



OLA
OUR LADY'S
ABINGDON



APPOINTMENT OF
TEACHER OF KEY STAGE 2

FOR SEPTEMBER 2024

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF OLA

Dear Candidate,

This is an exciting time to be joining OLA and a future of opportunity awaits the successful candidate. As the 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 versions of themselves. The value-added for public exam results is excellent; pastoral care is child-centered 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 right person to fill it.

Kind regards,



Mr. Daniel Gibbons
Head of OLA



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 Abingdon 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 created 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

- To encourage respect for the worth of the individual and in this way to develop self-confidence
- To enable all pupils to achieve their full potential
- To guide pupils to make informed moral choices
- To develop independent thinking and a love of learning

ETHOS

We believe that every human being is created to become a unique person with gifts that should be accepted and valued.

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.

A sound Christian framework is important as a basis for the whole of their lives

This is the basis of life-long learning

KEY STAGE 2 ('LOWER SCHOOL')

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.

Key Stage (Years 3 to 6) is known as 'Lower School', and Years 7 to Upper Sixth (Year 13) is 'Senior School'.

In Lower School, we aim to 'make learning exciting'. Our children enjoy learning and make excellent progress because they have passionate teachers who inspire enthusiasm. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and to develop their independence. Exciting lessons are supplemented by school trips, workshops and cross curricular activities.

Progress is carefully monitored throughout the year. Pupils sit verbal and non-verbal reasoning tests complemented by Maths and English assessments at the end of the academic year. The results of these assessments are reported as a standardised score, which becomes the following year's baseline prediction. Parents are updated on their child's progress through termly reports and the biannual parents' evenings, and parents are also always welcome to discuss their child's learning with the year group teacher (Form Tutor) at any time. For those who need additional help, Learning Support is available.

In Years 3 and 4, our aim is for the children gradually to become more independent and to begin to build a platform for further learning and life experiences in Years 5 and 6. The children are taught by their Class Teacher for the majority of lessons, and this ensures a secure and vibrant learning environment. Children's learning is further enriched by specialist teaching in Music, Design Technology, French, PE and swimming. Homework is set regularly, incorporating Maths and English, as well as some other subjects as appropriate.

In Years 5 and 6, one of our principal aims is to work closely with pupils, parents and our Head of Year 7 and Transition to prepare children for Senior School. OLA Lower School pupils moving to OLA Senior School are not required to sit an entrance examination. The children benefit from being able to access more specialist teaching in our Senior School, including use of Science laboratories, the Design and Technology Centre and Sports facilities.



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.

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. OLA is very much a Year 3 to Upper Sixth 'through school', and there are many opportunities for collaboration between the Lower and Senior Schools. From Year 3, OLA pupils are encouraged to follow their chosen paths with enthusiasm and confidence, and to develop mutual respect, personal integrity and an appreciation of their personal gifts, so that they can become valuable members of society.



JOB DESCRIPTION

OLA seeks to appoint an experienced Key Stage 2 teacher to join the Lower School team on a full-time basis. Candidates should be able to demonstrate the following skills/qualities:

- an outstanding Class Teacher who is inspirational, enthusiastic and highly motivated
- confident teaching all curriculum subjects in Key Stage 2, especially English and Mathematics
- ability to promote high standards of attainment and behavior
- ability to plan and prepare lessons appropriate to the class and individuals
- ability to confidently communicate and consult with parents, and prepare reports
- ability to promote pupil wellbeing and collaboratively work with the pastoral team.
- a team player who is passionate and excited about joining OLA Lower School in a time of growth and new leadership.
- commitment to and able to support the School values and ethos

THE LOWER SCHOOL

The Lower School forms a key part of the wider School community, and shares the same site as, and many facilities of, the Senior School. In September 2024, the Lower School will comprise of three full-time teachers and two teaching assistants. Our classrooms are bright and airy, well-resourced and benefit from a desktop computer and interactive whiteboard. Class sizes are small and pupils are keen to learn and progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE POST

All teachers are expected to share in break and lunchtime duties, run extra-curricular clubs, attend relevant parents' evenings, staff/departmental meetings, Open Days and other such activities as directed by the Head of KS2.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Honors degree in a relevant subject/ PGCE	X	
QTS	X	
Experience		
Teaching experience across the full age and ability range at KS2	X	
Teaching experience across the full age and ability range at KS1		X
Experience of subject leadership		X
Experience of working with children with SEN and EAL		X
Skills/ Knowledge and Abilities		
Outstanding and enthusiastic classroom teacher	X	
Track record of motivating learners and raising achievement	X	
Ability to use assessment data to inform planning and set targets	X	
Ability to work as part of a team	X	
Excellent written communication skills	X	
Excellent organisational skills	X	
Excellent oral communication skills with staff, students & parents	X	
Positive, enthusiastic, flexible with a pro-active 'can do' attitude	X	
A commitment to using ICT to develop learning	X	
Excellent IT skills	X	
Involvement in departmental planning	X	
Personal Qualities		
A sense of humour and genuine understanding and liking for our students	X	
Excellent interpersonal skills	X	
Enthusiasm	X	
Creativity	X	
Approachable, open and honest	X	
Dedicated, conscientious and hard working	X	
Commitment to safeguarding and the welfare of students	X	
Understanding of and commitment to OLA's ethos	X	

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. Snacks and light meals are provided to staff who are required to work in the evening for school events.

Free on-site parking.

CPD and training are encouraged and the school has an exciting annual INSET programme for staff.

Full support for teachers wishing to complete an on-the-job PGCE.

Staff have agreed access to the School's equipment and facilities, including the indoor swimming pool.

Pension

The School participates in the DfE Teachers' Pension Scheme and also offers a generous contributory pension scheme for all support staff.

School Fee Reduction

Teaching staff benefit from a staff discount on basic tuition fees of 50% for full-time staff, pro rata for part-time staff, and qualify for this benefit after completing two years of service.

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

- Application deadline: **Sunday 21 April 2024**
- Applications should be made via the online application form which can be accessed on the TES website at www.tes.com/jobs/employer/-1030286.
- Ensure that your application form is completed in full with no gaps in your education/employment history.
- Two referees should be provided, one of whom must be your current or most recent employer.
- In addition to the interview, candidates can expect to complete other selection exercises.
- Applicants will be required to prove their right to work in the UK at interview. The School cannot offer sponsorship to candidates who do not already have the right to work in the UK.
- The successful candidate will be required to undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and social media check, in addition to other necessary safeguarding measures.
- For any outstanding queries please contact Mrs Julie Braley at headsqa@ola.org.uk
- We aim to acknowledge receipt of applications within 24 hours, however acknowledgment is not always possible during holiday periods.

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.

