



CROXLEY DANES SCHOOL

c/o St Clement Danes School, Chenies Road, Chorleywood,
Hertfordshire WD3 6EW

www.croxleydanes.org.uk



ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

September 2019

Salary: L9-13 (Fringe Area)

'A truly exciting and rare opportunity for an ambitious and creative individual.'

Information for Applicants

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We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students and staff. This post will be subject to an enhanced DBS check.

Introduction

We are seeking an Assistant Headteacher to lead teaching and learning and curriculum development at our new, mixed, state secondary school as it builds on its outstanding first two years of operation and prepares to move into its state of the art building on its permanent site in 2020.

We can offer:

- Talented students and staff
- A role tailored to suit your strengths and interests
- A competitive salary: a five point scale from L9-13 (Fringe Area)
- Exceptional professional development opportunities both within the Trust and across the Teaching School Alliance
- The potential for future career development within the Trust
- A low teaching load
- Admission arrangements favourable to children of staff

We want you to bring:

- A passion for education in its widest sense
- A proven ability to lead and inspire others
- Experience of leading school improvement at middle or senior leadership level
- Enthusiasm, common sense and good humour

We are looking for the right person to fill this important role; you are looking for the right school to work in. The following information will inform your application.

Please follow the purple hyperlinks throughout the booklet for links to appropriate pages on our websites.



Our School

Croxley Danes is a new, all-ability, co-educational state secondary school serving South West Hertfordshire which opened in September 2017. Initially opening on the St Clement Danes School site for the first year, it is providing a high quality education and will eventually become a community of 1206 students aged 11-18 on a [permanent site](#) at the bottom of Baldwins Lane in Croxley Green. Until it moves to that permanent site in 2020, the school is housed in expansive accommodation at Wolsey Business Park, Tolpits Lane, Watford. Having been asked to plan and open the school by Hertfordshire County Council, St Clement Danes School, an outstanding, oversubscribed school in Chorleywood, acted as its blueprint, and its former Headteacher, Dr Josephine Valentine OBE, a National Leader in Education, became the CEO of the Danes Educational Trust. Having formerly been Deputy Headteacher at St Clement Danes, I was appointed to lead Croxley Danes in January 2017. The job of translating the blueprint into practice has also been assisted by a number of St Clement Danes staff choosing to move to the new school to seek career development, as well as the sharing of experienced staff between the schools. However, the opportunity to work in and help mould a new school has also attracted a number of experienced middle leaders from outside the Danes Educational Trust.

The opening of Croxley Danes School addressed a substantial shortfall in secondary places for 2017 and we were delighted to receive over 500 applications for the 120 places offered – according to the DfE, an unprecedented response for a new school. For 2018 entry, we were even more heavily oversubscribed with almost 800 applicants for the 180 offered. With over 960 applications for the 180 places in September 2019, the school is quickly becoming the first-choice school for the surrounding area. It provides a safe, happy environment where excellence and aspiration are encouraged and where an ethos of mutual trust allows students to celebrate one another's achievements. Highly skilled, qualified teachers ensure that the focus is on excellence in teaching and enjoyment in learning and that every child is known.

There is a comprehensive enrichment and extension programme to provide opportunities for students in areas such as music and sport; from September 2018 onwards, 10% places at secondary transfer have been allocated on the basis of musical aptitude so that talented children can benefit from the rich musical programme on offer. Once it moves to its permanent site, with an extended day and state of the art facilities for hire, Croxley Danes School will quickly become the hub of the local community.

Our Trust

The Danes Educational Trust was formed when Hertfordshire County Council asked St Clement Danes to apply to open a secondary school in response to significant demographic need. It is focussed on delivering outstanding outcomes to local students and sharing the excellent practice that has been developed at St Clement Danes over the years. Its aims are embodied in the principles of Excellence, Respect and Trust which underpin everything it does and its vision is 'to make the difference together'. Although currently comprising just the two schools, the Trust is working with two other secondary schools who are intending to join later in 2019. The intention is to provide forward-looking hubs of high performing schools that serve local families in Hertfordshire.



Our Blueprint: St Clement Danes

Our sister school within the Trust, [St Clement Danes](#), was awarded Outstanding in every one of the then 31 measures when last visited by Ofsted. Since then, it has been awarded 'World Class School' status, an accolade awarded to schools who have moved 'beyond outstanding' and currently only held by a small number of schools nationwide. In 2016, it was one of the very first schools to be awarded Platinum Science Mark in recognition of its excellence in science teaching. It has a proud history dating back to 1862 and celebrates an annual commemoration service in St Clement Danes Church in the Strand. The school regularly appears in lists of the top comprehensive schools in the country. During the tenure of the former Headteacher, outcomes at all levels improved significantly, with cohorts of students whose ability on entry at Key Stage 2 has remained broadly similar. In 1999, 59% of students achieved 5A*- C at GCSE; in 2018, 89% achieved standard passes with English and maths. In particular, it prides itself on the progress of its students. In 2018, the Progress 8 measure was +0.64. Having been on the Senior Leadership Team of St Clement Danes for 15 years, and instigated some of the practices which helped ensure such improvements were made and sustained, I am excited about translating this work to our new school.

