



## **Application Pack**

**For post of Deputy Head of Boarding (Residential)**



## **APPLICANT INFORMATION PACK**

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Brymore is a state boarding academy for boys situated in its own beautiful grounds of 60 acres in Cannington, near Bridgwater. In 1951 Somerset County Council purchased the estate at Brymore for £6,600 and following extensive repairs and alterations it was opened as a Secondary Technical School in September 1952 for boys aged 13 - 16. Today, Brymore is a sponsored academy and is part of the Bridgwater and Taunton College Multi-Academy Trust. From September 2014, the academy extended its age range to admit boys from the age of 11 and we reached capacity in September 2015.

Brymore is at an exciting period in its history. There has been a rapid rise in examination results and Brymore has consistently added significant value for the past ten years. We are one of the highest achieving schools in Somerset with consistently strong progress 8 scores. Maths and English have consistently achieved value added scores placing them in the top 15% of the country with DT, Land based, engineering and science results also exceptionally high. There has been considerable investment with £7 million going into new buildings - £3 million into new boarding houses which opened in January 2009, over £1.5 million into new classrooms and laboratories which opened in September 2008, a further £2 million refurbishment project of the main boarding house and over £0.75 million in a new dining hall, kitchens and horticultural facilities which opened in April 2015. Last year a further £0.5 million has been invested in a new milking parlour and specialist agriculture classroom with a re-design of the farm itself. A further investment of £150,000 has seen an additional multi-purpose farm building which opened in October 2020. Finally, we have invested £300,000 in the refurbishment of the swimming pool which should re-open in April 2022. It is a delightful and special place to work, and we are now the most over-subscribed school locally.

The four corner stones of the Brymore experience are the farm, gardens, workshops, and sport - plus, of course, the fact that it is a boarding school. Brymore has excellent facilities. It has a 90-acre farm including its own dairy herd, beef, pigs, sheep and chickens. It has extensive horticultural facilities including a one acre walled garden, glasshouses and each boy has access to his own plot. We have three workshops, a forge, and a CAD/CAM room so that boys can work with a variety of materials. Boys enjoy a wide range of sports including the traditional rugby, hockey, cricket, and athletics. They also have access to an outdoor pool and mountain bike track both within the school grounds.

There are currently over 340 boys on roll, as of September 2024 and 150 of these are boarders. However, even the out-boarders board when on a "duty" week. This involves milking or feeding at 6.30 am, then school, then duties again at 4.00 pm. All the boys help on the farm and in the gardens. Around half of the boys come from a land-based background. As a State Boarding School parents pay modest boarding fees, and the state pays for the education. Our half terms are kept short (six weeks maximum) to ensure that boarders - and staff - get adequate rest and time at home. From September 2018, we have moved from a six to a five-day week, with lessons taught on a Monday to Friday, with six Saturdays a year, for 'special' events such as the Harvest Festival. Teaching time is concentrated over 34 weeks, giving eighteen weeks holiday a year, in line with many independent schools and three weeks longer than other state schools. This pattern of short, focused terms, with longer holidays works well for families.

The pastoral system at Brymore comprises three houses, Galsworthy, Taylor, and Walker. Each has a Head of House and tutors who lead vertical tutor groups. The rewards system is well established and is of great importance to the ethos of the school. We have an assembly three days a week, with two tutorials and the Friday gathering is chiefly given over to the embodiment of the reward system. Certificates and awards are presented along with sports results and items of good news. Each term the results of inter-house fixtures are added to merits, commendations, attendance, and other data to produce the result for the FoBSA Trophy (Friends of Brymore School Association). Through this and other means, we actively seek to reward each boy for their endeavour and skill. We do not give rewards for the sake of it, but the system is remarkably good at finding something to celebrate in each boy.

Brymore is also about student development as well as academic success, so the context is one of encouraging the best in boys who frequently, have not thought of themselves as successful at school. We change that by finding out what they are good at, by building self-esteem and confidence and by encouraging them to live by our own three Rs - Resilience, Resourcefulness and Responsibility. We expect boys to be polite, courteous, to be able to hold a conversation and to mix well with people they do not know.

At present there are three classes in each Year Group of approximately 70 students, giving class sizes of 24-28 boys. Most boys study Land based studies and Resistant Materials/Engineering at Key Stage 4. However, we will also allow boys to meet the requirements of the English Baccalaureate and to follow a more academic pathway should they wish. Results have traditionally been high in value added terms, with several departments performing in the top five in Somerset.

