



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
Cardiff

Headteacher Vacancy

Start Date: September 2026



The Board of Trustees of St John's College, Cardiff invites applications for the role of Headteacher, commencing in September 2026.

St John's College, Cardiff is a leading co-educational Catholic independent day school for over 525 pupils aged 3-18. The school is housed in a beautiful Grade II listed building, developed to offer superb modern facilities, with an exciting new Sixth Form centre five minutes' walk from the main campus. St John's College enjoys a national reputation for academic excellence, being consistently ranked for over two decades among the highest-achieving schools in the UK, as well as a rich and diverse co-curricular programme, and is immensely proud of its role as Choir School to Cardiff Metropolitan Cathedral Church of St. David, the seat of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia. It is one of only two Roman Catholic cathedral schools in the United Kingdom, the other being Westminster Cathedral School.

The success of St John's College is underpinned by its Roman Catholic heritage and familial community. While maintaining a strong Catholic identity, St John's welcomes pupils of all faiths and backgrounds.

The school seeks an exceptional leader with the appropriate blend of skills, talents, experience and values to become its next Headteacher. The successful applicant will have an unwavering commitment to excellence and an aspiration for the holistic growth of young people. Most importantly, the successful applicant will uphold and develop the Catholic ethos of the school and promote the mission of the Catholic Church in education, both of which are fundamental and crucial to the role. As such, it is an occupational requirement for the successful candidate to be a practicing Roman Catholic in full communion with the Catholic Church.

An attractive package, commensurate with the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate, will be offered.

Further information about St John's College, including a full candidate pack, can be found at:
www.stjohnscollegcardiff.com

How to Apply: Please submit a letter of application, your CV, and a completed application form to
Nikki Thomas, HR Manager, via email at **nthomas@stjohnscollegcardiff.com**
The deadline for applications is **midday on Friday, 5th September 2025.**



St John's College, Cardiff is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and an enhanced disclosure through the Disclosure and Barring Service.

This post is subject to an occupational requirement in accordance with the provisions set out in the Equality Act 2010, and other relevant legislation



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Candidate Brief

Brief for the position of
Headteacher, St John's College, Cardiff.



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Background

St John's College is the leading co-educational Catholic Independent day school in Wales, providing an exceptional all-round education for approximately 530 pupils, aged 3-18 years. Its success is underpinned by its Roman Catholic heritage and familial community. While maintaining a strong Catholic ethos and identity, it welcomes pupils of all faiths and backgrounds.

The College is immensely proud of its outstanding musical reputation and strongly believes in music's ability to enrich academic learning. Founded in 1987, St John's reputation for academic achievement has grown as swiftly as the College. It enjoys a national reputation for academic excellence, being consistently ranked, for over two decades, among the highest-achieving schools in the UK. It has received many accolades. For example, in 2017 it was named Wales Independent Secondary School of the Year by The Sunday Times Parent Power supplement, in 2022 it was named Top Independent School in Wales for Academic Outcomes and in 2023 it was recognised by the Daily Telegraph as the sixth Best Value independent school in the UK.

St John's College enables every pupil to thrive in a familial community where, through aspiration and opportunity, each individual achieves the most from their potential. This is achieved by offering the highest quality academic programme coupled with an extensive co-curricular provision in an environment that nurtures and celebrates hard-work and challenge.

The late Dr. David Neville was the Founding Principal of St John's College which was regenerated from the foundations of the recently closed De La Salle prep school, previously run by the De La Salle Brothers to educate pupils from the local Roman Catholic community. Dr. Neville oversaw the growth of the College from a base of 85 pupils in a seven-room single-storey building to the thriving academic community which can now be found in its new setting, a listed nineteenth-century building developed to offer superb modern facilities. In 2018, an exciting Sixth Form centre was opened by The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Cardiff, five minutes' walk from the main campus. The College's outstanding success has thrived under the present Headteacher, Mr. Shaun Moody, who is retiring after 38 years at the College, as Headteacher since 2018.

