



Pre-prep Teaching Assistant

Information for Applicants

September 2025

Independent boarding and day school for boys aged 4 - 13 years.

PRE-PREP TEACHING ASSISTANT

Summer Fields is one of the premier boys' prep and pre-prep schools in the country, situated in 70 acres of superb grounds in North Oxford. The school has an excellent academic reputation and is extremely well resourced.

In September 2018 we opened a brand-new Pre-prep, catering for boys from Reception to Year 3. The school is housed in Newton, one of the oldest and most historic buildings on the school's site. This is a state-of-the-art development and provides a purpose-built environment for up to 80 boys aged from four to eight, whilst allowing the boys to use all of the Prep school facilities on a daily basis.

We are seeking to appoint a Teaching Assistant (preferably with previous experience and qualifications) to work in the Pre-prep. The successful candidate will work under the supervision of a class teacher but must demonstrate: independence and a capability to take small groups of children, enthusiasm for teaching and working with children, and a commitment to the highest levels of teaching and learning for all pupils. Applicants must have strong communication skills, the ability to work as part of a small but cohesive team, and the skills to create a warm, welcoming and happy environment within the classroom and Pre-prep.

The post would also suit a graduate looking for school-based experience before furthering their teaching career. The successful candidate will also have the opportunity to lead or join the after-school programme and contribute to the extra-curricular activities programme.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Please apply by submitting a fully completed application form with a cover letter addressed to Mrs Joanna Blackstone, Head of Pre-prep. To satisfy the requirements for safer recruitment, we need to ask you for your full employment record. Details of any gaps between jobs or between finishing education and employment must be provided.

Completed application forms should be emailed to recruitment@summerfields.com. Applications will be reviewed upon receipt and shortlisted candidates may be invited for an interview at short notice.

Summer Fields is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and we expect all staff to share this commitment. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The school is fully committed to the principles of equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion. Summer Fields does not discriminate on the grounds of race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability. Applications are welcome from a diverse range of backgrounds.

MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD OF PRE-PREP, MRS JOANNA BLACKSTONE

Thank you for your interest in Summer Fields and, in particular, in the role of Pre-prep Teaching Assistant. I am delighted that you are considering our school and I hope that you will wish to apply for this position once you have found out more about us.

Summer Fields was founded in 1864 by Archibald and Gertrude Maclaren at their home in north Oxford. Mrs Maclaren was a gifted classical scholar and Mr Maclaren was a fencing master and owner of an Oxford gymnasium, with a passionate belief in the importance of physical fitness. It is from these roots that our school motto was born: *Mens sana in corpore sano*, A healthy mind in a healthy body. The Maclarens established the importance of a breadth of education inside and outside the classroom, values which remain central to the education we offer today.

Summer Fields is a full-boarding and day school for boys aged 4 to 13; there are currently around 320 boys on the roll and the school is generally over-subscribed; indeed, numbers have risen over the last two years and look to be stable, even in the current climate. We offer excellent teaching, traditional values and exceptional pastoral care. We continue to build on a strong academic legacy with an individual focus on strengthening each boy's confidence and abilities.

Summer Fields is a special place and pastoral care is very strong. The school is a vibrant, extended family of staff and boys, living side-by-side in a busy, caring and friendly boarding community. We aim to ensure that each boy is happy, academically challenged and is taking full advantage of life at Summer Fields, with its many possibilities and opportunities.

Summer Fields celebrated its 150th birthday in 2014 and, as well as hosting many events to celebrate this anniversary, a major redevelopment of parts of the school was completed. In particular, a spectacular new £3m building, the Salata Pavilion, providing new sport changing and other facilities, was opened in January 2016. A further redevelopment provides a state-of-the-art new school library, including an archive room, a periodicals room and associated teaching rooms in what is the oldest and largest teaching space in the school. The £2.5m project includes a major refurbishment of the school Chapel, as well as the DT and Learning Support departments.

