

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in this key vacancy. Birchwood is a great place to work. We are a large and thriving 11-18 mixed Academy with 1400 students on roll. Throughout their time with us, students gain strong academic qualifications as becoming well rounded individuals with a sense of responsibility. We are proud of our all-ability ethos and inclusive philosophy which enables us to balance support of academically gifted students who go on to achieve top grades at A-Level and GCSE with students who need more help and guidance in a caring and supportive learning environment. As a result, all students who leave us go on to further education, record numbers to Russell Group Universities, to apprenticeships or a chosen career, our students do not appear in the government's 'not in education or employment' statistics.

Birchwood is an improving school with an energy and vibrancy – staff work hard and are committed to comprehensive education ideals – aiming to ensure that all children, regardless of background are supported, challenged and inspired to do their best, becoming well-rounded citizens of the future. Taking children of all ability from the local area, our intake reflects the national average so achieving above the national average at GCSE is something we are pleased with. In 2018, 74% of students achieved 5 or more good passes at GCSE including English and Maths (national average 63%) and our Progress 8 score was +0.00. We are currently expecting our 2019 cohort to achieve 80% 5 or more good passes and estimate that our P8 score will be +0.26.

We have excellent facilities and are financially secure. The school underwent a £15m expansion between 2005 and 2010, as we grew from 6FE to 8FE. Today, the school presents as a mixture of modern, recently built accommodation and renovated older buildings within a pleasant and well-cared for estate. As an employer, we have over 200 staff and a relatively low staff turnover. We pay great attention to staff well-being and teacher-workload (see the Birchwood Plus brochure) and personalised CPD, ensuring the school is run efficiently and effectively. Consequently Birchwood is a thriving and happy place to work. Teachers, therefore, tend to stay at Birchwood and develop their career rather than move on.

Beyond GCSEs, the majority of our Year 11 students stay on into our Sixth Form where they study predominantly A-Level subjects with the intention to apply for a place at university. We have a large Sixth Form and we offer over 35 different subjects at Advanced Level. In 2016, all our students passed their A-Levels, with 66% achieving A\*-B grades (well above the national average of 48%). This meant that 91% our students went to their first choice University.

Our most recent Ofsted report (May 2017) picked out the following strengths:

- *The school's provision for personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are safe and are exceptionally well cared for*
- *Sixth-form students make good progress and are well prepared for their next stages in education, training or employment.*
- *Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are polite, courteous and show respect for fellow pupils, staff and visitors.*
- *The curriculum, including the extra-curricular provision, offers a wide range of interesting subjects and opportunities which are well matched to pupils' interests.*
- *Most parents are effusive in their praise for the school and its support for their children.*



Principal - Dr Chris Ingate

Registered office - Parsonage Lane • Bishop's Stortford • Hertfordshire • CM23 5BD

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Email: [admin@birchwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@birchwood.herts.sch.uk)

Website: [www.birchwoodonline.co.uk](http://www.birchwoodonline.co.uk)

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We are confident in terms of our momentum and school improvement trajectory with the main area we need to focus on now is improving the progress for the 15% of students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds – something we are very committed to do as a comprehensive school

Speaking personally, it is a privilege to lead Birchwood High School and I am fortunate to work with many loyal and dedicated staff along with students who are a credit to themselves. We continue to work hard to improve the standard of education for all our young people so they can make a positive difference to the world. If you would like to find out more, our website is very informative and includes newsletters and parents' feedback: <https://www.birchwoodonline.co.uk/newsletters.php>

The Head of Science position is an important leadership post. For further details, please refer to the Person Specification and Job Description provided. This is a position that would suit someone looking for their first senior position in middle leadership or a more experienced Head of Science looking to expand their whole school involvement through their involvement in Senior Leadership.

To apply, please complete an application form and include this with a covering letter\* outlining any relevant experience to date, your values and how you would make a difference to student outcomes. Applications should be sent to Fiona Adeniji, HR Manager at [recruitment@birchwoodhigh.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@birchwoodhigh.org.uk). The closing date is **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019** with interviews on **Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019**.

If you have any further queries or would like to have an informal visit of the school prior to applying please contact the school on 01279 655936.