Today, St John's College Infants and Junior Departments and the Senior School form a close-knit community. Together the schools aim to educate young people of talent and potential to the highest level as they move from school to university and beyond. St John's College pupils go on to Oxbridge and top Russell Group Universities as young men and women with the highest aspirations and values, well-equipped to meet and compete with their contemporaries from across the world.

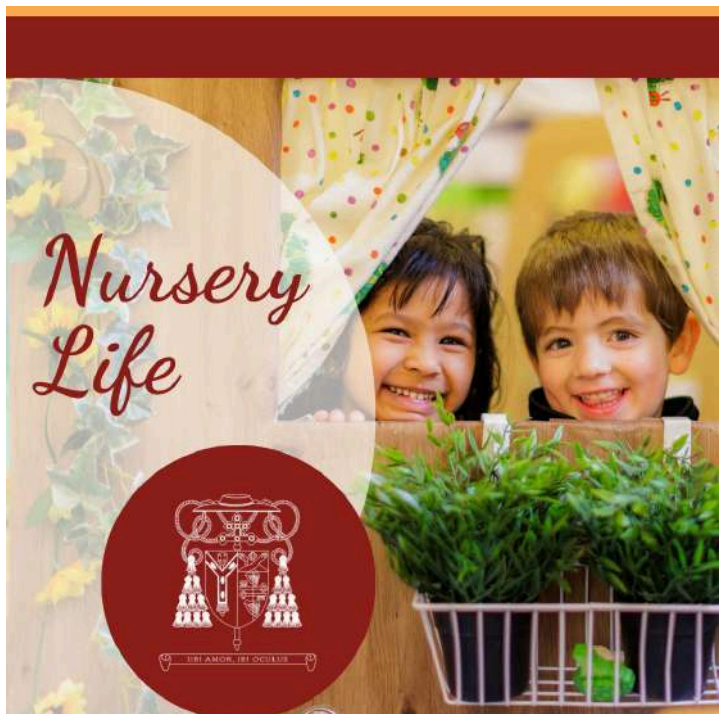


One family, three stages of development

Early Years & Infants (Age 3-7)

The Early Years and Infants Department provides a caring and stimulating environment in which all pupils are able to take part in new and enriching experiences. Children are prepared for the next stage of their education within St John's College by building their reading, writing and numeracy skills, using traditional methods as well as modern technology. The educational experience is enriched through the use of iPads and touchscreen laptops, interactive whiteboards and access to internet-based learning aids

The Infants Department benefits from a Forest School set amongst a copse of trees where children sit to discuss their activities, observations and findings around a log circle in the College's beautiful grounds. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their regular trips to Forest School which enable them to broaden their knowledge of natural habitats, bird life and woodland creatures, such as squirrels and hedgehogs.



Outdoors

Forest School is where our Nursery and Infant children sit to discuss activities, observations and feelings around a log circle amongst the trees in our beautiful grounds.



Juniors (Age 8-11)

The warm, family atmosphere of St John's College is exemplified in the close-knit junior community. Bright and spacious classrooms in an outstanding new block offer rich and stimulating surroundings in which pupils can learn and grow, nurtured by well-qualified and highly-motivated staff. Each pupil is regarded as a unique individual with his or her own particular learning needs and every pupil's individual talents both inside and outside of the classroom are encouraged and developed. Opportunities for co-curricular development include the Cathedral Choir, instrumental tuition, a diverse sports programme and the annual junior drama production. This is a place where learning is fun and the pupils particularly enjoy reading, with a thriving Junior library, run by the pupils themselves.



"Teachers plan thoughtfully, using a wide range of activities and stimulating resources that engage and challenge pupils and promote learning effectively" - Inspectors, Estyn.

Seniors (Age 8-11)

The Senior School at St John's College allows pupils to build on the knowledge, skills and understanding acquired during their early years, and prepares them for life beyond the classroom. The College prides itself on providing an atmosphere where pupils are encouraged to be good human beings; the values of care, kindness and compassion are at the core of all it does. Its pupils benefit from small class sizes and the dedicated staff's unwavering commitment to providing first class education in a family environment. They are nurtured and encouraged to develop their skills in a safe and supportive environment and to be the best they can be; as a result, its pupils achieve, on average, 1.5 grades higher at GCSE than they are predicted.

