



## Candidate Information Pack

# *Head of Department Psychology*

*'Pupils are provided with a world-class educational experience that inspires them to be the best they can be. They are happy and proud to be part of this community'.*

Ofsted - January 2026



## The Tiffin Girls' School Vision

***'Our community is vibrant, curious, creative and inspires positive change. We dare to be wise.'***

The school's motto *sapere aude* – **dare to be wise**, is embodied in its core values of *Community, Love of Learning* and *Character*.

### **Community:**

- Collaboration
- Active Citizens
- Celebrate diversity

### **Love of Learning:**

- Inspiration
- Embrace knowledge
- Creative & Critical thinking

### **Character:**

- Integrity & Respect
- Courage & Resilience
- Independence & Initiative



# From the Headteacher

Dear Applicant

## Head of Department - Psychology, from September 2026

Thank you for your interest in the post of Head of Psychology Department at The Tiffin Girls' School. We are looking for someone who is knowledgeable and passionate about their subject, enthusiastic about leading a high performing department and teaching students who love learning and is committed to contributing to the students' all-round development. I hope that the materials we have prepared help you to decide that you would like to apply.

I was drawn to the Headteacher post here because of the wonderful culture and ethos that permeates this remarkable school. Our motto, *sapere aude - dare to be wise*, has been shared by generations of students, especially when singing the school song, and this motto underpins our vision: **'Our community is vibrant, curious, creative and inspires positive change. We dare to be wise.'**

Central to achieving this vision are the school's core values of **Community**, celebrating our diverse and inclusive community, promoting a culture of giving and encouraging students to be active citizens in society; a **Love of Learning**, inspiring students to pursue their passions with freedom of intellect and being challenged to think creatively and critically; and **Character**, building resilience, confidence and independence with integrity and respect for others. With our students' commitment to these core values, we aim to be regarded as much for our academic results, as for being a school community that nurtures collaboration and giving back to society, and encourages engagement in a wide and diverse range of extracurricular activities.

Our common values have been the foundation and quiet force behind our success and will continue to be. It's because the staff make the students feel valued and included, they provide great experiences and wonderful memories, they inspire them with their love of their subject and they promote effort that leads to success.

It is all our responsibility to ensure the students not only achieve highly, but also develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to enable them to go out and make a difference in the world, where they will demonstrate ethics, empathy and resilience.

Alongside this focus on our values, every member of this community is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all our students. We demonstrate our commitment through:

- maintaining an attitude of 'it could happen here';
- when concerned about the welfare of a student, always acting in the interests of the student;
- establishing and maintaining an ethos where students feel secure and are encouraged to talk and are always listened to;
- ensuring that all students know there is an adult in the school whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty; and
- including in the curriculum opportunities which will equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to stay safe from harm, to make informed decisions and to know to whom they should turn for help.

I hope that you are excited by what you read and see on the school's website, and that the opportunity to teach such a successful department is an appealing one. I look forward to receiving your application.



Headteacher

# The Psychology Department

Psychology is taught at A-level and led by the Head of Department and currently supported by one other non-specialist teacher. There are three groups in Year 12 and two in Year 13. Each class has four hours of contact time. The department follows the AQA exam Board.

There are currently 57 students in Year 12 and 33 in Year 13 studying the course. The results of the A level students in August 2025 were 59% A\* to A and 94% A\* to B grade.

A large proportion of our students choose to continue their studies at degree level, and the department helps to prepare students every year for Oxbridge applications.

The curriculum is enriched by providing students with opportunities to extend their knowledge, understanding and interest by attending lectures and we encourage students to conduct their own research investigations. The department aims to provide a multitude of super- and cross-curricular activities such as the Digest magazine, Psychology Club, mini-research project and Book Club. These engage students beyond the syllabus, allowing them to consider psychology in action through the application of psychology to their areas of particular interest.

