

# New Staff - September 2026



## **Emma Lawless, Housemistress St Bede's, Teacher of Games & Christian Living**

It is with real excitement and a huge sense of privilege that I introduce myself as the new Housemistress of St Bede's House. During my career I studied Sports Management at Loughborough University, an experience that shaped my belief in the importance of teamwork, resilience, and participation in whole school life. I began my teaching career as a PE teacher in a girls' independent school in Bedford, before moving to Kimbolton School, as Head of Girls' Games. Supporting girls in building confidence through physical activity has been one of the most rewarding parts of my career. In recent years, my focus has very much been on the pastoral welfare of those in Balyes House, a senior day house, of which I have been housemistress for the past 14 years, as well as supporting my husband Tony, in his role as boys' boarding housemaster for the past 8 years. I understand the importance of a boarding house being a true home from home, where girls feel comfortable to be themselves. I hope the girls in St Bede's will laugh often, grow in confidence, and leave with friendships and memories that last a lifetime.

Family is at the heart of everything we do. Tony and I have four children: our twin boys, Benjamin and James, are 18. Benjamin is studying Historic Restoration at Cardiff University, while James is currently undertaking Commando training with the Royal Marines. Our daughters, Elizabeth who is 14 and Louise 6, are equally excited about this new chapter and the opportunity to become part of the Ampleforth community.



## **Jonathan Waldburger, Housemaster St Cuthbert's & St Thomas', Teacher of History & English**

It is an honour to introduce myself as the incoming Housemaster of St Cuthbert's and St Thomas'. It has long been a dream of mine to contribute to the lives of young men at a school like Ampleforth, where such a wide and generous curriculum is offered both within and beyond the classroom. I am truly excited to join your special community this September. I join you from Kearsney College, a traditional boys' boarding school in Durban, South Africa. Over the past twelve years, I have served as a boarding master, including five years as Housemaster of Finningley House. In the classroom, I am a History teacher driven by helping students uncover the 'why' behind the world they are inheriting. I have also been deeply immersed in the sporting programme as a cricket, rugby, and football coach. As a housemaster, I believe in providing a genuine home away from home: a space where iron sharpens iron, where every boy finds a secure platform to pursue excellence in everything he does, and where lifelong friendships are formed. Before my time at Kearsney, I spent thirteen years in Cape Town where I studied and began my career at Ambleside School of Hout Bay. I hold a BA in Political Thought from the University of Cape Town, followed by a PGCE and an Honours degree in Curriculum Studies from the University of Stellenbosch.

On a personal note, I have a deep love for the ocean. I spent much of my youth exploring the Southern African coastline, a passion I've kept alive by running the surfing club at Kearsney and taking my own family on camping trips whenever we get the chance. I am joined in this adventure by my wife, Kate, who is an architectural technologist. Kate and I were married and received into the Catholic Church in 2010. We share a deep love for the literature of Sigrid Undset, from whom we have gleaned much spiritual wisdom in raising a family, and P.G. Wodehouse, who has perhaps given us the most colourful understanding of boarding life (other than our own personal experiences!). Our four children, Thomas (15), Francis (13), Lucy (11), and John (9), are all keen readers and sports enthusiasts. As a family, we are overjoyed to be joining Ampleforth. I look forward to contributing deeply to the life of the school and, most importantly, to the growth and happiness of the boys in St Cuthbert's and St Thomas'.



## **David Pearce, Teacher of Economics & Business**

I am very excited to be joining the Ampleforth College community as a Teacher of Economics and Business. Prior to joining Ampleforth I taught for 11 years in schools in Italy and Switzerland following on from a successful career in the UK and the US as a financial controller. My passion for teaching Economics and Business is driven by seeing students develop their theoretical understanding and adapt it within real world contexts, to motivate and challenge them, so that they are prepared for the future. Outside of school life I love walking with our dog (Woody), cooking, reading and gardening. I am a keen follower of cricket and, having lived in the US for 12 years, I love watching and talking about American Football and Baseball.

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## **Karl Appleyard, Head of Computer Science**

I am joining Ampleforth College as Head of Computer Science following thirteen years at Archbishop Holgate's School in York. During this time, I established both GCSE and A-Level Computer Science provision and led the development of the subject across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, helping to build a thriving and successful department. I also worked collaboratively with schools across York and North Yorkshire to support the teaching of Computer Science and have a particular interest in curriculum development and enrichment opportunities for students. Alongside teaching, I led programming clubs, cyber security competitions and educational visits, and previously acted as an expedition leader on a four-week trip to Vietnam and Laos. I also enjoyed leading school-based karate sessions, drawing on my experience as a karate instructor. Outside school, I enjoy spending time with my wife and two young sons and have a particular interest in emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence and robotics.



## **Victoria Machen, Teacher of Mathematics**

I live locally and am delighted to be joining Ampleforth College this year as a teacher of Mathematics, bringing with me a wealth of experience, including middle leadership roles in education. Family-oriented and passionate about working with young people, I value building strong relationships with both students and colleagues, which have shaped my approach to teaching and leadership. I am committed to helping every student fulfil their potential, guiding and inspiring them throughout their educational journey to achieve their very best. I have also greatly enjoyed my involvement with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, having spent the past ten years supporting students through each stage of the award at my current school. I have particularly valued seeing students grow in confidence, resilience, and friendship through the experience. Outside of school, I am a keen cricket enthusiast and can often be found supporting a local team at weekends — weather permitting!



