



# DR CHALLONER'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**Teacher of  
Religious Studies,  
Philosophy and  
Ethics Information  
Pack**

*Challenge with reward*





DR CHALLONER'S  GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**TEACHER OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS**  
**TPS + Fringe allowance**  
**(plus TLR 2.2 for a temporary Subject Lead, if appropriate)**

Thank you for your interest in DCGS. For September 2025 we are seeking a highly qualified teacher of Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics at this 11-18 grammar school for boys, with a co-educational Sixth Form. This position offers an exciting opportunity for someone looking to further their experience in an innovative and high achieving school. Experience of teaching A level Religious Studies or Philosophy would be desirable. For a suitably experienced candidate, there may be the opportunity to act as Subject Leader during the Autumn term 2025-26.

Dr Challoner's has 1368 students, of which 452 are in the Sixth Form. We are regarded as one of the leading grammar schools in the country, and in 2024 Ofsted confirmed their 2019 judgement of Outstanding. As lead school for the Astra Teaching School Hub (Buckinghamshire), we provide an exciting range of professional development opportunities.

We also offer:-

- engaging, able and well-motivated students
- an innovative approach to learning
- a strong focus on character education
- outstanding facilities in every subject
- a friendly working environment

**Closing date: , Monday 3 February 2025, 12 noon**

**Interviews are expected to take place during week commencing 10 February.**

To apply for the post, please email a completed application form to Gill Byrne (HR Manager and Head's PA). Email: [employment@challoners.org](mailto:employment@challoners.org)

**We are interested to hear from candidates as soon as possible and early applications are welcomed.**

**Shortlisted candidates may be interviewed before the closing date.**

At Dr Challoner's Grammar School we ensure breadth of opportunities for all and actively promote open and outward facing attitudes to diversity and inclusion. As such, we actively encourage suitably qualified people from all backgrounds to apply for roles at our school. If there are any issues which you feel could be barriers to your application, as part of this process, please let us know

Dr Challoner's Grammar School is committed to safeguarding and successful candidates will be required to complete an enhanced DBS check.

# A warm welcome...

From Mr David Atkinson, Headteacher, Dr Challoner's Grammar School



Dear Applicant,

I hope that the information which follows will help inform your decision about whether to make a formal application for this post. Like most job applicants you will want to find out a bit more about us. These days there is a wealth of data about schools which you may wish to look at. Proud though we are of that data, such research never tells the whole story and you will only be sure that you want to work here when you get 'that feeling' within the first few minutes of walking through the door.

When you do your research you'll find that our Ofsted inspections, in 2019 and 2024, graded the school as outstanding in every respect. We believe this is an accurate reflection of the school as a genuinely special place. The reports echo what many visitors tell me - that we have a distinctive ethos of teamwork, loyalty and aspiration, with the well being of staff and students at the heart of what we do. Our students are intensely proud of coming to school here, and our staff feel similarly about their place of work. The relationship between staff and students is a very special one, and we see ourselves as running the school with the students rather than for them.

Our motto - Excellence with Integrity - demonstrates the purpose behind this ethos. We also highlight three key values which we believe can underpin the effective education of all our students. These are Aspiration, Kindness and Resilience. Our staff demonstrate these characteristics in their own ways, and inculcate the same attitudes in our students. This is not an attempt to produce a 'standard Challoner' student, but a means of encouraging our young people to find their own ways of demonstrating those crucial characteristics to help them flourish in the future.

Despite its impressive academic record, Challoner's is not an examination hothouse - it's a place of genuine creativity, fun and comradeship. In staff we appoint, we look for that much undervalued quality of humanity, along with an acceptance that young people will always make a few mistakes - and that it's our job to ensure that they learn from them. Two of the most immediately noticeable qualities of the people who work here are their humour and their sense of proportion. Even on the dullest of days, laughter pervades the school and reflects a genuine warmth and professional respect amongst colleagues. Sharing a laugh and a joke with the students is the norm and serves to brighten our daily work no end. One of the reasons our staff are prepared to give up so much of their time to run educational visits (we do more than any school I know) and other co-curricular activities is that spending time with our students is so rewarding and enjoyable.

