



Groundskeeper and Maintenance Caretaker Candidate Information Pack

Telephone: 01206 572544 Email: careers@stmaryscolchester.org.uk

Website: www.stmaryscolchester.org.uk/vacancies



Dear Applicants,

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

Founded in 1908 by the Bilson sisters, St Mary's has been educating girls from Colchester and the surrounding area for well over a century. As we approach our 120th anniversary in 2028, we are proud of our heritage and ambitious for the next phase of the school's development.

From its earliest days, St Mary's has been shaped by a bold conviction: that girls deserve an education rooted in scholarship, confidence and character. That founding vision remains central to who we are today. Our task now is to honour that inheritance while sharpening our distinctiveness as an academically ambitious school, where curiosity, high expectations and a love of learning matter deeply.

Since joining St Mary's, I have been struck by the strength of the community: the professionalism of staff, the quality of relationships and the genuine care shown to every girl. These are powerful foundations on which to build. Our aspiration is straightforward but demanding: to be a school known equally for warmth and scholarship; a place where pastoral care and academic ambition are not competing ideas, but mutually reinforcing strengths.

We are ambitious for our pupils and for our staff. At St Mary's, we are committed to providing a rigorous and engaging education, alongside strong pastoral care and a breadth of opportunity that enables every girl to thrive. We believe girls flourish when academic challenge is ambitious, joyful and unapologetically serious. Central to this is our belief that excellent teaching, rich challenge and strong relationships transform outcomes. We want pupils to think deeply, grow in confidence and character, and leave us not only with strong outcomes, but with curiosity, courage and a lifelong love of learning.

For colleagues, this creates a rare professional opportunity. We are looking for people who care deeply about scholarship and the craft of teaching; colleagues who share our ambition, are committed to their own professional growth, and want to contribute to a collaborative culture shaped by innovation, collegiality and high standards. This is an important and exciting moment to join the school. We are entering a significant phase of development and, for the right candidate, this is not simply an opportunity to take up a post, but to help shape an important chapter in the life of a distinctive girls' school.

There is much here to value, and much to build. If that sense of purpose resonates with you, I hope you will consider joining us.

With best wishes,

Lee Daniel Faith
Principal

The school

St Mary's is an Independent day school in Colchester, Essex for girls age 3-16 and boys age 3-4.

Our vision is to empower girls to thrive at school and beyond.

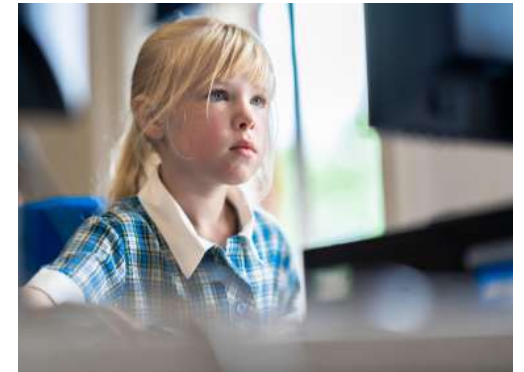
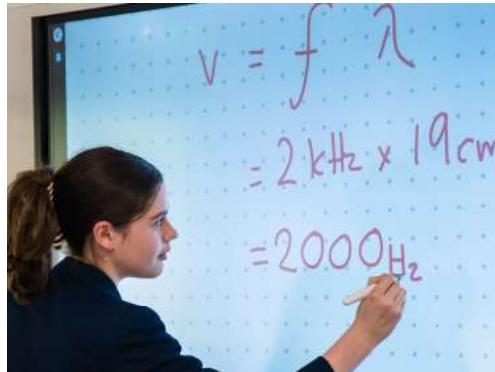
The Lower School was ranked 12th highest performing Preparatory Schools in England by the Sunday Times last year. Many girls achieve scholarships to senior school and we have an impressive 11+ pass rate for those who choose to sit the exam. At the Senior School, excellent GCSE results are achieved each year. We're able to achieve such success by tailoring the education to suit the needs of each individual in our small classes and by giving the girls the encouragement and support they need to aim high.

We are strong believers that success in life comes from more than just impressive exam results. At St Mary's we offer a brilliantly balanced education in order to develop exceptionally well-rounded individuals. With a huge variety of clubs, enrichment activities, music and drama productions, visits and international travel experiences on offer, there's ample opportunity to learn new skills and develop talents. There are numerous positions of responsibility available to the girls which help develop their leadership skills, and we foster team spirit through initiatives such as the School Council and School Houses.

