

**St Mary’s Catholic School**

*where everyone can succeed*

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**Headteacher’s Introduction**

Thank you for your interest in our School Chaplain post which, we believe, is a great opportunity to join our highly successful school at a very exciting point in its development.

St Mary’s is a great place to work, first and foremost because of our fantastic students. The majority come from our nine Catholic partner primaries and a sizeable minority from other schools across the city and beyond, including from overseas. The majority are Catholics but we welcome equally students from many Faith backgrounds. There is an excellent ethnic, socio-economic and academic mix in the school. Children from 40 countries are on roll, with 30+ mother tongues, though almost all of these EAL students have excellent English. This diversity within the student body is one of the many positive features of St Mary’s and it is very rewarding to serve these wonderful students in a happy and inclusive community. The roll was just 850 in 2009 and will have grown to 1250 by September 2016, with full year groups of around 200 in Years 7-11. The Sixth Form currently has about 200 students and this is set to grow to around 300 over the next three years. The school’s significant growth in recent years is all the more noteworthy as it has come at a time of surplus places and falling rolls elsewhere in Newcastle’s secondary sector.

St Mary’s benefits from having excellent staff, both teaching and support. The staff are the school’s greatest asset and, therefore, the task of appointing new staff is always given great importance. Governors are really committed to the school and are very supportive of staff, as are parents. In parental surveys, the average satisfaction rate to questions about the school is regularly well over 90%. We also enjoy a very strong partnership with our family of primaries, all of whom are fully supportive of St Mary’s. Links with parishes are strong as is our partnership with Diocesan and Local Authority schools.

St Mary’s has been judged Outstanding four times in the last six years, in our full Ofsted inspection, in our subject inspection of English and, in our previous and most recent Diocesan inspections. I would encourage you to read our inspection reports to get a sense of some of the school’s many strengths. Since our last full inspection in 2009, our School Improvement Partner’s Annual Reports to Governors have continued to grade all aspects of the school as Outstanding. The LA supports this view of St Mary’s, as does the Diocese. The DfE recognised St Mary’s status as an outstanding school by naming us as a National Support School (NSS) in 2011. We do increasing amounts of school to school support as a NSS.

Our students’ progress and attainment are excellent, among the very best in the north-east and UK. St Mary’s is one of 6 north-east schools with the highest value added achievement score, when measured across all the Ebacc subjects of English, Maths, Sciences, Languages and Humanities. Attainment over the last years has averaged the following very high figures:-

* Best 8 Value Added has been significantly above the national average for the last 5 years
* 4 year average of 69% A\*-C with English and Maths, well above the national average
* Excellent English and Maths results over the last 4 years, 77% A\*-C and 79% respectively
* Outstanding Expected Progress results in both English, 82% and Maths, 79%, in last 4 years
* Outstanding score of 807 points per A level student in 2015

High standards of academic achievement are, however, just one element of our mission to provide our students with the best possible holistic education. Their all-round development is equally important. As a Catholic school, nurturing children’s spiritual development is central to everything we do. This aspect of school life is flourishing. Teachers and school leaders do not need to be Catholic to work here but they do need to be committed to understanding and actively promoting the school’s distinctive Catholic/Christian ethos in their daily work. We have an excellent climate for learning in school. Students are extremely well behaved in and out of lessons. This is a key ingredient in the school’s on-going success and popularity with parents. I would strongly encourage you to read our Main School Prospectus, as it will give you a good flavour of our pastoral distinctiveness and the curriculum organisation of the school.

The appointment of high calibre staff from within and beyond the school has been a significant factor in St Mary’s achievements and, as such, the appointment of a Chaplain is extremely important to us. We are seeking a hard-working, flexible individual who enjoys working with young people. We envisage this post will be of interest to a wide variety of applicants. The Job Description outlines the main responsibilities of the post and the Person Specification summarises the key qualities required.

I hope that you will be keen to apply.  To apply, please complete the CES application form and include a supporting letter outlining the qualifications, experience, skills and attributes which you can offer. Your letter should be 1,300 words maximum. Please note there is no need to complete section 6, the supporting statement section of the CES application form, as your covering letter will outline your suitability for the post. Could I ask all applicants to include in the qualifications section of the form, details of their degree class and division, as well as A-level grades, as the CES form, which we cannot alter, does not make this clear.

Your completed application, along with your disclosure form, should be returned, marked for the attention of Mrs Julie Patterson (Headteacher’s P.A.) by **9.00am on Friday 17th June 2016** to the above address, or alternatively emailed to [**julie.patterson@st-marys.newcastle.sch.uk**].

Signature - J Foster

John Foster

Headteacher