



LEWESTON  
SHERBORNE



# Head of Religious Studies

Candidate Information



## Overview

Founded in 1891 Leweston School is a co-educational Catholic independent day and boarding school in Dorset for pupils aged 0 to 18.

Situated just outside Sherborne in 46 acres of beautiful parkland, the school offers holistic education in an inclusive community where first-class pastoral care and wide-ranging co-curricular opportunities underpin a supportive and rigorous academic offer. The school seeks to produce well-rounded pupils with a genuine interest in education in the broadest sense of the word, with interests that stretch beyond the confines of the academic curriculum. The school has strong traditions in music, drama, art, debating, community activities and sport. There are many co-curricular activities, all of which are important in developing well-balanced, confident individuals. The school is known for its excellent teaching and places a strong focus on providing an individualised experience which challenges pupils of all abilities in a supportive manner. It is academic aspirational with pupils exceeding national averages at all the key stages. Leweston prides itself on the strength of relationships between staff, pupils and parents and regards itself as a family community.

The school was originally founded as St Antony's and located in Sherborne. In 1948 the demands of the Education Act saw the move of the senior pupils to Leweston Manor with the Prep School continuing in Sherborne until 1993 when the whole school was reunited once again on the Leweston campus. The younger pupils took up residence in the redesigned Coach House. The school amended its name in 2007 to Leweston School.

Today the school educates just over 600 pupils with 90 in the Nursery, 170 in the Prep and 340 in the Senior School. There are approximately 100 boarders, the majority being in the Senior School.

Leweston is a thriving, busy community which has high expectations of its pupils. Whilst the assessment process is not based entirely on academic performance Leweston is increasingly over-subscribed. Pupils are offered places on the basis of school assessments, positive references and their generally suitability for the values and ethos of the school.

## Our Values

Leweston School's three core values are **community**, **opportunity** and **expertise**. They are underpinned by our Catholic foundation, which welcomes all faiths and none, building a strong sense of unity, courtesy, respect and affection. Everything we do comes from a place of self-worth and dignity.

- **Community** means being part of a collective. It's essential for every student to feel that they are an important part of the Leweston family and contribute to the life of the school. This same sense is extended to their parents and guardians.
- **Opportunity** is in abundance. We are proud of our zest for life and instil a willingness to try everything and to learn from our failures. This discovery of strength and weaknesses, and the support we provide to students in exploring it, enables them to develop the determination to persevere – a real lesson in preparation for life beyond the school.
- **Expertise** means having an expert skill or knowledge in a particular field. We have an exceptionally talented staff team, who have outstanding expertise and enthusiasm to inspire in others a love of learning and to share their passion for areas of specialism.



## Our Campus

With extensive grounds surrounding a beautiful Georgian Manor House, Leweston provides a location which whilst being safe, is close to a town with good transport links to London and South West airports. Within the 46 acre estate sits our swimming pool, a full-sized all weather pitch, a walled garden play area, Enchanted Wood Forest School, tennis courts as well as a wealth of historical features including work by Thomas Mawson and George Sherringham.

The range of buildings on site spans several architectural epochs. The historically important Trinity Chapel is one of the first post-Reformation churches in the country. The Palladian manor house, was built in the late 18th century with Art Deco interior refurbishments and later additions including dining, boarding and teaching wings.

The Prep School is housed in the former Coach House with its own Pre-Prep Garden, tennis courts and play area.





## The Prep School

Leweston Prep consists of the Nursery, Pre-Prep and Prep divisions. The school shares a single 46-acre campus with the Senior School and has pupils aged 3 months to 11 years old. It is co-educational all-through school.

The Prep School's staff is comprised of 21 teachers and 5 teaching assistants alongside visiting music teachers, coaches and volunteers. Each Pre-Prep class is led by a Form Tutor supported by a teaching assistant. From Prep 4 when the year group grows to two classes, each has its own a Form Tutor supported by additional part-time staff. The normal maximum class size in the Prep School is 20 with one class in Reception to Prep 3. If numbers allow, Prep 4 splits into two classes, a model which continues for the remainder of the school. Classes are not set.