The school is thriving at all levels and we have recently entered an exciting new phase in our history. In September 2018 we opened a brand-new Summer Fields Pre-prep, catering for boys from Reception to Year 3. The school is housed in a stand-alone building: Newton, one of the oldest and most historic buildings on the school's 70-acre site. The building has undergone a state-of-the-art re-development, including the addition of a striking, modernist new extension; it now provides purpose-built facilities for 80 boys aged 4 to 8.

Set within 70 acres of grounds the school is extremely well resourced with many outstanding and modern facilities, which are continually enhanced. In addition to the academic curriculum, sport plays an important part in the life of the school, as does music, art, design and technology and drama; recent results in music scholarship exams, in particular, have been outstanding. All these activities, and many others, are extremely well provided for. The Chapel is at the heart of the school, both literally and figuratively.

I recognise that a great deal of thought and time goes into preparing such an application and I assure you that I will, in turn, give your application serious consideration.

ACADEMIC RECORD

Academic standards and outcomes are high. The principal entry point to the prep school is currently in Year 4, although a few boys join in Years 5 and 6 depending on places being available; these places continue to be available following the establishment of the Pre-prep. Some 25 boys will join the prep school from the Pre-prep each year, in addition to those joining directly (both boarders and day boys) in Year 4. Admission is by selection. The aspirations of boys and parents are high and the school prides itself on the outstanding exam results achieved by our leavers. The school's greatest academic strength is excellent teaching at all levels and we are proud of the academic achievements of boys of all abilities. Each year boys pass Common Entrance and regularly win scholarships to the top public schools in the country.

THE PRE-PREP SCHOOL

Summer Fields Pre-prep has been founded on the same ethos and values as the Prep school. It has modern, well equipped learning and a library space as well as its own parking, gardens and playground, all within a secure, self-contained area on the school's main site. Pupils benefit from a fun and challenging topic-based curriculum within a nurturing Pre-prep environment. The school's extensive grounds, plantation and river access enable Forest School and outdoor learning to be integral to the curriculum and life of the school. The Reception and Year 1 classes also have dedicated access to outdoor learning spaces direct from their classrooms where they are able to work, investigate and experiment outside the normal indoor environment.

Pre-prep pupils have full access to everything the school's exceptional facilities and extensive grounds have to offer, including the sports hall, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, astro-turf, tennis courts, playing fields and adventure playground. Pupils also benefit from the excellent food and dining room facilities as well as a first-class medical centre which is permanently staffed by registered nurses. Combining the Prep school's outstanding facilities with a modern, well-resourced Pre-prep and outstanding teaching and pastoral care, younger pupils are provided with an unrivalled Pre-prep experience and the best possible start to their learning journey.

A love of learning is instilled in the boys through a rich and varied curriculum, and a timetable that is specifically created for boys of this age. The motto *Healthy Living, Happy learning*, encompasses the character and the ethos of the Pre-prep. The boys are encouraged to try a range of new experiences and activities so that they feel a great sense of achievement with all they attempt in the Pre-prep.

The working hours for this role are Monday to Friday from 8:00 to 16:30. This is a fantastic opportunity to work in a prestigious independent school in a beautiful location in Summertown. There is automatic enrolment into the school's contributory Group Personal Pension Scheme for eligible employees. Members of this scheme are also included in the Summer Fields Group Life Assurance Scheme which offers life cover of three times of annual salary. Other benefits include access to an Employee Assistance Programme, a free lunch and refreshments are provided during the working day, swimming club membership, discount on holiday activity clubs run on site, an annual flu vaccination and free parking.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title: Pre-prep Teaching Assistant

Reporting to: Class Teacher and Head of Pre-prep

Purpose of the Job

- To work in partnership with the class teacher to facilitate greater access of the curriculum for children in the Pre-prep
- To help create a happy, stimulating classroom environment in which children respond positively to high expectations of both application and attainment.
- To provide support to all pupils (including those with special educational needs) to enable their access to all areas of the curriculum, both academic and pastoral, so pupils can fulfil their potential
- To promote the interests of the school and its pupils at all times.

