

Teaching Assistant - Nursery or Kindergarten Recruitment Pack



SOMERHILL
SOME SCHOOL

A LEADING INDEPENDENT PREP SCHOOL FOR GIRLS AND BOYS



A message from our Headmaster, Duncan Sinclair

We have a very special school here with a unique offering: the 'best of both worlds', the 'ideal mix' and the 'place I always dreamt of finding' are the comments we often hear from our parents or visitors. With co-educational learning until age 7, Somerhill offers single-sex classroom lessons until children leave us for senior schools, allowing uninhibited learning and bespoke strategies for the older girls and boys with all the benefits of a co-educational setting.

Our philosophy for the children at Somerhill is straightforward: happy children want to learn. Children are happy if they can play, participate widely and start to master skills of whatever kind, and our stunning setting and outstanding facilities offer endless opportunities for the children to find something that makes them smile.

We believe this offers you the perfect glimpse into our school life. However, to fully appreciate the extraordinary education that we offer and see our vision of confident, curious, and resilient children realised, we invite you to visit us at Somerhill. You will see that this really is some school, an exceptional learning environment where we grow amazing people!



Our unique school

Somerhill is set in a stunning 400-year-old Jacobean mansion surrounded in 150 acres of beautiful parkland. You will be hard-pressed to find a more glorious setting for a school! We have excellent facilities including a multi-purpose sports hall, astroturf, indoor swimming pool complex and purpose-built music suite to name just a few.

Ours is a mixed ability school. Teachers really invest in the children and know them well, with lessons carefully planned to cater to all abilities.

We have very bright and capable pupils and send more pupils to grammar schools each year than any other local school. Destinations include Tonbridge Grammar School, The Judd, and Skinners. Some pupils are awarded scholarships at independent schools such as Tonbridge, Sevenoaks, Walthamstow Hall and Sutton Valence at 11+/13+.

We also cater to children who find aspects of their learning more challenging and currently approximately 40 pupils receive additional support.

Located just to the south of Tonbridge, we are readily accessed by a slip road off the A21.



Between the ages of 2.5 and 7 years, girls and boys are together in the classroom. This environment promotes uninhibited development at an age when playing and learning are often synonymous. From 7 to 13 years, children benefit from a single-sex classroom environment, where girls and boys learn in different and bespoke ways. The moment classes finish, everyone is together - at break and lunch as well as for sports, music, clubs and activities. This really is the best of both worlds for our children.



'Positive mental health is given high priority' and 'the welfare of pupils is given prime importance.'
ISI – February 2024

Taking a holistic approach to education, we nurture academic, personal, spiritual, social and moral growth, enabling our pupils to become confident, curious and resilient individuals going out into the world.

We encourage our pupils to work hard and take pride in their achievements, to think independently, to face up to challenges, to accept responsibility, to develop a broad range of skills and interests and to show concern for others and the environment. To put it simply: we grow amazing people.



Pre-Prep at Somerhill

Somerhill Pre-Prep is our co-educational Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 provision at Somerhill. There are approximately 220 pupils, ranging in age from 2.5 to 7 years, with circa 38 full and part-time staff.

Our pre-school provision allows children to start learning in a school environment prior to statutory school age. Our EYFS department comprises of three pre-school and four reception classes. In Key Stage 1, there are three Year 1 and four Year 2 classes. Somerhill Pre-Prep is a member of IAPS, and the majority of our children continue their learning at Somerhill in Year 3.

We are a mixed ability school and pride ourselves on developing each child to their full potential, both academically and socially. We ensure pupils are offered a range of stimulating and engaging experiences to develop a life-long interest in learning.

This is an exciting opportunity to be part of a dynamic teaching team.



Teaching Assistant - Nursery or Kindergarten

Employment Status: Full-time, permanent (part-time considered)

Salary: Competitive, based on our Somerhill pay scale

Reporting to: Head of Pre-Prep

Required From: January/ February 2025

Application Closing Date: 9 December 2024 (early applications encouraged)

Early applications are encouraged as suitably qualified candidates may be interviewed before the closing date. The School reserves the right to withdraw the vacancy if an early appointment is made



Teaching Assistant - Nursery or Kindergarten: Job Description

This full-time position offers the opportunity to join our strong and successful Pre-Prep team in Pre School department as a Teaching Assistant. This role is required to either work with Nursery children (2-3 years old) or with Kindergarten children (3-4 years old). Working alongside enthusiastic and dynamic colleagues in the Pre-Prep, the successful applicant will be someone who is passionate about nurturing and teaching children in a busy and exciting school environment. The successful candidate will hold a Level 3 Childcare Qualification and will be a person who values working as part of a collaborative team, has good communication skills and is able to develop and hold the trust and confidence of our families. As a member of the Somerhill staff, you will be valued and supported and in return we are looking for commitment, drive and enthusiasm.