Leweston School as a whole has 170 employees including academic and support staff.

Staff foster excellent relationships with the students and are committed to supporting the provision of extra-curricular clubs, House activities, school trips and other events.

The majority of Prep School pupils move on to the Senior School, many winning scholarships. A small number leave at this point typically to transition into the state system.





## The Senior School

Leweston Senior School educates pupils aged 11 to 18. The school shares a single 46-acre campus with the Prep School and Nursery. It is co-educational all-through school.

The Senior School's staff comprises of 170 teachers and support staff visiting music teachers, coaches and volunteers. Years 7 and 8 are typically three classes of 54 pupils with an additional class at Year 9 and above to take the year groups to 72. The Sixth Form is approximately 80 students. The normal maximum class size in the Senior School is between 18 and 20.

Flexible boarding is offered throughout the Senior School. Boarders belong to one of four houses: Martha, Cecilia, Eleanor and Antony. These are divided according to age and gender.

Staff foster excellent relationships with the students and are committed to supporting the provision of extra-curricular clubs, House activities, school trips and other events.





## Why Leweston?

### A PROVEN RECORD IN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Leweston achieves some of the best results in the region and excellent university and higher education outcomes. In 2022 over half of all Sixth Form results were A\* or A. In the past five years Leweston's leavers have gone onto 51 different university destinations, 56% of them Russell Group, however what is most important is to find the right pathway for each student to allow them to make their own impact on the world.

### DISTINCT APPROACH TO LEARNING

From Nursery to Sixth Form Leweston shares an educational approach that helps our pupils develop an attitude to learning they can apply across the curriculum as well as in the wider world. Pupils are encouraged to develop five key characteristics. They are asked to be: confident, inquisitive, adventurous, resilient and creative. We embed this philosophy in all our teaching and learning and ensure that the language of Leweston Learner sits at the heart of every lesson.

### OUTSTANDING VALUE-ADDED

Leweston has occupied a top 10 position for value-added for many years. The value-added measure uses baseline tests to indicate what students are likely to achieve and, through dedicated support and teaching, demonstrates where pupils achieve above expectation.

### A FAMILY-FOCUSED COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Leweston provides practical solutions for busy families. All pupils are welcome on site from 8.00am to 5.45pm with evening activities and supervised prep sessions. For boarders there is a full range of flexible options. With no Saturday school families can spend weekend time together but a busy programme is in place for those in school. Buses run across Somerset and Dorset and are charged on a per trip basis to provide maximum flexibility. The school's Catholic tradition has instilled in its ethos the importance of service to others, which is reflected in the buddy scheme in the Prep and Senior School and the whole school charity programme. This is combined with a House system that links the Prep and Senior schools, forming strong bonds across the year groups.





## A FLEXIBLE, INDIVIDUALISED APPROACH

We believe that the education of a child is a three-way relationship between academic staff, parents and pupils creating an environment where pupils can learn and grow. Every pupil is encouraged to try the different opportunities open to them and supported to achieve more than they thought possible. The school has an inclusive approach which encourages everyone into the music, drama and sports programme; every member of Prep 6, Year 7 and 8 perform in the choir, any pupil who wants to play a sports match will have the opportunity and all pupils from Prep 3 to Year 9 will take part in drama productions. From Reception to Year 13 class teachers and tutors work closely with their pupils monitoring progress and encouraging self-reflection and development.

## A WIDE-RANGING ENRICHMENT PROGRAMME

With an extensive lunch-time, after-school and weekend programme covering creative arts, sports, global citizenship and academic enrichment, options are on offer for all ages. The offer changes every term to incorporate new and seasonal opportunities and pupils are encouraged to contribute ideas for future plans.

## OUTSTANDING ART AND DESIGN FACILITIES

Pupils are able to study Fine Art, Ceramics, Computer Aided Design, Photography, Woodworking and Textiles are part of the curriculum for Years 7, 8 and 9. GCSE courses in Fine Art, Textiles and 3D Design are available with A Level courses offered in Fine Art, Textiles, Photography and 3D Design. The Department also provides creative clubs for all ages. The dedicated Art and Design Centre houses studios that provide 3D Printing and laser cutting facilities, ceramics, a creative graphics suite, photographic dark room, sewing studio and resistant materials workshop.

