

The Skinners' School

Appointment of Director of Drama



ABOUT SKINNERS'

Skinners' School was founded in 1887 and is a thriving boys' grammar school. There are currently 1119 pupils, 325 of whom are in the Sixth Form. A friendly and hard-working community, the school is amongst the highest achieving in the country, both academically and in terms of extra-curricular provision. Pastoral care is also a real strength.

Skinners' School is situated on the northern side of the town of Royal Tunbridge Wells in West Kent, with 20 acres of sports pitches. Surrounded by countryside, Tunbridge Wells has excellent transport links by rail to London (approx. 45 minutes to London Bridge, Waterloo East, Charing Cross, 60 minutes to Victoria), and Hastings. The M25 and M20 are a short drive from the School. Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports are easily reached, as are the Channel Tunnel and ferry terminals. It is a short drive to the neighbouring towns of Sevenoaks and Tonbridge.

ADMISSIONS

The School is significantly over-subscribed and has an excellent reputation in both Kent and Sussex. It admits 160 boys (five forms) at age 11. Entry is achieved via the Kent 11+ examination, with an entry qualification that is higher than the Kent County Council 11+ pass. Once they reach our qualifying score, pupils are given places based on distance lived from the school (although we also offer a sibling preference). The current 'catchment' of the school is approximately 11 miles.

Nearly all Skinners' students stay after Year 11 to enter the Sixth Form and are joined by a small number of students from other schools. Pupils are required to achieve a total of 50 points over their best 8 GCSE grades in order to enter the Sixth Form.



HISTORY

Skinner's is one of the Skinner's Company's family of schools – the others being Tonbridge School, Judd School, Skinner's Kent Academy, Skinner's Academy, Skinner's Kent Primary School and the Marsh Academy. The Skinner's Company, one of the original twelve London livery companies, provides a rich seam of support, governance and tradition.

Since the construction of the original school buildings in 1887, considerable development has taken place in recent years in order to accommodate an increasing school roll. The Leopard building (1994) houses Mathematics, Design Technology and ICT. The Beeby building (2002) created specialist accommodation for Modern Languages, and the Byng Hall renovation of 2008 provided a wonderful theatre for Music and Drama. A £2.5 million Sports Hall complex was opened in September 2012, dramatically increasing the range of sports available. In November 2020 we opened the £4.5 million Mitchell Building: a Sixth Form Centre, School Library and new premises for the English department.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Examination results at Skinner's are excellent. At A Level, 80% of grades are at A*-B. Students thus access the top universities in the country: last year over 95% went to the top 30 universities or top 10 courses rated nationally; typically, a dozen go to Oxford or Cambridge. At GCSE, typically around 70% of grades are 9-7, with 95%+ progressing to our Sixth Form.

Our goal is to help each pupil develop his talents and interests to the full. The curriculum is thus aimed at giving a broad education, leaving specialisation as late as possible. At Key Stage 3 this includes an integrated STEM curriculum. At GCSE and A Level there is a wide range of options, with students typically taking 11 GCSEs (including three separate sciences and a modern language) and either 3, 4 or occasionally 5 A levels. A growing number of students also undertake the Extended Project Qualification in the Sixth Form.

In February 2014, Skinner's converted to academy status, but remains closely tied to the ideal of being a leading Kent grammar school.



PASTORAL SYSTEM

Skidders' has a reputation as a friendly and supportive community. The responsibility for general welfare and progress lies with teams of Form Tutors. Heads of Year work closely with Form Tutors to ensure every pupil is known and supported. Good relationships between students, staff and parents are at the heart of all we do and are a key element in our success.

THE SCHOOL DAY

School begins at 8.45am. Each day has five periods, which last for one hour. School ends at 3.35pm but many activities take place at lunchtimes and after school. In addition, many sporting fixtures are played on Saturday mornings. Pupils enthusiastically take part in the extra-curricular life of the school and value it as highly as they do their academic studies.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY

We place great emphasis upon the development of character and potential through extra-curricular activities. A wide range of clubs and societies supports both the learning of pupils and their interests. These operate during and after the school day, with pupils immersing themselves in Chess, Eco Council, Politics, STEM and Model United Nations, to name just a few. Drama, Music and Art play a significant role in the life of the school, with concerts and a wide range of productions a regular part of the school's life.

