



# Shipston High School

*High achieving - Student-centred*

**Associate Assistant Head teacher:**

**Head of Department: English**

**Candidate Information Brief**



SHIPSTON HIGH SCHOOL  
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[www.shipstonhigh.co.uk](http://www.shipstonhigh.co.uk)

## Post of Head of English at Shipston High School

Thank you for your interest in this post. Shipston High School is a fantastic place to work, and I very much hope that you will wish to apply for this exciting job opportunity. The post of Head of English is a full time permanent position, teaching all ages and abilities up to GCSE level.

In recognition of the importance of the subject and the related management responsibility, this is a senior leadership role.

Shipston High School has a unique school atmosphere, arising from our high expectations and our student-centred ethos. It is an ethos in which our teachers are able to focus on the wellbeing and academic progress of our young people. As a result, both students and teachers flourish. This post offers the successful candidate an exceptional opportunity for career development and will be of interest to ambitious and experienced teachers.

In our search for an outstanding practitioner we are seeking a teacher with a commitment to academic excellence and high standards. The successful applicant will have a good knowledge and understanding of the teaching of English at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 and will be able to demonstrate excellent pedagogy.

The English department is highly successful. At GCSE in 2024, 73% gained 9 to 4 grades, with 13% securing the top 9 to 7 grades. Students make progress in the department, but we think we can do better. The department now requires thoughtful curriculum and assessment development to further improve outcomes. The successful candidate will be joining a strong and supportive department team, and will work with an outstanding senior leadership team to further develop provision.

This is a hugely exciting time for the school. At this point of significant national change in education, we are highly ambitious for our students and we recognise that our staff are essential to their success. Examination results have shown impressive attainment in the last few years and, as a result, the school is regularly oversubscribed.

Our students are our best advertisement. They are motivated, hard working and well behaved. In July 2023, Ofsted noted that 'pupils are mature, polite and considerate of others', further observing that 'Pupils show positive attitudes towards learning'.

For an informal, confidential discussion about the post or to arrange a visit please contact the Headteacher's Secretary on 01608 661833 or at [cdaubney@shipstonhigh.co.uk](mailto:cdaubney@shipstonhigh.co.uk). Visits to the school are encouraged, and you will be most welcome. I wish you all the best with your application and very much look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,  
Gavin Saunders  
Headteacher

## INFORMATION ABOUT APPLYING FOR THE POST

Please complete an application form and forward it by e-mail to Head Teacher's PA, at [info@shipstonhigh.co.uk](mailto:info@shipstonhigh.co.uk)

Application forms can be accessed on the school's own website:

[www.shipstonhigh.co.uk](http://www.shipstonhigh.co.uk)

In your application please indicate (no more than 2 sides of A4) how you feel your experience to date has prepared you for this post and what strengths you feel you could offer the school. Please include specific examples of where your work has enhanced pupil progress.

Applications are welcome from suitably experienced teachers.

The closing date for applications is 9.00am on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2025 with interviews planned for shortly afterwards.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

English is a crucial subject which ensures that our students have a vital foundation for future learning and are able to access the next steps in their education and careers. English is a high priority in the school.

The department itself consists of a lively, enterprising and supportive team. Currently there are five specialist teachers of English in the school, plus an English trained Senco and a colleague who leads literacy interventions across the curriculum.

The department's accommodation is excellent. The team utilise specialist classrooms in a contemporary teaching block, opened in September 2018. The rooms are equipped with the latest interactive technology and have access to further computers. The department is well-resourced and there are strong links between English and other subjects.

The department is always keen to try new resources and pedagogical ideas, constantly striving to improve the quality of curriculum and the learning experience the pupils at Shipston High receive. The department shares ideas and resources regularly and understands the importance of team planning.

