

Head of School

Queen Elizabeth High School, Hexham



## **Contents Page**

Welcome	1
The School	2
The Role	5
Location	6
How to Apply	8
Job Description & Person Specification	9

## Welcome from The Executive Headteacher

Thank you for your interest in becoming Head of School at Queen Elizabeth High School. QEHS is situated in the thriving market town of Hexham, in a beautiful part of Northumberland, a short drive from Newcastle. It is partnered with Hexham Middle School within Hadrian Learning Trust.

This is an exciting time to be joining our school, as we move into a period that could see significant growth and development. Please refer to the consultation section of our [website](#) for proposals on possible change.

QEHS is a very successful 13-18, mixed comprehensive high school with a proud history dating back to Elizabethan times. Our ethos is drawn directly from the original charter granted in 1599 to the people of Hexham on account of their “outstanding eagerness to promote good learning”. We believe that the highest academic standards for everyone should go hand in hand with education in its broadest sense, knowing that the arts, sport and other opportunities help shape us as individuals and as citizens of the wider world.

There is much that is already good in our school: confident, well-behaved learners, dedicated, loyal staff, supportive parents and skilled Trustees. Your mission, should you apply and be successful, is to help make us even better.

Graeme Atkins, Executive Headteacher

## **The School**

We have a total of 1264 students at QEHS aged 13-18, including 362 in the sixth form. The school enjoys an excellent reputation locally and beyond.

### ***Academic performance***

Our Progress 8 score in 2017 was 0.53, placing the school in the top 12% of schools nationally, and fourth nationally in our group of similar schools. The percentage of students gaining strong passes (grades 9 to 5) in both English and mathematics was 63%, well above the national figure for state schools. 35% of students entered the English Baccalaureate, with 28% achieving this. The school's Attainment 8 score was 53.9, and 79% of students gained 9-4 grade passes in English and mathematics, well above the national figures.

At A Level, the average point score per entry (APS) in 2017 was 41.39, significantly higher than the national figure. Expressed as a grade, the APS equated to an average of B. For Applied General students, the APS was 45.25 equating to an average grade of Distinction\*-.

QEHS was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2015 and was assessed as continuing to be a good school.

### ***Curriculum***

We offer a broad and balanced curriculum to all of our students at each Key Stage. The expertise of our teachers and size of our sixth form enables us to run courses that many schools cannot.

We place great emphasis on ensuring that students receive comprehensive advice and guidance to enable them to make decisions that best suit their abilities, needs and ambitions. As well extensive one-to-one advice and guidance on options and careers, activities and initiatives include various careers talks, a careers and employment day supported by a number of local and regional employers, Next Steps and Opportunity Ready conferences, attendance at skills events and jobs fairs, visits to universities, colleges and employers, involvement with the Raising Aspirations Partnership, and attendance at the UCAS convention and Oxbridge conference.



### ***Educating the whole person***

Previous Ofsted reports have recognised our success in producing well-rounded young people, partly as a consequence of very strong extra-curricular and provision. Students participate in a wide range of competitive sporting events including in football, rugby, cricket, netball and hockey, with successes last year including: winners of the Northumberland Under 19s league and county netball tournament (and third in the regional competition), Under 15 girls' indoor county cricket champions, winners of the Year 9 and 10 inter-schools rugby tournament and winners of the Tyneside senior schools' football cup. The school's rowing club continues to have considerable success at various events throughout the rowing season. The school also had a number of individual successes at the Tynedale and County athletics events.

In music, there are a whole host of opportunities for students to participate, including boys' choir, girls' choir, orchestra, folk group, rock band, wind band, jazz band, Northumbrian pipes and Brazilian drumming, with each ensemble featuring at various events throughout the year. Brazilian dance, Youth Dance Tynedale and Youth Theatre provide opportunities for students in the other performing arts.

### ***Catchment and student numbers***

Our students come from the market town of Hexham, as well as the surrounding rural area. Although this is a relatively affluent area with a high percentage of adults educated to degree level, there are also pockets of deprivation and rural poverty.

Of the 1264 student attending QEHS, approximately 30% travel from outside the catchment area. At the time of writing, the Trust Board is consulting on the possibility of accommodating children from the Haydon Bridge catchment area, should the Local Authority decide to close Haydon Bridge High School.

### ***Finance***

Altogether, the school's budget is around £7 million, with 73.5 FTE teachers and 61.2 FTE support staff during term time. As is the case with all schools, a real terms reduction in funding as costs rise remains a real challenge.

### ***Infrastructure***

The school occupies a large green site with magnificent views over the Tyne Valley. Our buildings include the impressive Grade 2 listed 'Hydro'. We have benefited from investment in facilities in recent years including a studio theatre, science labs and an all-weather pitch. However, we are well aware that a good deal of our estate is well past its "sell by date". We are also acutely aware of the need to invest in technology and training to equip our staff and students with the tools needed to succeed in the twenty-first century.

