

Head of Keyboard Studies and Accompanist

Job Description



Queen Margaret's
School for Girls

Escrick Park, York

Queen Margaret's School for Girls

Established in 1901, QM is an independent boarding and day school for girls aged 11-18. You will find us in glorious parkland about six miles south of York. But we are much more than our surroundings, we are more than a school:

We're a home from home,
A family of learning and belonging,
In a truly inspirational setting.

We are somewhere each and every girl can thrive,
Where they'll be happy and healthy,
Grow their knowledge, skills and confidence,
And make friends for life.

Somewhere that's the bedrock for success,
Opens up opportunities and possibilities,
Inspires them to forge their own future,
And gets them ready for life, whatever their calling.

We nurture girls to fulfil their ambitions,
To realise their potential,
To become the best women they can be,
And give them an amazing start in life.

Girls do so much better in single-sex education and here we see our pupils engaging enthusiastically in a range of activities - academic, sport, extracurricular and social. No airs and graces, no frills or make-up, just girls getting stuck in, and having fun while they do it. They achieve academically (outstandingly so), they come from a variety of backgrounds and, with an increasing emphasis on the level of support available, we are proud to continue making a QM education possible for an increasingly diverse range of girls. Our girls have homes in York, Ripon, Thirsk, Newcastle upon Tyne, Inverness, Hong Kong, Madrid, Frankfurt and Bangkok, to name a few. Many girls board, not because they have to, but because they want to. The girls are the focus of life at QM and are at the heart of everything we do. It's this focus and an individualistic approach that allows our girls to carve their own path, and flourish as formidable, independent women.

Working at QM

We employ around 170 staff, with over 60 teachers and the majority of staff live within 30-45 minutes of the school including York, Hull, Leeds and Harrogate. Staff involved in boarding live on site. We operate our own salary scale and all staff contribute to a pension scheme. During term time (in normal times) meals are provided when you are on duty. Working in a boarding school is an experience like no other. The sense of community is very strong and the opportunity to get to know both girls and staff is more apparent than would be the case in a day school. There are lessons on a Saturday morning and our term dates are shorter than schools in the state sector, although we adhere wherever possible to the half term dates of the local authorities in order to support our staff with children of school age.

Most girls stay at school after their lessons finish each day, either because they are boarders or because they are involved in activities. There are a variety of enrichment activities and clubs on offer including horse riding, tennis coaching plus clubs as diverse as debating, fashion, philosophy and swimming. We have extensive sports facilities and all girls play hockey, lacrosse, netball and rounders as well as an array of other sports. Day girls are able to stay until 19:30.

We're Recruiting...

We are looking for an outstanding Head of Keyboard Studies and Accompanist to join our Music Department in September 2024. The role could be suited to an exceptional early career professional with excellent sight-reading skills and an instinctual teaching style. The ability to play/teach organ would be an advantage but not essential for an inspirational candidate who is the right fit for the department. If you like the sound of Queen Margaret's and that you feel that the role might suit you then please read the detailed job description and feel free to contact the school prior to application if there is more you'd like to know.

Music at QM

Music is an integral part of the life of Queen Margaret's, with a thriving department which not only caters for music as an academic discipline but also as a major contributor to the school's enrichment programme. The department consists of the Director of Music who is assisted by the Head of Keyboard Studies (this role), a Teacher of Music, a School Administrator and a team of 16 visiting music teachers.

Academic Music

All girls in Years I-III study Music in the curriculum. GCSE and A Level Music courses are offered, currently with WJEC Eduqas at both GCSE and A Level. Class sizes are small and results are always very high. The department offers support on an individual basis to all students as needed, to ensure they reach their full potential.

In Key Stage 3 the girls at Queen Margaret's follow a varied programme which equips them with the practical skills and theoretical knowledge needed to enjoy engaging with music. Building confidence, communication, rehearsal and ensemble skills are core to the approach and lessons are always fully inclusive and hands-on. As they progress, students get increasing opportunities to work in small groups to develop independent learning skills.