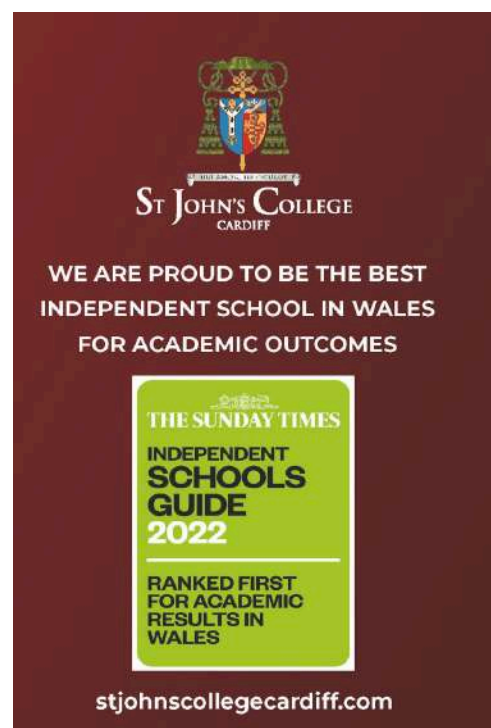


Academic Life

"St John's College, Cardiff is used to the celestial as choir school to Cardiff Metropolitan Cathedral. However, this year it was not just the school's music that was out of this world. Anyone obtaining a C grade on A-level results day in August will have felt a little lonely, as 98.1% of all outcomes secured A, A or B grades, putting Eton, Westminster, St Paul's et al into the shade." - The Sunday Times Parent Power (November 2017)*

Since then St. John's College has been named Top Independent School in Wales for Academic Outcomes (2022) and the sixth Best Value Independent School in the UK (2023). According to The Times Good School Guide 2025 the College was the best performing school in Wales based on GCSE and A-Level results in 2024

St John's College is an unashamedly academic school and, within a non-selective context, seeks to challenge every pupil to achieve their intellectual potential. Through a range of innovative teaching methods, as well a traditional quest for high standards, critical thought and curiosity for learning, the College makes for a stimulating and interactive learning community. Excellent facilities including class sets of iPads and Chromebooks and an awareness of current educational thinking and best practice combine to enable pupils to develop in a 21st century learning environment where effort and achievement are recognised and applauded. One example of the success of this was seen when a student received recognition for her discovery of two asteroids and a nomination for the Women of the Year Awards.



St John's College achieves outstanding results in public examinations, consistently maintaining a leading position in the UK, with 74% A*/A, 94.5% A*/B at A-Level and 79.3% A*/A at GCSE in 2024. Its students benefit from outstanding UCAS support. The vast majority of pupils move on to higher education, most of whom go to the UK's top universities, including Oxford and Cambridge.



Pastoral Life

From the moment pupils enter the College through to sixth form and admission to top universities, each individual receives the highest quality of care. Small class sizes and a family atmosphere mean every pupil receives the care and attention necessary to develop their full potential in a happy and safe environment. Through excellent discipline and warm encouragement, pupils are able to achieve far more than their predicted grades.

