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## **Appointment of a Director of Drama**

### **What sort of a school is Birkdale?**

Birkdale is an independent day school for boys aged from 4 to 18, with a coeducational sixth form, amounting altogether to 800 pupils. The School has a strong Christian ethos. Birkdale is located on three sites in south-west Sheffield, the 11-18 (Y7 to Y13) Senior School, the 4-11 (Reception to Y6) Preparatory School and the playing field. Birkdale is the only HMC (Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference) school in South Yorkshire. The Head of the Preparatory School is a member of IAPS (the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools).

### **How has Birkdale developed over time?**

Having been founded in 1904, Birkdale had by the 1950s become one of the largest boys' prep schools in the North of England. The age group was expanded to 4-16 in 1978, and the sixth form was launched in 1988. The original target figure of 180 sixth formers has now been attained, including about 50 girls. This rapid evolution of the school has been supported by an ambitious programme of physical development, including the acquisition both of the prep school site and of the playing fields, the addition of two large properties to the senior school site, the building of a sports hall and most recently the construction of a £2m sports pavilion.

### **Why teach in Sheffield?**

Your image of Sheffield might be a grim, northern industrial city with poor air quality and no culture. If so, you could not be more wrong! Visitors to Sheffield frequently comment on its greenness: there are in fact more trees per person in Sheffield than in any other English city. Birkdale is to be found in an inner suburb close to the Universities, 1½ miles from the city centre and 4 miles from the Peak District National Park. Indoor and outdoor leisure facilities of all kinds - from theatres and restaurants to sailing and hill walking - could hardly be closer at hand, making the quality of life very good indeed.

### **Why teach in an independent school?**

There are undoubtedly particular advantages enjoyed by independent schools and their staff. A recent survey of newly qualified teachers revealed five main attractive features of teaching in an independent school. The survey found these factors to be the more disciplined environment, the opportunity to express their passion for their subjects, good resources, smaller class sizes and greater professional freedom. In common with most independent schools, Birkdale offers a fully accredited statutory NQT induction programme.

### **What are Birkdale's academic standards?**

The expectation is that nearly all pupils, having entered the school at various ages, will progress through to A level. Prep school boys are very successful at Key Stages 1 and 2: a minimum level 4 is normally achieved at KS2, with a high or very high percentage of boys achieving level 5. The GCSE pass (A\*-C) rate is consistently around 99%, with the proportion of A\* or A grades around 60%. Most pupils take four AS levels in the lower sixth and three A levels in the upper sixth, in addition to General Studies. Twenty-nine A level subjects are offered. The A level pass rate has been 99% in recent years, with around 70% or more entries resulting in A or B grades. Setting is extensively employed at both prep and senior schools.

### **What happens outside the classroom?**

The school's academic emphasis, although important, is not exclusive. The extracurricular activities programme caters for most interests; sports, music, drama and outdoor pursuits flourish. All members of the teaching staff are expected to contribute to the wider life of the school beyond their academic commitment.

### **Does Birkdale offer the opportunity for teachers to develop professionally?**

Most departments are now housed in newly converted or extended facilities. Budgets for departmental resources are generous. The school libraries are recent conversions, well stocked and well used by pupils. A coherently constructed appraisal scheme exists partly to enable teachers to think about and develop their careers. As teachers develop, so does the school. Hence there is a generous annual budget for staff training and development.

### **What makes Birkdale special?**

The Christian ethos of the school manifests itself in the particularly friendly and supportive atmosphere. A good proportion of the staff are committed Christians, although as a community Birkdale is open to all, whatever they believe. We are therefore strongly committed to the care of our pupils and of our staff.

## **Appointment of Director of Drama**

The current Director of Drama will formally retire in July 2010, but is to return to Birkdale on a part-time peripatetic basis in September to introduce London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art Speech and Drama courses to the school. Thus a full-time Director of Drama vacancy has arisen from 1 September 2010.

Heads of Department are crucial to the successful running of Birkdale. The enclosed generic job description provides further details of the typical responsibilities. The Director of Drama would be responsible to the Director of Studies in all matters pertaining to the curriculum and its implementation. .

The Drama Studio and Store are located in a refurbished and very attractive Victorian building. Stage lighting is mounted on ceiling bars, and black curtaining can be drawn in a variety of ways to produce different background effects. The Drama Store houses a collection of costume that has been assembled over the last seven years, although this is usually augmented externally for productions. It is also used, along with another classroom, as a smaller rehearsal space for group work. Elsewhere on the school campus there is a well-equipped lecture theatre and the Heeley Hall complete with stage.

A Level Drama and Theatre Studies has been established in the curriculum for many years, and GCSE Drama was introduced from September 2006. Edexcel specifications are followed. All pupils in Y7 and Y8 are taught Drama in one of their five English lessons for half of the academic year.

The range of extra-curricular drama is one of the school's valued achievements. The aim is to give opportunities on a regular basis to across the age ranges. In most years there are at least two productions which might include a sixth form drama, a musical, a Shakespeare play or another performance including the Middle (Y9-11) and/or Lower School (Y7 -8) pupils. Amongst recent productions have been West Side Story, Hamlet and The Great Gatsby. In past years Birkdale has taken a production into the Crucible Theatre as part of the Sheffield Children's Festival. These productions remain the responsibility of the Director of Drama, as does the oversight of independent theatrical initiatives from the Sixth Form and other year groups.

