

Director of P E and Sport (Whole School)
CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

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

Website: www.stmaryscolchester.org.uk/vacancies

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the role of Director of PE and Sport (Whole School) at St Mary's Colchester.

Founded in 1908 by the Billson 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. Our task now is to honour that inheritance while sharpening our distinctiveness as a school in which academic ambition, exceptional pastoral care and rich co-curricular and holistic development work together.

PE and Sport are central to that ambition. We want girls to develop physical confidence, healthy habits, resilience, teamwork and leadership; to experience the joy and challenge of participation and competition; and, where they have particular talent and ambition, to encounter credible pathways towards excellence.

We have recently undertaken an independent strategic review of our PE and Sport provision. It identified considerable commitment, breadth and opportunity, but also the need for clearer vision, stronger whole-school leadership, greater coherence between phases and a more purposeful relationship between curriculum PE, Games, co-curricular activity and competitive sport.

This appointment is therefore not about maintaining an established model. It is an opportunity to help create the next one.

We are looking for an ambitious, credible and values-led educational leader who understands the transformative potential of PE and Sport for girls; someone who can combine strategic vision with operational command, inspire colleagues and pupils, and build a culture in which participation and performance strengthen one another.

For the right candidate, this is a rare opportunity to shape one of the central pillars of the future St Mary's educational proposition.

I hope you will consider joining us.

With best wishes,

Lee Daniel Faith
Principal

The school

Founded in 1908 by the Billson sisters, St Mary's is a distinctive independent school in Colchester with a proud tradition of educating and empowering girls. Our vision is to empower girls to thrive at school and beyond.

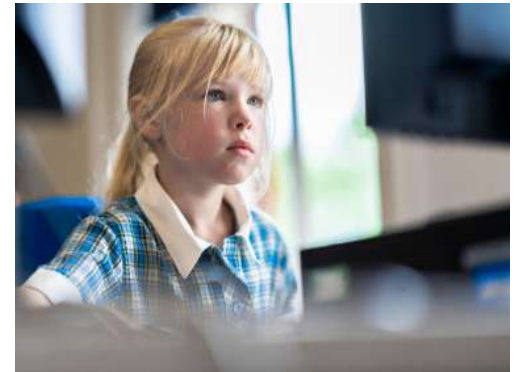
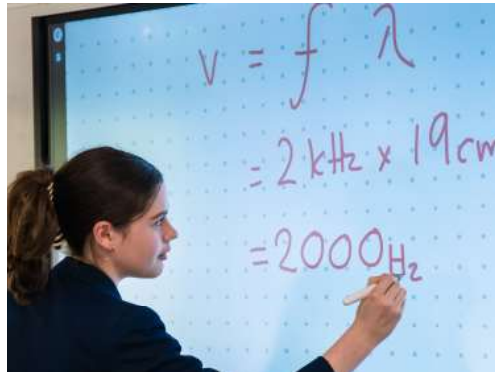
We provide an education built upon three mutually reinforcing foundations: academic ambition; exceptional pastoral care; and rich co-curricular and holistic development. At the centre of each is the individual pupil. We want every girl to be known, understood and supported, while also being challenged to think deeply, aim high and develop confidence in her own abilities.

Small classes, strong relationships and a highly committed staff enable us to respond thoughtfully to the needs and potential of each pupil. Recognised by The Sunday Times as the 12th highest-performing preparatory school in England, our Lower School has an established record of academic success. Senior School pupils consistently achieve strong GCSE outcomes across a broad range of academic, creative and vocational subjects. Throughout the School, we seek to nurture curiosity, intellectual rigour and a genuine love of learning.

We also believe that an excellent education extends well beyond examination results. Pupils benefit from an extensive programme of clubs, enrichment, music, drama, sport, visits and international experiences. Through leadership opportunities, pupil voice, community engagement and charitable activity, they develop the courage, integrity and kindness needed to make a positive contribution to the world around them.

Our pastoral culture is a defining strength. Pupils flourish when they feel secure, valued and confident enough to challenge themselves. We therefore combine high expectations with thoughtful support, creating an environment in which girls can grow academically, socially, personally and physically.

As St Mary's approaches its 120th anniversary in 2028, we are ambitious for the next chapter of the School's development. We are strengthening our academic distinctiveness while preserving the warmth, breadth and individual care that make the School special.



Why PE and Sport at St Mary's - and Why Now?

St Mary's is entering the next phase of its development with a clear educational ambition: to provide an intellectually ambitious and deeply humane education for girls, in which every pupil is known, challenged and equipped with the knowledge, confidence, character and voice to shape her future.

