies and procedures for child protection and security and the interview will include questions*



*about safeguarding children. Current and/or previous employers will be contacted for references as part of the verification process pre-appointment checks if the applicant is short listed. The successful applicant will be required to undertake an enhanced disclosure check with the Disclosure and Barring Service.*

*Sherborne Area Schools' Trust (SAST) recognises the benefit of having a diverse workforce and is committed to building a workforce which reflects diversity from the communities it serves. SAST values the contributions from all staff from a wide range of different backgrounds and actively seeks to promote an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment and at the same time supports fair promotion and cultural acceptance. Under the provision of the Equality Act 2010 SAST welcomes applications from everyone and operates a recruitment process which is fair and does not discriminate against or disadvantage anyone because of their age, disability, gender reassignment status, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race or nationality, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.*

*This role is UK- based and your right to work will need to be established as part of the appointment process.*



# PERSON SPECIFICATION

## Teacher of Religious Education

### Inter-personal attributes

- Able to build relationships quickly, with humility and empathy, whilst showing respect to others - students, parents and colleagues - to get the best out of them
- Positive, optimistic, caring, kind and approachable
- Willing to be immersed in the life of a busy and successful school

### Communication and Interaction

- Communicate clearly and accurately both orally and in writing
- Able to listen and respond appropriately
- Flexible to adapt your style in different situations
- Strong and confident ICT skills for teaching and management
- Contribute as a great team player

### Planning and Organising

- Manage daily responsibilities and priorities
- Work efficiently and effectively to meet deadlines and deliver successfully
- Design, produce and share high quality learning schemes and resources

### Knowledge

- Good honours degree and/or relevant high level expertise
- A real interest in educational issues, approaches and alternatives from around the world
- Strongly support the ethos and culture of the school

### Leadership Skills

- Proactive and confident, yet humble and considered
- You can inspire and motivate others
- Make informed decisions on a daily basis
- Ensure high professional standards including student progress of all groups of students

### Problem Solving

- Enjoy facing new challenges
- Find, propose and lead solutions
- Use resources, intellect, creativity and innovation to be successful

### Resilience

- Hungry for a challenge
- Have patience and endless energy to persevere through the challenging moments
- Tenacious and versatile
- Maintain a positive mindset

### Self-evaluation

- You are aware of strengths and weaknesses
- Strong desire to learn from others so that you can be even better
- Able to share and support others

We are interested in all these attributes for colleagues joining the Gryphon family but appreciate that some will be areas that you have a desire to develop and grow with our support once you are here. A sense of realism and humour are really important.

# TEACHER OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION – USEFUL INFORMATION

## THE ROLE

We are seeking to appoint an outstanding teacher or ECT who recognises the importance of RE for the School and the local community. This is a great opportunity for an enthusiastic and inspiring individual to join our ambitious and dynamic RE department in a school where RE was described as 'Outstanding' by SIAMS 2022.

Applications are welcomed from teachers who will strive for excellence in all aspects of their practice, from both experienced practitioners and early career teachers. We are looking for applicants who instil a passion for their subject and have a firm belief in the potential of all students.



We can offer you:

- A dedicated and experienced hardworking team of staff who are passionate about RE
- Enthusiastic, friendly and inquisitive students
- The opportunity to develop with lots of opportunities for personal development both with the school and Academy trust.
- Collaborative working with shared resources for all lessons
- A creative and innovative culture always looking for new opportunities and ways to develop our teaching practise.
- Staff wellbeing prioritised across the school

You will need to:

- Be willing to teach across all key stages, including teaching A-level RE
- Be a good and effective communicator
- Be open minded, creative and inspirational in the role
- Commit to working collaboratively with colleagues and students
- Share best practice and teaching methods with department
- Impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time



## STAFFING

The RE Department is currently made up of Stephanie Rann (Head of Department), Emma Brown, Laura Pittard and Roxanne Burrell. In our most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican & Methodist Schools (SIAMS) report, 2022, the subject was described as *"outstanding at all levels and is inspirational and challenging. Pupils confidently articulate their understanding of religions and worldviews...exceptionally well planned and taught by specialist staff"* The successful candidate will be joining this vibrant, supportive and experienced team and will be expected to make their own contribution to the development of RE across the school.



