



Castle Newnham Application Pack

School Head of Drama & Dance





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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Castle Newnham and the Bedfordshire Schools Trust. Thank you for expressing an interest in our current vacancy.

We have collated this application pack to provide you with all the information you should need to enable you to apply for this role.

However, if you would like any further information or would like to make a visit to our academy, please contact:

Lauren Crowley
School Business & Operations Manager
cnrecruitment@bestacademies.org.uk
Tel: 01234 303403

Castle Newnham
South site – Reception-Year 4: Goldington Road, Bedford MK40 3EP
North site – Year 5-Year 11: Polhill Avenue, Bedford MK41 9DT
www.castlenewnham.school



ABOUT BEST

The Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) is a multi-academy trust providing exceptional education across our community of 11 schools and five nurseries.

Since forming in 2016, we have grown significantly into one of the largest trusts in the county. We now educate 8,000 children across the area, from nursery age to advanced level study, and have over 1,000 members of staff.

It is our aim to grow the BEST in everyone, and everything we do is driven by our values. We will:

- Always put children first
- Collaborate to support and compete to challenge
- Provide community-based provision
- Have the courage to be compassionate

Our aims can only be achieved if we recruit, retain and develop the highest quality workforce – and we want those we employ to be valued in the workplace.

As a single employer, we are able to offer all our staff a fantastic range of benefits, including an excellent working environment, opportunities for career development and training, and discounts and deals that will help save you money.

Full details can be found in our BEST People staff benefits brochure, available for download from our MyNewTerm careers page, or on our website at www.bestacademies.org.uk/jobs

The formative years of BEST have been a real success story – and we are looking forward to an exciting future, too.



ABOUT CASTLE NEWNHAM

Castle Newnham is an all-through school with approximately 1,400 pupils located in the county town of Bedford.

Its most recent Ofsted inspection saw the school's secondary provision judged as Good (April 2024). Its primary provision is awaiting its first inspection for EYFS-Year 6 (the previous Outstanding grade was given to Castle Lower School in 2013).

At Castle Newnham, ambition and care for all pupils are at the heart of everything we do. Our aim is to serve the needs of our local community for high standards and a coherent and smooth transition throughout each child's 'one journey'.

Knowing pupils throughout their time in education and close working with families is a central component of our vision.

Castle Newnham is well thought of in the community and both school sites are set relatively close to the centre of Bedford in a pleasant suburb. The South site is situated in a listed Victorian building on Goldington Road, while the North site is a short walk away on Polhill Avenue near the University of Bedfordshire, with whom we are a lead school in a very well-reputed teacher training partnership.

We hope this application pack, alongside our school website, will give you a flavour of the wide and growing range of opportunities our pupils enjoy and participate in.

Our senior leaders, teachers and support staff are a committed and dedicated team and our pupils are a source of great pride in their enthusiasm, courtesy and care for others. They demonstrate our traditional values of hard work, good behaviour and kindness on a daily basis.



ABOUT PERFORMING ARTS & 4SIXTEEN THEATRE COMPANY

At Castle Newnham, performing arts are a cornerstone of the "all-through" experience and the department is well reputed in the local area and beyond.

Pupils experience performing arts teaching across the whole school, and at the end of their journey have the opportunity to study GCSE Drama, Dance and Music as part of the Key Stage 4 options. All performing arts subjects are popular at GCSE with high uptake of pupils choosing each subject.

The performing arts facilities are centered around the Studio One Performance Theatre, a professional 100-seat flexible venue located at the heart of the North Site. This space doubles as a well equipped drama and dance teaching space outside of performances. There are also halls across the site for performing arts teaching. The building also houses two specialised teaching studios, dedicated practice rooms and the department's office. To support the all-through curriculum, the South Site features an additional practice room designed specifically for small-group primary teaching.

Castle Newnham is proud to offer the multi award-winning 4SIXTEEN Theatre Company. High quality, professional standard productions that fosters a love for the performing arts in pupils from across both our primary and secondary phases. The theatre company is led by a production coordinator and the theatre company produces three to four productions a year involving pupils across the whole school.

Pupils in and outside the classroom have the opportunity to develop their talents onstage or contribute backstage in various capacities, including set design, costume creation, lighting and other technical aspects. The department also offers regular theatre trips for all year groups.



HOW TO APPLY

We use an application form, rather than asking for CVs, for most vacancies. This ensures all applicants present their information in the same standardised format and tell us only what we need to know.

Apply online via the MyNewTerm website at www.mynewterm.com before the closing date.

Closing date: Friday 20th February at 9.00am

Interview date: Tuesday 24th February

Start date: Easter 2026

We encourage you to apply at your earliest convenience. The Trust reserves the right to interview and appoint a suitable candidate before the closing date.

BEST is an equal opportunities employer and we are committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All offers of employment will be subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks and references, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.

Strictly no agencies.