Our educational vision is built upon three mutually reinforcing foundations: academic ambition; exceptional pastoral care; and rich co-curricular and holistic development. At the centre is the individual pupil.

PE and Sport have a fundamental contribution to make to that vision.

We believe that an excellent sporting education is not principally about producing a small number of successful teams, nor is it simply about providing a broad menu of activities. At its best, PE and Sport develop physical confidence and competence; health and wellbeing; courage and resilience; leadership and teamwork; aspiration and belonging. They provide girls with opportunities to discover strengths, encounter challenge, experience both success and disappointment, take appropriate risks and develop habits that can sustain physical and mental flourishing throughout their lives.

Our ambition is therefore considerably greater than improving fixtures or increasing participation.

We want to reimagine the place of PE and Sport within a St Mary's education.

An independent strategic review undertaken in 2026 identified considerable commitment from staff and a broad range of existing sporting opportunities, but also concluded that provision lacked sufficient strategic direction, coherence and a clearly articulated identity. In particular, it identified the need for stronger alignment between curriculum PE, Games, co-curricular activity and competitive sport, alongside clearer progression between the Lower and Senior Schools.

The review also identified something strategically significant for the wider School: sport is cited as an important factor in some families' decisions not to continue from the Lower School into the Senior School. Strengthening PE and Sport is therefore simultaneously an educational, cultural and institutional priority.

We do not believe the answer lies simply in more activity. It lies in greater purpose, coherence, ambition and leadership.



We want every girl at St Mary's to develop physical confidence and a positive relationship with movement and exercise. We want pupils who love competitive sport to encounter genuine ambition, excellent coaching and meaningful pathways. We want girls who have never considered themselves 'sporty' to discover forms of physical activity in which they can participate confidently and successfully. And we want sport to become a more visible expression of the courage, kindness and integrity that we seek to develop throughout the School.

That requires a new kind of leadership.

The Director of PE and Sport will therefore not inherit a finished strategy and simply administer it. They will help create it.

Our Emerging Vision for PE and Sport

Our ambition is to develop a distinctive whole-school culture in which every girl is physically confident, every girl participates, and every girl has the opportunity to pursue excellence.

The future St Mary's sporting proposition should reconcile ideas that are too often presented as alternatives.

Participation and performance

Sport should belong to every pupil. Broad participation and competitive ambition are not opposing philosophies. An excellent sporting culture creates multiple points of entry while also providing appropriate challenge, coaching and pathways for pupils with particular talent and ambition. We want significantly more girls participating meaningfully in physical activity while simultaneously raising the quality and ambition of representative sport.

Physical education and competitive sport

Physical Education should develop the knowledge, competence, confidence and habits required for lifelong physical wellbeing. Games and competitive sport should provide opportunities for participation, teamwork, representation, aspiration and excellence. Neither should be subordinate to the other.

Lower School and Senior School

We are one school. The experience will appropriately differ according to age and phase, but pupils should experience an intelligible journey through PE and Sport: developing physical literacy and confidence in the earliest years, encountering increasing breadth and challenge, discovering areas of interest and talent, and progressing towards independence and lifelong participation.

Breadth and strategic focus

St Mary's already provides considerable sporting breadth. The next stage is not necessarily to do more. It is to become clearer about why we do what we do. The Director will lead the School in determining an appropriate balance between broad participation and a smaller number of strategically developed sports in which St Mary's can establish stronger pathways, coaching, competition and identity.

Wellbeing and challenge

Our wider educational philosophy rejects the false choice between ambition and care. The same should be true in Sport. Girls should encounter challenge, competition, physical exertion, teamwork, success and disappointment within a culture in which they are known and supported. Sport should contribute to resilience because pupils learn increasingly to navigate difficulty.

School experience and lifelong flourishing

The ultimate measure of successful PE and Sport provision cannot simply be trophies, fixture results or club attendance. We want girls to leave St Mary's with the confidence and capability to remain physically active beyond school. For some, that may mean competitive sport at a high level. For others it may mean running, strength training, swimming, dance, fitness, recreational team sport or forms of activity they have yet to discover.

A St Mary's education should equip girls not merely to participate in school sport, but to understand and value their physical selves.

The Leadership Opportunity

Against that backdrop, the Director of PE and Sport (Whole School) represents a significant new leadership appointment.

The successful candidate will be asked to move St Mary's from a collection of sporting activities and provision towards a coherent educational philosophy, strategy and culture for PE and Sport.