Further information about our curriculum can be found on the school website:

<https://www.tiffingirls.org/academic/subject-departments/psychology/>

## Our School



The Tiffin Girls' School, a selective state school and stand-alone Academy, is a vibrant and happy community where the students take centre stage. The school is currently home to 1,267 students, aged between 11 and 18, and is now into its 146<sup>th</sup> year. The school prides itself on encouraging students to aspire to excellence in everything they do, whether that be: academic excellence, a passion and enthusiasm for the creative and performing arts, sporting prowess, or student leadership. A broad and challenging curriculum sits alongside a stimulating and rewarding range of extracurricular activities, many of which are student-led, and these elements of school life combine to develop inquisitive, confident, dynamic and successful young people ready for their future lives as global citizens.

The students achieve highly because they are incredibly motivated, hardworking and focused. It is, however, the caring and strong pastoral system, complemented by the development of strong friendship groups, which makes them feel happy and safe, allowing them to flourish in their time here. The school also benefits greatly from a very positive relationship with parents, working together in our common aim which is to encourage and support the students.

The school is a six-form entry selective school, with 180 students in each year group and over 360 in the Sixth Form.

There are spacious yet functional premises, which provide extensive facilities in all areas of the curriculum. Specialist teaching areas include thirteen science laboratories, three art rooms, two drama studios, a Learning Resource Centre, a music suite and a computer suite of two computer rooms, with bookable chromebooks. There is a large assembly hall and a separate dining hall. Sports facilities include a Sports Centre, opened September 2022, two gyms, an astro turf, resurfaced netball and tennis courts. Students in years 7 to 13 bring their own chromebooks to school to ensure a seamless transition between home and school learning.

The school's proximity to London makes it possible for students of all ages to attend concerts, plays, theatre workshops, lectures, exhibitions, one-day conferences and international matches. The school makes good use of this facility as trips and activities outside of school form an essential part of the students' educational experience.

Parental contributions and fundraising have greatly enhanced the accommodation in the school. In the recent past, a new teaching block and Sports Centre have been added thanks to the support of our parents, which have provided significant funding when submitting successful capital bids.

### **Ofsted**

Our most recent Ofsted inspection took place on 6 and 7 January 2026.

Please [click here](#) for an online version of the report or on the download below for a pdf version.

The school achieved 'Exceptional' judgements in Achievement, Attendance and behaviour, Curriculum and teaching, Leadership and governance, Personal development and wellbeing, and Post-16 provision. It also earned a 'Strong standard' in Inclusion.

## **Staff**

The strong team of highly qualified staff has extensive and varied experience. Both teaching and non-teaching staff share a commitment to high standards of learning, discipline and care for the personal wellbeing of each student. Good liaison is cultivated with local feeder schools, community services, employers and with universities.

Opportunities for professional development are essential and care is taken to ensure all staff have access to training and new experiences through CPD based on needs identified through appraisal, or for whole school development. Where relevant, non-teaching staff are encouraged to join working parties, recent groups include Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Behaviour for Learning. This year we have a digital working party with 4 sub-groups focusing on Teaching and Learning (Curriculum), Engagement of Stakeholders (CPD), Safeguarding, data management, privacy and policy and Collaboration and Partnerships.

Staff wellbeing is a priority within the school, supported by the Senior Leadership team, who identify and implement initiatives to support the positive and inclusive working environment. The latest initiative was focused on the refurbishment of the staffroom.

There is an active staff association, which arranges social activities throughout the year.

## **Admissions**

The school operates a two-stage testing process for admission to Year 7. The Determined Admissions Arrangements for 2026 entry are available to read on the website.

In recent years, Governors changed the admissions criteria, promoting greater social responsibility by giving a priority to those living in the inner area and designated area who are from a disadvantaged background. There is a similar priority criteria for disadvantaged students relating to Sixth Form entry.

We anticipate continuing to be heavily oversubscribed each year, receiving a large number of applications from academically able students.

## **Curriculum**

The school provides a wide range of subjects that meet the learning and destination choices of our highly able students. Lessons are taught in one-hour periods over a 25 period week.

