



Assistant Head of Languages (English): College

October 2021

Kia ora! Many thanks for your interest in our school, and your interest in the position of Assistant Head of English and Languages. You will find, within the application pack, a full Position Description, as well as a booklet outlining our Staff Wellbeing package. You will also find that our website is full of useful information about our school. But I also wanted to give you a fuller picture of the role.

The school

Pinehurst School is 30 years old now. When the founders established the school, we were surrounded by orchards and open fields. Now, three decades on, we are nestled within one of Auckland's busiest and most prosperous neighbourhoods, Albany. We are close to the motorway, so access is easy, but our surroundings are green and peaceful. Around half of the school, the eyeline is defined by bush; and the school is unusually green and speckled with trees. Our lovely environment helps, we think, our students to be so calm and focused.

Another factor is our size. We have around 1050 students in the school, and of those, close to 600 are in College (Years 7 to 13). We are still growing, but by 2023 we will have reached maximum capacity of about 1100 students, and there will be about 95 students in each year group in College. This is our perfect size, we think: big enough to offer a very wide range of curriculum and co-curricular opportunities; and small enough to know every single student, and provide a guided, informed pathway to them.

In other words, every student feels known and supported in our school. We are fortunate in that we have exceptionally engaged parents, and very well-motivated young people in our school, but our students have the same challenges as all young people from time-to-time. We are able to offer them, and their parents, exceptional support, and this ensures that we have a real sense of community. We talk about our Pinehurst Triangle quite a lot (Students, Staff and Parents), and it's a real, living thing to us. By working closely together in a school that is the right size to support each other, we ensure that our young people achieve more than they would have thought possible.

Our students are wonderful. They are a pleasure to be with, behaviour is excellent, and they are generally determined to learn. They form strong relationships with their teachers, and their teachers build strong relationships with them and with their whanau.

They also achieve exceptional results. In 2020, 95% of our school leavers achieved University Entrance, for example. And the profile of our students, moving forwards, suggests that we

should be maintaining this kind of level. We are not, though, selective. The academic profile of our young people certainly skews towards the top, but we have students of all abilities, and this will continue. Around 8% of our students have IEPs, and we have an active and supportive Learner Support department to ensure that they can flourish.

The curriculum

As you may know, Pinehurst is a “Cambridge” school. What this means is that we teach IGCSEs in Years 10 and 11, AS Levels in Years 12 and 13, and A Levels in Year 13. In Years 7-9, we teach “pre-IGCSE” courses alongside subjects that follow a programme that includes strong New Zealand elements. In English, the Year 7-9 curriculum prepares students for IGCSEs in Years 10 and 11, but it’s a wide ranging course, and NZ literature is very much a part of it.

A word on Cambridge. It’s really just the British curriculum, tweaked for an international environment. We are a New Zealand school, and our core ethos reflects that, but we teach a British international curriculum. We do this because it is consistent, rigorous and clear. It has less flexibility in the construction of courses, but its standards don’t change, and it has both the trust and the support of our community. It isn’t an extension curriculum by itself – although it is true that AS and A Levels are more consistently rigorous and have a higher content-level than some equivalent Year 12 and 13 courses – and it is suitable for nearly all students.

In English, the curriculum is comparable to the New Zealand curriculum in Years 7 to 9, though with a little more emphasis on literature. That emphasis continues into Years 10 to 13, and the approach to essay writing is a little different too. But the fundamentals remain the same.

We teach IGCSE English Language and IGCSE English Literature in Years 10 and 11; and we teach both English Language AS and A Level, and English Literature AS and A Level in Years 12 and 13.

The Position and the Department

There are 8 English teachers, 3 Spanish teachers and 2 Chinese teachers in the department. We also have Chinese and ESOL teaching assistants associated with the department. The English teachers teach from Years 7 to 13; one of the Spanish teachers is our senior teacher, and two teach Primary and Years 7-9. Our Chinese teachers cover Years 1-11. The department is a hardworking, high-quality team who are very committed to their students, and whose results are strong. They are also committed to continuing to develop their skills. They are part of a team of around 60 College teachers. The Library Manager and her team are also connected with the department.

The position is new and reflects the importance we place on leadership in English. The Position Description covers the nature of the role, and the specific responsibilities associated with it, but we are fundamentally looking for an excellent teacher who has had

some leadership responsibilities and who is interested in the challenge of supporting a good department who are keen to develop further. The position involves curriculum leadership as well as staff leadership, so we would expect the successful candidate to be able to teach to Year 13. You will need to be interested in teaching and learning approaches, in supporting all students to access the curriculum, and in extending students beyond the curriculum. You will also, of course, need to love literature and language, and to want to inspire the same love in our students.

Experience with Cambridge is not required, although we will of course be interested in teachers who are familiar with the curriculum. We are more interested in teachers who want to work in a kind, friendly environment, where we build relationships with each other, with students and with their whanau, and who want to make a difference to students' lives by opening up the rich worlds of literature and language to them.

I hope that you will be interested in this position. It's an important leadership one for us, and we will support your development as a leader as you develop those around you. We would encourage you to visit us before applying, and I hope very much that I will meet you soon.

Alex Reed
Executive Principal

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT**Assistant Head of Languages (English): College****Position Description****Allocation:** 2 MU's

This is a leadership position in the College, which means that there is an expectation of collective as well as individual accountabilities. As a leader within the Languages Department, the Assistant Head of Languages (English) is expected to support their colleagues in English as well as in the other subject disciplines within the department. They are expected to work alongside the Head of Languages to provide strategic direction to the department, and to ensure that the operations of the department are effective and efficient.

Core Purpose

To enable students following English courses in the College to be happy, secure and curious, and to support them towards outstanding progress and achievement within English.

Specifically:

- To take overall responsibility for English courses in specified year levels, ensuring that teachers within the department have the resources and support they need. These year levels could be negotiated, based on the preferences and expertise of the applicant.
- To ensure that English teachers have access to, and are making good use of, good professional learning opportunities.
- To work alongside the Head of Languages to ensure that the English curriculum builds effectively on the Primary English curriculum, and successfully prepares students exceptionally well for IGCSE, AS and A Level courses.
- To liaise with the Year 5 and 6 Syndicate Leader in order to ensure that the English curriculum in both the senior years of Primary and the junior years of College is developed with an excellent knowledge and understanding of the whole English curriculum.
- To work with the Head of Languages and the Principal of College and Deputy Principals of College to ensure that courses and students are organised appropriately.
- To lead a collaborative discussion with the other English teachers to reflect on student achievement and make plans based on this analysis.
- To work with the Head of Languages on curriculum design, in particular, focusing on ensuring programmes of study are balanced, creative, and innovative.
- To co-ordinate assessments and results for specified year groups and to produce credible and consistent assessment scores.

Key Relationships

Accountable to: Head of Languages

Partnership with: Other College teachers

Liaises with: Principal of College, Deputy Principal of College: Progress and Achievement, Deputy Principal of College: Wellbeing, teaching and learning, other college middle leaders, other teachers