



Willington

COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Recruitment Information Pack

Head of Department for Drama



Head of Department for Drama

Full time / Full year / Permanent

MPS-UPS £32,916 – £51,048 per annum plus TLR2a

Leadership possibilities for the right candidate

Start date September 2026

We are looking for a dynamic and engaging leader who will be innovative in the design and development of the Drama curriculum and will be well placed to generate and sustain the love and importance of Drama to our community. The post is suitable for a someone aspiring to lead a department or an experienced Head of Drama.

We hope to find a candidate who is ambitious, enthusiastic and highly motivated. The Head of Drama will lead on the KS3 and KS4 drama curriculum. The Drama department consistently achieves outstanding outcomes at GCSE. The successful candidate would be joining a dynamic department in a high achieving school, which greatly values Drama within the curriculum. We also value extra-curricular opportunities in Drama, either working alongside other local schools or attending theatre trips and giving our students the opportunity to spectate live performances.

All of our staff are lifelong learners and reflective practitioners. We pride ourselves on giving departments ample time for subject specialist CPD and to allow in depth conversations on drama pedagogy to develop better student understanding. We are also keen to see our Drama department work collaboratively with others across the curriculum, in particular, with Music and Dance.

The Drama Department at Willingdon Community School aims to develop students' skills as creative individuals, independent learners and effective group workers. The Drama curriculum builds distinct opportunities for students to develop key skills such as communication, negotiation, compromise and self-assertion. Students are encouraged to show confidence when speaking and their vocabulary is extended when they adopt roles and characters. Students will gain an understanding of subject-specific vocabulary and will also acquire the knowledge and skills they need to make very good progress at GCSE level. Those who wish to progress further in Drama are encouraged and supported to do so and receive an excellent grounding in related careers. We have high aspirations for our learners and build this into all aspects of teaching and learning.

The Drama Department has a purpose-built and very well-equipped Drama studio which is fully equipped with lighting and sound, with further investment into this teaching space on the horizon. We are also fortunate enough to have a second teaching space, the Main Hall, boasting a traditional school stage and further lighting and sound equipment. This space hosts our annual Drama Productions, which have included the following in recent years: 'Annie Jr', 'High School Musical', 'We Will Rock You', 'School of Rock', 'Into the Woods' and 'Alice'.

Students in KS3 receive one lesson each week, covering a broad curriculum designed to develop a thorough understanding of, and ability to use, a range of practical techniques. At KS4, students follow the AQA GCSE course and have five lessons a fortnight. They study a set text, devise work based on a topic and attend theatre trips, as well as preparing scripted and devised work for the end-of-year final practical exam.

Willingdon Community School is committed to child protection/safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, we expect all staff and volunteers to share this duty of care. All applicants will be subject to safer recruitment procedures and will require satisfactory references and an enhanced DBS check.

Closing Date: Monday, 4th May 2026 (by noon)

We advise applying promptly for this vacancy as we reserve the right to close and interview early if sufficient suitable applications have been received.

To apply for this post, please download and complete the application form from the school website: <http://willingdonschool.org.uk/about-us/vacancies> or, e-mail: recruitment@willingdonschool.org.uk

Our Vision Statement:



We are Willingdon

We are a united, vibrant community which demonstrates personal excellence in all that we do. Learning at Willingdon transforms lives by igniting curiosity and expecting the very best from staff and students alike. We value opportunities, aiming for success today to prepare for challenges and opportunities tomorrow. We are respectful, honest and courteous to empower each other on our unique learning journeys. We look after ourselves and each other, and show empathy, respect and compassion to all people and our environment along the way. We encourage tolerance, resilience and reflection, which in turn allows everyone to make progress every lesson. We work together as a harmonious community to be the very best versions of ourselves.

This makes us Willingdon

One Day at Willingdon Community School



Willingdon Community School is a high-achieving and over-subscribed (NOR 1040), 11-16, comprehensive school serving largely, the Eastbourne and Polegate area. We are committed to talent management and ensuring that all support and teaching staff are given the opportunity to develop and progress their careers. The school prides itself on putting staff and student wellbeing as a top priority and there are many initiatives which have been established to support this e.g. subsidising Benenden healthcare by 50% for all staff members to creating staff working parties to focus on key areas for example; marking workload. Our leadership team are receptive to constructive feedback and hold regular parent, staff and student voice sessions as well as google form entries to submit feedback.

The recent Ofsted report was very positive about the journey of our school and we sustained our 'Good judgement'.

Our report details: *'The school has high expectations of pupils and a strong focus on celebration and praise'* It also says *'External examination outcomes are extremely strong. Pupils' progress is significantly above national averages in most subjects, and in the highest 20% in English and mathematics.'*

This is largely due to teachers being 'subject experts' and also provided with the best support, CPD and leadership. Despite the recent impact of covid, our attendance was significantly above national average and we have enjoyed sharing our good practice with other colleagues in the south east region to support other children.

The school is a leading member of a number of local educational groups and partnerships, such as the Eastbourne Schools Partnership (ESP) which brings many and varied learning opportunities to both teachers and students, particularly via our links with Eastbourne College. We have excellent links with outstanding schools up and down the country. These links bring cultural and intellectual capital to the school and enrich our CPD provision for staff at all levels.

Value & Ethos We are a high achieving school which wants to achieve the best for all students. But achievement is not just about good academic results, it is also about developing the qualities and values which will make an Individual a good friend, employee, relative, parent or colleague and will serve them for the rest of their life.

At Willingdon Community School, we aim to develop, in all our students, key values which we consider contribute to the achievement of what we refer to as, Personal Excellence.