## CURRICULUM

Religious Education is a highly valued element of the whole school curriculum and is taught at all Key Stages. As a Church of England school, the Gryphon sets out to fulfil the requirements of the Dorset Agreed Syllabus which seeks to *'engage pupils in enquiring into big questions arising from the study of religion, belief, philosophy and ethics... support pupils' own personal moral, philosophical, ethical and spiritual development and promote respect for others'* (Dorset SACRE, 2011). At Key Stage 3 and 4 all Religious Education teachers follow the department schemes of work.

At Key Stage 3 these include looking at a wide range of religious beliefs and world views and focussing on questions to explore important aspects of the subject.



At KS4 AQA Religious Studies A is taught as an options subject. We currently have 3 Year 10 groups with over 70 students opting for the subject. We focus on Christianity and Hinduism as our 2 main faiths.

A-Level Religious Studies is a popular A-level subject, we follow the OCR specification.

Understanding how and why people hold and express beliefs which are different from their own is seen as being of fundamental importance if pupils are to experience a 'broad and balanced curriculum' designed to help them become confident and informed participants in a multi-faith democracy. Our aim is to develop a team-based approach to the planning, delivery and assessment of Religious Education in order to heighten pupils' awareness of the significance of the religious dimension in personal and social terms.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

*'Impact on pupils is reflected in the highest quality oral and written work demonstrating a thoughtful appreciation of the influence of Christianity and other religions on society' (SIAMS, 2022)*

In Key Stage 3, pupils are taught in mixed ability groups of around thirty. RE is taught in specialist rooms for two, one hour periods per fortnight. At Key Stage 4 RE is taught within the department as an options subject and students are very passionate and enthusiastic about the subject, with many choosing to continue to A-level.

The Department is always seeking innovative approaches to teaching and learning and as team we consistently look for ways to strengthen and build on our existing practise. The Head of Department is the Vice Chair of the Dorset SACRE and an RE Hub Lead for the Diocese of Salisbury, as a department we aim to be leading the way for RE in the area and focus on teaching and learning in everything we do.

## EXPERIENCES

*'The quality and range of their theological thinking is impressive. They have excellent knowledge of world religions and recognise the importance of this in promoting global understanding. A clear and very thorough system of assessment informs and guides their progress. (SIAMS, 2022)*



The RE department believes it to be of great importance that students are given opportunities to explore and encounter a wide range of experiences during their time at school. The department runs a range of trips and activities including visits to the Holocaust exhibition at the Imperial War museum and taking GCSE students to a Hindu Temple, to running RE days on issues from Social justice and Genocide awareness to Medical ethics and animal rights. We have also run trips abroad such as a

visit for GCSE students to Krakow in Poland, including visiting Auschwitz-Birkenau, and we hope to run these trips again in the future.

## WIDER CONTRIBUTION

All staff are expected to contribute to the pastoral care offered by the school as a group tutor, whose duties include delivery of the PSHE and tutorial programme developed by each Year Head and the relevant team of tutors.

We are looking for an enthusiastic teacher of Religious Education at any stage in their career. The successful candidate will be well supported within the department. This is a fixed term post in the first instance to cover a period of maternity leave but could be offered as a permanent role.

**If you would like to discuss the post further or would like to arrange a visit, please do not hesitate to contact Stephanie Rann, Head of Department on 01935 813122 or [stephanie.rann@gryphon.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:stephanie.rann@gryphon.dorset.sch.uk)**



# THE GRYPHON SCHOOL

## WHAT WE PROVIDE



### High Quality Professional Development

- INSET Programme with national speakers e.g. Sir John Jones, Simon Mayo
- Time is provided for learning and development in everyone's staffing allocation
- Middle leader training programme
- New staff induction programme
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year teacher programme
- Opportunities for sharing of best practice and expertise
- Encouragement of individual action research through appraisal
- Opportunities to mentor student teachers on ITT, Schools Direct, volunteers and other routes

