

March 2017

Dear Candidate

Deputy Principal – September 2017
Leadership Scale L23 – 27 (£67,382 to £74,208)

Thank you for your interest in this key leadership role at Birchwood High School. The position has been created through school growth and an associated review of all roles and responsibilities within SLT. It is therefore an exciting time to join the school and have a pivotal role in shaping its future, making this post an ideal platform for headship.

Birchwood is a fantastic place to work and, even after the number of years that I have been in charge, I feel as committed and passionate about its future as I did when first appointed. The students are proud of their school and the staff and governors work incredibly hard to ensure that our truly comprehensive intake are well taught and effectively supported. At Birchwood we aspire to be a truly great school.

I inherited a school in financial deficit, with facilities in dire need of renovation and with fewer than 700 students on roll. Most of the children's parents had chosen the school as their second or third choice; yet I recall inheriting a school with a supportive body of staff, who simply needed to be aligned and focused, and students who wanted to feel proud of their school.

Over the next decade, the school doubled in size. Our intake rose from 158 to 240 and we received capital funding from the DfE and LEA to provide new accommodation and renew existing classrooms, moving from being a maintained school to a Foundation School and then a Converter Academy in 2011. The number of applications rose to over 900 each year for 240 places and the Sixth Form grew from just over 100 students in 2006 to 275 in 2016. In 2012, the DfE recognised the school as one of the Top 100 most improved schools.

In the process of growth and expansion, and with the ever-changing notion of school accountability, our 2015 Section 5 inspection, where the 11-16 element of the school was judged to require improvement having been a 'good' school since 2004 was a salutary reminder of this. This was principally linked to the fact that our Child Protection Policy, at the time, was not up-to-date and the gap for disadvantaged students too wide. I think it is testimony to school leaders and the Governing Body that the policy issue was immediately rectified and new systems put in place to address the under-performance of pupil premium students. In many ways, we are stronger than we were before and staff and governors are universally determined to portray that in our next inspection.

Today, our 1400 students reflect the national average in terms of intake with approximately 45% high ability students, 45% middle ability students and 10% low ability students. We have a simple and transparent admission policy based on siblings and distance from the school, which ensures that we cater for all children regardless of background and circumstance. The percentage of SEND students is 17% with 16% of our students coming from disadvantaged homes. In terms of outcomes, attainment at GCSE is just above the national average and, as stated, we are focusing firmly on improving the progress of our disadvantaged students.

The Sixth Form predominantly caters for A-Level and Level 3 BTEC students with around 60% of Year 11 opting to stay on and the remainder going to FE College. Very few students go to alternative Sixth Forms, which says much about their attitudes to the school. A great deal of energy is spent on CEIAG to ensure that all our students go onto a chosen pathway at FE or HE with no-one left behind. Increasing numbers of our Sixth Form Students go to Russell Group Universities and we had eight Oxbridge applicants this year.

The school has a strong pastoral system led effectively by Heads of Year, each of whom are responsible for leading and managing attendance, tracking attainment, behaviour for learning and PSHE. The curriculum is separated into eight Faculties, well led by Heads of Faculty who line manage up to 16 members of staff. LSAs are generally aligned to Faculties but form part of an effective SEND Team led by the SENCO who is a member of SLT.

Teachers and support staff have clear systems and policies to follow but are encouraged to show individual creativity and initiative. Everyone is therefore clear about his or her roles and responsibilities but they have the freedom to make changes in a well-established distributed leadership culture. An example of this are the six steering groups where willing volunteers are contributing to whole school policy and practice around teaching and learning, curriculum planning, assessment, behaviour for learning, well-being and disadvantaged students.

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Performance Management is valued: all of our 190 employees engage in a supportive and thorough on-line process of self-review and setting objectives. There is a genuine commitment to staff well-being with a number of complementary benefits in place to ensure that staff feel cared for. Fundamentally, the school is non-hierarchical and we value everyone's contribution to the organisation. As a result, staff turnover is relatively low and we are currently fully staffed in all faculties.

Senior Leadership is key to the success of any school and the opportunity this post brings to add another person to a highly committed and hard-working team is an exciting proposition for us. The Deputy Principal and I have worked alongside the four other Assistant Principals, Business Manager and HR Manager to bring about change and challenge in the last two years. We have also been keen to involve others from middle leadership in whole-school initiatives, with regular contributions from key post-holders such as the Head of English, Maths, Science and Sixth Form. Ours is a team with a mixture of experience but a common belief in non-selective all-ability education. We demonstrate cohesion and high levels of professionalism; we do not always agree - which is when we are often at our most creative and any outcome is always fully supported by all. We recognise, however, that we are a relatively small team for the size of the school as it is today and we believe that the appointment of a second Deputy Principal will help us to address a genuine capacity issue.

