

# SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT



When you come and work at Spires Academy you will be able to benefit from a structured and comprehensive professional development programme. As a valued member of staff we want to ensure that you have access to the benefits available to you whilst you work at Spires.

Your first year in post will be crucial to ensuring your success as a member of staff and to maintaining the ongoing success of our Academy. For this purpose a mentoring system is in place to ease you into the structures and systems of the Academy and give support in your first year with us. Working in an Academy offers real opportunities for staff to improve educational standards for students in our school. There are excellent working conditions for all staff and opportunities for professional development.

## Induction and Career Development

- A mentor programme for all newly qualified teachers
- Strong programme of in-service training
- Professional development opportunities for all teachers from newly qualified courses to the NPQH for aspiring headteachers

The staff at Spires Academy are very supportive towards each other with a great camaraderie existing throughout the Academy with a number of social events that are well attended and open to all. In addition to this, benefits include the following:

- State-of-the-art tablet PC for all teaching staff
- Social staff area and work area for staff
- Discounts on hiring other areas of the Academy for functions

## Childcare

Kent County Council Children's Information Service offers a comprehensive service to help meet your childcare needs. The service can be contacted on Freephone 08000 323230 or visit the website: [www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/childcare](http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/childcare). They can provide information on childminders, playgroups, and nurseries and out of school schemes.

## Housing

Information about teacher recruitment and retention at Kent County Council can be found on the newly revamped website [www.kent-teach.com](http://www.kent-teach.com)

It offers a range of incentives to teachers relocating to Kent including key worker accommodation, mortgage subsidy, rent subsidy, equity loans for house purchase and relocation expenses. These are all subject to individual circumstances and further details can be found at [www.teachertree.org.uk](http://www.teachertree.org.uk)

# LIVING AND WORKING IN CANTERBURY



Canterbury City is one of twelve local authority districts in the county of Kent. Kent was settled well before most other parts of England and the county's history is closely bound up in its proximity to mainland Europe. Canterbury and the surrounding area has a whole host of history and heritage. Canterbury itself is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and has two castles, six museums and a time travel experience back to the Middle Ages. Canterbury Cathedral is justly famous for being the final destination of pilgrims in medieval times, some of whose stories were captured by Geoffrey Chaucer in the Canterbury Tales. Canterbury City district has the perfect blend of city, coast and countryside ensuring that all interests are catered for.

Transport links are good. The road network offers excellent links to the M20, M25, M26 and M2 motorways, providing easy access to London and its airports. Kent International Airport, Manston, is twelve miles from Canterbury. There are two mainline railway stations with frequent trains to London's Charing Cross and Victoria stations as well as Dover and Ramsgate. There is an extensive bus network and the area is also well served by National Express coaches. To get to mainland Europe there are ferry connections from Dover to Calais, the Channel Tunnel from Folkestone to Calais as well as Eurostar which stops in Ashford.

Fitness fanatics are well catered for. The Kingsmead Leisure Centre offers a range of activities and facilities for all ages and abilities; three swimming pools, dance, mind & body, cycle and fitness studios, sports hall, solarium, café, crèche and meeting/party rooms. Kent County Football Association run support programmes for clubs and schools and Kent County Cricket Club, who have a ground in Canterbury, organise junior courses.

Canterbury and the surrounding area has an abundance of green spaces. Dane John Gardens is an historic park which dates back to 1551. The city walls and an avenue of lime trees provide a sense of enclosure and escape from the bustling metropolis. It is a safe place for children to play and has a fountain and newly built band stand. Westgate gardens are also in the city centre; eleven acres of public gardens provide an ideal setting for a stroll along the banks of the river Stour. The meandering river provides the perfect environment for swans, ducks and moorhens and in the summer the garden is an ideal setting for open air events, exhibitions and picnics. Reculver Country Park on the coast to the north of Canterbury is a unique place combining wildlife interest and historic and geological sites. Larkey Valley Wood is an ancient 45 hectare woodland on the outskirts of Canterbury. It has spectacular displays of wildflowers from March to May. Blean Woods are the largest in Kent and, in addition to their interest as ancient woodlands, they surround a number of attractive villages with welcoming pubs. The Kent Downs are an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with all kinds of outdoor activities available. The 142 mile North Downs Way is part of it and includes some of the ancient pilgrim's way.

To the north of Canterbury are the two seaside towns of Herne Bay and Whitstable. Whitstable has a rich maritime history and is famous for its oysters, with a working harbour bringing in the daily catch. It has a strong arts culture with many interesting shops and galleries. The old Canterbury to Whitstable railway line, the Crab and Winkle Way, now forms part of the National Cycle Network Route 1. Herne Bay, besides being a popular holiday resort, has wonderful sunsets, famously painted by William Turner.

Venues in Canterbury and beyond are plentiful. Theatres include the Marlowe and Gulbenkian in Canterbury, Kings Hall in Herne Bay and the Horsebridge and Playhouse in Whitstable. Between them they present entertainment across the board; dance, opera, comedy, West End productions, tribute bands and martial arts championships. There are two cinemas in Canterbury and one in Herne Bay showing the latest box office hits as well as arthouse films.

The county of Kent has 23 vineyards including close by Elham Valley Vineyard and Chapel Down Winery, home to the largest producer of English wines. Visitors can take guided tours to learn about how the vines are grown and how the wine is made. There is free tasting in the shop. There are also many farmer's markets in the county.

For further information on what Canterbury can offer, visit:

**[www.canterbury.gov.uk](http://www.canterbury.gov.uk) [www.canterbury.co.uk](http://www.canterbury.co.uk) [www.kentattractions.co.uk](http://www.kentattractions.co.uk)**