



OLA
OUR LADY'S
ABINGDON



APPOINTMENT OF
CHAPLAINCY COORDINATOR

PART-TIME

Message from the Head of OLA

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in working with us at Our Lady's Abingdon. I hope that what you read here will inspire you and help you decide whether applying to join the OLA community is the right move for you.

This is an exciting time to be joining OLA. As the new Head of OLA, I am honoured and privileged to be leading a school which is high performing in all areas, and which has the full support of the Governing Board to grow the school pupil headcount, invest in futureproofing the school and develop the staff so that they can empower our pupils to be the best that they can be. The value-added for A Level results in 2019 was +0.42 (well above average); pastoral care is child-centred and consistently of the highest quality, and; the co-curricular programme is growing from strength to strength.

OLA is defined by its Catholic ethos and this underpins all that we do. Each child who joins us embarks on an educational journey, directed by our mission statement, *providing for each one in accordance with their needs* and encouraged by our ethos summed up in our school motto, *"Whatever you do, do it well"*. Our ethos provides an individual approach that ensures we uncover a child's potential and nurture them to achieve, enabling them to thrive both academically and as people.

Our ethos is reflected in the positive relationships that exist between all members of our school community. We are proud of our distinctive family atmosphere, which fosters a tangible sense of community and happy relationships between staff and pupils.

If you choose to apply for this post, we will give your application all the seriousness it deserves. OLA is a wonderful, vibrant and happy environment in which to work, with a palpable sense of belonging among our staff. The role we are looking to fill is important to the flourishing of the school and I hope you will feel that you are the person to fill it.

Kind regards,



Mr Daniel Gibbons





ABOUT THE SCHOOL

OLA is a Catholic co-educational day school located close to Oxford in the heart of Abingdon, welcoming pupils of all faiths and none. It was established by an Order of Catholic nuns founded by the Venerable Catherine McAuley called the Sisters of Mercy, who came to Abingdon in 1860 at the invitation of Sir George Bowyer of Radley Park. Reverend Mother Clare Moore was a national heroine who had worked closely with Florence Nightingale during the Crimean War - their joint portrait, entitled 'The Mission of Mercy', hangs in the National Portrait Gallery. Recently returned from Constantinople, Mother Clare brought three young Sisters to Abingdon on January 10th 1860 and teaching commenced the very next day. The girls' and boys' schools, now Our Lady's School, were actively run by Sisters for almost a century.

Our co-educational ethos provides an atmosphere where pupils are at ease with one another and natural relationships are fostered. OLA is a purposeful, outward-looking school with a happy, family atmosphere that gives children the freedom to develop within a structured framework. As our school motto says: *age quod agis* – whatever you do, do it well.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission statement reflects the reality of daily life at OLA, and encompasses the vision and values of our founding Sisters at Our Lady of Mercy. 'As God's family we learn to love, respect and forgive - guided by His Word'.

We believe that God creates each of us as a unique person with gifts that need to be recognised, celebrated and developed. Inspired by the words of our foundress, Catherine McAuley, "To each according to their needs", we encourage a respect for every individual, regardless of background, beliefs or ability.

Our aim is to develop a loving, caring and welcoming community in which all may grow as children of God. In partnership with parents and the wider community we seek to respond to God's invitation to faith, mercy and love. To develop skills for life in an ever-changing world, we cherish integrity, compassion, openness, forgiveness and reconciliation, co-operation and courage. We nurture wisdom, the value of learning, independent thinking, a sense of self-worth and care for each other that all may reach their full potential.

AIMS AND ETHOS

The following are central to our Mission Statement and the school wishes to foster a happy, caring Christian atmosphere in which these aims may be realised:

Aims	Ethos
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage respect for the worth of the individual and in this way to develop self-confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We believe that every human being is created to become a unique person with gifts that should be accepted and valued
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable all pupils to achieve their full potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our foundress Catherine McAuley said: "To each according to their needs" We owe it to our pupils to help them recognise and achieve the best of which they are capable, to obtain the qualifications they need and to develop a sense of personal fulfilment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To guide pupils to make informed moral choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A sound Christian framework is important as a basis for the whole of their lives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop independent thinking and a love of learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the basis of life-long learning



Our Lady's Abingdon is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

ACADEMIC

OLA promotes a challenging and progressive curriculum, which reflects the learning requirements of each individual pupil. It aims to nurture independent, analytical and creative thinking and to build the confidence in our pupils to articulate clearly their views of the world around them.

The School achieves strong academic results, as a result of effective and well-developed relationships between pupils and staff and a positive attitude to learning. In 2020, an 89.4% pass rate was achieved at GCSE, with 70.1% of all grades at 9 to 6. A Level results were equally impressive, with 79.5% of all grades at A* to B and with a 100% pass rate. OLA's value-added is outstanding, year on year.

