

Brief for the appointment of

# Principal

**ArtsEd**



ODGERS BERNDTSON



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# About ArtsEd

## Who we are

ArtsEd has earned widespread recognition as one of the premier performing arts schools in the UK and internationally. There are two primary streams within ArtsEd: the Day School & Sixth Form, for pupils aged 11-18, and the Higher Education provision. The Day School and Sixth Form (DSSF) provides a dynamic environment where vocational training is rooted and integrated within the academic programme. The outstanding quality of its education was recently awarded the Independent Schools' Inspectorate's highest accolade – a 'significant strength' for the outstanding standards that our pupils achieve in the performing arts: acting, dance and musical theatre.

Its Higher Education provision, which was recently awarded TEF Gold, delivers an outstanding and diverse range of programmes for Acting and Musical Theatre students and these include Cert HE (Foundation), Bachelor's and Master's degree courses. In the 2023 inspection, the undergraduate degree provision (DaDA) was rated by Ofsted as outstanding in all areas.

The exceptional teaching and outstanding pastoral care at ArtsEd, coupled with an inclusive environment, nurture talent and ensure that every individual feels valued and supported on their artistic journey. This holistic approach, and the unique offering of school to degree level education, attracts a high calibre of both students and staff and ensures that graduates are industry-ready. Ambitious, dedicated to emerging artists, nurturing talent, and driving ambition, ArtsEd has an exciting future ahead and presents an attractive opportunity for a lover of the Performing Arts and an advocate of arts education to become its next Principal.

## Our History

ArtsEd originated from two schools, one founded in 1919 by Grace Cone and one founded in 1922 by Olive Ripman. These two educational pioneers believed passionately in the value of combining a general academic education with specialised training in dance, drama, music and art. They were committed to preparing young people for professional careers in

or related to the theatre. In 1939, Grace and Olive joined forces to create the Cone Ripman School, subsequently named the Arts Educational Schools. Dame Alicia Markova and Sir Anton Dolin drew almost exclusively on ArtsEd students to help them create their revolutionary company London Festival Ballet, which eventually became the English National Ballet. Ballerina Dame Beryl Grey became Director of the Schools in the 1960s.

ArtsEd continued to innovate, introducing both professional acting and musical theatre courses and in 1986 moved to its present home in Chiswick. In 2007, Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber became President, heralding an auspicious new era for ArtsEd.

Today, ArtsEd incorporates the Day School & Sixth Form and the Higher Education provision and is a national centre of excellence for the study of the performing arts, from age 11 through to post-graduate level. The organisation's two educational strands operate out of a single site in Chiswick, bringing many opportunities for cohesive, collaborative and connected learning and working environments. It also delivers local outreach through its ArtsEd Extra provision. There are also the very successful Saturday and holiday school programmes which operate under the ArtsEd Extra brand.







**ArtsEd**  
Day School & Sixth Form

**ArtsEd Day School and Sixth Form**

The Day School, for pupils in Years 7-11, and the Sixth Form are international leaders in Performing Arts education. What makes us so unique is our commitment to providing a broad and balanced education which excites, challenges, and inspires our pupils to achieve their potential across all areas of their educational experience, while simultaneously delivering outstanding training in the performing arts. These aims and our ethos have remained the same since ArtsEd was founded over 100 years ago.

At the heart of this is the 'ArtsEd Curriculum' – academic rigour is achieved through a programme that is individually tailored and this is complemented by committed, creative professionals who inspire a passion for performance that feeds into all aspects of pupils' education and personal development.

Pupils spend time every day doing what they love within an environment of supportive pastoral care that enables them to feel safe, secure and valued. They are encouraged to aspire for the highest possible standards of achievement, to develop independent thought and learning and to foster the values of the 'Six Pillars of Excellence'.

Our outstanding pastoral care, small class sizes, and family atmosphere mean that every young person feels supported and encouraged to be the very best they can be. During their individual journeys, pupils explore who they are, what they stand for, and build their personal values and aspirations. Consequently, they become quintessentially more of themselves; as ISI noted, the pupils can be their natural selves.

Pupils in the Day School study a wide range of academic subjects alongside their vocational courses; GOSE are commenced in Year 9. The Sixth Form offers academic and vocational

qualifications through A Level and BTEC programmes of study, ensuring pupils are well prepared for successful progression into further training at a conservatoire, to university, straight into the industry or other employment.

