

April 2017

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in working at Bedford Free School. This is an exciting opportunity to join a hugely successful Humanities department that routinely achieves among the best results in the school.

Founded by local teachers, BFS opened in September 2012 with the aim of offering the families in our community a distinctive and world-class choice for their children. Our school values of Respect, Honesty and High Expectations drive what we do every single day to ensure that we give our students the best possible education.

We are unashamedly ambitious for those in our care – we have now had 2 sets of GCSE results and as we expected, we are among the top performing schools nationally. These results have been achieved through good teaching and hard work and Humanities, which is made up of History, Geography and RE were exceptional. Working within the faculty, you would be a specialist History teacher working with a well-established team of individual subject experts. Curriculum planning is centralised, meaning teachers do not have to spend hours preparing for lessons and we operate a highly selective marking policy to further reduce unnecessary workload. As a result, our teachers are free to do what they do best – teach, and they do this in a highly productive, disciplined environment where teachers are in charge and student behaviour is exemplary.

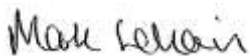
If you are a well-qualified expert looking to join a talented department and teach truly wonderful students I would encourage you to visit and see how we do things for yourself. We are situated in the heart of Bedford, just 30 minutes from London, and welcome visitors at any time during the school day.

This role would suit experienced or newly qualified teachers for whom we offer a full induction package and a generous starting salary that is significantly above national scales.

If you would like to arrange a visit or discuss the position further please contact Paul Donald, Deputy Head on 01234 332298 or pdonald@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

I look forward to answering any questions you might have, and to receiving your application in due course.

Regards,



Mark Lehain
PRINCIPAL



The Department

The department is made up of 6 teachers, two of whom are members of the senior team. We have a mix of youth and experience in the teaching staff, and this creates an extremely collaborative, happy and hard working group of professionals.

The Curriculum

Key Stage 3

History, Geography and RE are taught by specialists as separate subjects and staff exercise their considerable freedom in the curriculum. At BFS we teach a knowledge based curriculum designed to give our students the cultural capital that is the norm for the most advantaged in society, but is often lacking elsewhere. We are preparing them for GCSE, A Level and university study, but we also believe in knowledge and learning for their own sake.

Key Stage 4

Every student must choose either History or Geography (many choose both). There are three GCSE History classes in Year 10 and Year 11 each year and with over 30% of grades being A*/A in the last two years, huge numbers go on to study History at A Level. The department currently operates a hugely successful revision programme where former students return to BFS weekly to tutor current Year 11s and thus maintaining good links with teaching staff.

Extracurricular

Each member of the department contributes to the BFS Electives programme – these are the usual extracurricular clubs offered in most schools but timetabled into the school day to ensure that every student accesses them and to save teachers from giving up their precious 'free' time after school hours to run them. Currently we offer more than 50 activities a week which range from sports teams to knitting, debating and yoga.

Humanities offer a range of trips from the GCSE Geography residential to Dorset to a day trip to Holdenby House and our annual battlefields trip. Experiences like these help us to provide students, regardless of background, with the cultural literacy that they need to be successful in their GCSEs, A Levels and at university.

Reading

Developing our students as readers has been, and remains a key priority for all staff. We have 30 minutes of dedicated DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) time each day where students read classic literature out loud together with their tutor. This approach, which we call '100 Classics' will mean that at the end of 5 years at BFS, each student will have read 100 great pieces of literature just through DEAR.

Teachers have all been trained in the strategies outlined in the Doug Lemov book 'Reading Reconsidered' and our students expect to read out loud in each and every lesson.

Why work at BFS?

Based in the heart of Bedford BFS is already one of the top performing schools in the area which is down to an unashamedly academic curriculum, exceptional behaviour and subject teachers having the freedom to teach as a result. We recognise the subject staff are experts in their fields and the senior team allow heads of department to lead their teams as they see fit.

A strength of our school, and the key to the excellent attitudes of our students is our systems and routines. On appointment all staff are given a copy of 'Teach Like a Champion' by Doug Lemov and the strategies and techniques in this book drive the work we do on a daily basis. We have found that by arming everyone with the same routines, teachers become free to teach their subjects as they see fit because the students know what is expected of them.

As well as a generous salary scale which is above the national average, at BFS we offer funding for staff wishing to complete relevant post graduate study and all staff receive independent workplace advice and support from Edapt (www.edapt.org.uk)

Bedford is a pleasant and affordable town in which to live and offers great access to London (30m to St Pancras from Bedford Station) and Cambridge. Our school is growing into a multi academy trust with a local primary school joining us this year, and we expect to gain approval to open an additional secondary school in St Neots in September 2018. These developments, plus others that are planned mean there will be considerable opportunities for career development in the coming years.

Thank you for your interest in teaching at BFS, we encourage candidates to visit the school and can arrange tours at any time – feel free to come and see our school in action, meet our staff and students and get a real feel for the hardworking, happy atmosphere we have here.

To arrange a tour or for a confidential discussion about the position contact Paul Donald, Deputy Principal on 01234 332298 or email pdonald@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk