



HIGHGATE SCHOOL

Teacher of Biology for September 2010

A well-qualified and able teacher of Biology is required to join this strong department. The successful candidate will be required to teach pupils throughout the school, from Year 7 to Year 13. Interest amongst the pupils is high and there is considerable scope for someone with imagination and drive. The department currently comprises five full-time teachers and one part-time teacher who work in modern, well-resourced laboratories with good technical support.

Applicants should be academically well-qualified. More experienced teachers should preferably be accustomed to guiding motivated pupils of high ability, though this post would also suit a teacher new to the profession. Applicants need the imagination and ambition to challenge pupils to enjoy the subject, and the insight and enthusiasm to convey its intricacies at the highest level. Applicants should be familiar with IT, or be prepared to develop their skills in this area. The successful candidate will be able and willing to contribute to the pastoral and co-curricular life of the school, both aspects of which are valued at Highgate.

All pupils study Biology as a separate subject in Years 8 to 11 (a General Science course is taught in year 7, to which all three science departments contribute and which all members of the Science Faculty can be expected to teach), ultimately following the Edexcel IGCSE course (although Year 11 will still be tackling the AQA GCSE course for one more year), with about three quarters of the cohort taking GCSEs in all three sciences at present. High quality teaching materials produced within the department are used throughout. In 2009 96% of pupils taking Biology achieved A* or A grades. At AS and A2 the OCR course is followed and Biology is a popular choice for pupils. Standards of achievement are high: in 2009 76% of candidates achieved A/B at A2 and 80% achieved the same grades at AS. Every year, several pupils apply to Oxford to read a life science or to Cambridge for Natural Sciences, and a significant number of pupils also go on to study Medicine or Dentistry.

There are four recently refurbished modern laboratories (some with dedicated experimental areas), a departmental office and separate prep room. One full- and one part-time technician work in the Biology Department. The department organises regular biology-related events, such as attending public lectures and inviting guest speakers to the school, and there are a number of thriving societies affiliated to Biology that meet on a regular basis.

The School has in place DCSF recognised arrangements for the Induction Year and the confirmation of NQT status and has considerable experience of and success in guiding entrants to the profession to qualified status. For all teachers new to Highgate, regardless of experience, there is a strong and supportive framework of induction to the School.

Highgate is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Criminal Records Bureau.

Teachers at Highgate enjoy a welcoming, comfortable and exceptionally well-resourced environment and are provided with significant assistance from a range of support staff. Salaries are competitive. The School pays the employer's contribution to the Teachers' Pension Scheme. Terms are shorter than in the maintained sector. Staff have free access to the School's sports facilities, including a swimming pool and a fitness suite.

The Head of Biology, Ben Weston (ben.weston@highgateschool.org.uk), or David Fotheringham, the Director of Studies (david.fotheringham@highgateschool.org.uk) are very happy to answer any questions.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Please post the following documents to Mr A S Pettitt, Head Master, Highgate School, North Road, London, N6 4AY (Tel: 020 8347 3576, Fax: 020 8347 5286, Email: hoffice@highgateschool.org.uk).

- 1. Application form – handwritten and signed**
- 2. Letter of application - no longer than one side of A4**
- 3. Full curriculum vitae - including the names, addresses, telephone numbers and email contacts of two referees**

**Closing date: 12 noon on Wednesday 17 March, but earlier applications will be welcome
Interviews will take place in the week beginning 22 March 2010.**

Criteria for the post of Teacher of Biology

(to be read in conjunction with the details of the post)

I Essential professional criteria

Criteria	How will these be tested or verified?
A good honours degree in Biology, or a related subject (eg Natural Sciences)	Original degree certificate(s) Questions about subject specialisation (and course content for more recent graduates) Opportunities at interview to discuss techniques for teaching set topics
The ability to teach the Chemistry and Physics elements of the Y7 general Science course	Questions at interview relating to the demands of the current syllabus
Experience of teaching academic lessons, either as an employed teacher or during a teaching placement, and an understanding of effective assessment	A 50-minute lesson to be taught to a Key stage 3 or 4 class. Opportunity to comment on and grade pupils' written work
Excellent communication skills	Two panel interviews; lesson (as above)
The ability to use ICT fully in the teaching of Biology, or a willingness to learn the skills	Observed in the lesson Opportunities to recount experience and expertise at interview
The ability to establish good relations with colleagues and pupils.	Opportunities at interview to recount experiences where these skills have been demonstrated Questions which referees will be asked as part of the confidential reference request
Awareness and understanding of safeguarding and welfare of children	Questions at interview to test attitudes towards and knowledge of children's safeguarding and welfare Questions which referees will be asked as part of the confidential reference request

2 Desirable professional criteria

Criteria	How will these be tested?
A teaching qualification (eg PGCE, GTP)	Original certificate
Experience of teaching successfully in an academically selective school	Questions which a referee from an academically selective school will be asked as part of the confidential reference request Verification of a candidate's employment history
Knowledge of, and experience of teaching Biology at GCSE and at A Level	Opportunities at interview to recount experience of teaching and of successful strategies used in teaching these topics
A willingness to prepare pupils for BMAT and other related tests	Questions at interview relating to the requirements of the tests and possible methods of preparation
A willingness to be involved in the wider life of the department (eg Biology Society, visits)	Opportunities at interview to recount experience of running or participating in such activities or to give ideas for these

Person specification for teaching posts at Highgate School.

Highgate School seeks to appoint teachers who will have the following proven qualities, or the potential to develop them. At interview, candidates will have the opportunity to demonstrate or give an account of these attributes.

- The energy, dynamism and stamina to contribute fully to the life of a busy co-educational independent day school.
- Willingness to contribute to the extensive range of activities provided for pupils and to support them in their co-curricular pursuits.
- Capacity for industry and initiative in both independent work and as part of teams of colleagues in academic work, pastoral care, sports and co-curricular activities.
- Profound and continuing interest in the academic subject / s to be taught.
- The depth of knowledge and agility of mind to allow flexibility in lessons, adapting delivery as appropriate in the light of pupils' responses.
- Empathy with pupils across the age and ability spectrum at Highgate and the ability to implement a range of teaching strategies to cater for each individual pupil.
- Awareness and understanding of matters relating to the personal, social, health and emotional development of Highgate's pupils.
- General knowledge of Child Protection issues and good practice, particularly relating to professional obligations on safeguarding the welfare of each child and avoiding guarantees of confidentiality in any disclosure.
- Capacity to deal sensitively with problems raised by pupils, in line with Highgate's pastoral policies and sanctions system, working in partnership with Highgate's designated staff i/c pastoral care.
- Ability to create effective rapport and a sound relationship with pupils, earning their respect and trust but maintaining proper professional boundaries by not deliberately courting popularity or friendship.
- Willingness and ability to liaise effectively and professionally between pupils, staff and parents when required, making accurate records of these exchanges.
- Patience and thoughtfulness to see any issues that may arise with pupils, parents or colleagues from a variety of perspectives.
- The ability to de-fuse difficult situations using different strategies such as careful listening, sensitive use of humour, praise and recognition where due, utilising the School's reward system.
- Retention of a sense of perspective and, on occasion, the invaluable ability to laugh at oneself.