



# Head of Chemistry

Full-Time or 0.8 FTE

## Job Description





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We seek to appoint from September 2026 a well qualified, enthusiastic and energetic Head of Chemistry.

The post becomes available from September 2026 and offers applicants either a chance to move into management for the first time as a Head of Department, or an opportunity for an existing Head of Chemistry to gain further experience. The successful candidate will join a well-established, happy, and thriving department where high standards are expected of staff as well as pupils, but in a lively and supportive atmosphere.

## About St Catherine's School

St Catherine's was founded in 1885 and in 2025 celebrated 140 years of successful education for girls. The School is an Independent Church of England Day and Boarding School, in membership of the Girls' Schools' Association and the International Coalition of Girls' Schools, with 770 pupils aged between 3 and 18. The Prep School has 220 pupils aged 3 to 11 and the Senior School 550 pupils aged 11 to 18, of whom some 165 are in the Sixth Form and 150 are boarders aged 11 to 18. The School is situated in a 25-acre site in the village of Bramley, three miles south of Guildford off the main Horsham Road (A281) and on the edge of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

St Catherine's is a selective academic girls' school which prides itself on its excellent A Level results and the university places which all its leavers secure, including good numbers at Oxbridge. However, this is not at the expense of our commitment to the broader ideal of an all-round education for all our pupils, which will prepare them for full and happy lives as well as successful careers.

The School underwent a full ISI Inspection under their new framework in October 2023 and the Inspectorate's report along with an Executive Summary from St Catherine's may be viewed [here](#). Our Good Schools Guide Reviews can be found [here](#) along with Parent Testimonials which can be found [here](#).

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## Personal and Professional Qualities Required

The successful applicant will be a highly motivated and effective teacher with a genuine passion for Chemistry and the subject expertise to inspire and challenge high-achieving girls. A dynamic and ambitious leader, they will be able to build on the department's existing strengths, drive innovation, and consistently uphold high standards. They will be organised, resourceful, and collaborative with strong interpersonal skills. They will be able to effectively lead and develop colleagues in the department, work closely with the Heads of Biology and Physics and make meaningful contributions to the wider team of Heads of Department.

## The Department

This post offers the successful candidate the opportunity to work with dedicated colleagues, committed to delivering the highest standard of teaching. We are a collaborative department and regularly share resources and good practice with each other. Working as part of a team is vital and the successful candidate will be expected to play a full role within the department. The School has 9 laboratories, 3 of which are well appointed Chemistry laboratories located adjacent to a dedicated Chemistry prep. room. The recently opened Catalyst Lab is shared by all three sciences and is a large, modern, well-equipped space designed with outreach opportunities in mind. There are currently five Chemistry teachers, some of whom hold additional responsibilities, supported by an experienced Chemistry technician who is also the Examinations Officer.



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## Subject Courses at St Catherine's

### Year 7 to Year 11

Chemistry is currently taught as a separate subject from Year 7 to Year 11 with one double period per week from Years 7 to 9 and then it is studied either as a Separate Science IGCSE subject (4 lessons per week) or in combination with Physics and Biology for the Double Award (DA) Certificate (3 lessons per week). There are currently three groups for Separate Science Chemistry in Year 10 and 2 groups studying DA. The Edexcel Pearson specifications are taught at IGCSE and A Level. Chemistry is one of the most popular subjects at A Level and next year there will be 2 groups in the Lower 6 and 3 groups in the Upper 6. The department runs a well attended Science club for middle school pupils. We have entered students for the RSC Chemistry Olympiad, Cambridge Chemistry Challenge, and RSC Schools' Analyst Competition. Extension classes are offered to interested students to provide the opportunity to prepare for competitions, admissions to university courses, and to gain experience of discussing scientific issues.

### Public Examination Results

Results are excellent. In 2025, the Chemistry A Level pass rate was 88% Grades A\*-C, with 72% Grades A\* and A. In 2025, at IGCSE in Separate Science Chemistry 79% at Grades 9-7. IGCSE Double Award results were 51% achieving grades 9,9-7,7. Every year girls gain places at the top universities, including Oxford, Cambridge, and Imperial, to read Chemistry or Chemistry-related subjects such as Biochemistry, Natural Sciences, Medicine, and Veterinary Science.





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## Practical Information about the Post

The precise teaching commitment will be sensibly devised to take into account the strengths and interests of the successful candidate. Opportunities for training and further professional development will be provided. The successful candidate would be expected to attend training courses both within school and outside, inevitably involving hours beyond their usual contractual week.

