SHIPLAKE COLLEGE
HENLEY-ON-THAMES



Director of Music

Candidate Information Pack

To start in Summer Term 2027

Welcome from the Headmaster

Dear Applicant,

The word I hear mentioned most regularly when speaking to the pupils, parents, and staff of Shiplake College is 'community'. So, thank you for taking the time to consider the role of **Director of Music**, as it represents a wonderful opportunity to join our very special Shiplake community.

Shiplake College is an HMC co-educational boarding and day school offering a holistic education for around 620 pupils from Year 7 to Sixth Form. There has been a co-educational Sixth Form since 1998 and since September 2023 girls have been welcomed into Year 7, as we continue our journey to become a fully co-educational place of learning. We are nestled in leafy South Oxfordshire, five minutes from Henley, and sit right on the River Thames. It is a beautiful place to work.

As well as providing a fantastic learning and living environment for young people, Shiplake offers an enjoyable, challenging and rewarding working environment.

We strive to recruit the best possible teaching and support staff to drive the College forwards and ensure we continue to provide the best possible rounded education for our pupils.

Above all, Shiplake is a school where we try to live out authentically our three core values – the Three Is – **Inclusive**, **Individual**, and **Inspirational**.

'Inclusive' is our cornerstone with our strong sense of community in which everyone has value and where the prevailing culture is one of kindness.

'Individual' represents our all-ability school in which we not only recognise but also celebrate that everyone is different - thank goodness for that! This is a personal best school.

And finally, 'Inspirational' - the pre-requisite at Shiplake is that everyone – students and staff alike - turn up each day with a smile, a positive attitude, and a willingness to engage with all aspects of school life.

Shiplake College is a school where academic rigour is non-negotiable, but character development is just as important. We strive to help students develop broad interests across a wide range of co-curricular areas, bolster self-esteem, and give a sense of our place in the wider world with the aim to make a positive difference to society.

Embracing the lifestyle at a busy and vibrant boarding school is paramount for anyone wishing to work at Shiplake. Knowing our pupils well enables us to ensure that they get the best from their education here, and this is a pivotal part of any role at the College. This is a great opportunity for the right candidate and 'fit' is very important to us.

Thank you for your interest in working at Shiplake College and, as we look to an exciting future, I hope that you will consider being part of that story.

Tyrone Howe



The College

Shiplake College is a thriving and relatively young HMC school. In September 2026 we welcomed just over 620 boarding and day pupils aged 11-18 (up from 582 the previous term). There has been a co-educational Sixth Form since 1998 and since September 2023 girls have joined in Year 7 (making up 39% of all co-educational year groups) as the College goes fully co-educational.

Overlooking the River Thames, two miles upstream of the famous Henley Royal Regatta stretch, pupils enjoy a beautiful and inspiring 63-acre rural site. The College is conveniently located near major air, railway and motorway networks, close to Reading, London and Oxford and just 40 minutes from Heathrow.

There are boarding options to suit all family needs available from Year 7 - flexi (2 nights), part (four nights), weekly (six nights) and full, with ad hoc 'overnight stays' also an option for day pupils.

Every pupil is placed at the heart of Shiplake life and the College's ethos is underpinned by the Three Is – **Inclusive**, **Individual** and **Inspirational**.

Shiplake provides a friendly, supportive and structured environment to bring out the best in each and every pupil. Renowned for outstanding pastoral care and personal development, the College welcomes pupils with wide-ranging skills and talents, who will make the most of the many opportunities offered to them.

The College provides an education that is tailored to the individual, achieved through engaging and inspirational teaching, delivered in small classes where the teachers can know and understand each pupil's method of learning.

The College continues to see year-on-year improvements in examination results. In August 2026, Shiplake leavers achieved excellent public examination grades, with the best ever GCSE results setting a new academic benchmark for the College. At GCSE, pupils achieved 58% of 9-7 grades and 83% grades 9-6, an increase from 38% and 64% respectively in 2024. At Sixth Form, the percentage of A*-C grades was 89% A*-C and 67% at A*-B (up from 82% and 61% in 2025). A record 50% of pupils headed to Russell Group universities.

