

General Information Recruitment

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WELCOME TO BRIARWOOD SCHOOL

Dear Applicant,

We are delighted that you are interested in working at Briarwood School. We hope you are the caring, empathetic, innovative and energetic professional who will support us on the next stage of our journey.

A dedicated team of staff, governors and parents/carers are proud to support 155 children and young people aged 3 to 19 years on roll and are passionate about their progress, happiness and care. We are located on three sites –the post 16 Centre was newly built in 2016, the Nexus was newly built in 2019 and the other sites having had extensive recent refurbishment. At Briarwood, we encourage staff to be innovative and creative with a bespoke curriculum that puts the needs of our pupils first, complemented by pioneering assessment and reporting systems. Events like the Briarwood Music Festival and the brand-new Art Auction, demonstrate that the staff are encouraged to be imaginative in providing the very best learning and enrichment experiences.

The development of the Nexus Alternative Education Provision has enabled pupils with the most challenging behaviours to remain in a school setting and the governors are wholly committed to full inclusion.

The school was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2017 and was recognised as Good. The inspectors said: “The school’s values, ‘enjoy, engage and learn’ shine through. During the inspection laughter permeated the school with pupils demonstrating their joy, fully engaged in their learning. As a result, pupils make strong progress with their learning and development. “

The school is in an excellent position to move to the next level after a period of rapid growth and innovations in our approach. We need inspirational staff who will put our children and young people first. Our pupils come from very diverse backgrounds and candidates need to have excellent communications skills in order to reach out to all our families.

We hope you find this recruitment pack informative and helpful. If you do have any queries, or would like to arrange a visit, please do contact us.

We look forward to receiving your application.



ABOUT BRIARWOOD SCHOOL

Briarwood is a Bristol school committed to providing a high quality of education, care and life experiences for children and young people with Severe and Profound Learning Difficulties, Complex Needs, Autism and Sensory Impairment from 3-19 years. The school is based on three sites. The Primary and Post 16 Departments are on the Briar Way site. Our Secondary Department is on the Snowdon Road site, co-located with Bristol Metropolitan Secondary Academy and finally The Pod is our Early Years Centre, co-located with Barton Hill Academy. The Secondary site has a Specialist Centre for pupils with behaviours that challenge, called The Nexus.

Enjoy, Engage, Learn

The values of Briarwood School are that all pupils should **Enjoy** their time with us, so that they can **Engage** and **Learn** to their full potential.

Enjoy

Our aim is for Briarwood School to be a happy, welcoming, nurturing environment, where all pupils feel safe, secure and are ready to learn. All aspects of school life are designed to inspire and engage pupils, by implementing a mix of curriculum areas suitable for the different stages of education, creative approaches and essential life skills. We stress the importance of the personal development of each student to include social, emotional, physical, spiritual & moral education.

Engage

The role of communication is key in all we do and underpins our approach to learning. We value enrichment and inclusion and include this through such mediums as sport, dance, music, theatre, celebrations, community visits, charity fundraising, horse riding and swimming. Through planning and careful design, we can ensure an inspirational, accessible and adaptable environment that fosters a culture of learning and meets the requirements of all pupils.

Learn

We provide a bespoke approach to learning, to support children with often complex and widely differing needs. All pupils should be supported to achieve, no matter how small the goal or milestone. We have a developing curriculum, relevant to each stage of the children's learning journey, which prioritises key areas and an appropriate mix of academic and life skills. All staff working with the pupils provide a culture of supported independence and encourage pupils to be as independent as possible in the world around them.



"The school's values, 'enjoy, engage and learn' shine through. Laughter permeates the school with pupils demonstrating their joy, fully engaged in their learning. As a result, pupils make strong progress with their learning and development."

School Organisation

Our school is organised into Key Stages and by the learning needs of our children and young people. A Senior Leader is responsible for each defined area. Staff are appointed to Briarwood School and should assume that they will be required to work in any phase and with any cohort as circumstances demand, with the possibility of movement between sites.

