

Teaching at Thames



Application Pack SENDCO for KS4 & KS5

The Thames Vision

At Thames we believe that the teenage years are a valuable time to lay a foundation for success in life. While academic achievement is crucial, we also emphasise the importance of learning how to make good choices, build positive relationships and develop the resilience to overcome challenges.






At the heart of our Christian ethos is the belief that each individual is valued. It is this that enables pupils to grow in confidence and maturity. Understanding who they are helps them to build positive relationships with others and be equipped for life and discover their identity and purpose.

The key to our success is the way that our staff take the time to understand every pupil both academically and personally to release their potential. Pupils develop the wisdom, confidence and resilience to become authentic leaders who are able to rise above challenges. They learn to make good choices and understand that every choice has consequences.

The development of excellent character is the essential partner to academic and social success. Our focus on developing personal qualities, integrity and interpersonal skills is evident to everyone who meets Thames pupils and it sets them apart when competing for school places and jobs. Historically the vast majority of our pupils were offered places at their first choice of sixth form. With the opening of our new sixth form in September 2023 many are now choosing to remain at Thames.



Our Aims

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|  | Individuality | Each pupil knows their innate value as an individual |
|  | Grounding | Each pupil embraces good character, personal responsibility and academic challenge |
|  | Direction | Each pupil cultivates a sense of purpose both within and beyond the school community |
|  | Wisdom | Each pupil understands how to make positive choices, develops understanding of the world and leads with humility |
|  | The Journey | Each pupil recognises and becomes passionate about nurturing their gifts, skills and talents in preparation for life |

Our Values

We value compassion, respect, courage, openness, proactivity and diligence.



The School

Thames is a thriving mainstream school of 200 pupils founded in 2000 for pupils aged 11-18, currently with a two stream entry. In February 2022 the school moved to a brand new eco-friendly purpose-built building adjacent to Clapham Junction Station that has been designed to provide the perfect environment for learning. Classrooms are accessed from exterior walkways bringing light, connection and fresh air to every part of the building. Classroom layouts have been strategically designed to enhance our ability to maintain our outstanding commitment to the ethos and culture. The move enables the school to expand to three stream entry with a sixth form being added in September 2023 and an eventual roll of around 300. The school was judged Excellent in all categories by the Independent Schools Inspectorate in its Educational Quality Inspection in April 2022.

We teach pupils of a broad range of abilities: highly academic pupils alongside some with mild specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia. Many parents choose Thames for its strong and caring Christian ethos. Fees are competitive when compared with other London day schools and the school is committed to discounting a significant number of places to aid affordability. The inclusivity of abilities, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds enables pupils to thrive in a setting that reflects the diverse and dynamic make up of London.



Our Christian ethos is relational and pupils thrive due to proactive pastoral care and excellent relationships between staff and pupils. Progress and achievement are prized across the ability spectrum. Working collaboratively is fundamental to each pupil's success and we value the support of our parents. Whilst many pupils come from Christian families, other faiths are welcomed and represented.

The staff team comprises excellent teachers who are passionate about their subjects and whose warmth fosters enthusiasm in the pupils. High quality teaching and small classes enable the teachers to build a rapport with each individual, nurture their talents and inspire them to achieve.

As a result pupils excel in a wide range of subjects from the traditionally academic to the creative arts and technology. Pupils typically perform at least a grade higher than those of the same ability in an average school. Over the past three years 47% of GCSE grades have been 9-7 and 90% of grades 9-4.

However we are passionate about far more than academics and enjoy seeing young people understand their value, learn to honour and encourage others and contribute to the wider school community.



Pupils participate in a rich programme of co-curricular activities, external events, competitions and local and international trips including a trip to Tanzania, where they work alongside villagers in one of the poorest areas of the world to bring them clean water and health. This trip won the Independent Schools Association Award: Outstanding Contribution to International Understanding.

All staff play a part in these aspects of the school's life, with opportunities to lead activities and to develop interests old and new, in school and on visits both in the UK and abroad.

Why work at Thames?

A warm and welcoming atmosphere characterises the school and the mutual support of the team is immediately evident. Expectations of staff are high, but equally, personal workloads are carefully considered by the supportive leadership team. The planned growth of the school affords significant opportunities for career development and further responsibilities. The small mixed ability classes, with some needing additional support, means that teachers become highly skilled. Staff derive a great sense of satisfaction in seeing pupils grow and succeed.