We welcome job applicants who would support the extra-curricular life of the school.



CCF AND DUKE OF EDINBURGH

Skidders' School has one of the largest CCF contingents of any state school in the country, including Army and Air Force sections. The attractions of Adventurous Training, Easter and Summer camps, along with rifle practice in the School's range, draw significant numbers to join. Alongside, the Duke of Edinburgh award is also very popular: pupils can graduate through Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.



SPORTS AT SKINNERS'

We consider involvement in team sports to be a valuable part of the pupils' education. There is a very strong fixture list every Saturday and we also achieve success in national competitions. We place an emphasis upon excellence, but also upon mass participation and team work. We often, for example, field seven rugby teams for Year 7 alone. We think it is important that every pupil can say that they have represented the School competitively.

The main sports are rugby, hockey and football during the winter months and cricket, tennis and athletics during the Summer Term. However other sports include basketball, table tennis, badminton, cross-country and shooting. The Sports Hall is also equipped with a state of the art fitness suite, which is also freely available to staff at the school.



STATEMENT OF VALUES

The Skinners' School is place of learning. Students acquire not only qualifications, but a respect for scholarship and learning, as things worthwhile in themselves. We intend that they will also develop an appreciation of human achievement in the arts, humanities, languages, science and literature. Students must be diligent and open-minded, and they must develop the ability to think critically, to respect evidence, to distinguish between opinions and prejudices and to make balanced judgments of their own. Through involvement in our varied extra-curricular programme every boy should develop and grow intellectually, culturally, physically and spiritually and emerge as a well-rounded, flexible, articulate and collaborative individual.

Skinners' is a caring school. No young person will learn effectively unless he feels happy, safe and secure. At Skinners' we try to address the particular needs of every pupil through a comprehensive pastoral system. We value everyone as unique and we work together to develop self-respect, self-discipline and self-understanding. We aim to make responsible use of our talents and opportunities, strive for wisdom and knowledge and take responsibility for our lives.

Skinners' is a community. We respect others for themselves, not for what they have or what they can do for us. We believe that the capacity to form strong relationships is the foundation of a happy and fulfilled life. As such we strive to show others they are valued, to earn the trust and loyalty of others and to work together cooperatively. We do not tolerate bullying, violence, theft or abuse.

Skinners' is at the heart of a wider community. We learn to take on our responsibilities as citizens. We respect and celebrate diversity. We promote opportunities for all. We place truth, integrity, honesty, loyalty and goodwill at the heart of what we do. The ethic of service is more highly valued by us than that of self-interest. We believe that from those to whom much is given, much is expected.

These values will underpin our work and relationships at Skinners' School; they are at the foundation of all that we do.



DRAMA AT SKINNERS'

We are looking for a talented and enthusiastic teacher, with the ability to teach bright pupils from Key Stage 3 to A level, to lead a dedicated and successful department.

Drama is taught to all pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9, and is an option thereafter. In Years 7 and 8, pupils have a single hour long lesson per fortnight. They develop specific skills, a general historical understanding and an ability to use drama as an explorative strategy. In Year 9 there are two lessons a fortnight and the department takes on the delivery of part of the PSHE programme, through Drama.

At Key Stages 4 and 5 we follow the AQA syllabuses at GCSE and A level. Uptake is impressive, with two GCSE groups and an A level group. Results are strong (three year average of 80% A*-B at A level, and 65% 9-7 at GCSE).

The Drama department shares Byng Hall, our performing arts centre, with the Music department. This collaboration between Music and Drama teachers encourages an exchange of ideas and cross-curricular opportunity on a significant scale. In terms of facilities, Drama has one specialist classroom, a specialist teaching space which is shared with Music, and the Thomson Theatre, a 180 seat theatre renovated to a very high specification in 2008, with raked seating and a hydraulic lighting system.

The successful candidate will also be expected to lead the department's extra-curricular work. This involves at least two performances a year, one senior production and one junior: these are shared between Drama teachers. There is also a high demand for rehearsal of A level and GCSE practical work. The department is also involved in supported a number of linked projects (eg. the National Theatre's New Views writing competition). Theatre trips are common and we support a vibrant LAMDA programme.