The Director of Drama liaises closely with the Director of Music in order to enable students to participate in both disciplines, and a positive and creative working relationship exists in collaborative ventures. One of the school's Science Technicians is available to provide some technical/practical support eg for lighting & sound for productions. Drama clubs are run at lunch times for Years 7, 8 and 9 and the running of these has occasionally been delegated to willing sixth formers. Drama is in a healthy state and there is a reserve of pupil talent on which the new postholder can readily draw.

## **Generic Job Description for Heads of Departments**

Heads of Department are responsible to the Director of Studies. Each Head of Department is responsible for the following:

### **Curriculum**

1. Determine the aims and objectives of the department, ensuring compatibility with those of the school.
2. Maintain awareness of curriculum developments in the subject and encourage departmental colleagues to do the same.
3. Produce a departmental development plan to target the aims and objectives. This plan should be annually updated.
4. Produce and regularly update schemes of work and curriculum documents.
5. Monitor the teaching within the department.
6. Take overall responsibility for the demands of public examination courses.
7. Monitor the work and assessment of pupils.
8. Mark and assess the work of potential entrants to the school as required.
9. Maintain regular communication (where appropriate) with Prep School Curriculum Advisors, especially about the transition from P4 to S1.
10. Contribute to the overall curriculum planning of the school.
11. Provide advice to parents and pupils re. courses within and beyond school.
12. Provide opportunities for pupils to broaden their interest in and knowledge of the subject; foster cross-curricular links where appropriate; and contribute to the coverage of the ICT syllabus.
13. Encourage departmental staff to produce stimulating displays, especially including recent work produced by pupils.

### **Staff Manager**

1. Provide direction and give support to departmental staff as appropriate.
2. Encourage teamwork within the department.
3. Direct INSED within the department in consultation with the Director of Studies/Deputy Head to enable development of talents relevant to the needs of the department, and of members of staff.
4. Appraise departmental staff annually on a 2 year cycle.
5. Interview candidates for teaching/support posts and advise the Head Master on appointments.
6. Induction of new staff.
7. Contribute to the training of NQTs and student teachers.

### **Organisation of the Department**

1. Create an organisational structure for the department that encourages the generation of ideas and the allocation of responsibilities.
2. Deploy staff to cover the teaching needs of the department, to make best use of their strengths and to provide development opportunities.
3. Allocate pupils to teaching groups and teaching groups to rooms.
4. Organise teaching resources.
5. Adopt safety policies appropriate to the needs of the department.
6. Chair regular minuted departmental meetings.
7. Co-ordinate the organisation of trips within the department.

### **Communications**

1. Represent the views of the department within the school and at Heads of Department meetings.
2. Report to the department on school issues.
3. Discuss plans with the Director of Studies and Head Master as appropriate.
4. Communicate with parents and inform/consult class teacher, form tutor, Head of Section, Director of Studies and/or Head Master as appropriate.
5. Liaise with Exam Boards; inform/consult Examinations Officers, Director of Studies and/or Head Master as appropriate.
6. Create and foster links with other schools, universities, industry/commerce and the community.

### **Finance and Resource Control**

1. Produce an itemised annual budget for submission to the Head Master, taking account of the development needs of the department.
2. Operate within the agreed budget, keeping appropriate records.
3. Maintain records of books and equipment assigned to the department, having due regard to security.
4. Ensure that copyright and licensing regulations pertaining to printed materials, recordings and software are not breached.
5. Report requirements for maintenance and decoration of rooms within the department to the Bursar.

## Other Information and Application Procedure

Salary is on the Birkdale salary scale. A generous remission of fees scheme is available for children of staff. The school is a member of the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

Applicants should provide **all** of the following:

1. A handwritten letter of application
2. A completed summary application form (either enclosed with this job description or available from our website [www.birkdaleschool.org.uk/vacancies](http://www.birkdaleschool.org.uk/vacancies)). *(If you are able to offer a second subject, in addition to Drama please do include the relevant details on the form, or elsewhere in your application.)*
3. A full curriculum vitae
4. The name, address, telephone numbers (and e-mail if possible) of two referees

Current legislation applying to this post includes the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 and the Asylum & Immigration Act 1996. Therefore, shortlisted candidates will be required to prove their eligibility to work in the UK and the chosen candidate will be required to undergo a criminal record check. Details of the documentation needed in connection with these requirements will be sent to shortlisted candidates when they are invited to interview. Prior to appointment, we would then request a declaration about medical fitness.

Applications should be sent to the Head Master, Birkdale School, Oakholme Road, Sheffield S10 3DH by *the closing date of 16 March 2010*. It is not possible to write to every applicant with the result of the appointment. However, applications will be acknowledged if a stamped addressed envelope is included with the application form. *Interviews will be held during the week commencing 22 March 2010, with the anticipated date being Tuesday 23 March 2010.*

March 2010