Areas of responsibility, teaching and learning, and assessment

- Help teaching and learning, under the direction of the class teacher, for all pupils (according to their individual educational needs)
- Teach pupils in a small group setting outside of the classroom during timetabled lessons or listen to readers (in consultation with the Head of Pre-prep and the class teacher).
- Help mark work, in line with the Pre-prep marking policy, to reflect learning objectives, under the guidance of the class teacher
- Provide regular feedback about pupils to the class teacher
- Help the class teacher keep records of pupils' academic and pastoral progress through both personal records and those set out in school policy
- Contribute to planning and monitoring within the classroom
- Prepare resources appropriate to the pupils they are supporting and assist with displays and activities within the classroom (in partnership and consultation with the class teacher).
- Help maintain good order in the school and - in partnership with colleagues – promote an enthusiastic, polite and kind atmosphere.
- Support teachers with educational visits.
- Participate in all elements of teaching and learning InSET.
- Be familiar with all school policy documents.
- Attend courses which are relevant to professional development.
- Meet yearly (as a minimum) with the Head of Pre-prep to review professional development.

This should all be done with regard to Summer Fields school policies and schemes or work, with the advice of teaching staff and colleagues.

Activities

- Attend all relevant parents' receptions.
- Participate in the social, moral and cultural life of the school by attending assemblies
- Contribute to all school occasions during term time such as Harvest Festival, Christmas events, Open Days, etc. (Some Saturdays during term time may be required for particular events).
- Take an active part on making high quality displays throughout the school (in partnership with class teachers).
- Play an active part in the weekly activities and after school care rota, in consultation with the Head of Pre-prep
- Share in taking all duties, including playground and lunch

General

- Follow school policies in relation to communication with parents and children, both orally and via e-mail.
- Attend all staff meetings (within normal working hours) and be present at meetings at the beginning and end of term
- Undertake any other responsibilities as reasonably requested by the Head of Pre-prep and the Head of Learning Support and EAL.
- Cover for absent staff as is necessary
- Support the school in its aims, ethos and objectives
- Comply with all health and safety procedures as required by the school.
- All staff share the responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and must adhere to, and comply with, the Safeguarding Policy.

This job description gives an indication of what will be required of the role and may be subject to change.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Pre-prep Teaching Assistant

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good level of Maths and English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GCSEs in Maths and English Level three Teaching Assistant Qualification or above First aid qualification
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of working successfully as part of a team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of working with children of a similar age in a school or similar setting Experience of working with children with special educational needs
Knowledge and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good knowledge of the way that 4-8 year old children learn Confident use of information and communication technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of contributions to planning, monitoring and record keeping of pupils' achievements Expertise in behaviour and class management skills
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to form good rapport with children, parents and staff Have high expectations for pupils' attainment, progress and behaviour Ability to be adaptable and resilient Create a happy and safe learning environment for all pupils Good organisational and time management skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in Outdoor Learning such as forest school training or similar
Personal characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to work both as part of a team and independently Commitment to continuous professional development Commitment to Summer Fields' policy of equal opportunity, and working with all colleagues and pupils amicably Enthusiastic and enjoys working with children A good sense of humour, positivity and a good work ethic 	

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APPLICATION AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS GUIDANCE NOTES

Summer Fields is committed to ensuring the best possible environment for the children and young people in its care. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people is our highest priority. The school aims to recruit staff that share and understand our commitment and to ensure that no job applicant is treated unfairly by reason of a protected characteristic as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

