

Candidate Information Pack



THE BRITISH SCHOOL
OF GUANGZHOU
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL



A Message from the Principal

Many thanks for your initial interest in working at The British School of Guangzhou. Over the last few years we have become the school of choice for expatriate families living in Guangzhou, helping us to become the largest international school in the region as we have developed an enviable reputation for delivering a vibrant high-quality academic education.



If you join our school, you should expect to teach students who demonstrate a love of learning, an impressive work ethic and a desire to be involved. Discipline is rarely an issue but ensuring our students are challenged most definitely is. Our community is diverse, coming from over 50 different countries. Most speak at least two languages and all bring with them a cultural understanding that adds a global dimension to every learning experience.

There is no doubt that we are a busy school, and at times this is an exhausting place to work. If you are a committed teacher with a desire to make a difference, then this is an incredible environment to work within. We expect a lot from our teachers and our support assistants, but we also encourage everyone to make the most of opportunities that arise from living in a dynamic city of over 13 million people.

The British School of Guangzhou is part of Nord Anglia Education's growing group of premium international schools. As a result, our teachers benefit from an impressive level of professional development and unparalleled opportunities for promotion around the world. Nord Anglia Education are determined to make a difference to the children who attend their schools, and The British School of Guangzhou will play a big part in helping them achieve this ambition. While Guangzhou may not be as immediately recognisable as Shanghai or Beijing, it is a modern fast paced international city and it is certainly true to say that our location on the border with Hong Kong is a real advantage. Having lived and worked in China for over 15 years, I can recommend Guangzhou as a great place to live. It is also a safe city, and those of you traveling with young children will be pleased to know that this is a very safe, child friendly city. Crime is very rare within China and at any time of the day or night the streets will feel much safer than most Western cities.

As you read the information that follows, please take some time to reflect on the reality of living and working in China. Despite everyone's best intentions, a few teachers occasionally allow themselves to become swept up in the momentum generated by the application process, only to find, once they arrive, that China (as opposed to the school) is not all they had expected. It is important to approach life in China with a flexible and positive attitude. Life here is generally what you make it. If you are successful, we look forward to providing you with further advice to help you make the most of your time in Guangzhou.

One more thing to note, is that it is fair to say that our salaries are very competitive and living in China is comparatively inexpensive. Many of our staff save in excess of 50% of their salary each month, despite travelling to exotic destinations throughout Asia and living a comfortable life. We want our staff to feel valued and well rewarded for their efforts. However, if your motivation in applying for a position is simply financial, then this is probably not the school for you. We are looking for teachers and leaders who will make the most of the opportunities we provide, who are motivated by a desire to make a difference to our students and contribute to the development of our school. Just as importantly, we are looking for teachers who understand the value of greeting children with a smile each day. If you feel that you are able to meet our needs, we look forward to receiving your application and discussing this in detail during interview.

Kind regards,

Our Story

Founded in 2005, The British School of Guangzhou has quickly become the school of choice for expatriate families living in Guangzhou. In 2013, we became part of the Nord Anglia Education family, a group of schools that collectively teaches over 60,000 students worldwide, all of whom are connected through the Global Campus network. We are accredited by CIS and undergo an annual Quality Assurance Process with Nord Anglia Education. We are active member of Nord Anglia's China regional group of international schools, which currently includes schools in Nanjing, Cheng Du and Hong Kong as well as two schools in Shanghai and two in Beijing. Students and staff are involved in a growing number of regional activities across a range of curriculum areas, We also collaborate closely with a number of Nord Anglia's bilingual schools, that are located in the South of China.

We are an exclusively international school, only able to enrol non-Chinese nationals. As a result, we offer an international education comparable to the very best in the world to a diverse student body who regularly secure places at top universities worldwide. The British School of Guangzhou's excellent academic achievements are the result of engaged students working in partnership with a dedicated and experienced teaching team, supported by an impressive level of professional development often built around Nord Anglia University. We want all teachers to develop professionally from their time with us, and have an excellent track record of our teachers moving to promoted posts in prestigious schools globally.

Our teachers work within an ideal learning environment and benefit from our commitment to small classes, our admissions policy and teaching assistants throughout Early Years and Primary. We have integrated CISCO Wi-Fi installed throughout the school, a VPN to allow the use of Google and Youtube, and are committed to providing students with the latest technology. In addition to standard classroom IT provision, students from Year 10 upwards benefit from a 1-to-1 Mac programme, while Years 4 to 9 are part of our 1-to-1 iPad initiative.