In addition to a strong academic foundation, the College offers excellent sporting, artistic and co-curricular opportunities. Two afternoons are reserved for an array of clubs and activities, including a comprehensive outdoor education programme, with pupils encouraged to extend their horizons and experience new challenges and responsibilities.

Academic lessons take place Monday to Friday and each day ends with an hour of academic support during which pupils undertake independent study or seek help with homework from teachers. Sports training takes place on three days a week, with the majority of fixtures scheduled for Saturday mornings.

145 boarders become fully integrated into Shiplake's inclusive and welcoming environment. International pupils join us from all over the world, currently from 13 different countries, and represent approximately 4% of the school population. Full boarders take part in a vibrant weekend programme of trips and activities on Saturday afternoons and Sundays, with day pupils and weekly boarders able to enjoy additional family and down time at home.



School Development

The stunning grounds are a remarkable combination of old and new; of the traditional and the up-to-date. Although only founded in 1959, Shiplake occupies a site which includes an original late-nineteenth century mansion, still dominating the main school buildings.

The school is equipped with modern amenities, including a contemporary Thinking Space, multi-purpose Lecture Theatre, a multi-activity centre with climbing wall, fitness suite and indoor archery/rifle range, and Marjorie's, a café where Sixth Form students can socialise and work independently.

1959: College Founded
1990: Goodwin Building (Classrooms)
1998: Sixth Form Became Co-educational
2002: College House (Year 13 Boys)
2008: First Year 7 (Lower School) Joined
2009: Gilson (Girls) House
2014: John Turner Building
2020: Davies Centre and Marjorie White Building
2023: First Year 7 Girls Joined
2024: Bevan (Science) and Jubilee Classrooms
2024: Phillimore Fields
2025: Paddocks Artificial Pitches
2025: Sixth Form Centre
2026: Wellbeing Centre

Further investment and development will help to ensure that the College's future is even brighter than its past.

Governance

Shiplake College is a charitable company and is privileged to be supported by a highly experienced, knowledgeable and diverse board of governors. This helps to shape future strategies and inform key decisions to ensure the College continues to maintain the highest possible standards.

Inspection

Shiplake was visited by ISI in September 2025. The inspection went extremely well and we met all the regulatory standards. Shiplake was also awarded a '**significant strength**', which reflects that "pupils who participate in sports, such as rowing, are given guidance in balancing their academic, sporting and wider commitments in a way which effectively promotes their wellbeing."

Admissions

Entry points are normally at Year 7 (11+), Year 9 (13+) and Year 12 (16+). Prospective families are encouraged to arrange an individual visit and/or attend an open morning. Academic, Art, Music, Drama and Sport Scholarships, and means-tested bursaries, are available.

The College embraces pupils from a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds as well as diverse intellectual and physical talents. As a Church of England school, pupils at Shiplake are gently encouraged to lead an active spiritual life throughout their time at the College.

Community

There are strong links with the local community and pupils are given every opportunity to get involved in local events and to offer service wherever appropriate.

Fundraising for charities takes place year on year.

The Shiplake Connected platform helps maintain and develop the links between the College, parents, alumni (known as Old Vikings) and former staff.



Job Description

The Headmaster is seeking to appoint a dynamic, enthusiastic and visionary **Director of Music**, starting in the Summer Term (April 2027).

This is a superb opportunity for a suitably qualified practitioner to lead an innovative, successful and inclusive department. The role would suit an energetic teacher committed to the highest standards of teaching and learning; a teacher who can inspire and challenge all our musicians.

Applications are welcomed from teachers who will strive for excellence in all aspects of their practice. Applicants should also be able to instil a passion for their subject and create a rigorous environment for our pupils' learning to thrive.