The successful applicant will be an outstanding teacher with excellent subject knowledge supported by a good honours degree in Drama or a related subject. The ability to form good working relationships with colleagues and students is essential.



JOB DESCRIPTION

The Director of Drama will report to a member of the Leadership Group.

General:

Exercise the professional duties outlined in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document.

- The teaching of all aspects of Drama / Theatre Studies at all Key Stages.
- The management and leadership of the Drama department, including extra-curricular Drama.

Specific:

Leadership

- Lead and monitor high quality teaching and learning for all students of Drama; this includes lesson observation, work scrutiny and pupil voice.
- Develop a creative, energetic and enthusiastic environment in the department that encourages pupils to learn.
- Create operational and strategic development plans for the department in consultation with the Deputy Head (Academic).
- Use assessment data, including CATs, Progress Grade and GCSE and A level indicators to gauge current performance, plan interventions and to help planning for the future.
- Support new members of staff, and in particular early career teachers, when they join the department; supervise and support the work of student and trainee teachers.
- Keep abreast of academic and educational development, and teaching and learning techniques, leading change where necessary.
- Make presentations to Heads of Departments' and Governors' meetings, demonstrating initiatives and ideas being developed within the department.
- Take advantage of CPD opportunities as deemed appropriate for the leadership of the department in ways that are consistent with the School Improvement Plan and the Department Development Plan; advise on professional development to support the needs of the department, particularly in teaching and learning.
- Lead a vibrant extra-curricular programme of plays, trips and workshops, with support from other members of the department.
- Assist the Headmaster in interviewing and appointing new members of the department.
- Embrace collaborative work with our partner schools.
- Liaise with your line manager and the Leadership Group regarding departmental developments and academic monitoring.

Management

- Maintain the department's Schemes of Work and Assessment Policy on an annual basis, or when deemed necessary.
- Determine the most appropriate public examination specifications for the department at GCSE and A Level, and ensure that the Examinations Officer is informed of any alterations.
- Initiate and chair departmental meetings to ensure the effective coordination of teaching and learning within the Department.
- Participate in Heads of Department meetings and ensure that members of the department are aware of all decisions.
- Manage the performance of teachers within the department in line with whole school policy, through agreeing appropriate performance management targets.
- Support departmental colleagues with pupil disciplinary issues within the department.
- Market the department at Open Evenings etc. to help recruit and retain pupils.

- Make sure pupils have the opportunity to be involved in extra-curricular and enrichment activities such as workshops, visits and trips that actively encourage learning in the subject.
- Take responsibility for the setting and marking of internal school examinations and those portions of external exams that are internally assessed in your subject; this includes ensuring consistency across the department in all areas of assessment.
- Liaise with the Exams Officer regarding entries, withdrawals etc.
- Deploy your teaching time, and that of the department, in collaboration with the Head and Deputy Head (Academic), for the purpose of constructing the timetable.
- Control the department's budget, obtaining best value for money when spending funds.
- Oversee the work of technicians and gap students who work with the department.
- Ensure the department adheres to school policies with regard to Health and Safety regulations.
- Adopt whole school policies and national strategies within the subject area.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

- An outstanding teacher of Drama with QTS
- Dynamic, professional, positive and resilient
- High expectations of self and students
- The ability to lead, inspire and manage others
- The ability to work collaboratively with other middle managers
- A capacity for sustained hard work
- Strong organisational and interpersonal skills
- A passionate commitment to equality of opportunity for all students
- A firm commitment to professional development
- A commitment to the ethos and wider life of the school

This role comes with a TLR 2/3 (£6,738).

The Skinners' School is committed to the safeguarding of children; all employees will receive safeguarding training and will need to follow the Safeguarding Policy.

APPOINTMENT PROCESS AND HOW TO APPLY

Candidates should submit a completed application form, including details of key achievements and responsibilities, along with a covering letter which fully addresses the competencies outlined in the job description and person specification.

Completed applications should be emailed to the Headmaster's Secretary, Mrs Wendy Dray at wendy.dray@skidders-school.org.uk

The closing date for applications is **12pm on Friday 20th May (early applications very welcome: we reserve the right to appoint before the closing date).**

Interviews will take place during the week following the closing date.

