



Visiting Music Teacher – Oboe & Bassoon



ST HELEN &
ST KATHARINE

Welcome to St Helen and St Katharine

St Helen and St Katharine is one of the UK's leading independent girls' schools – a place where students thrive, and our brilliant staff use their expertise and enthusiasm to go above and beyond.

Our students achieve significant academic success each year, much of which is due to our teachers' ambition and passion, but the students and their parents are very aware that it is the whole staff group that makes St Helen's 'tick', and all staff are valued for their contribution to the school community.

When people start working at St Helen's, they are joining a vibrant community of 700 students and 225 members of staff. Whether as one of those expert teachers or as one of our skilled support staff, there are many opportunities to become fully immersed in life at St Helen's – from coming along to watch one of the outstanding school productions to taking part in the range of activities we have to support staff well-being and our sense of community.

We are fortunate to be able to offer a range of training and professional development opportunities to support staff growth; our staff training budget is generous and allows for both departmental initiatives and individual development. We look to get outstanding speakers to address both the whole staff and specific groups; we have been delighted to welcome Tom Sherrington, David Didau and David Weston to talk to our teaching staff in recent years and all staff have benefitted from the work we have done with Executive Coach, Simon Scott, as we look to keep life and work and wellness in balance. There is an active Joint Staff Consultative Committee and a regular staff e-zine that shares ideas for things to do in the local area.

St Helen's is an outstanding place to start your teaching career, and we provide comprehensive support for teacher induction. We encourage talented graduates interested in teaching to join us directly and have plenty of experience of guiding them to gain their qualified teacher status through the school-based PGCE from the University of Buckingham.

We are also an excellent school for newly qualified teachers to complete their 2-year Early Careers induction, guided by experienced subject mentors and our Initial Teacher Training Coordinator.

We look to connect both trainee and early career teachers with their peers in our immediate network of both independent and maintained sector schools in Abingdon.





The School

Recently named Independent Girls' School of the Year, ranked the top 5 girls' school in the Southeast (*The Times Parent Power 2026*) and among the top 20 schools for sport in the UK (*School Sport Magazine*), St Helen and St Katharine is one of the leading independent schools in the country. It is an exciting place to work, and appointing the very best staff is integral to our success.

St Helen's School was founded in 1903 and was then joined in 1938 by St Katharine's in Wantage. The School is located on a single campus-style site of beautiful Edwardian and modern buildings set in 22 acres of grounds, on the outskirts of Abingdon, some six miles from Oxford. An extensive school bus network facilitates a large student catchment area that includes Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Hampshire Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.

Unapologetically focused on girls – their needs, their ambitions and their voices – St Helen's is where futures are shaped *on her terms*. Our students achieve excellent academic results, and our goal is to ensure that every girl achieves success as she defines it, so that she can believe in herself, her talents and abilities, and so that she will feel prepared and equipped for life beyond school.

The School is a thriving community of girls and young women aged 9 to 18, from our Junior Department (Year 5–6) through to Sixth Form. St Helen's offers students an outstanding academic education and a rich and varied life beyond the classroom including excellence in sport, the creative and performing arts and a superb range of co-curricular clubs and societies.

We enjoy collaboration with a range of local partner schools, including Radley College, Abingdon, Larkmead, John Mason and Fitzharrys, providing opportunities to enrich the developmental journeys of our students and build positive connections across genders and experiences.

In 2023, we opened the doors to our new Sixth Form centre, the Benedict Building. The Benedict Building is a physical articulation of the School's vision for Sixth Form – to create an environment for our students that will spark their intellectual spirit and imagination – and provides students with the space and opportunity to grow their academic and co-curricular interests in readiness for the future.

The staff

St Helen and St Katharine is a very special place to work.

Our students are at the heart of everything we do, we celebrate our powerful sense of community, and we take pride in our very high standards and the strength of our performance. We enjoy a working environment and a culture within the School which focuses on development, inclusion and the pleasure of working all together.

We are always looking at ways to develop our people – students and staff. We look to be progressive, imaginative and respectful; we combine the best of long tradition with a commitment to readying our people for the challenges of the 21st Century. We also firmly believe that a diverse workforce is a better workforce which will help us develop ideas, solve problems and ultimately grow St Helen's. Our campus is beautiful and an inspiring place to work. The young people we work with are remarkable and the staff community is welcoming, committed and compassionate.

Every day is different at St Helen's. It's fast-paced but never loses sight of the value of individualised conversations and the need for support. We take our commitment to the well-being of staff very seriously and we offer the resources and training to allow people to flourish professionally.

The contribution of every member of the staff team is valued at St Helen's, and teaching and support staff work closely together, appreciative of the positive difference everyone can make in their varied roles.





The role

We are seeking to appoint a self-employed visiting music teacher (VMT) who is a double reed specialist to teach Oboe and Bassoon from September 2026. The role is expected to be timetabled over one or two days per week during the school term and will involve the delivery of individual instrumental lessons.

The successful applicant will be suitably qualified and able to inspire and motivate students of all levels across the 11-18 age range. This appointment offers an excellent opportunity to join a busy, supportive and vibrant Music Department, working with committed staff and talented young musicians.

All staff share the responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of the students, in accordance with the School's safeguarding policies.