GCSE Music in Key Stage 4 not only gives an excellent foundation for further study at A Level but also imparts a wealth of transferable and lifelong skills including analytical essay writing, creativity through composition and confidence fostered through performance and ensemble projects. Students emerge as more rounded and capable musicians and our small class sizes mean that they benefit from individual support throughout the course.

Our students can expect a stimulating and rewarding course in Key Stage 5, designed to challenge, enrich and further develop keen musicians. Students study classical and popular compositional techniques, supported with one-to-one tuition in this area. Academically, studies include the development of the Classical Symphony, Rock and Pop, Aural Analysis Skills and 20th Century styles (Neoclassicism, Impressionism and Expressionism).

Individual Music

About half of the girls in the school take individual instrumental or singing lessons each week. There are regular opportunities for the girls to perform in concerts and competitions both inside and outside QM and all are encouraged to join ensembles. We host termly examinations for an expanding range of examination boards including the Associated Board and Trinity Music qualifications.

Ensemble Music

The school runs the following groups: Chamber Choir, Cantiamo, Vocal Consort, QM Orchestra, String Quartet, Wind Band, Funk and Soul Band and various Chamber Music groups. There are frequent collaborations with the Dance and Drama Departments including regular musicals.

Religious Music

The Chamber Choir provides music (usually an SSA anthem) for our regular Chapel Services. High Services are held throughout the year to mark occasions such as St Margaret's Day, Advent Sunday, Service of Lessons and Carols, Anglican and Roman Catholic Confirmation Services, Passiontide, Old Margaretians' Day and Speech Day. There will usually be Choral Evensong and Eucharist services interspersed within the term. Annual visits by the Chamber Choir to Cathedrals and Abbeys also form an important part of their work, recently including York Minster and Durham Cathedrals.

Concerts

Regular concerts are an important showcase for music at QM with the main programme containing a Christmas Concert, Summer Concert and a Head's Invitational Concert during Speech Day week. We have a programme of quarter-termly Leave Out concerts showcasing individual year groups. There are also regular Wednesday@I concerts which are used to showcase the musical talents of our students.

Job Description

Job Title: Head of Keyboard Studies and Accompanist

Reporting To: Director of Music

Music is an integral part of life at Queen Margaret's and from September 2024 we will require an enthusiastic and forward-thinking professional to be the Head of Keyboard Studies and Accompanist. The ability to play/teach organ would be an advantage but not essential for an inspirational candidate who is the right fit for our department. The Head of Keyboard Studies and Accompanist will work with and report to the Director of Music in all aspects of the musical life of the school. The successful candidate will be an inspiring musician and teacher with the following attributes:

- A strong desire to continue to raise the profile of music at QM and to develop links with feeder schools
- Creative and inspirational leadership skills
- A sympathy with the Christian faith and worship
- Excellent communication skills, and the ability to enthuse and challenge girls of all ages and abilities with rigour and good humour
- An inspirational pianist and sensitive accompanist
- An excellent sight reader who can perform demanding accompaniments, occasionally at short notice
- A willingness to support and develop the enriching presence of music outside the classroom
- The ability to work collaboratively and creatively with the Drama and Dance Departments.

Key Responsibilities:

