

# The British Overseas School, Karachi

**Programme:** Secondary School Assistant Teachers

**Joining Date:** As soon as possible



## A. The Opportunity

The British Overseas School is seeking young graduates to join our team of highly experienced and successful secondary school teachers.

This is a new and unique opportunity for young people with a passion for education to join our prestigious institution to learn about, develop and experience the high-quality, contemporary teaching skills inculcated at the BOS.

Applicants will be enthusiastic about entering the teaching profession as a subject teacher at secondary school level. With this in mind, they must have an appropriate undergraduate degree in that subject, a passion for that subject and a strong desire to help students share their understanding and enjoyment of the subject.

Previous experience of teaching would be helpful, but is not a prerequisite; a willingness to learn is.

Successful applicants will join the BOS as Assistant or Trainee teachers on one-year, full-time, contracts. During that time they will be mentored by one of our experienced and highly successful teachers. They will work in classroom settings with the teacher, and independently, to experience on-the-job training and to develop their proficiency as a secondary subject teacher.

Potential applicants should note that the BOS espouses an educational experience that is a combination of contemporary teaching and traditional values. This means that successful applicants will be learning about and immersed in contemporary British educational methods – the approaches to teaching used in the elite BSO schools around the world. They will also be required to work within, and be committed to, the broader school curriculum that encompasses community service, drama, sport, art, expeditions and overseas travel.

By the end of the academic year, those who have an aptitude for teaching, work hard at their skills and have shown the right character traits will ‘pass out’ from the BOS with:

- a Certificate of Achievement,
- a portfolio of their achievements
- a letter of employment & recommendation

Especially strong performances may lead to contract extension to join the BOS team.

## **B. The British Overseas School**

The British Overseas School (BOS) is a highly successful, not-for-profit, co-educational school in Karachi, Pakistan. We pride ourselves on the community feel of the school, the high academic attainment of our students and our strong emphasis on personal development.

Founded in 1958, the BOS is a single-form entry school with classes from Pre-Nursery through to I/GCSE. The majority of our 330 students are of Pakistani origin, although families join us from all over the world in the world. Generally they are accustomed to high quality international or British education. These are the standards that we seek to offer and to maintain.

British education is embedded in Pakistan, with approximately 750 schools claiming to be “British” in some manner or other. The BOS stands out from the crowd by offering a contemporary British style of education. We use the National Curriculum of England as our framework, we employ contemporary teaching and assessment techniques and we measure our standards and achievements against British *independent* schools and the best international schools.

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*In May 2018 the BOS became the first school in Pakistan to achieve **British Schools Overseas (BSO)** status. The accreditation report described the school as “Good with Outstanding Features”. Two of those “outstanding features” were the school leadership and the primary division*

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### **1. Academic Standards**

High academic standards are very important to us and to the families who trust us with their children’s education. Therefore, we have high expectations of our staff, students and parents; we work in partnership to ensure that all of our students flourish. Academic achievement is an important part of this.

In the Secondary School students are assessed using the MidYIS system in years 7 and 8. This allows us to set a baseline for achievement.

Ultimately, students are prepared for Edexcel I/GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11. Generally, students sit 9 – 11 subjects in their final year. The results for the last two years are shown below:

2017-18				2018-19			
Grades	Number	%	Cumulative	Grades*	Number	%	Cumulative
A*	107	55%	55%	9	44	25%	25%
A	38	20%	74%	8	65	37%	63%
B	30	15%	90%	7	36	21%	83%
C	16	8%	98%	6	19	11%	94%
D	4	2%	100%	5	6	3%	98%
E	0	0%	100%	4	2	1%	99%
				3	2	1%	100%
Total	240	100%			174	100%	

\* From 2018-19 IGCSE grades were given as numbers rather than letters. For comparison, grades 9 and 8 are equivalent to A\*. Grade 7 is equivalent to A.

The combination of MidYIS and IGCSE examination results allows us to identify value-added. In recent years the average value-added has been in excess of 1 grade.

## 2. Personal Development

For many years the BOS has had a great reputation for helping children grow into well-mannered and confident young people. We do this not only in the classroom, but on the sports field and the stage; around the school and on trips. Everything we do should be a learning and growing experience for our children and students.

