



# BICESTER LEARNING ACADEMY

## APPOINTMENT OF HEAD OF BIOLOGY

Based at The Cooper School, Bicester OX26 4RS





## About Us

Bicester Learning Academy is a multi-academy trust currently comprising The Cooper School and Glory Farm Primary School. The ambitions for the schools are high: that we should provide to all our students a first-class and improving education that enables them, in all aspects of their lives, to make the progress and achieve the standards that reflect their full ability.

### The Cooper School

Choosing the right school to work in can be a minefield. The current political climate has resulted in there being a huge variety of types of schools to select from and not all types are right for everyone.

At The Cooper School, we pride ourselves on being forward thinking in terms of curriculum decisions which support our students; focused on improving learning through the use of new technologies and determined to continuously refine our approaches to teaching and learning. Investing in the Media Suite reflects a small part of our approach to making learning engaging, relevant and active for our students.

Joining us as a member of staff at The Cooper School means being able to see the big picture for the students here. It means that whilst we always strive for academic excellence, we also place great value upon students becoming adaptable, resourceful and enquiring. These are the sort of skills that will enable them to become effective citizens, just as much as their academic results will. As such, we encourage independent learning, enrichment initiatives and House-based teamwork and co-operation.

Working here is an opportunity to flourish as a professional. We 'grow our own' leaders. Many new staff have taken on additional responsibilities which is a mark of their quality and commitment to making progress in their own careers as well as their desire to become part of a successful and positive organisation.



**We have just received a fantastic Ofsted report!**  
(June 2017)

Our school was praised because:

- We "are driven by a desire to raise the aspirations of all pupils and have maintained and developed the culture of school improvement".
- "There is a caring, nurturing and inclusive ethos that permeates the school".
- "The climate for learning is very positive and the level of pupil engagement is high".
- we "have placed high importance on the development of staff and there is a rich and varied programme of professional training, which is helping teachers to improve their practice".

Please have a look at the full Ofsted report which can be found here: <http://www.bicesterlearningacademy.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/The-Cooper-School-ofsted17-PDF-final.pdf>

The school has also recently celebrated an outstanding set of A-level results, with students achieving the best grades since the opening of the Post 16 Centre in 2011. The 2017 A-level results saw 24% of students achieve an A\*/A, 48% achieved A\*- B, 80% achieved A\*-C, and 98% achieved A\*-E.

The school was equally delighted by the success of its Year 11 students in 2017, with 70% of students obtaining 5 or more 4+ grades, including Maths and English at GCSE.



## THE VACANCY

The Cooper School is seeking to appoint a **Head of Biology** to join the team from September 2018.

The salary will depend on experience, however the post does attract a TLR 2-2 allowance, currently £4,441 per annum.

The successful candidate will have excellent teaching skills and the ability to inspire and motivate The Cooper School's students to achieve outstanding results.

### **We can offer you:**

- An innovative and supportive working environment
- Caring, well behaved and motivated students.
- Friendly and hardworking colleagues.
- Good career development opportunities.

For an informal discussion of the post please contact:

Miss Harriet Hurdle, Head of Department  
Email: [hhurdle@thecooperschool.co.uk](mailto:hhurdle@thecooperschool.co.uk).

Further details and an application pack are available on the Academy website:

[www.bicesterlearningacademy.co.uk](http://www.bicesterlearningacademy.co.uk)

Alternatively please contact Human Resources:

Tel: 01869 362697

E-mail: [recruitment@thecooperschool.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@thecooperschool.co.uk)

**International applicants from outside the EU will need to demonstrate their eligibility to work in the UK.**

**Closing date for applications: Monday 23 April 2018 at 4pm.**

Bicester Learning Academy is committed to safeguarding children. The successful candidate will be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check (formerly CRB) in line with Section 115 of the Police Act 1997.

Details of the Academy's policies relating to the Employment of Ex-Offenders and the Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosure and Barring Certificates and Disclosure information are included within this recruitment pack.





## The Science Department

The Science Department is committed to providing a stimulating, engaging and intellectually challenging learning environment for our students. It is a large and successful department composed of fifteen teachers, two specialist science HLTAs and four technicians. The department occupies a large block in a single storey building, having 11 well equipped laboratories surrounding a large pond, Peace Garden and greenhouse. There is also a large Team Room available at break and lunchtimes to help facilitate collaboration within the team. We have three well-equipped prep rooms with a wealth of equipment for all three disciplines. Our four technicians are very experienced, have completed extensive training with CLEAPSS and are always on hand to help support teaching staff with both practical work and preparation tasks, such as photocopying.

We have invested a significant amount of time developing our curriculums, designing our own schemes of work and lesson structures that run all the way through from Year 7 to Year 13. A large proportion of our resources are self-made and all are founded on pedagogical principles and current research in cognitive psychology. We are however always striving to improve and are constantly adjusting and updating our methods and practice so we can be the best we possibly can. Science is a very popular subject at A-Level and we currently have 2 sets of Biologists and Chemists at AS and A2, and 1 at AS and A2 for Physics. All follow the OCR A science specifications. Many of our students go on to science based subjects at universities and we are proud that many of our students still come back to see us and help out even after they have left.