For young people to thrive we firmly believe they must feel confident, relaxed and secure. Every child is known and understood and the girls feel comfortable challenging themselves and asking questions.

We believe in instilling the values of respect and courtesy, and through our charity and outreach work the students develop a strong sense of community. We are a leading Eco School and the students get a strong sense of caring for the environment as a result. As a global member of the Round Square Organisation, those who attend St Mary's benefit from our international links, which helps to broaden their horizons.

In this positive environment our young people develop the strength of character and the self-belief they need to make the very most of the life that lies ahead.



Job description

Job title:	Groundskeeper and Maintenance Caretaker
Reporting to:	Estates and Facilities Manager
Hours:	Full-time, 8 hours per day, 9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday. Plus some evenings and weekends as required. Year-round.
Salary:	£26,500 - £29,500 pa (dependent on experience and qualifications) plus payable extra hours worked

Job Purpose

To ensure that (as part of a team) the school's buildings, grounds/gardens, facilities and transport service are managed and maintained safely and efficiently. The role of the Groundskeeper is primarily to maintain and improve the grounds at both school sites including all supporting facilities, as well as the maintenance and improvement to an exceptional standard of the horticultural areas, in particular the frontage of both schools, including, but not limited to, the following duties:

General Duties

- Promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons
- Key holder – lock up and alarm setting after evening / weekend events or facilities hire
- Delivering and collection of post
- Assisting with activities and events
- To undertake such other duties as may be reasonably delegated by the Principal
- Work across both the Senior and Lower School sites, responding flexibly to operational priorities and providing cover within the Estates Team as required

Gardening & Landscaping

- Maintain the cleanliness, tidiness and general appearance of all gardens
- Cut back bushes and hedges
- Removal of weeds and unwanted / dead plants
- Replanting plants in pots and/or flowerbeds
- Pruning plants, shrubs and foliage
- Mowing grass areas
- Jet washing outside communal areas and pathways
- Disposal of garden waste

- Manage small projects
- Ensure all garden equipment is maintained and in working order
- Working with the Senior Estates and Facilities Manager to ensure working areas are H&S compliant
- Conduct any other general garden duties

Grounds Maintenance

- Maintain the cleanliness, tidiness and general appearance of all external hard surface areas
- Provide and maintain playing surfaces and sports pitches, including Tennis and Netball courts
- Ensure the garden and grounds are maintained to an exceptional standard
- Provide front line grounds services in adverse weather conditions, including snow/ice clearance from pathways around the site
- Preserve the security of all playing areas and the maintenance of the hedges, fences and gateways surrounding them
- Work closely with our Head of Faculty – Sports & Outdoor Education to understand the Games programme, Games’ requirements and ensure the school’s sports fixtures run smoothly
- Pitch marking where required
- Manage general waste and recycling around the site
- Clearing, sweeping and rubbish clearance
- Ensuring that estate sheds and working areas are kept tidy
- Ensure all grounds equipment is maintained and in working order
- Working with the Senior Estates and Facilities Manager to ensure working areas are H&S compliant

In addition to the above, the role will also include supporting the site team in a caretaker / maintenance capacity, including, but not limited to, the following tasks:

Buildings

- Assist setting out and clearing away furniture when required
- Ensure the cellars are kept tidy
- Minor repairs and maintenance to school equipment, furniture and buildings
- Collect recycling bags and cardboard from various areas of the school
- Distribute parcels / deliveries around the school

Plant and Service

- Boiler / heating systems – general operation and problem reporting
- Electrical and water (sewage and drainage)
- Meter readings (fuel, energy and water)

School Transport

- Driving minibuses on an ‘as required’ basis (Desirable)
- Minibuses to be kept clean and roadworthy

Specific Duties (occasional, periodic or regular frequency)

Safety and Security

- Opening and closing the school, including intruder alarm setting
- Site security and CCTV monitor checks
- Emergency callouts
- Emergency lighting and Fire Alarm tests
- Water quality tests

Other Information

Suitable branded clothing and equipment will be provided.

Training will be provided where required.