ArtsEd pupils are remarkable individuals, and we pride ourselves on knowing, nurturing and respecting them as such. In the process, they develop into happy, confident, collaborative, and well-rounded individuals.





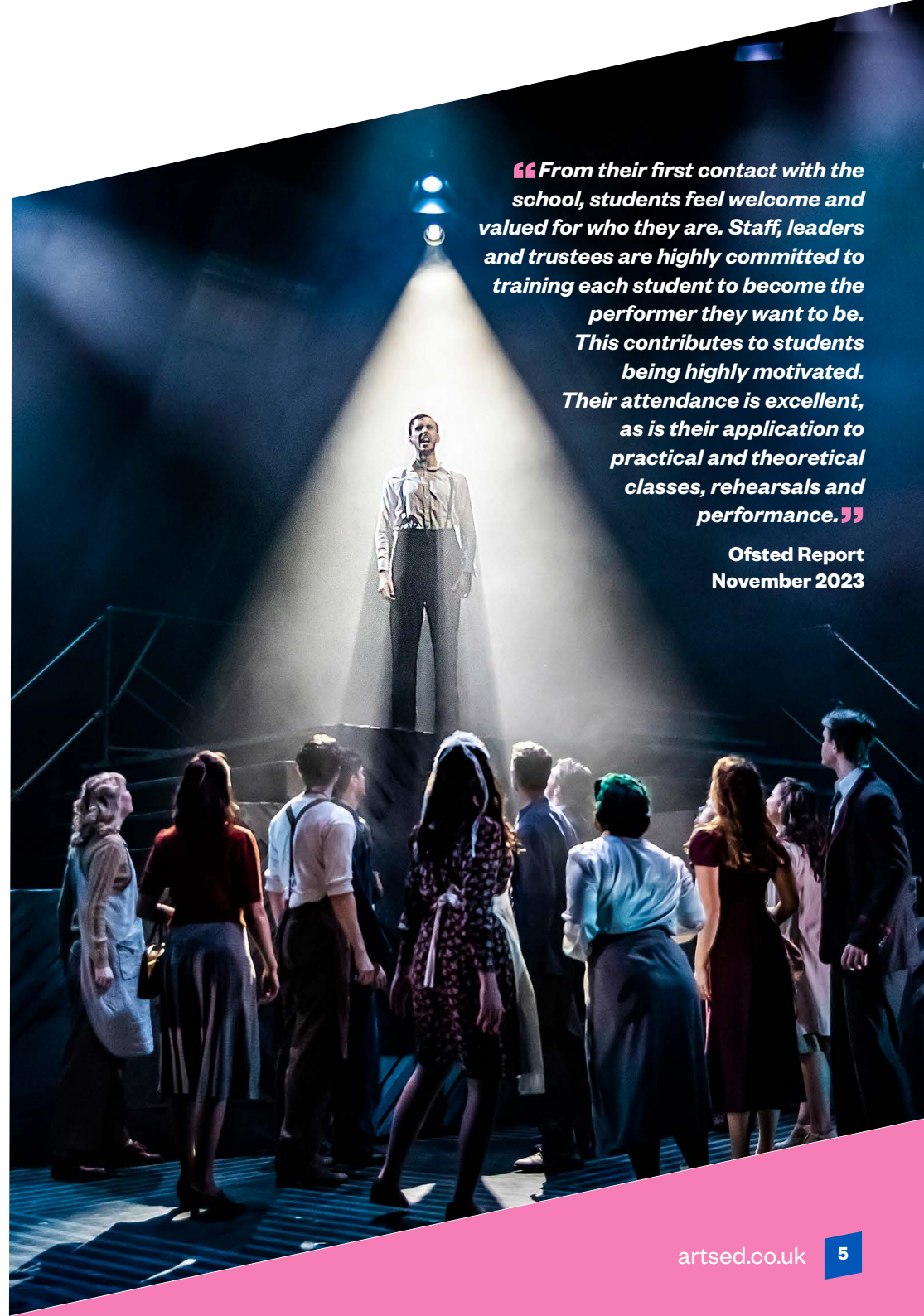
## ArtsEd Higher Education provision

ArtsEd is one of the UK's leading providers of degree-level conservatoire education. Our courses in musical theatre and acting provide outstanding contemporary and inclusive training, producing graduates who are innovative and resilient performers.