## A FOCUS ON OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Recognised for its focus on health and well-being Leweston makes the most of its rural location. Our accredited Forest School provides weekly lessons for all Nursery and Prep pupils and Senior Pupils participate in Duke of Edinburgh and Ten Tors. This passion for the outdoors is increasingly reflected in the students care for the environment.





## A PENTATHLON GB TALENT HUB

Since September 2016 Leweston has been an active part of Pentathlon GB's Talent Pathway programme. It is one of only nine Pentathlon Talent Hubs in the UK. Leweston's GB coaches provide the full range of sports in Modern Pentathlon and develop athletes of all abilities from beginner to elite with dedicated training and mentoring programmes. The school has produced multiple National and European title holders and GB team members.



## NSEA SOUTH WEST EQUESTRIAN CHAMPIONS

Leweston has a thriving equestrian team supported by the school's own Equestrian Manager and is gaining a reputation as a serious competitor in equestrian sport. The school is current NSEA South West Regional Points League Champion, a title which the team has held for the past six years. Pupils compete in showjumping, dressage and JWS and Leweston is an NSEA affiliated school. Pupils are also invited to regular training sessions with Emma Fisher, British Eventing Team Coach for Young Riders.



## SPORT FOR ALL

Sport and Physical Education play an important part of everyday life at Leweston and there is an impressive range of sports for pupils to take advantage of including: hockey, football, netball, rugby, tennis, cricket, cross country running, gymnastics, trampolining, tennis, athletics, swimming, shooting, fencing, triathlon, riding and pentathlon. All pupils are encouraged to pursue any sport that interests them with the support to develop and achieve to the best of their ability and compete at the level of competition that they aspire to.



## THRIVING PERFORMING ARTS FOR ALL AGES

Music holds a special place at Leweston and it permeates all aspects of school life. The Chapel Choir, Schola, leads the weekly whole-school Mass and prepares for special performances throughout the year. Pupils have access to individual music lessons with specialist teachers in voice, piano and organ, woodwind, strings, brass and percussion. Many learn at least one instrument from the extensive range available and, as the campus is registered as an official ABRSM centre. Opportunities to star are many and various with an annual Key Stage 3, Sixth Form and whole-school production. LAMDA examinations are also available either individually or in small groups.





## A Catholic School

Leweston has a reputation for having a clear sense of purpose that guides all we do as a school. Our school values are reflected in our commitment to exceptional pastoral care and the strength of relationships pupils form both with each other and the staff who support them.

Whilst Leweston is a Catholic foundation but we welcome pupils of all denominations and none. Our distinctive ethos, based on sound teaching, moral guidance, pastoral care and the development of the spiritual life, is central to what we are and how we interact with each other.

The Chapel of St Antony is central in the life of the school as the place where Mass and other school services are celebrated. It also plays host to our Choral Society performance and other musical events. It is situated in the heart of the school and is always open so that pupils, staff and parents can find a quiet space. Mass or Liturgy is celebrated on Wednesdays for the whole school. Pupils of all ages participate, from planning the liturgies and taking an active role in the choir, to performing as musicians or acting as servers and readers. Pupils of other faiths are supported in their own worship.

The whole school comes together for Mass once a fortnight and pupils of all ages participate in planning the liturgies and take an active role as servers, readers, choir and musicians. We often welcome parents, friends and neighbours. Pupils are prepared for First Holy Communion and Confirmation and we often celebrate Baptisms. Pupils of other faiths are supported in their own worship and an Anglican liturgy is held in the School chapel once a term. Boarders join the parishioners of Sherborne for Mass on Saturday evenings.

Leweston has a Retreat programme with an event held for each year group over the course of the year. Some are in school whilst others see the pupils going away for a day or longer. Retreats are designed to give each pupil time to step out of everyday school life and reflect on their faith and their relationships with others.