Like many schools and academies, our Governors have had to work hard over the last two years to develop their expertise and commitment to the school. A number of key changes have meant that the level of challenge and engagement has greatly increased. Governors at Birchwood allow school leaders to run the school on a day-to-day basis but they have considerable influence in terms of strategy, finance, personnel and premises. An example of this has been the review of all SLT roles and responsibilities and the creation of this post. A separate Governors' Succession Planning Committee met with individual members of SLT on a number of occasions to review the needs of the school and put forward the proposed changes you see today in this pack.

As for the future, Birchwood High School is confident of its direction and what it needs to do strategically and operationally. It is a financially stable organisation and has the capacity to reinvest to ensure our facilities and resources help all our students to achieve good academic qualifications whilst developing as, engaged and responsible young people. It is also a school that is open from 8.00 am to 10.00 pm and is committed to supporting its local community, with a full programme of extra-curricular and evening events.

Whilst we are large enough to be self-sustaining, we do not believe in insularity. We are a strategic partner of the Saffron Alliance TSA and we are a founding member of the Bishop's Stortford Education Trust (<https://www.bishopstortfordeducationaltrust.org.uk>) which will provide the six local secondary schools in partnership with the Primary School Consortium to combine the best elements of teaching school alliance and local federation. BSET will be bidding to sponsor the new Secondary and Primary Schools being built in Bishop's Stortford North.

In summary, this letter describes the DNA of Birchwood High School. It also gives you some degree of understanding of the type of person we are looking for to help us improve, change and adapt over the next five years. We require someone with drive, tenacity and the ability to implement sustainable change. We also need someone with exceptional interpersonal skills as well as professionalism and presence.

If the candidate pack ignites your enthusiasm, please complete the school's application form along with a letter of application (no more than two pages of A4 - Arial Font 11), articulating your education values, leadership experience to date and why you feel you would be the ideal person to succeed in this new position

Yours sincerely

Dr Chris Ingate
Principal

Key Dates:

- Closing Date Wednesday 22 March
- Short-listing Friday 24 March
- Interviews Wednesday 29 and Thursday 30 March



Deputy Principal Job Description

Key Responsibility

The Quality of Teaching and Behaviour for Learning

- To support and promote the ethos and aims of the school
- To be a key member of the SLT supporting strategic leadership and governance
- To work alongside other members of SLT to ensure all aspects of Safeguarding are effective and ensure that our students and staff are safe
- Overseeing the Quality of teaching and attitudes to learning, working alongside the other Deputy Principal responsible for Data and Assessment
- Disseminating, implementing and reviewing new teaching and behaviour for learning strategies
- Overseeing Leadership Development & CPD
- Having a strategic overview of Behaviour for Learning and Attendance
- Quality Assurance lead on lesson observations, learning walks, work sampling and student interviews, working with the other Deputy Principal who leads on data, targets and intervention
- Having a strategic overview of IT Provision across the school
- Collective responsibility for Strategy, Marketing and PR along with the Principal and other Deputy Principal
- To assist with regular and systematic updates of school policies
- To take a lead, along with other members of SLT with school events and assemblies
- To work alongside the Principal and other Deputy Principal with regards to reviewing staff performance and Upper Pay Spine assessment
- Carrying out Investigations and deputise on the behalf of Principal
- To undertake any other duties the Principal may reasonably request including system leadership

Line Management Responsibilities

- Two Heads of Faculty to be confirmed
- Head of Year to be confirmed
- Attendance Officer
- ITT and New Staff Co-ordinator
- School IT Network Manager

In addition:

- Chairing Heads of Year Meetings
- Serving a Governor committee (to be determined)

Teaching Responsibility

Teaching load five hours per week maximum - there is no preferred teaching background for this post other than being an excellent practitioner and someone who is passionate about their subject.



Deputy Principal Person Specification

The school is looking for a highly-skilled and experienced school leader to complement the existing strengths of SLT and bring new vision and strategy. This post would suit someone with either a curriculum or pastoral background who is committed to making a difference for all students in a truly comprehensive setting.

Essential characteristics

As a teacher:

- Educated to degree level with first or upper second class degree
- Qualified Teacher status
- An excellent classroom practitioner

As a school leader:

- At least three years' experience as an Assistant Headteacher/Principal or Deputy Headteacher/Principal
- Strong educational values and a commitment to all-ability comprehensive education
- Determination and passion for working in an 'improving school' context
- A clear understanding of the constituents of high-quality teaching and the importance of developing positive student attitudes to learning
- Experience of contributing to whole-school continuous professional development
- Implementing strategies to further improve our already good overall student attendance, particularly targeting those who are persistently absent
- An informed understanding of current educational issues
- Experience with working with and advising Governing Bodies
- An astute understanding of leadership strategy and the management of change
- Experience of whole school quality assurance including monitoring impact of change at an individual and institutional level
- An ability to communicate to large audiences, chair meetings effectively and support and challenge individuals
- An ability to instruct, mentor or coach individuals or groups as required
- An ability to assess staff performance and tackle under-performance
- An understanding of how school networks are run
- An ability to interpret data in order to improve standards

