



## **Job Description**

### **Teacher of Mathematics**

George Watson's College wishes to appoint a full-time teacher of Mathematics on a permanent basis from August 2025. This vacancy represents the opportunity for an outstanding practitioner to make a high profile contribution to the success of one of Scotland's leading schools.

#### **THE SCHOOL**

George Watson's College is one of the country's best co-educational independent day schools. Founded in 1741 by a local merchant concerned for the education of young minds, it fulfils to this day the role intended by its founder. Despite its size, everyone remarks that it has a small-school 'feel': the close-knit and friendly relationships amongst all its constituents are a hallmark of the School. Its motto – *ex corde caritas* (Love from the Heart) – is central to its values as it seeks to sustain what is described as 'The Watson's Family'.

This tangible sense of togetherness is significantly enhanced by everyone being on one purpose-built site, which is located in the attractive residential district of Morningside, to the South West of the centre of Edinburgh. Edinburgh itself is the second strongest city economy in the UK, outside of London, with the highest percentage of graduates and professionally qualified adults in the UK and over 25% of school age children attending fee-paying schools. Watson's is proud of its independent status and, whilst remaining true to its Scottish roots, seeks to sustain and develop an international perspective. The curriculum is adapting to the innovations inherent in Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence and the new Scottish National Qualifications.

The School welcomes a wide range of academic ability, and has very high academic standards, with 90% of pupils going on to Higher Education and a large proportion of pupils achieving outstanding success. Watson's also has excellent facilities, and offers a huge range of courses as well as extra-curricular activities. In addition, it has particular strengths in Sport, Music, Drama, Outdoor Education, Technology and in Support for Learning. The School is very well resourced with a campus-wide IT network.

The Principal, Lisa Kerr, took up post in 2024. Leadership of the Senior School is delegated to Gordon Boyd, Head of the Senior School, and the Senior School Leadership Team, including three Deputy Headteachers. A parallel structure exists in the Junior School.

#### **The Senior School**

The leadership of the Senior School is delegated by the Principal to the Head of Senior School who works with a team of deputy and assistant headteachers. The leadership model enables Principal Teachers to

shape the character of their department within an overall ambition for the Senior School and the School as a whole. Principal Teachers are encouraged to play a role in the development and implementation of practice in all aspects of the School, especially in curriculum design and in improving learning and teaching.

Approximately four-fifths of pupils in the Senior School have progressed there from the Junior School. On arrival, they have a carefully worked out induction programme which includes a residential experience together in the first term.

In First and Second Year, a diverse and stimulating timetable balances challenging academic progression with a variety of learning experiences, including in two foreign languages. Pupils study many of their subjects in their form classes but are set in English and Mathematics. This enables them to progress at a pace that provides the appropriate level of challenge and provides them with an opportunity to mix with the rest of their year group.

From Second Year, pupils discuss their personal targets and study options with teachers, through to their key certificate examinations, and we ensure that they choose subjects and levels that match their abilities and aspirations.

At Watson's we are proud of the exceptionally broad range of certificate courses we offer. Available at various levels of certification within the national qualifications framework, our extensive provision includes subjects across the spectrum of arts, sciences and social sciences, with a notably wide selection of languages, including Mandarin Chinese.

It is important that we prepare pupils for the increased independence they will require after school. A programme of study skills encourages independent thought and enquiry. Throughout their time at Watson's, pupils make confident use of our outstanding IT facilities and our Library.

## **The Mathematics Department**

The Mathematics department has identified a common experience to which all pupils studying Mathematics at George Watson's College are entitled. All staff have a responsibility to:

- aim to ensure that over a period of time there is an effective variety of delivery of teaching in order to support various learning styles (such as independent, collaborative, self-study, investigative, etc)
- aim to ensure that a diversity of effective resources and approaches are used at appropriate times (textbooks, worksheets, discursive activities, open-ended tasks, video, technology, practical items, etc)
- have an open mind to try out new ideas and be willing to share successful practice and resources with the department
- aim to ensure that each pupil receives appropriate praise, encouragement and involvement in positive experiences
- aim to ensure that commonly agreed sanctions for discipline, punctuality and organisation are consistently applied, making use of official departmental procedures where appropriate
- aim to ensure that all pupils know both when to use a calculator and how to use it effectively

To support these aims, all pupils have the responsibility to:

- be willing to attempt all tasks that are asked of them and to work either independently or with any other pupil(s)
- take their share of responsibility for ensuring that they have a firm grasp of all that they are taught arising from both classwork and homework
- be encouraged to be proactive in seeking help if required from any member of the maths department

We cater for a wide range of ability when carrying out these aims. The department has strong links with the Additional Support for Learning Department, which allow several forms of in-class help. In addition, we liaise with our Junior School to help support the mathematics met by pupils in P6 and P7.

### Curriculum

Pupils are taught in ability sets in all years. In S1, this setting is fairly loose, but becomes more finely tuned as pupils progress through to S5. We typically have 11 sets in S1 and S2, moving to 12 sets in S3 and S4. Ten of these sets in S4 are normally entered for SQA National 5 Mathematics.