All teaching staff are supported by an approachable leadership team and there is a well considered CPD programme. Thames has a strong track record of mentoring ECTs. Career progression is evidenced by the fact that several of our senior teachers started their teaching careers at Thames.



We have a stable staff team with a lower than average turnover. Support staff and teaching staff are equally valued for their part in the overall success of the school and there is a strong sense of camaraderie and fun.

People enjoy working at Thames!

Our staff say:

- *“I like seeing children flourish and respond to the opportunities given.”*
- *“I enjoy the supportive, caring and flexible management team combined with high expectations of pupils and staff to work together as a team and individuals.”*
- *“We thrive on mentoring because we are trusted to do our job and we get the support to improve and adapt to changes. It is easy to follow advice from people who also work hard and have your best interests at heart.”*
- *“We work hard and we are rewarded with quality time to do our job to the best level.”*
- *“I love it, as I can actually teach without being interrupted.”*
- *“I admire the Head’s vision for a left-field, quirky, creative, genre-defying place.”*
- *“I really like the Google techiness.”*
- *“I like the love for the 'whole child' and the value placed on the deeper agenda of growing citizens of the future rather than just schooling for grades, which is depressing and destructive.”*

Person Specification

This post is from September 2024 and is full time although consideration would be given to applicants willing to work 0.8 FTE.

We are looking for a professional with a commitment to working in a CReSTeD registered mainstream school with high standards and a distinct Christian ethos. Some pupils have mild specific learning needs, most commonly dyslexia. A small number of pupils may have other diagnoses such as ASD, ADD or ADHD. A very small number have EHCPs.

You will have:-

- Relevant SpLD qualifications including those required to determine access arrangements for KS4 and KS5 public exams
- Experience of supporting SEND pupils at KS4 and KS5
- An affinity with young people, a commitment to their safeguarding and welfare and a desire to see them thrive
- The ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with pupils
- The ability to communicate well with stakeholders including parents.
- Experience of liaising with local authorities and conducting annual reviews for pupils with EHCPs
- The ability to direct and develop in class learning support assistants and specialist learning support teachers
- Experience of a range of teaching strategies and assessment strategies in particular differentiation strategies for mixed ability classes
- A commitment to continuous professional development
- High personal standards of integrity, conduct, punctuality and dress
- A strong attention to detail and excellent planning skills
- A willingness to be involved with school events and to engage with the wider school community.

You will be:-

- Supportive of the school's Christian ethos and values of respect, compassion, courage, openness, diligence and proactivity
- Able to respond constructively to coaching, mentoring and feedback
- Emotionally resilient
- Able to lead a team and work alongside the wider school community
- Willing to take on specific projects and see them through to completion
- Positive, flexible, motivated and humble
- Well organised and skilled with time management.

Role

The post holder is responsible to the Head for the provision for KS4 and KS5 pupils with SEND within the context of the school's Christian ethos.

Job Description

In order to fulfil the role, the post holder should expect to carry out the following:

- Develop and oversee support for pupils in KS4 and KS5 with a range of learning difficulties, guiding the in class learning support assistants towards effective support as appropriate
- Work alongside the KS3 SENDCO
- Work with subject teachers, class tutors, learning support teachers and school leadership team in the planning, preparation, support and delivery of programmes of learning
- Train, motivate and communicate good practice in SpLD awareness to all members of staff
- Maintain the SEND and EAL registers
- Liaison between local authorities, the school and parents regarding any EHCP pupils including the planning and organising of annual reviews.
- Maintain the records of pupils' progress
- Assist the pupils to have access to the full Thames Christian School curriculum using the school resources including assessing and applying for public exam access arrangements
- Remain current with the latest regulations regarding access arrangements for public exams including attending relevant annual CPD training sessions.
- Keep professional qualifications up to date
- Work with staff to promote pupils' self esteem and social and educational welfare
- Contribute to the pastoral care via the pastoral care team
- Contribute to the development of the school in conjunction with the Head and Senior Leadership Team.

Wider Responsibilities

- Contribute to the maintenance of the school ethos including standards of discipline
- Uphold the policies of the school including the Safeguarding policy
- Carefully follow the procedures of the school, including ensuring Health and Safety and Safeguarding procedures are followed at all times
- Attend parents' meetings and other school events such as open days, plays, concerts, etc as part of supporting the wider work and activity of the school
- These may from time to time take place on a Saturday or in the evening
- Participate in INSET days and staff meetings.

The above list is illustrative rather than exhaustive and the person appointed must expect to undertake other tasks and duties as may, from time to time, be requested by the Head.