Student Voices

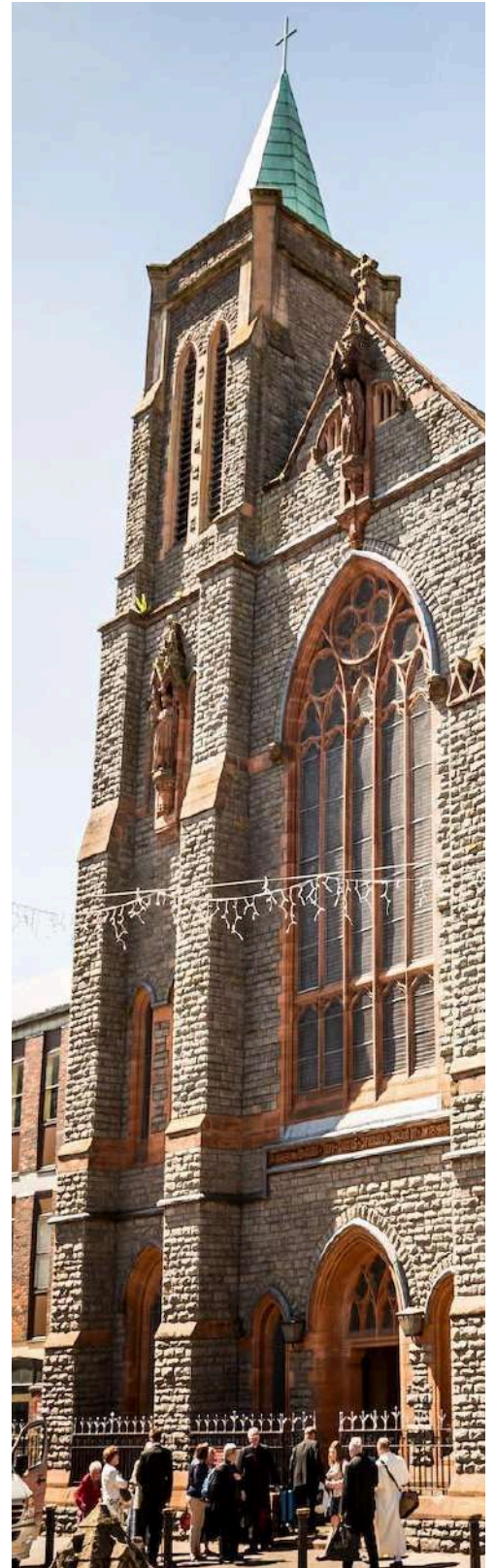


The Junior and Senior College Councils encourages pupils to develop a strong sense of belonging, and enhances communication channels between pupils and teachers alike.



Wellbeing

At St John's College, we believe in providing a positive and nurturing environment to all students, empowering them to thrive both inside and outside of the classroom.



"Ubi amor, ibi oculus (Where there is love, there is vision) " - St John's College, Motto.

The Choir School

Music plays a central role in school life.

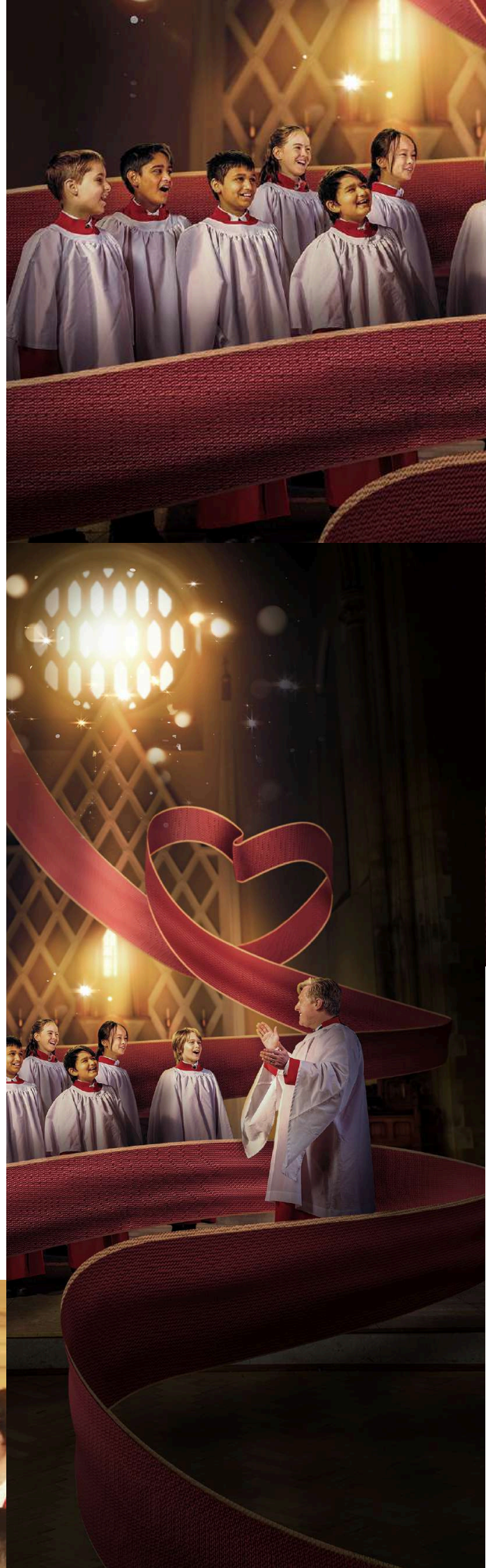
As the choir school to Cardiff Metropolitan Cathedral, St John's College provides girl and boy choristers (aged 8-18), choral scholars and lay clerks for weekly services at Cardiff Metropolitan Cathedral Church of St. David, the seat of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cardiff-Menevia.