Over the years, schools have been subjected to a daily influx of policy changes and 'guidance' from government, much of it well-intentioned but unhelpful. I see it as an important part of my job to insulate staff from 'initiative overload' as much as possible so that they can direct their talents and energy into the things which we think are really important - ensuring that our students develop into confident learners who are at ease with themselves and others and willing to take responsible risks in their learning. We don't believe that just getting good GCSE and A Levels necessarily makes our students into good learners. Therefore we put a lot of thought and effort into how to make their time at school into a really worthwhile apprenticeship in the arts and crafts of learning which will stand the test of time, equipping them to make a success of whatever they choose to pursue in later life. Our Learning and Teaching framework has been carefully developed over the years to promote valuable skills. You will find a lot more information about the school on our website [www.challoners.com](http://www.challoners.com) which we hope encapsulates that intangible 'feel' of the school, and about the Astra Teaching School Hub and SCITT at [www.astrahub.org](http://www.astrahub.org). If you would like further clarification or just an informal chat with someone, please feel free to contact us by phone or email. I enclose some information about your subject at Challoner's along with some general information about the school, a Role Profile and a Person Specification. When I read your application, I will be trying to assess whether you would be a 'good fit' for our school, so I hope that some of the things I have said will be useful to you in writing your supporting statement. I do hope that you will decide to make an application to join us and that we will have the chance to welcome you to our school.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Atkinson".

Mr D Atkinson,  
Headteacher

Challoner's is the Teaching School Hub for Buckinghamshire, a function we fulfill through the Astra Teaching School Hub. As a result we offer a wide and diverse range of professional development opportunities for staff. Astra is also a School Centred Initial Teacher Training provider (SCITT) ensuring Challoner's is at the cutting edge of curricular and pedagogical developments in education. Now leading the delivery of the ECF and NPQ programmes across the county, colleagues at Challoner's are able to contribute to, and benefit from, our leadership of high quality teacher training and CPD across over 200 schools in the local area.





*'The facilities are outstanding in many respects. The forward-thinking management and leadership ensure learner-led environments are possible'.*

## Why work for Dr Challoner's Grammar School?



- Outstanding modern facilities, including recently modernised sports, music, arts and science facilities.
- High staff retention
- A friendly working environment with supportive and caring colleagues.
- Culture of teamwork, loyalty and aspiration



- Engaging, able and well-motivated students
- An innovative approach to learning
- Outstanding facilities in every subject
- Access to an Employee Assistance Programme including financial and legal advice, counselling and health programmes
- Preferential admission for qualified children of staff (some restrictions apply)
- Access to onsite cardio fitness and weights room
- Free onsite parking
- Access to regular staff social events



- Generous pay based on the London Fringe Allowance
- Access to join the Teachers' Pension Scheme ("TPS"). The TPS is a Career Average Related Earnings ("CARE") Defined Benefit Pension Scheme.



- A successful and well recognised professional development scheme, which all colleagues have access to and are encouraged to make use of.
- Support for National Professional Qualifications (NPQs)
- Teaching staff are issued with a Chromebook computer for use during their employment at Challoner's
- An extensive induction programme for all staff joining the school, with components tailored to individual requirements, such as for those new to the teaching profession.





## Our commitment to Character Education



### Character Education

As well as our enviable track record of academic performance, we are equally proud of our focus on character, and our development of young people who will go on and improve their lives and our society with their education. Our core vision, to deliver education of excellence with integrity, is underpinned by values of Aspiration, Kindness and Resilience. We want to support students so that they develop their own well informed aspirations for their futures. We help our students understand how to flourish as young adults, with the resilience to adapt and be flexible while also helping others. We emphasise the need to be kind by looking after yourself, and through positive and productive personal relationships with others.

We encourage our staff, whatever their job, to play a part in this. This may be through classroom teaching, but role modelling good habits in these areas is something we expect of all our colleagues. As a result we have a cohesive staff body with a shared belief in the school's purpose, to develop thoughtful young people who can make a noticeably positive impact on society as a result of their education at Challoner's.







