



SEND Governor
Candidate Info 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 2-16 and boys age 2-4.

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

St Mary's aims:

- To provide an ambitious, girl-centred education
- To foster high aspirations and a bold attitude
- To create a compassionate culture where every girl is known, supported and understood
- To develop pupils' understanding of the world so they become dynamic and engaged global citizens
- To promote intellectual curiosity and an enquiring mindset

St Mary's Senior School was identified as 1st in Essex in the Sunday Times Parent Power League Table 2025 for its rankings of top independent secondary schools with no sixth forms. The Lower School was ranked 12th highest performing Preparatory Schools in England in the last table released by the Sunday Times. 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.

St Mary's provides an enlightened, empowering and complete education, designed specifically for girls aged 4-16 to thrive. 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.

We challenge our pupils academically, creatively and physically. With small class sizes and high standards, our focus is on individual success.

Our environment is safe in every respect - to experiment and question, to take risks and follow passions, to innovate and lead - free of judgement and stereotypes, and full of respect and support.

So when our pupils move on to their next steps in education, they are empowered to rise to the challenges and opportunities the world presents.

Governance

We are proud to have charitable status, meaning all fees are reinvested in the school. We are a Company limited by Guarantee and are truly independent.

We are overseen by a committed and knowledgeable Governing Body who help ensure we provide a high quality and brilliantly balanced education, and a happy learning environment.

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the school. The Governors have a wide range of experience and skills, and exercise highly effective oversight.

The Governors have an excellent understanding of the day-to-day working of the school.

The full Governing Body meets 4 times a year. A number of sub-committees provide regular reports to the Governing Body in areas such as Finance & Operations, Marketing & Business Development, Education etc.

The day-to-day running of the school is delegated to the Principal along with the Head of Finance & Operations, Vice Principal, and Head of Marketing, Admissions & Communications who make up the Senior Leadership Team.



Job description

Job title: SEND Governor

Role Overview

The Board of Governors is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of St Mary's School Colchester; developing the School's vision, aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing document, legal and regulatory guidelines.

The SEND Governor has oversight of the school's provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), ensuring it aligns with the school's values, policies, and statutory requirements. This role involves working closely with the SENCO, Senior Leaders and Managers, and Governing Body, to uphold an inclusive, supportive, and aspirational environment for all pupils. The SEND governor is expected to help maintain the highest standards of SEND support, reflecting the school's commitment to every child's progress and wellbeing.

Main Governor Responsibilities

- To determine the overall direction and development of the School through good governance and clear strategic planning
- To ensure that the School and its representatives function within the legal and regulatory framework of the sector and in line with the School's governing document, continually striving for best practice in governance
- To uphold the fiduciary duty invested in the position, undertaking such duties in a way that adds to public confidence and trust in the School
- To ensure that the School discharges its duties as a charity within its charitable objects

Main Governor Duties

- Ensuring the School complies with legislative and regulatory requirements and acts within the confines of its governing document and in furtherance to organisational activities contained therein
- Acting in the best interest of the School, beneficiaries and future beneficiaries at all times
- Promoting and developing the School in order for it to grow and maintain its relevance to society
- Contribute to the strategic discussions at Governing body meetings
- Ensure that the necessary resources, expertise and support are made available
- Maintaining sound financial management of the School's resources, ensuring expenditure is in line with its objectives and investment activities meet accepted standards and policies
- Interviewing, appointing and monitoring the work and activities of the Senior Leadership Team
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the School and its resources
- To maintain absolute confidentiality about all sensitive/confidential information received in the course of Governors' responsibilities to the School and to comply with the Conflicts of Interest Policy

When required, serve on Governor Panels to:

- Appoint the Principal and other senior leaders
- Appraise the Principal
- Set the Principal's pay and agree the pay recommendations for other staff
- Hear staff matters relating to issues such as grievances and discipline
- Hear parents' complaints

SEND Governor Responsibilities

SEND Policy Development and Review

- Collaborate with the SENCO, Assistant Head of Senior/Lower School (Pastoral) and Governing Body, to review and update the School's SEND Policy in line with statutory requirements and best practices.
- Monitor and evaluate the SEND Policy to ensure it reflects St Mary's ethos, aims, values, and commitment to inclusion and holistic development.
- Contribute to ongoing evaluation and improvement of SEND and provision, recommending enhancements where appropriate.

SEND Provision Oversight

- Have oversight of the work of the SENCO to ensure effective identification and support of pupils with SEND, or those needing additional academic mentoring.
- Monitor implementation of SEND plans (including pupils with an EHCP), ensuring compliance with statutory guidance and appropriate support for pupils' wellbeing and progress.
- Review and provide feedback on practices and documentation to promote clarity, transparency, and high standards of support.

Data Analysis and Reporting

- Work with the SENCO to analyse SEND and data, including pupil outcomes, progress, demographics, and stakeholder feedback.
- Provide regular reports to the Governing Body on trends, strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in SEND.
- Use data to inform strategic decisions and identify priorities for further development.

Parental and Pupil Engagement

- Support the School in facilitating effective communication between families and the SEND Department.
- Advocate for strong relationships with pupils, parents, and external professionals, to develop a collaborative approach to SEND support.



Person specification

Governors should be able to demonstrate:

- An active interest in education
- Commitment to lifelong learning and the role of the School as a major provider of education and training
- Commitment to promoting equality and diversity
- Commitment to quality and raising standards
- Willingness to promote the School within the community it serves
- Ability to work positively with others and to contribute as a member of a team
- Ability to agree policies and strategies and ensure these can be monitored and implemented
- Ability to make reasoned decisions and to act honestly, diligently and in good faith
- Ability to contribute to establishing performance targets and the monitoring of performance
- Commitment to attend Governors Meetings, Committees, Away days and Training
- Integrity to act without self-interest
- Ability to work within a framework of collective decision-making in the best interests of the School
- Awareness of standards in public life and accountability and a determination to abide by them

Generic Skills/Experience

- Previous Governor experience
- Strategic awareness
- Financial awareness
- Sharing best practice
- Vision and commitment
- Critical listening and appraisal skills
- Analytical and problem solving abilities
- Communication skills (written and verbal) and the ability to influence

Specific Skills/Experience

- Understanding of statutory requirements and best practice in SEND provision
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills to engage with a diverse range of stakeholders
- Analytical and data-informed mindset for interpreting SEND information
- Strong attention to detail and organisational skills to support smooth running of SEND provision
- Commitment to promoting inclusivity, diversity, and positive pupil outcomes
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and handle sensitive information appropriately

Application process

Date of interviews: You will be contacted upon receipt of your application to arrange a convenient date.

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

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.



St Mary's
Colchester