These duties will be developed into short and longer-term targets in consultation with the postholder. The post holder provides a range of support and therefore work is generated throughout the day. Due to the routine of schools, the workload may not be evenly spread throughout the year. Whilst every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task may not have been identified. The job description is current at the date shown, but, in consultation with you, may be changed by the Principal to reflect or anticipate changes in the job, commensurate with the grade and job title.

St Mary’s is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All candidates must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Person specification

(E) = Essential

(D) = Desirable

Education/Qualifications

- Current Driver's Licence (Manual) with the D1 category
- Must have already passed or must successfully complete Minibus (MIDAS) training before transporting pupils
- First Aid trained

Skills/Knowledge

- Able to prioritise and manage a varied workload across two school sites
- Good communication skills and the ability to work professionally with staff, pupils, parents, visitors and contractors
- Ground maintenance and gardening skills
- Practical/DIY or associated trade skills
- An understanding of what makes excellent customer service
- Able to use initiative and meet deadlines
- Accurate record keeping
- Comfortable with using basic ICT e.g., Microsoft Outlook
- Able to identify defects, hazards and maintenance issues and report or escalate them appropriately
- Willingness to undertake relevant training, including Health and Safety, safeguarding, fire safety, COSHH and manual handling
- An understanding of Health & Safety or safe working practices
- Minibus driving
- Experience of using and maintaining powered grounds equipment
- Experience of working within a school or similar environment



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Attitude/Personal Qualities

- Team player with a flexible approach and positive attitude (E)
- Honest and discreet (E)
- Reliable and punctual (E)
- Understands & maintains professional boundaries when dealing with others (E)
- Willingness to commit to the St Mary's ethos (E)
- Able to work independently, using own initiative while knowing when to seek guidance (E)

Why colleagues choose St Mary's

Employee Assistance Programme

Confidential 24-hour helpline
Counselling sessions
Wellness app

Meals and Refreshments

Lunch available during term-time
Tea and coffee facilities provided

Physical Health

Occupational health support
Bike2Work scheme

Financial

Staff discount for School fees (subject to qualifying criteria)
Financial coaching through the EAP
Regular benchmarking of salaries
Access to BlueLight Card and other discounts

Professional Development

Life and leadership coaching through the EAP
INSET training

Additional Benefits

Pleasant working grounds and location
Free parking on site

St Mary's offers colleagues the opportunity to work in a warm, purposeful and ambitious school community where pupils are known well and relationships matter. Small classes, committed pupils and a strong pastoral culture create the conditions for excellent teaching and meaningful professional impact.

As we approach our 120th anniversary in 2028, this is also an exciting moment to join the school. Colleagues appointed now will have the opportunity to contribute to an important phase of development, helping to shape an academically ambitious, intellectually rigorous and distinctive education for girls.

We value professional voice, collaboration and continuing development, and we are looking for colleagues who want to bring intellectual energy, scholarship and care to the life of the school.



Application process

Closing date for applications: Friday 28th August 2026

Date of interviews: On a rolling basis

Candidates should complete their application form on MyNewTerm: <https://mynewterm.com/school/St-Mary's-School-for-Girls/115394>

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact Mrs M Terry, HR & Compliance Officer at:

Email: careers@stmaryscolchester.org.uk

Post: St Mary's School, 91 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3RB

Whilst every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task may not have been identified; therefore, employees will be expected to comply with any reasonable request from the Principal including ad hoc projects and to undertake work of a similar level that is not specified in the job description. The job description is current at the date shown, but, in consultation with you, may be changed by the Principal to reflect or anticipate changes in the job, commensurate with the grade and job title.

Safeguarding

St Mary's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All candidates must be willing to undergo child protection screening.

Please visit www.stmaryscolchester.org.uk/vacancies/ to read our Application & Recruitment process explanatory notes.

Privacy Notice

Please read our Privacy Notice for Job Candidates, which can be found at www.stmaryscolchester.org.uk/vacancies/

We respect your privacy and are committed to protecting your personal data. Our Privacy Notice will inform you as to how we look after personal data held by us and tell you about your privacy rights and how the law protects you. It is important that you read this Privacy Notice together with any other privacy notice or fair processing notice we may provide on specific occasions when we are collecting or processing personal data so that you are fully aware of how and why we are using personal data. This Privacy Notice supplements the other notices and is not intended to override them.