Our Key Stage 3 curriculum develops students' knowledge, skills and understanding, and lays the foundations for the courses students will then follow at Key Stage 4. All subject areas are enriched with a wide range of creative and stretch and challenge opportunities that are designed to enable students to reach their full potential.

In Years 10 and 11, subjects are taught across two periods per week. The exceptions to this are Maths (three periods per week) and English (four periods per week). The core curriculum includes English, Maths, Biology, Chemistry, Physics and a language with students then choosing three further options. All students receive a private study lesson and two PE lessons per week as part of their broader curriculum.

In Years 12 and 13, subjects follow A Level specifications, choosing 4 in Year 12 dropping to 3 in Year 13. In Year 12, we offer a Higher Education Programme and a pastoral programme of activities designed to broaden their education, including compulsory PE lessons.

Staff care passionately about the students, and we are acutely aware of the pressures that many high achieving students face. We have therefore developed a comprehensive evidence based pastoral curriculum, one period a week, which has been specifically written for our context and includes many guest speakers.

## **Sixth Form**

Sixth Form students have many opportunities to enrich their educational and social experiences over the two years and many participate in charity and not for profit enterprises. They compete at national level in the Young Enterprise Company Programme – a team of approximately 25 students, enrol on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme Gold award, and take part in Chemistry and Biology Olympiads, Engineering Education Scheme, IRIS Research, UKMT, debating, university challenge, Model United Nations and a wide range of other clubs and societies. Sixth Form students support and/or are extensively involved in contributing to Black History Month, LGBTQ+ week, RAG week, our Time to Talk activities and lead on the extensive range of charity work the students are involved in. Alongside this, the students are encouraged to conduct work experience to support their personal development and UCAS applications.

Student leadership is actively encouraged and many Sixth Form students are school officers, prefects, subject associates and mentors for younger students in the school. Sixth Form students, for example, mentor and coach a large number of students in debating clubs covering all three key stages; all year groups compete in local and national competitions such as ESU and University Schools events.

While many of our students go on to Oxbridge (15 in 2025) and other Russell Group universities, a small number are choosing to study abroad or to take up degree level apprenticeships.

## **Location**

The school is located in spacious and attractive grounds in a pleasant residential area which is bordered by the River Thames and Richmond Park. It is situated on the northernmost edge of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames with easy access to road and rail networks. The nearest railway stations are at Kingston upon Thames (Zone 6), a fifteen minute walk away, or Richmond upon Thames.

## **Equality and Diversity**

The school celebrates the diversity of its students and staff, and is fully committed to an ongoing programme of review of our equality and diversity practices to ensure all members of the school community are fully accepted and equally valued.

## **Safeguarding at The Tiffin Girls' School**

In support of our safeguarding commitment, we undertake rigorous pre-employment, online searches and enhanced Disclosure and Barring service (with Barred List) checks on appointment. The school complies with the DBS Code of Practice and with the statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education, as updated from time to time. We provide regular safeguarding training and expect staff to be aware of, understand and act in accordance with school policies. On appointment, staff will be asked to sign up to our E-Safety, Health & Safety, Data Protection and Secure Data Handling policies and to our various Safeguarding documents. In addition, on appointment, all staff are required to sign their agreement to complying with the school's Code of Conduct. If any of the above raises any queries when you are considering your application, please do not hesitate to contact Claire Russam, HR Director on [recruitment@tiffingirls.org](mailto:recruitment@tiffingirls.org).

Our safeguarding policy is available for you to read on our website at [www.tiffingirls.org](http://www.tiffingirls.org) under the tab 'Our School' and the page headed 'Key Documents'.

# Job Description: Head of Department - Psychology

Responsibility for the leadership and management of the **Psychology** Department.