Our main campus, for students from PN-Y13, is located alongside the scenic Nanhu Lake, which is located thirty-minutes from Guangzhou city centre by car or approximately two hours from Hong Kong by train. We have an impressively green environment, due to the sub-tropical weather, and make the most of the opportunities it affords us. All classrooms are attractively furnished, air-conditioned and equipped with an interactive whiteboard. Our recent Council of International Schools accreditation visit, described us as, 'a very well-resourced school.' Our excellent indoor facilities include sports halls, specialist music and guided reading rooms, a recording studio, IT zones, dance studios, libraries, a theatre, EYFS play areas and coffee shops for staff, students and parents. Outdoor facilities include extensive play areas with dedicated areas for basketball, volleyball, tennis and a heated swimming pool, as well as two climbing walls, a covered Primary football pitch and a larger Secondary floodlit football pitch. We also boast impressive music facilities to support our collaboration with the Juilliard Performing Arts school of New York, and 5 science labs to support our Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) collaboration. As a result, our staff are able to offer an exceptional range of extra-curricular activities aimed at enhancing learning opportunities. In August 2020 we are opening a brand new, purpose built EYFS and Primary building in the Huangpu district. It boasts superb facilities including and indoor swimming pool, dedicated play areas, music, dance and drama facilities, a large theatre and gymnasium an art studio and STEAM facility. This site will accommodate up to 800 students and we expect demand for places to be high from current and new parents.

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Mark Thomas, Principal

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Our Guiding Principles

Our Philosophy

The British school of Guangzhou embraces Nord Anglia Education's 'Be Ambitious' philosophy we encourage our students to be:

Personally Ambitious- students will develop a life-long love of learning as they embrace the core values of respect, integrity, responsibility and commitment.

Academically Ambitious- students will be challenged by professional teachers and a world-class curriculum to achieve academic success.

Socially Ambitious- students will be inspired within a truly international environment to grow as a confident, well-mannered global citizen.

Our Mission & Values

Our mission and values underpin all that takes place at the British School of Guangzhou. They not only give us the overarching mission of 'creating a lifelong love of learning' within all who attend our school but also offer guidance on how we should act and treat each other each day.

Our four core values are represented by:

Respect – It is our duty to demonstrate respect and awareness for all. The British School of Guangzhou actively works to help students nurture these qualities by providing opportunities to develop self-esteem and self-confidence. This respect is evident in our interactions with students, parents, staff, our community and environment. Respect requires open mindedness and incorporates an understanding, tolerance, empathy and compassion towards others in both thought and action. We aim to develop an international awareness and cultural sensitivity within all students and provide them with opportunities to demonstrate this.

Integrity – We see integrity as being honest, open and truthful. We believe in being trustworthy in our dealings with each other and being able to give and receive constructive feedback well. We encourage our student body to have the courage of their convictions and the strength of character to stand up for what they believe is right and as a school we act in a completely transparent manner.

Responsibility – We aim to make our students independent confident learners who are able to meet deadlines and solve problems effectively. Students are expected to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour and to develop a sense of responsibility through making informed choices, learning to consider the consequences of their actions

and through taking advantage of leadership opportunities. Responsibility extends beyond the classroom where we demonstrate consideration towards others locally, internationally and towards the environment.

Commitment – We seek to establish a strong work ethic within our students and a desire to strive for excellence. Students are encouraged to develop a resilient attitude to difficult tasks and to persevere through difficulty. We believe that sustained effort greatly enhances student outcomes and that risks should be taken as students push through inevitable setbacks to ultimate success.

If you are applying for a position at The British School of Guangzhou, it is important you fully understand that you will share responsibility for demonstrating these values each day. If you are not willing to make this level of commitment, then The British School of Guangzhou is simply not for you.

Educational Beliefs & Policies

In addition, all our teachers are expected to subscribe to our educational beliefs and adhere closely to our policies. The British School of Guangzhou believes in a consistent approach; this is not a school that allows teachers to teach in a way that is not in line with our policies or to behave in a way that is at odds with our core values.

As well as inheriting our values, we expect candidates to:

Bring current UK educational theory and practice to the position in terms of curriculum understanding, teaching and learning, assessment, record keeping and reporting.

- Share our belief in a child-centered approach to education.
- Show a commitment to inspiring a love of learning amongst our students.
- Act as role models in promoting our core values.
- Share our belief in the importance of celebrating achievement.
- Create a well-organised, clutter-free teaching environment.
- Be experienced users of IWBs, iPads and Macs to enhance teaching and learning.
- Demonstrate a proactive approach to their own professional development.
- Have a fundamental understanding of assessment for learning strategies.
- Be adept at differentiating learning to meet the needs of all students.
- Actively contribute to the preparation of short, medium and long-term planning.
- Actively contribute to a curriculum team and to School Development Planning.
- Positively promote our school within the wider community.
- Contribute to our extra-curricular enrichment programme.

Teachers who join our school are joining a team of dedicated professionals. They understand that every child in every classroom experiences the curriculum and standards we promise in our promotional literature. There is no doubt that the unique combination of motivated pupils, dedicated staff, enthusiastic parents and a superb learning environment helps us to achieve our goals.



Our Curriculum

Those of us who work at the British School consider ourselves fortunate to have left behind much of the government interference that we experienced when teaching in the UK. Having said this, it is important to note that we closely follow educational changes in the UK and cherry pick initiatives that are in the best interests of our students within our international setting. For those of you who are considering applying, I can guarantee that this is no educational backwater. Our teachers are well informed, dedicated professionals and are supported by an impressive level of professional development opportunities.

Our whole approach to teaching and learning reflects a vibrant enjoyment of child-centred education at its best.