The school comprises of three boarding houses, each holding up to 50 students. Two staff are assigned to, and live in each house, with duty staff and Assistant Houseparents running activities and Prep in the evenings. A senior member of staff is always on call, including overnight. The Head of Boarding and Deputy Head of Boarding oversee the school's boarding facility. Many activities are run in the evenings which are managed by the Extra-curricular Coordinator, so that boys are occupied at all times. Friday afternoons are taken up with activities, including rugby, hockey, farm, gardens, mountain biking and hill walking. Many boys go home on Friday evening, usually leaving a maximum of 10-20 boys who remain in at the weekend, before all boys return Sunday night/Monday morning.

The School has an established and stable Senior Leadership Team who have worked together for over seven years and have made significant changes to improve the attainment of the boys. The focus is very much on raising achievement and we are proud of the consistently high value added scores produced by the boys. In 2024 Ofsted rated the school as 'good' in all areas and highlighted leadership as a strength, in recognition of the rapid progress and pace of change and the sustained strong ethos of the school. Results at the academy have improved exponentially, with good data and in many areas, outstanding achievement. Meanwhile, the support of parents is exceptional, with 96% recommending the school in a recent Ofsted survey. As a member of staff you will get to know parents well through many of our functions held throughout the years such as the Harvest festival service, Christmas carol service, sports day and swimming gala.

### **Brymore Academy and Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust**

Brymore converted to an Academy in September 2013. This formed part of our drive to continually improve the future of the school, which opened in 1952 as one of the first 'Technical Schools' in the country. Our aim is to be a centre of excellence, both vocationally and academically, building on the legacy of the past, whilst delivering the innovative education of the future.

Brymore is part of the Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust which consists of a group of schools, both primary and secondary, sponsored by Bridgwater and Taunton College, who are working together to maximise student achievement and opportunity. The Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust plays a key role in challenging and supporting each Academy and consists of Bridgwater College Academy, Hamp Academy, Otterhampton Primary School, West Somerset College, Stanchester Academy, Brookside and Maiden Beech School. It provides financial stability, direction, and accountability, whilst enabling Brymore to play to its strengths. Our emphasis on traditional values and the development of resilience, resourcefulness and responsibility continues to be at the heart of all that we do. At the same time, the Academy structure provides us with an opportunity to work in partnership with Bridgwater and Taunton College and other schools, share resources and expertise and strive to get the best for all our boys. The School and College already have a working relationship and the Trust is enhancing the synergy between them. The distance between the School and the Cannington Centre means that there is huge potential to ensure best use of all resources. The College can provide support to develop teaching and learning, extend curriculum opportunities for the students and build partnerships for staff development.

Academy status gives Brymore the freedom to be innovative and creative with the curriculum, timetabling, staffing and governance. We have the freedom to focus teaching and resources where improvements are really needed. Thus, we set the highest aspirations for student achievement providing a curriculum that is challenging, relevant, innovative, and sufficiently flexible to engage pupils of all abilities. The Academy is responsible to the Academy Trust which ultimately answers to the Secretary of State for Education. The Trust provides a structural solution that helps to build capacity, providing opportunities for both staff and students. It is building on the improvements already made by strengthening governance, broadening leadership and management, and providing a framework for long-term support.

Together we aim to build a Centre of Excellence, specialising in academic achievement, innovative technology, and Land Based Studies.



April 2025

Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in the position of Deputy Head of Boarding at Brymore Academy. It really is a fantastic and unique place to work and I hope having read all of the information, and maybe visited us, you will feel it is the right school for you. If not, then I wish you luck in any future applications.

Brymore has consistently delivered high value added/progress results for the past eight years. We are a thriving school and are proud to have become one of the most successful academies in the county. The boys themselves make the Academy what it is, and you will find them polite, well-mannered, and motivated to do well. I am also lucky to have loyal and hard-working staff. The grounds, purpose-built teaching block and boarding accommodation, 90-acre farm, one acre walled garden, workshops, forge, outdoor pool and the excellent views of the Quantocks are all added bonuses.

