

Dear Parents and Guardians

I am absolutely delighted to have accepted the position of Head of Juniors at St Mary's School, and will be continuing to move the school forwards, following the superb leadership of Mr Matthew O'Reilly.

It is a huge privilege to join the wonderful community of St Mary's School, Cambridge where your girls are at the heart of everything we do, and I very much look forward to getting to know you, and working with you, in the coming weeks and months as Matthew and I work together to enable a smooth transition. The characteristics set out by Mary Ward, our foundress, exemplify our unique approach to education, fostering in all a love of life and learning. Every girl in our school is unique, something to be celebrated, and I look forward to working together to nurture and help our girls to develop themselves; to enable them not only to flourish, but to know how and why they are flourishing. We already have an ambitious and wonderfully creative curriculum, and a wealth of resources and extracurricular activities, upon which we can build, to develop what our Junior School offers its girls.

As a way of introduction, here is just a little about my own learning journey; I originally hail from Lancashire where I attended an Independent Christian Girls' School. I loved my school days, and the character education I received back then still serves me incredibly well and makes me feel both grateful and proud of it.

I have a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science from the University of Nottingham, where I also achieved a PGCE in Physics. I have taught in several different (and outstanding) Secondary, Primary, Special Needs and Independent Schools, and most recently I have been at Bedford Preparatory School for the last 13 years. In this time my roles have included Head of Academic Support (SENDCo), Head of Enrichment, Head of Academic Improvement and most recently Assistant Headteacher (Academic, Teaching and Learning). Both my own education and my current role have highlighted the power of single-sex education; increased self-confidence, higher levels of achievement and perhaps most importantly, empowerment to try new activities.

I live with my husband, Simon, and we have three children (Tom, George and Henry) who are all enjoying their studies, love exercise (especially rowing), and who are all much taller than me! We have two dogs; Tilly and Pip, and we love little more than being in the great outdoors with them.

My first impression of St Mary's is that it is a welcoming, warm, and friendly place, where great things happen. I know that there are wonderful lessons, in every sense, happening every day here, and I look forward to working with you all on our upcoming projects. I am curious to see and help shape our new STEM Learning Lab, am inspired by the progress we are making in Digital Learning, am eager to see the magnificent Long Road developments come to fruition, and I am most excited to meet our new girls who join our Preschool in September! Most of all, I want you to help me to shape our future, together.

I hope you will introduce yourselves to me at the earliest opportunity, and I look forward to meeting you all very soon.

With warm wishes to you all,

Jo Christian