



JOHN F KENNEDY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

INSPIRE • ACHIEVE • SERVE



Director of Music Information for applicants



Diocese of Westminster

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Director of Music

Start date: September 2025

Salary: MPS/UPS plus TLR 2c plus London Fringe

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in this post at John F Kennedy Catholic School (JFK).

The Governors and I are seeking to appoint an experienced teacher of Music to take up this important leadership post, building upon the current high standards. The successful candidate will be an inspiring, dynamic teacher with a passion for learning and have the vision to develop further in this popular and successful department.

You will have a good track record of excellent classroom practice, be committed to high standards of learning and student progress, with the energy and vision to build on current progress and have ambitions for yourself and our school.

We welcome applications from candidates of all faiths and none, though support for our Catholic ethos is expected.

I hope that you find the following details useful and informative. They are intended to help you to decide whether or not JFK is the school in which you would be happy, be able to make a positive contribution and prepare yourself for the next stage of your career.

John F Kennedy Catholic School

JFK is a mixed 11-18 comprehensive, part of All Saints Catholic Academy Trust, located in the suburban environment of Hemel Hempstead. It is a voluntary academy with approximately 1100 students on roll. The school enjoys an excellent reputation and is always over-subscribed; for the 2024-25 intake of 180 places there were 530 applicants, with 206 putting JFK as first choice. The intake has, in recent years, been almost entirely Catholic - currently 83% of students. JFK serves the Catholic communities of Hemel Hempstead and a very wide surrounding area, including parts of Hertfordshire, Luton and Bedfordshire; in addition to seven main feeder primary schools, it regularly takes children from over twenty other schools. Unsurprisingly, its students come from a diverse socio-economic background, ranging from a very affluent commuter town to an area with high social deprivation. Overall, however, the school deprivation factor is just below the national average. Currently 15% of students are eligible for Free School Meals. The number of students from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased over the past ten years and is now above the national average. The prior attainment of students is significantly higher than the national average. Additionally the profile of current cohorts is generally skewed towards the 'middle' and 'high' prior attainment categories. The local parish church, St Mark's, is on the school site and the Parish Priest of the Hemel West Parish supports the liturgical life of the school.

JFK's most recent inspections were: Section 8 in March 2017 and Section 48 in February 2024. The headline outcomes for these inspections were all judgements of 'good'. In terms of results our most recent Progress 8 scores were: 0.09 in 2017, 0.25 in 2018, 0.05 in 2019, 0.01 in 2022, 0.15 in 2023 and 0.15 in 2024.

At A level, our results have been stable in recent years, and have been broadly average compared with national figures. Our most recent L3VA scores were -0.05 in 2017, -0.17 in 2018, -0.07 in 2019, -0.69 in 2023 and -0.27 in 2024.

Visitors to the school frequently comment on the ethos and atmosphere they sense as they come to the school for the first time. This friendliness and sense of community is part of something wider; it is rooted in the fact that we are a Catholic school. As such, everything that we do is based on our Mission Statement, summarised by words: Inspire • Achieve • Serve. We are an inclusive school that values the uniqueness of each member of our community. In this way we uphold the Gospel values and ensure that everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Outside the formal curriculum there have always been numerous opportunities for students to take part in a very wide range of activities. These include drama, sport, music, retreats, trips at home and abroad and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. All the opportunities offered for students' personal development are summarised by the 'JFK Journey' that is displayed throughout the school.

The Music Department

The Music Department at John F Kennedy Catholic School is a vibrant hub of creativity and learning, staffed by a dedicated team consisting of one full-time and one part-time member. We are proud to offer a comprehensive peripatetic music programme, featuring 10 independent visiting teachers who provide expert tuition in a wide range of instruments and singing.

Currently, over 100 students benefit from weekly instrumental or vocal lessons, reflecting our commitment to fostering musical talent. We facilitate ABRSM exam entries twice a year, typically in the spring and summer terms, achieving outstanding results across all grades from 1 to 8. For students interested in other examination boards such as Trinity, Rockscool, or LCME, arrangements are made through their teachers or parents.

Our Music Department has two dedicated classrooms and 6 practice rooms located in our newest block. The department also features:

- Two larger recording/live rooms;
- A purpose-built recording/mastering room, complete with windows for observation.

These facilities provide an inspiring environment for students to explore and develop their musical skills.

All students received 1 hour of music curriculum time throughout Key Stage 3, they are taught in their form groups. The enthusiasm for music is palpable throughout the school, with Music offered as an option at both GCSE and A Level. The school has enjoyed a good level of success in both GCSE and A Level results. The most recent results being:

GCSE Results (Grades 4 - 9)

2024: 12 Candidates - 58% achieved grades 4-9

2023: 7 Candidates - 87% achieved grades 4-9

A Level Results

2023: 4 Candidates - A*, B, D, D

2022: 3 Candidates - A, A, C

The extracurricular music programme at John F Kennedy Catholic School is popular and diverse, with activities running every lunchtime, including music theory class, jazz band, rock group, orchestra, choir and music for Mass. Additionally, the music department works with the Drama department to produce an annual school show, this year's production being Matilda.

