



The Castle Partnership Trust
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Executive Headteacher: Sarah Watson

THE CASTLE SCHOOL

General Information

**Wellington Road
Taunton, Somerset
TA1 5AU**

**Headteacher: Sarah Watson
Tel: Taunton (01823) 274073
Fax: (01823) 274080**

www.castleschool.co.uk

THE CASTLE SCHOOL

General Information

We are always grateful to candidates who express an interest in joining us to work at The Castle School. Submitting applications takes considerable time and effort and we are appreciative that you are prepared to give these to the school.

The Castle School offers an excellent environment for you either to begin your career or to continue your career development. We are happy either to appoint colleagues who wish to stay with us for a considerable amount of time or those who wish to gain experience to move on to further opportunities. We do have several members of staff who have contributed much to the school over many years whilst others have moved to a wide variety of posts in a range of organisations.

We have traditional values, but we are also forward thinking. Much has been achieved and we have a clear vision for our further development. Our students are representative of the full ability and social range. They respond well to good teaching and are a pleasure to work with.

We hope to provide an education which both prepares young people for their future life and is rewarding and enjoyable in its own right. It is the combination of academic excellence, together with an extensive range of further enrichment opportunities which we believe gives the school its special feel.

The Castle School opened in 1966 and became an 11-16 Co-Educational County Comprehensive School in 1978. The school is non-denominational. In 2009 we were granted Post 16 status which we retain although there is no provision on site. We enjoy a very productive relationship with our local Post 16 providers that we hope will lead to cross phase teaching.

Taunton is served by four 11-16 schools, which are comprehensive in all years. The Castle School, at the present time, has 1200 students on roll. The school is popular amongst parents and has an excellent reputation in the community. This reputation is based both on our outstanding academic record and the positive culture which exists within the school.

The Castle School has been regularly over-subscribed with over 550 applications for 240 places. Our reputation is based on consistently high academic achievement and we have been at the top of the league table for Somerset for many years. In the last few years we have been in the top 5% of schools nationally for VA and are 29th in the UK for GCSE results and 7th for A/A*s according to the Guardian and Telegraph respectively. This is based on best entry. Arts and Sports are equally important and we have a national reputation for both, consistently winning the County Cup for a host of Sports and achieving recognition for the quality of our Arts.

As a new member of staff the benefits to you are:

- Children of staff have priority in applying for much sought after places in the school.

- We have three additional INSET days and we agree with staff the timings of these and when they are delivered through twilights so staff can have the INSETs as time in lieu.
- Superb CPD which includes regular CPD at staff meetings, opportunities to develop your teaching practice through the Exemplary Teacher Programme (a Trust development programme), the School Leadership Programme (previously the Middle Leadership course).
- The opportunity to work across the Trust and across phases with primary schools.

Pastoral Organisation

An important feature of the Pastoral organisation of the school is the division into six Houses: Balmoral (Green), Lancaster (Orange), Caernarvon (Mauve), Buckingham (Red), Windsor (Blue), Sandringham (Yellow). Each student is a member of a House and he, or she, will spend a part of each day with the House Tutor Group for that year. The House Tutor will normally stay with that tutor group for the full five years, and thus continuity is achieved. A significant contribution to each student's education is made by the Head of House; he/she will establish links with the home and since there is a clear tradition of family loyalties with each House these links often extend over many years and sometimes over many generations of students.

Different coloured House ties, House badges, and sports shirts are features of the House organisation and each child will almost certainly represent his, or her House competitively at various times each year. Each House holds weekly Assemblies which are actively supported by tutors and students.

The school maintains a very high level of student attendance. The School Leadership Team work closely with House staff and regular meetings are held with the school's Attendance Officer and Parent and Family Support Adviser, as well as other outside support agencies.

Curriculum

Key points: The school ethos of all students Achieving, Belonging and Participating to secure the best possible qualifications in a positive and resilient way is fundamental to our philosophy.

Aim of the curriculum

The curriculum is designed to be balanced and broadly based as well as promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our students helping to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

Our aim is to provide a curriculum that is highly effective in delivering exceptional outcomes for all our students' needs. We aim to ensure that students leave the schools within The Castle School Trust being very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

The curriculum will:

Develop students' knowledge of themselves as learners in order to make them more effective learners.

Encourage independent learning and positive thinking amongst all students,
Prepare them for life-long learning,
Be personalised in order to meet the needs of individual students,
Build on the primary opportunities.
Ensure students are literate and numerate.

The Castle School.

The Curriculum

Maths set across the year through Years 7, 8 and 9.

For all other subjects the year is split into two equal ability populations and setting will occur by subject in English and Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) after the first term in Year 7, within the two populations. All other subjects are taught in mixed ability groups.

From Year 8 onwards, ability setting by subject within the two equal ability populations will continue throughout the school in English and in Languages. Setting in each subject is independent of that in the other subject. These sets are constantly reviewed and changes made whenever necessary.

In Year 9 students will also be set, in equal ability populations for Science.

Subjects Year 7, 8 and 9

All students are taught core subjects: English including Philosophy for Children, Mathematics, Science, RE and PE.

In addition, they will also be taught the following:

- Humanities subjects: History and Geography.
- Modern Foreign Languages: Either one or two languages from French, Spanish, German and Mandarin.
- Arts: Art, Textiles, Dance, Drama and Music
- Design Technology, Computing and Food
- Personal, Social and Health Education, which is taught via timetable enrichment days at various times through the year.

Subjects Year 10 and 11

All students study English Language and Literature, Mathematics, Science, PE, PSHE, Careers and Religious Education.

Students select a further four option subjects. These options include

- Modern Foreign Languages: French, German, Spanish, Mandarin.
- Humanities: Geography or History.
- Computing or Information Communication Technology.
- Arts: Music, Drama, Dance, Photography, Textiles.
- Design Technology – Resistant Materials or Graphic Products.
- Health related subjects, GCSE PE or Food Preparation and Nutrition.

The School Day

The School operates a one-week timetable

8.45 -	Warning Bell
8.50 - 9.10	Registration/ Assemblies
9.10 - 10.10	Period 1
10.10 – 11.10	Period 2
11.10 - 11.30	Break
11.30 - 12.30	Period 3
12.30 - 1.30	Period 4
1.30 - 2.30	Lunch
2.30 - 3.30	Period 5
3.30 -	End of School

Each week the students will attend a House Assembly and either a Year Assembly or a Half School Assembly.