## 1. Areas of responsibility and accountability:

### a) to ensure outstanding teaching and learning by:

- delivering conceptual teaching at the highest level, acting as a role model with similar high expectations of colleagues
- quality assuring and reviewing the teaching practice of self and departmental colleagues, leading critical self-evaluation of the department
- ensuring a relentless focus within the department on teaching and learning and student outcomes, observing lessons and providing focused feedback to colleagues
- leading discussions on pedagogy and methodology, devising and delivering practices and processes to enable the highest achievement of colleagues and students
- managing change within the department e.g. reviewing exam syllabi to ensure best fit with school's high aspirations for students
- ensuring an effective ambience, climate and environment for learning within the subject area
- ensuring consistency of assessment and feedback across the department through the Quality Assurance processes
- analysing progress and providing strategies for in-class intervention where appropriate
- having Curriculum Outlines in place for all year groups
- adapting Schemes of Learning and Assessments to optimise feedback
- organising standardisation or moderation within the department where appropriate
- following the Assessment and Feedback process for each year group in line with whole school policy and timescales
- analysing both internal and external assessment data, identifying areas for development or improvement with a specific focus on closing recognised gaps
- regularly monitoring assessment data across the department and general marking
- regularly carrying out feedback and progress checks to monitor the quality of marking and feedback, and student responses
- supporting and guiding individual teacher assessment
- planning, developing and rewriting Schemes of Learning in your subject area in light of changes from Ofqual, learner performance and feedback
- organising the teaching across all key stages in your subject area
- preparing students effectively
- ensuring that all the needs of students are met, including the management of behaviour and its impact on learning
- ensuring that there is appropriate and varied provision of educational enhancement outside timetabled lessons (eg booster lessons, trips/visits)

### b) to ensure the agreed policy on performance management is implemented in the department by:

- translating outcomes from departmental evaluation into challenging and developmental objectives for assigned teachers and support staff
- developing induction, reflecting school/department/individual needs and aspirations
- dealing with issues of underperformance and capability
- ensuring the effective professional development of staffing
- using coaching as a means to support staff development

- c) to ensure the development of personal and departmental knowledge, skills and expertise by:**
- the use of comparative attainment and progress data
  - updating knowledge at a subject and national level by keeping up to date on research and inspection findings and other pedagogical information
  - knowing and implementing national statutory requirements
  - keeping IT skills updated to ensure effective use of technology
  - committing to own professional development
  - mentoring trainee teachers or ensuring that they are mentored effectively by other members of the department
- d) to ensure the contribution of the department at a school level by:**
- the consistent application of whole school policies by the department
  - contributing to whole school literacy, by ensuring effective literacy practice within the department to ensure subject specific terminology is embedded and students are confident users of it
  - ensuring that staff within the department focus on disadvantaged students and track progress and learning accordingly
  - liaising with external agencies
  - representing views, concerns and interests of the subject team
  - supporting the school ethos and following policies
  - ensuring the strategic direction and development of the subject area
  - presenting to governors, parents and students as appropriate
  - monitoring, celebrating and rewarding student progress
  - interacting with parents in a professional manner
  - dealing with complaints as (and if) they arise
- e) to perform a personnel function for the department and seeking advice and liaising as appropriate with the HR Director by:**
- participating in the selection of new staff
  - participating in the development of future teachers (eg through PGCE and Schools Direct routes)
  - delegating to members of the department as appropriate
  - ensuring efficient and effective communication with the department
  - good organisation and management of assigned members of the department
  - supporting, guiding, developing and motivating teaching and support staff team members
  - sharing a common vision with team members to secure their commitment
  - developing and ensuring teamwork
  - chairing meetings as appropriate
  - being responsible for coaching and monitoring staff
  - giving advice and support for staff on threshold, UPR scale, promotion, induction, ITT and students
- f) to manage the resources of the department by:**
- ensuring the assets of the department are prudently managed
  - proactively and effectively managing financial resources raised through capitation
  - supervising the use of accommodation and the provision of an appropriate environment for learning
  - undertaking effective risk management assessments to ensure a safe learning environment
  - ensuring value for money when making purchases
  - maintaining a purposeful and well presented learning environment within the subject area
  - ensuring compliance with the school's Health & Safety Policy
  - ensuring that inventories are completed and checked

