



## Candidate Pack Art, Design & Technology 2023

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***Excellence: for each, for all***

## Welcome

Many thanks for taking the time to enquire about Thomas Gainsborough School. We are very proud of our school and the opportunities that it provides for our wonderful students, staff and our wider community.

Our school motto is 'Excellence: for each, for all' and this encapsulates our values and ethos. It is a school where every single individual matters. We strive to personalise a young person's education, putting them at the centre of their own learning, to ensure that each student achieves his or her full potential enjoying an education that focuses on their own individual skills, strengths and aptitudes. Each student has a voice here – it is their school and their education. Yet each student is also part of a community, locally, nationally and globally. We want our students to become outstanding citizens and contribute greatly to the society in which they live.

The values and the ethos apply to our staff also. We have excellent staff and we endeavour to make every individual, whatever their role in school, feel valued, respected and cared for. Your voice will be heard and you will be part of a supportive staff body where we have high expectations and standards but we also have the conditions and systems in place to help staff to be successful. Being part of the Unity Schools Partnerships also enables us to access wider opportunities and support for our staff and we have an active and effective governing body. We also ensure that we laugh together and have an on-going supply of cakes and biscuits for those more challenging days.

We pride ourselves in being an open school: one in which parents feel they play a full and proper role in their child's education. We encourage parents to come into school regularly and welcome their views, thoughts and opinions. We are providing a service, the singularly most important service a family can receive, the education of their children and that education is most successful when the school, the students and their parents form a strong partnership. However, we also provide outstanding student support to ensure that we remove students' barriers to learning.

Our school is oversubscribed; it has a growing Sixth Form and staff turnover is low. We are proud of all that we have achieved but we are not satisfied and eager to continue to improve and as a leader within our school you will play an integral role in this.

Please come and see our school; we will happily make time to answer your questions and take you on a tour.

I am certain that you will be impressed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H Yapp', with a long horizontal line extending to the right underneath it.

Helen Yapp (Headteacher)

# Our Visionary Art, Design & Technology Teams

We have a strong team ethos, with clear systems and a collaborative approach to curriculum development. The team is highly committed to the success of our students and to supporting each other, and this is exemplified through the vibrant work and excellent rapport between staff and students which enables outstanding progression at all levels.

Schemes of work are well developed and clearly articulated with excellent shared resources to support teaching. Teaching facilities, spaces and resources are excellent, as well as gallery spaces to showcase the outstanding work of the students.

As part of our innovative curriculum, enabled as part of a successful and over-subscribed school, all students



are offered a place in a Grammar, STEM or Arts pathway. Students who choose the Arts pathway have a higher proportion of Visual and Performing Arts, while those in the STEM pathway have a greater exposure to Technology and Science lessons.

Within the Creative Arts and Technology teams, led by a dedicated Assistant Headteacher, we have a range of experience from ECTs to 30+ years in the profession. Every teacher plays a key role in the continuing success of each subject and the team as a whole.

In September 2015 the school moved into an award-winning new building, where The Arts and Technology are taught in dedicated rooms across two floors, with classrooms in the Sixth Form building. This includes a darkroom for the teaching of Photography, Textiles, Graphics and Three Dimensional Design rooms, workshops and IT rooms and a dedicated sixth form studio in which students can approximate a university style study



experience with their own studio spaces which can be used at any time and fosters a culture of creativity and personalisation.

Our subjects are consistently among the highest performing in the school, at both GCSE and A Level.

The curriculum in each subject from key stage 3 - 5 is ambitious for all students, leading to strong outcomes at key stage 4 and 5, with exceptional performances from different groups of students.



# Courses, Awards and Opportunities

Our school offers a vast range of courses, awards and qualifications in the visual arts and technology subjects, which has not been reduced as other schools have been narrowing their curriculums.

In the Visual Arts, we offer Fine Art, Photography, Textiles, Three Dimensional Design and Graphic Communications at GCSE Level, with Art and Design, Textiles, Photography and Three Dimensional Design continuing into A-Level. In Technology we offer Design Technology and Engineering at GCSE, with Product Design and Engineering at A-Level. All of these subjects are high performing with outstanding feedback from exam boards and moderators.



At Key Stage Three the Visual Arts are taught in all three years, each based upon an overarching theme, while in addition there is a separate design lesson in which students develop an understanding of design conventions, architecture and design movements from different periods. In Technology, students move through a rotation which includes Design Technology, ICT and Food and Nutrition.



In addition to the curriculum in key stage three, all students are offered the opportunity to achieve a level one qualification in the arts, the bronze level arts award delivered by trinity college. Our school is the largest deliverer of the arts award in the East of England and has been recognised as a trinity champion centre and used as an exemplar of excellence to other schools. The provision of the arts award allows all students at Thomas Gainsborough School to leave with a qualification in the arts, even if they do not choose to study a specific arts subject at Key stage four or five. In

addition, students are given various opportunities to take part in enrichment and projects, such as the Victoria and Albert Museum's 'Innovate' competition, in which our students have been finalists twice.