Specific classroom-based requirements

- To assist in the educational and social development of pupils in Pre-School under the direction of the Teacher, Lead TA, Deputy and Headteacher of Pre-Prep
- To share the responsibility for pastoral care of the children
- To co-operate with other members of staff
- To attend relevant meetings and participate in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as identified in appraisal and annual reviews
- To assist with cover for absent colleagues as directed by the Headteacher and Deputy of Pre-Prep
- To promote good relationships between staff and parents
- To establish and maintain a positive regard towards pupils
- To keep abreast of current issues and attend training as necessary
- Communicate with parents and other visitors in a calm, friendly and professional manner
- Ensure your working practices are appropriate to meet ISI standards and requirements
- To deliver intervention booster lessons or lead phonics groups when required.

Additional duties and professional requirements

- To operate at all times within the stated policies and practices of Somerhill
- To establish effective working relationships and set a good example through presentation and personal and professional conduct
- To endeavour to give every child the opportunity to reach their potential and meet high expectations
- To co-operate with other staff to ensure a sharing and effective usage of resources to the benefit of the school, department and pupils
- To contribute to the corporate life of Somerhill through effective participation in meetings and management systems necessary to coordinate the management of the school
- To take part in marketing and liaison activities such as open events, parents meetings, review days and events with partner schools
- To take responsibility for own professional development and duties in relation to school policies and practices
- To assist with the organisation of school trips and attend trips where required
- To keep up to date with first aid paediatric training
- To be aware of and able to follow the procedures in the Somerhill Safeguarding Policy
- To set a good example in terms of dress, punctuality and attendance
- To respect confidentiality within the Somerhill community
- To assist in the school appraisal system
- To liaise effectively with parents and governors
- To undertake after school care duties or clubs as required
- To undertake any duties or tasks as reasonably requested by the Head of the Pre-Prep or the Headmaster.

Person Specification

Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
EYFS Level 3 Cache	x	
Strong command of the English language including spelling and grammar	x	
Good IT skills	x	
First Aid certificate		x
Experience of working with children in a EYFS	x	
Knowledge of social, cultural ad physical needs of children	x	
Passionate about inclusion and diversity		
Nurturing in approach, strategies and interventions	x	
Communicate effectively within a multi-disciplinary team	x	
Excellent time-keeping and attendance	x	
Strong organisational skills	x	
Level 2 Food Handling		x

Employee Benefits



Support

Professional support through regular appraisals and CPD opportunities



Pension

Generous defined pension contribution scheme



Salary

Competitive salary package, regularly benchmarked



Reward

Staff recognition and reward opportunities



Cover

Group life assurance



Well-being

A range of well-being activities including fitness classes, tennis and book club. Free access to all on-site sports facilities on dedicated days



Lunch

Free hot lunches, salad bar and refreshments during term time



Conditions

Format of applications

Formal applications will only be accepted via the official Somerhill Application Form which will be published alongside this pack. All completed applications should be sent to recruitment@somerhill.org. A tour will form part of the interview process but please visit our website which provides a lot of information about us.

Child protection

All staff have a responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children with whom they come into contact and are always required to adhere to and ensure compliance with the school's Safeguarding Policy Statement. If, in the course of carrying out their duties, a member of staff becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school, they must immediately report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Offer conditions

Somerhill is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be offered the role conditionally, subject to the satisfactory completion of a number of background checks including but not limited to: an enhanced DBS check with Children's Barred list check, the taking up and verification of references, the verification of career history and medical fitness to undertake the role. The complete list of required checks will be provided to the successful candidate.

Health and safety

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and subsequent legislation, the school is obliged to provide you with a workplace and working conditions which, so far as is reasonably practicable, are safe and without risk to health. You are required by health and safety legislation to take reasonable care for your own health and safety and for the health and safety and others.

Further information

We are an equal opportunities employer and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds. We celebrate the diverse backgrounds that make up our community and consider it important that people from a diverse range of backgrounds are represented in our setting.

This job description is not intended to be a comprehensive statement of procedures and responsibilities, but instead sets out the principal expectations of the school in relation to the post holder's professional responsibilities and duties. We are looking for an individual who is adaptable, flexible, and willing to carry out the wide range of duties that are likely to be required to make a success of this role. Please note we reserve the right to close prior to the application deadline or extend the deadline depending on the number of applications received. Early applications are encouraged.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact the Headmaster for a confidential conversation or Jess May at recruitment@somerhill.org for more general queries.





SOMERHILL

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