



ST MARY'S SCHOOL HAMPSTEAD

Recruitment of Trustees and Governors POLICY

September 2025

Reviewed September 2025

Next Review Date: September 2026

MISSION STATEMENT

St Mary's School seeks to provide an outstanding education firmly founded on the Catholic Faith.

Spiritual and moral principles are nurtured in a way that is reflected in daily life.

Within a happy and caring environment and based on the recognition of the dignity, worth and wellbeing of each child, high standards are expected. Intellectual development is emphasised and fostered along with the pursuit of academic excellence.

St Mary's values the unique contribution of every child within the school community.

St Mary's is inclusive and welcomes girls from all communities and faith backgrounds, or none, and believes that all benefit from the school's values.

St Mary's aims to encourage an active partnership between home, school, parish and the wider community.

General

St Mary's School, Hampstead ("the School") is committed to ensuring the best possible environment for the children and young people in its care. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are its highest priority.

We aim to recruit Trustees and Governors that share and understand our commitment to the aims of the School.

All queries regarding our recruitment process must be directed to the Chair of Governors.

Recruitment of Governors and Trustees

As trustees of a registered charity, the Trustees of St Mary's School, Hampstead are responsible for the selection and appointment of new Trustees and Governors. This is a legal responsibility that cannot be delegated, although the Nominations Committee, comprising the Headmistress and Chair of Governors will, after discussion and research, put forward recommendations for new Trustees and Governors to the Trustees. As Charity Trustees, we are aware of the importance of identifying the appropriate mixture of skills and experience that we and our successors need to manage the multi-faceted affairs of a modern school which is also a company limited by guarantee, a medium-sized business and an important local employer, with some 60 employees. Schools should avoid appointing or retaining trustees who are disqualified from being a trustee, unless the Charity Commission has given a waiver. All potential trustees should complete a "Charity Trustee Positions: Automatic Disqualification Declaration" before beginning the selection process.

The Trustees devote a good deal of thought to succession planning and keep a register of the mixture of skills and professional backgrounds that they require for the Governing Body. The aim is to achieve a balanced Board with a core of individuals with educational, legal, accountancy, finance, property management, surveying, IT, business and marketing backgrounds. The Governors review this balance regularly and try to achieve a wide range of professions and backgrounds. For a list of current Trustees and Governors, their professions and skills, see the School's website and Governor's Handbook.

The Board of Governors is required to consist of the Treasurer, eight members appointed by the Trustees, of whom at least one should be a member of the Congregation of Jesus ("CJ") nominated by the Provincial, and, in addition, the Board of Governors may co-opt not more than two additional persons. It is required that consideration be given to the appointment or co-option of at least one Governor with special links with education and the appointment or co-option of at least one Governor with special links to the Diocese.

Following return of the completed disqualification declaration, all Trustees and Governors complete a selection process which requires the submission of brief biographical details, meeting with a substantial number of Trustees and Governors, a meeting with the Headmistress and an interview with the Nominations Committee. Every Trustee and Governor undertakes the pre-appointment checks listed under "Safer recruitment checks" below, which includes the requirement that every Governor and Trustee has an enhanced DBS check unless they will be undertaking a regulated activity, in which case they will undertake an enhanced DBS check with a barred list check.

Each appointment is made by the full Board for a period of 3 years. We arrange for all new Trustees and Governors to receive a thorough induction in child protection and in the compliance and fiduciary duties of governance. New Governors and Trustees spend a day at the School in order to meet the key personalities and to gain an insight into the curriculum and to meet groups of pupils.

Governor and Trustee selection process

The initial stage

When a potential Trustee or Governor has been identified and has expressed an interest, they will be invited to visit the School to meet the Headmistress informally and to have a tour of the School. If the Chair of Governors is not present at that stage, they will arrange a separate informal meeting, perhaps in the company of another, experienced Governor. At that meeting, we will briefly describe our strategic vision for the next three to five years and the direction in which the Trustees and Governors see the School moving. Our aim at the informal meeting is to ensure that every prospective Trustee or Governor has a clear understanding of the commitment expected of them in terms of time and attendance and is given sufficient material about the School that is in the public domain (prospectus, latest ISI Inspection Report, Statutory Accounts and Annual Return for the previous year) to allow a well-informed judgement to be made before committing themselves to the appointment process. At the informal meeting, we also brief all potential candidates about the range of statutory checks that are required as part of the appointment process.

