



CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

A SCHOOL LIKE NO OTHER

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE GRADUATE DESIGNER IN RESIDENCE

Days at Christ's Hospital are completely varied and would appeal to someone who enjoys diversity.

Lessons here begin at 8.30am. If I am not teaching one of my 3 groups at this time, and I have all my lessons prepared for the week, I take the time to work on my own projects. The Design and Technology Department has been blessed with a very generous donor and because of this, the facilities available are incomparable. The department's offerings include a new suite of high-end 3D printers, 3D modelling software, CNC router, laser cutter, plasma cutter - the list goes on. The possibilities are, at times, overwhelming! I owe a great deal to our wonderful technician in the department for showing me the ropes and providing training on each machine.

During my time here, I have managed to bulk out my portfolio and home in on my own priorities and design style. It has truly been an excellent opportunity for which I will be forever be grateful.

Although daunting at first, the teaching side has become something to which I look forward each day. The students are funny, kind and just happy to be there. I teach groups of Years 7, 8 and 9. Before I begin each project, the staff make sure I am equipped with the skills to teach, and I am able to observe others these same lessons in advance. The support from the rest of the department is excellent and you will never have to do something for which you are not briefed or prepared. I have also found the projects I teach inspiring for my own work. I have come away with unexpected skills and knowledge.

My time spent with the Upper Sixth assisting with their projects and helping with prototyping has provided challenges that have seen me grow as a designer and significantly improve my skills. Daily, I am presented with engineering problems from a wide range of projects that has kept me on my toes and forced me to think about things from different perspectives. I have really appreciated this aspect of the role, and these students are always very appreciative of the help.

Twice a week I open the department in the evening for the Year 13 pupils to come in and do prep. This also acts as a drop-in session with me.

Another significant element of the role is a boarding house duty. Once a week, I am expected to sign pupils aged 11-17 into each meal and be on duty in a boarding house until they have gone to bed. Although this day is long, it has become one of my favourite days of the week. It is a pastoral role that has seen me face some challenging situations, but I am very grateful for the experience and relationships built with other

house staff and getting to know all the girls in house. I always leave with a smile on my face.

Staff at Christ's Hospital are also expected to lead or help with at least one extra-curricular 'active' a week. I have led tennis, netball, squash and hockey lessons however you could be doing anything from yoga to chess!

Other perks of the role are free meals every day, excellent accommodation, access to the gym, the library, long holidays and being on the doorstep of the South Downs. You are also given the opportunity to immerse yourself in the wider school community with offerings of chapel services, concerts and staff events.

Aside from the amazing facilities and opportunities the role has to offer, the school itself is an unique place in which to work. Christ's Hospital has to this day, maintained its ethos from 1553 by providing bursaries to underprivileged and disadvantaged children. As a result, the school body is made up of children from all walks of life who, without Christ's Hospital, would not have reaped the benefits of a first-class education. I have been really proud to be a part of this.

Fiona Blair, former Designer in Residence