

Dane Court Grammar School



March 2019

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for showing an interest in the post of assistant head teacher at Dane Court. This is a really important job – for the school but also for the successful applicant who will have the opportunity to work in an exciting grammar school which is hugely influential in Thanet and beyond.

Dane Court is a mixed selective school of about 1200 students. In the context of Thanet (Broadstairs, Ramsgate and Margate) it is the most popular grammar school, each year filled with first choice students who have passed the Kent test - 11+ - and is a very pleasant school in which to work and to learn. In the context of the UK, Dane Court is more like a mixed comprehensive, with a range of academic ability and social and economic backgrounds that would surprise those who believe selection is only for the middle classes.

Dane Court is a Teaching School, part of the East Kent Learning Alliance (EKLA), with two other Teaching Schools and a number of strategic partner schools, as well as being a National Support school.

The school is Ofsted 'Outstanding' – since its last inspection in 2007. Obviously, we are long overdue an inspection and expect one at any time. When we are inspected, given the current Ofsted framework we are likely to be found to be 'good'. This is because we have too many students who underperform, given their starting points, and whilst teaching is seldom worse than good, not all lessons are consistently outstanding. There is a lot of excellent practice in the school but still too many inconsistencies and so one of our key challenges is to make sure that every student makes excellent progress irrespective of the subject, the teacher or the challenges facing them at home or in the community.

Dane Court is an IB school and has been now for ten years. We only offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBDP) and the International Baccalaureate Certificate (IBCP) in the sixth form because these are the best post 16 educational offers in the world. We are a lead school for the IB and a champion for it in the south of England. We support 29 other schools in Kent and we have international visitors coming to our school frequently to see what the IB does for our students and how we can share good practise internationally, as well as locally, conversations which are hopefully exciting, relevant and interesting. IB programmes start with the learner profile, the qualities that we are seeking to develop in all our students rather than constantly obsessing over results.

The IB philosophy places the curriculum at the centre of our thinking, rather than outcomes, and so it is very much in line with the new direction Amanda Spelman wants to take Ofsted in – a focus on the purpose of education rather than only measuring a school by its results. Dane Court is an open, tolerant, compassionate community, ambitious and determined to use education to transform both the lives of our students and the economic and social fortunes of our deprived community and totally committed to working in collaboration with local schools, as well as those in Kent, the UK and across the world.

That commitment lies at the heart of Coastal Academies Trust. The trust began as a federation between Dane Court and King Ethelbert. Since then, we have been joined by Cliftonville Primary School, an extraordinary, now outstanding, very large primary school serving the most deprived parts of Margate; Hartsdown Academy, an extremely challenging non-selective secondary serving Margate and Royal Harbour Academy, an equally challenging school serving Ramsgate.

As a trust our commitment to all schools is non-negotiable. The children who attend the most challenging schools are just as valued and important as those that serve the Ofsted outstanding schools. We believe absolutely that we have a selective responsibility that cannot be avoided when the going gets tough!

Dane Court Grammar School and King Ethelbert are still in a hard federation which means we share a governing body and work very closely together. King Ethelbert is also a leader of educational best practice across Kent and is one of the most successful non-selective schools in Kent. There have been a few headship changes in the last year. I have become, after 10 years leading King Ethelbert, the Executive Headteacher of both Dane Court and King Ethelbert and from the beginning of June there is a new Head of School at Dane Court, Martin Jones. We are all very excited to have Martin leading Dane Court. He is currently the Deputy Headteacher at Dartford Grammar School for girls and is intelligent, thoughtful, enthusiastic and driven to achieve a very high quality of education at Dane Court largely through what happens in the classroom. Martin wrote the Pixl Thinking Hard programme which has a high profile nationally. Martin and the leadership team at Dane Court will make us one of the best grammar schools in Kent and you could be a part of that.

The successful applicant will be a significant member of both Dane Court leadership team and a part of the improvement of the trust. As Assistant Headteacher you will be responsible for data, the curriculum and the timetable but you will also work with everyone else improving teaching and learning and line managing departments.

This is a fantastic opportunity for an ambitious middle leader who aspires to headship in the future. This is a fantastic time to be involved with school leadership, the Coastal Academies Trust, and of course, Dane Court Grammar School. What we do together in the next couple of years will influence how our schools are run and the success of Thanet as a centre of educational excellence.

If you have the ambition, work ethic, motivation and want to be part of an exciting, dynamic team, driven by moral purpose and a committed belief in the value of good education for all - then apply. Please feel free to visit us, see the school and meet the people. Please contact Carolyn Hobbs on 01843 864941 to arrange a visit or email me directly on greig@danecourt.kent.sch.uk

We look forward to meeting you.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Greig". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Kate Greig
Executive Head