SEND at Thames

Thames is a mainstream school with provision for a small number of pupils with mild Specific Learning Difficulties such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or dyscalculia. Our excellent learning support for these pupils is recognised by the Council for the Registration of Schools Teaching Dyslexic Pupils (CReSTeD) at withdrawal level. At the CReSTeD re-registration visit in February 2023 the consultant noted *“Thames should be a blueprint for all schools aiming to meet the needs of mainstream students, alongside those with additional learning needs.”* Thames has since become a permanent member of the CReSTeD pre-registration committee in recognition of this approach.

As part of an inclusive approach within the school, the SEND team work in close collaboration with subject teachers to equip them to use dyslexia friendly strategies in the classroom. Teachers are expected to differentiate appropriately within lessons to take into account the learning needs of each pupil, so that they are both supported and challenged to achieve. As pupils progress through the school, the support/challenge ratio will vary. The aim is for pupils to have increasing knowledge and strategies that they can use for independent learning by the time they leave the school.

We expect all of our pupils to take GCSEs, although some pupils may take fewer than others. The specialist assessments for access arrangements for public exams are carried out within school by the SEND team, where qualified. Some pupils have one to one tuition which is provided by specialist learning support staff in English, literacy and mathematics. A handful of pupils receive one to one EAL support and a very small number receive professional support from a visiting occupational or speech and language therapist. A few pupils also may also have in class support from a learning support assistant. There are a very small number of pupils who have EHCPs. SEND in Key Stage 3 is overseen by a Level 7 qualified SENDCO.



Salary, Hours and Benefits

Salary will be dependent on the responsibilities of the position and the experience and qualifications of the successful candidate. Salaries are reviewed each year to ensure they remain competitive. Salaries are paid by BACS transfer on or around the 27th of each month, or the previous working day, in twelve equal payments.

Hours

Staff are expected to be in school for 8.00am and the school day ends at 5.00pm (4.00pm on Fridays). However staff are expected to work as required to fulfil the duties of this role both before and after school hours. Staff may be allowed some flexibility over actual hours worked in school to suit their lifestyle and family commitments.

Benefits include:

Staff Fee Remission: staff are eligible for fee remission, part-time staff are eligible to a reduction on a pro-rata basis. The continuance of school fee remission after a teacher has left a position is at the discretion of the Head.

Workplace Nursery: the new building includes a workplace nursery to cater for preschool children aged two years and older. Currently all payments made for childcare in a workplace nursery are tax deductible and by offering childcare 39 weeks of the year around, school hours staff will make significant financial savings on childcare.

Enhanced sick pay arrangements: the school offers additional support to staff via its sick and family friendly policies.

Private Medical Insurance: full time staff are eligible to join the school's private medical insurance with BUPA with premiums paid by the school. Part time staff may have the premiums paid pro-rata. All staff may extend the cover to their families at their own expense.

Employee Assistance Programme provided by BUPA Healthy Minds: all staff have access to this service.

Pension Scheme: staff are automatically enrolled into a pension scheme administered by Scottish Widows. Employer contributions may be supplemented by employee contributions but this is entirely at the discretion of the employee.

Subsidised Lunches: Delicious and healthy lunches cooked fresh each day on site by the school's chef. Daily offerings include meat and vegetarian options, street food, homemade bread, soup, salads, pudding, fruit and yoghurt pots.

Chromebooks: staff have the use of a Chromebook laptop computer.

Application

To apply for post that is being advertised

Fully completed application forms, together with your CV, should be returned to the school by post or by email to vacancies@thameschristianschool.org.uk as soon as possible. Our standard application form must be completed, CVs on their own will not be considered. Applications will be considered on receipt and interviews may occur at any stage.

Equal Opportunities

It is the policy of Thames Christian School to provide equal opportunities for all qualified individuals regardless of race, colour, religion, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, age, gender, medical condition or disability.

Safeguarding

Candidates should be aware that all posts in the school involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and therefore, all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those as “spent” must be declared. The successful candidate will be required to complete a Disclosure & Barring Service application. References will be sought on short-listed candidates and we may approach previous employers for information to verify particular experience and qualifications. Online checks will be carried out on all short-listed candidates as part of our due diligence. The successful candidate will also be required to provide original certificates of qualifications and may be required to undergo a medical examination prior to the post being confirmed.

Location

Thames is on Grant Road just a minute’s walk from the rear exit of the highly accessible transport hub of Clapham Junction (Zone 2) with its excellent rail connections from Victoria, Waterloo and many parts of both North and South London and the London Overground network.