We believe that an education is child-centred when:

1. It is based on children's strengths, needs, stages of development and interests.
2. The curriculum provides first-hand experience with meaningful activities.
3. The curriculum encourages the development of confidence and independence.
4. The learning environment is safe and secure.
5. Children's self-esteem is promoted through relationships that are respectful and supportive.
6. Teachers recognise and accept children's individual differences and provide an educational programme that enables them to realise their potential.

Happily, all this is exactly what the parents of our children want, and we enjoy a high degree of support within the community we serve. Those who choose to send their children to us are generally well informed, know what they want and trust us to deliver a vibrant and academically rigorous curriculum.

We base our curriculum on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and national curriculum of England and Wales, with regional modifications that consider our position within China and the international nature of our students. To a large extent, we plan our curriculum around our knowledge of how children learn, and wherever appropriate, integrate subject content so that it has meaning for the children. Everything we do is done with a high degree of professional rigour and with a respect for what children have a right to experience and achieve during their time at school. At Secondary level, our students work towards the IGCSE qualifications before moving on to an A-Level programme of study.

Our Early Years and Primary teachers plan within teams to ensure that children in parallel classes receive a mirror curriculum, something that will be even more important when we work across two Primary sites. Although English, mathematics and science are the core subjects within Foundation and Primary, the children receive a balanced education with cross-curricular topic studies being a significant component of our work. From Year 5 upwards, the children experience a growing number of specialist teachers, and by the time they enter Year 7, will be taught by specialists in all subjects.

In all of this, the rich environment of China is a wonderful resource to support an active curriculum. At the British School, we have a full programme of residential and educational visits, from Year 3 upwards, with all costs met from within school fees. We also encourage all classes to make the most of opportunities within the local area, and most classes organise termly educational trips within Guangzhou.

Teaching assistants support our work throughout the school and all classes up to Year 6 benefit from TA support. Increasingly, we are introducing additional teaching assistants to support specialist subjects with Art, Music, PE, Chinese, and EAL (English as an Additional Language) currently benefiting. Specialist teachers are responsible for PE, music, instrumental tuition and Chinese and EAL lessons, and all teachers' benefit from up to 20% planning, preparation and assessment time.



Throughout all this, we make realistic demands of our teachers and expect them to enjoy an active life both within school and beyond the working day. We have high expectations of our teachers and our professional standards are equally high. We balance this with an understanding that everyone needs time to rest, a social life beyond school and time to explore this fascinating part of the world. During the busiest parts of term time, it can feel as if school is your life, but it is also important to note that we go to great lengths to add an element of fun to our working day.

*A truly wonderful
international
work experience*

NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION



The Children

At The British School of Guangzhou, the most important people are the students. The children in our school are quite simply a delight to teach, and we all benefit from the family atmosphere that exists here. Our school is probably not their first educational experience, and will likely not be their last. Inevitably, we have some children who have received an interrupted educational experience and need a period of consolidation before an appropriate programme can be planned.

Expatriate families normally spend an average of three years in a country before being relocated. However, there are a growing number of long-stay families, whose children will complete their education with us. Recently, we have experienced an increase in the number of overseas Chinese families returning to Guangzhou, plus a growing number of Hong Kong Chinese joining us as an alternative to a local education. These groups are now the largest cultural groups at the school.

Most of our children are well travelled and a flight will be a regular experience. We are also part of a community of international schools in Guangzhou, which means that we are able take part in swimming, athletics and football tournaments on a regular basis, as well as participating in cultural and creative arts activities. Within the China region, we also have a growing number of opportunities to make use of the Nord Anglia network, with sister schools in Chengdu, Shanghai, Beijing, Nanjing and Hong Kong. Within the South of China, we have also benefited from opportunities to collaborate with the growing number of NAE bilingual schools in sports and Performing Arts.

After-school activities (ASAs) and house activities are integral parts of educational enrichment at the British School. All teachers and teaching assistants are expected to contribute to the provision of an exciting range of activities. For Primary students, compulsory ASAs take place from 3 to 4pm, twice a week. These activities are planned to ensure that they provide students with fun activities and an opportunity to learn or improve skills that are sometimes overlooked within the constraints of the curriculum/classroom. NAE contracts do not allow staff to take on additional paid employment, such as tutoring. However, we do operate an Academies Programme outside of school hours, and currently staff with appropriate skills in teaching English, football or swimming may choose to supplement their income by teaching one of the academy activities.



Teaching in China

We are proud to say that The British School of Guangzhou is recognised as an excellent employer and we take the issue of staff retention very seriously. We have many internal initiatives to promote this and also strongly encourage all staff to take part in the annual 'Staff Engagement Survey' that ensures each one of us has a direct confidential line to senior Nord Anglia Education managers.

It is important at the recruitment stage for everyone to be clear about the salary and benefits package that accompanies a teaching position at our school. The information below is just a brief summary of the detail contained in the standard contract of employment. If there is any doubt concerning the interpretation of this summary, then the contract itself is the superior point of reference so please use below as a guide only.

Salaries

Teachers will be offered an initial two-year contract. Gross salaries are paid monthly and incomes, particularly with the current exchange rate, compare favourably with the UK. On arrival, our finance team will arrange your local bank account and also arrange to transfer part of your monthly salary home if you have financial commitments. Since overseas transfers take time to arrange, this service will be in place by around October after you arrive, which will also give you time to assess your personal financial needs within Guangzhou.