The infographic features five icons in a row, each with a label below it:

- Ambition:** A green triangle with a flag on top.
- Respect:** Two hands shaking in a green circle.
- Compassion:** A green head profile with a heart inside.
- Courtesy:** A person standing next to an open door.
- Honesty:** A hand holding a heart.

Teaching & Learning To ensure that our curriculum is effectively delivered we use an evidence-informed model of FaCToRS of Excellent Teaching and Learning. FaCToRS incorporates five key strands; to be excellent learners, students are expected to focus, communicate, think, reflect and strengthen their learning.

FaCToRS of Excellent Teaching

- Focus:** Create a climate where students focus on their learning by:
 - Establishing clear expectations and routines
 - Responding to behaviour consistently
 - Motivating students effectively
- Communicate:** Communicate a well-structured curriculum effectively by:
 - Giving clear, memorable explanations and avoiding cognitive overload
 - Using effective modelling as a scaffold
 - Teaching new vocabulary with active practice
- Think:** Push students to think hard about ideas and promote oracy by:
 - Using accountable questioning to ignite curiosity
 - Empowering student voice through paired talk and group discussion
 - Planning for challenging independent practice
- Reflect:** Assess student learning and respond appropriately by:
 - Building a culture of feedback
 - Gathering responses during instruction and circulation
 - Giving effective individual and whole-class feedback
- Strengthen:** Support students to consolidate and lead their learning by:
 - Using low stakes retrieval activities
 - Re-teaching tricky content and concepts based on student needs
 - Planning homework that aids long term memory retrieval

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FaCToRS of Excellent Learning

- Focus:**
 - Arrive at lessons on time, ready to learn
 - Respect classroom routines and follow instructions
 - Be ambitious about what you can achieve and take ownership of your learning
- Communicate:**
 - Speak loudly and clearly
 - Use subject specific vocabulary in your answers
 - Listen to one another's ideas with courtesy and compassion
- Think:**
 - Be curious about your learning
 - Discuss ideas in pairs and groups respectfully
 - Challenge yourself to practice key skills independently
- Reflect:**
 - Be honest about what you know and can do
 - Take on board feedback from your teacher with resilience
 - Improve your work with ambition to fulfil your potential
- Strengthen:**
 - Complete homework to make learning stick
 - Use active retrieval and practice for revision
 - Reflect on how you learn best, to become more effective and independent

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The CPD and talent management of our staff is given a very high priority as we believe this is a vitally important part of improving outcomes for young people as well as invigorating teachers' passion for their areas. Willingdon is proud of its record in developing new teachers and on the quality of CPD more widely for our staff body.

Recent visits to our school have included: we have hosted Bill Rogers at our school, to talk to schools across the Southeast region about effective behaviour management, Sonia Gill Founder of Heads Up delivering training to support our middle leaders. Julia and Luke from Culture Shift, leading a creative journalling session, and Olympic legend Roger Black MBE, who delivered an inspiring talk to staff and students on determination, teamwork, and striving for excellence.



The school has an outstanding record for the quality and range of professional development opportunities it offers and takes pride in developing its staff as outstanding teachers and preparing them for the next steps in their careers. We have an internal coaching team made up of excellent teachers who specify in supporting staff with the development of certain key skills. From delivering literacy within lessons to having good presence and effective engagement, our staff work positively with each other without fear of judgment. As well as being supported through in-house middle and senior leadership programmes, aspiring leaders have access to: funded NPQ and Masters Qualifications; extended programmes in Durrington Research School and leadership opportunities provided by the SSAT and ASCL.



"It's a great school with great staff!"

"I work at Willingdon as I believe it is a great school that really cares about you as a person and the goals you wish to achieve."



"Willingdon is more than just a school, it is a community that work and strive for success collectively. We are all one team who want to share success with pupils and other staff members."

"School with community at its heart."

"There is a strong sense of community and pride with students and staff. Great colleagues and a sense that everyone's opinions and ideas are valued."

Staff wellbeing is of paramount importance to us at Willingdon Community School. We can offer the successful candidate:

- A clear purpose. We are here to develop personal excellence and help staff and students be the very best versions of themselves.
- Lots of opportunities to observe others and feedback. We don't grade lessons and feedback is developmental.
- Regular opportunities for staff voice directly to the Headteacher.
- On appointment, a full induction day is arranged to ensure you are supported with the transition to your new role.
- 50% off Benenden Health Care scheme.
- Opportunity to join Bupa Dental Plan which provides varying contributions to NHS and private dental services.
- Regular Mindfulness sessions to enhance your work-life balance.
- We offer Mental Health First Aid to all staff which is a two day qualification.
- An Employee Assistance Programme via the County Council, this service is provided by 'PAM Wellness', they offer advice, information, emotional support and counselling.
- Annual Flu Vaccination is provided in the autumn term and paid for by the school.
- Access to the ESCC My Staff Shop, which gives access to a wide range of tax efficient benefits and discounts from national and local businesses.
- The Love 2 shop membership card (linked to My Staff Shop) is a reloadable gift card which can be spent at a number of major retailers.
- Bike Scheme, this is a salary sacrifice scheme that produces a saving of up to 32% compared to buying a bike upfront.
- A free coffee machine is ready for you during break and lunch time.
- Invitations to whole school social events such as our Christmas party and summer BBQ which is subsidised as a thank you to staff, and other gatherings to celebrate success.
- Local business discounts for Willingdon Community School staff.
- Blue Light Card as a member of the teaching community
- And more!

We believe that happy staff make happy children and therefore do our utmost to support our staff.



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School website: willingdonschool.org.uk/about-us/vacancies

e-mail: recruitment@willingdonschool.org.uk