Our Partnerships

Croxley Danes' sister school, St Clement Danes, is at the centre of system leadership in the region and nationally. It was designated a National Teaching School by the National College for Teaching and Leadership in 2013. Part of its work is to support local schools in improving following poor Ofsted inspections; this gives members of Senior Leadership Teams within the Trust experience in working alongside colleagues in other schools with a focus on school improvement. Croxley Danes is part of the [Herts & Bucks Teaching School Alliance](#), which, led by St Clement Danes, is a group of educational organisations in the south of Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire who collaborate to promote exceptional standards of education. This prestigious role puts the Trust in the front line of developments in teaching and learning and facilitates a close working relationship with the Department for Education. It also ensures that staff across the Trust have access to superb training opportunities to enable them to develop as practitioners, whatever their field.

Croxley Danes is a member of the Hertfordshire [Challenge Partners](#) hub which St Clement Danes also leads. This is a national organisation at the cutting edge of school improvement, which builds long term capacity by organising constructive collaboration and peer to peer evaluation. Meaningful research and development is made possible by the pooling of expertise and resources across schools. Activities range from supporting local school improvement to influencing the national education agenda. Schools within Challenge Partners have been shown to make better progress nationally. As Deputy Head at St Clement Danes, I gained valuable experience acting as a Quality Assurance Reviewer in other schools and it is expected that the successful candidate will benefit from such opportunities in due course.



Our Partnerships (cont.)

Croxley Danes is also part of the [Science Learning Partnership](#) which works across a wide area of London and the South East. Accessing national resources, the partnership - another organisation led by St Clement Danes - promotes professional development for staff to generate high quality Science teaching in all phases of education.

All of these relationships provide fantastic opportunities for our Trust's Senior Leaders to work in collaboration, to engage in research projects and to learn from, and become, experts in the field of education.

Our Students

Our student body is drawn from local families, largely from Croxley Green, West Watford and Rickmansworth. They are engaging, imaginative and enthusiastic learners who are excited about coming to school each day. The video we made of them for our 2017 Open Evening, although shot within days of them arriving at the school, gives a flavour of their character and can be seen [here](#). Data from recent progress checks shows fantastic attitudes to learning from the vast majority of the cohort and detailed support plans have been successful in helping those who found transition more challenging to access the curriculum and work alongside their peers more successfully. In terms of their ability on entry, their aggregated KS2 scaled scores of 107, 106 and 106 for GPVS, reading and maths respectively are clearly above the national average. Their progress so far is a little hard to evidence comprehensively, as you will appreciate, but our Key Stage 3 curriculum runs in parallel with St Clement Danes and all data captures to date indicate that the students are progressing in line with their peers at our sister school.

Drawing from a slightly different geographical area than, St Clement Danes, our numbers on Free School Meals are still low (5.7% FSM). 16.2% accrue Pupil Premium funding. Our population is ethnically diverse and 22.2% of students have English as an additional language. 17.5% of students receive SEND support and two students currently have an EHCP. We draw upon the support of an extremely experienced SENCo who works across the Trust and have currently invested in a high ratio of Learning Support Practitioners to students.

All visitors comment on the pride students take in their school, the care they show for one another and the delight they express about being students who have the chance to help shape a new school community – a role which they take extremely seriously.

Leadership qualities are already being developed and it is intended to build on opportunities to allow students to lead as the school grows. During 2018-19, an extensive student participation programme has been introduced and has been heavily oversubscribed. Students have joined groups focusing on the environment, digital leadership, charities projects, well-being and journalism and a representative from each group sits on the overarching student council.

The school prides itself on nurturing students' talents, whatever they might be. Students are currently able to join in with a wide range of clubs and activities and our sports teams are starting to chalk up promising results against local schools. To get a full sense of the life our students are able to lead at the school, see our [News Pages](#) or [Newsletters](#) on the school website or follow us on Twitter [@croxleydanes](#).



Our Community

Our parent body is fiercely loyal to the school and extremely supportive of it. Our Parents' Association hold monthly meetings which routinely have over 20 parents in attendance – unheard of in even a fully populated secondary school where such meetings usually attract committee members and an unsuspecting passer-by or two. During its first four terms of operation, the Parents' Association has already raised just over £3,000.