## Our commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)



### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

At Challoner's, we strive to create a safe environment where everyone feels they belong, and kindness, respect and equity inform everything we do. Our school is a rich and diverse community, so we must develop thinking and attitudes appropriate for the global society in which we live.

Our DEI charter is for current and prospective students and staff, as well as the wider community, to understand the commitments of our school in this vital area, and to outline the expectations of all members of the school community:

#### Our key commitments:

**Maintain a positive ethos:** We stand for an atmosphere of empathy, inclusion and respect that empowers all members of the community.

**Commitment to curiosity:** We will retain a curiosity about others in our diverse community; whilst also remaining tolerant of others who might make genuine mistakes along the way.

**Accountability:** We will accept responsibility for our actions and any negative impacts our comments and actions have upon those close to us and the wider community.

**Stand strongly against discrimination:** We will actively oppose any form of discrimination including the protected characteristics of: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. This will be treated with the same protocols and rigour as other harmful acts.

#### Our DEI pledge:

**Educate:** Address problematic stereotypes and prevalent prejudices by showing each other how such intolerance directly affects individuals and society as a whole.

**Encourage dialogue:** Offer a safe space in which everyone can openly discuss issues they feel are important, share their own experiences and ask questions.

**Set clear expectations:** Make clear in the school's code of conduct that any form of prejudice and discrimination is unacceptable and detail the consequences. Breaches of these rules will be followed with swift action.

**Promote diversity and inclusion:** Encourage the celebration of diversity and sharing culture through activities that can be enjoyed by all.

**Promote & empower upstanders:** Encourage students and our whole school community to challenge intolerance and teach them how to support those affected by intolerance effectively.

**Involve parents:** Ensure that families are aware of the positive work being undertaken by school. Involve them in what students are learning and encourage them to reinforce the same messages in a more direct and personalised way at home.

# Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics at Challoner's



## Introduction

The Religious Studies, Philosophy and Ethics department at Dr Challoner's is a friendly and welcoming team, determined to provide the very best experience for each of our students, whether they are following the subject as a compulsory part of their curriculum or as an optional subject. We have a desire to provide the opportunity for exciting, innovative learning, and believe that RS plays a vital role in our students' development as both confident learners and citizens of the world. This is summed up in our team motto: 'everybody needs a place to think'.

## Accommodation and resources

The subject is based in three well-furnished, light and comfortable rooms. These have a wealth of resources available including amplifiers and digital projectors. We also make use of other facilities

around the school such as a dedicated seminar room when appropriate. We strive to ensure a diversity of approach in our lessons, with video, music, artefacts, and debates being regular features, alongside the virtual learning environments of the department Google site and class Google Classrooms. The team works collaboratively to create and share a wide range of resources

to support learning, and we have a well organised and substantial Google Drive at our disposal. The department is housed in a well-stocked office and we are well supported by a fantastic Curriculum Support Technician two days a week.

## Academic details

The subject is delivered in line with the Buckinghamshire Agreed Syllabus. The focus of our Key Stage 3 curriculum is on exploring Philosophy and Ethics through world religions. This is achieved through encouraging student engagement with a variety of ultimate questions about life and the universe. For each question students consider relevant religious and non-religious responses and reflect on their own views in the light of them. As students progress through the key stage this becomes as much a philosophical mode of enquiry as a theological one.

As well as the subject being a key feature of the Key Stage 3 curriculum, we have thriving GCSE and A level cohorts. We deliver a non-compulsory GCSE (usually opted for by at least 60 of the year group), following the Christianity, Buddhism and Philosophical and Ethical Themes options of the AQA Religious Studies A course. At A level we follow the OCR Religious Studies (Philosophy, Ethics and Theology) course, running two sets in each year group.