The department proudly showcases students' talent in concerts at the end of each term. These performances not only provide students with invaluable opportunities to perform but

also inspire engagement and self-expression through music whilst showcasing the students' creativity and talent.

JFK, now and in the future: ASCAT

JFK was opened in 1967, so it is over 50 years old. There is a great tradition here of several generations from families attending the school. Many teachers and support staff over the years were students at the school and currently one of the students in the first intake is working on the support staff. I believe there are many features that make JFK a great school but I also recognise there are areas needing development. We must never be complacent and we must embrace new ideas that will benefit the educational opportunities of the students in our care. We made a bold decision seven years ago to become a 'Google school', introducing Chromebooks for use in and out of school. This has been phased in, one year at a time, and is complete in the main school - all students in Years 7 to 11 have their own device. Google Classroom has been embraced by staff as well as students and is now an integral part of school life.

JFK joined All Saints Catholic Academy Trust (ASCAT) on 1st June 2023. The trust currently comprises 11 schools and JFK is one of only two secondary school members. Within the trust, JFK sits in a regional hub, with other Dacorum Catholic schools: 'St Mark's Hub'. Joining ASCAT has opened up many opportunities for cross-school and cross-phase developments, making this a very exciting time for JFK's future development.

Next steps

I hope that having read this letter and the information about the school that you will choose to apply to. To do so, you are asked to complete the application form in full but instead of a supporting statement please write a letter of application which relates your experience to the job description and person specification. In your letter you should also outline your personal educational philosophy, your vision and the contribution that you can make to John F Kennedy Catholic School.

Please post your application or submit it to Ms Eva Final by email to: efinal@jfk.herts.sch.uk

I am always happy to welcome visitors to the school and I would strongly encourage you to come and visit us to see the school for yourself. If you would like more information about the school please visit our website www.jfk.herts.sch.uk where you will find our online prospectus and other information. If you would like to know more about the post itself or to arrange a visit, please do not hesitate to contact my PA, Ms Eva Final (email: efinal@jfk.herts.sch.uk), who will be very happy to help you.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Paul Neves
Headteacher



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Person Specification – Director of Music

Qualifications:

- A Honours graduate
- Qualified Teacher Status

Professional Experience:

- Ability to teach Music at KS3
- Ability to teach Music at KS4 and KS5
- High expectations of students
- Effective communication skills
- High standards of classroom management
- Knowledge and use of ICT in teaching and learning
- Commitment to continuing professional development
- Knowledge of current curriculum developments
- Knowledge of safeguarding requirements

Personal Qualities:

- Commitment to support the Catholic ethos
- Commitment to team working
- Commitment to equal opportunities and the equal value of all members of the school community
- High personal standards – dress, conduct and presentation

Note:

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. An enhanced DBS check is required for this post.

Subject Leader Job Description

Responsible to: Headteacher through the SLT Link

It is expected that the Subject Leader will work in such a way that is totally compatible with the aims and objectives of the school. The responsibilities outlined below are intended to fall within the 'School Teachers' Pay and Conditions' guidance. They are in addition to the responsibilities outlined in the teachers' job description and the Teachers' Standards.

As senior post holders in the school, Subject Leaders occupy a pivotal role in securing its effectiveness and are expected to contribute to whole-school thinking and development. With a clear understanding and focus on how students learn, the subject leader is expected:

- to give full support to the school's distinctive Catholic ethos and act as an appropriate role model
- to look for opportunities for the department to be actively involved in the Catholic life of the school
- to support the strategic vision of the school and the School Development Plan
- to lead on the Quality Assurance system within the department in order to improve the quality of student learning and to raise standards of student attainment and achievement
- to monitor student progress within the department, organising intervention strategies when necessary
- to ensure all staff take a measure of responsibility for department teaching rooms to create an environment which stimulates learning
- to support the development of the House system
- to manage behaviour within the department
- to liaise with the Pastoral Support Coordinator and SENCo as and when necessary
- to be accountable for leading, managing and developing the curriculum, ensuring that it is appropriately broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated
- to seek and promote activities that enhance and extend the curriculum
- to attend all meetings relevant to your post
- to attend regular line management meetings and work collaboratively with the SLT Link
- to support and develop school links with home, parish and the wider community as appropriate
- to oversee the Performance Appraisal system offering encouragement and support to all members of the department in their professional development
- to develop and enhance the pedagogy and practice of others
- to efficiently and effectively manage and deploy staff, financial and physical resources within the department
- to support the organisation of school events: meetings, performances, examinations etc.
- to take responsibility for the day to day management of Health and Safety within the department, including updating Risk Assessments where necessary
- to be a presence around the school and be supportive of the leadership of the school
- to set work for absent colleagues when necessary
- to support and contribute to staff training as and when required
- to support the recruitment, induction, training and development of new staff