We have high expectations of all of our students and try to set the bar as high as we can every single day. Every class is a mixed ability group, and we believe that every day every student should receive the best teaching possible to stretch them and drive them forward with their learning. We run an extensive support program; this is delivered through targeted termly intervention through small group work with our specialist HLTAs. We also run many enrichment activities for our scholars outside of lessons, as well as part of everyday practice in the department. At A-Level we also run several trips to Oxford University, and support students in attending extra-curricular events, such as the 'Defense against the Dark Arts' immunology event.

At Key Stage 3, students follow a tailor-made scheme designed to fulfil the National Curriculum and extend our students beyond it. We aim to provide a grounding in Biology, Chemistry and Physics as well as an introduction to scientific problem solving and the use of evidence to develop theories.

In Year 9, students begin following the GCSE AQA specifications. They are taught Biology, Chemistry and Physics as separate disciplines and follow our in-house schemes, which build on those at KS3. All students begin on the separate science (triple) pathway, but can opt for combined in Year 11. In Year 10 students are taught by specialist subject teachers and at the end of this year decide whether to pursue triple sciences or move to combined. Consequently, all students have the choice to pursue their love of science regardless of their prior attainment. In Year 11 students are taught by specialists in combined or triple groups, which are all mixed ability. Those who select triple receive 12 hours of science a fortnight as opposed to 9 for combined.

This is an exciting time to join the department at The Cooper School. Having developed high quality curriculum for all year groups, our focus is now on ensuring excellence in teaching and learning for all age groups, integrating the current best practice from educational research with the needs and experience of the department. We are eager to deliver high quality and enriching learning for all students, and welcome all individuals who would like to join us on this journey.



## Job description

**Job title:** Head of Biology

**Working hours per week:** Full time

**Permanent/Temporary:** Permanent

**Principle place(s) of work:** The Cooper School

**Immediate line manager:** Head of Department

**Staff managed:** None

**Job Purpose:** Lead teaching and learning in the Biology Department

### Key Responsibilities:

In addition to general responsibilities as a Science Teacher the role includes, but is not limited to, the responsibility to:

### Teaching & Learning:

- Keep up to date with relevant developments in teaching practice and in science education and to communicate these developments to the department.
- Oversee the creation (in collaboration with the Head of Science and other Lead Teachers), redrafting and use of schemes of work for all Key Stages (3, 4 and 5) ensuring that they meet National requirements, encourage creative, up-to-date pedagogy and ensure learners' personal and curricular development.
- Assist the Head of Science in review of curriculum, teaching and assessment in Science to make changes to continually improve practice in the Department, to include learning walks, book monitoring and lesson observations.
- Ensure the department provides a purposeful and safe learning environment including assisting on behaviour management as directed by the Head of Science.
- Provide extra-curricular and enrichment activities for students.
- Provide advice, as necessary, on specialist teaching and content across the Key Stages.
- Lead assessment, monitoring and feedback within the subject ensuring that learners, colleagues, parents and carers are provided with timely, accurate and constructive feedback which promotes pupil progress.
- Monitor assessment in subject ensuring key findings are reported back to Head of Science regularly along with details of actions taken.
- Analyse examination data to identify areas for improvement.

**Organisation & Management:**

- Promote collective responsibility for whole school/departmental policies and plans.
- Lead some weekly Department meetings.
- Choose appropriate courses for students.
- Responsible for the professional development of colleagues through coaching, mentoring, demonstrating effective practice, providing advice and feedback, and performance managing colleagues as directed by the Head of Science.
- Choose areas of investment for the Department ensuring effective provision of resources across Key Stages.

**Additional duties:**

- To be aware of their responsibilities for health and safety for themselves and others.
- A commitment to safeguarding the welfare of children.

Bicester Learning Academy is committed to safeguarding children. The successful candidate will be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check (formerly CRB) in line with section 115 of the Police Act.



## Person Specification

This post offers an opportunity for a committed teacher to be part of our strong and successful department.

**Job Title:** Head of Biology

**Job Purpose:** To lead the subject specialism in developing the teaching and learning of Science in accordance with school policies and in pursuit of the highest standards of student achievement.

