



## Working at Willowfield

What is it like to work at Willowfield?



April 2023

## Staff Profiles

### Tasrin Shahana

Assistant Head Teacher



I have been Assistant Headteacher at Willowfield since April 2022. This is my first Senior Leader role, having been Head of English and Head of Year in the past. My journey here so far has been incredible, the welcoming nature of the school community and the support to fulfil your role makes me really excited about what the future will hold. The upbeat attitude of our staff and students, the willingness to grow, adapt and learn as a school but most importantly knowing you are making a difference and impact regardless of your role as everyone's contribution is valued and appreciated. **Willowfield is a fantastic place to discover the teacher you want to be and educate students who will challenge you but also make you feel proud. I am proud to be an Assistant Headteacher at Willowfield, a wonderful place to shape the senior leader I want to be.**

### Ben Holbrook

Assistant Head Teacher



At Willowfield I have been supported and encouraged to grow and develop, both as a teacher and a leader. Through a coaching ethos and well-designed CPD I have been encouraged to reflect on my practice, and have received high quality mentoring and support from line managers, and other members of SLT including the Headteacher. I continue to be inspired by the amazing teachers, support staff and students who show incredible compassion, commitment, resilience, and determination. I love the sense of community and how we serve the community, especially the young people in it. **Willowfield is a compassionate school that cares for people and is driven by our mission to improve life chances. I feel proud and fortunate to be a member of this extraordinary group of staff and students.**

### Sadaf Ahmedzai

Subject Leader



I chose to begin my teaching career at Willowfield as an NQT because my personal values about education fell in line with the school's - which is centred around developing young people as great citizens. The school does a great job at infusing this in the whole school curriculum and into the learning experiences of every child. Due to the great support and encouragement, I was soon promoted to a middle leader role as subject leader of citizenship, where I developed my leadership and strategic management skills. The staff are always friendly, welcoming and incredibly supportive of each other. It makes for a positive, inclusive and stimulating atmosphere to work in. **What I love most about working at Willowfield is how diverse we are. Being exposed to the different cultures, languages, and customs makes the experience of working here very unique and highly rewarding.**

## Staff Profiles

### Mili Prakash

#### Curriculum Leader Maths



I met the Headteacher in an SLE interview, and began working with our partner primary schools continuing to build positive relationships, not only at Willowfield, but across the West Walthamstow partnership. Due to the support of the school and their belief in me, I applied for the position as Curriculum leader of Maths. This is a journey I never thought I'd take, but glad I did as now I am starting to see the desired impact of my role as a leader and leading my team. Everyday is different! I love those moments when the kids just get it and something clicks!

**There is always someone to talk to! Staff are approachable and I've had fantastic support and guidance from my line manager.**

### Usman Loonat

#### Maths Teacher



I joined Willowfield as cover supervisor in November 2007, just as I began my part-time degree in Mathematics. I started Willowfield as a shy individual, however within a few years, I felt more confident as I could sense the value others saw in me. In 2016 I was offered an opportunity to qualify as a Mathematics teacher via the Assessment only Route and was given ample support during my first few years. I felt fully supported within the maths department and my views were always taken on board. I love the diversity of both the staff and pupils at Willowfield. It is so nice to hear about the different experiences our pupils go through.

**One thing I enjoy, is the challenge of getting young people to an even better place than they are now. I am proud of the positive relationships I have formed with both staff, pupils and parents/carers.**

### Lionel Morgan

#### Achievement Leader (AL)



My Willowfield journey began in February 2018, working with students in years 10 and 11 as Assistant Achievement Leader (AAL). After a year of working as an AAL, I was encouraged to apply for the role of AL when an opportunity came up. I successfully transitioned into the post and further developed my role through safeguarding training. Our Senior leadership team are very accessible and open to conversations, meetings and guidance. They have supported me through discussing possible pathways and how to progress in my career. As part of my journey into safeguarding the headteacher met with me and encouraged me to explore pathways. They are always visible which creates a safe and calm environment. I was always passionate about keeping young people safe. I have since been supported with formal training and mentoring in this role.

**Willowfield has real warm and a family atmosphere. I've never worked in a school that cares about its young people like this place does. I've also learned that this is not by accident, this is part of the culture of our school.**

## Staff Profiles

### Emma Aherne

#### Exams and Careers Officer



I started at Willowfield in 2019 as examinations officer. Only six months into my role I was offered the opportunity to expand my skillset and work alongside the Careers Leader taking on the dual role of Examinations and Careers Officer. Willowfield encouraged and supported me in undertaking a Level 6 Career Development Professional Apprenticeship, a qualification that would enable me to expand my horizons further and take on the career interviews within the school, giving me a chance to support our students throughout the last years of their secondary education in both their upcoming examinations and helping to guide them in finding their future career path. Willowfield gave me the belief that I could take on new challenges and have continued to support me within my development. With encouragement from my Line Manager and the Senior Leadership Team,

**Willowfield offers a great programme that supports staff wellbeing. The strong leadership team encourages staff to continue with personal self-development giving opportunities for staff to grow and flourish within the school.**

### Dante Birthwright

#### IT Technician



I spent my education in Waltham forest, and as I got closer to end of my college course I decided university was not the next step for me, so my teachers suggested that I try to do an apprenticeship instead. I saw an advert for Willowfield and thought this would be perfect for me because it was the best way to transfer into a work environment. One of the main benefits I liked about being an apprentice was the balance of being able to learn and work and feel like it is the best way to progress for me. I have now completed my apprenticeship and I am a Full time IT technician. Being at Willowfield has done a lot for me to evolve as a person, I feel much more confident speaking to people, it has helped me to be more empathetic towards others, especially towards younger people since I have now had a better understanding of them. I also really love my department, they have been especially helpful with developing my skills, always willing to demonstrate how certain tasks are done and never made me feel inferior when I don't know.

**My favourite part of working at Willowfield is the people. From the moment I have started the staff have always been very friendly and welcoming**