

Our Ref: HR
13th September 2024

Dear Parent/Guardian,

RE: New ECT at The Duston School

I am very pleased to welcome the following newly qualified teachers to The Duston School Mr Butt, Mr Davies and Dr Maxwell and would like to share their journeys on returning to our school.

Mr O Butt – Primary Phase Teacher



My passion for education and desire to become a teacher first began during my time in primary school because of how I looked up to my own Key Stage Two teacher. The concept of being in a learning environment and working together with my peers in a variety of educational subjects had always been fulfilling to me at primary level. However, coming from a small village primary school, I was slightly apprehensive at the thought of transitioning to a large urban secondary school. Yet, as soon as my learning journey began at The Duston School (TDS), I immediately knew that my enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge would endure. I was excited to meet new friends, learn under new teachers and acquire the foundation of skills, knowledge and ability for a future career.

During my time at TDS, I received consistently high-quality instruction from a range of staff and took part in a multitude of wider curriculum/sporting activities that were on offer, thus encountering teaching role models who reinforced my ambition to become a teacher along the way. This enabled me to tackle my GCSEs in Year 11 with ample confidence and ultimately allow me to continue my journey as a sixth form student studying mathematics, further mathematics, history and media studies at the school. With an abundance of support from my teachers and the sixth form team, I was able to achieve A*AB at A-level and fulfil my dream of successfully applying to study BA Primary Education (leading to QTS) at the University of Northampton.

Mr S Strickland - Principal - BA (Hons), MA, NPQH

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During my time as a student at the University of Northampton, I was educated and inspired by educational professionals who prepared me for the world of teaching and academic writing (L4/5/6). These lecturers enabled me to feel confident and competent when entering a primary classroom environment, whether that was delivering high-calibre lesson content or implementing behaviour management strategies to ensure high expectations of children. As a first-year student, I was also inspired to start my own tutoring Facebook page, where I could work with various children in the Duston area at a 1:1 level, as I found this would benefit and improve my teaching practice by witnessing first-hand how children learn best. Furthermore, throughout the three years at university, I had learnt from expert teaching mentors in Northampton within five educational placements. This allowed me to observe and adopt certain teaching pedagogies and techniques to develop my own teacher identity and philosophy. Upon my fifth and final educational placement, as a third-year student, I was placed in TDS with Year 5, which felt extremely nostalgic, and I was excited to return to the school setting which I spent seven years at. I was instantaneously reminded of the school's vision and ethos, which completely aligned with my own from the outset. I saw the high expectations of children and exceptional behaviour management techniques in place and felt comfortable. Hence, after eight successful weeks on placement, enriching my understanding as a primary teacher, I was fortunate enough to be offered a permanent role as a Year 4 teacher in June of 2024.

This leads me to today, where I am so proud to be a male role model for every child within the school. I continue aspiring to contribute significantly to the social, emotional and academic development of the children I work with. My return to TDS felt so right and coming from the area allows me to feel like I am contributing to my community. I look forward to the exciting opportunities this new chapter for me brings.

Dr. I. Maxwell – Teacher of Chemistry



I am excited to return to the Duston School as a Teacher of Chemistry, having previously completed my teacher training placement here. My journey to this point has been both diverse and deeply rewarding, shaped by a blend of academic research and teaching experiences.

Before embarking on my teacher training, I spent approximately four years as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Oxford. As a member of the Clinical Islet Transplant Research Group, I had the privilege of working under an honorary contract with the NHS as an honorary scientist. My research focused on optimizing the human islet isolation process, specifically investigating the role of donor variables on islet isolation and transplantation outcomes. This research was crucial in advancing the field of islet transplantation for patients with type 1 diabetes.

My role extended beyond research, as I was an active member of the on-call clinical human islet isolation team. This involved participating in all aspects of the clinical islet isolation process for transplantation into patients across the UK. This position was exceptionally rewarding, as it involved saving lives and making a tangible difference in the treatment of type 1 diabetes.

Prior to my time at Oxford, I accumulated valuable teaching experiences in higher education. Transitioning to secondary school teaching has allowed me to pursue my passion for inspiring the younger generation. My aim is to show students that they can achieve anything they set their hearts on, provided they are willing to work hard.

During my placement at The Duston School, I had many positive experiences that confirmed my decision to pursue a career in secondary education. The supportive and collaborative environment created by the staff was instrumental in my professional development. I was particularly impressed by the enthusiasm and curiosity of the students, which made teaching both enjoyable and fulfilling. The school's commitment to fostering a love for learning and encouraging critical thinking resonated with my own teaching philosophy. Additionally, the

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mentorship and guidance I received from experienced teachers were invaluable, helping me to refine my teaching strategies and classroom management skills.

I look forward to continuing my journey at The Duston School, contributing to the school community, and helping students discover and nurture their passion for science. Teaching is a role I thoroughly enjoy, and I am committed to making chemistry both exciting and accessible for all my students.

I am excited to be back at The Duston School and look forward to the opportunity to inspire and be inspired by the next generation of scientists.

Mr S Davies – Teacher of Science



When joining The Duston School as a Year 7 student in 2012 I knew I wanted to be a teacher, however I initially wanted to be a primary school teacher. Throughout my Duston School journey I loved and excelled at maths and science as well as a range of art and design subjects such as hospitality and catering. This ultimately made me extremely passionate about science and resulted in the decision to teach science.

Once achieving my desired GCSE grades, I joined The Duston School's sixth form where I undertook A-Level biology, chemistry, and physics. As I got to know the science department, they allowed me to complete work experience allowing me to assist during science lessons which reinforced my want to both be a science teacher and work at The Duston School. With the aid of my wonderful A-Level teachers I was able to achieve my desired grades allowing me to study biochemistry at the University of Warwick where I was able to acquire higher level subject knowledge ready to teach GCSE and A-Level sciences upon my return to The Duston School. During my degree I undertook additional work experience in The Duston School's science department and completed teaching modules to improve my teaching practice.

After completion of my degree, I achieved my teaching qualifications at NTTTP and successfully completed an interview to be a Teacher of Science at The Duston School where I plan on staying forever due to how much I love it.

We wish them all the very best in their next chapters at TDS and I look forward to working with them all.

Yours faithfully,

Mr S Strickland
Principal/CEO

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