

Brief for the position of
Head of English
Tonbridge School
September 2021



TONBRIDGE
SCHOOL



Winner: Independent Boys' School of the Year 2019
(Independent Schools of the Year Awards:
'Celebrating student experience').



“*A thriving, top-of-its-game, all-boys boarding and day school ...
One of the finest campuses we've come across*”
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About Tonbridge School



Tonbridge School is one of the leading boys' boarding and day schools in the country and is renowned, both in the UK and internationally, for providing a world-class education.

The School aims to provide a caring and enlightened environment in which the talents of each individual flourish. We encourage boys to be creative, tolerant and to strive for academic, sporting and cultural excellence. Respect for tradition and an openness to innovation are equally valued.

The School has a distinctive mixture of boarders and day boys and enjoys superb indoor and outdoor facilities on a 150-acre site, which lies only 40 minutes by train from central London.

Pastoral care at Tonbridge is based around an outstanding House system. Strong and positive relationships between boys, staff and parents are central to its success, and the School strives to ensure that each pupil, whether a boarder or a day boy, feels fully at home and well supported. A culture of House dining supports the family ethos.

There is also a strong ethos of social responsibility, and boys at Tonbridge develop a keen sense of belonging to their community.

Ultimately, the School prepares its boys for entering the adult world equipped with the knowledge and self-belief to fulfil their own potential and to become leaders in their chosen field. In the words of the great novelist and Old Tonbridgian E.M. Forster: 'Only Connect'.

Location

Tonbridge was ranked "the happiest place to live in the south east" in property expert Rightmove's latest annual survey in 2020, a study which looked at factors including community, local services, environment and green spaces.

There are plenty of areas of historic interest to explore nearby, including Tonbridge Castle, Penshurst Place, Ightham Mote, Knole Park, Chartwell and a number of National Trust sites. A little further afield are Hadlow Tower, Chiddingstone Castle and numerous places for country walks.

It is a short drive to the neighbouring towns of Sevenoaks, Royal Tunbridge Wells and West Malling. The extensive River Medway flows through the town of Tonbridge, with regular boat trips on offer around some of the hidden parts of the town.

Did you know the town even has some intriguing Jane Austen links?
'Kent is the only place for happiness'
Jane Austen, 8 December, 1798.

Tonbridge and transport

Tonbridge School is situated on a campus of 150 acres in the town of Tonbridge in West Kent. The school is placed at the top of the High Street and is surrounded by beautiful Kent countryside. Rail links to mainline stations in London are excellent, with the journey into the capital taking approximately 40 minutes. The M25 and M20 are a short drive from the School. Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted airports are easily reached, as are the Channel Tunnel and ferry terminals.



Working at Tonbridge

“ I enjoy teaching Maths, in a talented and committed Department, to talented students ... many of whom are going to progress to university courses and careers where they will use these skills
Ian Jackson, Head of Mathematics ”



Tonbridge has an outstanding record of developing staff and promoting good practice. If you are excited about teaching, you should consider this opportunity.

Professional development is regular, supported and actively encouraged. In addition to leading a new academic department, outside the classroom you will support one of the seven boarding or five day Houses and get to know the boys in a different environment.

Your co-curricular involvement will depend on your expertise, with a huge range of sport and cultural activities taking place throughout the week across Tonbridge's many fantastic facilities.

Opportunities will also be available to engage with the School's extensive trips programme during the holidays, both in the UK, Europe and further afield.

