

# Head of geography

Required from September 2025



St Swithun's  
WINCHESTER



# Welcome from the headmistress



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Thank you for your interest in St Swithun's.

We are proud to be a High Performance Learning School and a member of the Fellowship of World Class Schools. The High Performance Learning philosophy is that: high achievement is an attainable target for everyone; intelligence is not fixed (we can all become cleverer); high performers are made, not born (they work for it). HPL involves the systematic and explicit encouragement and empowerment of students to develop the ways of thinking and ways of behaving that will equip them for success both in school and beyond. It is the cornerstone of our philosophy.

We are also a girls' school and as such we expect and support all our students to enjoy and excel in a range of subjects and activities according to their interests and not their gender. We seek to be free from unhelpful stereotyping and to offer genuinely limitless education.

Further, we are a high trust community and we try always to behave with a seriousness of intention and a lightness of touch. We believe the best of staff and students and often see our expectations exceeded and a joke cracked along the way.

If this short introduction resonates with you, we would very much welcome an application from you.



Jane Gandee, headmistress

# Our school



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St Swithun's School, Winchester is a leading GSA and HMC school offering day, weekly boarding and full boarding for 520 girls aged 11-18.

The girls benefit from excellent teaching, sporting and recreational facilities. St Swithun's is academically selective and regularly appears in the top 30 schools in the national league tables.

There is also an adjoining IAPS Prep School for girls aged 3-11 with a co-educational nursery.



# Our ethos



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St Swithun's is an appropriately academic school which means that we celebrate intellectual curiosity and the life of the mind, but not to the exclusion of all else. We expect our pupils to develop individual passions and through them to acquire a range of skills and characteristics. These characteristics will include a willingness to take risks, to question and to debate, and to persevere in the face of difficulty. In the words of Samuel Beckett: "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." If a girl can immediately excel at everything we ask of her, we as educators must set the bar higher.

We want all pupils to learn about life beyond the school gates, to appreciate the rich variety of our world, to develop an understanding of compassion and to value justice. We encourage all pupils to become involved in fundraising and community work. They should appreciate how their decisions and their actions can affect those around them.

By the time a pupil leaves St Swithun's she will be well- educated, courageous, compassionate, committed and self-confident with a love of learning, a moral compass and a sense of humour.

# Our community



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St Swithun's was founded in 1884 by Anna Bramston, daughter of the Dean of Winchester, and Christian values underpin our approach to education. We provide a civilised and caring environment in which all girls and staff are valued for their individual gifts and encouraged to develop a sense of spirituality and of kindness. We believe that kindness and tolerance are at the heart of any fully functioning community. Our staff are friendly and supportive, and the school is committed to supporting the wellbeing and professional development of its employees.

The school is committed to maintaining the vision of its founder by offering bursaries for girls who would otherwise not have the opportunity of a St Swithun's education.



# Our professional learning community



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At St Swithun's we are committed to learning in its broadest sense and we relish trying different teaching methods and crafting opportunities in and out of lessons to challenge and excite.

We are a kind and supportive community of enthusiasts who welcome newcomers. Innovation, energy and individuality, in staff and pupils alike, are considered a distinct advantage.

We offer a dynamic leadership program for all levels of leadership.

We are a *High Performance Learning* school which means we systematically and consistently teach the skills and attitudes that enable all girls to achieve highly.



# Why work at St Swithun's



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This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy working in a stimulating and professional environment.

As staff, we find we are teaching girls who are energetic and insightful and, moreover, girls who like nothing more than learning from others' enthusiasms, specialisms and interests – no matter what role they have or take in the school. It's a real privilege to sense that these are the Students who will be changing the world in the future.

St Swithun's is a vibrant place for both students and staff alike. The friendly and loyal atmosphere ensures that the environment is one which captures the true meaning of 'community'



# Our facilities



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The school offers girls excellent teaching, sporting and recreational facilities. The school buildings are modern and well equipped. As well as the normal academic classrooms and science laboratories, there is a magnificent performing arts centre with a 600-seat auditorium, a music school, an art and technology block, a sports hall and a full-size swimming pool. There is an impressive library, higher education and student guidance department and ICT facility. The grounds are spacious and encompass sports fields, tennis courts and gardens.

