

APPOINTMENT OF CURRICULUM LEADER FOR PERFORMING ARTS

WANTED: Excitement, Energy and High Expectations!

This is a superb opportunity for a candidate to make a significant contribution to the life of Stratford upon Avon School and the wider community. We would like an outstanding practitioner to lead a potentially outstanding Performing Arts Faculty.

For a town synonymous with Shakespeare, this is a wonderful opportunity.

This post has arisen due to the promotion of our current Curriculum Leader (a Drama teacher).

Leadership

We are ideally seeking a visionary leader who will help shape the future curriculum and manage high quality daily experiences for our students. The faculty currently comprises of Dance, Music and Drama. The successful candidate is likely to be a strong classroom practitioner in Drama. However, an understanding of (and the ability to teach) Music and/or Dance would be desirable to head up the faculty.

Our deliberate way of working has developed a very strong group of middle leaders at Stratford who have responded very well to our blend of autonomy and accountability. This includes fortnightly breakfast meetings, timetabled group meetings for middle leaders and regular presentations to SLT. As a leader, you will find a positive working environment supported by peers, Lead Practitioners and members of SLT. The school is 'well led by many'. We will help you develop as a leader.

Staffing

The Faculty currently comprises of one full time and one part time Dance teacher, two full time and one part time Drama teacher, one full time and one part time Music teacher. In addition, the faculty occasionally has other members of staff who teach within the curriculum area. The Performing Arts team is a positive, enthusiastic and forward looking one. All of these strengthen the bond between staff and students and help to make the school an enjoyable and fulfilling place to work.

The Curriculum Leader and other staff within the departments have specific areas of curriculum responsibility. Together they lead the development of these areas with the support of the rest of the team. This has been important over recent years to provide quality schemes of work, appropriate methods of assessment and the development of qualification opportunities. The successful candidate will be expected to lead across all three subjects and ensure high levels of expectations are embedded in both classroom and extracurricular activities.

Curriculum

The school has seized the initiative in developing our curriculum.

"They benefit from a carefully planned and organised curriculum. Leaders' careful checks on what is happening mean that they know where learning is really strong and where there is still some work to be done." (Ofsted 2020)

Subjects are expected to have common schemes of work and are in the process of developing common evidence-based strategies to reinforce learning and the retention of knowledge. Students *"are taught the things they need to know, in the right order, so they can remember this new knowledge and build on their learning. But this is not yet consistent enough."* (Ofsted 2020).

You will be expected to have, or be developing, a strong grasp of curriculum related issues in order to help shape our future direction.

Currently, at Key Stage 3, students receive five 60-minute lessons of Performing Arts per fortnight. These are divided up across the three subjects and ensures all students have the opportunity to experience a broad and balanced Performing Arts curriculum. Groups are generally taught in mixed ability and mixed sex classes.

At key stage 4, the following courses are currently taught:

- ***Edexcel BTEC Dance***
- ***Edexcel GCSE Drama***
- ***Edexcel BTEC Music***

During year 9, students are given a foundation in the subject (3 hours per fortnight) that they have selected before commencing the examination content in year 10 & 11 (4 hours per fortnight).

At key stage 5 (10 hours per fortnight), our offer is reviewed on a year by year basis, currently we offer

- ***Edexcel Drama and Theatre***
- ***AQA A Level Dance.***

In recent years the school has also taught A Level Performing Arts.

We are always looking to offer the most exciting, relevant and enjoyable experience for our students. We will therefore readily consider alternatives to our curriculum where it would be in the best interests of our students. Our primary aim is to engage our students and ensure that they achieve and this will require the successful candidate to have an innovative, flexible and inspirational approach to work and building relationships within the school.

Facilities

The department currently has the use of 2 music classrooms, a suite of music practice rooms, 2 drama studios and a dance studio. Retractable tiered seating in the Hall enhances our facilities for performance. A new Performing Arts block is being constructed and should be open by September 2025. There are also impressive professional facilities in the town which our students sometimes have the opportunity to use.

There may well be additional developments in future as we are in the process of developing/expanding our site due to our increasing popularity and increased admissions applications.

Extra Curricular Activities

The department has a strong tradition of lunch time and after school clubs. Clubs exist in a wide variety of activities. Currently, in a typical week, students can attend dance, drama and music clubs during both, lunchtime and after school. In addition, there is a Performing Arts performance at least once a term with additional Music, Dance and Drama performances in between. We are fortunate to have strong links with the Royal Shakespeare Company and our Performing Arts students frequently get opportunities to collaborate with visiting artists and technical staff. The department enjoys very strong links with a number of local clubs, many of whom use our community facilities.

I hope you feel enthused about the opportunities that this appointment offers.

We will look forward to receiving your application in due course.

Neil Wallace
Headteacher
April 2024