**Responsible to:** Head of Science Department

| CRITERIA                         | ESSENTIAL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | DESIRABLE                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Education/<br>training           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Well-qualified graduate with appropriate degree</li><li>PGCE/Qualified Teacher Status</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Recent, relevant INSET</li></ul>                                                                                    |
| Relevant<br>experience           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Experience making a full contribution to the life of the department, including through developing shared resources and best practice</li><li>Experience across the age and ability range in the subject specialism</li></ul>                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Enrichment/ extra-curricular initiative</li><li>Experience of marking examinations</li></ul>                        |
| Relevant skills<br>and aptitudes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ability to lead and support a team</li><li>A person who already is, or has the potential to become an inspirational classroom practitioner</li><li>Keen sense of progression of own career</li><li>Interest in current educational research and its application to the classroom</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Awareness of the need to balance the needs of the department with wider school and national changes</li></ul>       |
| Special<br>requirements          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A passion for the subject and to inspire students</li><li>Commitment to developing teaching and learning</li><li>High expectations for attainment of <u>all</u> students</li></ul>                                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A willingness to support the wider life of the school</li><li>Contribution to extra-curricular activities</li></ul> |



## APPLICATION PROCESS

Please fill in the application form according to the instructions on the first page of the form.

Curriculum Vitae (CVs) will not be accepted without an application form. The form should be fully completed, accurate and clearly legible.

In addition to the application form, we also require a letter of application, which should be a maximum of two sides of A4 paper.

This letter should be addressed to **Mr Ben Baxter - Executive Headteacher**. It should set out how your experience to date makes you a suitable candidate for the position, what you will bring to the school and how you would help further contribute to an outstanding department.

Please send your completed application to the HR team using the contacts below:

Email: [recruitment@thecooperschool.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@thecooperschool.co.uk)

or by post to:

HR Department  
Bicester Learning Academy  
The Cooper School  
Churchill Road  
Bicester  
Oxfordshire  
OX26 4RS



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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <b>Policy statement on Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosure and Barring Service certificates and Disclosure Information at Bicester Learning Academy</b> |                                                                               |                                                     | <b><u>Written By:</u></b><br><b>E Le Brun</b>                                    |
|                                                                                  | <b><u>Applicable to:</u></b><br><br><b>ALL STAFF</b>                                                                                                                                    | <b><u>Accountable Officer:</u></b><br><b>B J Baxter</b><br><b>I Elkington</b> | <b><u>Date Adopted:</u></b><br><br><b>July 2014</b> | <b><u>Date To Be Reviewed:</u></b><br><b>July 2017</b><br><b>(Every 3 Years)</b> |

Bicester Learning Academy is a Multi-Academy Trust which incorporates The Cooper School and Glory Farm Primary School. It is a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with registered company number 09053713 and its registered address at Churchill Road, Bicester, Oxon, OX26 4RS.

## General principles

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Bicester Learning Academy complies fully with the Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificate information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

## Storage and access

Certificate information should be kept securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

## Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificates or certificate information has been revealed and it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

## Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

## Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep certificate information for longer than six months, we will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights of the individual before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding the safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

## Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested the position for which the certificate was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and details of the recruitment decision taken.

## uCheck acting as an Umbrella Body

uCheck acts as an Umbrella Body on behalf of Bicester Learning Academy (an Umbrella Body being a Registered Body which countersigns applications and receives certificate information on behalf of other employers or recruiting organisations). A copy of uCheck's Policy statement on Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosure Certificates and Disclosure Information is available on request.

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <b>Policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders to a post within Bicester Learning Academy</b> |                                                                                   |                                                     | <b>Written By:</b><br><b>E Le Brun</b>                                               |
|                                                                                  | <b><u>Applicable to:</u></b><br><br><b>ALL STAFF</b>                                                  | <b><u>Accountable Officer:</u></b><br><br><b>B J Baxter</b><br><b>I Elkington</b> | <b><u>Date Adopted:</u></b><br><br><b>July 2014</b> | <b><u>Date To Be Reviewed:</u></b><br><br><b>July 2017</b><br><b>(Every 3 Years)</b> |

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As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Bicester Learning Academy complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subjects of a DBS check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

Bicester Learning Academy is committed to the fair treatment of its students, staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process through inclusion on The Cooper School and Glory Farm Primary School websites. The policy is also sent to applicants with the DBS application pack after acceptance.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talents, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

A disclosure is always requested for those who are offered a post within Bicester Learning Academy. Disclosures will also be requested for all members of the Governing Body of Bicester Learning Academy Trust, and for all volunteers where applicable. Where a job is advertised by Bicester Learning Academy, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that a DBS check will be requested in the event of an individual being offered the position.

As a disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, Bicester Learning Academy encourages all applicants for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover to the Human Resources Manager for Bicester Learning Academy, and we guarantee that this information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Posts within Bicester Learning Academy are exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974. This means that the Academy can ask questions about your entire criminal record, including unspent and spent convictions, cautions and bind overs.

Bicester Learning Academy will ensure that all those who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. It will also ensure that these members of staff have received appropriate guidance and training in relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

At interview, or in a separate discussion, Bicester Learning Academy will ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.

We make every subject of a DBS check aware of the existence of the Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a DBS check with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.

Bicester Learning Academy has a policy on the Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information, and a copy of this policy is available on request.