Package Benefits include:

- ❖ 2-year contract with the world's premium international schools group.
- ❖ Highly competitive salary dependent upon your position on a China regional salary scale.
- ❖ Comprehensive international medical cover for teachers and their dependents.
- ❖ Western-style accommodation provided by us (see below for further details).
- ❖ Start and end of contract flights for employees and dependents.
- ❖ A relocation allowance of 6000RMB towards shipping and costs incurred in setting up an apartment.
- ❖ Any visa related costs before arrival will also be reimbursed on arrival.
- ❖ Gratuity bonus worth 10% of annual salary is payable at the end of a 2-year contract subject to completion of full contract terms and conditions.
- ❖ Full scholarships covering the tuition fees for up to two accompanying children.
- ❖ Responsibility allowances (TLRs) for certain key responsibilities.
- ❖ Excellent opportunities for professional development within Nord Anglia Education.
- ❖ Opportunities for promotion within the Nord Anglia Education Group.

Costs to be met by the teachers

School will cover 100% of tuition fee for up to two eligible children and will provide free use of school buses where required. The following cost will need to be met by the teachers.

Item	Cost (RMB)	Notes
Uniform Cost (Yearly Estimated)	3000	Costs are dependent upon year group expectations, quantity and individual requirements.
Lunch Fee (Yearly)	6660	The finance department will provide an invoice to the teacher and can coordinate with the HR department to deduct lunch fees from monthly salary on termly basis.

Accommodation upon arrival in China

The school will source and provide a modern, furnished apartment with basic appliances for the first year of employment. Our first option of location will be apartments located alongside one of our schools for the convenience of new families and couples, and apartments in town for single teachers, if they can be found within the budget of the housing allowance. The school will pay rent and security deposit for the apartment in your first year of arrival. The employee is responsible for timely payment of all other bills or costs, such as phone, Internet, management fees and all utility bills. In the second year of their contract staff can opt to move out of the apartment provided by the school and find their own accommodation. It is important for staff to note that they will then be responsible for any deposit and will need to ensure they provide the school with a monthly fapiao to ensure they receive the full benefit of their housing allowance.

The school will also provide a basic welcome pack, left in the apartment prior to arrival to help with the initial 'settling in' period.

What's in the Apartment & Welcome Pack?

Standard furniture and appliances provided with the apartment:

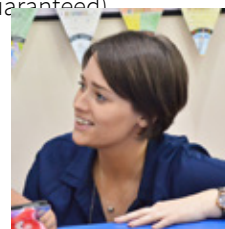
- ❖ Sofa and coffee table
- ❖ Dining room table with chairs
- ❖ Television set
- ❖ Desk and chair for study
- ❖ Bed in each bedroom with mattress and bedside table
- ❖ Bedside table
- ❖ Wardrobe
- ❖ Curtains throughout



“Guangzhou is a fast-developing city with a rich culture. I've lived here many years and found the school and the city to be equally hospitable towards me and my young family.”

David Barton
Year 4 Teacher

- ❖ At least two gas/electric hobs for cooking
- ❖ Microwave Oven (conventional ovens are not standard in China and can not be guaranteed)
- ❖ Fridge Freezer
- ❖ Water dispenser machine
- ❖ Washing machine (this may be a top loader as they are more common in China)



Typical welcome pack contents:

- ❖ Quilt and covers
- ❖ Pillows and pillow cases
- ❖ Bed sheets
- ❖ Cutlery *
- ❖ Cup and glasses *
- ❖ Bathroom towel *
- ❖ Plate and bowl *
- ❖ Basic kitchen utensil set
- ❖ Two large full bottles of drinking water
- ❖ Pot and frying pan
- ❖ Tea towel/small hand towel
- ❖ Toilet paper, soap and tissues
- ❖ Bread, milk, tea bags, tinned beans, tinned tuna
- ❖ Taxi book
- ❖ City map (including subway map)
- ❖ Public transportation card, (for public bus and metro)

“The school community as a whole are a massive help when you arrive in Guangzhou. You won't face the culture shock alone.”

Nicole Torrens
Year 1 Teacher

Note: The school rents apartments from multiple private landlords, so apartment styles and contents vary. Additional items are often provided at the landlord's discretion, but the school will not negotiate for further items or upgrades to the above list unless those provided are faulty. Also note, the school will not enter into discussions with landlords to remove any of the current furniture, fittings or appliances held in the apartment.

Cleaning and Maid Services

Cleaning and day-to-day general maintenance of apartments is the responsibility of employees. The school is not responsible for supplying or managing domestic home help for employees. The best sources of contacts for this are colleagues or friends working at our school.

The 'Buddy' System

Before arrival, your Head of Phase will supply you with the name and contact details of a colleague to help facilitate you joining the BSG team. From many years of managing the arrival process for expats in China, we know that this person can be a valuable source of information. We will also arrange a Facebook group to allow appointees to share FAQs.

