

A personal note from the Head Master to those who have taken an interest in the Director of Music role at Wells Cathedral School.

The appointment of a new Director of Music is a really exciting opportunity for Wells Cathedral School. It is a role which is fundamental to the mission and aim of the School, both as one of the UK's five Music Specialist Schools and as an all-round boarding and day school which champions creativity, aspiration and excellence in all that we do. The successful candidate will have the opportunity to shape the structure and direction of the School in both Music and more widely, and will be required to work closely with me as Head Master, and the whole Senior Management Team, to implement our strategic vision for the School.

Wells Cathedral School is a unique and inspiring place. Since my own arrival in September 2018 I have been repeatedly impressed by the talents and character of the pupils, the enthusiasm, expertise and dedication of the staff, and the warm and welcoming family-feel which pervades this wonderful School. This is a lively and busy place which combines hard work with fun, eschews complacency and seeks an ambitious future. Most importantly, this is a place which puts its pupils at the centre of its being. We have something really special here, and I look forward to appointing someone who will be able to develop and further strengthen the excellent pastoral care here, and in so doing add to this School's remarkable history.

Musically, I cannot think of a more inspiring or more appropriate place for young people to develop their skills as musicians. As one of the UK's Music Specialist Schools we already have a world-class reputation for the quality of our musical education and provision, and attract some of the world's most talented aspiring musicians. Our unique position as a Specialist Music School, a Cathedral Choir School and an all-round School means that our pupils and staff are fortunate to live and work in one of the most creatively vibrant places I can imagine. We have approximately 200 pupils on our elite Specialist Music programmes or Vocal Programmes (80 of whom are supported by the government's Music and Dance Bursary scheme), with a further 200 or so pupils receiving instrumental/vocal tuition on a regular basis. All our pupils are privileged to be taught and inspired by some of the very best teachers and coaches in the UK. And in addition, they are able to make music in inspiring facilities, including the 13th century Gothic masterpiece that is Wells Cathedral, our 14th century Quilter Hall, or our state-of-the-art, multi-million pound concert and performance venue Cedars Hall, which was opened in 2016.

From the Head Master
Alastair Tighe

In recent years, 100% of pupils who have applied to Music Conservatories in the UK and globally have secured places, often with major scholarship awards. In the most recent BBC Young Musician competition, Wells had more category finalists than any other school, and Wells has one of the highest number of A level music students of any school in the world.

So the School is looking to appoint a Director of Music of the highest calibre, who has a thorough and experienced understanding of what the training of young instrumentalists and singers involves, who is ambitious for our Specialist and Music for All schemes, who appreciates the value of ensemble performance, who is not afraid to champion the cause of Music and the Arts in the School, who can appreciate the unique possibilities the School's relationship with Wells Cathedral can provide, and who is a well-respected musician in their own right.

We live and work in a truly historic and beautiful place in Wells, with wonderful grounds and buildings, and in a place with a great sense of community both within and outside the School. The School has been educating young people for over 1000 years and we have around 720 pupils in total. Whilst the Director of Music role is mainly focussed on the Senior School (Years 7-Upper Sixth), we are a School with pupils from Nursery age upwards, and so the School provides excellent exposure to the demands and opportunities of Pre-Prep and Junior School life as well.

I hope that you will be attracted by this position and the opportunities it offers to make a really significant difference. This is a confident and kind place to live and work, with very high musical standards and a total commitment to a broad, holistic boarding and day education, which places creativity (and Music in particular) very much at the heart of what we do, but firmly alongside sport, drama, outdoor activity and a whole host of other opportunities. This in itself helps ensure that our Specialist Musicians develop not just as highly skilled performers, but also as well-rounded, balanced and kind young people. I hope that the information provided here will give you a glimpse into what we are about, and that you will want to apply to become a key member of this community.

I am looking for a Director of Music with ambition for him/herself and also, more importantly, for the School, our Music Department and its pupils. I hope that we might meet soon, and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to be in touch.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alastair Tighe". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Alastair Tighe
Head Master