



Baleares International College

Sa Porrassa

an Orbital Education School

February 2025

Dear applicant,

Thank you for showing an interest in joining our school.

I moved to the island in the summer of 2019, to be the principal, having spent 27 years teaching in the UK. I moved because the time was right, I wanted a new challenge and I believe strongly that international schools on sunny islands need outstanding leadership just as much as those schools in disadvantaged areas, where I spent most of my teaching career. I found on arrival a school that could do and be much better; it was certainly not for the faint hearted. Five years on (and a pandemic and draconian lockdown in the first year notwithstanding), the school is now in a very strong position, with experienced and highly professional staff, excellent exam results, a vibrant and friendly student body, and supportive parents.

However, we are far from complacent; there are always things that can be developed further, and my mission has been and remains to work with my colleagues to make BIC the number one school of choice on the island. We are making good headway, with a strong reputation and waiting lists now in many Year groups.

The school educates children between the ages of 5 and 18; this all-through element is one of its many strengths and, indeed, one of its attractions to me when I first applied. It is important that the school operates effectively as one school, with all members of staff working as one team, to drive the improvement and future growth of the whole school. It is important that you embrace this whole-school approach, and that you will bring ideas, enthusiasm and optimism to our team.

Of far less importance than international school experience (it isn't important) is that you are genuinely collaborative, a problem solver and a team player, with sky-high expectations and standards, of children, of staff and of yourself. I don't want people who are looking for a holiday, I want a hardworking, principled and energetic teacher, who wants a challenging, rewarding role, in what is a lovely place to live. In addition, and as you might know, salaries in Spain are significantly lower than in the UK (that said, children of full time staff do also get full fee-paid places in the school, under Spanish law). I need you to be aware of the reality of the pay; this is not the UAE with their tax free packages and free accommodation. The package here is working in Mallorca, with all its beauty, charm and sunshine! The salary is around €33k.

As a leader, my staff and our children are of the utmost importance to me, and I love coming to work every day. I want you to do the same, and if you don't you are in the wrong job or maybe just the wrong school. Teaching is a joyous, wonderful profession and a privileged one, giving us the opportunity to mould young lives and to transform life chances - I know that you remember your great teachers. But if you are a hardworking, committed and talented teacher you can - and should - be choosy. There are lots of schools and lots of jobs - why would you join us?

I look for only three things in my teachers - that you love children; that you are conscientious, committed and with a clear moral purpose; and that you are passionate and highly knowledgeable about your subject. For leaders, I require reliability and resilience, humility and humour, common sense and integrity; talented people can learn most tasks, but some essential qualities are just innate. If you have these things, I would love to meet you. In return, I don't preach work-life balance and staff well-being - I practise it and prioritise it. My aim is to ensure all the staff in our



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school work and play hard in equal measure. We don't have unnecessary meetings and we do no unnecessary paperwork. I actively encourage staff to leave school at a sensible time every day - I don't care whose car is last in the car park. Our email policy prohibits evening or weekend communication, and I expect teachers to enjoy and to relish every minute of their well-earned 17 weeks of holidays.

I don't do jargon, I don't do clichés and I put common sense at the front of everything I do, constantly looking at school life to make sure we don't do anything that is unnecessary. We don't start (and then abandon) endless pointless initiatives, and I welcome the thoughts and suggestions of every member of the staff team; no one person has a monopoly on good ideas. Leading a school is a privilege; I often describe myself as the conductor of the orchestra and I want all staff to enjoy their jobs and be proud to work in our school. If you would like to join them and me, and to continue our mission to make our great school truly world class, please feel free to contact me for an informal chat about the role, and the school.

Yours faithfully,

Alison Colwell
Principal