Early Years Pod

Briarwood Pod is a specialist provision, for children with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD), Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), Autism (ASD) and children with Complex Needs. It is an 18 place provision, with 3 classrooms for children in Early Years and Key Stage 1. Pupils offered a place at Briarwood Pod must have an Education, Health and Care Plan and admissions are through Bristol City Council SEN department.

Our Early Years Pod is co-located with Barton Hill Academy and benefits from extensive refurbishment. We retain good links and relationships with the mainstream Barton Hill Academy; however the Pod has its own entrance, reception, staff and specialist facilities. We support pupils from the East Central area of Bristol though some children come from other areas in the city; our pupils have a diverse mix of nationalities and languages.

Briarwood Pod serves as a supportive first placement, for young children who require additional support or who are not currently flourishing in other placements. The school believes that in supporting these children intensively during the crucial early years, the package that they need can be individualised and monitored so that each pupil can meet their full potential. Many of our pupils will continue on to the Primary Department of Briarwood School however for some pupils it may be appropriate to move onto another specialist setting or integrate into a mainstream provision, a process that takes place with families and professionals through the annual review.

Primary

The Primary Department meets the needs of children from 5 – 11 years through Key Stages 1 and 2. The majority of pupils come from the Briarwood Pod; however we do welcome pupils from a range of other settings. We are an ever growing Department with seven classes in total. Our building includes two P.E. halls, a sensory integration room, a sensory room, a dark room for pupils with VI/HI needs, a soft play room and a library. We have recently had the external grounds extensively refurbished and are enjoying the new space.

The Primary Department supports transitions for pupils from an Early Years setting to more formal schooling and gets them ready for Secondary, as young adults. We continue to develop the thread of learning started in early years and prepare pupils for becoming young adults as they move to Secondary provision.

Secondary

The Secondary Department works with pupils from 11 to 16 years old, in Key Stages 3 and 4. Pupils are placed in classes according to their learning needs and we have a flexible approach so that placements can be changed as pupil needs change. We have a sensory room, food technology and art room, hall for lunch, assemblies, PE, celebrations and other Departmental events, outdoor gardening area and large outdoor play area.

The particular focus of our work in the Secondary Department, in addition to the Whole School vision, is to support our pupils on their way to becoming young adults. That means finding ways for all our pupils to develop their skills, independence and potential in the most appropriate way to each of them - in lesson time, at leisure times, mealtimes and times of personal care.

Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility for areas of life in the Department, when it will be of benefit to them. We have an ethos of caring for each other in the Secondary community and caring for our environment. Visits to the local community take place as much as possible, in order to develop pupils' skills, confidence and understanding of the world beyond school. Pupils' academic and other achievements are celebrated and at Key Stage 4 all pupils begin the nationally recognised Asdan Transition Challenge accreditation scheme. Every young person will leave us at the end of Key Stage 4 with a certificate of achievement from Asdan. This prepares them well for more in depth ASDAN work completed in the Post 16 Department.

Post 16

Briarwood's purpose built Sixth Form Centre opened in September 2016, it is co-located with the Primary Department and is a 25 place provision, with 3 classrooms, dedicated art/vocational studies room, food tech facilities, and a common room for students to relax, socialise and utilise their own time.

The majority of pupils come from Briarwood school however we do also welcome visits and applications from pupils who started their education journey elsewhere. Pupils offered a place must have a statement of educational needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan. Admissions are through Bristol City Council SEN Department.

Much of the work within Briarwood Post 16 is planning and preparing young adults for life beyond Briarwood. Within our sixth form, all aspects of the curriculum are based on this ideology fulfilling the Preparing for Adulthood outcomes as required by the Department of Education. We modify the curriculum to ensure that we concentrate on building important skills in readiness for adulthood whilst supporting individuals to reach their full potential and maximise success. Students have access to excellent work experience opportunities and we have strong relationships with external partners who support us to provide exciting and relevant vocational experience.

Ensuring that we provide students with excellent opportunities to build on their level of independence is of the highest priority and shopping, cooking, self-care, health and home

maintenance feature highly within the curriculum. We recognise the importance of enrichment and of the arts and work well with external partners to broaden student's horizons and provide experiences to support personal growth and creativity. We enjoy community participation and ensure that ample opportunity is given for students to develop the skills needed to become responsible and active members of their own society able to make a contribution and excel.

