



# THE ORATORY



## BRIEF FOR THE POST OF HEAD OF DRAMA SEPTEMBER 2024 START



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## THE SCHOOL

**The Oratory is an HMC independent school for students aged 11 to 18, proving an all-round education of quality and purpose.**

We offer small class sizes and outstanding facilities on a wonderful South Oxfordshire country estate and yet we are within easy travelling distance of London, major motorways, railways and airports.

The Oratory School has high academic standards; however, we believe that an education is about more than statistics. We have a clear vision to ensure that each student flourishes and fulfils their maximum potential both in and far beyond the classroom. To this end, a wide variety of co-curricular activities enrich the students' learning and all students get the opportunity to develop their specific talents to the full.

The Oratory is not a large school, and this enables each and every student to be known, valued and stretched as an individual within our nurturing community.

Founded in 1859 by Saint John Henry Newman - we are a Catholic school which welcomes students of all faiths or none. Visitors often comment on the inclusive community atmosphere of our school, which we believe nurtures confidence, self-expression and a desire to learn and grow.



## **A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD, DR JULIAN MURPHY**

**Thank you for your interest in this key post at The Oratory School.**

**I am acutely conscious that it takes a considerable commitment to apply for a new role. In return you can expect us to expend a similar amount of time and energy in considering your application.**

We are very proud of our school's history. The Oratory School was founded by Saint John Henry Newman – one of the greatest figures of the 19th Century – in Edgbaston, Birmingham in 1859 as a response to numerous requests to start a school for the education of the sons of Catholic gentlemen. Having spent time at Caversham, on the outskirts of Reading, the school moved to its present site, Woodcote House, in 1942.

I urge you to spend some time looking at our website, which I hope will give you a flavour of our school. The school is in very good heart, and we are improving our provision all the time. We currently have approximately 380 students at the school with a projected 400 for September 2024. Class sizes are small and facilities impressive: we have recently unveiled an ambitious plan for the next stage of the school's development. As an avowedly all-round school our aim is that everything we do – be it teaching, sport, music, drama, art, boarding or pastoral care – is done to the very highest standard. As a result of our success in this endeavour our reputation is enviable. However, we are anything but complacent about maintaining and building our reputation and numbers on roll, hence the importance of attracting and retaining high quality staff, both in the classroom and beyond it.

Our staff are a wonderful, supportive, professional, and good-humoured team, and the atmosphere of the school is often described as warm and positive, as well as purposeful.

The Oratory has a fine reputation and tradition as an independent school in the local area, nationally, and abroad. Over the years, many members of staff have progressed from The Oratory to senior roles at other prestigious schools: the school's relative smallness means that staff can achieve significant levels of responsibility relatively quickly and feel that they are making a genuine difference to the school's development.

I am looking forward to working closely with the successful applicant for this post to further build our visibility, reputation, and numbers on roll. I hope that you are similarly excited by the prospect of a role at the heart of our wonderful community.

With best wishes

Dr Julian Murphy, DPhil (Oxon)

Head





## THE ROLE

**An exciting opportunity has arisen at The Oratory for a Head of Drama teaching position. We are looking for a vibrant and dynamic Head of Drama to join our team. As the Head of Drama, you will play a crucial role in shaping the educational experiences of our students and ensuring a rich and diverse learning environment for them.**

The Head of Drama has responsibility for the successful planning, development, delivery and administration of the academic Drama curriculum. In addition, the Head of Drama takes responsibility for the school's co-curricular drama programme of events. Students are actively involved in dramatic productions every year and recent performances over the past few years have incorporated musicals and Shakespeare, as well as more modern productions.

The need to develop a rapport with students that promotes high academic standards and intellectual development is paramount, as well as the enthusiasm to encourage students to take the subject further academically.

In this role, you will have the opportunity to create a supportive and engaging learning environment for students of all abilities. You will also be expected to participate in school-wide initiatives and help promote the importance of Drama education to parents and the wider community.

## THE DEPARTMENT

Drama is taught throughout the school, up to and including A Level. It is also a very popular co-curricular subject, with many students taking LAMDA examinations and taking part in school productions. The Drama Department consists of the Head of Drama, another part-time teacher who also teaches English, and part-time LAMDA staff. The department is housed in our Hilaire Belloc Theatre, which was opened in 2013 and includes a main auditorium with retractable tiered seating, lighting and a technical booth. There is also a Drama classroom in the same building.

Through the leadership of the Head of Teaching and Learning all staff are actively encouraged to undertake CPD opportunities and to continually share and reflect on



their practice, engaging in and applying their awareness of developments in teaching and learning strategies, including digital initiatives.

In any school, and particularly in a boarding school, the emphasis is on total education and we provide a wealth of opportunities for our students. The school is therefore keen to appoint teachers who would wish to be involved in activities outside the classroom, provided that their teaching duties permit this.

