

Background Information

**for Applicants**

Thank you for your interest in BSix Sixth Form College



## College in Context

In 2012/13 the College's overall success rate has continued to rise, from 82% to 84%. In 2006 it was just 59% and there has been sustained year-on-year improvement since then. Such a trend has been accompanied by a transformation of the College's reputation in local communities and in the education sector. In March 2013 Ofsted undertook a full inspection of BSix, acknowledging the significant improvements made since their last visit in 2009 and concluding that its overall effectiveness is 'Good'.

These successes serve to highlight and isolate the remaining shortcomings in the College's performance. The most critical strategic challenge is to raise achievement rates, especially at advanced level, while sustaining the year-on-year improvement in retention. Within this general challenge, there are several detailed areas for improvement: pass rates and high grades (A\*-B) at AS and A2; inconsistent achievement of high grades (Merits/Distinctions\*) on applied courses; A\*-C grades in some GCSE subjects; value-added at advanced level; and the elimination of underperformance in a minority of A Level subjects.

BSix faces these challenges in a complex and rapidly-changing context. The College is located in the London Borough of Hackney, the second most deprived borough in the country and the fourth most diverse in London with over 100 languages being spoken. 40% of secondary school pupils are eligible for free school meals. The unemployment rate is 10.6% compared to a London average of 9% and a national average of 8%.



On the other hand, 59% of Hackney's employed residents are in managerial and professional occupations compared to a London average of 55% and a national average of just 44%. The most telling statistic of change, however, is that in 2006 32% of residents were educated to degree level whereas now the figure is 48%, at the London average but well above the national average of 34%.

This transformation, fuelled by an influx of young graduates, is most rapid and most visible in Clapton, the home area of BSix. In the last year alone, five refurbished bars, two new flower shops and eight new coffee bars have opened in the area.

This is of potential benefit to the College because its immediate environs, including 'murder mile' (as was) on the Lower Clapton Road, have been a deterrent for some young people and their parents. However, the College recruits from the whole of East London and recognises that shifts in (often transitory) local populations do not dictate a change in the character of the College.

BSix's character is unusual in the sixth form college sector. First, it is comprehensive, offering courses at all levels from entry to Level 4. 64% of students are on Level 3, 23% on Level 2 and 12% on entry/Level 1 courses. Second, the College is non-selective with one of the lowest GCSE points on entry in the sixth form college sector. Third, the breadth of the curriculum is unusual for a sixth form college including Hair & Beauty, Music Technology and ESOL as well as more traditional subjects.

After a serious reputational, educational and financial crisis in 2007-09 the College has stabilised at 1520-50 full-time students. The student cohort reflects the diversity of East London. The biggest groups are Black African (31%), White (19%) and African Caribbean (9%). The gender breakdown is 60% female and 40% male. 65% of students receive some form of financial support from the College.

The College has a clear strategy to navigate a highly competitive environment (for example; in 2002, when the College was set up, only two secondary schools in the borough had a sixth form whereas now all eleven have one). This strategy has two aims: (i) to raise achievement and standards and thus (ii) to enhance external relations and consolidate the College's reputation.

The sustained and determined pursuit of these aims has brought improved results; better student and staff recruitment; greater financial stability; and an award-winning reputation.



Teaching is organised in six departments:

Business and IT	Humanities
Creative Industries	Progression (entry/Level1)
Health	Science & Mathematics

Each department has a Head, a Senior Tutor responsible for student performance and a Teaching Fellow responsible for leading on the improvement of teaching and learning. Each department also has an Academic Progress Officer who assists teachers in the pursuit of work submission, attendance and parental liaison.



## A university for teachers

A 'university for teachers' is a nice line but we want to make this more than an attractive slogan. We want every teacher, manager and member of our services staff to feel that they are better at their jobs for having been at the College.

We run an extensive programme of staff development. This includes an MA in Teaching and Learning run by the Institute of Education. We offer a Coaching Certificate accredited by Middlesex University. Two highly experienced former inspectors run Ofsted training for all staff throughout the year.

There are several whole days of cross-college staff development. In addition, there are teachers' development sessions on Friday afternoons (4.00-5.00). More and more, we are drawing on our own resources and capacity. Teachers, managers and services staff are increasingly sharing their expertise and developing their colleagues. This is helping to nurture a genuine learning culture which will ensure that our improvement will continue.

All of these activities take place in a safe and secure environment. The College is clean and well-maintained. The facilities are very good. These include: a student-run Art Gallery, purpose-built theatre, hairdressing salons, state of the art laboratories, sports hall with multi-gym, art and design studios and media suites together with excellent music facilities.

Our catering is available from 8.30 a.m. It is of top quality and is overseen by award-winning restaurateur, Amar Ahluwalia. It won the Cost sector Catering University/College Award in 2011 ahead of St John's College Cambridge and the University of Chester.

