



Commercial Director (Whole School) 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.

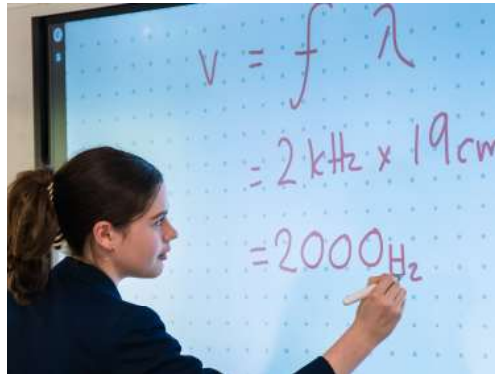
The Lower School was ranked 12th highest performing Preparatory Schools in England by the Sunday Times last year. Many girls achieve scholarships to senior school and we have an impressive 11+ pass rate for those who choose to sit the exam. At the Senior School, excellent GCSE results are achieved each 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:	Commercial Director (Whole School)
Reporting to:	Chief Financial and Operating Officer (CFOO)
Responsible for:	Commercial development, facilities hire, lettings and non-fee income generation
Location:	St Mary's Senior & Lower Schools – both School sites
Contract:	3 days per week, fixed term of 1 year (with potential to become full time and permanent), 52 weeks per year
Salary:	£40,000 basic (FTE) + performance bonus. Performance thresholds, including net contribution targets, will be confirmed following completion of the initial feasibility and commercial-baseline assessment.

Role Purpose

The Commercial Director will lead the development and growth of non fee income across St Mary's two sites, maximising the commercial potential of the School's facilities, estate and assets. The postholder will develop and deliver a 3–5 year commercial strategy focused on facilities hire, lettings, holiday programmes, partnerships and other appropriate income generating opportunities.

The role begins with an 8–12 week feasibility and business case phase to establish the commercial baseline, test demand, assess pricing and costs, prioritise opportunities and create a clear commercial pipeline. All activity must remain compatible with the School's educational purpose, safeguarding responsibilities, values, reputation and operational requirements.

The Commercial Director will own the end-to-end commercial proposition: identifying markets and opportunities, developing and pricing the offer, marketing and selling facilities, securing customers and partnerships, negotiating arrangements, managing customer relationships and evaluating financial performance.

The postholder will also provide commercial input into longer-term estate and capital planning, identifying where investment could increase utilisation, generate additional income or strengthen the School's commercial proposition.

The Commercial Director reports to the CFOO and attends School Executive and SLT meetings by invitation where commercial matters are being considered.

Reporting Lines

- The role of the Commercial Director reports to the CFOO.

Direct Line Management Responsibilities

- None initially. Line management responsibilities may be introduced as the commercial function develops, subject to an approved structure.

Key Internal Relationships (in addition to direct line management responsibilities)

- Principal
- Vice Principal
- Head of Marketing, Admissions & Communications
- Senior Finance Manager
- Senior Estates & Facilities Manager
- IT & Digital Services Manager
- HR Manager

Key Boundaries and Relationships

- **Commercial Director:** Identifies what can be sold, to whom, at what price, and with what expected return. Owns markets, propositions, pricing, pipeline, sales and customer relationships within this remit.
- **Estates & Facilities Team:** Determines whether and how opportunities can be safely and operationally delivered, including staffing, cleaning, security, maintenance, access and health & safety.
- **Marketing/Communications Team:** Retains ownership of brand, channels and communications execution. Admissions remains outside the remit of the Commercial Director.
- **Finance Team:** Retains responsibility for financial parameters, modelling, affordability, reporting and approval thresholds.
- **Delegated Authority:** All pricing, discounts, contracts, partnerships and longer-term commitments will operate within an agreed delegated-authority framework approved by the CFOO and School Executive.

Key External Relationships

- Prospective and existing lettings customers
- Commercial partners
- Professional advisers
- Suppliers
- Relevant regulatory and statutory bodies

Initial Priorities

- Establish a comprehensive two-site commercial baseline (facilities, utilisation, availability, income, costs).
- Undertake market research and competitor benchmarking to test demand and achievable pricing.
- Assess opportunities against net contribution, demand, operational feasibility, safeguarding/reputational risk and strategic fit.
- Develop a prioritised commercial pipeline and prospective customer list.
- Prepare business cases and a three-year financial projection for significant opportunities.
- Develop and recommend a 3–5 year commercial strategy.
- Begin implementing the highest-priority opportunities once properly assessed.

Core Responsibilities

Strategic Commercial Development

- Deliver the agreed commercial strategy and annual programme of activity.
- Identify and develop opportunities from the School’s estate and facilities.
- Review utilisation and identify under-used facilities and periods available for external use.
- Develop recurring, multi-year and higher-value opportunities.
- Provide commercial input into estate and capital planning.

Facilities Hire and Lettings

The Commercial Director will have overall responsibility for the commercial development, marketing, sales and customer management of the School’s facilities-hire and lettings operation.

