

# School Direct

## Barr's Hill School and Community College

### Key Features:

Barr's Hill is committed to building a community where learning and enquiry is the cornerstone of all we do. The promotion of learning as a lifelong and sometimes life defining experience is paramount. We strive for high **quality** provision and delivery within a framework where all are valued and where a culture of achievement is central. Students, parents and staff all have high expectations of continued, ongoing improvement leading to **success** in life. This is underpinned by the highest level of respect, understanding and tolerance for the rich **diversity** within our school community

In October 2012, Ofsted described Barr's Hill as a "good" school, building on the success of the previous Ofsted in 2010. Ofsted praised the achievements of our students and some outstanding teaching. At present there are over 750 students on roll including some consortium students in Years 12 and 13. Barr's Hill is proud of its cultural diversity; students from the minority ethnic communities account for approximately 45% of the school population with a wide range of backgrounds represented. EAL is supported from within our Student Support Faculty which includes special needs and we adopt an "all inclusive" approach believing that it is important that every child has every opportunity to be successful in their studies. Our students follow a range of pathways which enables us to tailor our provision to the need of each child.

### Staff Training at Barr's Hill

Barr's Hill offers professional support for all trainees that is personalised to their needs. All staff are involved in cross curricular learning and teaching groups and have access to a well mapped CPD programme.

As a trainee you can expect:

- A supportive training environment in departments with specialist staff
- Classroom experience that develops your skills
- Weekly mentor meetings
- Well planned professional training
- Opportunities to take part in wider school activities and events

A whole school professional mentor will also ensure you have the maximum support possible.

Should you require any further information, want to come in for a visit, or just want to ask a question, please contact:

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## **Subjects offered at Barr's Hill:**

### **English:**

The English team at Barr's Hill consists of a Head of department, second in department and seven additional members of staff, with a wide array of experiences and expertise. This is one of the strongest departments in the school with a team who deliver some outstanding practice.

We teach an array of texts at KS3 and are passionate advocates of reading for pleasure. The KS3 curriculum is exciting and adapted to enable students to prepare well for Key Stage 4 with students able to access a wide variety of texts and different themes. At both Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils experience differentiated learning pathways dependent upon their ability in English. The more able are challenged to achieve the highest levels of attainment and progress that they can through our "Accelerate" pathway; there is a fast track pathway to enable EAL pupils to make rapid progress; whilst the use of a phonics based, Ruth Miskin programme helps to develop pupils who struggle with basic literacy skills.

At Key Stage 4 pupils either complete their GCSEs in English Language and Literature through the Edexcel pathway or the Cambridge iGCSE pathway, based on our 'what is best for each individual pupil' approach. At Key Stage 5 pupils who continue to study English Language and Literature at A-Level do so through the AQA exam board and study "English Language and Literature".

In all key stages reading, writing and speaking and listening are of great importance and regular assessment opportunities for all pupils are established through regularly reviewed and updated schemes of work.

### **Mathematics:**

At Barr's Hill School, there is something for everyone in maths and pupils have the options of studying Functional Skills and Statistics. In addition, a wide range of options are available at A-level, including AS Further Maths (Edexcel). There is a progression of concepts and each step forward is built on consolidating previous knowledge and skills taught. There is no 'ceiling' to the level of work a pupil can access at any stage of the process.

The department is an innovative, well qualified department, made up of seven full time members of staff, and prides itself in providing the best care possible for our students. The school has excellent ICT facilities and all classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards.

We believe that all students can learn mathematics and we are currently exploring barriers to learning mathematics that contributes to student actively engaged within the subject. The department is working this year towards developing a more functional approach to mathematics.

#### **Key Stage 3**

Years 7, 8 and 9 pupils are put into groups according to their ability. All pupils follow a rich curriculum widely based around engaging, discovery activities ensuring they become positive, active learners and understand that maths is about concepts and is not restricted to following a set of rules.

In Key Stage 3 the units of work are taught in Level Bands from the MyMaths scheme of work which are taught and reviewed continually and assessed by Progress Tests each half-term. Each pupil is kept informed of their progress up through the levels and sets are reviewed at the end of each year.

In Key Stage 4

Years 10 and 11 pupils are also grouped according to ability. Year 10 & 11 pupils follow the new AQA Curriculum (Foundation Grades 1-5, Higher Grades 5 - 9) and pupils take exams at the end of the course in June.

### **Science (Biology):**

Science is taught by 5 full time and 2 part time members of staff. These include a Head of Faculty (science and DT) and a Head of Science. The department aims to deliver Science to all key stages through an enthusiastic and largely practical based approach. At KS3 we follow the 'Exploring Science' series which closely ties in to the QCA schemes of work. Pupils at KS3 have three, one hour lessons per week. The year 7 pupils are taught in mixed ability groups from September through to November where, following their first formal assessment, they are set. This gives one top set and three parallel sets of mixed ability. This continues through year 8 until year 9 where pupils are streamed in sets 1-5 based on ability in School based assessments.

At Key Stage 4 the department follows Edexcel Core GCSE Science, Additional Science and separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. Pupils study for 2 hours per week for each Science GCSE that they study.

At Key Stage 5 we offer A levels in Biology, Chemistry and Physics as well as running the more vocational qualification of Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma in Applied Science (this is not an examined course and is awarded based on a portfolio of completed assignments).

### **Specific Information**

Both School Direct places at Barr's Hill are suitable for enthusiastic graduates who want to make a difference (either those who have already graduated, or are about to graduate from a British university or College of Higher Education with an honours degree, normally a 2:1 or higher). We would expect that a significant proportion of a candidate's degree is in their chosen subject. Applicants should hold at least Grade C in GCSE English Language and Mathematics. We also expect candidates to have had some experience of mainstream UK schools as appropriate and relevant so that they become familiar with the atmosphere and demands of a diverse, challenging, vibrant inner city secondary school.