We prepare our students for both the physical and mental rigours of the performing arts industry, through a combination of outstanding vocational training and focused pastoral care. The success of our approach has led to ArtsEd graduates playing a key role in the success of the UK's creative economy for many years. They include leading choreographers, directors and producers as well as performers. Many of our graduates have received awards for their work, including most recently Tom Francis (2024 Olivier Award for Best Actor in a Musical for his performance in *Sunset Boulevard*) and Miriam-Teak Lee (2020 Olivier Award for Best Actress in a Musical for her performance in *&Juliet*).

The School of Musical Theatre and the School of Acting offer full-time CertHE and BA courses in addition to an MA Acting (all validated by City St George's, University of London) to close to 300 students from across the UK and internationally. Our musical theatre courses are renowned for producing graduates who are equally highly accomplished in acting, singing and dancing, whilst our acting training is noted for nurturing an individuality and broad skillset that enables our graduates to compete right across the sector in theatre, film, television and radio. For our 2022/23 cohort, over 90% of our final-year Acting students and all of our Musical Theatre students had secured agents before graduation.

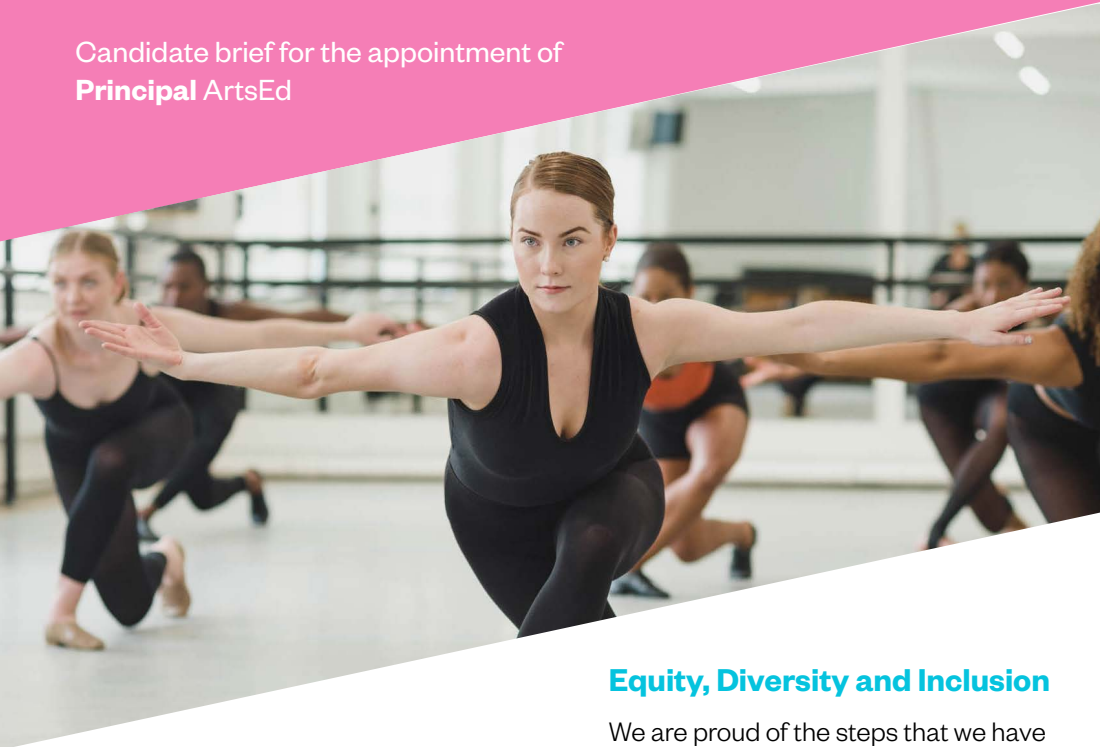
In autumn 2023, ArtsEd was awarded Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), confirming that our provision is of the highest quality and sector-leading. In November 2023, we were awarded 'Outstanding' across all areas following an Ofsted inspection of our Higher Education (DaDA funded) provision.



**“From their first contact with the school, students feel welcome and valued for who they are. Staff, leaders and trustees are highly committed to training each student to become the performer they want to be. This contributes to students being highly motivated. Their attendance is excellent, as is their application to practical and theoretical classes, rehearsals and performance.”**

**Ofsted Report  
November 2023**





## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

We are proud of the steps that we have taken and continue to take to create and nurture an inclusive environment at ArtsEd, one in which we want all staff to feel that they are treated with fairness and have equal opportunities. We constantly strive to ensure that inclusivity and diversity sit at the heart of everything we do. We were a founding partner of the Diversity School Initiative, which addressed under-representation and the lack of diversity in performing arts education, and in 2019 we won an Industry Minds award for our approach to mental health awareness, support and action.