The choir has given concerts at St David's Hall, Cardiff, performances at venues such as St Paul's Cathedral, Oxbridge Chapels, Westminster Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Bruges and Ghent Cathedral, Brecon Cathedral and the Royal College of Music and Drama and undertaken concert tours across continental Europe, performing at Notre Dame, Paris and Madrid El Escorial. It has also performed with the world-renowned consort The Tallis Scholars and alongside the Prague and Cardiff Philharmonic Orchestra, has developed an active programme of international choir collaboration, has performed in BBC Radio 4 broadcasts and has appeared in a major Hollywood film.

In 2022 one of the Choir's choristers was named runner-up in the prestigious BBC Songs of Praise Chorister of the Year competition.

The College's many instrumental ensembles include its award-winning Concert Orchestra, which has been a finalist in the Welsh Proms Schools Competition and has performed movements from Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concert at Christ Church Cathedral Oxford. It has also given very popular evening concerts to packed audiences, has toured Bruges and Ghent, and performed at St David's Hall and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama.

In addition, students can take part in a big band, a show band and a wide selection of peripatetic instrumental and vocal lessons.



Co-Curricular

Every pupil has the opportunity to develop their individual talents through the College's thriving and inclusive extra-curricular programme, which encourages pupils to engage in a broad and diverse range of activities beyond the classroom. Besides the exciting sports programme that encompasses everything from rugby and hockey to golf and basketball, there is ample opportunity for debating, drama and performance. The College has enjoyed notable successes in sport, chess and the performing arts.

The College provides outstanding sporting opportunities supported by first class indoor and outdoor facilities. It is proud of its newly built multi-purpose sports hall as well as the school's extensive sports facilities[SD1] in nearby Began Road, which include full-size football, rugby and cricket pitches with an artificial all-weather wicket as well as athletics equipment. A state of the art pavilion complex was opened by The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Cardiff in May 2019.

St John's College has celebrated individual and team achievements across a wide range of sports. Recent highlights include the Under-14 cricket team reaching the semi-finals of the Cardiff and Vale Schools Cup and the Under-15 rugby team progressing to the semi-finals of the Cardiff Schools Cup. Pupils regularly compete in fixtures against local independent and state schools fostering a strong spirit of competition and camaraderie. A significant number of pupils have achieved representative honours at national and international level across a wide variety of sports including sailing, fencing, cricket and tennis.





Chess continues to be a highly popular activity among pupils with significant individual and team achievements in both local and national competitions. Pupils have the opportunity to prepare for and sit formal chess examinations, further supporting their development in strategic thinking and competition.

Many pupils participate in LAMDA sessions working towards accredited qualifications in disciplines such as Acting, Musical Theatre and Public Speaking. These opportunities help build confidence, communication skills and performance ability. Recent results were outstanding with the first cohort of 16 pupils achieving 13 distinctions and 3 merits.