Police Clearance & Other Formalities

Nord Anglia Education considers the safety of its students of paramount importance and we make a commitment to protecting the children with/for whom we work. To this end, and in addition to a Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy in our schools, Nord Anglia Education recognizes the need to ensure, where possible, the safety of our students when we employ, and continue to employ, persons responsible for the delivery of learning and teaching, care of students in our schools and Learning Services Business, or those persons who interact with our students on behalf of the Company. The Employee will facilitate, or assist the Company, in obtaining a criminal background check covering the ten years prior to their start date with the Company that covers all countries of residence during that period.

Everyone must also be in possession of originals of their university diploma/certificate showing that they are appropriately qualified to teach the subject/age group for which they are applying. If for some reason these are not available, then fully authenticated copies must be provided in order to obtain appropriate visas and valid work-permits. In China, two years relevant work experience is also a necessity to be eligible for the foreign expert certificate, which is required for a working visa. All relevant documents will need to be notarized so it is important to promptly follow any instructions from the HR department to ensure that you are able to meet the requirements for obtaining a work visa.

The school has an Administrative Department consisting mainly of Chinese nationals, who provide an invaluable service, having regular contact with local and government authorities to ensure that we operate effectively. Administrative staff will also deal with work permits, visas and resource purchasing as well as helping you with housing issues as you settle into life in China.





Shipping & Relocation

Freight

Although the apartments that are provided for new staff are fully furnished. We also arrange a voluntary trip to Ikea for new staff during induction to buy a few extras. Many employees also bring freight to make their apartment 'homely'.

Relocation Company

We would recommend using a reputable shipping company when sending your freight, either by air or sea. Allied Pickfords, Four Winds, Asian Tigers, Santa Fe and AGS have many years of experience shipping to GZ while International Teachers Freight Service is meant to be very good for AIR freight in China.

Time Frame

It is important to note that you cannot clear your freight from customs until you have received your Guangzhou Residency Permit & Foreign Expert Certificate. Since the Residency Permit and the Foreign Expert Certificate cannot be issued until around late-September, you need to arrange for sea freight to arrive in Guangzhou no earlier than late-September, to avoid additional storage fees. Please remember that sea freight can take up to 8 weeks to get to GZ from the UK so check on the ship's sailing date and estimated arrival time. Generally, sea freight will arrive in your apartment until the end of September/October at the earliest so plan for this when deciding what to bring with you.

Documents and procedures

To collect your belongings the relocation company will help to prepare all relevant documents, you then simply complete the relevant forms which need to be stamped by the school, and then will be ready to clear customs after paying any relevant taxes.

The Residency Permit and Foreign Expert Certificate are also required for Air freight so do not arrange for air freight to arrive at GZ airport before mid- September, or you will pay storage while it sits in customs. If you wish to bring additional baggage with you instead of freighting do this as PAID additional weight/pieces of luggage and collect off the luggage belt upon arrival. DO NOT arrange it as unaccompanied luggage as this will go to customs (and you will have to follow the same procedures outlined for freight before you can collect it).

Tax regulations

China customs charges tax on any personal belongings in excess of 50RMB, whether first or second hand.

Import Duty:

- ❖ Wooden Furniture - 10% - 25% of estimated price.
- ❖ Soft Furniture – 10%.
- ❖ Alcohol – 50%.
- ❖ DVD/CD above allowed amount – RMB30 (approx 3GBP) PER DISC!
- ❖ Electronic Items – 20% - 50%. We strongly recommend that you do not bring any electrical items such as CD players, TVs, Hi-Fi, DVD player, digital cameras, video cameras etc. in your freight. If you do bring these, then put them in your hand luggage. They are VERY cheap to buy here in China and all apartments should come with a large flat-screen TV.
- ❖ Luxury Items – Golf clubs 70 - 200%. We suggest you leave these at home or bring them on the plane with you as hand luggage)

Air Freight (unaccompanied): No Food, No prescription medicine, Books – 50 pieces limit (more subject to tax), DVDs/CDs - 30 pieces limit (more subject to tax).

Sea Freight: Books – 300 pieces limit, DVD/CDs – 300 pieces limit. Dried food is allowed (cereals etc.), as are jars of food i.e. marmite. Medicine/toiletries, electronic KITCHEN items are non-taxable.

Prohibited Items (Air and Sea): Firearms, drugs, poisons, pornographic material, politically sensitive material, fresh food, animals, non-original (burned) DVDs/CDs subject to screening for checking by customs. Original DVD/CDs are subject to random checks.

Computers: Please note that the school will provide all teachers an iPad and laptop to assist with teaching of the relevant year groups.

Telephones: Staff have had some difficulty getting UK smartphones to work in China. We would recommend waiting until you are here rather than buying a new model in the UK. You can get phones unlocked before you come to China but there have been compatibility issues, particularly with some iPhone models.

"The annual MoonTrekker was a brilliant experience. We hiked 30km through the mountains of Hong Kong during the night to raise money for a good cause."

Gemma Campbell, Early Years Teacher



Application Procedure

We hope that the information in this booklet will help applicants who are considering making an application to the British School along with those who have already applied or been appointed. We encourage you to also take a look at our website, www.bsg.org.cn, as we spend a lot of time making sure that it provides an up-to-date overview of school life.