We are empathetic to the needs of all staff and students and our work to understand and address issues of equality, inclusivity and diversity is continuous. We have EDI officers working with students and staff at every level of the organisation. Training is

ongoing and our EDI committee, made up of staff, students and trustees, meets regularly to maintain an overview of objectives and progress. We expect all ArtsEd staff and students to share this same commitment to equal opportunities on every level.

## Accessibility information

ArtsEd is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected. We recognise that the broad range of experiences that a diverse staff and student body brings strengthens our work and enhances our teaching, and that for ArtsEd to remain world-leading in a performing arts education, we must continue to

provide a diverse, inclusive, fair and open environment that allows everyone to grow and flourish.

We offer the following amenities:

- Step-free access to the building, all key meeting rooms and bathrooms, and an accessible workstation.
- Accessibility dogs are welcome.
- Papers and materials can be presented in different formats.
- A sign language interpreter can be accessed for interviews.
- Working patterns and locations can be adjusted.

For more information about ArtsEd Equal Opps Policy, please read [here](#).

## Our Strategy

Our strategy for 2020-25 encompassed an exciting period in the history of ArtsEd. During this period we completed a major capital development, including building several new teaching and performance studios at the heart of the building. ArtsEd has shown great resilience in responding to a rapidly changing political and economic climate, including global events, notably the Covid-19 pandemic.

ArtsEd is now looking forward to forming a new strategy for the period 2025-30, to ensure that it continues to be modern, forward looking, resilient and financially sustainable, building on the high-quality work and dedication of our committed staff and students.



## Learn more about ArtsEd

- [Articles of Association](#)
- [Ofsted Report 2023](#)
- [ISI Inspection Report 2024](#)
- [ArtsEd Board and Committee Meetings 2023/24 and 2024/25](#)
- [Statutory Accounts 2022-23](#)
- [Strategic Plan](#)
- [Teaching Excellence Framework](#)
- [Policies](#)
- [ArtsEd News](#)





# The Role

## Purpose of the role

Accountable to the Board of Trustees, the Principal is responsible for setting and agreeing the strategic direction, and for the financial sustainability of ArtsEd.

The Principal sets the cultural tone and lives the values of ArtsEd, working closely with the Senior Team to ensure the professional and collaborative development of the staff body. They will provide creative and inspirational leadership to ensure that ArtsEd attracts the best students through first class teaching, and through the provision of a safe and rewarding learning environment in which students and staff can achieve their set goals.

This role is for an outstanding individual who recognises the distinctiveness of ArtsEd's ethos and sees real value in the diversity of opportunities offered to its students to enable their individual development.

