





“Better a diamond  
with a flaw than  
a pebble without”

-Confucius







## Who we are



One of the greatest joys of working with young people is the sheer diversity of their individuality. Each precious human being, created from a unique set of chromosomes with a character that is theirs and theirs alone. Sadly, we are all under increasing pressure to measure ourselves against a false perfection promoted and perpetuated by social media and 'reality' TV, amongst others. Flawless diamonds are beyond rare: let's embrace our flaws; polish our rough edges and shine.

My unwavering commitment as Headteacher at Teignmouth Community School is to challenge and support every young person in our community to be the **best version of themselves**.

As a school leader, if I could give one gift to the young people in my care, it would be the resilience to overcome life's challenges so that they find their diamond rather than settling for being a pebble. None of us are perfect, life is never easy but there is a diamond within every one of us.

This centrally held belief – that we are all always capable of being a slightly better version of ourselves tomorrow than we are today – celebrates who we are as an individual whilst also acknowledging that we can keep on polishing.

Everything that we do here at Teignmouth Community School is driven by this belief and underpinned by the values that, we believe, will ensure that we are all always working to be the best version of ourselves.

By **working hard** and **never giving up** we remain open to limitless opportunities for progress. I firmly believe that you have not failed until you stop trying.

As a community we have a responsibility to **be kind** and **care for each other**. We don't need to agree with everyone, we don't even need to understand everyone but there is absolutely nothing, other than our own fear and weakness, that stops us from accepting everyone.

And only by **joining in** can we **develop and grow**. Our characters are like muscles: if we don't exercise them, if we never push ourselves beyond that which is comfortable then we will never grow.

It may be easier to be a pebble but that is not what we do here at TCS. We unapologetically mine for diamonds. Because, quite simply, why wouldn't you?

*Rachel Wickham*  
Headteacher



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## Our Senior Leadership Team

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### **Rachel Wickham – Headteacher**

Rachel has a degree in Law from Brasenose College, Oxford University and a Masters in Criminology from Keele University. She retrained as a teacher in 2005 with her first teaching role as an English teacher at Ivybridge Community College before moving to be Head of English at Exmouth Community College. Rachel moved to Dawlish College as Assistant Headteacher in 2016 and subsequently became Headteacher there in 2018 before moving to Teignmouth Community School in 2022.

### **Samantha Atkinson - Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum and Assessment)**

Samantha studied History at The University of Exeter before qualifying as a teacher of English in 2009. She has since also gone on to complete a degree in English Language and Literature and a Masters in Education Studies. Having relocated from the Isle of Wight she began her career at Teignmouth Community School before quickly progressing to Head of Department. Samantha has since held several posts within the school including Assistant Headteacher and Vice Principal before becoming Deputy Headteacher.

### **Christopher Darvill – Deputy Headteacher (Conduct and Attitudes)**

Chris studied Media Production at Plymouth University and worked professionally in the media industry. He trained as a Teacher of Art in 2003 and has taught across the country (and indeed the world) before finally settling in Devon where he taught at Queen Elizabeth's Crediton for seven years and was an Assistant Principal and Head of KS3 site.

### **Nicola Lee – Director of Inclusion**

Nicola has a degree in Human Geography from Nottingham Trent University and qualified as a teacher of Geography in 2005. She spent much of her career teaching in schools in Hertfordshire before relocating to the South West in 2020. Nicola joined us in September 2023 from South Molton School where she was the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.



### **Laura Milsom – Assistant Headteacher (Personal Development and Head of TCS6)**

Laura studied Sports Education and English at The University of Gloucestershire and went on to complete her teacher training at Exeter University. Her first teaching position was at Teignmouth Community School, where she has since held a variety of roles. Following a gap year to experience teaching abroad, she returned to live in Teignmouth and became the Deputy Team Leader for PE. Her desire to work pastorally whole school then led to a Head of Year position with experience of Year 8-11. She then progressed to a Senior Leadership position as Director of Sixth Form, and has recently taken on whole school Personal Development.

### **Martin Lewis – Assistant Headteacher (Conduct Support)**

Martin studied at Cheltenham & Gloucester College of Higher Education (Now University of Gloucestershire) and completed a four-year BEd Degree in Physical Education. Graduating in 1995 with full QTS, Martin spent his first seven years of teaching in North London and East London respectively, where he progressed to a Head of Department. He relocated to Devon in September 2002 and taught at South Molton Community College where he was Head of the Performing Arts Faculty, Head of PE and also the EVC (Educational Visits Co-ordinator) for the school. Martin joined TCS in September 2004 as Head of PE and during his time at Teignmouth has held a wide variety of Middle and Senior Leadership roles.

### **Billy Lee – Deputy Headteacher (Attendance and Welfare – Designated Safeguarding Lead)**

Billy studied History at Cardiff University and went on to gain his teaching qualification at the University of Bath. His first teaching post was in Stevenage where he quickly progressed to Head of Year before moving to be an Assistant Headteacher at a school in Wellingborough. He returned to Devon to become Assistant Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead at Avanti Hall School where his role was to rectify the safeguarding failures of the previous Steiner Academy, Exeter before joining TCS as Deputy Head.

