St Mary's School
Gerrards Cross

Application Pack

Job Role: **Head's PA**

Start Date: ASAP

Closing Date: 9:00am on Friday 21st March 2025

Interview Date: W/C Monday 24th March 2025

Welcome from Headmistress

St Mary's is quite simply a wonderful school. The experience of each individual student is at the heart of all that we do. Our warm and inspiring environment encompasses a supportive framework where our students, whether in Pre-Prep, Prep, Senior House or Sixth Form, are encouraged to take risks, be creative, think for themselves, learn to make good choices and to embrace a challenge.

All of our students are encouraged to aim for excellence in all of their pursuits, to be kind to each other and look for opportunities to make a difference in the wider world. Students here 'dream big' we prepare our students for their future lives and careers to be compassionate, caring and confident young women.

The opportunities at St Mary's, including those for leadership and co-curricular activities, are wide ranging, the academic and pastoral focus unsurpassed and the ability to tailor your daughter's education unrivalled.

Please visit our website to give you a brief insight into our wonderful school. I do hope you will come and meet us to discuss this important role.

Mrs. Patricia Adams, Headmistress

About St Mary's School

St Mary's is an independent day school for girls aged 3-18 in the heart of Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire.

Founded in Paddington in 1872, the school moved to its present site in 1942. Class sizes average 16-18 and academic outcomes are excellent.

St Mary's School is warm friendly community where parents, staff, students, and governors work together to ensure that every student exceeds her potential whilst having the time of her life, making memories, and building skills to equip her to be successful through her future years.

Our students leave with the resilience to take on the next challenge, the ambition to follow their dreams and the confidence in themselves to go from success to success in their future careers. Through the pastoral and classroom support she has received at St Mary's, she knows her worth, who she is as an individual, and what she wants to go on to do.

Well-being and happiness of staff and students alike is at the heart of our success – a happy school is a successful school!

Joining St Mary's staff community, you would be welcomed into a supportive, close-knit community who can regularly be found spending lunch times in the Senior or Prep staff room, enjoying social time outside of school, competing in the teacher's relay, performing in the school orchestra or at an open mic event, and can even be caught on a space hopper on the lawn on the last day of term!

St Mary's School Values

St Mary's is committed to providing an excellent education in a caring, happy environment, where each girl develops self-confidence and exceeds her potential.

Staff and students, alike, are encouraged to find their own SMS Spirit by exploring our huge range of Co-Curricular activities to try new skills and meet new people, explore different learning or teaching techniques in small classes and make friends from Nursery right through to Sixth Form through our House System and whole school opportunities that brings.

Staff are supported in their roles through Department Heads, and SLT links, with wellbeing at the heart of staff satisfaction and the positive morale which we pride ourselves on. A comprehensive CPD programme allows for staff members to grow personally and professionally and broaden their skills in their specialist areas finding their very own SMS Spirit in their own individual ways.

Our whole school community operates under our Take Care acronym which ensures each individual reaches his or her potential in a supportive and challenging environment.

T – Team Work – we work together to ensure we achieve the best outcomes for our students, pastorally and academically, and that as a staff community we work in a supportive, collaborative caring team who have each other's backs.

A – Ambition – we go above and beyond in everything we do. We look for the WOW factor at every opportunity.

K – Kindness – through our ethos runs the theme of kindness. Everything our staff and students do should consider kindness first.

E – Enthusiasm – staff and students alike bring the energy and desire to succeed.

C – Curiosity – we always ask why.

A – Adventure – work should be exciting, satisfying and thrilling – we are spending time doing what we feel passionately about.

R – Resilience – we carry on in the face of challenge, and come out stronger and wiser.

E – Excellence – aim for the highest quality in all that we do.

Why Work at St Mary's?

- Competitive Salary
- Support staff pension scheme
- 30% fee Remission at St Mary's
- 25% fee Remission at Thorpe House
- Subsidised staff socials
- Annual pay review

- Hot daily meal
- Use of fitness suite
- On-site parking if available
- Free annual flu vaccine
- Electric Car purchase Scheme
- Cycle to work Scheme

- Full staff induction in Term 1
- Staff buddy system
- Full training and development program
- Equal opportunities for all
- Well-being committee to share ideas

All staff share responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of our pupils and mush adhere to, and comply with, the school's safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times.

The Role – Head's PA

This is an essential role at St Mary's, where our strong sense of community is one of our most cherished values. In this role you will provide an accurate, timely, flexible and confidential service to the Head, supporting a variety of administrative tasks to ensure the smooth running of the Head's daily activities. We're looking for someone with excellent communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to interact with people at all levels. You will be regularly communicating with students of all ages, parents, staff, SLT, Governors and visitors.

As the main support to the Head, you'll need to be organised, efficient and reliable. Strong IT skills are essential, as is a sense of humour. An ability to remain calm under pressure will be greatly appreciated. Given the sensitive nature of the information you'll handle, maintaining complete confidentiality is paramount.

In return, you will quickly become a valued member of a warm, welcoming and supportive community. No two days are the same and there is never a dull moment. The hours for this role are term time plus 20 days in the holidays to be agreed. There is flexibility to work from home during the school holidays but there may be occasions where you are required to be on-site such as results day. We look forward to welcoming someone who is ready to make a positive impact in our school!