We look forward to receiving your application.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Post	School Head of Drama & Dance
Responsible to	An identified member of SLT as appropriate
Grade	MPS/UPS + TLR 2a
Key relationships	Principal; Senior Leadership Team; School Head of School Music; 4SIXTEEN Coordinator; Performing Arts Department; relevant teaching and associate staff; partner professionals; parents; local community.
Location	Castle Newnham – based on North Site (Polhill Avenue) with teaching also on South Site
Working pattern	Full-time and as described in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.
Disclosure level	Enhanced.
Job purpose	To lead and teach in the subject areas within performing arts; to ensure that the standards of teaching and learning are high by being at the cutting edge of development in the subject, modelling and sharing good practice. To maintain the school as a centre of excellence for performing arts by influencing both curriculum design and extra-curricular programmes across the whole age range. To be accountable for GCSE and other key performance indicators.



Responsibilities

Leadership and development

- Lead and be accountable for standards of teaching and pupil outcomes in Performing Arts (including GCSE);
- Monitor and evaluate standards according to the school's annual cycle, making use of assessment information and performance data to drive improvement;
- Advise and support the senior leadership team on matters pertaining to standards in the subject areas, devising, taking and monitoring appropriate action as required;
- Ensure that the curriculum and schemes of work are developed to take into account progression through primary, secondary and to GCSE;
- Enable and contribute to the sharing of good practice across the school and with other high-performing institutions;
- Lead the subject team, playing the key role in its drive to become part of a leading edge, innovative and high performing school;
- Ensure that opportunities are sought and developed for high-quality and extensive enrichment activity pertaining to the subjects;
- Ensure that the highest standards in teaching and learning are continually modelled to all staff to help improve their personal classroom performance;
- Support, train and coach staff in the development of resources and pedagogical approaches in the subject including those who may be non-specialists;
- Respect and develop the curriculum expertise of others in the performing arts department to create a coherent and mutual complementary offer to pupils from 4-16;
- Be an active member of relevant middle leadership groups contributing to the development of high-quality and successful provision in the performing arts;
- Advise and support the senior leadership team on matters pertaining to recruitment and resources in the subject;
- Contribute fully to the school's options process including the production of high quality information, advice and guidance pertaining to subjects within the performing arts;



- Ensure that staff contributing to teaching in the subject are well supported and helped to improve and progress as professionals;
- Organise and administer as required the internal assessments and public examinations in the subjects, supported by other subject leads within performing arts;
- Manage any budgets and resources in the performing arts department and report on best value for money to the line manager.;
- Maintain and develop working relationships with external partners, for example the Music Hub, The Place Theatre, University of Bedfordshire ;
- To work alongside the Performing Arts Administrator to ensure the smooth operation of business in the performing arts department;
- Maintain and develop working relationships with external partners such as the Music Hub;
- To collaborate with the 4SIXTEEN Theatre Company Coordinator to ensure the 4SIXTEEN Theatre Company theatre season is produced and managed effectively to a high standard of excellence, including directing productions;
- To deputise one of the identified link staff members for the Music Hub in the absence of School Head of Music;
- In the absence of the School Head of Music, liaise and work with the school's Visiting Peripatetic Teaching Staff to ensure high standards of teaching and learning, in addition to opportunities around GCSE and showcase performance events;

Teaching, learning and assessment:

- Set appropriate and demanding expectations for pupils' learning, motivation, and presentation of work based on a sound knowledge of their prior attainment;
- Work collaboratively as part of a subject or phase team to plan consistent and effective sequences of lessons and associated resources;
- Set and mark work for pupils absent from school for health or disciplinary reasons;
- Set and make clear high expectations for pupils' behaviour by establishing a purposeful working atmosphere in accordance with school strategies;



- Ensure positive relationships with pupils based on warmth and respect;
- Follow the behaviour policy in monitoring, recording and acting to improve any incidents of poor behaviour;
- Deliver teaching which develops the skills and knowledge required in order to succeed in the subject area(s);
- Provide regular guidance to pupils on the work they have done and how to improve it in accordance with school policy on feedback and marking;
- Attend the appropriate parents' evenings to keep parents informed about the progress of their child;
- Be familiar with the code of practice for identification and assessment for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) as well as school practice in this area and contribute to / make use of appropriate documentation;
- Support all pupils to achieve regardless of their SEND or stage of learning English or home disadvantage;
- Work in collaboration with support staff attached to any teaching group;
- Set clear targets for pupils' learning building on and ensuring mastery of knowledge and skills;
- Use teaching methods which keep pupils engaged, including stimulating pupils' intellectual curiosity, effective questioning and response, with clear presentation and good use of resources;
- Set and monitor pupils' homework providing constructive oral and written feedback;
- Secure progress towards challenging pupil targets. Praise effort and improvement and acknowledge achievement using guidance from the school;
- Recognise that learning takes place outside the school context and provide opportunities to develop pupils' understanding by relating their understanding to real-life examples;
- Contribute to whole school teaching and learning by teaching across both sites.

Care and guidance

- Undertake responsibility for a tutor group or for any other arrangement for the care and guidance of pupils as is required by the school, including tutor, pupil, interviews and coaching and mentoring;
- Be the first point of contact for parents of this group;



- Monitor the social, personal, academic and vocational progress of individuals in their designated group;
- Be prepared to undertake responsibility as required for the delivery of the PSHE programme;
- Promote good attendance and monitor in accordance with the school's attendance policy;
- Understand the need to liaise with partner professionals responsible for pupils' welfare, care and guidance.