### **Rebecca Flint – Deputy Headteacher (Teacher Development and Curriculum Delivery)**

Rebecca studied Biology at The University of Glamorgan before qualifying as a teacher of Science at The University of Exeter. She then moved to Kent to teach for a period of time before returning to the South West as Assistant Head of Science at Teign School and then Lead Practitioner of Science at South Dartmoor Community College. It was there that she progressed to Head of Science and then Assistant Headteacher responsible for the quality of teaching and learning. Rebecca joined us at Teignmouth Community School in September 2023.



Rachel Wickham  
Headteacher



Samantha Atkinson  
Deputy Head



Chris Darvill  
Deputy Head



Nicola Lee  
Director of Inclusion



Laura Milsom  
Head of Sixth Form



Martin Lewis  
Assistant Headteacher



Billy Lee  
Deputy Head



Rebecca Flint  
Deputy Head





## Our Curriculum



In Years 7, 8 and 9 (Key Stage 3) all pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum. We operate a two-week timetable with each week split into twenty-five, hour-long lessons or periods, five in each day. Pupils study the following subjects:

Art and Design  
Computing  
Drama  
English  
Ethics, Philosophy and Religion  
Geography  
History

Mathematics  
French or Spanish  
Music  
PSHE  
Physical Education  
Science  
Technology

Pupils study Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education in assemblies and bespoke lessons, plus collapsed enrichment time. These sessions provide essential real-world learning enabling pupils to consider values, health, relationships and well-being, and prepare them to enter the adult world.

We take reading very seriously at TCS and are fortunate to have a brand new library facility. All year groups engage in reading and vocabulary development in daily reading. In the first few years at TCS, pupils will take part in the Accelerated Reader Scheme and have separate lessons dedicated for reading each week.

In Years 10 and 11, pupils enter Key Stage 4 and are able to specialise in four subjects as well as continuing their core curriculum of English, Maths, Science, PE and EPR. One of our strengths is the wide variety of options we offer at this stage, with pupils able to select courses such as Dance, Hair and Beauty and Engineering, as well as traditional, academic subjects such as History and Modern Languages.

We also have a very successful Sixth Form, TCS6, and around a half of Year 11 students each year will choose to stay with us for the last phase of their education (Key Stage 5). We again offer a broad range of subjects in a college environment which is both separate from and a key part of our school. (Please do view the TCS6 pages and prospectus on our website for more information).













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## *Extra-curricular activities*

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It is important that pupils have opportunities to develop the widest possible range of talents and interests. To extend the formal curriculum, we offer a wide variety of activities during lunchtimes, evenings and weekends. Experience suggests that the pupils who flourish most are those who take full advantage of these programmes.

Sporting activities at lunchtimes and immediately after the last lesson of the day include athletics, badminton, basketball, cricket, trampolining, table tennis, five-a-side football, football, gymnastics, hockey, netball and rugby. Pupils also have access to the school fitness suite in the sports centre, 'Alive'. Our 'All Weather Pitch' boasts one of the best 3G playing surfaces in the local area.

Pupils interested in music have the opportunity to take lessons in a variety of instruments, as well as the chance to join the School Choir, The Wind Band, String Groups, Music Club and lunch-time music practices. There are also dance and drama clubs and performances, technology and arts clubs, a chess club and an eco group, and other opportunities emerging all the time.

We run and encourage all to take up the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and we have teams in the Ten Tors event annually. Trips and residential experiences are invaluable in developing independence and broadening horizons. Residential trips include field trips and foreign exchanges. Day trips are also arranged each year to such places as galleries and exhibitions, theme parks, the Houses of Parliament, sporting fixtures and theatres.

Every year group has a student voice forum which feeds into the leadership of the school. We encourage and foster leadership opportunities in each year group and as pupils reach their senior years, they are encouraged to become involved in motivating younger students and co-ordinating school activities. Many will become student ambassadors and take up other whole-school responsibilities.





## Transition from Primary to Secondary

We are very aware that TCS will be a much larger school than almost any primary school. We are blessed with a lot of space and excellent facilities and our site contributes to the calm and productive working environment where learning can be personalised. We recognise that young people must feel comfortable and secure in order to thrive and to achieve their potential.


In the transfer from Year 6 to 7, we liaise closely with primary colleagues to find out as much as we can about our new cohort. Following advice, we organise our new Year 7 intake carefully into groups where they will have the opportunity to be with pupils they already know as well as forge new friendships. We run enhanced transition days and taster days at TCS for pupils who are due to join us at the end of the summer term each year.

Our induction processes ensure that each pupils' move to secondary education is as smooth as possible. We have a specialist, dedicated Year 7 team who support this important transition and

we have a very strong pastoral team. We set high expectations of all pupils and we have clear policies about issues such as conduct and bullying. At TCS, every child matters. We recognise that everyone associated with our school, and especially the pupils, flourish in an environment where their efforts are acknowledged and they feel that they belong.





A photograph of two young women in school uniforms hugging outdoors. The girl on the left is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt and a black pleated skirt, with her back to the camera. The girl on the right is wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and a black pleated skirt, smiling at the camera. They are standing on a grassy area with trees in the background. Other students in uniform are partially visible in the background.

*“My child settled into TCS really quickly and made new friends within the first couple of weeks. The staff went above and beyond to ensure he was happy from the first day.”*

**Year 7 parent**





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