Information Pack

Head of Geography position
Required from September 2020

Queen Mary’s Grammar School
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The Location
Queen Mary’s Grammar School was founded in 1554 by Mary Tudor. We have been shaped by our past and are proud of our traditions, but we are also confident of an exciting future as we help to shape the new educational landscape with our partners in the Mercian Trust.

Queen Mary’s is an academically selective school. It is our aim to support pupils to achieve their full academic potential. We value the life of the mind and want to pass on a love of learning.

Outside the classroom, we offer a range of life-enriching opportunities: time at our Field Centre in Wales; membership of our thriving Combined Cadet Force; individual and team sports; foreign exchanges and travel; participation in music, debating and public speaking and many other activities. We believe that achievement and enjoyment go hand in hand.

We equip our pupils to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Most choose to go on to higher education. Through partnership between School, pupil and parents, we aim for the examination success that will open doors to the very best universities and international employers. It is our mission to attain excellence in all that we do.

Our House system celebrates the four pillars of school life at Queen Mary’s: an academic focus, an international ethos, an enterprising spirit and a sense of community. We enjoy our social, cultural and ethnic diversity and recognise our many privileges. We are keen to share what we have - experience, expertise, enthusiasm - both with those who live on our doorstep and those from further afield.

To do so is very much in the spirit of our motto quas dederis solas semper habebis opes: it is what you give that you will keep as eternal riches.

Richard Langton
Headmaster
About Us

Queen Mary’s Grammar School is an invigorating and rewarding place to work: the pupils are intelligent and committed to study; the staff are friendly and forward looking. It is more than just a place of work – it is a thriving community, proud of its past and confident of its future. In November 2008, it was recognised as ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted.

There are currently almost 1150 pupils on roll, including 422 in the Sixth Form. The School has an outstanding academic record and regularly features at the upper end of the national league tables. In 2019, 76% of GCSE grades were 7-9 (A*/A) and 62% of A Level grades were A*, A or B. Our value added scores place the school top in the borough, with a Progress 8 score of +0.76 in 2019. We do not rest on our laurels, but encourage all our pupils to realise their full potential.

In June 2011, the School converted to Academy status and we have undertaken a series of exciting building projects since then, including a new Sixth Form Centre, science labs and a humanities wing, music and PE refurbishments, extensions to existing English and maths classrooms, as well as a new dining room and reception. We were a founding member of the Mercian Multi Academy Trust (along with five other schools) in January 2018. Over the past year, we completed projects to add additional capacity through the building of extra science rooms and improving Design Technology and Art facilities.

The School encourages an enterprising and international outlook: trips, expeditions and exchanges have gone all over the world in recent years, as well as a wide range of vibrant and formative educational visits and experiences closer to home such as theatre visits, visiting speakers and the mental health ambassadors programme. We are proud to appear in Ross Morrison McGill’s new book *Just Great Teaching*, showcasing our mental health work.

We want our pupils to lead happy and fulfilled lives. Learning here is not just about passing exams, but about enjoying the life of the mind. We also encourage all our pupils to take part in a wide range of enrichment activities in music, sport, the Combined Cadet Force and at our Field Centre on the Afon Mawddach in Southern Snowdonia. We have been named in the Top 100 cricket schools by the *Cricketer Magazine* for the second year in succession.

Our pupils come from diverse backgrounds, but they all thrive on the sense of support, encouragement and care that characterises Queen Mary’s.
Benefits of working at
Queen Mary’s Grammar School

- teach gifted and intelligent students who have a real motivation to succeed
- a thriving and expanding school that achieves examination success, particularly at GCSE level
- professional autonomy in the classroom – you are encouraged to teach in a style that suits you and your subject
- a Headmaster and Senior Leadership Team that operate an open-door policy to support colleagues personally as well as professionally
- we take our mental health seriously, considering workload and staff wellbeing
- a dedicated induction programme for new staff and NQTs to ensure you are supported at whatever stage of your career you join us
- opportunities to play a role in the wider life of the school, including involvement in the CCF, music, debating, drama, coaching of sports teams and other opportunities
- career progression – many of our current middle and senior leaders are “home-grown” promotions from within.

Find out more

You can find out more about our school at http://www.qmgs.walsall.sch.uk.

For a flavour of daily life at QM follow us on Twitter at @QMGS1554.

Please contact Carol Wood (HR Executive) to arrange a phone conversation with a member of SLT about the school and the role.
The Geography Department

The Geography Department at Queen Mary’s Grammar School is a positive and engaging place to work. The department has been led by Mr. C. Larvin since 2016 alongside specialist Geography teachers Mr. G. Collins (Assistant Head), Mr. R. Matley (Head of Sixth Form) and Mr J. Hawkins.

Exam results are strong with 71% of our A-Level Geographers achieving A*-B grades. There are two teaching sets covering the AQA A-Level Geography specification taught by our four specialist geography teachers. The department tries to instil the value of the subject and we were pleased that 12 of our 40 A-Level geography students chose to study a Geography-related degree at university last year.

At GCSE, Geography is a popular option with three teaching sets in both Year 10 and Year 11 following the AQA Geography GCSE specification. The exam results are GCSE are very strong, with 86% of students achieving grade 7 or above last year.