Academically, the department has a strong track record of examination success. The department currently teach the AQA syllabus for GCSE language and GCSE Literature, and all students are entered for both examinations. The staff are pro-active in reviewing their own classroom practice and by accessing good practice from elsewhere. The department's results in the external exams of 2024 were strong, demonstrating the commitment and expertise of the team. 73% of pupils gained at least a grade 4 in 2024 in English Language. However, the school is ambitious to improve outcomes, and the new head of department will share that energy and ambition to lead curriculum improvement.

English is a core department, and important to the school. The current team are strong practitioners of impressive commitment. Pupils take their learning seriously. This vacancy is a unique career opportunity for the right candidate.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

Title: HEAD OF ENGLISH

The following will be assessed from applications, interviews and references:

### Qualification criteria

- Qualified to at least degree level or professional equivalent
- Qualified to teach and work in the U.K.

### Experience

- Evidence of raising attainment in the subject
- Evidence of improved practice following feedback
- Teaching in the secondary age sector

### Behaviours

#### Teaching

- Up to date with latest pedagogy, curriculum developments and assessment requirements
- Excellent classroom teacher with a genuine passion and a belief in the potential of every student
- Effective behaviour management, with clear boundaries, praise, rewards and sanctions
- Good planning, organisational and communication skills
- Resilience, motivation and commitment to driving up standards of achievement for all students
- Commitment to regular ongoing professional development to improve practice
- A role model to students, parents and other staff
- Alignment to the Shipston High School ethos and vision
- Commitment to the safeguarding and welfare of all students

#### Other

- An excellent health and attendance record
- A satisfactory enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check

**SHIPSTON HIGH SCHOOL**  
**JOB DESCRIPTION: Head of Department**

Post Title:	Head of Department: ENGLISH
Purpose:	To develop, monitor and evaluate a curriculum area
Reporting to:	The Department's Senior Line Manager
Core tasks and responsibilities (in addition to those of a classroom teacher):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To raise standards of pupil attainment and achievement within the curriculum area and to monitor and support pupil progress providing appropriate intervention.</li> <li>• To be accountable for pupil progress within the subject area.</li> <li>• To ensure the provision of an appropriately broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum for pupils studying in the department.</li> <li>• To be accountable for leading, managing and developing the subject/curriculum area.</li> <li>• To deploy financial and physical resources within the department effectively to support the school and department development plans.</li> </ul>	
Strategic Direction and Development:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop and review specifications, resources, schemes of work, marking policies, assessment and teaching and learning strategies in the department.</li> <li>• To oversee day-to-day management, control and operation of course provision within the department, including effective deployment of staff and physical resources.</li> <li>• To actively monitor and follow up pupil progress.</li> <li>• To implement school policies and procedures.</li> <li>• To work with colleagues to formulate aims, objectives and strategic plans for the department which have coherence and relevance to the needs of pupils and to the aims, objectives and strategic plans of the school.</li> <li>• To ensure, in liaison with the School's Health and Safety Manager, that Health and Safety policies and practices throughout the department, including risk assessments, are current and in-line with national requirements.</li> </ul>
Teaching and Learning:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be accountable for the development and delivery of the department's curriculum.</li> <li>• To ensure the delivery of an appropriate and comprehensive curriculum area programme that complements the School Development Plan and School Self Evaluation priorities.</li> <li>• To keep up to date with and respond to national developments in the subject area and teaching practice and methodology.</li> </ul>
Leading and Managing Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To manage and effectively deploy teaching/support staff in the department.</li> <li>• To develop and enhance the teaching practice of others.</li> <li>• To monitor the work of post holders in the department.</li> </ul>

Effective Deployment of Staff and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To participate in the recruitment of teaching staff and, where required, support staff to the department.</li> <li>• To support teachers to promote high quality teaching and learning for the benefit of all pupils, through effective resourcing in the department.</li> <li>• To participate in arrangements made in accordance with the regulations for the appraisal of staff.</li> </ul>
Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To monitor the work of the department and ensure evaluative reports are produced as requested by senior management.</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be a Form Tutor (where allocated)</li> <li>• Contribute to the school's extracurricular programme</li> </ul>
<p>The post holder will be subject to appraisal objectives which will be agreed and reviewed annually. The post holder is expected to carry out such other Leadership duties as may reasonably be assigned by the Headteacher.</p>	

## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Shipston High School is a non-selective 11-16 mixed High School with a very special ethos and character. Our students are high achieving and increasingly successful. The school itself is located on an attractive green-field site on the outskirts of Shipston-on-Stour in South Warwickshire. Our buildings are spacious and offer a wealth of specialist and general accommodation. Significant development of the site saw a first phase of new classrooms open in 2015, with a further teaching and reception block completed in the summer of 2018. A £12.5 million refurbishment and redesign of the original building is currently underway, due for completion in 2025.

Visitors frequently remark on the distinctive ethos of Shipston High School. In particular, they praise the obvious energy and enthusiasm of staff and students, the excellent relations, and the happy and mutually respectful atmosphere. They also express admiration for the unusual confidence and maturity of our students and the way they rise to the challenge of taking on increasing levels of responsibility.

### **The Three Rivers Alliance**

Shipston High School is proud to be a founding member of an ambitious alliance of five schools. Alcester Academy, Alcester Grammar School, King Edward VI School in Stratford, Shipston High School and Stratford Girls' Grammar School have come together to form The Three Rivers Alliance. The Three Rivers name is inspired by the rivers close to each school; the Arrow in Alcester, the Stour in Shipston and the Avon in Stratford

Each school is successful in its own right, and enjoys a distinct identity and ethos. However, the five schools share important qualities and values. All promote and achieve academic success, and all value and promote the development of the whole child, enabling young people to grow academically and as independent and confident young adults. By working together for our students, each school will be strengthened through shared best practice in both the academic curriculum and wider opportunities for young people.

The Three Rivers Alliance is taking a different approach to collaboration. This is not a Multi Academy Trust (MAT), but an alliance of successful schools retaining their independence as Single Academy Trusts. As a group, we recognise that the opportunities for schools working together are substantial. This is a strong alliance of schools with fantastic potential for our young peoples' education.



## Some recent highlights

- The school achieves consistently strong examination results. In our most recent (2024) results 73 % of students achieved standard passes in English and 67 % in Maths. 2024 FFT data shows the school as equal to or exceeding national averages.
- In our 2023 Ofsted inspection the school was judged to be good overall with our students seen as 'at the centre of school life at Shipston High School'.
- The school has achieved positive progress 8 outcomes in the majority of years this measure has been active.
- Owing to its continuing success the school has become increasingly popular and is now regularly oversubscribed. Numbers on roll are rising. We currently have over 600 students in the school and plan to expand over the forthcoming few years.
- The school became an Academy on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012, and is a founding member of the Three Rivers Alliance of good and outstanding schools, launched in 2024. We have developed an imaginative and ambitious project to redevelop the entire school in phases. The first phase, a new £1.6M state-of-the-art teaching block, opened in September 2015, with the second £2.25M building opened in the summer of 2018. A further £12.5 million investment will see new buildings on site in 2025.

## Teaching and Learning

We put learning at the heart of everything we do. Staff have high expectations of all students, whatever their backgrounds or abilities, and we expect students to make the most of the many opportunities the school provides. Class sizes are kept as small as possible so that we cater more effectively for every student's needs. We believe firmly in the importance of homework and independent study as important tools to help our students become successful, self-motivated learners.

## Resources for Learning

The range and quality of our facilities ensure that teaching and learning is varied, interesting and successful. ICT facilities throughout the school have been increased and upgraded significantly during recent years.

All classrooms are equipped with audio visual technology; our students are learning in high quality, well-equipped subject environments.

*The teaching was most enthusiastic and drew interested and involved responses from the students. The oral responses were particularly impressive. How well (the teachers) know their classes!*

*Visiting Governor*

## **The School Curriculum**

All National Curriculum subjects are taught through both Key Stages 3 and 4. Students are initially grouped by ability in most subjects at Key Stage 3, including the core. At Key Stage 4 all students follow a core curriculum and then choose from a wide range of options. The curriculum is robust, and fulfills national accountability measures whilst enabling a personalised programme for our learners.

