



**The Castle Partnership Trust**  
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**Executive Headteacher: Sarah Watson**

## **THE CASTLE SCHOOL**

**Assistant Headteacher - Curriculum**

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**[www.castleschool.co.uk](http://www.castleschool.co.uk)**

Dear Colleague

Thank you for your interest in the post. We are looking for an exemplary team member and leader to join us from September 2017.

Our current Executive Head of Faculty for Humanities and English has secured promotion and is moving to Cambridge to relocate with his family. The work he has driven, improving literacy across the curriculum and especially within English and Humanities, has made a significant difference to our students. The importance of this work has led to us revising our SLT structure.

You will be joining us at an exciting time in our school development. We have a great record for developing staff and preparing them for the next stage of their career. The SLT consists of colleagues who have been here for some years, which gives continuity and stability alongside two Assistant Headteachers appointed in September 2016.

This is a new Assistant Headteacher post to work alongside our current Assistant Head, Becky Gee, who provides our strategic lead on numeracy and STEM. The new post holder will have specific strategic responsibility for leading and developing excellent literacy across the school and with our primary partners. You will also play a significant role in the development of the Teaching School and CPD within the Trust as well as leading and managing the English and Humanities Faculties. Within this structure there is a Head of English and a second in English as well as Heads of subjects for Geography, History and RE.

Our other current Assistant Headteacher, Matt Randle, works alongside our Deputy Head, James Lamb, to provide the strategic lead ensuring exemplary Academic Progress and Pastoral Care for our students. Our belief is that every child should Achieve, Belong and Participate.

### **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. We were ranked 29th in the UK by the Daily Telegraph and 7th in the UK by the Times for % A/A\*, but more importantly 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.

SLT are required to have a strong visible presence and to be responsive to staff and 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 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.

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. 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.

We are committed to helping you to move on in your career. You will be encouraged to take an active role in county-wide and national events. Your ambition should be for yourself and the school.

If you are interested in joining our team and our school, I welcome your application and encourage you to come and have a look round the school. It is important that you feel you can be happy here and will enjoy the company of our School Leadership Team. Being on SLT is hard work and a challenge, I promise you will not be bored! Once you experience the school, you will realise that we are all about the children; it is about the relationships between students and staff, and the relentless focus on achievement that makes us special.

In your letter of application please include:

- No more than 150 words on your vision and values
- The story of your career so far. No more than 150 words
- No more than 100 words on your career aspirations.
- Evidence of impact – this should make up the main part of your letter and demonstrate your leadership in whatever areas you have experience.

Please ensure your covering letter is **no more than 2 sides of A4 in total** and in **arial font size 12**.

In addition, please write no more than 1 side of A4 also in arial font 12 on **Your vision, as a leader of literacy, working alongside our leader of numeracy, to ensure all students excel in all aspects of literacy.**

Please note that covering letters from candidates who are shortlisted for interview will be sent to their referees for comment as part of the reference process.

Applications should be emailed to [Recruitment@castle.somerset.sch.uk](mailto: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 Wednesday 22 of February 2017**. Interviews will be held on the 1 and 2 of March 2017. 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**