Our school takes a leading role in the arts and technology, both locally, regionally and in our multi academy trust. Our innovative, outward looking and ambitious approach has led to Thomas Gainsborough School being recognised with the highest award for education settings, the platinum level Artsmark Award from the Arts Council of England three times, only the second school in the country to do so.



# Supporting You

## Professional Development

The success of our school is built on the dedication of our staff, and at Thomas Gainsborough School we are passionate about promoting professional development and training and are always looking for innovative ways to provide CPD as well as developmental and leadership opportunities for staff.

At the core of this is an extensive CPD offer which caters for the needs of our staff and students in terms of developing subject knowledge, pedagogy and the wider responsibilities that go with serving our community.

We are a leading school for a local ITT provider, and working closely with the Unity Teaching School Hub, are able to support career progression through our bespoke middle leaders' programme in addition to being able to offer the full range of NPQs.

Key Elements of our CPD offer:

- Instructional Coaching linked to developing pedagogy, supported by lead practitioners
- Members of the National College portal
- 'Praxis' - our in-house half-termly CPD magazine
- Strong links with the Unity Teaching School Hub and the Unity Research School
- Support for NPQs



## Staff Wellbeing

Staff Wellbeing is prioritised to ensure that all of our colleagues feel valued and supported in the work they do. As a school we adhere to the DfE Wellbeing Charter and are pleased to be able to offer a range of employee wellbeing benefits, which include:

- Free use of Great Cornard Leisure Centre (including gym and swimming facilities)
- Access to 'LifeWorks' mental health support
- Face to face wellbeing sessions
- Self-care resource pack
- Annual staff wellbeing survey and wellbeing group
- Clear and well-established systems to support behaviour
- Consideration of staff wellbeing and workload as a strategic priority



# Recent Comments by Staff

*“TGS is not just a school, we are a community that cares for and looks after one another, whilst also delivering an impeccable standard of education to all of our students. I have only been here three years but from the moment I started I knew this school was special, somewhere that was different and stands out from other schools and I am so proud to be a part of it. This is the main reason I was so eager to stay here after teacher training and even more excited when I secured a head of department role.”*

*“TGS thrives thanks to the amazing leadership in place and the commitment which is being demonstrated from the very top by Mrs Yapp. She shows us kindness and motivates us every single day to be the best we can be.”*

*“A very professional and supportive school. I feel I can approach anyone to discuss concerns and I am supported in my teaching here. I really enjoy working here and value the school, having had experiences in many other schools over my 27 years.”*

*“After 10+ years' work in education it is the best school, I have worked in.”*

*“High expectations of staff with high levels of support and culture for students and staff.”*

*‘Thomas Gainsborough is a dynamic, supportive, forward-thinking school which wants the best for both the pupils and the staff. People are happy to go the extra mile for others because they know that they are appreciated and that it is valuable.’*

*“This is the first school I've worked in during my 17-year career where I feel supported with behaviour.*

*The systems the school has in place for the behaviour policy work. SLT have your back. We are all here to ensure the learning of all students and on the occasions where the odd student is not allowing that to happen, SLT will support you to ensure learning in the classroom can happen.”*

*“Helen is a highly approachable headteacher. She is constantly visible around the corridors throughout the day. She takes the time to say hello and to talk to you. When she thanks the staff, she means it.”*

*“Working at TGS has allowed me to progress in my career and continue to be the parent I want to be. This is down to the support and understanding of a fantastic leadership team.”*

*“All the staff provide an incredible school that supports students' learning and their wellbeing, superior to any I have seen before. The standards they expect are high, which I believe is why the majority of students and staff perform so well. I class myself as very lucky having a job I love, in a school I love, that is local to where I live.”*

# Our School & Community

Thomas Gainsborough School is a consistently high performing, well resourced, and truly comprehensive school, with a firm belief in excellence for each and every student, placing students at the heart of their curriculum. Our school has remained incredibly popular with a growing Sixth Form of more than 200 students.

We are close to the vibrant and beautiful market town of Sudbury. The town has great independent shops, well preserved mediaeval town houses, a nationally significant art gallery and some of the finest scenery in Suffolk. The River Stour runs through the town, with extensive water meadows providing easy access for walking & rowing. We are close to beautiful villages and within easy reach of Bury St Edmunds, Colchester, Ipswich.

We work hard to ensure that all our students have meaningful experiences which bring them closer to their local community, while also embracing national and global opportunities.

Our school is fully inclusive, our comprehensive careers provision is award winning and our arts programme has been recognised by the Platinum arts award three times.



## Finding Out More & Joining the Team

We always welcome visitors and are happy to talk about this opportunity before you visit.

If you would like further information or to arrange a visit please contact Mr Chris Ryall, [cryall@tgschool.net](mailto:cryall@tgschool.net) or call the school to speak to Mrs Kerry Fuller, the Headteacher's PA, on 01787 375232.

Information about the school is available at [www.tgschool.net](http://www.tgschool.net) and the application process is supported by our Multi-Academy Trust careers website [www.unitysp-careers.co.uk/](http://www.unitysp-careers.co.uk/)