The Music Department

Music plays a very important part in the life of Shiplake College. The music department is dynamic, forward-looking and proud to offer music for all. In addition to our high-quality academic teaching, the College provides an abundance of co-curricular opportunities, allowing many pupils to place music at the heart of their Shiplake experience. We continually review our co-curricular provision to ensure that our offering matches the skills and interests of our pupils. Ensembles range from our inclusive College Chorus to our auditioned Camerata choir and from our Big Band to Rare Groove, our College soul band.

The department supports a growing number of pupil-led bands, with a wide range of performers and vocalists involved. The department offers a number of performance opportunities including our formal Winter and Spring Concerts, a regular Lunchtime Concert series, our Music Scholars' Recital, our high-profile Carol Service, regular performance opportunities in Chapel and Assembly and our very own summer music festival, Shiplake Rocks.

Job Role

Direction and Development

- Lead, inspire, and motivate by engendering a culture of openness, in which colleagues are encouraged to use their initiative and are fully supported, whilst being accountable for their performance
- Develop and implement subject-specific policies and practices which support the College's priorities of high academic expectations and outstanding teaching and learning
- Hold weekly departmental meetings, which focus on pupil progress, curriculum development, and teaching and learning, minutes of which must be recorded and made available to the Deputy Head Academic
- Produce and implement a Departmental Development Plan, with progress reviewed twice yearly
- Routinely analyse internal and external academic results, drawing on a range of assessment and baseline data to identify strengths and development areas of both students and staff
- Promote the profile of the department within the College and beyond, seeking opportunities to develop the programme of public performances
- Be cognisant of key subject developments in terms of both content and assessment and to share this information with colleague

Department Management

- Provide energetic leadership, imparting both direction and drive
- Establish and maintain a positive learning environment through regular monitoring and evaluation of colleagues by lesson observation, learning walks, work scrutiny and use of student voice. The Head of Department must complete a minimum of two lesson observations per colleague each academic year, one of which will count towards the school appraisal system. In



addition, departmental scrutiny of students' work and both teachers' planning and marking should take place once a term

- Monitor the setting of prep work, and the resulting feedback, to ensure both are being used effectively. The Head of Department should ensure that all assessment and feedback follows the College's Academic Expectations framework
- Set clear expectations about professional conduct and working relationships amongst department staff, ensuring effective delegation of responsibilities and tasks
- Produce, and review on a yearly basis, a comprehensive departmental handbook, which informs staff of agreed policies and procedures
- Manage the performance of staff in line with school policy and use the process to develop the personal and professional effectiveness of staff
- Ensure that all staff engage in continuous professional development (CPD) by conducting an annual career review, agreeing professional development targets and by putting in place appropriate training and support. The Head of Department should liaise closely with the Assistant Head (Staff Development) to ensure best practice on this front
- Ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to induct new staff to the department and that trainee and Early Careers Teachers are monitored, supported and assessed, in line with statutory requirements. Liaison with the College's ECT Coordinator is essential
- Support departmental colleagues in the consistent use of pupil sanctions and awards, informed by the College's Behavioural Framework
- Attend, and play an active role in, Heads of Department and Faculty meetings
- Assist in the recruitment of departmental staff

Teaching and Learning

- Lead by example by modelling innovation and excellent practice
- Ensure that schemes of work provide for a curriculum that meets statutory national requirements, and allows continuity and progressions of skills, knowledge and understanding
- Ensure that all teachers plan for their lessons, taking into account assessment for learning, fostering independence, and growth mindset culture
- Establish robust assessment systems and ensure that they are used with consistency. Departmental assessment should be standardised and data held centrally
- Monitor pupil progress and intervene where necessary, by offering support and communicating with key stakeholders; including, parents, Learning Development and House staff
- Provide guidance and training for colleagues on effective teaching and learning methods
- Ensure that the department is aware of SEN pupils, their learning difficulties and that teaching within the department addresses the needs of these pupils
- Ensure that Health and Safety policies and practices, including risk assessments, throughout the department are in-line with national requirements and are updated where necessary, liaising with the School's Deputy Bursar Estates where appropriate
- Ensure the effective and consistent implementation of School Policies