Remuneration and Benefits

- The Tonbridge Salary scale is highly competitive (approximately £32k-£65k) with new members of staff starting at the point on the salary scale which is appropriate to their experience.
- Accommodation. May be available if required, with properties – from one-bedroom flats to large family homes, all within an easy walk of the school – allocated according to need. Successful candidates, who purchase their own property in the area, are offered a living out allowance.
- The School will contribute towards removal expenses for the successful candidate.
- Sons of permanent members of staff may be educated at reduced fees as boys at the School, subject to satisfaction of the entry requirements. A reciprocal arrangement exists with a local independent girls' school which enables the daughters of permanent members of staff to be educated there at reduced fees.
- Some local prep schools offer fee concessions for the children of Tonbridge staff.
- The School strongly encourages staff to attend CPD and provides a large budget to facilitate this.
- Membership of Teachers Pension Scheme.
- Private health insurance, on a group scheme.
- All teaching staff are provided with a laptop.
- Reduced membership rates of the Tonbridge School Centre (the sports centre) for staff and their families.
- Lunch is provided during term-time.

History & Facilities



History and Governance

Tonbridge School was founded in 1553 by Sir Andrew Judde, a distinguished member of the Worshipful Company of Skinners, one of the oldest City Livery Companies. Sir Andrew left property in the City of London and in the parish of St Pancras as an endowment for the School, with the Worshipful Company of Skinners assuming governance of Tonbridge following his death.

The Master and Wardens of the Skinners' Company remain the trustees of the School, though in recent years an independent Board of Governors has taken on responsibility for governance. The main buildings of the present school date from the second half of the nineteenth century, but there has been much further building in more recent years, including the magnificent restoration, completed in 1995, of the Chapel of St Augustine.

Facilities

Tonbridge has outstanding facilities. There is a dedicated Music school and an Art and DT centre, while the E.M. Forster Theatre is often used for theatrical and musical events for the general public as well as for School drama workshops, lessons and productions. The Smythe Library is a modern space, fully refurbished to support the teaching and learning needs of the whole School community. It provides a wide variety of resources for boys and staff, including more than 20,000 books, a wealth of online resources and WiFi access.

Tonbridge Alumni

Old Tonbridgians (OTs) embark on a variety of vocations once they leave the school, ranging from art, architecture, academia and education to science, business, sport and the performing arts. Tonbridge's career guidance and networking service is regarded as among the best on offer in schools across the country.

Journalists and writers educated at Tonbridge include novelists E.M. Forster, Frederick Forsyth and Vikram Seth. Scientists include Norman Heatley OBE, who turned penicillin into usable mass medicine, and Professor Derek Barton, a Nobel Prize Winner for Chemistry.

Well-known names in sport include former England cricket captain Colin Cowdrey and current national cricket selector Ed Smith. Ben Earl (rugby) and Zak Crawley (cricket) are both playing for their national sides, having left Tonbridge in 2016.

Among other alumni are actor Dan Stevens; members of the best-selling band Keane; documentary film-maker Vikram Jayanti; former ambassador Sherard Cowper-Coles; prominent scholar Owen Chadwick; entrepreneur Tim Waterstone; financier Sir John Bond, and historian Sir Anthony Seldon.



Facilities

“The boys have plenty of opportunities to pursue their love of learning at Tonbridge”
Phil Deakin, Head of Science



In 2019, the School opened the Barton Science Centre (pictured), a £20m, state-of-the-art building which places science and technology at the very heart of the school. The three-storey centre combines new classrooms and latest technology with many original architectural features.

Our cricket, rugby and football pitches are among the finest in the country: in particular, The Fifty (rugby) and The Head (cricket) are renowned far and wide. World-class facilities are also on offer at the Tonbridge School Centre, a major sports hub for the region which features an award-winning pool, a large fitness suite and superb athletics track. It includes a five-court sports hall and facilities for fencing and martial arts.

The centre has been used by the Australian Olympic team and has formed a training base for Saracens and Harlequins rugby clubs, as well as for England Hockey. It has floodlit clay tennis courts, astroturf pitches for hockey, a climbing wall, outdoor basketball courts and rackets courts, among many other facilities.

A fundamental aim is to develop in Tonbridgians a lifelong love of sports and of taking part, an achievement which can be measured in the sheer number of students who continue to play sport at university and beyond.