This may include:

- Sports facilities, halls and activity spaces.
- Classrooms, teaching, meeting, conference and training spaces.
- Performance, music and rehearsal facilities.
- Dining and catering facilities.
- Grounds and external areas.

The postholder will:

- Establish a clear commercial proposition and target market for each priority facility.
- Market and actively sell available facilities rather than relying solely on inbound enquiries.
- Develop and review pricing, including peak/off-peak, block-booking and recurring-use arrangements.
- Develop appropriate booking, contract and customer-management processes.
- Increase utilisation during evenings, weekends and school holidays.
- Convert one-off bookings into repeat and longer-term business.
- Manage the customer journey from enquiry through booking, contract, delivery and follow-up.
- Monitor utilisation, income and net contribution by facility and address under-performing areas.
- Ensure facilities are presented and marketed to an appropriate professional standard.

The objective will be to establish a professional, consistent and commercially focused lettings operation across both School sites.

Holiday Programmes, Events and Activities

- Identify and develop potential commercially viable holiday programmes, camps, courses, activities and events bearing in mind the School's current in house provision.
- Work with appropriate external providers and partners to expand holiday and weekend provision.
- Explore other appropriate uses of the School's facilities.
- Assess whether opportunities should be delivered directly, through a partner or through a third-party provider, taking account of income, risk and operational requirements.
- Monitor demand, income and contribution and recommend expansion, modification or discontinuation.

Commercial Partnerships and Business Development

- Develop and maintain strong relationships with external organisations and commercial partners.
- Proactively target sports clubs and governing bodies, businesses, professional and educational organisations, community groups, activity providers and event organisers.
- Secure recurring, multi-year and strategic commercial partnerships.
- Develop partnership propositions that provide greater value than conventional hourly or daily lettings where appropriate.
- Explore sponsorship, naming rights, revenue-sharing, venue partnerships, sports academies, residential/summer programmes, professional development and other appropriate opportunities.

All such opportunities will be assessed against agreed commercial, financial, operational, safeguarding and reputational criteria.

Marketing and Sales

Working closely with the Head of Marketing, Admissions and Communications, the Commercial Director will:

- Develop an annual commercial marketing and business-development plan.
- Establish clear propositions, target markets and appropriate campaigns for priority facilities and activities.
- Ensure facilities are promoted through appropriate digital and other channels, including the School website.
- Develop commercial content and sales materials.
- Proactively approach potential customers and maintain a structured prospect/customer database or CRM.
- Manage and report on the commercial sales pipeline, enquiries, conversion, lost business and marketing return on investment.
- Ensure commercial activity is consistent with the School's brand and reputation.

Pricing, Contracts and Commercial Frameworks

- Develop and regularly review pricing based on market demand, positioning and School costs.
- Establish appropriate minimum charges, deposits, cancellation arrangements, discounts and concessions.
- Develop standard booking and contract frameworks with the School's professional advisers.
- Ensure terms and conditions are applied consistently and protect the School's financial and reputational interests.
- Ensure commercial proposals are assessed on anticipated net contribution and return.

Financial Management and Commercial Performance

The Commercial Director will be accountable for the financial performance of the School's commercial activities, working closely with the CFOO and the Finance team. They will:

- Prepare the annual commercial income budget and contribute to financial planning.
- Deliver agreed commercial income and net contribution targets.
- Prepare regular forecasts and monitor actual performance against budget.
- Analyse income, costs and contribution by facility, activity and customer type.
- Identify opportunities to improve revenue, margins and utilisation.
- Ensure commercial activity is assessed using net contribution, including incremental staffing, cleaning, utilities, security, maintenance and other associated costs.
- Work with Finance on invoicing, income recognition and credit control, including management of commercial debt.
- Provide regular reports to the CFOO and School Executive, and to Governors where appropriate.

The principal financial measure will be sustainable net contribution: gross commercial income less incremental operating costs, with the cost of the commercial resource and associated overheads also considered when assessing the overall benefit to the School.

Customer Experience and Relationship Management

- Establish high standards of customer service and a professional, consistent customer experience.
- Monitor customer satisfaction and feedback and resolve issues promptly.
- Develop retention and repeat-business strategies.
- Maintain strong relationships with key customers and partners.
- Protect the School's reputation through the quality and professionalism of the commercial operation.

Estates and Operational Coordination

The Commercial Director will work closely with the Senior Estates & Facilities Manager to ensure that commercial opportunities are operationally deliverable.

The Commercial Director will be responsible for:

- Determining what can be commercially offered, to whom, at what price and with what expected return.
- Identifying operational requirements and ensuring proposals reflect staffing, cleaning, security, utilities, maintenance and access requirements.
- Working with the Senior Estates & Facilities Manager to agree appropriate operating arrangements.
- Ensuring commercial activity does not conflict with educational use.
- Identifying opportunities to improve the commercial attractiveness of facilities.
- Providing commercial input into proposed estate investment where there is a demonstrable business case.

