



The Castle Partnership Trust
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Executive Headteacher: Sarah Watson

THE CASTLE SCHOOL

Second in English Faculty

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Dear Colleague

Due to the promotion of the current post holder to Head of House, we are looking to appoint an excellent teacher with either proven leadership or potential to help lead our English Faculty as Second in Faculty for English from September 2017.

I am delighted that you are interested in working at The Castle School and look forward to welcoming you to our School for a visit if you can so that you can see first-hand what we are about and what we can offer you. We are a friendly and welcoming school and our parents and students are always very appreciative of what staff do for them. We frequently have compliments from parents and members of the community, which I like to read out in staff briefings so people get the recognition they deserve. This builds a positive and warm school community where everyone is valued.

At The Castle School, we value teachers. We have an outstanding record of investing in our staff, believing that potential, enthusiasm and good subject knowledge leads to outstanding teaching. Our excellent CPD programme supports that; even the best teachers need to keep refreshed and interested, and given opportunities to develop themselves. We are serious about education for our students AND our staff. Whatever stage you are at now, if you are ambitious to progress in your career, we will give you opportunities to develop leadership and management, to work with some of the best teachers in the country and to learn leadership from some of the best in the profession. We have programmes for school leadership, Head of Department or Faculty, Pastoral leaders, aspiring strategic leadership and our Exemplary Teacher programme. 80% of the 20 participants on the school leaders course went on to gain promoted posts either within or beyond the Trust.

Staff at all levels have a strong visible presence and are responsive to students. I want students and parents to know that if there is a problem, we will deal with it quickly - within one working day- and to take any action quickly and fairly. There must be no child invisible at The Castle Partnership Trust and incidents must be dealt with quickly and effectively so children know and trust that we will take care of things and will go the extra mile with them. We are also committed to widening participation so that every child participates in learning and enrichment and all members of the school community are expected to pursue these aims.

Context

The Castle School is an outstanding school; it is good to have this recognised by OFSTED but it is more important that our students continue to receive the best education we can give them. Our students achieve some of the best exam results in the UK. In our most recent results, 84% of students achieved at least 5 GCSE passes at grade C or above including English and Maths. Our value-added has increased steadily each year so that in 2016 we hit 1040. We continue to achieve the top attendance rate in Somerset and that seems to me to be a good indicator of how much students enjoy school. We have been one of the top schools nationally for a number of years and are heavily oversubscribed with about 550 applications a year for 240 places.

This reputation doesn't just happen of course. We work hard for our students and instil a positive learning ethos that is appreciative of others and supportive. Students have high aspirations and expectations of us as we do of them. Students will tell you the best thing about

the school are the teachers and teachers will say the best things about the school are the children and their colleagues. Children here achieve more than expected progress but it is critical to me that every child has a sense of belonging and worth, and that every child participates in enrichment and learning. We all know that exam results matter, they allow our students to progress in their education and to embark upon careers, but no less important is the kind of person they become, as this leads to happy positive relationships, good health and living happy, prosperous (in every sense) and fulfilled lives. That is what we want for every single one of our children.

We are very, very lucky to have exceptional staff here at The Castle School. All staff are very focused on student achievement and the relationships between students and staff are outstanding. There is a very welcoming and cheerful staffroom and a great atmosphere in staff briefings, which are usually characterised by good humour.

The Trust

We are a Multi-Academy Trust with Court Fields School, one of The Castle School's neighbouring schools. Court Fields was put into special measures in November 2012. In January 2013 the DfE asked The Castle to sponsor Court Fields as an academy, which means it became part of the Trust in 2014. Court Fields is well on its way to 'good' and the Trust is determined and focused on raising standards. The staff at Court Fields have risen to the challenge and, like The Castle School, the students at Court Fields are the best thing about the school. They are motivated and keen to learn, proud of their school and want to see it improve.

In July 2015, The Castle School was designated a National Support School and the Head an NLE and we fully acknowledge that colleagues at Court Fields have significantly contributed to this national recognition. We are a Teaching School, one of the projects we are currently running is CPD and mentoring to encourage more women into Leadership, another is an Excellence in Maths initiative. We work with a number of outstanding schools in the South-West, we are a member of Somerset Challenge, as well as being proactive in networking with other schools, both supporting schools in challenging circumstances and working with other outstanding schools. That we are proactive is vital so that we always stay fresh and ahead of the curve.

The three key themes in our next phase of development are:

- a) to strengthen progression for all children through the Key Stages by working with primary partners to identify vulnerable families early on and to plan and implement strategies to support the children in their education. By doing this we think it will ensure that all students in The Castle Partnership Trust will achieve their full potential and become productive and happy members of society. All members of the Trust will contribute to and benefit from this relationship over time and we are working hard to develop these relationships. We have recently developed even stronger links with our primary schools and they are key partners in our bid for Teaching School status. We have bid successfully for a second capacity sponsor grant to develop early intervention across the Trust.

- b) Developing our pedagogy so it is strong and achieves exemplary progression across the age ranges and across the Trust. Teaching School will support this. We have reviewed all schemes of learning so that they explicitly teach Bloom’s taxonomy and embed the skills needed for the new GCSEs. We have developed a pedagogy, PALM+, that aims to deliver the attitudes and attributes needed by young people in the modern world so they are successful in every sense and thrive. We are also at the early stages of implementing ‘Talk for Writing’ pedagogy across the school to improve literacy.

This is an exciting stage of our growth as a Trust. We are contracted to work with Sir David Carter, National Schools Commissioner, as well as developing the Trust so that other schools see the benefit of working with us and joining us in our partnership. Proposals are also currently being developed for us to build two primary schools.

The most important thing for our children is their safety. We foster a culture of vigilance amongst staff, students and parents. We always listen to children and take their concerns seriously. The Castle School is committed to safeguarding and all staff have a duty of care towards our young people. All complaints and concerns are fully investigated. I want students and parents to know that if there is a problem, we will deal with it quickly - within one working day- and to take any action quickly and fairly. There must be no child invisible at The Castle School and we aim to increase participation at every level, to deal quickly and effectively with incidents so children know and trust that we will take care of things, and to go the extra mile with them.

Please note that for posts working with children the successful candidate will be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Check in line with the Local Authority and School Child Safeguarding Policy.

Further information regarding the post

Number of teachers in the Faculty: 10

Exam results for the last two years:

	% Achieving 4 Levels	
	2015	2016
English Language	52%	36%
English Literature	54%	50%

	Actual 2015			Actual 2016		
	No.	% A* - A	% A - C	No.	% A* - A	% A - C
English Language	234	28%	92%	234	21%	84%
English Literature	234	36%	83%	235	32%	88%

On a personal note, this really is a fabulous school to work in and it is a pleasure and privilege to work with our students and our exceptional staff. If you like the sound of the school I very much hope you will apply. If you do, please address your letter of application to me, the

Headteacher, and include any evidence of impact, such as exam results and progress/value added, and any experience and impact of leadership that you may have had as well as anything else you feel it is important to tell me. We expect all candidates to be IT literate and therefore applications must be electronic.

Please do come and look around the school or talk things through with me. I am always delighted to make the time for prospective candidates. I think you will find our students really good company and as they are our best advert, they will show you around but I will also make sure that the School Leadership Team are available to have an informal chat.

Applications should be emailed to Recruitment@castle.somerset.sch.uk or posted to:
Mr Rob Trowbridge, Assistant Business Manager, The Castle School, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 5AU.

The closing date for applications is **9am on Monday 27th February** with interviews due to take place on Friday the 3rd of March. The programme for interviews is available on the school website as well as details of opportunities to visit the school.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Watson
Executive Headteacher