## The Role

Salary: **Range 24 – 28**

Starting date: **September 2018**

As Head of School, reporting to the Executive Headteacher, you would be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school, overseeing the leadership of teaching and learning and the school's work to promote students' personal development, behaviour and welfare, so that outcomes continue to improve.

While academic outcomes are already strong for many of our students, we are committed to improving achievement at every stage for all of our children. This will require the full skillset expected from a senior leader in the twenty-first century. You can find more details in the Person Specification and Job Description in the How to Apply section.

If you wish to have a confidential discussion about the role, or would like to arrange to visit the school, please do not hesitate to contact **Rachael Stokes on 01434 610362 or [rstokes@qehs.net](mailto:rstokes@qehs.net)**.

We are an equal opportunities employer and are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. An enhanced DBS check will be required for this post.



## The Location

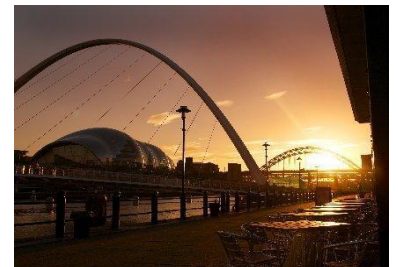
Hexham is a rural market town situated on the south bank of the River Tyne, with a history dating back at least to 672, when St Wilfrid founded Hexham Abbey. The town retains many listed buildings, including the medieval Gaol and Moot Hall. Hadrian's Wall and other Roman sites are a short drive away.



There is a strong community spirit and volunteers from the town organise events including a popular fireworks display, music and book festivals, farmers' market, community-run cinema and many more.

<http://www.visithexham.net>

Beautiful countryside surrounds Hexham yet it is only a twenty-five minute drive to the vibrant city life of Newcastle upon Tyne and some of the country's largest arts and shopping centres at The Sage Gateshead and the MetroCentre. <http://www.newcastlegateshead.com>



Commuting to Hexham is easy with relatively little traffic and good road and rail links. The A69 links us to Newcastle and the A1 in the East, and to Carlisle, the M6 and the Lake District to the West. Travelling by train to London takes less than 3 hours and there is an international airport at Newcastle.



You can read The Guardian's view here: [Guardian verdict on Hexham](#)



## ***Northumberland***

The county is steeped in history, with each period leaving its mark on our architecture and culture: from the Romans, to the establishment of Christianity; from the lawlessness of the Border Reivers, to the great railway engineers of the nineteenth century.

As one of the most sparsely populated counties in England, Northumberland offers room to breathe, with wide-open spaces and large expanses of sky.

Areas of outstanding beauty include the North Pennines, Cheviots and Scottish borders and the stunning Northumberland coast with its empty sandy beaches, castles and Holy Island. It is not surprising then that there are so many active leisure pursuits and sports to be enjoyed. If quiet contemplation is more your thing, the star-studded skies above Kielder Water & Forest Park are the darkest in England and have been awarded Gold Tier Dark Sky Park status by the [International Dark Skies Association](http://www.visitnorthumberland.com) (IDA). For more information visit <http://www.visitnorthumberland.com>

City centre location images courtesy of the Newcastle Gateshead Initiative [www.newcastlegateshead.com](http://www.newcastlegateshead.com)

## How to Apply

Closing date: **12.30 pm on Friday 16 March 2018**

Final panel: **TBC**

Please note dates are indicative and may be subject to change

To apply, please send a completed application form and accompanying covering letter to:

Email: [rstokes@gehs.net](mailto:rstokes@gehs.net)

Or

Post: Rachael Stokes, HR Administration, c/o Hadrian Learning Trust, Queen Elizabeth High School, Whetstone Bridge Road, Hexham, NE46 3JB.

Your application will be acknowledged within 24 hours of receipt.

**To support your application you should write a statement of not more than three sides of A4 (font size 12) within which you should ensure you address the experience, professional knowledge and skills/attributes as outlined in the person specification.**

Please provide names, addresses and contact details of two referees, one of whom should be your current or most recent employer. Please indicate clearly if you do not wish any referee to be approached without your permission.

We expect to take up references for candidates who have been shortlisted.

For an informal discussion about this role (in confidence) or to arrange a visit to the schools, please call Graeme Atkins, Executive Headteacher, on 01434 610301.

