

January 2018

Dear Candidate,

Re: Subject Leader of Computing

Thank you for your interest in Bohunt School Wokingham. We are seeking charismatic and driven individuals who will be at the vanguard of the development of the new school. You will have the opportunity to develop as a teacher and professional, with the support of an experienced and innovative team of staff and also help establish the culture, ethos and expectations for all members of the community as the school grows. If you are passionate about learning, are confident you can meet the challenges of establishing and delivering innovative education and developing a similar passion in others then I would encourage and welcome your application. We opened in September 2016 to year 7 students and moved into new state-of-the-art buildings in July 2017. The new school is a landmark project for Wokingham Borough Council, with substantial investment in interim buildings as well as the new build. Interest and expectations of the new school have been high across the community and the school is heavily oversubscribed for September 2018.

As a new school we are in the rare position of having an educational blank canvas, with the opportunity to create an outstanding environment for learning, achievement and enjoyment without existing barriers. Being at the forefront of the new school and the unusual flexibilities and opportunities that this affords us, along with the support of a wider and growing outstanding Academy Trust, means opportunities for professional development are outstanding. As I said in the advert, potential is as important as experience.

Students have had a limited exposure to computing thus far but we are now in a position to bring in a subject specialist with the drive and vision to develop computing into its own department within the STEM faculty. The appointed candidate will therefore be able to grow and develop the subject and their team as the school steadily grows to capacity over the next few years. It should be a very exciting prospect for a dynamic and creative candidate, with support from within the Trust to draw upon on the way.

This is an exciting time to be joining the Bohunt Education Trust (BET), which already comprises of 5 secondary schools in the region: Bohunt School in Liphook, Priory School in Southsea, Petersfield School and Bohunt School Worthing. We also have formal links with City Academy Norwich and the Wenzhou district in China and recently were appointed to sponsor a new all through school in Horsham. With other schools showing interest in joining the trust from both primary and secondary phases and with our status as a Teaching School it is a very exciting time to be part of the Trust.

Our school will feature various innovations in learning environments and technology that have been pioneered by BET over time: dynamic learning environments, the use of ICT to enhance learning and excellent sports facilities, as well as pioneering new innovations ourselves. The trust has a proven track record of offering exceptional opportunities to develop your skills and career progression, make a difference and work within a team committed to raising very high standards further.

Proud to be part of the Bohunt Education Trust

Starting at a completely new school is a unique opportunity and will come with many questions. For an informal conversation about the post or to arrange a visit to the school, I can be contacted by e-mailing on head@bohuntwokingham.com and please do also read the FAQ sheet which will help you decide if this post is for you.

If you are interested in applying please complete the online application form and provide a letter of application. On the application form please ensure that all periods not in education, employment or training are explained. The supporting letter should be no longer than two sides of A4. It is your opportunity to tell us a little bit about yourself, why you are attracted to this post and any other details which you think are relevant.

I look forward to receiving your application should you decide that you wish to contribute to the development of Bohunt School Wokingham.

With very best wishes,

Ben Godber
Head of School, Bohunt School Wokingham

FAQ's

Q: Has the new HT led a brand new school before?

A: No. This is a first time experience, so we are all in it together! The HT has prior experience as a Head at an outstanding school. Under his leadership the school consistently ranked in the top 15% schools nationally and twice in 3 years was the highest achieving school in Hampshire. In his final year the school achieved record results with 98% 5+ A*-C and 73% 5+ A*-C inc English and Maths. A feature of the Trust is that we also have another new school in Bohunt School Worthing which is a year ahead of Wokingham and so we have been able to work closely with them to use their experiences to our advantage.

Q: Will teaching only year 7, 8 and 9 be detrimental to my career development?

A: Teaching only year 7, 8 and 9 offers both opportunities and limitations that are unique to the role. The school will grow year on year up to Y13 and so teachers over time will be experience teaching of all abilities and age ranges. If however you saw yourself moving schools again in 2 years time, then I would advise you think carefully about whether this is the school for you. Being part of an 11-18 wider trust means that staff wishing to experience teaching of other year groups at other schools in the Trust, will be supported by the Trust to have those opportunities as desired, so staff will be kept in close contact with A Level and GCSE teaching. Cluster groups between schools in the Trust meet regularly for collaborative curriculum development, INSET and an infrastructure for resources and materials across the trust is being developed.

Q: Have the students had an experience of computing so far?

A: In the first year all the students had a lesson of computing a week so one cohort has had a foundation experience. Without a specialist to lead computing this year we chose to omit it from the curriculum and used the Trust and other linked professional to run structured coding experiences and sessions introducing them to computing and coding. Students are having some exposure to computing through STEM lessons and there are after school clubs for coding running throughout the year.

Q: Will I be expected to teach outside my specialism?

A: It is always a possibility at some point that could happen but for the coming year this is highly unlikely due to the amount of curriculum time the subject requires. We try to utilise second specialisms as much as possible because we have the flexibility to be more creative with the curriculum than is usually the case in a school. The scope this gives us allows time for lots of collaborative working between staff and for staff to have more freedom to work with Primary schools, the local community and access more professional development than would ever normally be the case. Where staff have other specialisms and interests they will of course be able to develop those further by choice.

Q: How many pupils will start in September?

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A: We are expecting 240 new year 7's in September, with 240 in the year above and close to 180 in the leading year group. We are an 8 form entry school with a larger number of teaching groups to allow slightly smaller class sizes than is often the case in schools. The school admission number for 2019 is 240 per year, so the school is quickly growing in size.

Q: What sort of support will I receive?

A: All new staff will benefit from a lower timetable than is typical and with a number of very experienced senior leaders in the team, there will be extensive opportunities for support, as well as a 1:1 mentor. Opportunities for support will also extend beyond the Trust

Q: Will I be a form tutor?

A: All staff will be involved in some way in the pastoral care system. This year we operated a system with 2 staff to each tutor group in year 7 with one of those staff becoming the longer term permanent tutor. This is a successful approach and we will try and follow a similar pattern for future years, with support staff also assigned as form tutors. New staff are likely to be assigned as year 7 tutors. Where particularly good relationships form we would want those staff to continue with those tutor groups going forwards and as the house system evolves, the role of the form tutor will adapt with it.

Q: What career opportunities are there for me?

A: Being amongst the team of staff at the early stages of the school foundations being laid inevitably gives staff a head start on future opportunities within the school as it grows. Starting with a fairly small team has meant everyone being a little more hands on and involved in the shaping and direction of the school than might normally be the case and this has given all staff a far greater insight into the leadership and management of a secondary school. This would continue to be the case.

Q: How many staff are there already?

A: We have 23 teaching staff currently, with 12 support staff and the Head teacher. We will be recruiting approximately 11 new teaching staff for 2018.

Q: How has the first year in the new building gone so far?

A: Overall it has been fantastic. There are inevitable building issues in a new build but these have been insignificant compared to the richness of the curriculum and engagement of students, staff and parents. It has been wonderful watching the year 7's and 8's assume the responsibilities of the leading year groups and being active partners in shaping their own school and for staff to be able to direct their attention to developing their expertise and exploring opportunities to diversify the typical school experience that a blank canvas offers.