The senior school has six boarding houses for full and weekly boarders, with separate houses for those in their first and second years and those in the upper sixth.

The School is securely financed and this has enabled a continuous development programme over the years, which has made it possible for the School to keep pace with new requirements in terms of curriculum and equipment.

The School is registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee and as a Charity, and it has a wholly owned subsidiary company (St Swithun's School Letting Company Limited).

Further details of the School can be found at [www.stswithuns.com](http://www.stswithuns.com)



# Our location



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The school is set on an impressive and attractive campus of 45 acres overlooking the Hampshire Downs and within the South Downs National Park. The school is within walking distance of the centre of Winchester, and only a 50-minute journey from central London.

Winchester is well connected by road, rail, air and sea, allowing convenient and affordable holiday opportunities for staff. There is also easy access to the New Forest, the south coast, and the West Country.

Winchester and its surrounding areas offer outstanding local cultural, historical, sporting and entertainment opportunities in addition to fantastic access to outdoor pursuits. Southampton and Winchester University are in close proximity, as are a wide range of good state and independent schools.

# Our geography department



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Geography is taught throughout the school as a compulsory subject at Key Stage 3 and as an option at GCSE and A level.

We follow our own curriculum in Key Stage 3 and currently offer the AQA specification for both GCSE and A level.

Geography is a popular option at GCSE, with typically about three quarters of the year group taking the subject. At A level the teaching has traditionally been split between physical and human geography with two teachers, while at GCSE one teacher typically takes each group through both years.

A-level numbers vary, typically between about 10 and 20 students, usually resulting in one or two teaching groups in each of L6 and U6.

The department has a suite of three recently refurbished specialist classrooms with state-of-the-art audio-visual and IT equipment, plus an office with ample storage facilities.



# Our geography department



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The department is a passionate, friendly and experienced team that works collaboratively to share ideas and plan lessons and schemes of work. In addition to the head of geography there are four other teachers of the subject.

We enjoy trying out new ideas and taking risks with our teaching in order to provide the best engaging and enjoyable educational experience for our students.

We strongly believe in the importance of fieldwork in the subject and provide these opportunities at all stages of our students' education, including residential trips in the UK at both GCSE and A level as well as voluntary trips further afield. This year we are running a trip to Iceland and in the past we have also visited the Azores and the Amalfi coast.

We are always looking for ways in which we can extend our students' engagement with geography beyond the classroom, and we have well-developed links with the local Geographical Association.



# Head of geography

## Key responsibilities



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- The head of geography is responsible for the overall delivery of the geography curriculum at all levels. They will organise systems of appraisal and monitoring according to the school model, and also the administration of assessments and mock exams, with cross-marking where appropriate.
- Heads of department are responsible for providing professional leadership and management, generating enthusiasm and demonstrating and encouraging good practice within their subject area. They have a responsibility to monitor standards, to ensure high quality teaching, high standards of learning and achievement for all pupils and the effective and safe use of resources.
- The head of geography is responsible for the promotion of the subject, be that during open days, school competitions or by sharing departmental successes and events with the wider school community.
- It is the responsibility of the head of geography to ensure that St Swithun's is known for the high quality of the department's examination results and its excellent and innovative teaching, as well as providing challenge and support for students applying for geography and related courses at competitive universities, including Oxbridge.

# Job specification



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Heads of Department are expected to

- **Provide strategic leadership**, creating a positive climate of learning and confidence in teaching
- **Foster a collaborative team** in which responsibility is delegated and shared
- **Plan and manage pupil learning** to ensure curriculum coverage, continuity and progression for all pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and the Gifted and Talented
- **Evaluate and assess pupil progress and achievement** in their department
- **Assess and evaluate national, local and school data** to inform planning
- **Use data** from previous years or other schools to optimise progress for pupils
- **Monitor and evaluate the work of staff** within their department
- **Plan and set expectations for pupils and staff** in relation to standards of pupil achievement and the quality of teaching
- **Be actively involved in the development and review** of departmental and school policies and procedures
- **Maintain good relationships** with parents and the wider community
- **Contribute to the recruitment and assessment of prospective pupils** through Open Days, visits, marking Common Entrance, 6<sup>th</sup> Form and other examinations, interviews, etc.