APPLICATION

- Applications will only be accepted from candidates completing the relevant Application Form in full. CVs will not be accepted in substitution for completed Application Forms but are permitted to be submitted alongside a completed Application Form.
- Candidates should be aware that all posts in the school involve some degree of responsibility for safeguarding children, although the extent of that responsibility will vary according to the nature of the post. Please see the job description for the post. If you are invited to attend a formal interview your suitability to work with children will be assessed.
- As the job for which you are applying involves substantial opportunity for access to children, it is important that you provide us with legally accurate answers.
- The successful applicant will be required to complete a Disclosure Form from the Disclosure and Barring Service (“DBS”) for the post and, where appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS will be made. Any offers of appointment will be made conditional on obtaining such satisfactory checks. Additionally, successful applicants should be aware that they are required to notify the school immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children.
- The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 apply to those providing early years childcare or later years childcare, including before school and after school clubs, to children who have not attained the age of 8 and to those who are directly concerned in the management of that childcare.
- The school takes its responsibility to safeguard children very seriously and any staff member and/or successful candidate who is aware of anything that may affect his/her suitability to work with children must notify the school/their manager immediately. This will include notification of any convictions, cautions, court orders, reprimands or warnings he/she may receive.
- Staff and/or successful candidates who are disqualified from childcare or registration may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of disqualification. Such individuals may not be employed in the areas from which they are disqualified, or involved in the management of those settings, unless and until such waiver is confirmed. Please speak to the HR Manager for more details.
- The school has a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’. This is known as the Prevent duty. Schools are required to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Accordingly, as part of the recruitment process, when an offer is made the offer will be subject to a Prevent duty risk assessment.
- If you are currently working with children, on either a paid or voluntary basis, your current employer will be asked about disciplinary offences, including disciplinary offences relating to children or young persons (whether the disciplinary sanction is current or time expired), and whether you have been the subject of any child protection allegations or concerns and if so the outcome of any enquiry or disciplinary procedure. Any information about past

disciplinary action or substantiated allegations will be considered in the circumstances of the individual.

- If you are not currently working with children but have done so in the past, that previous employer will be asked about those issues. Where neither your current nor previous employment has involved working with children, your current employer will still be asked about your suitability to work with children. Where you have no previous employment history, we may request character references which may include references from your school or university.
- You should be aware that provision of false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if you have been appointed, and a possible referral to the police and/or DBS.

CONDITIONAL OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

Any offer to a successful candidate will be conditional upon the following criteria:

- Receipt of at least two satisfactory references (if these have not already been received), including for internal appointments. All references should be provided by a senior person with appropriate authority, subject to the satisfaction of the school. All referees will be asked if the candidate is suitable to work with children. The school will compare any information provided by the referee with that provided by the candidate on the application form. Any inconsistencies will be discussed with the candidate.
- Verification of identity and qualifications including evidence of the right to work in the UK.
- A satisfactory enhanced DBS check and if appropriate, a check of the Barred List maintained by the DBS.
- For a candidate to be employed as a teacher, a check that that the candidate is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State or any sanction or restriction imposed (that remains current) by the historic General Teaching Council for England before its abolition in March 2012.
- Verification of professional qualifications, including, where applicable, any award of Qualified Teacher Status.
- Where the successful candidate has worked or been resident overseas, such checks and confirmations as the school may consider appropriate so that any relevant events that occurred outside the UK can be considered. This shall include the candidate providing the school with proof of his/her past conduct as a teacher in the form of a letter of professional standing from the professional regulating authority in the country in which he/she has worked.
- Verification of medical fitness for the role in accordance with DfE Circular 4/99 Physical and Mental Fitness to Teach.
- Where the role involves providing care for pupils under eight, receipt of a signed Self-Declaration form showing the candidate is not disqualified from providing childcare as set out in the statutory guidance "Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (July 2018)".
- For a candidate to be employed into a senior management position as set out within the School's Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy and Procedure, receipt of a signed "senior charity manager positions: automatic disqualification declaration" confirming that the candidate is not disqualified from acting in a senior management position for a charity in accordance with the automatic disqualification rules for charities;
- If you are undertaking a management role, a check that you have not been prohibited from participating in the management of independent schools.

It is the school's practice that a successful candidate must complete a pre-employment health questionnaire. The information contained in the questionnaire will then be held by the school in strictest confidence and used as set out in the school's Staff Privacy Notice and Staff Information Security Policy. This information will be reviewed against the Job Description and the Person Specification for the particular role, together with details of any other physical or mental requirements of the role i.e. proposed workload, extra-curricular activities, and layout of the school. The school is aware of its duties under the Equality Act 2010. No job offer will be withdrawn without first consulting with the applicant, considering medical evidence and considering reasonable adjustments.