As a person:

- Possessing drive, ambition and perseverance with aspirations for Headship
- Excellent time-management skills, ensuring that there is an effective balance of time spent with adults, students, administration and strategy
- Demonstrating effective behaviour, showing empathy, understanding and precision.
- Being highly visible and leading by example
- Exhibiting strong inter-personal skills including humility
- Stamina and a positive approach to all aspects of school leadership
- An ability to self-manage workload and ensure that work-life balance is kept to the fore.

Desirable Characteristics:

- Higher Education Degree (MA/MEd/MBA/PhD)
- Evidence of continuous professional development (NPQSL / leadership training / ASCL / Ofsted / Leadership internships)
- Registered or considering NPQH
- Experience of networking and working with schools in both local and more regional/national networks.

Other

This post comes with a designated office space, personal administrative support, and associated IT hardware (laptop / iPad) and access to Birchwood Plus benefits including gym access.

Senior Leadership Team – Roles and Responsibilities From September 2017

<p style="text-align: center;">Principal</p> <p>Vision and Strategy Marketing and PR** Accountability for- Progress and Attainment Finance & Compliance Overview of Safeguarding Ofsted / EFA / LEA Quality of Teaching & Leadership Personnel & HR oversight Governance Co-ordination of system leadership / BSET / Saffron Alliance</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Line management of: 2 Deputy Principals, 4 Assistant Principals, Business Manager</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Teaching load 3 hours per week</p>				<p>School Governing Body Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair: Vice Chair Vice Chair <p>Committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Personnel Finance Estates Audit Pay <p>The governing body comprises: 4 staff governors 6 parent governors 10 community governors 1 co-opted governor</p>
<p>Deputy Principal Data and Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic overview and implementation of Data and Assessment SDP/ STP / SEF lead Strategic overview of Intervention QA lead - measuring impact** PM management UPS Assessment** Investigations and Deputising on the behalf of the Principal** Marketing & PR** 	<p>Head of English Head of Maths Head of Year 11 Oversight of Quality of Support Staff</p> <p>Heads of Faculty</p> <p>Teaching load 5 hours per week</p>	<p>Deputy Principal NEW Teaching and Behaviour for Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of teaching / T&L Innovation / Leadership Development/ CPD Strategic overview of Behaviour for Learning and Attendance New Staff induction / ITT QA lead – implementation** UPS Assessment** IT Provision across the school Investigations and Deputising on the behalf of Principal** Marketing and PR** 	<p>Head of Science Head of Humanities Head of Year 10 Attendance Personnel ITT New Staff Co-ord. IT Network Manager / Web Manager</p> <p>Heads of Year</p> <p>Teaching load 5 hours per week</p>	
<p>Assistant Principal Student Welfare, and Admissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding - Child Protection co-ordination Student welfare Student Admissions Strategic overview of Primary liaison Year 6/7 Transition Primary School Sports Head of Technology Head of Year 7 Student Welfare Officer School Admissions Officer SSCO <p>Teaching load 8 hours per week</p>	<p>Assistant Principal Personalisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disadvantaged Students SENCO SEND Students Exceptional Needs* Children Looked After High Ability Students Intervention - implementation <p>KSC/HoDs SEN/PLC staff Intervention leads Head of Year 8</p> <p>Teaching load 8 hours per week</p>	<p>Assistant Principal Creative Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum Timetable Options Exams Cover/ Trip Management Sixth Form Attainment & Progress Post-16 and Post-18 transition Home-learning Head of MFL Head of PE Head of Sixth Form Exams Officer <p>Teaching load 8 hours per week</p>	<p>Assistant Principal Extended Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events Management CEIAG/Destination Data Student Rewards Student Leadership / Student Council / BLISS House System Trips overview Extra-Curricular provision Staff Well-Being Head of EPA Head of Year 9 Head of House Marketing Manager ITT/New Staff Co-ordinator <p>Teaching load 8 hours per week</p>	<p>Business Manager</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Health Economy & Efficiency Compliance – Audit Premises Catering Community Health & Safety <p>Senior Finance Manager Finance Manager Site Manager Community Manager Catering Manager</p>

Key: Green = Job title Black = Key responsibilities Blue = Line Management responsibility Purple = Lead meetings

*Students with very specific needs (eg Medical / Alternative provision) **Joint or shared responsibility All SLT to do 1 hour of cover per fortnight + 3 on calls per fortnight

Red = Teaching load recommendations (maximum)