Our curriculum is driven by student need and pathways, however we are able to accredit learning through nationally recognised awarding body ASDAN and all students leave Briarwood Post 16 with an exciting portfolio of qualifications to demonstrate their strengths and achievements to their next providers.

Nexus

The Nexus was established in 2008 to provide a much needed education for children from the South West of England who have been or are at risk of exclusion from an SEN settings because of their exceptionally complex behavioural needs.

The Nexus provides bespoke educational programmes and Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) for 13 young people who have severe and complex sensory profiles, learning difficulties and present with behaviours that can be exceptionally challenging. Most of our pupils also present with social and emotional difficulties and have history of recurring trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

Due to the continued success of the nexus provision Bristol City Council recognised the unique, highly specialised education we provide and its impact on the our young people lives and their families by funding a new building that was completed and opened in May 2019.

The Nexus is able to offer a unique, highly specialised and therapeutic level of education. The pupils are supported by highly trained, dedicated staff that support our young people on a 1:1, 2:1 or 3:1 basis. The Nexus staff receive training around; understanding sensory processing difficulties, ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences), trauma informed practises, positive behaviour support (PBS) strategies and level 2 Team Teach Training. This wealth of training supports our staff to consider all behaviour as a form of communication and promotes an understanding of the function of behaviours as well as appropriate physical environments that meet the needs of the pupils.

Our mission is to provide a valuable education for our young people by offering an enhanced and balanced curriculum which addresses each young person's individuality. We also aim to challenge our young people and provide them with opportunities to feel empowered to **Enjoy** school life, **Engage** with the community and educational experiences, and **Learn** to their full potential.

"Routines are well established and staff consistently apply the school's behaviour policy. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and respond quickly to instructions."

Curriculum and Assessment

At Briarwood all aspects of school life are designed to inspire and engage pupils, through a mix of a learning curriculum, creative approaches and essential life skills. The roles of communication and engagement are key to all we do and underpin our approach to learning. We ensure that a nurturing approach supports all pupils through their education, providing a bespoke curriculum to each child depending on their current needs.

We believe that an early years approach and curriculum is appropriate for nursery through to Year 1 pupils at Briarwood. It is in keeping with the Early Years foundation stage expectations. We aim to provide a broad, balanced, differentiated curriculum which addresses the children's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual and cultural development within a safe, secure, stimulating environment.

Our curriculum is designed as a cohesive approach with an individual's EHCP at the core; therefore facilitating greater involvement of families, the pupil and other professionals in their learning and development. The overarching curriculum vision is one that supports the idea of provision and curriculum linking together. Consequently, what a pupil needs at that point in time, becomes both a provision requirement and a learning opportunity. This means there are closer, consistent connections between the schools curriculum and the provision we offer. We provide positive challenges to foster individual achievements and promote confidence and self-expression. This allows the curriculum to show progress of pupils over time; celebrating the challenging, enriching and developmental progress of all pupils.

Our Post 16 curriculum builds on the life skills and independence that runs through the curriculum, especially in key stage 4, providing new opportunities for our pupils. Pupils participate in a range of courses and activities building up a portfolio of evidence to support accredited learning at a level to suit their learning needs and ability. Our courses are accredited by ASDAN and include modules to support achievement of awards, certificates and diplomas in Personal Progress, Employability and Personal and Social Development.

Due to the curriculum at Briarwood, we have adapted and created assessment systems which accurately and meaningfully allow us to support the progress of our pupils. Our assessment systems are designed as a meaningful and reflective approach to support teachers in planning the best route for each individual. The overarching vision is that assessment should be used as a supportive measure that allows all progress, no matter how small, to be demonstrated and for each pupil to keep moving forward in their learning, however that may look. All pupils at Briarwood have 6 learning maps per year. These learning maps set out all the targets a pupil is working on and are individual to them. We currently use the software system Onwards and Upwards to monitor progress and identify any gaps in learning. We also use an App called SeeSaw which records pupil learning and allows parents to share in their child's achievements.

"Parents speak highly of the quality of teaching and the support provided by staff. 'Briarwood is an excellent school, staffed and managed by an amazing group of people who go above and beyond what is required to ensure that their pupils and parents get the very best from each and every day'."

Summary of Ofsted Report, June 2017



"This school continues to be good."



- Pupils receive high-quality care and education pupils at Briarwood. The school has a skilled and highly effective senior and middle leadership team.
- Leaders are highly ambitious for the school and are determined to provide the very best for the pupils it serves. High expectations are shared by motivated and passionate staff.
- The quality of provision is monitored to ensure that teaching and learning are consistently strong.
- The school provides effective support and guidance to staff, which is combined with carefully planned professional development.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time is consistently good.
- Staff know each pupil extremely well and are acutely aware of their highly complex needs.
- The curriculum covers a wide range of subjects and learning experiences for pupils. There is a strong focus on the core skills of reading, writing and mathematics, carefully linked to developing pupils' real-life skills.
- Teachers provide bespoke activities and the curriculum is highly personalised to meet the needs of each individual pupil.
- Teachers are ably supported by highly skilled, motivated support staff. Staff are well deployed to ensure pupils receive the care and guidance they need to support their learning & development.
- Pupils make good progress in their learning & development from often extremely low starting points.
- Total communication is pivotal and threaded throughout the curriculum. This allows pupils to successfully access their learning.
- Parents speak highly of the quality of teaching and the support provided by staff. Parents who responded to the online survey or spoke with inspectors stated that their children are well looked after, are taught well, behave well and that the school is well led and managed.
- Safeguarding is effective; staff ensure all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders work closely with a range of external agencies and decisive action is taken when required to ensure pupils are kept safe. The school ensures that all staff, irrespective of their role, receive high quality training in all aspects of safeguarding.

"The behaviour of pupils is impressive and was exemplary during this inspection."

KEY PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES

Our key priorities and challenges for Briarwood School for the year ahead include:

- Responding to the current context with the aim of providing consistency in education.
- Continued investment in CPD opportunities to ensure a highly skilled, motivated workforce that is able to respond to the needs of future cohorts.
- Addressing increasingly difficult budget constraints whilst ensuring a balanced budget, achieving value for money and optimising staffing in classes to ensure continuity of pupil progress.
- Encouraging continued self-reflection of teachers to ensure they are skilled to respond to potential staffing changes through self-reflection and innovative teaching ideas.
- Embedding a new curriculum and assessment system that the school has recently introduced to ensure all children and young people make good progress against their targets.
- Development of new initiatives and curriculum for pupil mental health and wellbeing.
- Development of a wider safeguarding team and move to an electronic system to improve the quality of summative data for monitoring whilst maintaining a focus on pupil safety, achievement and progress.

WHAT MAKES BRIARWOOD UNIQUE?

Following a recent survey, relationships, culture and ethos make Briarwood unique.

- Underpinning all that we do at Briarwood are the highly positive relationships that are fostered with pupils through many years of hard work by a highly dedicated team.
- All pupils are seen as individuals and are treated as such through their entire curriculum and educational career with a focus on fun and enjoyment.
- A motivated teaching team who seek opportunities for growth and development which is evident in the number of middle and senior leadership qualifications that have been achieved through robust educational research.
- Pupils and staff represent over 22 different Nationalities and speak even more languages. As a school it is important to us to integrate pupils culture, religion, language and beliefs into our everyday experiences.



"Staff foster tremendously positive and trusting relationships with pupils and their families."

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Parents & Carers

The school enjoys and encourages strong partnerships with parents and carers. We operate an open door policy and each pupil has a home school diary for daily communication. We are using the App SeeSaw to share aspects of school life, promote opportunities and celebrate success. In addition to regular parent teacher meetings, we hold termly meetings for parents on each site with members of the SLT.