- g) to be an effective Form Tutor by monitoring student progress and supporting all members of the tutor group in making progress commensurate with their ability by:**
- being aware of the strengths and needs of each student
  - undertaking regular tutor reviews with students, providing advice as necessary on strategies to develop key skills and achieve examination targets in all subjects
  - monitoring and providing appropriate advice and guidance on individual student's progress in respect to attendance, homework, behaviour management and acceptable standards of conduct and appearance
  - promoting high standards of behaviour and attitudes to work within the group
  - promptly completing administrative tasks relating to the group
  - other tasks appropriate to the tutor role

These duties are in addition to performing those of a main scale classroom teacher as outlined in the STCPD/STRB documents.

2. **Accountable to:** Headteacher
3. **Accountable for:** Academic progress and attainment of the students  
Performance management of subject staff in your subject area
4. **Important relationships:** Students and parents  
Other members of the teaching and support staff  
Link member of SLT  
Heads of other departments  
Head of Year and relevant pastoral team
5. **Important external relationships:**
- Staff in all phases of local schools and other relevant educational establishments
  - Professional associations
  - School improvement partner/external quality assurance

# Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualifications</b>		
Qualified Teacher Status	✓	
Good honours degree	✓	
Evidence of commitment to continuing professional development	✓	
<b>Experience</b>		
Strong track record of high success rates and positive value added in teaching at A level	✓	
Evidence of raising student attainment and adding value	✓	
Experience of involvement in developing and supporting colleagues through coaching and mentoring		✓
Managing and planning a departmental budget		✓
Manage and organising events and trips including practical co-ordination with support staff, caretakers and Senior Leadership Team	✓	
Awareness of current developments in education training		✓
Experience of undertaking Form Tutor role	✓	
<b>Skills and abilities</b>		
Ability to demonstrate excellent teaching practice against the current Teaching Standards up to and including A level	✓	
Demonstrate awareness of and ability to develop outstanding practice in teaching techniques in yourself and in colleagues	✓	
Ability to demonstrate an ambitious vision for academic and extra-curricular performance of students in your subject area	✓	
Ability to devise strategies to ensure outstanding achievements of colleagues and students	✓	
Evidence of effectively using assessment data to inform teaching and learning in your classroom and department	✓	
Demonstrate high level of skill in giving effective and regular feedback to students on academic progress	✓	
Ability to prepare Sixth Form students for Oxbridge		✓

Ability to quality assure and evaluate departmental teaching practice	✓	
Ability to use performance management processes successfully to contribute to school improvement		✓
Ability to manage and develop a good relationship with parents encouraging their involvement	✓	
Ability to oversee and take a lead in developing the extensive extra-curricular program of the department	✓	
Personal qualities		
Possess personal warmth and be able to gain the confidence of students and parents to create a safe environment for student development	✓	
Ability to work effectively as part of a middle leadership and departmental team, demonstrating the ability to inspire and motivate colleagues, working collaboratively across departments	✓	
Ability to communicate effectively (verbally and in writing) with all members of the school community	✓	
Excellent organisational skills, ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines	✓	
Be committed to the ambitious visions and values of The Tiffin Girls' School	✓	
Demonstrable commitment to treating others fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect	✓	
Demonstrable commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Demonstrate the ability to uphold public trust and confidence and maintain appropriate positive professional boundaries in relationships with both children and adults at all times	✓	