### Support for Teaching

- Investment in resources, facilities and the environment
- Outstanding ICT infrastructure including Wi-Fi, resources
- Strong departmental support structure
- Free iPad for all teachers
- Timetabling ensures specialist teach in their subject areas and there are rarely any split classes
- Designated support for reprographics, trip management, student behavioural support, SEND needs etc
- Dedicated team of school cover supervisors

### Links with other schools

The Gryphon is outward looking and a lead member of various school development groups. This facilitates visits, exchanges, subject sharing, leadership support and enhanced student opportunities.

- Jubilee Group – eight schools across the SW from Devon to Wiltshire and Gloucestershire
- South West Academies Group – nine academy schools across Devon, Somerset and BANES
- North Dorset – five secondary schools, a Special school and a PRU
- Sherborne Schools Partnership of nine feeder primary schools with whom we have excellent cross-phase academic collaboration Y6-8 curriculum and transition.
- Since 2014-15 we have been part of the national PiXL group

### Supporting families

- Forget me Not Nursery on site
- Supportive to colleagues for time off during periods of family illness/crisis
- Supportive of requests where possible to attend graduations, family weddings, special family events, house moves

### Practicalities – little extra touches

- Generous allocation and pattern of INSET Days to support staff learning and development and wellbeing
- Quality free seated lunch provided on INSET Days
- Free on-site parking

### Strong Staff Community

- Very active, vibrant, Staff Social Committee who arrange an array of social events and activities across the year
- Large main staff room – and we hold weekly whole staff briefings
- Successful and very competitive staff sports teams playing other schools
- Amazing involvement in charity events, national days, productions, teams, public speaking, Duke of Edinburgh etc

# SHERBORNE AREA SCHOOLS' TRUST (SAST) INFORMATION



SAST is a multi-academy trust, formed in June 2017, of seven schools serving the West and North Dorset area as well as students from South Somerset. Currently, there are 17 schools with more than 5,000 students and over 850 members of staff. SAST has large town primary schools with over 300 children, smaller village primary schools and nursery provision. SAST also has 4 secondary schools including a state boarding school and Sixth Form and a large 11-18 secondary school with a Sixth Form of over 400 students. There is a mix of formerly maintained and Church of England schools - both voluntary controlled and voluntary-aided in the Diocese of Salisbury. We believe in preserving Schools in their local community.

## **Our Schools:**

A key principle of the SAST is that member schools maintain their own character, such as church and community status. All schools in the multi-academy trust are equal partners and are committed to the principles of collaboration, sharing expertise and resources to enable all partner schools to deliver excellent education for all young people in their care.

At the heart of SAST is the desire to work in partnership, to collaborate with others and to be outward facing for the benefit of children and staff. The schools have extensive links beyond the immediate area and are keen to extend these further.

SAST works by providing opportunities to share and improve - to develop further our provision as well as supporting the quality of leadership and management. This includes sharing best practice, being creative in maintaining a broad and diverse curriculum, ensuring the care and support is in place for children and families and enabling further staff and teacher development. We also work together on meeting the challenges of funding and the opportunities for financial efficiency, determining for ourselves which services and providers we will use to provide outstanding provision for our children. There is real strength in coming together with a collective responsibility for all the children's development and progress between 0-19 years.

## **What we value – our ethos:**

### **Partnership and Collaboration**

Our schools support each other, by sharing expertise and resources, to ensure improvement.

### **Pursuit of Excellence**

We provide a high-quality education to enable all students and staff to aspire, thrive and succeed.

### **Holistic Lifelong Learning**

We promote the personal development of every child and a love of lifelong learning for our students and staff.

### **Equality and Distinctiveness**

We celebrate the individuality of each school and all in it. We are proud to be at the heart of our local communities.

## **Organisation - How we work:**

All our schools are successful. Of course, we recognise that we need to continually improve and evolve. The priority is to enable every School to continue to provide an excellent education for all our students while protecting the school's role at the heart of its community, along with our unique qualities and strengths.