Our students are consistently positive about their experience of the subject as a GCSE and A level, with one recent GCSE student commenting "RS is good because it is different. It enables us to think on a higher level than the other subjects do", and a recent A Level student declaring that "RS has consistently been my favourite lesson to go to". Beyond Sixth Form, we regularly see around 30 of our A Level cohort go on to study Philosophy, Theology or a related degree at university, including several students at Oxford and Cambridge. Although we're not solely focused on exam grades we consistently achieve fantastic results. In 2024, 80.5% of students achieved grade 7-9 at GCSE, and 86% achieved A\*/B at A'level.

## Educational Visits

The department runs several visits to extend the learning of our students beyond the classroom. Our GCSE students make day trips to Coventry Cathedral to develop their understanding of Christianity. In addition, the department runs a hugely successful visit to Krakow and Auschwitz in Year 11, which is always oversubscribed. We also ran our first A level residential visit in June 2017, with a theme of 'Philosophy in Paris', and are looking to run similar visits in the future, exploring different parts of the world that have given us some of the most prominent philosophers. In KS5 we attend the Cambridge University study day with lead examiners, to equip the students with the skills needed to be successful at A level. All RS staff keenly participate in these excellent opportunities to enrich the learning of our students.





# Classroom Teacher Role Profile



## Job title

Classroom Teacher/Form/Division Tutor

## Job purpose

To promote the academic and personal development of all students.

## Objectives

- To encourage and support the learning of all students.
- To ensure the highest possible standards of student behaviour
- To promote positive values and attitudes
- To demonstrate professional values and practice.

## Principal areas of responsibility

- A Planning and providing challenging learning activities
- B Assessment and support of student progress
- C Managing the students for whom you have responsibility as their tutor.
- D Working professionally as a member of subject teaching and tutorial teams

## Key Tasks

- A1 To plan and teach sequences of lessons which incorporate an appropriate range and depth of subject knowledge in line with statutory requirements.
- A2 To teach lessons with clear objectives and well pitched tasks which provide pace and challenge using a variety of learning strategies including ICT.
- A3 To understand the responsibility required under the SEN Code of Practice and to adjust teaching and learning strategies for individual students accordingly.

- B1 To employ a variety of marking, monitoring and assessment strategies to inform planning, develop learning and evaluate students' progress.
- B2 To provide constructive feedback to help students reflect upon and improve their work.
- B3 To make effective and regular use of the school's assessment criteria and reporting procedures to inform learning.
- C1 To keep the form register (a legal requirement) and monitor patterns of student attendance/ absence.
- C2 To make appropriate use of the school's rewards and sanctions procedures in line with the school's behaviour policy.
- C3 To monitor the progress of students in your tutor group by target setting and through regular inspection of planners and/or other appropriate methods (e.g. students on report).
- C4 To report concerns about individual student progress and behaviour to relevant senior staff (Subject/Team Leaders)
- D1 To demonstrate consistently high expectations of all students and a commitment to raising their achievement.
- D2 To promote the positive values, attitudes and behaviour expected from all students by treating them with respect and consideration.
- D3 To communicate promptly and sensitively with parents, carers and other relevant bodies where necessary.
- D4 To contribute towards, and value, the work of teams of staff dedicated to advancing student learning and welfare.
- D5 To be aware of, and work within, the statutory framework relating to teachers responsibilities and comply with policies/procedures relating to child protection and safeguarding, health, safety, welfare, confidentiality and data protection.



# Person Specification



## TEACHER OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES, PHILOSOPHY AND ETHICS

At DCGS we want to employ people who share our desire to deliver the best experience and outcomes for our students. This person specification is designed to show the personal and professional characteristics that we would like to see in a successful applicant for this post.