Main Duties

Main Duties	*Manage the Head's day to ensure that sufficient time is allocated to allow them to fulfil all aspects of their role.*
	Act as the first point of contact for students, staff, parents, Governors and other stakeholders looking to speak with the Head.
	Deal with telephone and face-to-face enquiries efficiently and in a professional and supportive manner.
	Liaise on the Head's behalf with the Heads of other schools as well as teaching and non-teaching staff within the school
	Filter phone calls and email enquiries, delegating tasks wherever possible to other members of the SLT.
	Assist the Head by providing PR support in the form of greetings cards, invitation to events, support for GSA Activities.
	Ensure the provision of hospitality for visitors and Governors at public events, including flowers and gifts as appropriate.
	Attend key school events such as Sports Day, Open Mornings, Speech Day and Carol Service as required and any other school events where the Head may require support.
	Welcome visitors on behalf of the Head.
	Make travel requirements as required.

Administration and Diary Management	*Prepare a daily and weekly schedule for the Head at the end of each day for the following day and/or following week.*
	Ensure that the Head is in possession of all relative information in advance of meetings, supported by the necessary files and papers.
	Carry out all admin tasks required by the Head and SLT including but not exclusively preparing letters, papers and reports.

Written Communication	*Ensure that the Head sees and gives approval to all correspondence and printed matter going out of school.*
	Prepare responses to routine correspondence for signature.
	Prepare minutes as required.
	Interpret Head's comments into draft written correspondence to be sent to relevant stakeholders.
	Develop written communication that's professional and upholds the school's vision and values.
	Proof-read outgoing communication to ensure it's of the highest standard.

SLT & Governors	*Attend SLT Meetings and produce and circulate meeting minutes and papers.*
	Liaise with School Governors and the Bursar's PA regarding Governor Meetings.
	Handle all confidential correspondence with discretion.

Event Organising	*Compose and organise the printing of invitations for Speech Day and Carol Service.*
	Organise invitations for Governors, current parents, new parents whose daughters are joining SMS in the September as well as new staff, former staff and friends of the school.
	Organise the seating plan.
	Liaise with the Site Team and Catering Team on all arrangements for the day.
	Collate and prepare the Annual report.

Other Responsibilities	*Read and follow the relevant school policies.*
	Respond with tact, sensitivity and awareness to pupils and parents in relation to duties undertaken.
	Maintain a high degree of confidentiality with regard to issues concerning members of staff and pupils.
	Contribute to the safety of children and young people and protect them from harm.
	To cover for Registrar when on holiday and assist HR Administrator on occasions as required.

Candidate Specification

Qualifications	*Minimum GCSE or equivalent level, including at least a Grade 4 (Grade C) in English and Maths.*
	Degree or equivalent level professional qualification would be desirable.

Knowledge and Skills	*Excellent oral and written communication skills.*
	Ability to respond quickly and effectively to issues that arise.
	Ability to plan, organise and prioritise to meet deadlines.
	Ability to produce meeting minutes and documents of a high quality.
	Ability to use own initiative and act accordingly.
	Excellent attention to detail.
	Ability to use a range of IT packages to a high standard.
	Ability to build effective working relationships with colleagues.
	An understanding of data protection and confidentiality.
	An understanding of safeguarding.

Experience	*Worked in a PA role previously (desirable)*
	Carrying out administrative tasks in a busy environment.
	Dealing with people face-to-face and over the phone.
	Working and collaborating in a team.
	Working with children or young people (desirable)
	Working in a school environment (desirable)
	Experience of using iSAMS or other school MIS system (desirable)

Safeguarding	*To adhere to School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.*

Candidate Specification

Personal Qualities	*Commitment to promoting the ethos and values of the school and getting the best outcomes for all students.*
	Commitment to acting with integrity, honesty, loyalty and fairness to safeguard the assets, financial probity and reputation of the school.
	Commitment to a team approach, exchanging ideas and providing support to colleagues where needed.
	Ability to work under pressure and prioritise effectively.
	Commitment to maintaining confidentiality at all times.
	Commitment to safeguarding and equality.
	Is able to embrace change and deal with difficult situations in a professional manner.
	Patient, flexible and adaptable, meticulous and conscientious.

Safeguarding

St Mary's School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its recruitment and selection of job applicants. The school expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment and be willing to undergo checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service.

How to Apply

Please complete an application form which can be obtained from the HR Administrator at hradmin@stmarysgx.co.uk or from our website www.stmarysschool.co.uk

Early applications are advised as the school reserves the right to appoint at any stage during the application process. Completed application forms and cover letters must be addressed to the Head and emailed to applications@stmarysgx.co.uk

Interviews will take approximately three hours and will be held at the school. As part of the process, you will be given a tour of the school and attend a panel interview. You will also be asked to provide documentation confirming your identity and qualifications and a search of an online social media presence may also be conducted as part of due diligence checks.

There is no need to visit St Mary's before applying, as the school website contains plenty of information, photos and all the school's policies. However, if you'd like to see the school in person, you are most welcome to arrange a visit. Interviews will, of course, include a tour. All applications will be acknowledged and interview dates are provided below. References will be requested for all those invited to interview.

Closing date for applications: 9:00am Friday 21st March 2025
Interview date: W/C Monday 24th March 2025
Hours: 8:00am – 5:30pm Term time plus 20 days to be agreed with flexibility to work from home during school holidays.
Salary: Competitive