## Work with us

### A fantastic working environment

Leweston is set on a beautiful campus a few miles outside the picturesque town of Sherborne. The grounds offer both pupils and staff the opportunity to enjoy space and fresh air and provide an inspiring location to teach and learn. The school's value and ethos creates a culture of courtesy, mutual respect and affection that has at its heart the importance of service to others. High standards are set both inside and outside of the classroom.

### Flexible and family friendly

We are a relatively small school that regards itself as one big family. The majority of our staff have children, many of whom are Leweston, and a staff remission is available to both academic and support staff. Our term dates operate differently to state schools, which means that whilst the school day is longer so are the holidays.

### Health and Wellbeing

Leweston hosts a range of exercise classes run by local provider Communitfit who offer a discount to Leweston staff. There are also free swimming sessions available during the week in the school pool as well as employee assistance and wellbeing support programmes.

### Free meals and parking

Staff are entitled to free lunch and refreshments during term time. This is extended to include supper if on duty. There is also an onsite cafe where a staff discount is offered. There is free onsite parking.

### Pensions

Leweston offers a defined contribution pension scheme with Royal London. Membership of the Royal London Scheme includes Death in Service benefit and income protection.

### Discount for Teachers

Discounts for Teachers has been introduced following the success of Health Service Discounts and Discounts for Carers. As Leweston staff (not just teachers), you can access a vast range of discounts and deals when you register online.





## The Opportunity

**Responsible to:** Deputy Head Academic

The successful candidate will be expected to lead the RS department effectively, managing staff in order to maximise pupil progress. You will have a drive to improve teaching and learning across the department. You will also contribute to the Catholic life of the school, leading on many aspects of our Chaplaincy work and helping to prepare the school for our Catholic Schools Inspection.

All our staff are expected to promote the ethos and good reputation of the school both internally and externally, adhering to professional standards at all times. You will also be expected to commit to the life of our busy boarding school, carrying out academic and pastoral duties with professionalism and as instructed by the Headmaster.

**About the Department:** The RS department lies at the heart of the school. We teach RS to all students from Reception through to Year 13. In Years 9-11, all students follow the AQA B Religious Studies course. Post 16, all students follow our General RS course, and many choose to study A-level Religious Studies.

## Key Duties and Responsibilities

### Head of Department

- Maximise pupils' potential attainment and achievement standards
  - Be responsible for leading, managing and developing the school's provision in the subject area, including the delivery of the new Religious Education Directory
  - Help to improve teaching across the subject area, e.g. through securing professional development opportunities for teaching staff and through lesson observation and feedback
  - Ensure that the subject area curriculum is broad, balanced, challenging and inclusive, and that it delivers Catholic Social Teaching
  - Promote and safeguard the welfare of all pupils at all times
  - Take lead responsibility for effectively managing and deploying teaching and learning resources across the subject area to enhance the curriculum.
  - Monitor pupils' behaviour, attendance, progress and performance in the subject area. Ensure that appropriate behaviour management processes are implemented effectively
  - Be responsible for Quality Assurance in the department, writing yearly Departmental Self-reviews and appraising staff as necessary. Act on any issues arising from the analysis of performance management data and escalate this to the SLT where appropriate
- Regularly liaise with other staff members in the subject area to:
    - Allow any concerns to be raised.
    - Enable colleagues to share their ideas, e.g. regarding the syllabus
    - Ensure that teaching is aligned with the implementation and development of the subject area syllabus and curriculum policy
    - Ensure that all department staff members are familiar with the aims and objectives of the department in accordance with the SDP
  - Pass on relevant information to the SLT in scheduled meetings
  - Make appropriate arrangements to cover classes and provide work when members of staff are absent
  - Assist with the induction of new staff who join the department
  - Set targets, monitor, evaluate and review staff achievement and progress



## Key Duties and Responsibilities cont.

### Chaplaincy

- Build and maintain links with the Diocese, local clergy and Catholic education groups such as CISC, ATCRE, CAFOD
- Assist with the preparation for Catholic Schools Inspection
- Help to organise and plan Days with a Difference (retreats) for each year group
- Support house staff in developing the Christian ethos of the houses
- Development of the physical/visual environment so that there is evidence of our Catholic foundation
- Lead and mentor Pupil Chaplaincy programme
- Submit written information and photos evidencing the school's chaplaincy activity to marketing in a timely manner, for publishing on our social media outlets