I took over as Headteacher at Brymore in 2024, following a period of financial investment that created excellent facilities. Within the Brymore leadership team I am supported by Jayne Taylor Lane who is the Deputy Headteacher, in charge of teaching and learning/curriculum. Rob Watts joined the school in April 2012 and is Head of Boarding, with Kim Hartley as Assistant Head teacher and SENDCO. The Pastoral support for all students is overseen by Chloe Doble as Senior Assistant Head / DSL, and newly appointed Assistant Headteachers Oliver Walby and Peter Cammish. Staff describe the 'buzz' of Brymore, the sense that we are moving forward and building our own future. In the last nine years the school has moved from the 96<sup>th</sup> percentile for pupil progress to the top 15% of schools nationally. English consistently has the best progress in Somerset and has regularly been in the top 5% of schools nationally, with Maths also having been in the top 5%. Results in Land based, Technology, Science and Engineering and have also been consistently outstanding.

In September 2014, the academy admitted Year 7 boys for the first time, reaching our capacity in September 2015. In fact, we are now heavily oversubscribed, with three applicants for every place. This is a unique opportunity to join a successful team of staff with a proven track record of school improvement. I am looking for people with drive and determination, who demand high standards from themselves and others and who share my vision that there is no ceiling to the success that the boys at Brymore can achieve.

We are looking for a passionate, well organised, practical and understanding individual to join the Academy as Deputy Head of Boarding. The post consists of supporting the Head of Boarding in leading, developing and monitoring all aspects of the boarding provision, whilst supporting and managing boarding staff within the houses on a day to day basis. A key part of the role will be to act as the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead working alongside the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Senior Assistant Headteacher), ensuring that all aspects of safeguarding provision and information is shared effectively and appropriately with boarding staff, with pupil safety and welfare remaining as the top priority and consideration. The post will combine both leading and supporting boarding staff with hands-on day-to-day management of boarding houses and pastoral support.

You will need to be prepared to give up your time in and out of school if required, to focus on student welfare and wellbeing. You will be expected to take a lead alongside other boarding staff in ensuring all boys are in the best possible position to succeed and prosper throughout their time at Brymore. You should also have the potential to be an outstanding practitioner who consistently adds value to the students you care for, with a pupil centred approach.

It is a chance to have a significant impact and a strong voice in driving a successful future at Brymore.

A full job description is enclosed with the pack. If you wish to apply for this exciting post then please complete the application form, accompanied by a letter of application. The closing date for applications is midnight on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025 and interviews are anticipated to take place on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025

Should you wish to visit the school at any time then please contact Mrs Julie Vearncombe on [office@brymoreacademy.co.uk](mailto:office@brymoreacademy.co.uk) who can arrange a visit. Should you wish to discuss this post further, you can contact Rob Watts (Head of Boarding) on 07912180117 or [Robert.watts@brymoreacademy.co.uk](mailto:Robert.watts@brymoreacademy.co.uk)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stefan McHale', written in a cursive style.

**Stefan McHale**  
**Headteacher**

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Deputy Head of Boarding

Grade: Band 08

Allowances: N/A

Reference: 0089

The success of the Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust will be underpinned by two fundamental beliefs:

**Students come first:** First and foremost, the purpose of the Trust is to enable students to achieve their potential, and it is this principle that drives how we make decisions and how we act. It is expected that anyone who joins or forms part of the Trust shares this philosophy.

**We are team players:** Whilst every colleague has a specific role to fulfil, we expect all staff to communicate with compassion, treat others with positive regard, collaborate and behave with professionalism. In our colleagues we seek energy, passion, initiative and cooperation, as well as acting in a way that promotes a positive image of the Trust in the wider community.

### **Our values**

We are ambitious, collaborative and inclusive.

We believe that every role contributes to our students achieving. We are a values driven organisation and strongly feel a shared sense of purpose. We behave in a way that puts our students at the forefront of our actions and decisions making, we champion equality of opportunity and respect our colleagues, our students and our community. We believe passionately that all individuals are entitled to learn and should be encouraged to do so.



### **Core Purpose**

To provide day to day management and leadership of a team of boarding staff and support the Head of Boarding in all aspects of running of the boarding function.

### **Main Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of this role could vary as a result of new legislation, changes in technology or policy changes. This job description is not an exhaustive list of tasks of the role.

