



RADLEY

Teacher of Biology
The department

Radley College, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 2HR
01235 543000

www.radley.org.uk/employment/working-at-radley

The department

The successful candidate will teach Biology to small sets of motivated, capable students. The department comprises five full-time and two part-time teachers, and we are lucky enough to be supported by three well-qualified technicians. The department is housed in Queen's Court, a beautiful, spacious and well-appointed building overlooking the Avenue. Each full-time teacher has one of six large teaching laboratories and the department also has a Sixth Form study room, centrally-located prep room, staff office and two large foyer areas which provide extensive space for displays and private study. The school's Countryside Centre is located on the school campus and woodland, Capability-Brown lake and other habitats are to be found on the school estate. A project to "rewild" certain areas is also in the offing.

Each laboratory is equipped with a visualiser, microscope camera, data projector, computer and DVD players. The department is very well resourced with microscopes, specimens, models, and ICT equipment. Investments in practical facilities afford extra opportunities for biotechnology at A-level, including PCR, electrophoresis and genetic modification of bacteria. Students have access to libraries of teaching resources both within the department and the central College library. Our most recent Monitor's Report on the Practical Endorsement described us as "an incredibly passionate and knowledgeable team of teachers it is clear that they provide an incredibly rich and rewarding experience for the students".

Biology is taught by specialists in the lower school in preparation for AQA GCSE, taken by all boys at the end of the Vth form (Year 11). Higher sets tend to perform at grade 9/8 level, and the overall science score for the lower sets is high also (grade 7 on average). Boys are streamed in seven or eight sets (maximum 22) from their arrival in the school, and work for the higher sets is extended appropriately with separate sciences, ensuring candidates make a seamless transition to A level. The health aspects of PSHE are included in the Biology scheme of work throughout the lower school.

The Sixth Form course prepares boys for taking OCR Biology at the end of 6.2 (Year 13). In recent years we have benefitted from an increased teaching allocation and the extra time available enables us to make full use of our excellent practical facilities, maximising student interest in and enjoyment of the subject. There are currently just under 60 boys studying biology in the sixth form, with 80% of them gaining A*-B grades (27% A*) over recent years. Several boys go on to read biological or clinical subjects at the top universities, including Oxford, Cambridge, London and Bristol.

The department

The Radley Biology staff share a great love of the subject which we seek to pass on to the boys by combining modern teaching techniques with academic rigor. Our charismatic and organised approach enables us to make the subject interesting, relevant and fun. An already extensive but expanding collection of living organisms is used not only for teaching the curriculum but also for the Animals Society, open to all students, which is flourishing with up to 10 meetings being run weekly to satisfy demand. One member of the department shares responsibility with a member of the Physics team for the supervision of potential Medical and Veterinary Science students, and all members of the department provide support to boys applying to read Biology and other related sciences at Oxbridge and other universities. Boys in the Biology Society arrange an exciting programme of external speakers, prepare for the British Biology Olympiad annually, and organise occasional meetings of our dissection society, affectionately called DeadSoc.

Radley places great emphasis on making use of facilities outside the College and all members of the department are encouraged to take boys on trips to the University Museums, Botanic Gardens and Arboretum in Oxford, Marwell Zoo, Slimbridge Wetland Centre and numerous other locations as opportunities arise. The Sixth Form students all attend a compulsory field course at Dale Fort FSC Centre in Pembrokeshire, taught by residential staff with extensive local knowledge of the habitats being studied, and it is an expectation that all full-time Biology teachers attend also. We also take the opportunity to visit Skomer Island to see the seabird colonies. Additionally, the Head of Department leads wildly popular conservation research expeditions with Operation Wallacea on a biennial basis: the next one being planned for Honduras in July 2026 with 61 students and staff. This will involve assisting Oxford University and other scientists with biodiversity sampling in a tropical montane cloud rainforest with high levels of endemism for a week, followed by a week's scuba diving on the island of Utila on the Meso-American Barrier Reef.