Within Nord Anglia Education, we use an online recruitment system to track applications and help us to make a fair and balanced assessment of your suitability against other candidates. If you have yet to formally apply, you can do so by registering with www.jobtrain.co.uk/nordanglia and following the online instructions to record your interest in specific jobs for Guangzhou or other Nord Anglia schools.

The recruitment of high-quality candidates is critical to the development of our school, and a number of people will be involved in reviewing your application. We also understand how difficult it is to be left waiting, and will do our utmost to review all applications by the

Specified closing date. Soon after the closing date, we will contact all applicants to give them an update with regards their application.

Courtesy is very important to us as a school, and we go to great lengths to update all applicants on the situation.



Adapting to Life in Guangzhou

From experience, we know that the process of adapting to life in Guangzhou takes some time, particularly for those of you who are looking at your first overseas post. The language barrier and cultural differences can create an overwhelming feeling of anxiety or tension. The language is an obvious barrier, but we are aware that the cultural difference can be an even bigger barrier at times.

We will go to great lengths to help you adapt to life in Guangzhou. It is important to remember that we have also gone through this process and are there to offer advice. All new staff take part in an induction process, which will help to make you aware of the likely issues, and will start to provide you with the information to adapt to your new surroundings. This process will continue throughout the term, and you will soon find that what initially seemed strange is now familiar.

The following information has been collected directly from staff over the last six years. It is not specifically about our school, but can help you to decide if you should be considering relocating your life to Guangzhou.

For the majority of the week, you will be at work in a calm and positive environment, surrounded by English speakers and supported by management and staff. It is during your time off that life can, on occasions, be a little more challenging. Depending on your personality, background and life experiences, Guangzhou can initially be difficult. It is without doubt easier if you learn some Chinese, but for those who are unable at this point in time to commit to this challenge, do not worry, you can achieve a lot by waving, smiling and using hand actions. A smile and nod, a hello and thank you go a very long way. Most shops/restaurants/bars, etc. have address cards; if you think you may return, grab a business card.

People spend their time in Guangzhou in many different ways. Some absorb the culture and learn the language, some shop, some stay at home and do simple things like take the children swimming or go for a walk in the hills around Guangzhou. Others treat themselves to regular weekends in Hong Kong. However, like many Asian cities, Guangzhou is changing rapidly and developing every year and these days there's a plethora of Western products available.

The following information will only scratch the surface of what we could tell you, but it is enough for now, and will either leave you feeling that Guangzhou is not for you or feeling that you cannot wait to get here and dive headlong into a host of exciting new experiences.

Essential Apps

Mobile apps are essential everywhere, and none more so in China than **WeChat**. Not only is it used to socialise, but to check banking, top up phone credit, order taxis, buy tickets for planes, trains and movies, shopping and much more! It is certain you will use WeChat more than phoning and texting, and it really is very convenient for foreigners living and working in China. *During induction at BSG, we will help to set this up for you on your phones, as it is important to download in Guangzhou to get the correct version.*

Another essential app is **Bunga Monkey (www.bungamonkey.com)**. Set up by expats in Guangzhou, this is one of the most user-friendly guides to the city you can find. It is great for getting addresses to places in the city, but also for searching social events and fun family days out. Bunga Monkey staff join us during induction week to give you a flavour of what is available in this thriving city — feel free to start exploring their website now!



Shopping

The cost of living in China is relatively cheap when compared to the UK. This is particularly true if you 'live locally', i.e. shop in local supermarkets/markets and eat in local Chinese restaurants. Guangzhou has a wide range of shops, and, if you are prepared to pay the price, you can buy everything that you would buy back home. There are a number of supermarkets that stock locally produced and imported products:

Pharmacies

There are two big Asian chains in Guangzhou - Manning's and Watsons. These stores supply a large range of skin care products, make-up, basic medical supplies and pharmacies (if you are looking for a particular medicine, you will need to arrange for a Chinese member of staff to write it for you unless you have impressive language skills). These pharmacies now stock a wide range of products, but some female hygiene products can be difficult to obtain in China, so you may want to bring a supply.

There are of course many local Chinese medicine pharmacies. China recently introduced new social security regulations. As a result, a small amount of your salary goes into a local health fund and you are provided with a card, which can be used to purchase products in the local pharmacies. It is worth speaking to your colleagues as some of the larger local pharmacies now stock a wider range of toiletries and cleaning products. It is important to take advantage of this additional benefit to avoid losing it.

Shopping Malls

There are an overwhelming number of big shopping malls. Tai Koo Hui, Citic Plaza, IGC and Parc Central have lots of expensive brands if this is your thing. Grandview Mall has a good mix of high street names and reasonably priced stores, and next door is Tee-Mall, which has another Aeon supermarket in the basement and a huge amount of shops over 8 levels. IKEA can be a lifeline as prices are reasonable and their products are the same all around the world.

Markets

There are a huge number of markets around Guangzhou and you can buy almost anything you want at very cheap prices. There are specific markets for different items - the leather goods (handbag) market is hugely popular, plus markets for watches, computers, pets, plants markets and much more.