For those pupils studying SQA Courses, we often have eight S5 sets attempting a one-year Higher, one set attempting Higher over two sessions, and three more S5 sets studying SQA National 5 Mathematics. Those who complete the SQA Higher Course in S5 can go on to choose from all of the Advanced Higher Courses in S6: Mathematics, Statistics and Mechanics. These Advanced Higher units are currently taught collectively by nine members of the department.

### Awards and Competitions

Every session, we have a large entry for the Scottish Mathematical Challenge and we enter pupils for all divisions in the UK Mathematical Challenge competitions. We have good levels of success at both - from the latter some pupils have progressed through to rounds for the Mathematical Olympiad and have come away with Gold or Bronze Medals. In addition, small teams comprising of pupils from S1 to S6 often compete in various Maths Team competition days, both locally and nationally.

Over the past 20 years, we have progressed through to some National Finals, taking either winning position or runners-up.

### Resources

Most of our courses use textbooks as their main resource. We currently use publications by TeeJay Publishers, Hodder Gibson and Leckie & Leckie.

To complement all of these texts we have developed an extensive electronic database that cross-references each textbook chapter and topic with many other useful resources that can be used - these include past exam papers, video solutions and other revision materials. We are always developing our use of Moodle that the school began using in 2012, as well as identifying the most effective ways of incorporating pupil owned laptops and tablets into our teaching.

## Staff

The department of 15 staff is managed by the Head of Department and two Assistant Head of Departments. The department also currently contains four promoted staff with responsibilities outwith the department. It is widely recognised that the department has a very clear sense of team unity, and common purpose.

All members of staff are encouraged to develop their areas of interest and responsibility both within, and separate from, the running of the department.

Over a period of time, all staff are involved in teaching all levels of ability to all year groups, up to and including S6 Advanced Higher.

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

The person appointed will:

- be a trained and qualified graduate teacher of Mathematics, eligible for registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland
- have significant and successful experience of teaching Mathematics in secondary schools;
- be flexible and imaginative in developing new ideas and resources, as well as adapting to curriculum changes.

## **JOB SPECIFICATION**

### **Line Management**

A Teacher of Mathematics is accountable directly to the Principal Teacher of Mathematics and to both of the Assistant Principal Teachers of Mathematics

### **General Responsibilities**

A full time Teacher of Mathematics is currently expected to teach up to 45 out of 60 periods of teaching, over a ten day timetable cycle.

The person appointed will be responsible for teaching classes in the School using their skill, experience and best endeavours.

All members of the Senior School staff contribute to the health and well-being of our pupils. Under the direction of a Year Head, most teachers undertake the first level guidance role of Form Tutor for a mixed Form class of around 20 pupils.

A contribution to the wider life of the School - known as enrichment - is an expectation of all staff.

They will abide by the Code of Conduct for Staff at George Watson's College.

## **Specific Responsibilities**

The person appointed will:

- maintain the Standard for Full GTCS registration. They will be required to undertake relevant CPD, be observed and write up all activities in the GTCS Profile
- work effectively as a member of the department to facilitate outstanding teaching and learning and ensure pupils are properly prepared for examinations
- set high expectations for all pupils, to deepen their knowledge and understanding to maximize achievement
- prepare and provide activities that are appropriate to each year group and suitable for learners' needs
- be confident of their ability to work and respond to the needs of pupils and inspire the next generation of adults
- develop new resources and course materials, as directed by and/or in collaboration with the other staff in the department
- assess, record and report on work of pupils as required by the School, ensuring that assessments are punctual, meaningful and informative
- contribute to the extra-curricular life of the School
- attend parent evenings and communicate with parents whenever necessary and contribute effectively and positively to the corporate life and welfare of the School
- act as a Form Tutor and/or S6 Tutor as required, carrying out the administrative, pastoral and advisory responsibilities of these roles.

## **Additional Responsibilities**

The Teacher of Mathematics should also be willing to undertake such other responsibilities as the Head of Senior School and Head of Department may from time to time reasonably require.

## **REMUNERATION**

Teaching staff at George Watson's College are paid a competitive salary. The salary is pensionable under the Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme.

## **DISCLOSURE SCOTLAND - PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS SCHEME**

All staff must be prepared to undergo screening to confirm their suitability to work with children and young people.

## **CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT / PROFESSIONAL REVIEW**

All staff are required to participate in appropriate programmes of continuing professional development and undergo professional review as set out in the School's policy.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Please include a letter of application of not more than 800 words giving us more information about you, and why you would like the role, addressed to Mr Gordon Boyd, Head of Senior School.

Any specific questions relating to the advertised post can be put directly to Mr Michael Dick, Head of Department by emailing: [m.dick@gwc.org.uk](mailto:m.dick@gwc.org.uk)

Candidates called for an interview will be asked to teach a lesson as part of the selection process.

If you require more information about the School, please visit our school website.

Closing date: **11:59pm on Thursday 23 January 2025**

Interview date: **Tuesday 4 February 2025**