



Hall Cross Academy

English Department

An overview for applicants

Dear applicant,

Thank you for considering applying for the position of English teacher at Hall Cross Academy; it is a successful department in a successful school.

One of the key attributes which sets this English department apart from others is the autonomy with which we are allowed to operate. Teachers do not follow a script or a prewritten scheme of work. Although there are medium term plans which outline the broad course of study and we share resources we have created, each teacher makes decisions about how to prepare students for half termly assessments. These decisions will be based on the particular progress needs of their class based on prior data, ability level and formative assessment.

There are approximately 18 teachers in the department currently, over half of which have more than 8 years of teaching experience and some with more than 20 years' experience. Consequently, we have a wealth of subject knowledge and pedagogical skill within the team. There is no complacency, however; everyone continues to improve in both areas through an extensive whole school CPD programme as well as subject specific sessions during department meetings and on training days.

The autonomy you will be afforded, alongside your teaching proficiency and extensive subject knowledge, mean that there is a high level of expectation. As a department we will support and challenge you to deliver quality in your lessons so that the students achieve the best outcomes.

This practice is in line with the school ethos of facilitating teachers to deliver in the most effective way possible. Additional tasks such as break duties, detention duties and form tutoring are not required of the regular classroom teacher, freeing you up to focus on your teaching.

In the latest Ofsted report, inspectors noted that "behaviour is calm around the school. Pupils are polite and friendly. Overwhelmingly, there are positive relationships between pupils and staff." As such, this is an excellent environment in which to build productive working relationships and to develop your teaching skills.

I have provided below the opening few sections of our department handbook for your information.

I look forward to reading your application and, hopefully, welcoming you to the team so that you can continue to develop your knowledge and pedagogy, and our students can benefit from the effectiveness of your classroom skills and your passion for the subject.

Best regards,

Rob Smith

Head of English, Hall Cross Academy

From the English department handbook:

Mission statement

Through insightful and inspirational study of a broad range of challenging non-fiction and literature texts, the English Department at Hall Cross Academy will foster a love of the English language as a tool through which ideas and imagination can be expressed with beauty and power.

Aims

- to equip students with accurate, wide-ranging English language skills so that they can operate successfully in the workplace or the next stage of their education
- to develop lifelong readers and learners of high quality written texts by introducing them to a broad range of challenging and engaging writing.
- to improve educational outcomes in English for all students, year on year.

Intent

English department teachers use all available data to ensure all students are presented with engaging, differentiated learning opportunities. As well prior attainment data, this might also include one-page-profiles for SEND students, additional information for students on the VIS list, or simply the awareness that a student might be disadvantaged - all this information will contribute to the way in which the teacher supports and challenges each individual student.

English department teachers use a range of retrieval techniques to revisit prior learning in order to steadily build and reinforce both skills and knowledge throughout all three key stages. The English journey that each student undertakes is clearly sequenced and signposted, so the students are fully aware and supported in achieving their potential at school and beyond.

The English department has always developed reading not just as a necessary learning skill, but also for pleasure. We assign time and encouragement in KS3 for the students to make their own choices in reading material and are, of course, fully behind the school's priority of extending and improving all students' reading.