## Line management for:

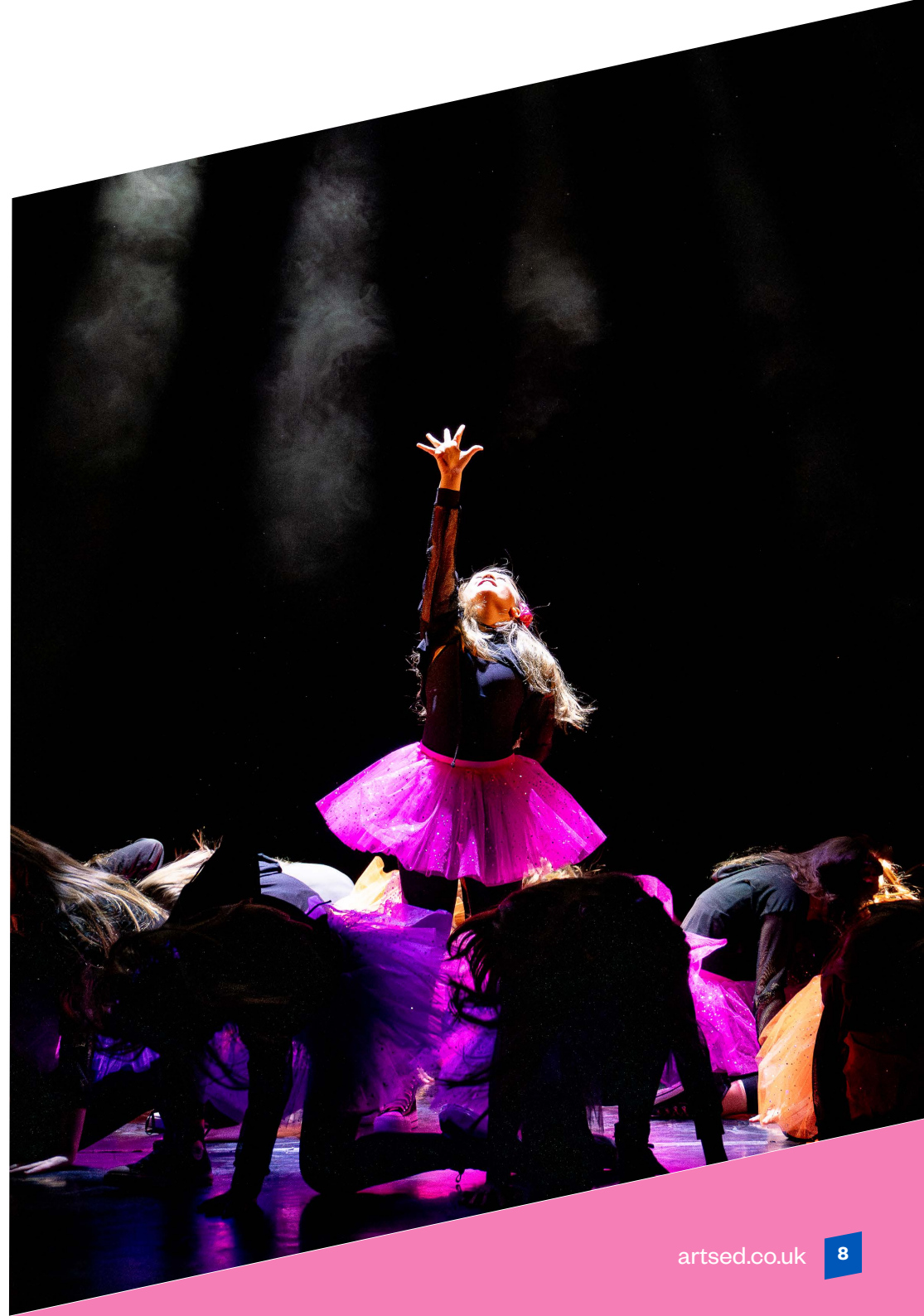
Senior staff including:

- Interim Director of HR
- Head of Facilities
- Director of Finance
- Head of Day School and Sixth Form (DSSF)
- Director of the School of Musical Theatre (Higher Education)
- Director of the School of School of Acting (Higher Education)

[odgersberndtson.com](http://odgersberndtson.com)

## Main duties and responsibilities

- To lead the strategic and academic development of ArtsEd.
- To develop a compelling vision for the future of ArtsEd.
- To lead the development and implementation of a new, transformational organisational strategy, to ensure that the organisation is modern, sustainable, adaptable and resilient to the local and global challenges posed in the mid 21st century.
- To work closely with the Chair of Trustees, giving appropriate updates and apprising the Chair of significant events as necessary.
- To lead and develop strategically senior leaders within ArtsEd in a manner that enables them to deliver effective, high quality, and sustainable provision in their specialist areas, and setting clear performance objectives.
- As Head of Provider, to be the Accountable Officer (OfS).
- To be accountable for the overall financial sustainability of ArtsEd, working closely with the Finance Director.
- To be a highly respected ambassador, voice, and face of ArtsEd, with a commitment to diversity, inclusion and outreach.







- To network and promote ArtsEd widely by developing and maximising the use of our wide-ranging facilities and other resources for educational, cultural, social, philanthropic and economic benefit.
- To promote ArtsEd's development activities, in order to build a strong portfolio of supporters who will contribute to the School's profile, reputation and future financial sustainability.
- To sustain and develop the highest academic and artistic standards, setting standards for innovation across all activity to ensure ArtsEd remains contemporary, progressive, and proactive and is recognised externally as a trail blazer and leading performing arts institution.

- To oversee and work strategically with the Head of the DSSF, to ensure the successful provision of an academic programme for students, aged 11 to 18, that meets the required standards and ensures continuous improvement of teaching and learning.
- To oversee and work strategically with the Directors of HE provision to ensure required academic and vocational standards are met and to ensure continuous enhancement of learning, teaching and the student experience.
- To build strong working relationships with the Board of Trustees, and to work with the Board and senior leaders to create and implement an action plan following the recent independent external investigation.

