



**ST EDMUND'S
SCHOOL**
CANTERBURY

STEDMUNDS.ORG.UK

DIRECTOR OF DRAMA

CANDIDATE PACK

WINNER
INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS OF
THE YEAR 2023



St Edmund's School is a 2-18 independent, co-educational, HMC day and boarding school. Our Nursery & Pre-Prep, Junior and Senior Schools are all located on the same site in Canterbury. This year, St Edmund's is celebrating its 275th anniversary. The school aims to be a caring and disciplined community informed by Christian principles that encourages pupils to become 'the best that they can be'. It seeks to enable pupils to take pride in their achievements, be humble and responsible members of society and leave equipped to make a success of their personal and professional lives. During the headship of Edward O'Connor, school numbers have climbed to record levels (currently 650) and St Edmund's is known for being a friendly, academically ambitious and creative community. St Edmund's was judged as excellent on all measures in its most recent ISI inspection and won the Independent School of the Year Award for Performing Arts in 2023. In March 2024, the school received a NACE Challenge Award in recognition of outstanding provision for able and gifted students. This summer work will be completed on Academic Hub Phase 2 – a new state of the art classroom block.

THE SCHOOL





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WELCOME FROM THE HEAD

Thank you for the interest that you have shown in joining us as Director of Drama. We are looking for an inspirational, creative leader of this key department to build on the extraordinary work of Mark Sell who retires from the role this year. This candidate pack will give you a good overview of the position, and some valuable insights into working at our School. However, if you have any queries then we are more than happy to help. Do also take a look at our website where you will find useful information about our values and vision. It also gives you a flavour of the uniquely caring, inclusive and creative St Edmund's ethos. There are also some great photos and videos of some previous productions. St Edmund's is blessed with a stunning location and superb facilities. Not least, a 350 seat Theatre in the Francis Musgrave Performing Arts Centre! Our approach is based on understanding the needs and characteristics of individual students within a dynamic and mutually supportive community. Nowhere is that better represented in our school than in the Drama Department. The Director of Drama is a crucial role at St Edmund's.

Drama is at the very heart of our curriculum and we have a formidable reputation based on years of ambition, innovation and hard work that we want to develop even further. Our department strikes an extraordinary balance between high level productions and practical work (that would grace professional theatres) and maintaining an inclusive approach that seeks to encourage young people of all ages and ability to participate. Our recent whole school productions have included Chicago, Beauty and the Beast, Time and the Conways and Oliver! This year we are tackling Sondheim's Assassins. In class, students are encouraged to learn a range of theatrical styles drawing inspiration from practitioners as diverse as Artaud, Frantic Assembly, Stanivlaski, Mischief Theatre and Brecht. We have also run a hugely successful summer arts festival since 2017 that gives an opportunity for experimental and challenging work. In recent years we have offered productions such as Grimm's Fairy Tales and The Language of Art. We were awarded the Independent Schools Award for Performing Arts School of the Year in 2023. This year we celebrate our 275th anniversary. It is a time for reflecting on (and celebrating) how far we have come, but it is also an opportunity for re-imagining our future role and identity. Drama is at the heart of our identity and the new Director of Drama will have the full backing of the School Leadership to build further on our superb foundations. The aim, as always, is to become the best Drama department in the country. We will be delighted to receive applications from candidates from a wide range of backgrounds. Those with professional experience as actors and/or directors are encouraged to apply. I look forward to welcoming you to St Edmund's School, Canterbury.

Edward O'Connor
Head

OUR ETHOS

- Our pupils thrive in a supportive, nurturing environment with high-quality teaching and a holistic approach that fosters creativity, leadership, and original thinking.
- A broad curriculum and diverse co-curricular activities help pupils find their path and grow to their full potential.
- Small class sizes allow personalized learning, ensuring pupils receive the attention and challenge they need to excel.
- Every pupil is known and understood.
- Educating children from ages 2 to 18 fosters a strong family atmosphere and sense of community.
- St Edmund's nurtures original thinkers with the skills to become future leaders and decision-makers.
- Highly-qualified teachers provide inspirational instruction, vibrant debate, and individual attention in every classroom.
- Pupils develop learning skills through projects and research, promoting original ideas and multi-dimensional thinking.
- Pupils are encouraged to achieve the highest academic standards they are capable of throughout their time at St Edmund's.



THE DRAMA DEPARTMENT

INTRODUCTION

St Edmund's has an exceptional reputation for its Drama, both in terms of academic teaching and of the outstandingly high quality school productions it regularly offers. We are proud to be the Independent Schools Awards Performing Arts School of the Year for 2023-24.

Our major shows attract capacity audiences. There is strong support, too, for the public performance of pieces being offered by examination classes for external moderation. Such exam-focused productions are challenging and creative, the product of outstanding teaching. They often produce genuinely innovative, ground-breaking dramatic performances.

Drama has a wide appeal among the pupil body. Auditions for school productions generate great excitement and attract vastly more applicants than can usually be accommodated! Sets for the GCSE Drama option are always heavily subscribed.

The department encourages pupils to witness a variety of theatrical styles and experiences by taking frequent trips to the professional theatre, both locally and in London. Visiting theatre companies are also encouraged to come into the school when possible. The Department also runs regular overseas trips – in recent years visiting New York, Los Angeles and Krakow.

We have an exceptional backstage operation too. Our technical systems are excellent and our team creates its own sets and costumes to remarkably high standards.