Dramatic achievements have included The Sound of Music, HMS Pinafore, The Amazing Maurice and his Educated Rodents, Trial by Jury, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night, Alice, the Musical, Beauty and the Beast, 'Pantastic', Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat and Little Shop of Horrors, whilst Sixth Formers have enjoyed notable success in the Oxford Union and Cambridge Union schools debating competitions, students have represented Wales at the ESU Public Speaking Final in London, have won the Rotary Youth Speaks Area Final on three occasions and have been successful in "Bar Mock Trials" competitions.

As a registered Duke of Edinburgh Award centre, the College supports pupils through all levels of the programme. Almost all students participate in and complete one or more of the Bronze, Silver and Gold awards.



The College has enjoyed remarkable success in national and international competitions in the F1 in Schools Global Engineering Challenge, with students representing the College at three World Finals in Abu Dhabi, Singapore and Silverstone, where Team Blackout achieved an exceptional second place on the podium.



The Role

The Headteacher of St John's College shall, subject to the direction of the Trustees, be responsible for the overall management, internal regulation, teaching and curriculum of the College.

Strategic vision for this role

- To uphold, maintain and develop the College's Catholic ethos and core Roman Catholic values and to promote the mission of the Catholic Church in education, which is fundamental, crucial and of paramount importance.
- To enhance further the academic performance of the College, whilst maintaining a focus on pastoral care and individual development..
- To build purposefully on the existing structure and strengths of the College, working with the Trustees to develop a clear vision and strategic plan for the future of the College.

Key Responsibilities

Academic and Educational Leadership

- **Ethos:** To uphold, maintain and develop the Catholic ethos of the College and its stated aims, including the promotion of the mission of the Catholic Church in education, and to generate, both inside and outside the classroom, not only excellence in academic endeavours but also a sense of vitality, energy and a genuine enjoyment of learning.
- **Community:** To create a stimulating community, encouraging enquiring minds and the development of lifelong learning skills.
- **Technological Pioneer:** To take a lead in the adoption of emerging technologies to support and enhance the learning environment.
- **Extra-curricular:** To support and foster extra-curricular activities.

Professional Leadership and Management

- **Exceptional example:** To provide leadership by example, including taking regular assemblies and running regular staff meetings.
- **Holistic responsibility:** To have overall management responsibility for all teaching and administrative staff in the College. This includes their appointment, induction, continuing professional development and review.
- **Respect:** To maintain the ethos of the St John's College community so that pupils and staff of all beliefs and backgrounds are valued and treated equally.
- **Operation:** To oversee the creation and review of all necessary operational policies to ensure the smooth running of the College in an efficient and safe way, with particular reference to the Health & Safety Policy.
- **Safeguard:** To safeguard and nurture the health, welfare, safety, pastoral care and general well-being of the pupils, including liaising closely with the College's Designated Child Protection Contact/ Lead Safeguarding Officer.

Business Management and Strategic Development

- **Report:** To report directly to the Board of Trustees on all matters relating to St John's College, to attend all meetings, providing written reports in advance as required, and to provide strategic input to the Trustees' decision-making process as appropriate.
- **Strategy:** To write, update and monitor the strategic development plan, consulting widely with staff and Trustees.

- **Budget:** To maintain oversight of the annual financial budget for the College and its implementation. To delegate on appropriate responsibilities including the collection of tuition and other fees, maintenance of buildings and grounds, catering, housekeeping and related tasks.

External Engagement

- **Public relations:** To take a lead role in the College's marketing and public relations to ensure creative marketing communication strategies are in place.
- **Visible:** To act as a figurehead and be personally visible and involved in school events.
- **Community:** To enhance St John's position and reputation in the community.
- **Admissions:** To oversee the procedures for admission to the College.
- **Independent sector:** To respond to the local and wider external environment of the independent sector.
- **Stakeholders:** To engage regularly with parents, prospective parents, Trustees and others, in particular, the Archdiocese of Cardiff-Menevia.

The Person

The Trustees are seeking an inspirational Headteacher who will lead St John's College with integrity, warmth and vision. The successful candidate will be an exceptional leader with an appropriate blend of skills, talents, experience and values, together with an unwavering commitment to excellence, who will, as a paramount responsibility, adopt, maintain, understand, nurture and develop the College's Catholic ethos, promote the mission of the Catholic Church in education, and build on the College's success, whilst preserving its culture.