- Providing 1:1 tuition on piano, and potentially organ
- Providing piano accompaniment for school performances at both informal and formal occasions, concerts and whole school events
- Providing accompaniment for departmental ensembles at rehearsals and performances
- If applicable, act as an organist and accompanist at Chapel Services.
- Provision of the ABRSM Grade 5 theory tuition
- Providing accompaniment and musical coaching in support of events/workshops in our outreach programme to feeder prep schools.
- Supporting the Director of Music in the running and accompanying of ABRSM and Trinity live/recorded examinations and taking responsibility for understanding the latest updates in examination specifications and requirements.
- Rehearsing and accompanying the lunchtime concert series in support of the Director of Music
- Providing rehearsal sessions in the weeks leading up to ABRSM/Trinity practical examinations where appropriate
- Supporting the Director of Music in the running, administration and management of the peripatetic staff where appropriate.
- Occasional accompaniment, as required, in support of our informal concert series 'Wednesday@1'
- Facilitating ensemble work for piano and organ students, including duets, piano trios, piano quintets etc
- Oversight of the maintenance and tuning of school pianos and organ
- Assisting the Music staff in the direction, accompaniment and running of ensembles and deputising in their absence wherever necessary
- Assisting the Director and Teacher of Music in the musical direction of whole school musical theatre productions including répétiteur work as needed in the term of production and playing in the pit orchestra during the week of the show
- Supporting the Director of Music in the preparation and rehearsal of performance coursework for GCSE and A Level recitals.
- Accompanying performance opportunities in Minsters, Abbeys and Cathedrals in the UK and trips further afield
- Accompanying live Ballet examinations in support of the Dance Department where required - these are infrequent in the school calendar.
- Mentoring Music/Choral Scholars
- Assisting the Director of Music in the accompaniment of the annual QM Musician of the Year Competition week
- Attending and facilitating the promotion of school at Open Mornings and other such events as required.
- Undertaking regular safeguarding training and staff inset, reporting any safeguarding or pastoral concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Senior Tutors, Tutors and Boarding Staff in line with the school policy.
- Attending regular departmental meetings
- Undertaking such other reasonable duties as directed by the Head, or the Director of Music
- Being prepared to deputise for the Director and Teacher of Music in classroom teaching on rare occasions.

Person Specification

Qualifications	A good honours degree in music	Essential
	A Higher/Post Graduate qualification in music	Desirable
	Qualified teacher status/extensive instrumental teaching experience	Desirable
Qualities	The ability to inspire students and sensitively challenge underperformance	Essential
	A creative, inspirational and enthusiastic teacher to students of all abilities	Essential
	An inspirational rehearsal practitioner	Essential
	A genuine desire to develop girls to their fullest potential	Essential
	A team player who keeps the best interest of the department and students at the forefront of their actions	Essential
	Demonstrably self-reliant, resilient and adaptable	Essential
	Evidence of the ability and willingness to contribute to the wider school community outside of the classroom	Essential
	Willingness to commit to and foster the values and ethos of the School in line with the school's Strategic Plan	Essential
Skills, Knowledge and Experience	Ability to actively seek out and develop new opportunities for girls to experience music	Desirable
	Outstanding keyboard skills, musicianship and sight reading	Essential
	Ability to provide individual tuition in piano to the highest standards, including diploma level and beyond	Essential
	A sensitive accompanist	Essential
	Ability to advise on and improve students' attainment during répétiteur work	Essential
Excellent and up to date subject knowledge	Essential	

	Ability to prepare students for theoretical and aural aspects of music grade examination	Essential
	Ability to teach and play Organ	Desirable
	Ability to offer other instrumental skills for the wider benefit of the department	Desirable
	Experience of preparing practical assessment of music to a very high standard at GCSE and A Level	Desirable
	High levels of competence in the use of ICT for teaching and administration	Desirable
	A commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children	Essential

Benefits of Working at QM

- Outstanding setting in a rural location
- Friendly staff team
- Free meals during working hours
- Free onsite parking
- Small class sizes
- Occupational DC pension scheme with an employer contribution of currently 8.4%
- Death in Service benefit
- Free staff swimming sessions on site

How to Apply

All applicants must complete the school's official application form, available via this link to our website <https://queenmargarets.com/careers>, providing a full career history and names and contact details for two referees. Completed application forms should be returned to: recruitment@queenmargarets.com.

Queen Margaret's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young persons and candidates must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure & Barring Service and will be asked to bring certain documents to interview to confirm their identity.

Candidates should be aware that, in compliance with statutory guidance, as part of the shortlisting process the school will consider carrying out an online search as part of their due diligence on the shortlisted candidates. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which the school might want to explore with the applicant at interview.