

Details of the school and post

What sort of a school is Birkdale?

Birkdale is an independent day school for boys aged from 4 to 18, with a coeducational sixth form, amounting altogether to 830 pupils. The School has a strong Christian ethos. Birkdale is located on three sites in south-west Sheffield, the 11-18 (Y7 to Y13) Senior School, the 4-11 (Reception to Y6) Prep School and the playing fields. Birkdale is the only HMC (Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference) school in South Yorkshire. The Head of the Prep School is a member of IAPS (the Independent Association of Preparatory Schools).

How has Birkdale developed over time?

Having been founded in 1904, Birkdale had by the 1950s become one of the largest boys' prep schools in the North of England. The age group was expanded to 4-16 in 1978, and the sixth form was launched in 1988. The original target figure of 180 sixth formers has now been attained, including about 50 girls. This rapid evolution of the school has been supported by an ambitious programme of physical development, including the acquisition both of the prep school site and of the playing fields, the addition of two large properties to the senior school site, the building of a sports hall, the construction of a £2m sports pavilion and most recently the completion of a £2.5 million building project at the Prep School.

Why teach in Sheffield?

Your image of Sheffield might be a grim, northern industrial city with poor air quality and no culture. If so, you could not be more wrong! Visitors to Sheffield frequently comment on its greenness: there are in fact more trees per person in Sheffield than in any other English city. Birkdale is to be found in an inner suburb close to the Universities, 1½ miles from the city centre and 4 miles from the Peak District National Park. Indoor and outdoor leisure facilities of all kinds - from theatres and restaurants to sailing and hill walking - could hardly be closer at hand, making the quality of life very good indeed.

Why teach in an independent school?

There are undoubtedly particular advantages enjoyed by independent schools and their staff. A recent survey of newly qualified teachers revealed five main attractive features of teaching in an independent school. The survey found these factors to be the more disciplined environment, the opportunity to express their passion for their subjects, good resources, smaller class sizes and greater professional freedom. In common with most independent schools, Birkdale offers a fully accredited statutory NQT induction programme.

What are Birkdale's academic standards?

The expectation is that nearly all pupils, having entered the school at various ages, will progress through to A level. The GCSE pass (A*-C) rate is consistently around 99%, with the proportion of A* or A grades around 60%. Most pupils take four AS levels in the lower sixth and three A levels in the upper sixth, in addition to General Studies. Twenty-nine A level subjects are offered. The A level pass rate has been 99% in recent years, with around 70% or more entries resulting in A or B grades. Setting is extensively employed at both Prep and Senior Schools.

What happens outside the classroom?

The school's academic emphasis, although important, is not exclusive. The extracurricular activities programme caters for most interests; sports, Modern Language, drama and outdoor pursuits flourish. All members of the teaching staff are expected to contribute to the wider life of the school beyond their academic commitment.

Does Birkdale offer the opportunity for teachers to develop professionally?

Most departments are now housed in newly converted or extended facilities. Budgets for departmental resources are generous. The school libraries are recent conversions, well stocked and well used by pupils. A coherently constructed appraisal scheme exists partly to enable teachers to think about and develop their careers. As teachers develop, so does the school. Hence there is a generous annual budget for staff training and development.

What makes Birkdale special?

The Christian ethos of the school manifests itself in the particularly friendly and supportive atmosphere. A good proportion of the staff are committed Christians, although as a community Birkdale is open to all, whatever they believe. We are therefore strongly committed to the care of our pupils and of our staff.



Appointment of Full Time Head of Modern Languages From September 2017

Birkdale Prep School is a thriving independent day school for boys aged 4 to 11. There are currently around 250 boys on the roll. The school offers excellent teaching, traditional values and exceptional pastoral care. There is a strong academic legacy with an individual focus on strengthening each boy's confidence and abilities. The school aims to ensure that each boy is happy, academically challenged and taking full advantage of life at Birkdale with its many possibilities and opportunities.

The Prep School has its own site on Clarke Drive, Broomhill but also shares some facilities with Birkdale Senior School. The Senior School (Y7 to Y13) is boys only to 16 and has a coeducational sixth form. The vast majority of boys from the Prep School progress to the Senior School by means of an entrance exam taken during Year 6.

Birkdale Prep School recognises that its teachers are its most valuable asset and seeks to recruit and retain well-qualified and enthusiastic staff, who can communicate their knowledge and passion for learning to the boys. Our teachers' primary aim is to develop the boys' intellectual curiosity, interest and enjoyment in an atmosphere of respect and discipline. The aspirations of boys and parents are high and we are constantly striving to maintain and further improve our standards.