Yours sincerely

**Dr Chris Ingate**  
Principal

\*the application letter should be no more than two sides of A4 Arial Font Size 12

# Birchwood High School

## Science Faculty



### Our aim

- To deliver the highest quality Science teaching to every student.
- To thoroughly equip our students for today's technological world.
- To enable our students to be fully aware of the implications and application of Science, so that they can make judgements on environmental and social issues.
- To enthuse our students with a lifelong interest in scientific matters and to have fun learning.
- To ensure our students fulfil their potential in examinations.

These aims are to be achieved by offering investigations where the students have to think for themselves, diverse questioning techniques and through the delivery of well-planned, high quality Science lessons.

Science is a heavy user of IT and all teaching staff are given a lap top to facilitate this. We use dedicated Science i-pads and data logging equipment to engage student understanding and debate. A Science resources area facilitates the sharing of ideas and effective materials across the faculty and our students have benefited from the innovative ways in which we have adapted our schemes of work in order to make full use of these valuable resources.

Within Science many resources are held electronically including Schemes of Work.

As a Science teacher, you will be responsible for:

- National Curriculum teaching in all Sciences at KS3 and KS4.
- Teaching KS5 in your specialist area.

- Record keeping and monitoring of student progress through target setting.
- Contributing to the development of schemes of work.
- Assessment and regular marking of students' work.
- Examination preparation, marking and writing of reports.
- General display material.
- KS3/KS4/KS5 required practical administration.
- Initial responsibility for classroom discipline.
- Laboratory safety.
- Attendance at Faculty and parents' meetings.
- Reviewing and monitoring of curriculum changes.

### Accommodation

The Science faculty is undergoing a refurbishment programme and all nine laboratories have interactive whiteboards and network points.

### The Curriculum

Key Stage 3 students receive six hours of Science per fortnight structured around a bespoke two-year scheme of work. One piece of home learning is set each two-week period.

Triple scientists receive ten hours per fortnight (over three years) with three teachers (Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

Additional scientists receive ten hours of Science per fortnight (over three years) with two teachers.



# Birchwood High School

## Science Faculty

### Schemes of Work

The Science Faculty is in the process of updating and reviewing the KS3 curriculum and cohorts complete KS3 in two years. We have adopted the "Activate" scheme of work in Years 7 and 8 which equips students with the skills needed for their KS4 journey as well as making Science fun.

For KS4 we offer AQA triple award Science, Science 'A', Trilogy and Additional Science. The schemes have been written in house and are reviewed for content, context and practical activities on a regular bases. All exams are taken at the end of year 11.



### A Level Teaching

There is considerable interest in the Sciences at 'A' Level and we offer Biology, Chemistry and Physics. We have excellent and growing numbers again next year and it is likely that the newly appointed member of staff may have the opportunity to teach 'A' Level in their specialist subject.

From September 2017 we will be introducing the Level 3 BTEC Certificate and Extended Certificate in Applied Science.

### Student Setting

All students across KS3 and 4 are banded into academic sets which are constantly reviewed and refined. At Birchwood we value all our students and aim for value added results for all our Science learners.

Sixth form students are also openly encouraged to be leaders of learning. In this capacity we have students helping and leading learning in KS3 and KS4 classes; supporting students and teachers alike.

### Our Philosophy

We believe that our students should enjoy Science, find it rewarding and gain knowledge and understanding by investigating things for themselves.

Science is a large faculty consisting of 12 teachers and five support staff. All Science teachers and Technician staff are of equal importance and it is fully recognised that effective learning requires such team coordination.

### Extra-Curricular

Science club takes place at a lunchtime and is successfully enthusing students and engaging them in STEM type activities.

We run trips to Colchester Zoo for Year 8 and have also visited CERN in Switzerland, The Greenwich Royal Observatory, Big Bang Fair and Cambridge Astronomy Club.

Sixth former students have the opportunity to spend a day at GlaxoSmithKline and Merck, Sharp and Dohme, guest speakers are invited to the Faculty to support our learning and teaching.

We regularly send a group of 'A' Level Chemistry students to the Chemistry Lectures at the University of London and CERN.

Sixth Form Biology field trips are run every year and our students have the opportunity to conduct field sampling and ecology based investigations.

We are always looking to expand out repertoire of trips and external speaks to keep Science live, relevant and interesting.

Revision and mentoring sessions are run for Years 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 after school in order to support the GCSE modules and final examinations.