- To work with the Board of Trustees to ensure the most effective development of the ArtsEd infrastructure (physical and digital), in pursuit of academic excellence, an outstanding student experience, and the highest standard of industry leading professional practice.
- To ensure that ArtsEd has a robust critical incident plan, to demonstrate resilience in dealing with unexpected crises or challenging incidents, and to take a leading role in associated communication with stakeholders.
- To build strong working relationships with key partners, including City St George's University, Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation (ALWF), Industry professionals, and other Alliance of Musical Theatre Conservatoires (AMTC) institutions.
- To engage with, and actively participate in, sector bodies to influence educational and professional practices.

- To ensure with the support of the Board of Trustees that ArtsEd is able to meet all regulatory obligations and to ensure it builds strong transparent relationships with the relevant bodies eg. Charity Commission, OfS and ISI.
- To embrace and role model an inclusive leadership style and cultivate good leadership in others, providing an environment that encourages learning, growth, and development.
- To review the institution's culture and subsequently to lead strategies to deliver and embed organisational clarity, unity and sense of purpose in respect of culture and matters of EDI to all stakeholders.
- To work closely with the Director of HR in support of the wellbeing and development of staff and implementation of the HR strategy.



# The Individual

## Essential skills and attributes

- A demonstrable passion for the performance and creative arts which has been evidenced over a significant period of time.
- Academic/educational credibility, evidenced by, for instance, relevant leadership experience, a higher degree, research or innovation experience, external examiner roles or external accreditation/validation/advisor responsibilities.
- A successful track record of strategic leadership and operational management, gained at executive level, within a comparable organisation.
- An outstanding creative, strategic, and operational leader with the ability to think laterally, a commitment to the value of the arts and a passion for education, learning, training and vocational excellence.
- A visible, active and engaged leader with a proven track record of leading transformational change in an organisation.
- A distributive leadership style that builds on the strengths and expertise of others in their respective specialisms.
- A leader with exceptional interpersonal and communication skills, who has a track record of building trust-based relationships and delivering both institutional and personal credibility to internal and external stakeholders.
- A proven ability to motivate and inspire staff, pupils and students, and to create an atmosphere that is creative and dynamic.
- A passion for learner progression, creating an environment that nurtures young people to be innovative and to excel.
- A commitment to the welfare of children and young people as being at the heart of everything at ArtsEd, including an appreciation of their diverse individuality.
- A commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion within ArtsEd's pupil and student bodies, creatives, and staff, ensuring that ArtsEd continues to be one of the most accessible and diverse drama school in the country.
- Demonstrable ability to manage high performing teams through effective planning, setting priorities, delegation, and monitoring, with an empathetic and empowering leadership style and approach.
- The ability, proven through experience, to listen, be adaptable, approachable and collaborative, bringing clarity through informed decision making; creating a positive, pro-active, and dynamic approach to projects and problem solving.
- Financial understanding and commercial awareness, with a good appreciation of the current challenges facing the education and arts sectors.
- An effective understanding of independent secondary and higher education provisions, and, in both cases an appreciation of the unique regulatory requirements applicable to each.
- Entrepreneurial awareness with the ability to identify philanthropic and commercial opportunities.
- A willingness to explore new technology and digital trends.
- Drive, determination, and energy with a resilient nature.
- Integrity and a strong moral compass with the ability to make tough decisions when needed.
- Knowledge of, and total commitment to, the application of best practice in Safeguarding.





## Additional information

- The post holder must always carry out their responsibilities with due regard to ArtsEd's policies and procedures and should make recommendations for change when needed to support the effective governance of the institution.
- The post holder must respect the confidentiality of data stored electronically and by other means in line with the Data Protection Act.
- The post holder must ensure that all staff regularly undertake training, to include Safeguarding, Prevent, Code of Conduct and GDPR, to maintain their own professionalism and job-related knowledge through ongoing CPD.
- All staff must accept their responsibilities, adhere to, and promote throughout the school, the Staff Code of Conduct.
- The above list is not exhaustive, and the post holder will be required to undertake such duties as may reasonably be expected by the Chair of Trustees.
- The postholder must at all times work with personal integrity and not undermine the integrity or reputation of ArtsEd as an institution.



## How to apply

ArtsEd has engaged the services of Odgers Berndtson to assist with the recruitment of the next Principal.