The department and facilities

St Helen and St Katharine has a thriving Music Department with a strong reputation. The Department is committed to nurturing musical excellence while ensuring that every girl has the opportunity to engage with and enjoy music. Music is valued both as an academic discipline and as a creative pursuit, fully inclusive in its approach and focused on developing lifelong musical skills for all students.

This is a large Music Department with 36 members of staff led by Dr Charlotte Exon, Director of Music. There are 3 academic teachers, including the Assistant Director of Music and Head of Choirs together with the Department Administrator. The Visiting Music Team consists of 33 specialist teachers, including seven Heads of Section, providing approximately 400 individual instrumental and vocal lessons each week.

The Department benefits from excellent facilities, including 13 teaching and rehearsal spaces. These include specialist rooms for piano, cello/harp and percussion teaching, alongside larger teaching rooms, a Music Technology suite, and a Performing Arts Studio.

The main school hall, purpose-built for concerts and theatrical performances, houses a full-sized Yamaha CF3 concert grand piano and an electric organ. The Chapel contains a three-manual Harrison & Harrison organ.

In addition to its curriculum provision, the Department offers a rich and extensive programme of extracurricular musical activities, including aural, musicianship and theory classes.

The Music Department is an ABRSM examination centre and hosts practical exam sessions for students each term. The Head of Keyboard is available to provide accompaniment for these examinations.

Main responsibilities

- To encourage ambition and high standards in one-to-one lessons.
- To arrange and timetable music lessons directly in consultation with their students. These music lessons are to take place during the hours when the School is open in term-time (as specified by the School).
- Providing proper supervision of students during lessons times as appropriate whilst on the School's premises and ensuring that students comply with the School's reasonable standards of conduct and behaviour.
- To keep an accurate and up-to-date online school register of lessons and to register student absences on each teaching day.
- To operate in accordance with School's policies and procedures as shall be notified to them by the School, ensuring compliance with the School's Code of Conduct, the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection procedures, the School's Health and Safety policy and the Health and Safety at Work Act.
- The ability to coach an ensemble/s could be an advantage.

The person

Skills/abilities

- An enthusiasm for music together with the ability to be energetic and willing to motivate students across the age and ability range.
- Ability to raise achievement for all your students from the beginner to the diploma student.
- Excellent teaching skills with the ability to employ a range of effective and creative teaching, learning styles and assessment methods.
- Strong command of the subject area.
- Ability to relate well to young people.
- Ability to build students' confidence and technique on the oboe or bassoon.
- Effective communication skills – oral and written.
- Effective IT skills (Microsoft Office, SOCs).

Knowledge and Experience

- Experience of teaching instrumental music lessons to secondary school age students.
- Clear understanding of the oboe and bassoon ABRSM syllabus and other examining boards.
- Experience of working in schools would be an advantage.
- Experience of working with young people would be an advantage.

Qualifications

- A relevant music degree and/or performing diploma and/or teaching qualification.





Personal attributes

- Enthusiasm and passion for music and the ability to convey this to students.
- A genuine interest in, and commitment to, a student's musical learning.
- High levels of personal and professional integrity.
- High degree of self-confidence, dynamism and personal warmth, to develop a good rapport with students, colleagues and parents.
- Reliable.
- A commitment to safeguarding our students in line with the School's safeguarding policies.

Terms

- VMTs operate as self-employed contractors via an Agreement for Services. The VMT will enter into contracts directly with parents to provide music teaching for which they are paid directly by parents.
- The School will provide the VMT with access to students and facilities at the School to enable the teacher to provide music teaching services for their own account, for which the VMT will pay a Facilities charge (currently £2.60 plus VAT for each 40 minute period); full details are given in the VMT Agreement for Services.
- Teaching rates (individual music lesson fees) are agreed by the VMTs each academic year.
- VMTs are required to provide adequate policies of insurance to cover all liabilities that may arise in providing their teaching services.
- VMT appointments are subject to a number of regulatory vetting checks including an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (with Barred List) check. In addition, the VMT is required to sign up to the DBS Update Service and renew their subscription annually.
- The VMT is required to attend periodic safeguarding and child protection training that the School provides.

St Helen and St Katharine 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, the Disclosure and Barring Service and overseas Police checks, if applicable. Employment is subject to these checks.

The process

These job details should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding policies, available within the Working at St Helen's section of our website.

Please then complete an application form (available within the vacancies section of our website). The completed and signed application form, along with a brief supporting letter addressed to **Mrs Sarah Rollings, Head**, should be submitted via email (recruitment@shsk.org.uk) in the first instance and then sent to:

Human Resources Department
St Helen and St Katharine
Faringdon Road
Abingdon
Oxfordshire
OX14 1BE

Please note that any application form submitted electronically must be completed in the existing application form format, within Adobe.

The closing date for this post is **Monday 11 May 2026 at 9.00am**.
Interviews will take place on **Thursday 14 May 2026**.

Please note that due to the volume of applications we receive, we are unable to provide individual feedback.

We look forward to receiving your completed application.



shsk.org.uk

 @SHSKSchool

 @StHelenStKatharine

 @SHSKSchool

 /school/shskschool



ST HELEN &
ST KATHARINE

Independent day school for girls aged 9–18
Faringdon Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 1BE