Getting Around

Getting around can initially seem difficult if you have no language skills, but as long as addresses are written down in Chinese, it all tends to work. We provide all new staff with a card showing the school address and another card showing your home address. Information on places to eat etc are best sourced using an app like Bunga Monkey. In the last few years the Chinese taxi hailing app, Didi has made a significant difference — it has English translation services and is incredibly convenient.

Mobikes

A popular new phenomena is the 'mobike'. Once you have downloaded the app to your phone, you have access to a huge number of bikes for convenient cycling around the city.

Walking

Guangzhou is a very safe city to walk around for men and women. However, it is a bustling city and it always pays to be careful regarding your personal possessions. Pick-pocketing and petty crime can happen downtown or on crowded buses, so precautions should be taken.

Taxis

Cars vary from new to old. A taxi from BSG to Tianhe CBD is approximately 35RMB for a 35-minute taxi ride. The airport run is about 80-150RMB depending on traffic and use of the expressway. Some compounds will call you a taxi to the door while others require you to flag one down on the roadside. A Chinese version of Uber (Dee Dee) is popular in Guangzhou recently we will show you how to download an app to make use of this service.

Buses

The cheapest form of transportation at just 2.5RMB/25p anywhere in the city. A number of buses leave from directly outside the school campus to city centre destinations. Going to the city by bus can be fine at certain times of the day, but extremely crowded during the rush hour. This is not an easy option with children and pushchairs, though local people will generally offer their seats to mothers and babies. There are long haul buses to visit other parts of China, Hong Kong and Macau. Again, this is a very cheap way to travel but not the height of luxury.

Metro

The new metro line was completed for the Guangzhou Asian Games in 2010 and is only 10 minutes away from school by bus, and is an excellent way to explore Guangzhou. We provide all new staff with a metro card, which can also be used on the local buses, and as part of the induction programme, we will help you to navigate the metro system. The metro goes directly to the airport and is often the best way to get home from a holiday.

Train

There are two main train stations in Guangzhou and trains are reasonably cheap. This is particularly useful when travelling to Hong Kong for the weekend either directly to from GZ East or the high speed option from GZ South. There are frequent trains and the journey takes between 1 and 2 hours, depending on the train, with a single ticket costing between 185-230RMB. Alternatively, you can take the train to Shenzhen and cross the border directly into Hong Kong (new territories), where you can use the Hong Kong metro to get to Kowloon or Hong Kong Island. Trains leave for Shenzhen every 15 minutes and the journey to Shenzhen takes around 1.5 hours. Shenzhen in itself is a great weekend get-away with miles of coastline and is worth exploring, although it struggles to compete with Hong Kong.

Staff visit Hong Kong frequently for weekend breaks and it is not uncommon for groups to head off for the station on a Friday, aiming to be checked in and enjoying a meal in central Hong Kong by 7pm. With its beaches, hiking, islands, restaurants and shopping (including Marks & Spencers) it is hard to beat. Macau is also easy to get to and offers an alternative to Hong Kong with the added incentive of the casinos.

Plane

There is a new international airport in Guangzhou that is easy to arrive/depart from. It takes approximately 45 minutes from BSG to the airport, depending on time and traffic, and costs around 160RMB in a taxi or less than 10RMB on the metro. There is another airport 1 hour away in Shenzhen and Hong Kong adds several travel options for holidays. Internal flights to other parts of China are reasonable in price provided you are not travelling during major Chinese holidays.

Eating Out

You can eat out very cheaply. You can have a fine dining experience in a top hotel/restaurant or have coffee and cake in one of the many Starbucks branches around Guangzhou. Eating out is very individual, and everyone you talk to you will give different recommendations and experiences, but what Guangzhou does offer is extremely affordable eating. You will never have to cook at home if you don't want to. Cantonese restaurants offer a world famous cuisine in their own right.

Night Life

There are local bars that charge 5-7RMB for a 0.5 litre of local beer, expat/western-type bars that charge 25-60RMB a beer, and there are international hotels that charge higher prices - it all depends on your preference. There are nightclubs, Karaoke clubs, private members clubs and numerous bars. You can head downtown on the weekend and explore or ask existing staff for recommendations.

Weekend Activities

In the warm weather, spending time by/in the outdoor pool in your apartments is a popular option, for 8 months of the year. There is always shopping and eating, but if you are looking for more, there are lots of weekend options. The botanical gardens are the biggest in southern China and well worth a visit.

Luhu Park is also another very large park to explore for a Sunday stroll. Shamian Island is the city's most picturesque historic area. Over the last few years Guangzhou have extended their 'Greenways' cycle and walking routes alongside the Pearl River and these provide an excellent pedestrian area to walk with children without having to worry about the traffic.

There are a wide variety of museums and temples to visit in the day and the Pearl River Dinner Cruise can be enjoyed in the evenings. Guangzhou Philharmonic Orchestra has a reputation for putting on excellent concerts, with occasional visiting choirs and orchestras from around the world. In nearby Panyu district, are Chimelong Theme Parks, including the water park, crocodile and safari parks and circus. Baiyun Mountain, Mao Feng Mountain, the strawberry farms or the hot springs are about 1 hour away. A number of staff enjoy cycling and frequently head off to the countryside around Mao Feng Mountain where there are a car free roads and local restaurants serving the best ribs in Guangzhou.