The department believes in the value of excellent geography and aims to engender a passion and enthusiasm for Geography in our students. Our Key Stage 3 curriculum is designed to cultivate a thorough sense of place and location taught through engaging and relevant themes. The department utilises innovative approaches to teaching and learning with a collaborative approach to planning to minimise workload and utilise staff expertise.

Geography extends beyond excellent results; we hope to motivate pupils to learn and provide opportunities to develop ‘soft’ skills through the use of group tasks, presentations and multimedia production. Together with the Queen Mary’s Association we have raised funds to purchase tablets to develop for use within the department. The department has developed fieldwork opportunities including field studies around the school to residential trips at the school’s Farchynys, NW Wales. The opportunity to experience different cultures and exciting landscapes is behind the department’s commitment to international fieldtrips.

We have a well-established relationship with the University of Birmingham PGDipEd course which is considered a valuable opportunity for professional development. The department is committed to remaining an enjoyable place to work and study, whilst keeping the ultimate focus on achievement of the pupils.
The Role

The successful candidate will:

- have a clear vision for the curriculum intent and implementation for the Geography department, in line with the broader ethos of the school
- be an innovative leader and thinker, capable of moving the subject area forward and keeping abreast of changes in education
- lead Geography in the School: take responsibility as the line manager for the department; ensure that teachers achieve their potential through professional development; manage budgets and resources
- set and achieve high success standards (including in examination performance) for the department
- communicate effectively within both the department and wider school community – fostering links with other subject areas, external agencies and through participation in the school’s curriculum group (made up of Heads of Department)
- teach Geography to all years (from Year 7 to A Level)
- teach challenging and differentiated lessons, whilst developing schemes of work that reflect the changing nature of the subject area
- monitor teaching, learning and behaviour for learning across the department
- assess pupils’ work, giving constructive feedback to aid improved performance; develop assessment pathways to ensure effective practice within the department; and monitor the marking of all colleagues working in the department
- use and analyse relevant pupil data within the department to help pupils achieve their full potential, whilst supporting colleagues to do so
- attend the Curriculum Group meetings and regular review meetings with a member of the SLT

Person Specification:

- You will be an experienced and skilled classroom teacher with a proven track record of academic success and curriculum impact
- You will be a well-qualified graduate with QTS and possess excellent subject knowledge in Geography.
- You will be an innovative and effective teacher, keen to develop Geography teaching in the school
- You will have a commitment to the ethos of the school and a willingness to contribute to extra-curricular activities
- You will be positive and enthusiastic in your approach to teaching, departmental management and working in the school
- You will have good oral and written communication skills
- You will have good ICT skills
- You will have the ability to work as part of a team and to develop and maintain positive relationships with teaching and associate staff, as well as students
- You will be willing to be involved in the pastoral life of the school as a tutor
- You will be suitable to work with children. This job is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure.

NB You must be suitable to work with children. This job is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure.
Closing date: 9am Friday 1st May 2020

Please return completed application forms to c-wood@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk

Queen Mary’s Grammar School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and all applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment Policies can be found on our website.

The Mercian Trust

Queen Mary’s Grammar School is a Founder Academy of the Mercian Multi-Academy Trust. According to the National Schools Commissioner, Sir David Carter, MATs exist:

- to secure school improvement and develop people
- to encourage good governance and proper risk management
- to secure the financial health of all its academies.

We sign up to those ambitions. In our MAT, the Mercian Trust, we choose to pursue life to the full in the business of education.

We are convinced that we are stronger together. The Mercian Trust is already helping to shape the educational landscape in exciting ways. We welcome you to be part of that story.

The members of The Mercian Trust are: Aldridge School, The Ladder School, Queen Mary’s Grammar School, Queen Mary’s High School, Shire Oak Academy, Walsall Studio School.

Our schools prepare pupils to live life to the full by equipping them to realise their full potential as learners; to thrive in the world of work; and to make a positive contribution to the local, national and international community.

You may have heard about some MATs that seem to have turned into big businesses. That is not our view of what education should be about. That is why Queen Mary’s Grammar School wanted to be right at the heart of decision making of what our MAT should look like.

The Mercian Trust respects the autonomy of its member schools but, through collaboration, it will foster strengths greater than the sum of its parts. Put simply, the Trust provides a framework for sharing expertise, enthusiasm and experience.
Queen Mary’s Grammar School is located on the Sutton Road, in the leafy south of the town and close to the centre of Walsall. Travel to the school is very convenient, being approximately 10 minutes’ drive from both junctions 7 and 9 of the M6.

There are good bus links from Birmingham to Walsall (with the 51 and X51 buses) and there is a direct train route to Birmingham from nearby stations in the town centre, Bescot Stadium and Tamebridge Parkway.

The close proximity of Walsall, Wolverhampton and Birmingham City Centre provides excellent access to shopping, leisure facilities, museums, cinemas and a wide range of nightlife.

House prices in Walsall are also very competitive compared to the Midlands as a whole and there is a range of good local primary schools and nurseries for those with young families seeking to move close to Queen Mary’s.