*"Parents speak highly of the quality of teaching and the support provided by staff.
'Nothing is too much trouble'."*

New Friends

New Friends is our PTA which has supported Briarwood School for many years. We are keen to extend this partnership with increased parental involvement. Some of the recent support the school has benefited from include outdoor play equipment on each site and New Friends have previously run holiday playschemes for the benefit of pupils and families.

Governing Body

The Briarwood Governing Body is made up of parents and carers, staff and other members of the community who have a connection to the school. We are all volunteers who care passionately about Briarwood school and the education and opportunities that it provides to all students. Our role is to ensure the school meets all its legal and statutory duties and provides the very best education and care for the children and young people. We want to support the staff in their roles whilst challenging them to make sure the school is the best it can possibly be. As a group we make strategic decisions on the future of the school.

"Leaders, including Governors, are highly ambitious for the schools and are determined to provide the very best for the pupils it serves."

Bristol Special School Partnership

There are four Special Schools in Bristol which cater for pupils with Learning Difficulties. Briarwood is part of this LDD Partnership which has been instrumental in improving practice across the City. The Headteachers meet on a regular basis as well as other leaders with responsibility for areas such as Assessment, Moderation, Early Years and Post 16.

Post 16

We have an excellent relationship with adult service providers in both education and care settings. This has enabled us to develop courses offsite exposing pupils to new environments, peers and settings as well as sharing expertise. This important, inclusive, transition work provides opportunity for young adults to experience adult centred and potentially future provisions in readiness for future destinations.

We recognise the importance of working in partnership with parents/carers, the Preparation for Adulthood teams, social care, health, and education to ensure that transitions into the adult services are as smooth and carefully planned as possible. Pupils best interests and views placed at the heart of everything we do with a strong emphasis on preparing them for the journey into adulthood and indeed life beyond Briarwood.

External Professional Support Services

Briarwood is also supported by a range of external support services, this is usually part of the statutory provision for pupils, and includes:

- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech & Language Therapists
- Specialist Teachers for the Visually & Hearing Impaired
- Educational Psychologists
- School Nurses
- Social Care
- Representatives from the Local Authority



"Parents are confident about the safety of their children in school. 'I couldn't be happier with Briarwood School and I recommend it to everyone.'"

LIVING IN BRISTOL

Bristol City Centre is a 15 minute drive away from Briarwood School, the Coast is 22 miles away and the Cotswolds or Mendips are an easy drive away.

The City Centre is lively, diverse with good shopping, dining and entertainment opportunities. Bristol has topped the list of the "best places to live in Britain" in the Sunday Times Best Places to live guide 2017. It has been described as "a small city", it was praised for being "handily placed for seaside and scenery" but "hardly cut off" with lots of "glamorous, creative, hi-tech and professional" jobs on offer and "great" food and drink - the city "crams in all the culture you could wish for".

Entertainment including music and theatre are a thriving part of Bristol Life with the Hippodrome providing hit West End shows and several local theatres such as the Bristol Old Vic and the Tobacco Factory. The Bristol Beacon (formerly the Colston Hall) and The O2 Academy are examples of a vibrant live music scene in the City.



Bristol also has top sporting football, rugby and cricket teams whose grounds are located across the City.



If you are considering re-locating with school age children, Bristol offers high standards of Education at Primary, Secondary, Further and Higher Education. There are a large choice of schools in the City and surrounding areas both state and private and four Universities in the local area.



Bristol has great road, rail and air transportation links with a direct rail link to London and an International Airport.

"Bristol is the best city to live in the UK for wealth and happiness, it benefits from its reputation as an environmentally friendly city, with a top-class university and buoyant property market." (Telegraph).



VISIT US

Due to current restrictions we are unable to offer visits, however, you are welcome to contact us to help inform your application.

To arrange this, please email Dawn Saunders:
dawn.saunders@bristol-schools.uk



Primary School & Sixth Form Centre

Briar Way, Fishponds,
Bristol, BS16 4EA
0117 3532651

Secondary School

Snowdon Road,
Fishponds,
Bristol, BS16 2EQ
0117 3773042

The Pod

Queen Ann Road,
Barton Hill,
Bristol, BS5 9TX
0117 9038727

CONTACT US

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