In Years 7, 8 and 9, pupils study Mathematics, English, Science, a Modern Foreign Language (French or Spanish), Geography, History and Religious Studies as core subjects, alongside other practical-based subjects such as Art, Drama, Music, Design Technology, Food and Nutrition, Latin, PE, Textiles, and Computer Science. Year 9 pupils choose up to four of these practical subjects to study in greater depth.

At GCSE, pupils choose up to three optional subjects in addition to their core subjects of Mathematics, English, Science (Double or Triple), a Modern Foreign Language (French or Spanish) and Religious Studies. There is the option to study an additional Modern Foreign Language (French or Spanish) and Further Maths.

This wide range of options is also offered at A Level, in addition to Economics, Philosophy, Ethics and Religion, Psychology, Classical Civilisation and Business Studies. Sixth Form pupils study three A Levels, with many choosing the additional option of the Extended Project Qualification. University application and career choice guidance is excellent, and the majority of OLA sixth leavers go on to their first choice of university and to study a diverse range of subjects.

OLA provides academic enrichment beyond the classroom and curriculum. A strong track record exists of enriching pupil experiences by applying their learning in real contexts through a varied trips programme. The School runs a McAuley Lecture programme for scholars in all years, which seeks to enrich pupil experiences and extend their learning beyond the classroom. Lower Sixth pupils benefit from tailored programmes in preparation for life beyond school, and there is a parallel path for those who have expressed an interest in Oxbridge.



THE WHOLE PERSON

OLA offers a growing programme of activities that enable our pupils to explore passions and to develop important skills and characteristics, including teamwork and determination, all within the safety of a caring and compassionate community. The rich programme of activities caters for broad tastes, from creative arts, coding and textiles to a variety of academic clinics.

The School has a particularly impressive offering in the performing arts. Several choirs and orchestral groups provide regular music performance opportunities, and take-up of instrumental lessons is high. Music partnerships with local schools are strong, and visiting musicians provide a series of masterclasses. OLA has its own drama studio and theatre. Pupils across the school community are involved in productions, including an annual inclusive whole-school musical. The School is also a LAMDA (London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art) centre through which pupils can develop skill and confidence in public speaking, articulation, presentation and acting skills.

OLA offers a range of sports for all ages and abilities to encourage participation, fitness and an enjoyment of team sport. Sports on offer include swimming, gymnastics, cricket, athletics, rugby, netball, hockey and football. OLA has generous facilities including a heated indoor swimming pool and access to the extensive range of facilities at the Tilsley Park Centre. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme is also popular at OLA, with many pupils supported through to the Silver and Gold Awards.

In the development of our pupils OLA pays special attention to pastoral care and spiritual nourishment, promoted by all staff but particularly by our dedicated chaplaincy team that arranges retreats, assemblies and liturgies. Our beautiful Chapel is a real centre for prayer and our Catholic ethos ensures all pupils, whatever their background, have opportunities to step back from the busy school day and benefit from quiet reflection. We have a justified reputation for being a caring, compassionate and nurturing school with a calm purpose that gives all pupils the opportunity to thrive in a safe environment.

OLA prepares children for life. Pupils leave us at 18 as young men and women not only equipped academically for university, but as well-balanced individuals with the confidence to make their way successfully in the world beyond school. Following their chosen paths with enthusiasm and confidence, they can use the broad skills they have acquired at OLA to become valuable members of society.



RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAPLAINCY COORDINATOR AT OLA

OLA is conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with Canon Law and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. The school has been designated by the Secretary of State as a school with a religious character. At all times, the School is to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is important that the postholder will ensure the school is distinctively Catholic in all its aspects.

The purpose of the Chaplaincy Coordinator post is to actively support staff and pupils in equipping them to share in the mission of OLA and the Church. In this way, the role of the Chaplaincy Coordinator supports the responsibility of all staff to invite, foster and encourage the Catholic life of the school.

The Chaplaincy Coordinator, through their work and witness, will support the wider chaplaincy function of OLA in its delivery of the spiritual and pastoral care of all members of the School community. They will have a central role in supporting and developing the Catholic life of the school through Chaplaincy. They will help to support the nurturing of the faith formation and liturgical life of the School community of both staff and pupils. The Chaplaincy Coordinator may also work to enhance the Religious Education curriculum where appropriate.

The School is committed to giving the successful appointee all necessary support to help them make a success of this extremely important role.

KEY ASPECTS OF THE ROLE

Witness

- To help people to recognise God's love for them and the invitation that God offers them.
- To inspire through example.
- To encourage staff and pupils to live out their faith by being involved in projects relating to social justice and global citizenship.

Spiritual Leadership

- To support the Head in their role as spiritual leader of the Catholic school community.
- To be a visible and approachable presence around the school for pupils/pupils and staff.
- To accompany people at particular stages of their journey through life.
- To pray for pupils and staff alike in ordinary and extraordinary times.
- To support and further develop the spiritual, religious and liturgical life of the school.
- To use a collaborative style of ministry that encourages a team approach to Chaplaincy.
- To offer opportunities of prayer for staff and pupils and, where appropriate, collaborate with other areas of the school, including music, performing arts and Religious Studies to support prayer and liturgy.
- To seek to engage pupils in prayer, liturgy and the sacramental life of the Church, particularly the Eucharist and Sacrament of Reconciliation where appropriate.
- To form good working relationships with the parish priest to support sacramental and non-sacramental engagement with the school, and facilitate partnership working with the local and wider Church.
- To work with others to coordinate and develop suitable activities to mark and celebrate the major feasts and seasons of the Church, and significant events in the life of the school and of local, national and international communities.

