



Dear Applicant

Thank you very much for your interest in Poole High School. I hope this information conveys a sense of the spirit of our thriving learning community. We look forward to receiving your application - confident that if successful, you will be part of a team in which subject-specialist development is at the heart of our core purpose and we are a genuinely enjoyable community to work within.

This vibrant 11-19 school has a roll of 1,900, serving families throughout the historic town of Poole. The school benefits from an extensive programme of new buildings and refurbishment and is set within a very attractive landscaped site at the centre of the town. We are proud of our comprehensive ethos and we are committed to ensuring that all excel.

We were inspected in 2016, and the HMI described Poole High School as a good school that is 'rapidly improving'. Since then, we have made significant progress at both GCSE and A Level once again, placing us on the 17<sup>th</sup> percentile nationally for KS4 progress. In the last six years we have seen an unparalleled pattern of improvement. More of our sixth form students have gone on to top university courses than ever before, unsurprising given our position in the first and second quintile for A level progress nationally.

We place immense value upon the quality of relationships at all levels in the school and our middle leaders play a highly significant role in sharing and sharpening best professional practice. This year we are using external support from some of the best in the country to further develop our thinking and practice. We take a real pride too in the fact that our staff are highly effective but we are highly mindful about workload and looking after our most precious resource!

Given our location, the school is a hub of activity for our community partners. Facilities such as our swimming pool, theatre and fitness suite are in use after hours and at weekends. We take a pride in maintaining these facilities to the highest of standards and provide staff free access to these. Many colleagues start their day with an early swim or workout. You will be reassured too to hear that an informal survey of staff found that they have found the school's response to workload "highly attentive". Staff also expressed the view that the reason that there are so few behaviour issues in school is because the immediacy of response by senior leaders to even low-level disruption means there is an embedded culture of responsiveness by students. This is further borne out by the fact that we are now heavily over-subscribed and a significant number of staff send their children to the school.

There are many hugely positive traits in the school, and I am confident about our future success. If you have a social conscience, great interpersonal skills, a strong work ethic and love creating new insights within your specialist subject, then I would very much like to hear from you. One of my favourite quotes from a student who joined us from another school: "The difference between Poole High School and my last one is that staff here smile and laugh". We are serious about standards, but there is humanity to our ethos, and this is very precious to us. In the past, families and staff have held the view that the shift in the school culture is rapid and significant. Today, that is the norm. We take enormous pride in the fact that newly appointed colleagues frequently comment that they receive more support in this school than in any other. When I say 'learning is sacrosanct' we mean it. Just ask our students!

My personal principles for education are quite straightforward. I believe that everything that we do in school should be centred upon improving students' life chances for the future. Also, that our infectious enthusiasm in the classroom and genuine sense of care for every individual student, should be evident in great 'day to day' teaching.

I look forward to meeting you if you feel that this is the sort of school which matches your ambition and vocation for future generations.

Yours sincerely

Mr Paul Gray  
Headteacher