	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	EVIDENCE
Qualifications and work experience			
<b>Degree level qualification in Philosophy, Theology or similar</b>	Y		Application, Certificate
Qualified teacher status or QTS with PGCE	Y		Application, Certificate
Further professional qualifications		Y	Application, Certificates
Previous work experience			
Experience of teaching the subject to at least GCSE level (either in a substantive post or as a student teacher)	Y		Application, Interview, Reference
Experience of teaching A level Religious Studies		Y	Application, Interview
Experience of teaching A level Philosophy		Y	Application, Interview
Professional skills, knowledge and experience			
Thorough knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum and examination requirements in this subject	Y		Application, Interview, Observed lesson
A competent IT user	Y		Interview
An understanding of the ways children learn and how individual needs may be assessed and met	Y		Application, Observed lesson
Knowledge and experience of able and gifted students		Y	Application, Interview
Knowledge and experience of safeguarding and child protection issues	Y		Interview

People management skills and experience			
An effective communicator with students, staff and parents	Y		Interview, Observed lesson
An effective team player, able to work collaboratively with colleagues	Y		Application, Reference
Other Personal qualities			
Appropriate motivation for working with children (one which values each child and shows concern for their personal safety and wellbeing)	Y		Interview
Well developed planning and organising skills, including time management, delegation and administration	Y		Interview, Reference
Emotional resilience and maturity	Y		Interview
Commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion	Y		Application, interview
Sense of humour		Y	Observed lesson, interview
Evidence of continued professional development	Y		Application, Interview
Willingness to contribute to the wider life of the school		Y	Application, Reference



# Making an application



The purpose of the selection process is to assess your suitability for the post and give both the panel and yourself an opportunity to gain further information before making a successful appointment. It is also an opportunity to seek clarification on information which you have provided on the application form and accompanying information. As this post holder will be working in regulated activity and will have contact with children, the interview will also assess your suitability to work with children and will include questions relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

**How to apply** To apply for this position, you will need to complete an application form, which can be downloaded by following this link.

Completed applications should be sent to [employment@challoners.org](mailto:employment@challoners.org)

Please note that only fully completed application forms will be considered.

CVs will not be included in the short-listing process

**Short-listing** Applications will be assessed based on the information provided on the application form; only those best fulfilling the criteria for the role and the person specification will be short-listed.

Subject to the number of applications, short-listing may take place before the deadline for applications has passed.

If you have not heard from us within three weeks of the closing date, you can assume that your application is not being progressed on this occasion.

**Interview** Short-listed candidates will be interviewed initially informally by a member of the senior team.

Candidates will also be given a tour of the School, and there will be a chance to meet members of the department informally over lunch or coffee.

The interview will also include a lesson sample for teachers or administration task for support staff.

Selected candidates will then be formally interviewed by the Head and other members of the School management team.

**(Teachers) Sample Lesson** Teaching candidates invited to interview in person will be expected to prepare and deliver a sample lesson of one hour, which will be observed by the Head of Department or Subject Leader. Details of the material to be covered will be sent in advance.

Candidates are advised to avoid trying to cover too much in the lesson, but to have enough material to fill the time available: pupils at the school are of differing degrees of high ability and will expect to be involved in lessons that challenges them.

As part of our safer recruitment process please find here links to our Child Protection Policy, Safeguarding Statement and Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy.

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore the amendments to the Exceptions Order 1975 (2013 and 2020) provide that certain spent convictions and cautions are 'protected', are not subject to disclosure and cannot be taken into account. Further information about filtering offences can be found at DBS filtering guide. It is an offence for any applicant to apply for the role if the applicant is barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) guidance, we will conduct online searches to research information on shortlisted candidates, to determine suitability to work with children and keep them safe. This is not part of the shortlisting process; if there are any findings of concern, you will be given the opportunity to address them at interview.



## Excellence with integrity

At DCGS...

We work hard to help everyone feel safe and valued as part of our school

We are determined to give our best to everything we do

We are prepared for the opportunities and challenges of today and the future  
We serve the wider community

At DCGS We Value...

Aspiration



Kindness



Resilience



In All Our Actions And Intentions

At DCGS everyone learns through...

Teaching that is rigorous, engaging and high quality

Developing leadership at all levels

Maintaining a culture of high expectations

Showing a concern for everyone's wellbeing

Providing a first class learning environment

Ensuring a breadth of opportunities for all

Promoting an open and outward facing attitude

Engaging with the global potential of technology

Exploring innovative and sustainable approaches