

Dear Applicant

February 2012

Art Teacher - MPS with London Fringe Allowance

Thank you for showing an interest in this key post. What follows is a brief synopsis of our school and I do hope you find it appealing.

Birchwood is a true comprehensive with 1400 students on roll covering the full range of ability. We take boys and girls from the community of Bishop's Stortford; many of whom decide to continue their education with us into the Sixth Form. With still rising numbers, ever-improving standards and a £18 million buildings programme now completed, this is an exciting time to join our school.

On my appointment as Headteacher nine years ago I saw the opportunity to lead a school through this transformation. We are well on the way to becoming a great school, but as ever there is always work to do. Whilst our recent Ofsted inspection was very positive it also accurately reflected where the school is – a rapidly expanding, greatly improved institution that is now determined to be outstanding across the board.

Some of the key headlines from our Ofsted in May 2010 are outlined below:

- *Birchwood High is a good school. There are a number of good outcomes for students that help them develop into mature, confident, and personable young adults who are generally well-prepared for their future studies or employment.*
- *Overall GCSE results are above average, achieved from average starting points.*
- *Students' behaviour is good and attendance is above average.*
- *Students have good healthy lifestyles and make good contributions to their school community.*
- *The large majority of teaching is good; some is outstanding.*

To add to this I am firm of the belief that, both teaching and support staff work extremely hard and are very supportive of one another. As a school, we expect high standards of student achievement and student behaviour. The standard of teaching and learning is at least good with many areas of excellence - hence our belief in only appointing the best teachers.

Whilst our GCSE results consistently meet their targets, the changing nature of our intake is resulting in the current Year 11 expected to achieve 85% 5+ A*-C and the current Year 9 expected to achieve 90% 5+ A*-C. This was echoed by Ofsted: *"In 2009, the proportion of Year 11 students gaining five good GCSEs including English and Mathematics was above average. Year-on-year, this proportion has improved since the last inspection.* In addition, Post 16 results this year were significantly above LEA and National averages (100% A-E pass rate, 52% A*-B, APS 225).

I do hope that you will have the chance to view our website, have a look at our Ofsted reports or maybe visit us to get a feel of what a great school Birchwood High is.

Why you should apply for this post

The EPA Faculty is a vibrant, hard-working and cohesive team, who are achieving good and improving results. It is a well-resourced area, led by an experienced Head of Faculty who has been with us a little over a year. The Art Department working environment is within an impressive 3 room suite, with ample storage space, a public display area and daily, part time, support.

If you believe you can make a difference to our students and be part of this exciting faculty, then please apply. We seek to appoint someone who is adaptable, creative, imaginative and inspirational with the interest and ability to enthuse students of all ages and who will enhance the "team" ethos of the Department and Faculty.

I hope I have conveyed in this letter a "feel" for both working at Birchwood, and the importance of this post. If you wish to apply, please complete the application form provided, together with a letter of application which should be no longer than two sides of A4. In your letter please outline: any relevant experience to date, your vision and values relating to this role and what personally attracts you to this post. You can return the application either by post or email - recruitment@birchwoodhigh.org.uk. Our closing date for applications is noon on Monday 27 February with interviews taking place on Monday 5 March.

If you have any further queries about this post, please do not hesitate to contact, Vanessa Bowman, Head of Expressive Arts Faculty, via email at vbowman@birchwoodhigh.org.uk.

Yours sincerely



C Ingate
Headteacher

Headteacher - Dr Chris Ingate