## **Jenny Adams, Teacher of EAL**

My teaching career began in Greece where I lived and worked for 14 years. On my return to the UK, I taught in various settings in and around York, including as member of the Ampleforth EAL department until 2018. I have been working at Bootham for the last 8 years, teaching EAL, working with the international students and in boarding, and am looking forward to splitting my time between there and Ampleforth from September.

I live in York with my family, and love all things Greek – language, culture and weather!



## **Paige Boxhall, Teacher of Chemistry**

Originally from East Yorkshire, I am excited to be returning to the region where my family are based and I have a particular fondness for York, where I completed my undergraduate degree in Chemistry. Following graduation, I moved into science communication, working at the Royal Society of Chemistry in Cambridge, where I developed my writing and editorial skills, including contributions to Chemistry World magazine. Driven by a desire to make science more accessible to all learners, I went on to complete a PGCE at the University of Cambridge. It was during my training that I developed a strong interest in scientific literacy and how students can be supported to build confidence in understanding complex scientific ideas. I have most recently been teaching Chemistry at The Perse Upper School, where I was the Science Literacy Lead and also coached rowing. I am looking forward to returning to Yorkshire and being closer to my family, as well as settling into life locally with my partner. Outside the classroom, I enjoy running and am keen to take up trail running in the North Yorkshire countryside. I also have a passion for gun dog training and looking forward to developing this further, with plans to begin canicross with a young dog I am currently training.

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## **Catherine Tams, Art Technician**

I am a painter and printmaker and bring experience across both arts education and professional creative practice. I graduated from The Glasgow School of Art with a First-Class degree in Fine Art and has since worked extensively in studio education, workshop delivery and artist engagement roles across Scotland. Alongside my role as Art Technician, I continue my own artistic practice, and am particularly interested in places and objects; how they are read, remembered and reimagined. I am looking forward to becoming part of the Ampleforth community and supporting students in their creative development.



## **Tori Fletcher, Head of Psychology**

After completing my Honours degree in Physiology, Sports Science and Nutrition at the University of Glasgow, I studied Dietetics at Glasgow Caledonian University. I worked as a Dietitian in York and Scarborough NHS Trusts before gaining my PGCE at the University of York. I was fortunate to have my teaching placement at Ampleforth College, where I taught Biology, supported Duke of Edinburgh expeditions, and I experienced first-hand the strong sense of community at Ampleforth College.

My teaching career has since taken me across North Yorkshire, to Catholic, boarding, and comprehensive settings, teaching the three sciences, Psychology, vocational subjects, as well as being an Assistant SENDCo. I am delighted to return to Ampleforth College. In my spare time, I enjoy long-distance walking trails, skiing with my family, and walks on the Yorkshire Moors with our dog, Nutella.



## **Tony Lawless, Teacher of Enterprise & Marketing and BTEC Sport**

I arrive from Kimbolton School in Cambridgeshire, where I have spent the past 22 years teaching, coaching and undertaking a variety of pastoral roles. Most recently, I have been Housemaster of Kim House, the boys' boarding house, a position I have held for the last eight years. Alongside my pastoral responsibilities, I have served as Head of Boys' Games and led football, cricket and tennis programmes, as well as teaching academic PE. Originally from Liverpool, I was educated in the Catholic sector and have always valued the importance of faith, community and service. My wife, Emma, will also be joining Ampleforth as Housemistress of St Bede's House. As a family, we enjoy spending time outdoors, travelling and making the most of school holidays together. We are all very much looking forward to becoming part of the Ampleforth community.



## **Charlotte Neal, Pastoral Graduate (Chaplaincy)**

I've recently graduated from the University of Leeds, where I studied Philosophy, Ethics and Religion, and alongside this I have spent the last few years as a youth leader with the Diocese of Hallam.

I love music and especially enjoy playing the drums and trumpet. I love to get involved in team sports, such as Hockey and rounders, and outside of school I like spending time with my family and dogs. I'm really looking forward to meeting everyone and becoming part of the Ampleforth community.



## **Jed Soper, Pastoral Graduate (Rugby)**

I am most looking forward to being able to combine my rugby coaching skills with my strength and conditioning training to help educate youth athletes and ultimately improve their performance. Rugby has been a massive part of my life. Since the age of 5, it has guided me from juniors to seniors to now being a semi-professional athlete in the national leagues and BUCS university set up. As a player taking on a coaching role, I'm excited to help players grow and improve as they progress through the age groups. Watching them learn new skills and apply them in the game is rewarding to see from the side lines. I have a competitive personality, especially when it comes to sport but am approachable to students and like to build a strong rapport with them as individuals as well as part of a wider much larger team of young people. When I'm not playing rugby or coaching you can find me on the golf course or in the gym. I have been passionate about fitness and strength training since I was 16. This interest developed at degree level where I studied a BSC in Strength and Conditioning. I hope to guide students down the developmental path of S&C, helping them to develop off the pitch as well as 'in the game'. With my very sporty competitive attitude comes a very friendly person who is keen to chat with anyone no matter the subject (although I am of course keen that the topic is Rugby!)