The following key attributes, in the context of the above, are required for the post:

Qualifications and Experience

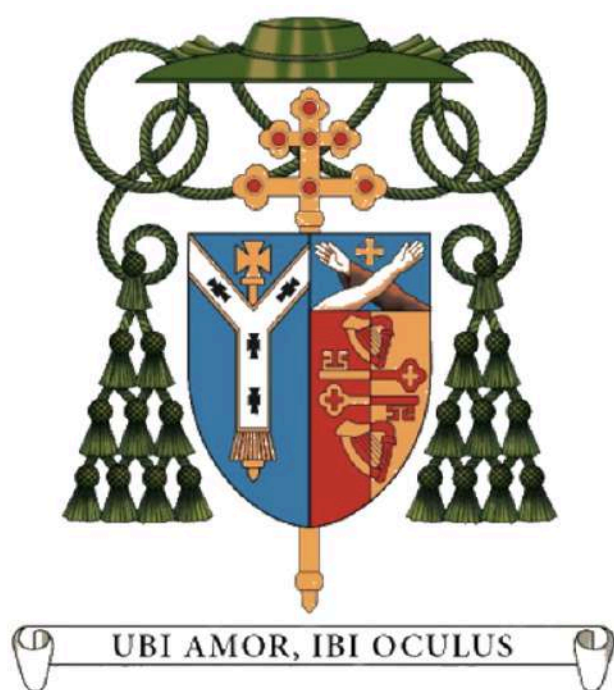
- A degree, with an additional leadership and/or management qualification an advantage.
- A proven track record in driving academic performance and delivering outstanding achievement.
- Experience in successfully developing, implementing and monitoring strategic plans.
- A proven track record of inspiring and leading academic and support teams.
- Experience in managing human, financial and physical resources.
- A proven track record of success in developing relationships with stakeholders.
- Good track record of operational delivery within an educational environment.

Knowledge, skills and abilities

- Excellent communication skills with the ability to listen, consult and discuss.
- Willingness to be externally visible and act as a high-profile ambassador for the College to current and potential parents, and the wider community.
- Ability to relate effectively to all sections of the school community.
- Ability to lead, inspire and motivate.
- Excellent knowledge of, and ability to manage financial matters, risk, regulatory and legal issues, including a strong commitment to Child Protection, Safer Recruitment and Health & Safety.
- Ability to lead and drive innovation, as well as project management skills.
- Excellent decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- Highly efficient, with excellent time management skills.
- Commitment to achieving the highest possible academic standards.

Personal

- A practising Roman Catholic in full communion with the Catholic Church with a commitment to and empathy with the Roman Catholic ethos, values and objectives of St John's College.
- Natural empathy with the underlying Catholic ethos of the College – focus on the pastoral care and development of the individual.
- Commitment to the welfare of its students.
- Excellent judgment and integrity.
- Confident and assured communicator.
- Strong, dynamic and inspirational.



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Cardiff

How to Apply

Letters of application **and** completed application forms should be submitted by email to nthomas@stjohnscollegcardiff.com, the email address of Nikki Thomas, HR Manager, St. John's College, Cardiff.

Please be advised that while you may include a CV with your submission, applications will only be considered if accompanied by a fully completed application form. You can obtain the necessary application form by visiting our website: www.stjohnscollegcardiff.com

If you require an application form in an alternative format, please contact Nikki Thomas, HR Manager.

If candidates prefer to send their application by mail, it should be addressed to:

Nikki Thomas
HR Manager
St. John's College
William Nicholls Drive,
Cardiff,
CF3 5YX

All applications will receive an automated response.

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation.

Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

The closing date for applications: **Midday Friday 5th September 2025.**

Shortlist interviews with the Selection Committee will take place on **2nd or 3rd October 2025.**
Finalists will be invited for briefing visits to the College week commencing 3rd November with final interviews taking place at the College on **10th November 2025.**