

ASHMINA GURUNG

HISTORY TEACHER

Hi there, I'm Ashmina and I teach History at an all-boys secondary school in Kent. I currently teach all years and provide pastoral care for my form group. Alongside teaching, I also coach Newly Qualified Trainees and provide specialist support in History for the Trust (Primary and Secondary Schools).



WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO APPLY FOR THE ROLE OF A TEACHER?

I have always wanted to be in a field where I could make direct impact and not be behind a desk. At university, the graduate schemes that were advertised never appealed to me as they were mostly finance based. I wanted something different! One day I stumbled upon Teach First. The idea of teaching in challenging schools fascinated me and I was up for the challenge. The fact that in England, your social and economic background still affects the quality of education you receive and life opportunities you had did not sit right with me. Ever since I made the decision, I have never regretted it. I love being in the classroom.

WHAT DOES YOUR TYPICAL DAY LOOK LIKE WITHIN YOUR ROLE?

My day starts early; I arrive to work at 7:30am. I first check my emails to see if there are any urgent issues that I need to take care of straightaway. I then check my lessons for that day and make sure I'm prepared. We then have a quick meeting either department or pastoral. From 8:30 all the way till 3:00, it is a blur. Time goes quick when you are teaching. Due to my role, some days I will go and observe my trainees and offer coaching. Other days, I am on-call and circulating the school, picking up any behaviour issues. I may spend my lunch time talking to students about the latest game or trend on social media. Around 3:15 I catch up on any phone calls to parents, emails and prep my lessons for the next day. I leave school around 4pm. However, no day is the same and that's what I love about my job.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE MORE REPRESENTATION AND DIVERSITY OF CANDIDATES APPLYING FOR A ROLE WITHIN THE SECTOR?

It is vital! Depending on which area you end up teaching, it is so important for students to see representation. For them, 'school' is a microcosm of life outside. Your relationship with your students will change how they perceive people from different ethnicities outside the classroom.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO WOMEN WHO ARE THINKING OF BEING PART OF THE SECTOR?

I would say try it! The relationships and bonds you develop with your students are phenomenal! You are working with all sorts of people daily e.g., children, adults and community members. The small moments are priceless - when a child finally understands a concept or receives test scores that they worked hard for. There are also many opportunities for you to develop as a leader, beyond the classroom. You can specialise in different areas that you are interested in.

Sometimes the days can get long, and the early mornings may be tough. Some of my tips would be: **Prioritise** - there are not enough hours of the day to do everything, prioritise what you need to give your best at, what can be done quickly and what can be done later. **Passionate** - be passionate about what you do, research your subject. **Research** - talk to the students and get to know them. They want to know that you care about them other than the strict teacher in the classroom. **Wellbeing** - take time for yourself. If you are not 100% sure, the students won't be either.