# Job specification



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Heads of Department will

- **Have knowledge and understanding** of the School's aims and ethos, development plan, overall curriculum, and its policies and procedures
- **Share responsibility with other leaders** for the implementation of these policies and procedures, especially curriculum, child protection, health and safety, pupil behaviour and staff duties
- **Manage resources**, prioritise expenditure and advise on the deployment of staff and use of facilities and ICT
- **Manage their own performance and professional development** in consultation with senior leaders
- **Manage the performance and professional development of staff** within their department by establishing clear expectations, encouraging good working relationships and by induction, monitoring and appraisal
- **Play an active role in staff recruitment and retention** in their subject area
- **Have an appropriate working knowledge** of areas of the law relevant to their role as teachers and managers; employment, equal opportunities, personnel, child protection, behaviour and discipline, health and safety etc.
- **Work collaboratively with other Head of Departments** to ensure that the learning experience of pupils across subject areas is coordinated and to contribute as appropriate to the PHSE provision through work in their own subject area

# Job specification



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## Learning and teaching

Heads of department should

- Produce a departmental development plan as part of the school's development cycle
- Produce relevant material for the departmental handbook and update it annually
- Devise, implement and regularly update specifications for the teaching of their subject, and select suitable specifications for public examinations
- Develop schemes of work throughout the school
- Monitor quality of teaching by lesson observation and monitoring assessment of pupils' work
- Organise supplementary (off site) educational activities where relevant or appropriate

# Job specification



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## **Pupil achievement: marking, assessment, recording, reporting**

Heads of department should

- Implement the whole school assessment and marking policy in specific subject area
- Prepare or oversee the preparation of internal exam papers and marking schemes
- Monitor pupil achievement within subject area both internally and via external results
- Oversee the work of colleagues in reporting to parents and at parents' meetings

## **Staff professional development**

Heads of department should

- Maintain a record of staff training and INSET
- Provide leadership and professional support for the other teachers in the department.
- Hold weekly minuted meetings
- Provide feedback on lesson observations and monitoring of pupils' work.
- Follow the Induction procedures in Staff Handbook with a colleague joining the department
- Supervise colleagues and their professional development through the professional review process



# Job specification



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## Resources

Heads of department should

- Organise the supply of necessary resources, keeping up to date with the availability of new resources and of ICT developments
- Manage departmental budgets: producing budget requests annually for approval and incorporation into the whole school budget
- Liaise with the ICT department and digital learning co-ordinator for advice on ICT provision
- Cooperate with the Careers department to provide information and advice to pupils

# Job specification



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## School level responsibilities

Heads of department should

- Undertake the role of form tutor (and/or Housemistress/master)
- Provide the deputy head academic with information on staffing needs to inform timetable building
- Participate in regular Heads of Department meetings
- Serve from time to time on working parties and committees
- Provide an annual report to Council on behalf of the department
- Perform any such other professional duties as may reasonably be required by the Headmistress

# Person specification



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Heads of Department are expected to

- be well qualified and knowledgeable within their subject area
- have a relevant teaching qualification and a proven record of success as a classroom teacher
- have high level communication skills
- be enthusiastic, self-motivated and committed to helping all for whom they have responsibility, pupils and staff, to achieve the best possible standards
- have the ability to inspire and promote confidence and foster an enjoyment of their subject
- form and maintain good professional relationships with pupils and colleagues
- take an active interest in current developments in their subject area and the wider educational issues
- have a willingness to participate in, and generate, new initiatives as and when appropriate

# Salary and application process



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## SALARY

St Swithun's has its own competitive pay scale and provides private health insurance cover for teaching staff plus a range of other employee benefits including:

- Discount on school fees
- Discounted corporate gym membership, and use of 'my active discounts'
- Free membership of the school swimming pool
- Access to the school's staff wellbeing programme
- Refreshments whilst working, and free meals when required to be at work over a meal time during term time.

## APPLICATION

The closing date for applications is 9am, 27 January 2025

Please complete our application form which can be found [here](#).

For any queries please use the following contact details.