Deployment of Staff and Resources

- Establish staffing and resource needs. Providing the Deputy Head Academic with information as required
- Coordinate, and contribute to, departmental revision sessions and clinics
- Ensure best use of subject expertise and physical resources
- Facilitate the use of ICT, for learning and administration
- Prepare and submit the annual budget request in line with priorities identified in the departmental development plan, to monitor and manage spending throughout the financial year and evaluate spending profiles at year-end
- Maintain and store departmental resources in good order and organise them in a way that provides ready access to colleagues. An inventory of departmental resources should be maintained
- Administer and develop the departmental library, whilst collaborating with the Thinking Space Manager to ensure digital resource provision
- Market the department effectively, including at subject fairs, and seek to provide a safe, attractive and stimulating environment in which to work

Academic Administration

- Work with the Exams Officer to communicate key examination dates to parents
- Review student GCSE and Sixth Form subject choices to ensure suitability
- Provide papers and mark schemes for internal examinations
- Manage external examination entries and oversee entries for external music exams
- Co-ordinate, mark and moderate coursework within the department
- Monitor Progress Reviews and End of Term Reports, to ensure grades are data/evidence driven and that written advice is specific and constructive

Any other duties as reasonably required by your Line Manager or member of the Senior Management Team. Every subject teacher will be expected to undertake tutorial responsibilities. This job description will be reviewed annually and may be subject to amendment or modification at any time after consultation with the post holder. It is not a comprehensive statement of procedures and tasks but sets out the main expectations of the School in relation to the post holder's professional responsibilities and duties.

Person Specification

Candidates must empathise with, and be committed to, independent education generally, and to the personal best education provided by Shiplake College.

Essential Requirements

- A degree in Music (or a closely related field)
- Excellent subject knowledge of GCSE and Key Stage 5 Music specifications
- Proficiency on at least two instruments
- Excellent keyboard skills including the ability to accompany congregational singing
- Proficiency in use of music technology and its effective use as a teaching and learning tool



- Ability to lead and manage our series of high-profile public concerts and services
- Ensure continuity, progression and cohesiveness in all teaching
- Use a variety of methods and approaches which differentiate and stimulate, which match curricular objectives and the range of pupil needs, and ensure equal opportunity for all pupils

Knowledge and Experience

- Ability to motivate and inspire pupils and colleagues
- Ability to review and implement effective programmes of study in line with examination specification requirements
- Good knowledge of current pedagogy
- Ability to teach GCSE and Level 3 Music

Skills and Abilities

- Excellent organisational and time management skills
- Strong interpersonal and communication abilities
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office and administrative systems
- Ability to multitask, meet deadlines, and remain calm under pressure
- Professional, positive, and approachable manner
- Ability to work well both independently and within a team, including supporting colleagues by providing absence cover when required
- Ability to prioritise and manage diary commitments
- Ability to multi-task whilst remaining calm and composed
- Ability to communicate clearly with a range of different people, including teachers, pupils, current and prospective parents and candidates for vacancies

Personal Qualities and Interests

- Attention to detail and a passion for accuracy
- Prepared to attend internal and external training days
- Practical and pragmatic
- Ability to stay calm under pressure
- Flexibility in approach with a can do attitude
- Enthusiasm and drive
- Reliable and considerate
- Self-reliance and self-motivation
- Empathy

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Shiplake College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Shiplake College is also committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and applications from individuals are encouraged from suitably qualified candidates regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnerships. There is no typical Shiplake member of staff, we live our core values of individual, inclusive and inspirational and value the contribution that each member of our community makes to life at the College.



Staff Benefits at a Glance

A competitive salary will be offered commensurate with the role and the experience of the successful candidate. Full details and terms and conditions will be outlined in a contract issued with an offer of employment.



PARKING

Free onsite car parking is available. A valid school parking permit must be displayed. Bike storage is also available (and shower/changing facilities provided).



SUBSIDISED ACCOMMODATION

Subsidised accommodation may be available onsite subject to availability.