After-school activities at the BOS are enriching and challenging; but, in a city such as Karachi, they are also a central part of family life. Our sports and football nights, our productions and concerts, our parties and film shows are all highlights of the school year for children and their parents. They contribute a great deal to the family feel and the community spirit within the school.

An important part of our school improvement plan is to enhance the opportunities available to all of our children and students by making the BOS a more “out-going school”. By this we mean looking beyond our own boundaries to engage more fully with other schools in the city, in the region and globally.

For secondary students this means community service projects, in-city and international competitions and all of the opportunities that membership of Round Square offers. In addition, two years ago, we have introduced the International Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and our first batch of Year 10 students have completed their bronze award.

Initiatives have begun to take place in the Primary School, and we intend to extend these opportunities to give our younger students more exposure and stimulation through interaction with other children in the city and beyond.

### **3. Curriculum & Structure**

The BOS Primary School uses the National Curriculum of England as its framework for delivery. However, we make adjustments according to our own priorities and the local context. For example, Urdu is a compulsory element of the curriculum from Nursery through to the end of KS3 – the vast majority of students take the IGCSE.

In fact, alongside Urdu, students also study French from KS1 and in January, and KS2 in April, 2018 we were able to add Mandarin. Mandarin became a compulsory addition to the secondary curriculum (Year 6) in 2019-20. Given Pakistan's ties with China, a Chinese language component to the curriculum has been a long-standing ambition.

In the primary school the humanities and creative elements of the curriculum are addressed via the International Primary Curriculum (IPC). This cross-curricular learning programme suits our desire for active and integrated learning.

The curriculum *is vertically integrated* in the sense that it allows continuous study and progress from the EYFS stage through to the IGCSE years. This is largely due to the fact that we use the NC as the framework for our curriculum.

The EYFS years makes an excellent provision for children's development of personal and social skills. Assessments are made and evidence recorded to form a Learning Journal for each child as well as informing reporting on student progress relative to NC objectives.

Therefore students move to more formalised education supported by a wealth of evidence on their progress. Shortly after children move into the Reception class they are assessed using the Durham University CEM Base assessments.

A similar process is followed at the end of each year and key stage. It is very rare for a student to be held back a year for any reason, and when they progress a very thorough handover is undertaken to ensure continuity in the next step.

Four years ago the transition to the secondary school was especially problematic for Year 6 students. The 'step' was a struggle, which interrupted progress. As a result the decision was made to transform the structure of KS2. We moved from class teachers to subject teachers. This allowed continuity within subject areas, as well as accountability. It also required students to

move between rooms, as in secondary (albeit along a short corridor). In addition, we moved Year 6 into the secondary school, on a “Secondary Lite” timetable (8 subjects rather than 15).

The results of these changes have been excellent, for Years 3-5 and for Year 6, with levels of attainment rising substantially.

In the secondary school, KS3 students follow a broad, compulsory curriculum:

English Language	Physics	Geography
English Literature	ICT	Urdu
Mathematics	French	Art
Biology	History	PE
Chemistry	Religious Studies	PSHE

In Year 8 the mathematics class is split into sets, with a view to the high-achieving students taking an additional IGCSE in Further Pure Mathematics in Year 11.

#### **4. Teaching at the BOS**

The teaching staff is made up of a mix of expatriate and local teachers. In the Primary School all class teachers are UK qualified (or the equivalent). In each class they work in teams of Assistant and Support Teachers. The former are anchored to a subject and a Key Stage, for example Key Stage Literacy or Key Stage Numeracy. The Assistants move with their subject and are intended to give extra expertise in specific areas. The latter are anchored to a class, move with their class and give more general support to the children.

The use of teaching teams in this way means that the adult to student ratio in most Primary School classes is 1:5, which is excellent when compared to most international schools.

Currently, in the secondary school subject teachers take classes alone. However, our move to a system similar to that used in the primary school will allow our secondary assistant and trainees to be part of a ‘subject team’ designed to bring the best from each other as well as from the students.

Children with learning difficulties, of which there are very few at the BOS, receive further support through our SEN Manager.