The successful candidate will be expected to:

### **Manage pupil learning and experience**

- be focused on Safeguarding of pupils at all times and be up to date with reading and understanding Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- demonstrate great enthusiasm for their subject, promoting it through the school, and encouraging departmental colleagues to do so too
- demonstrate strong knowledge and understanding of the concepts and skills of their subject and keep abreast of current thinking and development in the subject area and in terms of pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning in Chemistry
- ensure that lessons within the department are innovative, relevant and exciting through departmental preparation, planning and through regular learning walks
- keep up to date with changes in the National Curriculum, GCSE, and A Level specifications and ensure their implementation at school as appropriate
- ensure all members of the department are teaching to the schemes of work and the examination specifications
- ensure teaching is enhanced through a range of relevant resources and ensure that resources are shared amongst staff via the shared areas
- standardise prep, assessment, marking, and recording procedures within the department and in line with whole school policies
- ensure that the department assists each pupil to reach her full potential in the subject through implementation of rigorous ongoing assessment processes in line with school policy
- monitor pupil data produced by the Deputy Head (Academic) to ensure that teaching and learning is tailored appropriately to the ability of each pupil and to identify trends. This will include being alert to any indications of SPLDs or timing issues (this process may also require liaison with pastoral and Academic Mentoring staff)
- advise the Head and Senior Leadership Team on all matters relating to their subject

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## Practical Information about the Post (continued)

### Lead and develop colleagues

- provide vision and leadership for the department
- facilitate a regular exchange of ideas and resources within the department
- be responsible for the professional development of all the staff in the department, attending/organising INSET as appropriate
- devise and carry out a programme of routine lesson observations and marking scrutiny of all department colleagues, in support of their continuing professional development, the sharing of best practice, and the consistency of standards in the classroom and marking practice across the department
- appraise departmental members in line with School Policy, identifying and developing the skills and strengths of all members of the department
- lead weekly departmental meetings and arrange for minutes to be taken and circulated to SMT promptly
- play a part in the delivery of the new teacher or ITT/ECT induction programmes where relevant in line with School policies
- assist the Head in the selection and appointment of members of the Department

### Contribute to Pastoral, Extra Curricular and School objectives

- ensure the department offers an appropriate range of dynamic curriculum enrichment and extra-curricular activities for pupils
- become involved with extra-curricular activities relevant to the Department, including educational visits, and to the School as a whole, depending on the interests/particular talents of the candidate
- liaise with the Director of Studies, School Housemistresses and Housemaster, House Tutors and Sixth Form Tutors, Academic Mentoring Department, Head of Careers, and Oxbridge Co-ordinator as appropriate
- attend twice-termly twilight Heads of Department meetings, reporting back to the Department as necessary, weekly Heads of Sciences meetings and take a turn, on rotation with the HODS of Biology and Physics Geography, History, and RS, to represent science subjects at consultation forums
- market the department effectively to both internal and external candidates
- engage with and take an active part in the GSA South Central Region Cluster Group for your subject- a local networking group within Girls' schools locally - and take a turn to host and run an event for colleagues from time to time
- be aware of the need to contribute to the development of the School as well as the Department





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## Practical Information about the Post (continued)

### Administration

- ensure practical endorsement administration and moderation takes place and an internal review system is in place
- be responsible for the departmental handbook, including aims, schemes of work, and Subject Development Plans
- be responsible for the allocation and recording of termly ALLs (Attitude to Learning Levels), commended lessons, and any recommendations for Head's Commendations
- be responsible for internal school examinations and entries for external examinations.
- make an annual presentation to the Head and Deputy Head (Academic), reviewing the previous year's public exam outcomes and any other areas of current development or pedagogical thinking that are relevant at that time.
- be responsible for day-to-day displays and Open Morning/Day displays in the subject teaching rooms, working with the Sixth Form Subject Mentors
- to oversee that cover work is set
- attend Parents' Evenings and Open Mornings/Evenings, and deal with queries from parents
- be responsible for liaising with the Deputy Head (Academic) over school prizes and scholarships
- allocate teaching groups/lessons within the department, liaising with the Head, Deputy Head, Director of Studies, and the Examinations Officer/Timetabler as necessary

### Organisational and financial awareness and health and safety

- be responsible for departmental health and safety and risk assessments in line with Whole School Policies
- keep abreast of Health and Safety guidance relevant to the Chemistry department
- be responsible for the departmental budget, ordering, and maintaining departmental resources



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## Being an iPad School

We are committed to using digital learning alongside traditional educational values to offer the best of both worlds. The technology is there to support the learning. We make use of the iPads to redefine what we can do in a classroom to encourage collaboration, and to stretch, challenge and support students.

In 2014 St Catherine's became an iPad School, and all students from Year 5 to Year 10 have iPads that are the property of the School and are managed by the IT Department. Years 11 to 13 have their own iPads and/or laptops of choice in the Sixth Form.

