GORDONSTOUN
Japan

Head of Languages

Gordonstoun, founded in 1934, is a **philosophy of education in action**. The extraordinary education we provide gives students the confidence to achieve the impossible. Gordonstoun's motto – "Plus est en vous" – is the ethos at our core – we hope you will be keen to bring your passion to this incredible staff body.

Reporting to: Deputy Head

Salary: Competitive salary based on experience

Location: Wakayama, Japan

Contract: 3-year fixed-term contract

Working hours: Working hours will generally follow the School's term dates, with specific hours determined in advance by a published schedule. As with all schools, the role will include some evening and weekend commitments, as well as preparation time before the start of the student day. Additional hours may be sought in conjunction with the Impact Challenge programmes run during School holiday periods, and staff are encouraged to support these.

Head of Faculty

The Heads of Faculty at Gordonstoun Japan will establish their departments on a belief in education that develops both the mind and character. Through a rich and stimulating curriculum, faculty leaders will inspire students and colleagues to think critically, communicate effectively and engage with the world around them. Departments will be more than a collection of classrooms. Guided by Gordonstoun's enduring philosophy of challenge and service, each will strive to develop the skills, knowledge and values that equip students for life beyond school.

Academic rigour will be woven carefully into a supportive learning environment in which children can thrive. The Cambridge IGCSE will provide our base for Key Stage 4 and then again for the A levels and further opportunities at Key Stage 5.

Our staff will be more than teachers - they will be mentors, coaches, designers, researchers and innovators, inspiring the very best from our students and each other. Heads of Faculty will be leaders in this space.

About the Department

As the world becomes ever smaller through our ability to travel and connect, languages provide a powerful bridge across continents, cultures and communities. The Languages Department will develop students' existing skills and build new linguistic proficiency and cultural understanding, nurturing globally minded individuals who can engage with confidence in international communities.

The Head of Languages will guide the School in developing innovative approaches to language learning at Key Stages 3 and 4, with opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of their chosen language at A level.

Purpose of the Role

The Head of Languages will provide inspirational leadership for the department, promoting excellent teaching and learning, high expectations and a culture in which every student can flourish.

The postholder will champion Gordonstoun's educational ethos, support colleagues' professional development and contribute fully to the academic and broader life of Gordonstoun Japan.

Key Responsibilities

1. Departmental Leadership & Development

- Lead the development of the Languages department in line with the School's educational ethos, priorities and strategic direction.
- Develop, implement and review an annual departmental development plan, informed by the School's wider development priorities.
- Oversee departmental schemes of work, resources, policies and approaches to teaching, learning and assessment.
- Monitor departmental effectiveness, identify areas for improvement and lead appropriate action.

2. Teaching, Learning & Curriculum

- Model high-quality teaching through well-planned, engaging and challenging lessons that enable students to achieve their potential.
- Lead curriculum planning and review to ensure progression, appropriate challenge and a broad educational experience.
- Promote reflective teaching practice and the sharing of effective approaches across the department.
- Assess and mark students' work routinely and in line with exam board requirements, ensuring consistent assessment practices across the department.
- Keep up to date with relevant educational developments and curriculum and assessment requirements.
- Gather and use feedback and students' progress data to evaluate and plan future learning.

3. Staff Leadership & Professional Development

- Lead, motivate and support departmental colleagues, fostering a collaborative and positive working environment.
- Complete regular staff review, feedback and professional development processes in accordance with School policy.
- Monitor and identify training and development priorities and facilitate opportunities to share good practice.
- Coordinate departmental meetings, workload and responsibilities, including timetabling and cover arrangements as appropriate.

4. Student Progress, Assessment & Inclusion

- Set high expectations for students' learning, engagement, conduct and achievement.

- Monitor progress, attainment and the quality of feedback and assessment across the department.
- Use assessment data to identify underachievement and provide suitable support and extension.
- Work with pastoral, EAL, and learning support colleagues to meet the needs of students with a range of abilities and backgrounds.
- Communicate students' progress appropriately to parents and relevant School colleagues and according to School policy.

5. Student Welfare & Safeguarding

- Promote students' wellbeing and a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment.
- Follow the School's safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, reporting concerns promptly through the designated channels.
- Apply the School's expectations and procedures for behaviour, attendance and student support.

6. Collaboration & Wider School Life

- Work constructively with academic, pastoral and senior colleagues to advance the School's priorities.
- Contribute to departmental and whole-school events, activities and communications.
- Support Gordonstoun's commitment to education beyond the classroom and contribute to co-curricular and wider school life as required.
- Support students' development through tutoring responsibilities, including a commitment to spending one evening per week in the boarding environment.

7. Resources & Departmental Operations

- Plan and manage departmental resources and budgets responsibly, subject to agreed authority and procedures.
- Oversee the safe and effective use of departmental facilities, equipment and learning resources.
- Ensure compliance with relevant health and safety regulations, including any department specific requirements and implement safe working practices.

8. Additional Responsibilities

- Carry out any other task as required from time to time in order to support the School.

Key Outcomes (Success Measures)

- High-quality and inspired teaching and learning across the department
- Strong student engagement, motivated application, progress and achievement
- A clear, effective departmental development plan and a culture of continuous improvement
- A well-supported and professionally developing departmental team

Person Specification - Essential

Experience

- Experience of teaching Languages up to Cambridge IGCSE and A level or equivalent.
- Experience of leading staff teams to develop and implement a shared vision.
- Proven experience of leading innovative or inspiring projects that demonstrate leadership within your subject area.

Education and Qualifications

- A first or upper second class degree (or equivalent) in Languages or closely related discipline.
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (or equivalent) in secondary education or significant experience in teaching or coaching students within a school environment.

Skills

- Strong curriculum, assessment and pedagogical knowledge.
- Excellent IT skills, including proficiency in all Microsoft Office applications.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to build positive working relationships with students, colleagues and parents.
- Ability to plan and deliver engaging teaching for students of different abilities and needs.
- Ability to motivate and inspire students to achieve their potential.
- Confidence and ability to lead, motivate and develop staff.
- Ability to initiate and implement change, with a reflective, collaborative approach and a commitment to continuous improvement.
- Proven commitment to safeguarding, student wellbeing and doing the best for students from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Adaptability and cultural awareness, with the ability to work effectively in an international community.

Person Specification – Desirable

- Experience of teaching advanced or specialist aspects of language learning.
- Experience of preparing students for university and beyond.
- Experience of leading performance management and continuing professional development.

Safeguarding

Gordonstoun Japan is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All appointments are subject to satisfactory safeguarding and background checks, including appropriate criminal record and reference checks.