## **KEY TASKS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The duties of a classroom teacher at the Oratory School include the following:**

1. Provide inspirational and excellent subject teaching.
2. Look after the happiness, well-being and safety of all students responding to any instances where support or intervention may be needed.
3. Have high expectations of students and the determination to help them reach their full potential.
4. Adopt high standards of conduct with both staff and student behaviour.
5. Communicate in a timely and effective manner with students, staff and parents.
6. Find opportunities for promoting students' independent learning, ICT skills and personal development.
7. Plan, set and assess homework and coursework in an organised and timely manner.
8. Have up-to-date knowledge of teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies.
9. Be prepared to engage with and support cross curricular activities, as well as any other departmental academic initiatives.
10. Be committed to further professional development.
11. Participate in Parents' Evenings and events which promote the department, such as the 6th Form Choices evening.
12. Complete reports and Quarterly Grade entries in a timely and professional manner.
13. Participate in department trips or enrichment activities, as required.
14. Work as an academic tutor for a year group, providing support for tutees and delivering PSHE programs and/or assistance with university applications, as required.



# HEAD OF DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Participate in the appointment of new staff.
2. Support the induction of new members of the department – where relevant, overseeing the progress of ECTs or PGCE students within the department.
3. Take a leading role in the appraisal and monitoring of department members and help with their professional development.
4. Take responsibility for the management of the Drama curriculum – including the drafting of Department Handbooks and overall responsibility for department Schemes of Work and Department Development Plans.
5. Work to promote the department's subject to students, staff and parents, ensuring that they have a high level of confidence in the operation of the department.
6. Represent the department in Heads of Department meetings and feedback the matters discussed to department members.
7. Report to, and take direction from, the Deputy Head Academic, the Assistant Head Teaching and Learning, and the Head in establishing a collaborative and positive rapport.
8. Schedule regular department meetings, for the discussion of academic policy and student progress.
9. Take overall responsibility for the arrangement of departmental trips, including the requisite paperwork and administration.
10. Manage the department budget effectively and stay within the required financial constraints.
11. Provide reports on exam results to the Deputy Head Academic and the Head and offer pre and post-exam support for students as required.







# PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS & DEVELOPMENT

1. To be a role-model to students through personal presentation and professional conduct.
2. To arrive in class before the start of the lesson, and to begin and end the lesson on time.
3. To cooperate with the employer on all matters concerning Health and Safety and specifically to take reasonable care of their own Health and Safety and that of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
4. To be familiar with the school and department handbooks and support all the school's policies.
5. To establish effective working relationships with professional colleagues and associate staff.
6. To strive for personal and professional development through active involvement in the school's induction programme, staff development, and performance management procedures.
7. To seek continually an improvement in professional practice, to include attendance at departmental meetings, and participating in appropriate INSET, whether organised in school or externally.
8. To liaise effectively with parents/guardians.
9. To undertake any reasonable task as directed by the Line Manager.
10. To train in basic first aid.
11. To consider the needs of all students within lessons (and to implement specialist advice) especially those who: Have SEN; are gifted and talented; are not yet fluent in English.
12. To uphold the ethos of the school, including its emphasis on pastoral care for individual students.





## SALARY

Dependent on qualifications and experience. The school has its own attractive salary scale.

## BENEFITS

- Sports Centre membership with free access to the gym; squash courts, lane swimming and golf course.
- A meal while on duty during term time.
- Contributory pension scheme.
- Free parking.

## SAFEGUARDING

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The following duties will be deemed to be included in the duties which you may be required to perform:

- child protection, discipline, health and safety.
- promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom you are responsible.





# THE PERSON

## Essential Characteristics:

- A strong academic background and a good honours degree in a related subject.
- The ability to teach Drama to GCSE and A Level.
- Up-to-date knowledge of subject developments for students aged 11-18.
- The ability to reflect on own teaching practice, adapting teaching strategies and techniques based on departmental/senior leadership team feedback.
- Well organised, able to approach work methodically, prioritise and meet deadlines.
- Effective communication skills. Good collaborative skills, able to quickly establish effective internal and external working relationships with key people across the school including colleagues, students and parents.
- Excellent organisational and time management skills; competency in the use of ICT for administration and teaching purposes.
- The ability to motivate students to achieve their best.
- An understanding of the expectations, ethos and aims of a full boarding school.
- A passion for teaching Drama.
- An empathetic, enthusiastic and well-presented person, capable of inspiring confidence in students, parents and staff.
- Committed to the safeguarding and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Commitment to participation in the co-curricular programme of the school.
- Able to respond flexibly to the demands of working in a school environment.

## Desirable Characteristics:

- Qualified teacher status.
- Head of an academic department with experience.
- Experience of undertaking Form Tutor role.





# HOW TO APPLY

Applicants should complete the school's application form and send together with a covering letter in PDF format to [recruitment@oratory.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@oratory.co.uk)

The closing date for applications is **7 May 2024** with Interviews taking place soon thereafter. Early applications are encouraged.

**The interview process will include:**

- Interviews with the Head, Deputy Head Academic and Head of Department.
- Lesson observation.
- Tour of the school with the Deputy Head Pastoral.

We reserve the right to close this advertisement early if we receive a high volume of suitable applications or if we find a suitable candidate from early applications.

**Please send postal applications together with a covering letter to:**

Human Resources Department  
The Oratory School  
Woodcote  
Reading RG8 0PJ

For any queries, please email [recruitment@oratory.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@oratory.co.uk).

*The Oratory Schools Association Registered Charity No 309112 is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.*





# THE ORATORY

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