A laptop is provided by the School for teaching in the Senior School. The School utilises a variety of screen-mirroring solutions and projectors/LFDs. Additional facilities include visualisers, microphones, and motorised desks which are commonplace. Staff are required to ensure that all resources needed for teaching are made available in an electronic format (Microsoft Teams/OneNote are our core educational tools) for downloading by girls and interacting on the iPad.

Strong general ICT skills are therefore a requirement, though high levels of technical ability in ICT are not. ICT training and support are thoroughly delivered and supported to all colleagues.

Support is freely available to all staff from the Director of Digital Technologies and the Head of Digital Learning.

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## Extra Curricular Activities

All members of staff are asked to make a contribution to some areas of the extra-curriculum and from time to time to assist with an occasional evening event to help support events like the school plays or major concerts. These can often be combined with watching the girls in action in another sphere from the classroom and seeing another side to them which can be very helpful.

All part-time and full-time staff also contribute, pro rata, to supervising Day Girls prep time in the Library after school from 4.30pm to 5.30pm or 5.30pm to 6.30pm respectively roughly twice per term. Part-time colleagues are asked to staff the earlier slot that fits in with their timetables.

## Statutory ECT Induction, Staff Induction, Staff Review and Continuing Professional Development

The School offers statutory ECT induction, as provided by the Independent Schools' Council, and a strong and well-established system of mentoring and support for ECTs. We have a well-established Initial Teacher Training Programme and consider applications from good graduates seeking school-based teacher training. All new staff are given electronic access to a Staff Handbook and School Policies well ahead of their joining the School and are given full induction training at the start of their first term. Subsequent twilight sessions also offer training in other specific areas, e.g. report writing.

The School is committed to the continuing professional development of its staff and there is an annual review procedure, conducted by a line manager. INSET opportunities are provided for the whole staff three times a year, and for individual staff, often arising out of discussions during the annual review.

St Catherine's School is committed to the proper Safeguarding of its students. All staff are required to undertake Child Protection Training as part of their induction and every three years thereafter, and to undertake Prevent training.

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## Pastoral Roles

Full-time roles usually come with pastoral responsibility for a small tutor group. If such a post is not available initially, other opportunities will arise from time to time and will be advertised in the Staff Room.

Whilst every effort has been made to outline the main duties, responsibilities and requirements of the post, the list is not exhaustive. The successful candidate will be expected to comply with any reasonable request from their direct line manager or other members of the management/leadership team to undertake work of a similar level that is not specified in this job description.

It is understood that areas of responsibility are from time to time subject to review and change in light of the changing needs of the school environment and the professional development of the staff. This job description may therefore be amended from time to time.

## Accommodation

Accommodation on site may be available in return for boarding duties. Opportunities can be explored at interview.

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## Other Benefits

Lunch is provided daily and all staff enjoy access to the School's leisure facilities for a small one-off joining fee: pool, tennis courts, squash court, fitness suite - when these are not in use by the girls or other visiting courses. Other meals will be provided if staff are required to work during the evenings. Other meals such as breakfast and supper may be taken regularly for a very modest charge, payable in advance.

A fee concession is offered for the education of daughters of staff at St Catherine's, if a place is available and the girl passes the entrance examination. For part-time staff any fee concession is calculated on a pro rata basis.

From September 2026 new Teaching Staff will be automatically enrolled in the School's Defined Contribution Scheme, expected to be APTIS (through Aviva).

St Catherine's offers a health cash plan, which covers an individual employee and their family members. The plan provides cash to pay for a range of services including dental, optician, physio, hospital, prescription services, 24 hour GP, and personal accident to name a few, and is a taxable expense. This benefit is reviewed annually.

The school offer a cycle to work salary sacrifice scheme and free parking.

Full-time teaching staff in the Senior School currently have an allocated free half day each week, usually an afternoon, or some other equivalent block of non-contact time, if this can be timetabled. However, this is a non-contractual privilege and it is expected that the member of staff would remain in school during this time if there were a special school event requiring his/her attendance, or if he/she needed to catch up on work after some days' sickness leave, for example, or an INSET day out of school.





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## Applications

The application should be completed on My New Term using the link to job opportunities below by 10am on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April and should take the form of:

- a letter of application relating to the specific job description for the post,
- the completed My New Term Application Form provided with these details/found on the School website at [www.stcatherines.info/welcome/job-opportunities](http://www.stcatherines.info/welcome/job-opportunities)
- a curriculum vitae if you wish to submit one to complement the above documents

**Applications will be assessed in order of receipt and interviews may occur at any stage after applications are received. Please apply as soon as possible.**

Candidates will have their applications acknowledged and if you do not hear from us after a few days, please contact the HR Administrator by email on [jobapplications@stcatherines.info](mailto:jobapplications@stcatherines.info).

Thank you for your interest in St Catherine's School.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Watson'.

Emma Watson, Head  
April 2026



# St Catherine's School BRAMLEY

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Registered Charity Number: 1070858