Their early priorities will include:

- establishing and articulating the whole-school vision for PE and Sport;
- translating the independent review into a prioritised and deliverable development strategy;
- creating greater coherence between Lower and Senior School provision;
- establishing a clear educational distinction and relationship between PE, Games, co-curricular activity and competitive sport;
- developing a culture combining broad participation with credible pathways towards excellence;
- strengthening curriculum progression, coaching, competition and pupil experience;
- developing the people, structures, systems and evidence required to sustain improvement;
- strengthening the visibility and identity of Sport within the School; and
- advising the School Executive on the future staffing, facilities and resources required to support the strategy.

Crucially, the successful candidate will need to exercise judgement about sequencing. The independent review contains a substantial range of recommendations, from curriculum architecture and priority sports to fixtures, House Sport, scholarships, partnerships, data, communication and facilities.

We are not seeking someone who will attempt to implement a list. We are seeking someone capable of determining what matters most, what should happen first, what evidence will demonstrate impact and how lasting cultural change is secured.

This therefore requires more than an excellent teacher of PE or an accomplished sports coach. We are looking for a credible educational leader who understands Sport deeply; who can move confidently between strategy and implementation; who can lead adults as effectively as pupils; who can build relationships across two schools and two sites; and who possesses the ambition and imagination to establish a distinctive sporting identity for a girls' school entering an important new chapter.

For the right person, this is a rare opportunity: not simply to lead Sport at St Mary's, but to define what Sport at St Mary's will become.

Job description

Job title:	Director of PE and Sport (Whole School)
Reporting to:	Principal or Vice Principal, according to the final leadership structure
Hours:	Full-time
Salary:	Competitive, commensurate with experience and the seniority of the role
Teaching:	A teaching commitment commensurate with the strategic and operational demands of the role

About the Role

The Director of PE and Sport provides strategic leadership for Physical Education, Games, co-curricular and competitive sport across St Mary's. The postholder is responsible for developing and implementing a coherent whole-school vision that strengthens participation, performance, physical literacy, wellbeing, pupil experience and the School's sporting identity.

This is a strategic leadership role with substantial operational accountability. The postholder will lead the development of curriculum and co-curricular provision, staffing and coaching structures, fixtures and competition, sports scholarships, partnerships, systems, communication and the evidence base through which impact is evaluated.

The Director will work closely with the Principal, Vice Principal, Chief Financial and Operating Officer, relevant Assistant Principals, the Co-Curricular Lead, Marketing and Admissions colleagues and PE/Sport staff across both sites.

Role Purpose

- Develop, articulate and deliver a distinctive whole-school vision and strategy for PE and Sport aligned with the School's wider educational proposition.
- Secure coherent progression from the Lower School through the Senior School, while respecting the distinctive developmental needs of each phase.
- Create an inclusive sporting culture in which all pupils develop physical confidence and positive lifelong habits, alongside ambitious pathways for pupils seeking competitive excellence.
- Provide strategic and operational leadership of curriculum PE, Games, co-curricular sport and competitive fixtures.
- Build the leadership, staffing, coaching, systems and accountability required for sustainable improvement.
- Use participation, performance, pupil voice, parent voice and other evidence intelligently to evaluate impact and inform decision-making.
- Strengthen the contribution of PE and Sport to pupil recruitment, retention, reputation and the wider identity of St Mary's.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Whole-School Development

- Lead the creation, implementation and regular review of the whole-school PE and Sport strategy, translating the School's strategic direction and the 2026 independent review into a sequenced development plan with clear milestones, responsibilities and measures of impact.
- Provide authoritative advice to the Principal, School Executive and Governors on PE and Sport, including priorities, risks, staffing, resources, facilities and future investment.
- Establish a clear philosophy for the respective purposes of Physical Education, Games, co-curricular sport and competitive sport and ensure that this is understood consistently by pupils, staff and parents.
- Develop a coherent sporting identity which reflects St Mary's values of Courage, Kindness and Integrity and contributes visibly to the School's wider educational proposition.
- Attend and contribute to Senior Leadership Team meetings as required, providing authoritative advice on PE and Sport and contributing to relevant whole-school strategic and operational discussions.

Curriculum PE, Games and Physical Literacy

- Lead the strategic development and quality assurance of PE and Games across the whole School, ensuring appropriate progression, challenge and continuity between phases.
- Review curriculum architecture, curriculum time and schemes of work so that provision develops physical literacy, health, wellbeing, competence and confidence as well as appropriate competitive opportunity.
- Reinstate and build a fully supported, academically rigorous GCSE Physical Education curriculum as an early priority, including secure leadership of Edexcel requirements, moderation and filming arrangements.
- Ensure curriculum provision is inclusive and appropriately adaptive while maintaining ambitious expectations for every pupil.
- Ensure that curriculum planning is informed by relevant evidence, developments in girls' sport and physical education, pupil needs and the School's strategic priorities.