# Why teach at Tiffin Girls'?

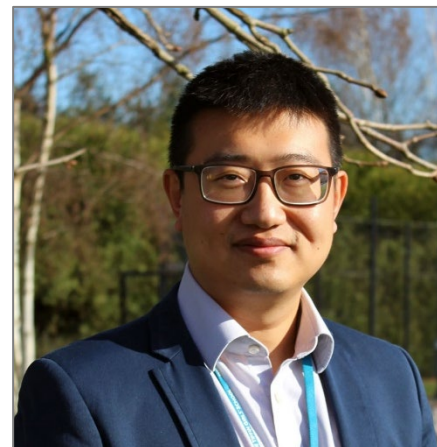
## Mrs Laura Metcalf Head of History



“ I joined the school as Head of History and since then, have had the opportunity to become a temporary member of the Senior Leadership Team before starting a family. After that, the school has supported me by enabling me to become part time and then within that, being able to job share the Head of Department role. More recently, I have undertaken sole Head of Department responsibility while working four days a week. It’s a special place to work – the incredible engagement from the students and their love of history, their quest to find out more at every level – definitely keeps me on my toes. I still continue to be blown away by the sheer excitement they feel about learning. I enjoy working with a very diverse teaching staff; the Humanities department is particularly close knit and welcoming. A personal highlight is going to the Himalayas with World Challenge which was something I’d never experienced before and a life-long ambition. ”

## Mr Zidong Cui Maths Teacher & 2<sup>nd</sup> in Maths Department

“ I was a business owner before becoming a teacher but I was trained in a very similar setting (a top performing girls’ grammar school) in my PGCE year so I knew what it would be like working at The Tiffin Girls’ School. Initially, I did think I might struggle with the level of Maths taught here as the students are so able, however, since I started, the support I’ve had from the department has made things so much easier. The Maths department has so many experienced teachers from whom I have learned so much. The people definitely make it special working here. The staff are so friendly and supportive. The students work really hard and are so interested in the subject. I took over the Young Enterprise programme in my third year. Because of my business background, I was really excited to help the students develop their business skills through real life experiences. I’ve taken them to many trade fairs (as far as Stratford upon Avon) and competition finals, and we’ve won several awards together. But the best part has been to see the progress the students make in a year – they’ve all been brilliant. The school has given me many opportunities to develop myself – I’ve been involved in CPD sessions and policy-making working parties, and I’ve been given opportunities to teach all the year groups. ”



## Ms Afiyya Sami Chemistry Teacher & KS3 Science Co-Ordinator



“ I started my teaching career at the school as a NQT – I was a bit nervous about applying as I thought I might not be able to teach at such a highly academic school. But I realised straight away they’re just normal students – they’re very enthusiastic, fun and willing to do well. The school has always been very supportive – there are lots of training sessions, and I had the opportunity to observe experienced and supportive teachers in the department, which also helped develop my skills in teaching A-Level. I’m really enjoying teaching the A-Level syllabus because the students are very passionate about their subject and share the love of your subject with you. One of the nicest bits about working here is the great sense of community. It feels like a family that supports and encourages each other and like every family we stay in touch, we get together to share, remember and celebrate. The support and encouragement also led me to apply for (and gain) the role of KS3 Science Coordinator after completing my NQT year. ”

# Benefits of working at The Tiffin Girls' School

All of our employees enjoy a range of benefits, with some specific benefits for teaching staff:

- Two week October half term
- Free tea and coffee in the staffroom
- Pleasant working environment on the outskirts of the busy town of Kingston upon Thames with easy access to London and the surrounding Surrey countryside
- Free on-site parking
- Cycle to Work Scheme (salary sacrifice)
- Annual flu vaccinations for staff
- Enhanced maternity benefits and consideration given to flexible working where possible
- An Employee Assistance Programme including free at the point of use counselling
- Free lunch and refreshments on Inset days
- A busy Staff Association who arrange social events
- Staff discount on hiring the school facilities (single booking only) <https://facilities.tiffingirls.org/>

## Teaching Staff benefits:

- Membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme: *the school contributes 23.68% of salary*
- Generous Teaching & Learning Responsibility allowances to recognise positions of responsibility
- The opportunity to participate in a wide range of working parties to enhance and influence working practices and pedagogy irrespective of your experience
- A structured CPD programme with elements of selective CPD so that you can tailor your personal development to meet your needs