## **Pastoral Care and Guidance**

All students are expected to meet the very high standards of behaviour required of them. There is a very experienced pastoral team based on a House system that looks after the needs of all our students. We also rely on the support of parents to maintain our high standards.

We place a strong emphasis on establishing a caring community that encourages growth and confidence in all our students. Each student is assigned to a form and a form tutor whose purpose is to enable youngsters to obtain the best out of all aspects of the school life. The positive relationships that exist with our local primary schools ensures that we have detailed information about students as they transfer at 11 years old.

During Years 10 and 11 students are encouraged to take on leadership roles by applying to become school prefects. They take on responsible duties and are expected to use their own initiative in helping with the day-to-day running of the school. Senior prefects are appointed annually.

## **Celebrating Achievement**

Our school is founded on the belief that all students have talents and can achieve. We make it our mission to bring out the talents of our individual students and to celebrate their endeavours and successes at all levels. The school takes a proactive stance with regard to rewarding students for good behaviour, achievement, motivation and service to the school and wider community. Our system of rewards is designed to encourage positive attitudes above and beyond normal working expectations. Some examples of the many ways that we reward achievement include:

- Individual praise
- The award of merit points
- Letters, postcards and certificates sent home
- Celebration in House and whole school assemblies
- Special, end of term "Celebration Assemblies"
- Letter of commendation from the Headteacher
- An award at our annual Awards Evening when students receive public recognition for their efforts and achievements

## **Extra curricular Activities**

A wide range of opportunities exist for the students to be involved in sporting, dramatic, computing and musical activities. Our student participation rate is exceptionally high. We regularly compete on the sports field with neighbouring schools and youngsters are involved both locally and with county teams. We have staged many dramatic productions of varying types, along with regular music concerts. Opportunities also exist for students to take part in a wide range of educational visits to places in this country and abroad, and The Duke of Edinburgh scheme is a popular and successful activity.

## **Communication with Parents**

We are keen to see parents involved in helping their children to learn. Much of this contact is achieved through regular contact in person or by telephone. On a more formal level, regular consultation sessions take place including termly reports home.

*From the first telephone conversation to your school we were met with the utmost courtesy and attention and the boys who showed us round are to be particularly commended. They were truly ambassadors to your school and their knowledge, interest and enthusiasm for the school was clearly obvious to see. The comment from our son afterwards was that Shipston High School was his number one choice.*

*Prospective parent visiting the school*

## **Post 16 Destinations**

On completion of their GCSEs the majority of our students leave school to follow a wide range of AS/A level and other post 16 courses at local sixth form centres and colleges. Many then go on to university and higher education in order to enter a wide range of professions and careers.

## **SHIPSTON HIGH SCHOOL'S SAFE RECRUITMENT PROCEDURE**

Shipston High School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

### **Disclosure**

Shipston High School requires all employees to undertake an enhanced DBS check. You are required, before appointment, to disclose any unspent conviction, cautions, reprimands or warnings under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar you from employment – this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred.

### **Shortlisting**

Only those candidates meeting the right criteria will be taken forward for interview.

### **Interview**

1. Shortlisted candidates will be subject to an in-depth interview process including a lesson observation
2. Candidates will be asked to address any discrepancies, anomalies or gaps in their application form

### **Reference checking**

References from the previous and current employer will be taken up for shortlisted candidates, and where necessary employers may be contacted to gather further information.

### **Probation**

All new staff will be subject to a probation period of three months (which may, in certain circumstances, be extended by up to a further three months). The probation period is a trial period to enable the assessment of an employee's suitability for the job for which they have been employed. It provides the school with the opportunity to monitor and review the performance of new staff in relation to various areas, but also in terms of their commitment to safeguarding and relationships with students.