Participation, Performance and Competitive Sport

- Develop a clear participation and performance framework, ensuring that broad access and competitive ambition reinforce rather than displace one another.
- Lead the identification and development of appropriate priority sports, informed by pupil interest, staffing expertise, competitive opportunity, progression from the Lower School and the wider development of girls' sport.
- Develop a coherent fixture and competition strategy, including appropriate representative opportunities, festivals, House Sport and consideration of the future place of Saturday sport.
- Ensure transparent, equitable and educationally defensible approaches to team selection and representative sport.
- Develop appropriate performance pathways, training opportunities and links with external clubs and governing bodies for pupils with particular talent and ambition.
- Develop a strategic approach to sports tours and major sporting experiences.

Co-Curricular Sport and Pupil Experience

- Work closely with the Co-Curricular Lead to ensure that the sporting programme is coherent, sustainable and aligned with the School's strategic sporting priorities.
- Increase meaningful participation across age groups and challenge limiting assumptions around 'sporty' and 'non-sporty' pupils.
- Develop House Sport as a visible driver of participation, belonging, competition and school culture.
- Ensure that pupil voice is used systematically to understand barriers to participation and improve the quality of provision.
- Develop opportunities that support lifelong engagement with physical activity, including fitness, strength and conditioning and other appropriate forms of movement.

People, Leadership and Professional Development

- Provide clear leadership, expectations, support and accountability for PE and Sport colleagues across both sites, with the Lower School PE Coordinator reporting directly to the Director as part of a genuinely integrated whole-school PE and Sport structure.
- Review and advise on staffing and coaching structures required to deliver the whole-school strategy effectively.
- Establish effective meeting, planning, communication and accountability structures across the PE and Sport function.
- Lead recruitment, induction, development and appraisal of relevant colleagues in accordance with the School's structures.
- Develop a culture of professional learning, coaching and evidence-informed improvement within the department.
- Ensure appropriate deployment and quality assurance of external coaches and specialist providers.

Systems, Data, Communication and Operations

- Introduce robust systems for tracking participation, fixtures, attendance, performance and other agreed measures of impact.
- Use data intelligently to identify patterns, inequalities, opportunities and areas requiring intervention.
- Lead improvements in communication with pupils and parents concerning fixtures, selection, schedules, cancellations and sporting opportunities.
- Evaluate and, where appropriate, lead implementation of a sports management platform or other systems required to strengthen organisation and communication.
- Ensure sporting calendars, transport, staffing, risk management and operational arrangements are well planned and communicated.
- Ensure appropriate health and safety, safeguarding, risk assessment and regulatory requirements are embedded throughout PE and Sport provision.

Scholarships, Partnerships, Marketing and Admissions

- Lead the review and development of Sports Scholarship criteria, expectations, benefits and ongoing responsibilities, working with Admissions and Marketing colleagues.
- Contribute actively to Open Days, taster events and other recruitment activity where PE and Sport form part of the School's educational proposition.
- Work with Marketing and Admissions colleagues to ensure that communication about PE and Sport is accurate, evidence-based and compelling.
- Develop productive partnerships with local clubs, schools, governing bodies, athletes, alumnae and community organisations where these strengthen pupil pathways or the School's strategic objectives.
- Ensure sporting achievement and participation are appropriately celebrated through assemblies, publications, digital channels and the wider life of the School.

Facilities, Resources and Future Development

- Advise the School Executive on the facilities and resources required to support the long-term PE and Sport strategy, distinguishing clearly between immediate operational needs and longer-term capital aspirations.
- Contribute to strategic consideration of the swimming pool and wider sports facilities within the School's estate planning.
- Manage delegated budgets responsibly and ensure resources are directed towards agreed educational and strategic priorities.
- Seek opportunities to maximise existing facilities and partnerships before recommending significant additional investment.

Governance, Evaluation and Accountability

- Establish clear success measures for the PE and Sport strategy and report regularly on progress, impact, risks and next steps.
- Prepare high-quality reports for the Principal, School Executive and Governors as required.
- Maintain appropriate evidence and audit trails to support governance, inspection readiness and evaluation of provision.
- Ensure that strategic claims about participation, performance, wellbeing, recruitment or retention are supported by credible evidence.