If desired, the nominee may attend a full Governors' meeting and a subcommittee meeting as an observer, appropriately supervised as a visitor to the School.

The appointment process

The second step is to invite the prospective Trustee or Governor to submit a copy of their brief biographical details under a covering letter to the Chair of Trustees, following which the Chair of Trustees will arrange for an opportunity for the individual to meet a substantial number of Trustees and Governors. Prospective Governors and Trustees are then interviewed by the Nomination Committee, which recommends all appointments to the full Board of Trustees. Care is taken to select Trustees and Governors who are prepared to serve for a minimum of three years (which is the normal length of a term of appointment) and preferably six years, and to be prepared to commit the time necessary to get to know the School.

All new appointments are made by the Trustees and formally recorded in the minutes. A formal letter of appointment is sent by the Chair of Trustees, which specifies the term of the appointment, and, if appropriate, the sub-Committee(s) to which the new Governor has been appointed. The letter will state that the appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of safer recruitment checks, detailed below.

As part of the approval process, the nominee will be required to sign a declaration of Catholicity, in order to evidence that the Roman Catholic majority required by the constitution of the School is maintained.

Safer recruitment checks

The Bursar, in their capacity as Clerk to the Governors, plays an important role in assisting with the appointment of new Trustees and Governors, in arranging briefing and induction programmes at the School and in ensuring that the correct paperwork is sent and completed. They will complete/obtain the following from the new potential Trustee or Governor before their appointment is confirmed:

- Identification checks (including name, address, photographic ID and date of birth);
- Evidence of right to work in the UK;
- If they will be undertaking a regulated activity, a barred list check;
- Satisfactory enhanced DBS check (or pre-existing enhanced DBS checked and accepted from applicant who has subscribed to DBS update service together with the check with the DBS update service);
- Receipt of Suitability Declaration Form showing applicant is not disqualified from providing childcare as set out in the statutory guidance “Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006”;
- Evidence that the applicant is not prohibited from participating in the management of independent schools;
- Prohibition from teaching check if applicant is a teacher;
- Evidence of overseas criminal records checks for applicants who have worked/lived abroad and for candidates who have previously taught overseas, a letter from the professional regulating authority of the teaching profession in any country (or countries) where they have carried out teaching work confirming that they have not imposed any sanctions or restrictions, and/or that they are aware of any reason why they may be unsuitable to teach;
- Confirmation that applicant has not been disqualified from acting as a charity trustee or director;
- If they are also to be appointed as a Company Director, a completed Form AP01 (downloadable from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/appoint-a-director-ap01>) will be sent to Companies House to register the appointment.

All the paperwork will be handled by the Bursar as Clerk to the Governors and will be recorded in the School’s Single Central Record.

Checks regarding the Chair Of Trustees

If the Chair of Trustees is to change, we will ensure that the Department for Education obtains an enhanced DBS check, and checks both the individual's identity and right to work in the UK before they take up the appointment. Further overseas checks are required if the person lives or has lived outside the UK. The Chair of Trustees’ disclosure application has to be made by the DfE; we cannot handle it as we would for all other Trustees or Governors. Even if a Trustee or Governor, whom the school has already checked, becomes Chair of Trustees, the DfE has to make another check.

Induction of Governors and Trustees

Governors and Trustees will be provided with training on the following, once in post:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Prevent Awareness
- Protect Duty

- School's Code of Conduct from the School's Employment Manual (N.B., This applies both to Staff and to Governors/Trustees)
- Health and Safety policy
- Confidentiality obligations
- Supervision
- Data Protection
- Online Safety (to include an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring).

In addition, all new Governors and Trustees will be required to read Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and Annex B and to confirm in writing that they have done so. They will also be required to read KCSIE Part 2 which sets out Governors' and Trustees' responsibilities.

All new Governors and Trustees will be advised on the confidentiality requirements of their appointment.

New Governors will be provided with access to the Governors' Handbook which is maintained on the School's intranet for Governors and Trustees (with hard copies available if needed) and which sets out useful information about the School, including the roles and responsibilities of senior staff, details of sub-committees of the Governing Body, and the School's Employment Manual. Governors will be provided with the AGBIS manual, *Guidelines for Governors*, and will be advised and encouraged to participate in training and in particular to undertake the AGBIS Seminar for New Governors.

Data protection

We will comply with our obligations under the relevant data protection legislation. Governors and Trustees' attention should be drawn to the Staff Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy which sets out details of how we will process their personal data.