Professional standards

- Support the ethos, vision, principles and values of the school;
- Treat colleagues, pupils and all members of the community, with respect and consideration;
- Treat all pupils fairly, consistently and without prejudice;
- Set a good example to pupils in terms of appropriate dress, standards of punctuality and attendance;
- Support the aims of the school through attendance at and participation in events such as open evenings, option evenings and the like (as appropriate to responsibilities);
- Take an active role in extra-curricular performing activities including but not limited to drama clubs and school productions;
- Actively collaborate with the 4SIXTEEN Theatre Company Coordinator to ensure the 4SIXTEEN Theatre Company theatre season is produced and managed effectively to a high standard of excellence;
- Support the ethos of the school by upholding the behaviour policy, uniform rules, etc;
- Take responsibility for own professional development and participate in arrangements as adopted by the school for the assessment of own performance and that of colleagues;
- Reflect on own practice as well as the practices of the school with the aim of achieving excellence in every area of our work;
- Read and adhere to the various policies of the school and implement school improvement plans;



- Participate in the development and management of the school by attending various team and staff meetings;
- Ensure that all deadlines are met as published in the school calendar;
- Be proactive and take responsibility for matters relating to health and safety;
- Promote lifelong learning and promote enrichment and extension activities within the school;
- Participate actively in the review and setting of appraisal objectives agreed annually;
- Support and contribute, as required, to the school's programme for Initial Teacher Training and to the programme of teaching and learning briefings.

Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate a clear and well thought-out understanding of current educational issues, theory and practice;
- Have a detailed knowledge of the relevant aspects of the National Curriculum and other statutory requirements;
- Have a secure knowledge and understanding of a specialised subject(s) or phase, including subject knowledge and sound knowledge of GCSE courses and assessment arrangements;
- Understand progression in the specialised subject(s) or phase;
- Cope securely with subject-related questions which pupils or parents raise and know about pupils' common misconceptions and mistakes as related to the specialised subject(s).
- Have sufficient knowledge of the primary curriculum to be able to support colleagues who may be non-specialists with planning and delivery of effective teaching in the subject area(s).

Safeguarding children

Castle Newnham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff to share this commitment and to undergo appropriate checks, including enhanced DBS checks.



General

The above responsibilities are subject to the general duties and responsibilities contained in the Teachers' Terms and Conditions.

The duties of this post may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed. This job description and person specification may be renegotiated if changing circumstances arise.

Please note, while every effort has been made to explain the duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task undertaken may not be identified.

Employees will be expected to comply with any reasonable request from the line manager/Head teacher to undertake work of a similar level that is not specified in this job description.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: School Head of Drama & Dance

Category	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications/ Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualified teacher status Evidence of continuing professional development relating to school leadership and management, and curriculum/teaching and learning Experience of leading/coordinating professional development opportunities Experience of working with other schools/organisations/agencies Ability to identify own learning needs and to support others in identifying their learning needs Evidence of recent and appropriate training in safeguarding and the 'prevent' strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of further professional study post-degree
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of teaching or training in more than one school Substantial, successful teaching experience including in the secondary phase Successful experience in a leading and managing aspects of the subject specialism Successful experience of leading key areas of school improvement Effective implementation of policy and practice to keep children safe from harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful experience in a leadership and management role Successful experience of leading key areas of school improvement Experience of teaching in more than one school Ability and experience to teach another subject such as English.
Strategic Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to provide strong and up-to-date expertise on all matters pertaining to teaching and learning in this subject area Ability to inspire and motivate staff, pupils, parents to achieve the aims of the school Evidence of successful strategies for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating improvements to teaching 	



Category	Essential	Desirable
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to analyse assessment information, develop strategic plans, set targets and monitor/evaluate progress towards these 	
Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A deep understanding of the requirements of the curriculum in the subject area(s) Knowledge and experience of a range of successful teaching and learning strategies to meet the needs of all pupils Promoting wellbeing of pupils across the curriculum A secure understanding of assessment strategies and the use of assessment to inform the next stages of learning Experience of effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and taking successful action to improve Understanding of the characteristics of an effective learning environment and the key elements of successful behaviour management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrable interest in current research and debate concerning the teaching and learning of this subject Experience of teaching and/or leading in both the primary and secondary phase
Leading and Managing Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of leading staff teams Ability to delegate work and support colleagues in undertaking responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of supporting the professional development of colleagues
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of offering challenge and support to improve performance Ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing to a range of audiences – e.g. staff, pupils, parents, governors, Ability to provide clear information and advice to staff, parents and governors 	



Category	Essential	Desirable
Skills, Qualities & Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality teaching skills • High expectations of pupils' attainment and progress • Strong commitment to school improvement and raising achievement for all • Ability to build and maintain good relationships • Ability to remain positive and enthusiastic when working under pressure • Ability to organise work, prioritise tasks, make decisions and manage time effectively • Empathy with children and families • Excellent communication and interpersonal skills • Stamina and resilience • Effective ICT skills 	

We are committed to the safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare and offers of employment are subject to DBS clearance