Feedback from moderators is exceptionally positive: on several occasions in recent years the full cast of test pieces have been awarded maximum marks, with comments from the examiner that many candidates were "off the scale". This is the case across the full range of GCSE, AS and A2 work. The department expects its pieces to be assessed as Band 1 – it is very rare indeed that they are not.

This is an outstanding department by any measure.



THE DRAMA DEPARTMENT

FACILITIES

The school has a 350 seat proscenium arch theatre, which forms part of the Francis Musgrave Performing Arts Centre. It has an unusually large stage area and excellent technical systems.

Teaching takes place in the theatre, the adjoining space (known as the Exhibition Area) and in the air-conditioned Recital Hall (in the Music School), which has a sprung floor and wall-length mirrors.

COURSES

At Lower Fifth (year 9), Drama is taught as non-examined subject and is designed to foster self-confidence and improve communication skills.

The GCSE Drama course is an extremely popular option in the Middle and Upper Fifth years (10 and 11). Results are consistently outstanding and among the very best in the country on a value-added basis.

Drama A-Level offers sixth form pupils the opportunity to specialise their skills and several pupils progress to university or to specialist Drama Schools. The department is experienced in preparing pupils for prepared for National Youth Theatre, University and Drama School auditions. Recent St Edmund's pupils have progressed to ALRA, Rose Bruford, The Royal Welsh, Guildhall and The Actor's Studio in New York.

Perhaps St Edmund's most famous former pupil is the Hollywood actor Orlando Bloom.





THE ROLE

The following qualities are deemed to be essential in the successful candidate:

- A visionary educator determined to develop the next generation of young actors
- Ambition, both for the department and for its students
- Substantial experience in directing theatrical productions
- Excellent knowledge of wider technical aspects of production
- Personal dynamism together with an ability to engender enthusiasm and motivate pupils and staff at all levels
- An approach to teaching that is inspirational and pupil focused
- A degree in a subject closely-related to Drama
- An excellent level of current subject knowledge, including the ability to teach A-level Drama to the highest grades
- The ability to stretch and challenge the most able pupils
- Experience of teaching Drama to public examination classes
- The ability to deal confidently with sensitive issues concerning safeguarding and pupil welfare
- The ability to communicate effectively and accurately
- Excellent management skills
- The ability to relate well to pupils of all abilities and to a wide age range

The desirable qualities of the successful applicant include:

- Demonstrable leadership qualities
- A formal teaching qualification
- Experience of preparation of pupils for university entrance and on applying to drama schools
- Familiarity with GCSE and A-Level Drama syllabuses
- Record of success in increasing the uptake of drama as a subject.
- A knowledge of national developments in the teaching and examining of Drama
- An ability to work collaboratively (for example, with the Director of Music)

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Director of Drama is responsible for:

- The inspirational leadership of the Drama department
- Articulation of the vision for Drama throughout the school and externally
- Overall co-ordination of curricular and extra-curricular drama activities
- Responsibility for co-ordination of all extra-curricular workshops and production work
- To take personal responsibility for all major, at least annual, school productions
- To play a key role in the planning and delivery of the St Edmund's Festival
- The provision and maintenance of current Drama syllabuses for each year in the Senior School
- Overseeing the setting and marking of internal examinations within the department
- Attending Heads of Department meetings to discuss academic policy and curriculum development
- Liaising with the Stage Manager and any staff associated with productions
- Teaching and co-ordination of GCSE and A-Level Drama
- Monitoring the quality of teaching in the department, and ensuring that high standards of teaching (including the setting and marking of work, and classroom management) are maintained
- Financial and organisational management of the Department
- Holding regular departmental meetings
- Ensuring that work is set for any departmental member absent from school
- Providing an annual written report to the Deputy Head (Academic) analysing and reviewing the performance of pupils in public examinations
- Advising on matters relating to departmental staffing, and the appointment of staff.
- Liaising with Special Needs teachers, e.g. SENCo, EAL
- Arranging auditions for applicants to the school and scholarship candidates, as necessary
- Overseeing the appraisal and professional development of departmental members
- Maintaining knowledge about curriculum developments and syllabus changes nationally
- Encouraging cross-curricular teaching and learning, as appropriate
- Ensuring departmental practice complies with the schools' Health & Safety Policy

These duties and responsibilities are in addition to those set out in the Staff Handbooks.





APPLICATION PROCESS

St Edmund's School is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects their entire school community to share this commitment. Applicants will need to be prepared to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

APPLICATIONS

Applications should be emailed to recruitment@stedmunds.org.uk

To apply, please complete the attached application form and submit it along with a cover letter explaining how you meet the requirements outlined in the person specification.

The names and contact details (including email addresses) of two referees are required (one of whom must be your current or most recent employer and neither referee should be a relative or someone known to you solely as a friend).

Application deadline: Wednesday 29th January 2025

Sarah Hudson, Head of Human Resources
St Edmund's School, St Thomas Hill, Canterbury, CT2 8HU
Tel: (01227) 475600 Fax: (01227) 471083
Email: slh@stedmunds.org.uk
Website: www.stedmunds.org.uk

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

BENEFITS

Workplace Pension Scheme, Employee Assistance Programme including counselling services and financial/legal advice line, Salary Sacrifice schemes such as Cycle2work, subsidised gym membership, retail discounts and cashback scheme.

Fee remission is available to all members of staff subject to spaces being available at the discretion of the Governors and subject to change.

Support of visa sponsorship is in place for international candidates.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

St Edmund's School Canterbury is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

UK GDPR

Personal information provided by candidates will be kept on a secure file in the school and will not be released to third parties outside the school without the permission of the person concerned, except where there is a legal requirement so to do.





