

French Language Assistant (Fixed-Term, Full time, Term-Time only) Languages Faculty

Whitgift is one of Britain's leading independent day and boarding schools for boys aged between 10 and 18 years with approximately 1550 pupils and over one hundred boarding or flexi-boarding pupils. The School, which was founded in 1596 by Elizabeth I's last Archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, is one of the oldest in Croydon and enjoys facilities of outstanding quality, amongst the best available nationally. It is set in an attractive 48-acre parkland site in South Croydon with excellent links to London, Surrey and the south coast.

The Vacancy

The Languages Faculty at Whitgift is one of the largest in the country. In addition to French, Mandarin Chinese, German, Spanish, Japanese, Latin and Ancient Greek are also taught within the School. There are nine French teachers in the Department, and French is a popular choice at all levels within the School. Many pupils take IGCSE French, and continue their studies in the Sixth Form, where we offer both IB and A level. We offer a wide co-curricular provision, and students have the opportunity to take part in several trips and exchanges, including an exchange trip to Toulouse and a Sixth Form work experience trip.

As a full-time language assistant, the successful candidate will be pro-active and enthusiastic about promoting French across the School and will play an important role in preparing students for examinations, working with students in small groups and assisting teachers in the classroom. They will be able to produce resources and lead enjoyable discussions that challenge students while simultaneously building their confidence and ability to converse in both a natural and articulate manner. In addition to preparing resources for teaching, the successful candidate will work with the Head of French to assist in the production of high quality and innovative resources to support classroom teaching. A high level of accuracy in both spoken and written French and English will be essential, and the ideal candidate will excel in encouraging our students to engage with current political and social issues in French-speaking countries, drawing inspiration from the media and other authentic sources. Flexibility and a willingness to engage with the broader life of the school is a prerequisite. An ability to teach French literature would be an advantage.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Working with small groups of pupils in Year 11 and above
- Preparing pupils for the oral component of public examinations
- Provide appropriate support for native French pupils including teaching literary analysis and advanced essay-writing skills
- Producing appropriate resources to support the teachers within the department
- Commitment to the broader life of the School is also essential.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

To carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post, in accordance with the School's Health and Safety Policy and relevant Health and Safety Legislation.

The Whitgift Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young and elderly people in their care and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

To ensure that all services within the areas of responsibility are provided in accordance with the School's commitment to high quality service provision.

This job description will be reviewed annually and may be subject to amendment or modification at any time after consultation with the post holder. It is not a comprehensive statement of procedures and tasks but sets out the main expectations of the School in relation to the post holder's professional responsibilities and duties.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

General:

- Fluent French speaker
- Proactive and enthusiastic about promoting French across the School
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Good command of the English Language
- Excellent administrative skills
- Confident and well-organized
- Ability to meet changing deadlines and work under pressure
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Flexibility and co-operation
- Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office

Qualifications:

- Educated to degree level (or equivalent) in a relevant subject area (eg. Language/Literature/History/Philosophy/Anthropology/Cultural Studies etc)

The Languages Faculty

The Whitgift Languages Faculty is one of the largest and most vibrant language faculties in the UK with thirty teachers, eight assistants and a faculty administrator. Several classrooms on one of the main corridors of the school are dedicated as language teaching rooms and our comfortable offices, a thirty-station language laboratory, 5 assistant rooms and a dedicated Sixth Form computer room are all on a perpendicular corridor enabling that part of the School to have a genuinely international and excitingly language-focused atmosphere.

Spanish, French, German, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese and Latin are taught from Year 7 throughout the school with Classical Greek available from Year 9. All these languages are offered as IGCSE, A Level and IB options. Five Heads of Department work together under the Head of Faculty: French, German, Japanese, Mandarin Chinese and Spanish.

The Faculty prides itself on the range and quality of its exchanges and trips. All are organised in-house with the assistance of our Faculty Administrator. These include long-standing exchanges to Tokyo, Albertville, Caen, Munich, Valencia, Berlin, Nuremberg, Toledo, Zaragoza, Taipei and Beijing as well as trips to such cities as Cologne, Paris, Bilbao, Nantes and Shanghai.

We have a very international intake and pride ourselves on tailoring language provision to the diverse needs of our pupils. We therefore have a large number of pupils who are supported in their language-learning off-timetable. We encourage pupils in their learning of all languages, even those which we do not teach, and aim to support them in formal accreditation of their skills wherever possible. Approximately a hundred pupils board at Whitgift, around two-thirds of whom come from abroad, which gives us the opportunity to encounter unusual languages and also to teach languages at an unusually high level - we offer all our languages as Language A (native speaker) within the IB for example.

The Faculty is energetic, forward-thinking and collegiate. Textbook usage is minimal, and a focus is placed on developing innovative, imaginative teaching strategies which challenge and stimulate our pupils. Flexibility, passion, academic rigour and the ability to inspire are amongst the key words which would characterise our ethos. We encourage a plethora of teaching styles and enjoy learning from one another. Strong emphasis is placed on the teaching of grammar, use of literature, on encouraging pupil use of target language and adapting to the needs of individual pupils. Innovative IT usage is encouraged but we are not fans of IT for the sake of IT.

Contact

Please feel free to contact James McFarthing, Head of French on 020 8688 9222 or e-mail jmf@whitgift.co.uk should you have any questions regarding this position.

FURTHER INFORMATION

STAFF BENEFITS

All our staff benefit from a competitive remuneration package, including:

- Membership of a generous money purchase pension scheme for all support staff which includes 3 x salary life assurance cover
- Free access to an Employee discount Club, which offers discounted rates on a range of products and services, including insurance, holidays and travel, fashion and retail
- Discounted school fees for permanent staff working at, or for, the Foundation Schools
- Access to our onsite gym facilities
- Membership of the BUPA Cash Plan Scheme, which gives financial support towards the cost of optical, dental and medical costs as well as a free 24-hour advice line for all staff
- A range of family friendly benefits including enhanced maternity pay and childcare vouchers
- Season ticket loan

Additional benefits include:

- Onsite parking (when available)
- Lunch available on-site during term time

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

This position is offered as a full time, fixed-term, term-time only contract from 1 September 2024 to 5 July 2025, with possible extension in September 2025 for a further academic year.

The French Language Assistant will work 5 days per week, term time only. The hours are 8.00am to 5.00pm (40 hours per week) with a one-hour unpaid lunch break. There will occasionally be a requirement for some flexibility with start and finish times to meet the needs of the department.

We offer a generous salary and benefits package including membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme (including Life Assurance cover), Employee Discount Club, discount on school fees for the Foundation Schools (permanent posts only), staff discount on off-peak membership at our on-site gym, membership of a healthcare plan, a range of family-friendly benefits and season ticket loan.

Staff are required to make a significant contribution to the co-curricular life of the School, and this is reflected in the salary offered. A strong commitment to the pastoral and house system is also anticipated.

As a result of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, employers now have to verify that new recruits who are not British Nationals are eligible to work in this country. Therefore, any applicant who is offered an interview will be asked to provide official documentation to verify their ID, address and right to work in the UK. It is also normal practice for the School to ask for original qualifications and professional membership documents as detailed on their application.

Whitgift School (part of the Whitgift Foundation) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Where applicable, applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service and online media checks (including personal, professional and other online activities)

May 2024