## Person Specification

QUALIFICATIONS	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Qualified Teacher Status	✓		AF/Cert
Degree or Equivalent	✓		AF/Cert
Evidence of continuous professional development appropriate to a Head of School role	✓		AF/Cert
EXPERIENCE	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Successful track record of senior leadership in the schools sector	✓		AF/Int
Experience of post 16 provision		✓	AF/Int
Managing teaching and learning leading to the achievement of excellent results	✓		AF/Int
Proven track record of significantly improving quality and standards	✓		AF/Int
Successful experience of using data to raise standards	✓		AF/Int
Effective budget and resource management	✓		AF/Int
Building and sustaining effective and successful working relationships with partners and external stakeholders	✓		AF/Int
Leading and delivering operational planning to achieve strategic objectives	✓		AF/Int
Successfully identifying and addressing under-performance	✓		AF/Int
Leading and delivering operational planning to achieve strategic objectives	✓		AF/Int
Commitment to bring about the best in all students, regardless of their abilities, needs or backgrounds	✓		AF/Int

VALUES, KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Commitment to education in its broadest sense with an understanding of the contribution creative arts, sport and extracurricular activities have in the development of young people	✓		AF/Int
Commitment to equality & diversity	✓		AF/Int
Able to model, develop and evaluate outstanding teaching and learning	✓		AF/Int
Effective people and change management skills	✓		AF/Int
Ability to empathise, enthuse and inspire confidence	✓		AF/Int
Excellent communication and interpersonal skills	✓		AF/Int
Strategic thinking with ability to assimilate information, analyse, and make use of a wide range of data	✓		AF/Int
Ability to translate strategic planning into effective operational outcomes	✓		AF/Int
Knowledge of current and future developments in the educational landscape	✓		AF/Int
Understanding of the changing nature of school governance	✓		AF/int
Awareness of and ability to influence the relationships between individuals, groups and organisations	✓		AF/Int
Best practice in the provision of a safe and secure learning environment	✓		AF/Int
Understanding of financial planning and budget control in relation to effective school management	✓		AF/Int
Understanding of the importance of policies, systems and processes in effective school management	✓		AF/Int
Open minded and committed to continuous professional development	✓		AF/Int

## Job Description

**Responsible to:** Executive Headteacher

**Job Purpose:** Responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school, overseeing the leadership of teaching and learning and the school's work to promote students' personal development, behaviour and welfare, so that outcomes continue to improve.

### ***Qualities and knowledge***

1. Hold and articulate clear values and moral purpose, focused on providing a world-class education for the pupils we serve.
2. Demonstrate optimistic personal behaviour, positive relationships and attitudes towards pupils and staff, and towards parents, governors and members of the local community.
3. Lead by example - with integrity, creativity, resilience, and clarity - drawing on own scholarship, expertise and skills, and that of those around them.
4. Sustain wide, current knowledge and understanding of education and school systems locally, nationally and globally, and pursue continuous professional development.
5. Work with political and financial astuteness, within a clear set of principles centred on the school's vision, ably translating local and national policy into the school's context.
6. Communicate compellingly the school's vision and contribute to the strategic leadership, empowering all pupils and staff to excel.

### ***Pupils and staff***

1. Demand ambitious standards for all pupils, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality, instilling a strong sense of accountability in staff for the impact of their work on pupils' outcomes.
2. Secure excellent teaching through an analytical understanding of how pupils learn and of the core features of successful classroom practice and curriculum design, leading to rich curriculum opportunities and pupils' well-being.
3. Establish an educational culture of 'open classrooms' as a basis for sharing best practice within and between schools, drawing on and conducting relevant research and robust data analysis.
4. Create an ethos within which all staff are motivated and supported to develop their own skills and subject knowledge, and to support each other.
5. Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders in a climate where excellence is the standard, leading to clear succession planning.
6. Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct and practice.

### ***Systems and process***

1. Ensure that the school's systems, organisation and processes are well considered, efficient and fit for purpose, upholding the principles of transparency, integrity and probity.
2. Provide a safe, calm and well-ordered environment for all pupils and staff, focused on safeguarding pupils and developing their exemplary behaviour in school and in the wider society.

3. Establish rigorous, fair and transparent systems and measures for managing the performance of all staff, addressing any under-performance, supporting staff to improve and valuing excellent practice.
4. Welcome strong governance and actively support the governing board to understand its role and deliver its functions effectively – in particular its functions to set school strategy and hold the headteacher to account for pupil, staff and financial performance.
5. Exercise strategic, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure the equitable deployment of budgets and resources, in the best interests of pupils' achievements and the school's sustainability.
6. Distribute leadership throughout the organisation, forging teams of colleagues who have distinct roles and responsibilities and hold each other to account for their decision making.

### ***Self-improving school***

1. Create an outward-facing school which works with other schools and organisations - in a climate of mutual challenge - to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all pupils.
2. Develop effective relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues in other public services to improve academic and social outcomes for all pupils.
3. Challenge educational orthodoxies in the best interests of achieving excellence, harnessing the findings of well evidenced research to frame self-regulating and self-improving schools.
4. Shape the current and future quality of the teaching profession through high quality training and sustained professional development for all staff.



5. Model entrepreneurial and innovative approaches to school improvement, leadership and governance, confident of the vital contribution of internal and external accountability.
6. Inspire and influence others - within and beyond schools - to believe in the fundamental importance of education in young people's lives and to promote the value of education.