“Boys love the sense of community and family their Houses offer, while parents value the way meals are all served and prepared in-house, with boys and staff eating together”
Tatler Schools Guide



Academic Life

Tonbridge is renowned for its high-quality, innovative teaching and learning. Exam results at GCSE and A-level are outstanding. In 2020, 95 per cent of all GCSE / IGCSE results were at Grades 9, 8 and 7, the equivalent to A* or A: this was the School's strongest performance on record. At A-level, more than 70 per cent of all results were A*/A, and 93 per cent of grades were A*, A or B (or their Pre-U equivalent).

Each year boys progress to leading universities in the UK and worldwide, including Oxbridge. The large majority of leavers achieve their first-choice higher education destination. A significant number now choose to study abroad, particularly in the USA, attending a range of prestigious universities.



“I am often moved by the profound sense of community, support and camaraderie that we have here”
James Priory, Headmaster

Head of Department

The House System

Tonbridge has seven boarding and five day Houses. Boys identify strongly with their House in their time at Tonbridge, eating their meals together and taking part in an extensive programme of House competitions, including those for sport, music, art and debating.

All the Houses have their own buildings, with study and recreation areas. Each Boarding House has its own resident Housemaster, Matron and several House tutors, all of whom look after the boys.



Co-Curricular Life

A Tonbridge education includes a vibrant programme of co-curricular breadth and depth. Wide participation in activities is encouraged at both House and school levels.

The School offers a wide range of activities through clubs and societies, musical and dramatic groups and the popular Combined Cadet Force (CCF). There are more than 20 societies, including Junior Science, Beekeeping, Rocketry, Debating, Robotics and Conservation – the latter includes coppicing and looking after pigs! Bridge The Gap was started by boys at the school and is about diversity. Creative Writing is thriving and sees regular trips to the Arvon Foundation. We offer more than 20 sports, and boys of all abilities are encouraged to take part and to enjoy themselves.

The Head of English and This Post

The Governors of Tonbridge School wish to appoint a new Head of English to start in September 2021. The successful candidate will have studied English to degree level and should have a strong background in teaching the subject across the whole of the required 13-18 age range and be able to prepare candidates for Oxbridge entry.

The successful candidate will lead a department comprising eight experienced subject specialists. The department, located in its own Victorian mansion-house building, has interactive digital televisions and Wi-Fi access in all classrooms. English is taught to all pupils in Year 9 and at GCSE level, with all boys studying the Edexcel IGCSE Language and Literature syllabuses in Year 10 and 11. Numbers at sixth form level are traditionally strong too, typically four sets of ten or twelve boys per year group, with many boys pursuing the subject at university level once they have left Tonbridge at Oxbridge and other top universities.

Results at GCSE and Sixth form level are impressive, with 81% of our year 11 candidates in Literature and 97% in Language securing a Grade 8 or 9 at IGCSE. At OCR A Level the boys this year achieved 38% A*s and 73% A*/A grades.

The predominant mode of teaching in the department is discussion-based, with individual teachers free to make their own choices of syllabus texts.

A rich co-curricular programme of theatre trips and other activities such as extension classes, reading competitions, debates, creative writing publications and visiting speakers contribute to the intellectual life of the department. The English Society attracts internationally respected speakers, with Simon Armitage, Jeanette Winterson and Germaine Greer all having spoken in recent years. Creative writing is a nationally-recognised strength of the department, with boys in recent years having won nationwide competitions such as the Ledbury and Foyle prizes. There is an annual creative writing trip to the Arvon Foundation, as well as departmental literature trips to Dublin. The successful candidate should have a proven track record for contributing to the enrichment programme in their current departments and schools in a similar fashion.



“Boys have access to a wealth of experiences and opportunities in the arts, sport and teaching, introducing them to new passions from day one
Josie McNeil, Lower Master

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Job description for Head of Department

Reporting to: Deputy Head Academic and ultimately the Headmaster.



MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Heads of Department are responsible, through the Deputy Head Academic, to the Headmaster for the efficient running and management of the Department. They should attend all meetings of the Heads of Department Committee and liaise with the Deputy Head Academic concerning policy-making, general academic issues, staffing problems and requirements, classroom needs and the development of resources, etc. They should also liaise with the Director of Learning and Academic Enrichment regarding teaching and learning issues and the Second Master regarding professional development of staff in their department.

Within this wide brief there are several major areas of responsibility, including Health and Safety, and many specific tasks. Appropriate delegation of some of these functions to experienced departmental colleagues is permissible and to be encouraged but the Head of Department has ultimate responsibility for them. They include the following (not all of which fit easily within the four categories used):

1) Management of pupils

Heads of Department should:

- a) Ensure that organisational information is communicated clearly and effectively to pupils (e.g. information about examination courses, coursework requirements and deadlines, examination dates).
- b) Monitor the progress and performance of pupils in their department (e.g. through discussions with Housemasters and colleagues, internal reporting system, internal examinations, block tests, etc).
- c) Ensure that departmental policy on behaviour and discipline is consistent with, and upholds, school practice.
- d) Produce set lists when appropriate, and monitor setting arrangements over the year.
- e) Ensure that preps within the department are set and marked regularly, and in accordance with school and departmental policy.
- f) Explain and monitor as necessary departmental use of all school systems of encouragement and punishment, e.g., Commendations, Distinctions, subject prizes, departmental and school detentions.
- g) Gather information on university courses in their subject areas, and offer advice and guidance to pupils applying for appropriate university courses.
- h) Establish links with, and liaise with as appropriate, both Prep Schools and Universities.
- i) In consultation with the Deputy Head Academic, Director of Learning and Academic Enrichment and those members of CR in charge of Oxbridge oversee Oxbridge applications from the department and the provision of Oxbridge teaching.

- j) Ensure that pupils (and staff) in their department are aware of the School's policies and practices that specifically mention Heads of Department such as fire drill, complaints procedure, cheating at coursework, etc.

2) Management of staff

Heads of Department should:

- a) Hold regular departmental meetings.
These meetings should be used to update staff on curriculum and administrative details including changes of school policy and decisions taken at Heads of Department meetings, to exchange ideas and develop departmental policy, and to discuss and develop teaching practices and methods. Minutes of meetings should be taken and circulated to the Headmaster's PA, Deputy Head Academic, Director of Learning and Academic Enrichment and members of the department.
- b) Help in the development of staff in their department.
This would include the induction and monitoring of any new members of the department; appraisal of staff within the department; encouraging staff to attend external CPD training courses as necessary and appropriate; organising lesson observation of, and by, colleagues, both within the department and occasionally in other departments; encouraging continued training of all members of the department in the use of ICT in teaching. The Director of Learning and Academic Enrichment and/or the Second Master are available for advice in these matters.
- c) Organise the departmental timetable ensuring a fair, balanced and appropriate allocation of teaching sets within the department.
- d) Allocate departmental responsibilities as necessary and appropriate, e.g. responsibility for a society, etc.
- e) Organize the procedures for the appointment of new staff in consultation with the Headmaster and the Headmaster's PA.
- f) Organise and manage the work schedules and other commitments of any support and technical staff within the department.
- g) Ensure that they have fully familiarised themselves with the School's Health & Safety policy with regard to their department. They are required to take responsibility for implementing all Health & Safety requirements in their department as set out in that policy, particularly with regard to the identification of Health & Safety hazards, fire procedures and risk assessments'.
- h) Ensure that they familiarised themselves with School's Occupational Stress policy.