We help with local primary schools within our catchment area with their KS2 Science work by a combination of visits either to their school or by sessions at Birchwood as part of our Primary Liaison programme.

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## Job Description

### Head of Science Faculty (and SLT Secondment) – Sept 2019. L11-15 (£51,814-£56,962)

#### **Science Faculty Outline**

This position arises because the current post-holder is moving onto an international leadership position in China.

Birchwood's Science faculty is fully staffed and there is a strong focus on great whole class teaching supplemented by highly targeted and effective intervention for key students. The teaching team is supported by a team of first-rate Science technicians who help to ensure that, wherever possible, our students discover a love of science through practical exploration and experimentation rather than just through PowerPoint & textbook.

Birchwood Science students have performed above the national average in 2017 and 2018 at GCSE and there is a strong take-up at A-Level where results are similarly positive. In the Science Faculty, as with the wider school, there is a strong trajectory of improvement that was recognised in our most recent Ofsted visit.

The particular challenges that we face are common to many Science faculties. We have more Biology specialists than Chemistry or Physics specialists but we do have expertise in all three areas. Where teachers need extra training to teach outside of their specialism this is provided both internally and externally. Members of the senior leadership team assist the head of faculty in supporting individual teachers who want to improve their practice and this will continue.

The Science faculty at Birchwood is a team of exceptionally committed teachers and technicians. They work tirelessly to support not only the students but also each other. The successful applicant will no doubt have their own vision and strategies and they will take over a team of staff and students who are ready, willing and able to be led by them on the next part of the Birchwood Science journey.

This is, therefore, an exciting opportunity for someone who is currently a successful second in Science or Head of Biology / Chemistry / Physics to take that next step in their career. Equally, this post would suit a more experience Head of Science who is looking to substantiate their whole school portfolio by having a seconded position to the wider Senior Leadership Team.

We look forward to hearing from you.

#### **Person Specification**

##### **Essential**

- Qualified teacher status with relevant Science Degree
- Strong subject knowledge and passion for all aspects of Science
- A commitment to all-ability mixed 11-18 education
- The desire and drive to close gaps for Disadvantaged and SEND students
- A drive to further develop Post-16 Science and University-related degrees
- Evidence of leadership experience in current school

- Experience of school improvement – we value candidates from improving schools
- Excellent inter-personal skills
- Effective use of initiative and independence
- Well-organised and ability to self-manage with strong IT skills
- Humility and self-reflection

### **Desirable**

- Post-Graduate qualification or experience (Masters' degree / NPQSL / Examiner at GCSE/ A-Level)
- Career development into Senior Leadership – this post carries a Secondment Opportunity for the successful candidate

### **Teaching requirement**

- 18 16 periods / 25 (64% contact ratio)
- Dedicated Office
- Due to size of the team, the Head of Science does not have a Form Tutor responsibility

### **Job Description**

The Head of Science Faculty will be primarily responsible for leading and managing their curriculum area.

Responsibilities will include:

### **Quality of Learning**

- Implementing the Faculty's School Transformation and Development Plan (STDP)
- Implementing and monitoring the quality schemes of work throughout the faculty
- Checking that Assessment Recording & Reporting policies are in place
- Monitoring student achievement through classroom observation, moderation and analysis of outcomes
- To develop curricular bids to facilitate learning in the faculty
- Aiming to establish appropriate resources
- Over-seeing progression and continuity throughout key stages

### **Supporting Staff**

- Supporting a large fully-staffed team of Science Teachers and Lab Technicians
- Development of faculty specific strands within the (STDP)
- Organisation of regular meetings to disseminate information and provide opportunity for team members to discuss issues
- Checking that staff who teach within the subject areas are provided with a SoW that shows progression and continuity. Heads of Faculty should also check to see that staff have access to a range of resources from which to teach.
- To implement subject specific strands relevant to the School Transformation and Development Plan (STDP)

### **Ethos and Environment**

- To adhere to Health & Safety procedures as detailed in H&S policy
- To follow risk analysis procedures
- To conduct faculty premises audit
- To check that classrooms, corridors and displays are of a high quality

### **Deployment of Resources**

- To devolve capitation and resources in a fair and equitable manner
- To monitor levels of consumables
- To implement new resources in accordance with the (STDP)