#### **Safeguarding**

- To take the leading role in all aspects of safeguarding and student welfare within boarding acting as the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) supporting the Designated Safeguarding Lead in ensuring all aspects of the boarding safeguarding provision and practices are folioed and monitored correctly and consistently.
- To provide regular updates and guidance to boarding staff on all aspects of safeguarding and student welfare, in line with national guidance and school policies and practices.
- To update and maintain regular communications with boarding staff regarding updates and changes in safeguarding information for pupils, ensuring the correct support is in place and recorded and monitored as per school procedures and practices.
- To be aware of the implications of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools and Keeping Children safe in Education for welfare and pastoral care at Brymore. Be alert to changes in statutory legislation relating to Safeguarding and to be familiar with local and national policies and Guidance.
- Ensure that the Boarding Pastoral Manager is updated and provided with relevant information to allow appropriate support and interventions are in place for identified individuals dependent upon their specific needs and circumstances.

#### **General Duties**

- To support the critical review and assessment of all elements of boarding practice within a cycle of continuous improvement to ensure that our boarding offer reflects sector best practice and at least meets but often exceeds National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools.
- To line manage a team of Houseparents, ensuring that all staff are performing their roles effectively, pro-actively engage with their own professional development and experience positive wellbeing at work.
- To ensure that all members of the boarding staff are familiar with Brymore's policies and are aware of the appropriate response and procedures needed in those areas. To support the Head of Boarding in staff training and professional development.
- To ensure that boarding staff, parents and pupils understand the aims and objectives of boarding at Brymore and these are put into practice on a day to day basis.
- To act as a point of liaison between boarding and day staff in relation to any problems, concerns or issues arising.

- To take responsibility for leading and managing the boarding provision in the absence of the Head of Boarding.
- To ensure that the individual circumstances, presenting needs, strengths, and weaknesses of each student are identified and known and supported by staff as needed, so that individual opportunities, talents and potential are developed and maximised. Meet fortnightly with boarding staff team to ensure continuity of communication and pastoral care.
- To be aware of the academic strengths and weaknesses of students; to liaise with teachers to ensure that relevant background circumstances of students are known and discussed; to ensure that the conditions and supervision in evening prep are conducive to effective academic progress.
- To be responsible for the care, welfare and support of all students within the boarding houses, maintaining regular contact with parents where necessary.
- To take an active role in ensuring that students have a full, stimulating and regular programme of activities
- To manage compliance processes for all regulatory requirements, legislation and policies relating to boarding.
- To provide cover for Houseparents and the Head of Boarding, sometimes overnight, in the event of their absence.

#### Other Duties

- To attend mandatory training courses, e.g., Child Protection, Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety related courses
- To promote and celebrate an approach of equality, diversity and inclusion for all colleagues, students and external stakeholders.
- Responsible for the health and safety of themselves and others
- Responsible for the safeguarding of and promotion of wellbeing for both children and colleagues
- To be a team player and contribute towards the vision, culture and ethos of the Trust
- From time to time you may be required to carry out other duties commensurate with the role.

#### Person Specification

Area to be assessed	Essential criteria	Desirable criteria
<b>Safeguarding</b>	Must be able to demonstrate a commitment to the safeguarding and well-being of children and young people.	
<b>Qualifications/Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working with children in a caring / boarding / teaching environment</li> <li>• Evidence of continuing professional development</li> <li>• Able to manage pupils fairly, consistently and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Aid Certificate</li> <li>• Mini bus certificate/ clean driving licence</li> <li>• Level 2 safeguarding training</li> <li>• Trained in restorative justice</li> <li>• BSA Boarding Qualification (or willingness to work towards this)</li> </ul>

	according to the school's expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of working with colleagues from other schools</li> <li>• Familiarity with and ability to use data and tracking information</li> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools &amp; an ability to ensure they are met</li> <li>• Experience of managing and leading staff</li> <li>• Clear knowledge and understanding of safeguarding</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge/Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to motivate, influence and inspire others</li> <li>• Able to engender a safe and caring boarding community</li> <li>• Able to work as part of a team</li> <li>• Excellent communication skills</li> <li>• Flexible approach</li> <li>• Ability to relate to students and adults at all levels</li> <li>• Approachable, sensitive with excellent interpersonal skills</li> <li>• Ability to set targets, meet deadlines and to work under pressure</li> <li>• Attentive to detail</li> <li>• Understands the need for confidentiality</li> <li>• Positive leadership qualities; an ability to lead by example and display a strong presence in the school</li> </ul>	