DOG FRIENDLY

The 'Dogs of Shiplake' form an important part of our community and some staff bring dogs to work (please see Dogs and Pets Policy).



PENSION SCHEMES

Teachers are offered the opportunity to join a defined contribution pension scheme (APTIS).



CATERING

Complimentary lunches during term time (and supper if a school commitment or duty). Snacks at break time and hot drinks throughout the day.



TECHNOLOGY

All teaching staff and eligible support staff are loaned a school device (Microsoft Surface) to enable flexibility in achieving their roles.



OUTDOOR POOL

Free access to the outdoor swimming pool for staff and their families, at agreed times when the pool is open during the summer months.



SPORTS CENTRE

Free access to the onsite weights rooms and fitness suites for staff (and partners living onsite).



DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is nurtured and encouraged. In addition to the INSET programme, individual requests are supported.



FLU VACCINATION

The College covers the cost of the annual flu vaccination for colleagues not eligible for a free NHS vaccination.



COMMON ROOM

The Shiplake staff form a vibrant common room with regular social and sporting events.



CYCLE TO WORK SCHEME

This enables employees to purchase a bike and accessories through tax-free salary sacrifice, saving on income tax and National Insurance.

Applications

To Apply

- Please go to www.shiplake.org.uk/vacancies and apply by clicking on the **Apply Now** icon which will take you to My New Term where you can complete an online application form

Closing date is 10.00am on Wednesday 25 November 2026

Interviews will be held on Monday 30 November and Tuesday 1 December 2026

We reserve the right to interview early applicants

Application Process

- Please read all of the information provided before completing your application
- Within the application form there is the opportunity to demonstrate, using examples, your suitability for the role and the qualities you would bring to Shiplake College. This is where you can bring your application form to life. Please do not send testimonials, certificates or examples of work etc., unless specifically requested to during the recruitment process

References

All offers of employment are subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are satisfactory to the College. One of the references must be from your current or most recent employer. If your current/most recent employment does/did not involve working with children, then the second referee should be from the employer with whom you most recently worked with children. If you are or have been employed within a school, then one reference must be from the Head of your current school, or the last school at which you worked. In all circumstances the information given should be for the Head or HR Department. Neither referee should be a relative or someone known to you solely as a friend.

Shortlisted applicants are advised that references will be taken up prior to interview unless you ask us not to. We will assume it is acceptable to contact your references at any time unless advised otherwise using the appropriate section on the application form. Please ensure that any referees who you are happy for us to contact before interview are aware that they may be asked to provide a reference with a relatively short deadline.

Online Searches

In line with the updated KCSIE 2026, we will carry out an online search for all shortlisted candidates. Any relevant incidents or issues involving candidates that are publicly available online (including information contained in social media accounts) and identified during the search may be explored at interview. The purpose of carrying out online checks is to comply with the KCSIE recommendation that Schools review information to assist any decision as to the candidate's suitability to work with children and young people. Shiplake College is an Equal Opportunities Employer and seeks at all times to ensure that its processes do not unlawfully discriminate against any prospective employee.



Interview Process

If you are shortlisted and invited for interview we will ask you to bring in evidence of the following:

- Identity – passport or photocard driving licence
- Address – document from Group 2b of the DBS List of Valid Identity Documents with current address
- An original document to show proof of right to work in the UK from the Right_to_Work_Checklist
- If you have changed your name by deed poll or any other mechanism (e.g. marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) you will be asked to provide documentary evidence of the change

During your visit if you have not done so already, you will be required to sign your application form in order to declare that the information you have given is accurate and true.

In the event that you are unsuccessful please be assured that certified photocopies of documents taken will be destroyed.

Interviews are conducted in person and will explore your suitability for the role and to work with children. On occasion, applicants will be invited to participate in a preliminary online video interview.

As well as a face-to-face interview, if relevant to the role, the selection process may include some other form of assessment e.g. administrative test, demonstration of practical skill, a presentation etc.