Rachel Nicholls, executive assistant

Telephone: 01962 835 701

Email:

Recruitment@stswithuns.com

Website: www.stswithuns.com

# Child protection and safeguarding



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*“St Swithun’s committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.*

*All staff are expected to share and support this commitment and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure & Barring Service.”*

## **Child Protection Statement**

- Every child has the right to freedom from physical, racial, sexual, verbal or mental abuse (this includes bullying and intimidation). Our overriding aim is the protection of the individual child within the school.
- We require staff to be fully aware of what child abuse is and the different forms in which it may present itself, and of their duties in respect to child protection.
- We will provide adequate training (both as part of an induction and an ongoing process) in recognising abuse, and what to do if abuse is suspected.
- We are committed to maintaining good communication within the School on child protection issues and to following recognised procedures.
- The Headmistress ensures that the recommended procedures are followed when recruiting staff.

# Equal opportunities



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St Swithun's is an equal opportunities employer.

The school will recruit predominantly based on an applicant's relevant skills, experience, capabilities and potential for development. The ability to work with others will also be taken into account.

St Swithun's is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants. We aim to create a working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills free from unlawful discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Equality Act).

We do not discriminate unlawfully on the basis of age, disability, marital or civil partner status, race (including nationality, ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy or maternity (defined in the Equality Act 2010 as protected characteristics).

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# Explanatory notes



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## Application form

- Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the enclosed application form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed application forms
- Candidates should be aware that all posts in the school involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. Please see job description for the post
- Accordingly this post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as 'spent' must be declared
- The successful applicant will be required to complete a disclosure application form from the Disclosure and Barring Service
- In accordance with government guidelines, we will seek references on shortlisted candidates for teaching and some other posts, and approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience or qualifications before interview. In other cases, if this has not been done, any offer of a post will be conditional upon receipt of satisfactory references. References should be from the applicant's current or most recent employer. If the current/most recent employer does/did not involve work with children, then the second reference should, if possible, be from the employer with whom the applicant most recently worked with children. Referees should not be a relative or someone known to the applicant solely as a friend

# Explanatory notes



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- If you are currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether you have been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so, the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. If you are not currently working with children, but have done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues. Where neither your current nor previous employment has involved working with children, your current employer will still be asked about your suitability to work with children, although they may, where appropriate, answer not applicable if your duties have not brought you into contact with children or young persons. The School will only accept references obtained directly from the referee and it will not rely on references or testimonials provided by the applicant or on open references or testimonials
- You should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected, and possible referral to the police and/or DfES Children's Safeguarding Operation Unit



# Explanatory notes



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## Invitation to Interview

- If you are invited to interview, this will be conducted in person and the areas which it will explore will include suitability to work with children
- All candidates invited to interview must bring documents confirming any educational and professional qualifications that are necessary or relevant for the post (e.g. the original or certified copy of certificates, diplomas, etc.) Where originals or certified copies are not available for the successful candidate, written confirmation of the relevant qualifications must be obtained from the awarding body. All candidates invited to interview must also bring with them:
- At least two forms of identification, i.e. current driving licence (including photograph), a passport, a full birth certificate or marriage certificate
- A utility bill or financial statement showing the candidate's current name and address. These must be issued within the last three months and provide verification of address
- Documentation confirmation their national insurance number
- Where appropriate, any documentation evidencing a change of name
- **Please note that originals of the above are necessary -photocopies or certified copies are not sufficient**

# Explanatory notes



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## Conditional Offer of Appointment: Pre-Appointment Checks. Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received)
  - Verification of identity and qualifications
  - A check at DfES barred list database and the Protection of Children Act List as appropriate
  - A satisfactory DBS disclosure
  - Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas in the previous five years, such checks and confirmations as the school may require in accordance with statutory guidance
  - Satisfactory completion of the probationary period
  - Verification of medical fitness if appropriate for the job's requirements
  - For staff who will be working within early years childcare provision or children under the age of 8 or in the provision of out of hours care, will be required to provide a written declaration that neither they nor anyone in their household is disqualified from working with children
- For teaching posts:**
- Verification of medical fitness in accordance with DfES Circular 4/99 Physical and Mental Fitness to Teach of Teachers and Entrants to Initial Teacher Training.
  - Verification of professional status, such as GTC registration, QTS Status (where required), NPQH
  - Verification that the teacher/applicant is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State
  - Verification of successful completion of statutory induction period (applies to those who obtained QTS after 7 May 1999)



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