Staff Duties & Responsibilities



3) Curriculum issues

Heads of Department should:

- a) Establish and monitor programmes of study, producing schemes of work appropriate to each year group. Cross-curricular issues, including ICT, PHSEE and Study Skills, should be clearly indicated within the schemes of work.
- b) Establish appropriate examination specifications.
- c) Keep abreast of, and disseminate, national developments in the evolution of specifications, the curriculum and pedagogy.
- d) Maintain and promote an interest in their subject, for example by membership of subject associations.
- e) Ensure that departmental curricular aims are in line with whole school curricular aims.

4) Administration

Heads of Department should:

- a) Ensure the efficient administration of all paperwork and correspondence connected with their subject, including the documentation required for inspection, and develop and maintain a working knowledge of the school's ICT Administration system.
- b) Produce and update a departmental handbook annually, together with any other curriculum documentation requested by the Deputy Head Academic
- c) Write an annual report early in the academic year on the results of external examinations for the Headmaster and Deputy Head Academic.
- d) Carry out any necessary health and safety risk assessments.
- e) Organise the setting and marking of all internal examinations in their subject as appropriate, including Common Entrance, Tonbridge Scholarship at 13+ and LVIth entry tests.
- f) In liaison with the Examinations Officers and Deputy Head Academic deal with the paperwork connected with external examinations (entries, predictions, coursework, results and remarks).

- g) Manage the departmental budget and resources with a view to visual aids, ICT, books, equipment, CPD, etc.
- h) Monitor the physical state of the department, including the appropriate display of pupil work.
- i) Oversee the organisation of appropriate contests and competitions, lectures, societies, field trips, educational visits and conferences.

Pastoral

You will be assigned to a boarding or day house, where you will assist one of the tutors with a year group. A willingness to get involved and organise activities would be essential.

Other Duties

- being a member on a rotating basis of a team of five staff who carry out various supervisory duties as specified by the Second Master; including, for instance, supervising the road crossing outside the Avenue Entrance at 8.25 a.m., supervising the Orchard Centre Café during morning break, etc.
- Participating in the "Novi Visit" just after the end of the Lent Term unless engaged in other School activities at this time.
- Participating in the wider co-curricular life of the school.
- Other duties that the Headmaster or Senior Colleagues might reasonably request.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The successful candidate must maintain the confidentiality of information regarding the School, its staff and its business as sensitive and confidential materials are regularly handled in the department. Information must not be communicated to other persons either in or outside the School except in the recognised course of their duties.

Application Process

Tonbridge School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to any post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Applications forms, accompanied by a short letter of application, a current curriculum vitae, and the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of three referees via the online application form <https://www.tonbridge-school.co.uk/about/employment-opportunities> or via email as below.

Tel: 01732 365555 Ext: 4246

Email: schooladmin@tonbridge-school.org

Website: www.tonbridge-school.co.uk

Closing Date: Monday 18th January

Interviews: Week Beginning 18th January

We reserve the right to interview and appoint prior to the closing date for applications, so early applications are encouraged

Full details and an application pack may be found on the Employment Opportunities page of the website (<http://www.tonbridge-school.co.uk/contact-us/employment-opportunities/>).

A willingness to take part in the wider life of a boarding school is expected and candidates are asked to give an indication of their interests in their letter of application.

It is the post-holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom he or she is responsible, or with whom he or she comes into contact, and so to adhere to and ensure compliance with the school's Safeguarding Policy Statement at all times. If in the course of carrying out the duties of the post the post-holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school, he or she must report any concerns to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or to the Headmaster.

The selection process will typically involve

- Teaching a lesson
- A tour of the School
- An interview with the Headmaster and Second Master
- an interview with the Head of Faculty/Department and Deputy Head Academic

There will be an opportunity to meet other members of the faculty. If circumstances dictate, these interviews may be conducted virtually.

Details of the members of the Senior Team can be found on the website:

<https://www.tonbridge-school.co.uk/about/school-management/senior-team>



“There doesn't seem to be a typical Tonbridgian – some sporty, some less so, some musical, some not – but all seem to enjoy themselves, and the key seems to be to take part in everything”

Good Schools Guide