Professional Responsibilities and Other Duties

- Uphold the values, ethos and professional standards of St Mary's.
- Comply with all School policies and procedures, including those relating to safeguarding, equality, health and safety and confidentiality.
- Maintain high standards of communication, discretion, organisation and professional judgement.
- Maintain a visible professional presence across both School sites and play a full part in the wider life of the School.
- Engage actively in professional development and contribute to INSET, staff meetings, briefings and School events as required.
- Undertake such other reasonable duties and strategic projects as the Principal may require, provided that they are commensurate with the nature and seniority of the role.
- Participate in periodic review of the job description as the School's structure, strategy and needs evolve.

Safeguarding

St Mary's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be required to undertake the School's safer recruitment and child protection screening processes, including appropriate checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Indicative Priorities for the First 18 Months

The precise sequencing will be determined with the successful candidate. The following reflects the current strategic direction rather than a predetermined implementation checklist.

Phase	Priority	Intended Direction
First 100 days	Listen, diagnose and establish strategic control	Validate the review findings; understand pupil, staff and parent experience; map curriculum, staffing, fixtures, participation and systems; establish immediate operational improvements and agree success measures.
0-6 months	Vision, structure and quick wins	Publish the whole-school philosophy; strengthen communication and data; clarify PE/Games architecture; begin reinstatement of a fully supported, academically rigorous GCSE PE curriculum; develop House Sport and visible participation; review scholarships, staffing and priority sports.
6-12 months	Build coherent provision	Implement agreed curriculum and co-curricular changes; strengthen fixture strategy and performance pathways; develop partnerships; embed quality assurance and professional development.
12-18 months	Evaluate, refine and plan longer term	Evaluate impact against evidence; refine the strategy; advise on facilities, staffing and resource investment; establish a sustainable multi-year development plan.

Person specification

The successful candidate will demonstrate many, if not all, of the following qualities, skills and experiences. Essential criteria are those required for appointment; desirable criteria indicate areas of additional strength.

(E) = Essential
(D) = Desirable

Qualifications and Training

- Degree-level education or equivalent.
- QTS, PGCE or equivalent teaching qualification.
- Evidence of sustained and relevant professional development.
- Relevant postgraduate, leadership, coaching or sport-related qualification.

Experience

- A strong record as a successful teacher of PE and/or Sport.
- Substantial successful leadership experience within PE, Sport or a closely related educational setting.
- Experience of leading significant improvement or change in sporting or educational provision.
- Experience of leading and developing colleagues, including accountability for performance and professional growth.
- Experience of curriculum development and quality assurance.
- Experience of competitive school sport, fixtures, coaching and co-curricular provision.
- Experience of using participation, performance or educational data to evaluate provision and inform improvement.
- Experience of strategic planning, budget/resource oversight and operational delivery.
- Experience in an independent school or similarly ambitious educational environment.
- Experience of girls' education and/or the development of girls' sport.
- Experience of sports scholarships, external partnerships, tours or performance pathways.



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Knowledge and Skills

- Deep and current understanding of Physical Education, school sport, physical literacy and the relationship between participation, wellbeing and performance. (E)
- Ability to translate strategic vision into coherent structures, priorities, systems and measurable improvement. (E)
- Strong understanding of inclusive practice and the barriers that can affect girls' participation in physical activity and sport. (E)
- Excellent organisational and operational capability, including the management of complex calendars, fixtures, staffing and competing priorities. (E)
- Strong analytical skills and the ability to use evidence rather than assumption to drive decision-making. (E)
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills with pupils, parents, colleagues, governors and external partners. (E)
- Secure understanding of safeguarding, health and safety and risk management in PE and Sport. (E)
- Understanding of contemporary developments in girls' and women's sport and relevant external pathways. (D)

Leadership Qualities and Personal Attributes

- A compelling educational vision for the place of PE and Sport in girls' development. (E)
- Strategic ambition combined with disciplined implementation and attention to detail. (E)
- Credibility, presence and the ability to inspire pupils and adults. (E)
- Collaborative leadership exercised with clarity, courage and appropriate accountability. (E)
- Warmth, emotional intelligence and the ability to build trust across different phases and professional groups. (E)
- The courage to challenge inconsistency and underperformance constructively. (E)
- Sound judgement about priorities, sequencing, resources and sustainable change. (E)
- Commitment to participation and inclusion alongside genuine competitive ambition. (E)
- Integrity, resilience and a strong commitment to St Mary's values and the education of girls. (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: Wednesday 28th October 2026 at 12:00

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 position or would like an informal chat about the role, please contact Mr Phil Greenaway and Mr Russell McCluskey at phil@pgreenawayltd.com and russ@rpmsports.co.uk.

If you have any questions regarding MyNewTerm or the recruitment process, please contact Mrs Molly Terry at careers@stmaryscolchester.org.uk

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.