A parental survey in 2017-8 was extremely encouraging; its headline measures are reproduced below:

Non-academic questions		Academic questions	
Question	Mostly true	Question	Mostly true
The school has supported my child well in the transition from primary school.	100%	The school promotes a positive attitude to learning.	98%
The school expects high standards of behaviour.	100%	The school teaches its students how to stay safe online.	100%
The school cares about the happiness of its students.	100%	Teaching is tailored to my child's needs and ability.	94%
My child feels safe at school	100%	My child gets helpful feedback on their work.	86%
The school promotes an anti-bullying culture.	100%		
The school develops confidence in its students.	94%		
The school develops strong moral values in its students.	98%		
The school promotes a strong community spirit.	100%		
The school treats all students fairly and equally.	96%		
The school rewards the achievements of students.	98%		
The email communication system is effective in providing information for parents.	98%		

We have a strong and committed Governing Body with expertise across many areas. Details can be found [here](#). Once we are on site in Croxley Green, we hope to continue to build strong relationships with local organisations and businesses in order to become the truly local school we envisaged when drawing up our initial plans back in 2013.

Our Staff

The Trust is lucky to attract high quality applicants to most posts and we consequently have an exceptional staff team. This year, some teachers who teach at Croxley Danes also have St Clement Danes lessons on their timetable. As our school grows, however, the vast majority of our teachers and support staff will be based wholly at Croxley Danes.

Teachers tend to stay at the Trust because they are developed; many are appointed to promoted posts, often within the Trust's schools. I am a prime example: I joined St Clement Danes as Head of Science in 2000, joined its Senior Leadership Team in 2002 as Assistant Headteacher, before becoming Deputy Headteacher and Project Manager for the Croxley Danes School development in recent years. I took on the role of Headteacher in January 2017. Teachers have a variety of opportunities to develop as practitioners through the Teaching School Alliance. We have a small number of dedicated support staff at present whose numbers will grow with the school, but are able to call on the support of the Trust's Central Services Team for assistance with Finance, HR, ICT Development and Communications. Staff at the school benefit from favourable [admissions arrangements](#) for their children in an oversubscribed and popular institution.

For 2018-19, we appointed a Deputy Headteacher, Miss Ridge, who is our Pastoral Leader and Designated Senior Person. In 2019-20 she will be supported by Heads of Years at Key Stage 3. Curriculum Middle Leaders – KS3 Faculty Co-ordinators – are in place and embedding schemes of work and assessment practices. They are supported by a high performing and reflective staff body who remain both committed to developing the ethos of the school and also embracing change – a good job, given the current educational landscape. They are central to the success of the school so far, responsible for the fantastic feedback from parents you will have read above and will be supplemented by seven high quality practitioners that we have already appointed this term for September 2019.

Our Environment

The permanent site of the school is on the borders of Croxley Green and West Watford and close to beautiful countryside, including the Chess Valley. It is on the Metropolitan line into London and ten minutes from Jct 18 of the M25, meaning that it is readily accessible from London and the home counties. It is close to towns (including Croxley Green itself) regularly voted as some of the best places in the UK to live and raise a family and, although an affluent part of the country, there is plenty of affordable housing in nearby Watford, Chesham and their surroundings.

The site itself is extensive and beautiful. An historic lime tree avenue which once formed the entrance to a manor house is being preserved as part of the plans. As you can see from the images in this booklet, our architect has designed a functional but contemporary building and we have worked hard to put in place features which will enable us to make our educational provision second to none. A Trust wide, state of the art IT solution will be situated at Croxley Danes School and it will have sporting and drama facilities which we can hire to the local community. The site is opposite a small parade of shops and a short drive or bus ride to Watford Town Centre. In short, Croxley Danes provides a fantastic environment in which to teach and is situated in a desirable area in which to live.



Our Future

With the Danes Educational Trust now established, the future for Croxley Danes is an exciting one. We had our plans agreed for our permanent accommodation at the local planning committee in January 2018 and broke ground at our site in Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green in April 2018. Photographs from my most recent site visit can be seen [here](#). We will be moving into our permanent building during the 2019-20 academic year, most likely, as progress to date stands, in either Easter or, at the very latest, summer 2020.

During 2018-19, the students spend one day each fortnight at St Clement Danes in order to access specialist facilities for subjects such as PE and Technology. By 2019-20 this will no longer be necessary as the school will be developing Technology facilities at Tolpits Lane, as well as accessing sports facilities much more locally prior to moving to its permanent accommodation.

Away from bricks and mortar, part of the process of developing a new school is creating the traditions and annual events which our students will remember into adulthood and which will start to make Croxley Danes distinct from other schools within the Trust. The successful candidate will be encouraged to share in the development of such traditions and lead on many of them. It is no exaggeration to say that beyond leading a school, you would also be helping to define a new community.