The Senior Estates & Facilities Manager will retain responsibility for the safe and effective operational delivery of the School's estate, including premises, maintenance, health and safety, security, cleaning and related operational matters.

Compliance, Safeguarding and Risk

- Ensure commercial activity complies with School policies and relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
- Ensure appropriate due diligence is undertaken on prospective hirers and partners.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding, insurance, contracts, terms and conditions and risk assessments are in place.
- Work with the Senior Estates & Facilities Manager on health and safety, fire safety, security and emergency arrangements.
- Professional ownership of safeguarding, H&S and Estates remains with the relevant functional leads.
- Ensure external users comply with School rules and conditions of hire.

- Ensure the School can decline or terminate arrangements where there are safeguarding, reputational, operational or other material concerns.
- Escalate significant financial, contractual, safeguarding, reputational or operational risks promptly.

Leadership and Management

The Commercial Director will provide commercial leadership across the School's non-fee income activity. The postholder will:

- Lead and develop the commercial function as it grows, including any future staff responsible for lettings, bookings and commercial programmes.
- Build effective commercial capability, systems and processes that support sustainable income generation.
- Work collaboratively with Finance, Estates & Facilities, Marketing/Communications, Admissions, IT and other relevant teams to ensure commercial activity is financially robust, operationally deliverable and consistent with the School's brand and educational purpose.
- Provide commercially informed challenge and insight to the CFOO and, when invited, to the School Executive on matters relating to commercial development.
- Model high professional standards and a commercially accountable culture across the commercial function.

Professional Responsibilities and Other Duties

The postholder will:

- Uphold the values, ethos, and professional standards of St Mary's.
- Adhere to and model the Nolan Principles of Public Life (Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, and Leadership) in all aspects of professional practice.
- Comply with all school policies and procedures, including those regarding safeguarding and equality.
- Maintain high standards of communication, confidentiality, discretion, organisation and sound professional judgement.
- Act as a role model.
- Engage in professional development.

Flexibility Clause

The duties and responsibilities set out in this job description are not exhaustive. The postholder will operate within the authority delegated by the CFOO and will refer matters requiring significant financial, contractual or strategic decisions to the CFOO. The postholder will undertake reasonable duties commensurate with the role and respond flexibly to changing School priorities and operational requirements. The job description may be reviewed periodically to reflect the evolving needs of the School.

Other Information

This job description reflects the present requirements of the post and as duties and responsibilities change/develop, the job description will be reviewed and be subject to amendment in consultation with the post holder.

The post holder also undertakes to carry out any other reasonable duties commensurate with the post and as directed by the Principal.

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

Experience

Essential

- Significant experience in commercial development, business development, partnership development, sales, venue management, facilities hire, leisure, hospitality, property or a comparable commercial environment.
- Demonstrable track record of generating new income and developing commercial opportunities.
- Experience of marketing, selling and managing facilities, services or venues.
- Experience of securing and negotiating significant commercial partnerships or contracts.
- Strong commercial acumen and understanding of pricing, income, costs, margin, contribution and return on investment.
- Demonstrable ability to identify, develop and convert new business opportunities.
- Strong relationship-management and negotiation skills.
- Strong financial and analytical capability.
- Experience of developing and managing a commercial pipeline.
- Experience of leading and developing people and/or a commercial function.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong organisational and project-management skills.
- Ability to work strategically while retaining responsibility for practical delivery.
- Proactive, entrepreneurial and results-focused approach.
- Strong professional judgement and integrity.
- Ability to work sensitively and effectively within a values-led educational environment.

Desirable

- Experience of working within an independent school, university, college, sports organisation, leisure business, venue, hospitality or property environment.
- Experience of commercialising educational, sporting or community facilities.
- Experience of developing holiday programmes, sports programmes, conferences, training or events.
- Experience of developing multi-year commercial partnerships.
- Experience of commercial input into property, estate or capital development.
- Experience of sponsorship or strategic commercial partnerships.
- Experience of CRM, booking or commercial management systems.
- Relevant qualification in business, commercial management, property, marketing, finance or a related discipline.



Personal Attributes

The successful candidate will be:

- Commercially minded and entrepreneurial.
- Proactive and opportunity focused.
- Comfortable with selling, negotiation and business development.
- Financially astute.
- Results-focused and accountable.
- Creative in identifying opportunities for under-utilised assets.
- A confident negotiator and relationship builder.
- Customer-focused.
- Analytical and comfortable working with financial and performance information.
- Highly organised and able to manage competing priorities.
- Comfortable operating with a high degree of autonomy.
- Willing to constructively challenge established thinking.
- Collaborative and able to work effectively across organisational boundaries.
- Pragmatic and solution focused.
- Sensitive to the particular requirements of an educational environment.
- Committed to protecting the School's reputation, values and educational purpose.

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: Monday 19th October 2026, 3pm

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 Manager 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.