## Checklist

Please ensure you have all the documents required

- Letter from the Principal
- Background information for applicants
- Application Form
- Job description and person specification
- Prospectus

If you are missing any of the above please contact the Human Resources Department on **020 8525 7150**

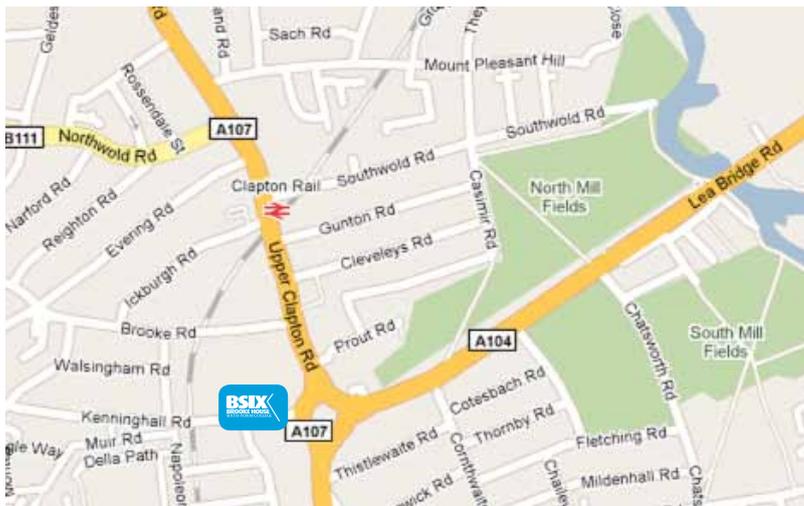
## Premises

The college operates from one site. The address is as follows:

### **BSix Brooke House Sixth Form College**

Kenninghall Road  
 Hackney  
 London  
 E5 8BP

Please see map below. We have also provided routes to the college:



### TRAVEL INFORMATION

Tube Station	Seven Sisters , Finsbury Park, Liverpool Street Station (Chingford train from Liverpool Street Station to Clapton Station)
Railway Station	Clapton Railway Station
Buses:	106,253, 254 (from Finsbury Park) 106,253,48,38, 55 (From Hackney Central)



## Equal Opportunities

Our policy is to ensure that no applicant, student or member of staff receives less favourable treatment on grounds of race, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or disability.

The College undertakes to implement this policy through agreed action programmes which will be monitored. It also undertakes to publicise this policy and all associated programmes within the college and to make them known to prospective students and staff.

## Equal Opportunities Monitoring

To ensure that the equal opportunities policy remains effective monitoring of applications is carried out. This monitoring slip is detached prior to shortlisting and is not seen by those involved in making shortlisting decisions. The content of the slip is treated in strictest confidence. The information that you provide will form part of a confidential statistical record which will not be used for any other purpose than the analysis of the college's equal opportunity policy.

## Criminal Record Bureau

In accordance with the College's legal obligations candidates whose applications are successful will be required to undergo a Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure.

Our organisation complies fully with the Criminal Records Bureau's Code of Practice, a copy of which is available on request. Having a criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining employment.

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The application form has several sections. It is important that all sections are completed and you sign and date the form.

### Some general points:

- Complete this form neatly and clearly. If you are hand writing the application form please use black ink as the application form will be copied several times for the shortlisting panel.
- Please do not send a CV. Completing the application form allows you to provide us with all the information we need and your supporting statement should refer to qualifications and experience relevant for this post. Give evidence of how you meet the person specification and briefly explain how you will carry out the role and contribute to the work of the College.

## Reference

Write the names of two people who are willing to write references for you and can provide current information about your suitability for the post you have applied for. If you are currently in work, one of your referees must be your present employer.



## Writing your Supporting Statement

This is the most important part of your application form as this is how you explain how your skills, experience and qualifications match the person specification for the job.

- Please read the job description and person specification carefully so you know what the job entails and the range of experience required.
- Give examples and evidence to show why you think you've got the right skills and abilities for the job. Fill this out by giving us the details of your experience and what you have achieved.
- Use positive statements about yourself.
- Please make sure that you say something to cover each point of the person specification. It might be useful to use the same numbering on the person specification as a guideline.
- When writing about your commitment to equal opportunities please give some concrete examples of your own experiences.
- Your Supporting Statement should be no longer than two sides of A4. A very long statement is not necessary. It may be an idea to start writing your statement in rough first and when you are happy with your statement write or type it up neatly.

### **Please return your completed application form to:**

The Human Resources Manager  
BSix Brooke House Sixth Form College  
Kenninghall Road  
Hackney  
London  
E5 8BP

## Procedure after your application is submitted

After the closing date, Human Resources ensure that all application forms (without the equal opportunities monitoring forms) are sent to the shortlisting panel. Shortlisting usually takes place within 2 weeks following the closing date. A panel of at least 2 people will select the shortlist for the interview. The shortlisting is based on the information given in the application form and supporting statement. Each applicant is assessed against the person specification for the post and those who clearly meet the criteria are selected for interviews. Candidates who have not been contacted within 3 weeks of the closing date should presume they have not been shortlisted on this occasion. BSix does not usually give feedback to candidates who have not been shortlisted but if you require feedback please request this in writing to the Human Resources Department.

Shortlisted candidates will be contacted and invited to attend an interview. They will be advised of any special arrangements such as tests or presentations for the interview day. Candidates will normally be advised of the result as soon as practicable after the interview.

References for shortlisted candidates may be requested prior to the interview being held, unless indicated to the contrary on the application form. All appointments are conditional upon satisfactory references, CRB clearance and medical report.

A contract of employment will be sent to the successful candidate as soon as practicable after the interview.



## Complaints

We endeavor to ensure that every stage in our recruitment process is fair and carried out in a professional manner. We hope you feel that you have been treated fairly, even if you are not successful in your application.

If you are unsuccessful and feel that feedback on your interview may be helpful, please contact the Human Resources Department who will be pleased to arrange for this to be given to you wherever possible.

If you have any other queries please contact the Human Resources Department on 020 8525 7150.

www.bsix.ac.uk  
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