The closing date for applications is **9am BST on Friday 11 October**.

Initial interviews with Odgers Berndtson will take place during the **weeks commencing 28 October and 4 November**. Candidates invited to the final stage will be invited to attend a briefing visit **week commencing 25 November and 2 December**, with final interviews **week commencing 9 December**.

In order to apply, please submit a comprehensive CV along with a covering letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria. Please include current salary details and the names and addresses of three referees. Referees will not be approached until the final stages and not without prior permission from candidates.

The preferred method of application is online at: [www.odgers.com/92137](http://www.odgers.com/92137).

All applications will receive an automated response.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process. This will assist the client in monitoring selection decisions to assess whether equality of opportunity is being achieved. Any information collated from the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Forms will not be used as part of the selection process and will be treated as strictly confidential.

For an initial discussion, please contact:

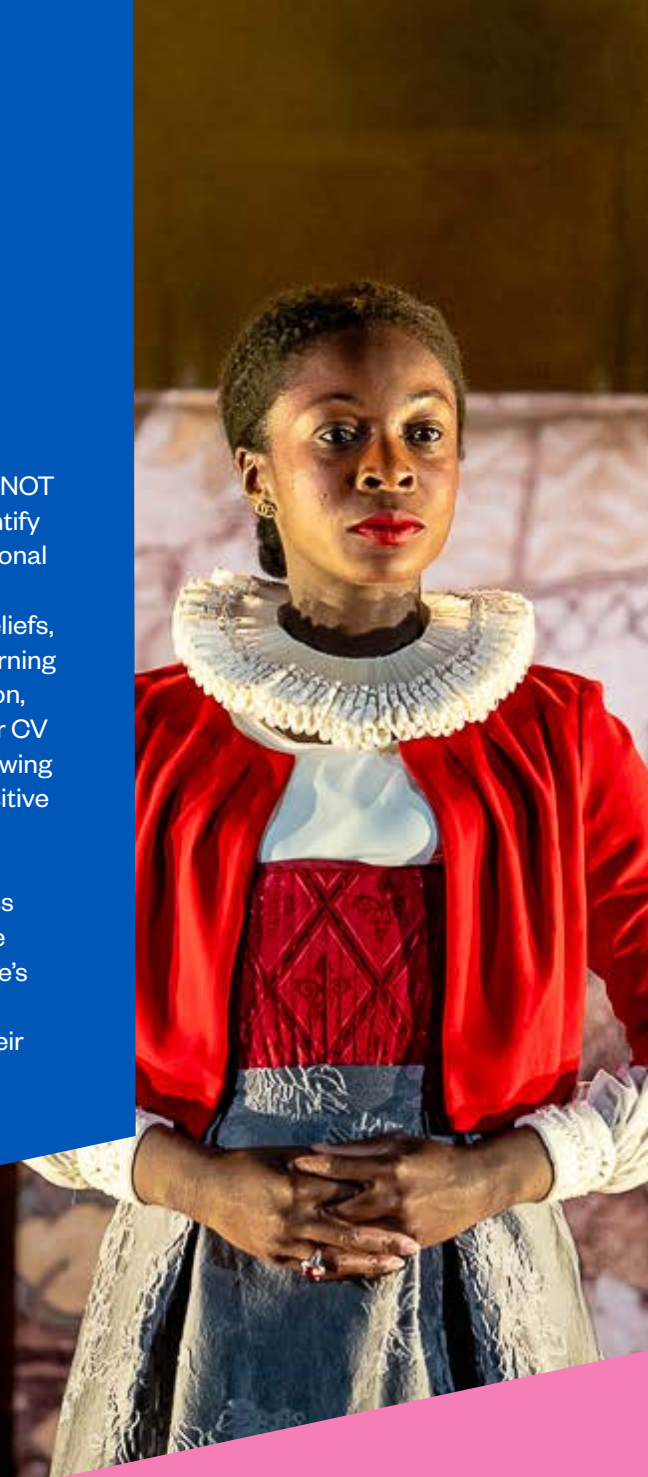
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### Personal data

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward. Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

*ArtsEd is committed to equal opportunities and maintaining a safe and secure environment for all pupils and a 'culture of vigilance' to safeguard and protect all in its care, and to all aspects of its 'Safeguarding (Child Protection and Staff Behaviour) Policy'. Please note, it is an offence to apply for this position if barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children. All employees are subject to pre-employment checks including a Disclosure and Barring Service check.*





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