- To co-ordinate, prepare and lead retreat days, days of reflection and other spiritual activities appropriate to the age and understanding of the participants
- To lead pupils and staff in a fuller appreciation of the richness and beauty of Liturgy through collective worship and prayer.
- To advise and support staff in fulfilment of their duty to support the Catholic ethos of the school, including the provision of suitable resources for prayer and worship.
- To ensure the school environment and displays reflect the school's Catholic identity.
- To oversee the good order of the Chaplaincy spaces.
- To care for any sacred space in school, especially where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.
- To signpost pupils to other opportunities to deepen their faith relationship with God and the wider church.
- To celebrate and share the faith life of the school with the wider community

Education

- In a non-teaching capacity, to support and enhance the RS curriculum, where appropriate.
- To help educate staff on the teachings and perspectives of the Catholic Church
- To provide induction sessions to new staff, which enable them to understand the teachings and perspectives of the Catholic Church.
- To train and support staff in the preparation and delivery of acts of prayer and worship.

Professional

- To attend meetings and advise the Leadership Team, where appropriate.
- To meet regularly with the line manager (Head of Faculty RS).
- To attend, where possible, staff meetings and any other meetings and staff CPD in line with the wider role of understanding and walking alongside staff as appropriate
- To engage with CPD relevant to the role of Chaplaincy Coordinator.
- To lead school based CPD for staff in relation to the Catholic life of the school.
- To liaise with Diocesan agencies, groups and individuals, where appropriate
- To undertake such other duties as may reasonably be required by the Headteacher

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- Fully understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church with a sound spiritual and theological understanding.
- Possess personal and professional integrity.
- Ability to demonstrate sensitivity to the needs of others (regardless of faith/belief, gender, race or disability).
- Be a good listener, clear thinker, and capable organiser.
- Have an understanding of liturgy for children and young people, and an ability to coordinate and engage children and young people in prayer, worship and sacramental life.
- Ability to provide opportunities for staff and pupils/pupils to deepen their spiritual life, for example through the organisation of retreats and days of recollection.
- Ability to address large groups and conduct one-to-one dialogue with sensitivity.
- An effective communicator with excellent inter-personal skills.
- Good administrative and organisational skills required to undertake the role.
- Willing to undertake appropriate professional training and development.
- Ability to work under pressure

- Ability to maintain professional working relationships; have regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory safeguarding procedures.
- A clear Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced check and for there to be no concerns with regard to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

DESIRABLE

- Educated to degree level.
- Experience of working with young adults (eg parish Youth Ministry or general youth work).
- Hold a specific Chaplaincy qualification (or qualification that supports the work of a school Chaplain).



WORKING AT OLA

Salary

OLA has its own salary scale. Experience and qualifications are considered when setting starting salaries.

Benefits

- Lunch is provided at no cost during term time, with tea and coffee available throughout the day. Light meals are provided to staff who are required to work in the evening for school events.
- Free on-site parking.
- Personal Pension Scheme, support staff are entitled to join the school's pension scheme after 1 months' employment. Employees contributes 6% and OLA contributes 13.5% of monthly pay.
- CPD and training are encouraged and the school has an exciting annual INSET programme for staff.
- Staff have agreed access to the School's equipment and facilities, including the indoor swimming pool.

Non-contractual benefits are given at the discretion of the Governing body and can be withdrawn without notice.

LOCATION

The school is located in Abingdon-on-Thames, an historic market town situated eight miles to the south of Oxford with its world-renowned reputation as a centre of academic excellence. The town supports a mixed, international community which enjoys a good selection of restaurants, cafes and bars situated a just few minutes' walk away from the river and gardens of Abbey Meadows. The town benefits from excellent bus links to Oxford, which is just a 15-minute ride away and provides a wealth of social and cultural opportunities.



SELECTION PROCESS

- Applications will be considered on a rolling basis until a successful appointment is made, early applications are therefore encouraged.
- Applicants are asked to submit a completed application form, available online via the TES website (<https://www.tes.com/jobs/employer/-1030286>). No other form of application will be accepted.
- Ensure that your application form is completed in full, and no gaps are left in your employment history.
- Two referees should be provided, one of whom must be your current or most recent employer.
- Applicants will be required to prove their right to work in the UK at interview. The School is unable to offer sponsorship to candidates who do not have worker status.
- The successful candidate will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, in addition to other necessary safeguarding measures.
- For any outstanding queries please contact Mrs Julie Braley at headspa@ola.org.uk