For all of our staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a priority. This is provided at many levels: in-class mentoring, in-house training, international CPD courses (usually in the Gulf States) and, ultimately, NPQ leadership qualifications for middle and senior leaders.

At all levels, we expect teaching to strike a balance between creativity and tradition. But we always expect engagement, high expectations and respect.

## **5. The BOS Parent Community**

As in any school, our parents are a very important part of our community and are expected to be partners in every aspect of the education of their children.

With this in mind, the primary school runs regular workshops to facilitate more effective parent understanding and contribution. These are very important because the educational experience of our parent body has, in many cases, been significantly different to the BOS. Changes to the style of mathematics teaching stand out as an example of a steep learning curve for many parents.

Parents also contribute a great deal to the school in terms of their time. Last year over 100 parents volunteered to help the school across a variety of events. This includes volunteers for class activities as well as PTA sponsored events. The PTA at the BOS is especially strong and active, making a wider range of events possible.

## **6. Governance of the BOS**

The BOS is a not-for-profit organization. Our Patron-in-Chief is the British High Commissioner. Currently the school is governed by a Trust and Board of Governors. The Board of Governors includes the British Deputy High Commissioner, the Director of the British Council as ex officio members, as well as elected parent governors and prominent members of the wider community.

## **C. The Role & the Person**

### **1. Distributed Leadership**

In a small school, such as the BOS, the dispersal of leadership is not only desirable, but also essential. We at the BOS believe that our school “punches above its weight” in terms of achievements in all areas; that is only possible because the whole staff pulls together and works as a team and individuals not only take responsibility, but welcome it and the challenges that accompany it.

### **2. Educational Philosophy**

At the BOS we believe in high standards in all things. Perhaps, in some respects, we believe that the old ways are the best. But at the core of what we do must be a determination to provide the best possible education for our children and students – an education that works. An education

that brings academic achievement certainly, but an education that brings personal growth through a range of qualities including: confidence, resilience, creativity and independence.

Our teachers are always exploring and reflecting on approaches and methods that can improve school life for our children. Some may be fashionable, others less so, but the litmus test for us is “does it work?” If we cannot exhibit critical thinking ourselves, how can we expect it of our children?

We believe we have a school, that works well, which provides very good growth both academically and personally. Therefore, we are not seeking a revolution or radical change when we appoint new staff members. We are seeking teachers who share our vision and who can help to take us closer to the realization of that vision. A teacher who can travel our journey with us, rather than turn us around to start anew.

### **3. Leading People**

It is a simple, but fundamental tenet of life at the BOS that people make the difference – especially in education and all of us are leaders in some respect.

A curriculum is simply a document; technology is simply a box of electronics. What matters most to children and students are the people with whom they work: the people who interpret the curriculum; the people who make the most of the technology. Beyond these basic requirements of good teachers, we are looking for individuals who have strong emotional intelligence. We are looking for people who genuinely care, people who listen, people who reflect, and people who inspire.

We expect all teachers to model all of these characteristics as well as having qualities such as sound judgement, an analytical command of data, good communication skills and a sense of humour.

## **D. Applications**

Applicants to the BOS Secondary Assistant and Trainee Programme must:

- Have a strong educational background, including a completed undergraduate degree in your preferred teaching subject, which must be one of the following:

Biology	English Literature	Physics
Chemistry	French	Religious Studies
Computer Science	Geography	Urdu
Economics	History	
English Language	Mathematics	

- Be proficient in English (English language will be tested both orally and in writing)
- Be based in Karachi and available full-time (7.30am to 4pm) for the duration of the programme

If, having read this introduction, you believe that you have what it takes to join the BOS Secondary Assistant and Trainee Programme, please send us your application, which should consist of the following:

- A letter of application addressing why you are interested and why you believe you have what it takes
- A statement of philosophy that explains your view of teaching
- A curriculum vitae outlining your education/career/achievements and interests to date
- A passport sized photograph
- The names and details (including email addresses) of three referees who would be willing to support your application

These documents should be emailed as a single PDF document to [jobs@bos-karachi.org](mailto:jobs@bos-karachi.org)