Although an experienced school leader, I am still relatively new to Headship and refining my 'leadership style' every day. What I can promise is that you will be given the scope to lead within a supportive framework. It will be a small Senior Leadership Team to start off with although you will ultimately be working within a team of five. The interview process will give you a chance to get a feel for the way you would work with myself and the Deputy Headteacher. As an integral part of a small group of three senior leaders working with a talented team of middle leaders, you will be helping me to shape our new school as it grows; a truly exciting and rare opportunity for an ambitious and creative candidate. I hope this might be you.



Your Qualities

We are looking for an exceptional senior leader with the following qualities:

Qualifications

- Graduate and qualified teacher
- Evidence of having undertaken continuing professional development

Knowledge and Experience

- Experience and proven impact at middle leadership level
- Experience of leading school improvement at middle or leadership level
- Understanding of current educational issues
- Understanding of effective pedagogy
- Understanding of how data can be used to drive up standards through intelligent intervention programmes
- Experience of teaching at all levels 11 – 18
- Experience of contributing to whole-school continuous professional development

Personal Qualities

- Passion for education in its widest sense
- Drive, sense of purpose, commitment and perseverance
- Highly developed emotional intelligence
- Excellent interpersonal and persuasive skills
- Flexibility and sensitivity to the needs of individuals
- Excellent communication and presentation skills, both oral and written
- Enthusiasm, common sense and good humour
- Willingness to reflect on and evaluate performance within the context of a team
- Outstanding classroom practitioner who inspires and is respected by students
- High levels of resilience
- Confidence to lead a high-performing staff

Leadership

- Clear vision for raising educational standards
- Clear vision for leading and developing Teaching & Learning
- Ability to lead, inspire and motivate others
- Ability to lead by example, take responsibility and to be accountable
- Ability to hold people to account effectively
- Ability to develop and support others through effective coaching and mentoring
- Proven solution-provider
- Intellectual curiosity



Your Role

It is hard to overplay the fantastic opportunity this role presents for the right candidate. Creating a school is incredibly rewarding and fulfilling - if not without its challenges. I am looking for someone who has the drive, creative flair and imagination to work with me, sometimes in unchartered waters, to create an outstanding school for Croxley Green and the local area. As a single Assistant Headteacher in a small school to start off with, you will be exposed to a wider range of responsibilities than might be the case in a larger school - a fantastic preparation for the further career progression you may well be seeking. There will be opportunities to develop your career in a supportive and nurturing environment and to get involved in Trust projects, both regionally and nationally.

After appointment, we will involve the successful candidate in drawing up a detailed job description. As a starting point, however, the job description will include the following tasks:

- To be responsible for leading and developing teaching and learning
- To be responsible for curriculum development
- To support and promote the ethos and aims of the school
- To share responsibility for the daily running of the school
- To share responsibility for the school's strategic planning and sustained improvement
- To monitor and evaluate aspects of the school's provision as part of an ongoing improvement programme and to have oversight of particular curriculum and administrative areas
- To share responsibility for the recruitment of staff
- To share responsibility for the line management and appraisal of staff
- To take responsibility for some school events and activities
- To take responsibility for developing and operating particular school policies
- To attend and act as a professional adviser at Governors' meetings
- To assist with and lead assemblies and public events
- To undertake any duties the Headteacher may reasonably require

Your Questions

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions before applying. If you would like to visit the school, you can arrange this by appointment with Ms Carla McBride, my PA. Both of us can be contacted via enquiries@croxleydanes.herts.sch.uk.

At interview, you will have a chance to meet students, teachers, support staff, middle leaders and members of the Trust's Central Services Team. There will be ample opportunities to find out more about the school to help you to decide whether Croxley Danes is the right school for you.



Your Application

We hope that, having read this information and looked at our website, you will decide to make an application. In order to do so please:

1. Complete the Danes Educational Trust Leadership Team Application Form.
2. Write a letter of application (of no more than two sides of A4, minimum font size 11) detailing:
 - How your skills, knowledge and experience match the school's requirements for the post of Assistant Headteacher
 - Your strategy for developing excellence in teaching and learning and curriculum development at Croxley Danes School over the next 5 years
3. Send both, together with the names and contact details of two referees, via post or email to Mrs Manisha Patel, Trust HR Administrator, to arrive by 10am on Monday 25th February using the contact details on the back of this applicant information pack.

We may well take up references to aid in shortlisting; all shortlisted candidates will have references taken up prior to being invited to interview.

Interviews will take place across two days during the period Thursday 28th February to Monday 4th March 2019.

We look forward to hearing from you.



Stephen Thompson
Headteacher





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CROXLEY DANES SCHOOL

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