In addition to the academic curriculum, music, drama, sport, art design and technology play an important part in the life of the school. These vital parts of our school life are only maintained by dedicated teachers committing themselves to providing as many opportunities as possible for the boys. Therefore, it will be expected that teachers are willing to contribute to duties and activities within the wider school community.

The vacancy

This vacancy arises through the promotion of the present Head of Modern Languages. We require an ambitious, dynamic, forward thinking, energetic educational practitioner who is looking for an exciting new teaching opportunity that will be professionally invigorating, challenging and rewarding. We are looking for a well-qualified, highly motivated language teacher who would like to join us as our new Head of Modern Languages, with additional teaching responsibilities.

The successful applicant will be expected to teach French and Spanish from 4-11.

The Head of Modern Languages leads and manages all aspects of the language programme across the school. He/she will be responsible for the day to day language teaching at the school – at present all the boys from reception to Year 6 learn at least one modern foreign language. The successful applicant must be able to demonstrate clear evidence of being able to promote and develop language teaching across the 4 to 11 age range.

An important part of the role will be to work in partnership with the Head of Modern Languages at Birkdale Senior School. It is very likely that a small amount of language teaching will be available at the Senior School.

Person Specification for the Head of Modern Languages

Birkdale is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

We are looking for a Head of Modern Languages who is:

- A fully qualified teacher and eligible to work in the UK
- An inspirational teacher of French and Spanish
- Passionate about working with boys, staff and parents
- Committed to excellent provision for all boys
- A great communicator, verbally and on paper
- Organised, efficient, trustworthy and discreet
- A good team player who is interested in developing others
- Up to date on the latest educational developments
- Able to lead and support in equal measure
- In sympathy with the Christian ethos of the school
- Able to work well under pressure
- Good with detail, and also the wider strategic vision
- Experienced and efficient when managing systems, processes and deadlines
- Ready for a teaching and leadership role of this nature and the challenges and opportunities this provides
- Willing to actively support residential trips
- Comfortable with language technology

Our Head of Modern Languages will have:

- An enhanced disclosure via the DBS process
- High levels of energy, a positive spirit and lots of enthusiasm
- A secure understanding of the National Curriculum
- A warm and encouraging personality
- A love of learning and will be ambitious for themselves and for others
- Patience, energy, commitment and loyalty
- A sense of humour

In return, we offer:

- A superb, caring, school environment in which to work
- A recently refurbished Modern Languages room
- Links to Birkdale Senior School language assistants
- Pupils that are keen to learn and make the very best progress
- Dedicated and supportive staff, parents and governors
- Remuneration commensurate with the qualifications and experience of the successful applicant

For further details of the role please also see the job description for Head of Modern Languages.

General

This is an exciting opportunity for an enthusiastic, forward-thinking professional to join the existing Birkdale Prep School team. We want you to not only be able to teach to a very high standard but also to be innovative and creative in your approach, adapting your teaching style to 'how boys learn best' and be committed to the Birkdale whole school ethos.

Other Information and Application Procedure

Salary is on the Birkdale salary scale. A generous remission of fees scheme is available for children of staff. The school is a member of the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

Applicants should provide **all** of the following:

1. A handwritten letter of application (no more than 3 sides of A4)
2. A completed summary application form (enclosed)
3. A full curriculum vitae
4. The names, addresses, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers of two referees

Please note closing date for applications – Tuesday 21 March 2017 by 12 noon
Interview date – Tuesday 28 March 2017

Current legislation applying to this post includes the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 and the Asylum & Immigration Act 1996. Therefore, shortlisted candidates will be required to prove their eligibility to work in the UK and the chosen candidate will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS clearance. Details of the documentation needed in connection with these requirements will be sent to shortlisted candidates when they are invited to interview. Prior to appointment, we would then request a declaration about medical fitness.

Applications should be sent to the Head of the Prep School, Birkdale Prep School, Clarke Drive, Sheffield S10 2NS by *the closing date of Tuesday 21 March by 12 noon*.
(*We remind you that postage is now partly based on the size of an envelope. Insufficient postage is likely to delay delivery to us, and you might therefore miss the deadline.*)

How did you hear of the vacancy? Website / *Newspaper Ad / Word of Mouth/other:
* Please specify which site/publication



Post: Head of Modern Languages

Surname: _____ **Title:** (Dr/Mr/Ms etc) _____

Forenames(s): _____

Address : _____

_____ **Post Code:** _____

Tel Nos: _____

e-mail: _____

Present Post: _____

EDUCATION

	Dates	School/College	Qualifications/Results
School(s)			
Further Education			
Further Qualifications			

EMPLOYMENT

Dates	Employer	Appointment