Medical Care

BSG provides all expatriate staff and their families with international health insurance. This provides outstanding cover and you will be given a detailed information pack upon your arrival. Guangzhou has a number of clinics and hospitals, but current staff mainly use [Eram, Distinct or United Family Hospital](#). All three provide direct billing, but in the case of United family, staff are required to co-pay 20% of the bill due to their significantly higher prices. When the hospital or clinic provides direct billing no payment is required as long as you are carrying your insurance card or the downloaded electronic membership card. A number of Guangzhou clinics provide pediatric services including immunization services, but you are advised to check that the vaccinations are covered on the health insurance, or alternatively ensure vaccinations are up to date, before you arrive.

Our school nurses also stock a range of common medications, headache tablets, cold and flu medicines, etc. and can provide them free of charge to our teaching staff. We encourage you not to use the international health insurance for minor ailments as the costs are very high and sensible use helps us to keep the cost of the premiums down.

Reading Material

There are a number of book shops around Guangzhou that stock English literature. You can't usually get the most up-to-date titles but there is usually a good range of fiction and non-fiction to be found. In addition to book shops, the school has three libraries for students.

Magazines are harder to find and can cost four times the price of the UK. British newspapers are not sold, although magazines and newspapers are readily available in Hong Kong or online. Staff often share reading materials when they have finished with them and increasingly use iPads and Kindles for reading material.

There are also local magazines called That's PRD and Urban Family, which have all the addresses of shopping centres, restaurants, hairdressers, bars, etc, and advertise what is going on each month.

Children/Non-Working Partners

Going to work every day and being instantly surrounded by English speakers and a support network makes life easier. For non-working partners who do not have this day-to-day routine and contact with people, it can be harder to adapt to expatriate life in Guangzhou. However, there are groups that meet up regularly, and the school is always happy to help you make contacts while you settle.

Volunteering

A number of partners choose to come into school on a voluntary basis and provide additional support for our students. Unfortunately, due to Chinese visa restrictions, we are unable to offer paid positions to partners unless they have a degree, teaching qualification and two years relevant experience. However, a number of partners are able to find work within Guangzhou, teaching English in a local language school, with a TEFL qualification.

For those of you looking to explore this option, we recommend you get an online TEFL before arriving.

Playgroup

By far the most popular with parents of young children is our very own playgroup, which is free of charge to anyone with a pre-school child and an international passport. Snacks and drinks are provided and this is a great way to meet other parents of small children.

Gymboree

This franchise operates in various locations around Guangzhou. They have art, music and movement classes (45 minutes) everyday. The cost varies on the numbers who pre-book, but generally works out to be about RMB255-300 a class.

GWIC

Guangzhou Women's International Club has things going on for non-working women with or without children most days. For more information, go to their website at www.gwic.org

Work clothes

It is quite hard to get larger western sizes for both men and women (12 upwards for women) or large shoes (6 upwards for women, 9 for men). However, there are tailors in GZ that can make professional and casual clothes for a reasonable price. If you have children starting school, our uniform shop provides most things. However, white socks and white trainers (for Foundation stage) and white socks and black shoes for all other ages might be handy to bring, so that you don't have to go shopping for these items when you first arrive.

Winter clothes

You can of course buy things in the shops, but they do not always have the right sizes – the weather in Guangzhou is usually hot and humid, but it can drop to around 5 degrees in winter.

Medical products or first aid provision

It is advised that you bring any specific medicine that you feel you may need, particularly medicines for children, such as Sudocreme or Calpol or prescription medicines that you require.

Toys

You can buy EU safety standard toys, i.e. Fisher Price, Chicco, Tomy, Vtec, Playskool, etc. in Aeon and Guangzhou Friendship stores, but they tend to be more expensive than the UK. You can also go to the markets or Chinese toy stores to buy much cheaper alternatives. IKEA presents another option at a reasonable price.

Domestic Help

Many teachers employ domestic help in some form. Single teachers often employ an 'Ayi' (translates literally as 'auntie') to visit a couple of times a week whilst they are at work to help with weekly chores such as ironing, cleaning and other housework chores. Those with families tend to employ a full-time Ayi 5 days a week whose duties can include childcare and babysitting as the school has no provision for these. Rates of pay are reasonable and affordable for expat teachers in Guangzhou plus it makes life at home a little easier, to say the least! However, do please note before you arrive that finding and managing domestic help is fully your responsibility and may present you with communication issues if you do not speak Chinese as Ayis in general do not speak English. Existing staff are a good source of knowledge and may be able to help you but the school cannot offer formal help managing domestic help, childcare or babysitting. You are therefore advised to consider plans carefully, especially if you are arriving with dependents. Where both parents are employed in school an 'Ayi' is essential to allow you to meet your working commitments.

Summary & Contacts

I hope this information answers some, if not all of your questions, but do not hesitate in contacting us if you have further queries. If you are successful in being appointed to our school, we very much look forward to welcoming you in August.

Email Contacts

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Vice-Principal, Mr. Garry Russell – garry.russell@bsg.org.cn

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