### General

- Be a positive ambassador for RS, teaching engaging and challenging lessons
- Ensure that lessons meet curriculum requirements by following the schemes of work
- Share the responsibility of updating and adapting Schemes of Work, as required, with other specialist teachers
- Support the Catholic ethos of the school, including attending and participating in Mass as timetabled.
- Promote and develop the effective use of ICT and other independent learning resources within the department. Ensure that feedback is provided regularly and to specified standards, and that appropriate records are kept
- Maintain accurate records of pupils' progress for external and internal use by writing assessments, reports and testimonials in a fair, consistent and timely manner
- Supporting and preparing pupils thoroughly for public examinations;

- Communicate effectively with pupils, parents and colleagues by responding promptly to letters and queries and by attending relevant meetings, parents evening and other events
- Supports colleagues by covering absences, developing new teaching methods, offering ideas and sharing experience
- Support the department in organising events and visits here and abroad
- Participate in the delivery of the School's pastoral and academic tutorial system
- Contribute to the extra-curricular timetable through events, assemblies and after-school clubs.
- Carry out relevant duties according to the duty rota
- Assists in maintaining the discipline, neat appearance, good behaviour, health and wellbeing of pupils on and off school premises by implementing school policies
- Represent the department and school in a professional manner
- Adhere to school policies as detailed on the school's website and intranet and as set out in the Staff Handbook and elsewhere, 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





## Experience, Skills and Knowledge

The successful candidate will demonstrate most or all of the following:

### Knowledge base and experience

- Knowledge and/or experience of Catholic theology and teaching
- Degree educated
- QTS
- Some experience of leadership and/or management
- At least two years' experience of teaching RS, ideally to A-level
- Desire to continue to develop professionally

### Skills

- Adhere to professional teaching standards
- Ability to take initiative, develop new ideas and implement them
- Ability to motivate and challenge pupils of all abilities and across all Key Stages
- Ability to meet deadlines and work effectively under pressure
- Good communicator with colleagues, parents, pupils and member of the public
- Good time manager, able to meet deadlines and plan effectively
- Writes well and is able to structure information to meet the needs and understanding of the intended audience
- IT skills – all staff have access to PCs and are expected to complete their own work
- Full clean driving licence is desirable. The ability to drive the school mini-bus would be desirable but training can be given



### Personal Attributes

- Kind, enthusiastic and friendly with a genuine interest and commitment to the education and development of young people
- Self-motivated, able to use own initiative
- Reliable, good timekeeper
- Team player, willing to participate and support
- Flexible and resilient, can adapt and respond to changes and display good judgement Creative and resourceful
- Enthusiastic and energetic, passionate about their subject

At all time staff must operate in accordance with school's policies and procedures as detailed on the school's website and intranet and as set out in the Staff Handbook and elsewhere, 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 duties and responsibilities shown above are not intended to be exhaustive and teachers will be expected to be flexible and to take on new responsibilities as necessary to meet the changing needs of the school.**





## Application Process

Interested candidates are invited to contact Fiona McCarthy, HR Manager on [recruitment@leweston.dorset.sch.uk](mailto:recruitment@leweston.dorset.sch.uk)

Applications should be made electronically. To submit your application, please submit a completed application form available on the Leweston School website. If you have any questions about uploading your application documents, please contact 01963 211016.

The process is as follows:

- All applications will be acknowledged by email. If you have not received acknowledgement that your application has been received within two working days of sending it, please contact Fiona McCarthy by telephone
- Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interviews at the School.

Leweston is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all sections of the community. Candidates will be assessed against relevant criteria only (i.e. skills, qualifications, abilities and experience). All applicants should read the schools' safeguarding policy and are required to declare any criminal convictions or cautions or disciplinary proceedings related to young people. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service. N.B. Safer recruitment checks will be made at all stages of the recruitment process.







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