All adults working at Shiplake College should be aware of their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of every pupil, both physical and emotional, inside and outside school. This involves ensuring that pupils are protected from significant physical or emotional harm and that there is a positive commitment to ensure the satisfactory development and growth of the individual. Everyone working at Shiplake College should be aware of and, when necessary, follow the school's Safeguarding Guidelines, which are in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Prevent 2015, Working Together 2018 and the Department of Education's (DfE) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board's (OSCB) practice and procedures (these are available online at www.oscb.org.uk and also refer to http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/safeguarding).

Warning

You should be aware that it is an offence to apply for the role if you are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children. Provision of false information is also an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if you have been selected, and possible referral to the police and/or DBS, and/or the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

Queries

If you have any queries at all about the recruitment process please contact the HR Department on 01189 405218 or jobs@shiplake.org.uk.



SHIPLAKE COLLEGE
HENLEY-ON-THAMES

INCLUSIVE • INDIVIDUAL • INSPIRATIONAL

The School Day

7.00am	Boarders' Breakfast
8.00am	Buses Arrive/Registration
8.20am	Assembly/Chapel/Tutor
8.40am	Lessons Begin (average 6 lessons per day)
3.30pm	Games/Co-Curricular Activities
4.45pm	Prep/Academic Clinics
5.00pm	Supper
6.15pm	Buses Depart (5.00pm Fridays)
7.00pm	Boarders Activities Programme

13 daily bus routes
1 weekly West London route

2:1 applications for each place

10% discount for most scholarships

Academic, **Art**, **Drama**, **Music** and **Sport** Scholarships available

Means-Tested Bursaries available

Fees include **snacks** at break, **lunch** and **dinner**

Fees 2026-2027

Registration Fee
£180 inc. VAT (non-refundable)

Acceptance Deposit
£1,750 (UK and EU), with £500 credited to the second term's bill.

All fees are per term, inc. VAT

	Years 7-8	Years 9-13
Day	**£9,300**	**£11,645**
Flexi	**£11,995**	**£14,325**
Part	**£12,995**	**£15,350**
Weekly	**£13,995**	**£16,380**
Full	**£15,905**	**£18,200**

Flexi-Boarding (1 or 2 nights a week)
Part Boarding (3 or 4 nights a week)
Weekly Boarding (5 or 6 nights a week)

Headline Figures

624 school roll (2026-27)

28% full, weekly, part, flexi boarding in Years 9-13

39% girls across the co-ed year groups

1:7 teacher:pupil ratio

1 Wellbeing Centre opening November 2026

Sport and Co-Curricular

50+ sports and co-curricular activities available

Success in **rowing** for girls and boys at Schools' Head, NSR, HRR, and at international level

Active **Outdoor Education Programme** and **CCF** (Royal Navy and Air Force)

High participation for **Gold**, **Silver** and **Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Awards** each year

Destinations and Careers

94% of 2026 leavers applied to university

71% progressed to top third UK universities

50% progressed to Russell Group universities

Top destinations 2026: Exeter, Cardiff, Brookes, Bath, Newcastle, Birmingham

Top degree subjects 2026: Business, Economics, Sport, Marketing, Engineering

10 2026 leavers went to universities abroad (including **8** to USA)

Microsoft Surface unified **device policy**

All **mobile phones** handed in at the start of each day

Exam Results

98% of GCSE results were **9-4 grades** (2026)

89% of Sixth Form results were **A*-C** (or equivalent)

Teaching and Learning

27 subject options at Sixth Form

3 options for additional Year 12 qualification with UCAS points

21 subjects offered at GCSE

1 bespoke Key Stage 3 curriculum

16 average class size

9 average tutor group size

46 pupils are children of Old Vikings (former pupils) and staff

Creative Arts

164 pupils receive tuition in at least one instrument

17 different instruments taught

10 ensembles and choirs

7 drama productions and showcases a year

52 pupils involved in whole school musical 2026

48 pupils taking LAMDA lessons

3 whole school art and photography competitions and **1** golden easel

Up to **20** staff dogs on site each day


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