



# Teaching Assistant Application Pack

**Space to learn, grow and be inspired**

RESPECT \* KINDNESS \* TRUTH \* POLITENESS \* DOING YOUR BEST



Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in teaching at Sonning Common Primary School. We are a happy and inclusive school in the centre of Sonning Common village, located 10 minutes from Reading and Henley-on-Thames, providing space to grow, learn and be inspired.

We are now seeking an amazing teaching assistant to join our team and help us to build on our successes and achieve our ambitious vision for the school.

We are looking for an energetic, positive person who would enjoy working with children and being part of a large, sociable team of adults. The position could suit an experienced teaching assistant or someone who wants to gain experience working with children to support their educational, social and emotional development.

What we want in a new colleague is someone who:

- loves working as part of a team
- shares and lives by our values of respect, truth, kindness, doing-your-best and politeness
- has a positive outlook on life

As a teaching assistant at Sonning Common Primary you will strive for excellence and build on the values at the heart of our school community. You will be ambitious yet nurturing, fostering a culture of openness and mutual respect. You will also set the safeguarding and welfare of our pupils as your highest priority.

In return, our staff enjoy working here because the school offers:

- a supportive management team, exceptional staff, and an active PTA and parent community
- kind, curious, and enthusiastic learners
- professional development and leadership opportunities

The school maintained its rating of 'Good' by Ofsted in September 2023 and the feedback we received from our inspection was reassuring and heartwarming. Our school is truly valued by the community it serves. The pupils at Sonning Common Primary are happy, engaged and well supported by an outstanding team of dedicated teachers and staff.

You are warmly invited to visit the school and get a sense of everything that Sonning Common Primary School has to offer. Information on how to arrange a visit is at the end of this pack.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Rachel Salmons

Headteacher



## About Sonning Common Primary

We are a happy and inclusive school proudly providing space to learn, grow, and be inspired. Our location in the centre of Sonning Common village helps to do this as we are situated on the edge of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, with easy links to large towns such as Reading and Henley-on-Thames.



Sonning Common Primary provides a stimulating academic environment and design our curriculum to engage and excite our pupils, so that they gain an independent desire to learn. We have a dedicated team of Subject Leaders who craft the strategic vision in each area of the curriculum and look for opportunities to engage students in those areas in new ways. Our high academic standards are demonstrated by our excellent Key Stage 2 results, showing how well equipped our children are for their transition to secondary school. We continued to be rated 'Good' in our most recent Ofsted inspection in September 2023.



Sonning Common Primary is set in a vibrant, spacious location, with refurbished, well-resourced classrooms and an up-to-date computer suite, plus sets of laptops for most year groups. We have an onsite library supported by library services staff. The school benefits from large playing fields and an onsite swimming pool and an all-weather multi-use games area to support our varied sports curriculum. We are very proud of our Forest School which gives pupils in all year groups a chance to appreciate and

learn about the amazing environment they are in. We have two dedicated woodland Forest School areas and hold Recognised Provider status.

Our children develop within this nurturing and caring environment to become independent, free-thinking learners who have a secure moral and spiritual grounding. We are ambitious and want every staff member and child to achieve their full potential. As a result our children are well-behaved and enthusiastic about their learning. Their families are engaged and supportive. Our pupils value their school.



As a local authority-maintained community primary school we have a diverse student body. We aim to serve the needs of our wider school community. We provide a range of services to support busy working parents including a Breakfast Club, After School Care and Holiday Club. Our PTA is highly active and engaged. They organise a diverse range of well attended events each year, and the funds they raise help to support a broad range of additional learning experiences for our pupils.



We have a warm, welcoming and committed staff team. Our Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body are knowledgeable and supportive and place a high value on development for improvement. All staff receive a comprehensive induction. There is a strong commitment to CPD (including leadership development opportunities) and managing staff workloads. We have a great track record of mentoring ECTs and we regularly host teacher training placements. We are proactively responding to increases in the numbers of pupils with SEND requirements and have a dedicated pastoral support team who work alongside our SENCo to meet the needs of staff and pupils. We have a designated wellbeing co-ordinator for staff and a program of fun social events. All staff have access to a package of free and confidential wellbeing services.







## Vision & Values

Our school is a values-led community school centred around making good relationships, teamwork and caring for others. Our staff members are dedicated to providing an education for the whole child, giving every individual an exciting and interesting start to life.

Around 350 boys and girls aged between 4 and 11 and 80 adults make our school the amazing place that it is.



We are proud to provide everyone with a space to learn, grow and to be inspired. Our values of Respect, Kindness, Truth, Politeness and Doing your Best help us to shape the culture of our school. We have an ambitious school vision which we expect the successful candidate will support and develop:

### for Students

- Improve teaching and learning so that teaching is recognised as consistently outstanding.
- Maintain our record of above local and national averages for progress and attainment in the core subjects.
- Forest School will make a measurable impact in school improvement and wellbeing.
- Attendance will be at more than 96%, with additional support to increase attendance of disadvantaged pupils.



### for Parents

- Become the natural first choice of school for the village and surrounding areas.

### for Staff

- Develop strong leadership and management across the school with expectations and ambition to always improve.
- Support all staff to continually develop and enable them to reach their full potential in their role and inspire both pupils and staff alike.

### for Community and Sustainability

- Collaborate with the community on a wide range of activities and knowledge sharing.
- To be recognised as one of the most eco-friendly schools in the country, having reduced waste, increased wildlife and biodiversity onto the site, saved energy and generated our own.
- Sustain a healthy budget which provides for good financial resilience and the ability to invest in the improvement of our pupils' learning.





## Job Description – Teaching Assistant

**Grade: 4 (SCP4-5) Hours/week: by agreement Working weeks: 38 (term-time only)**

**Responsible to:** Head teacher / designated member of staff, e.g. Deputy Head teacher / SENDCo

### Duties and Responsibilities:

The post-holder may be expected to work with individual children having special, or particular, needs and/or groups of children - as directed. The following does not represent an exhaustive list but gives an indication of the role of the post.

The post-holder must have a good, general education and may be expected to possess a relevant qualification e.g. NNEB or NVQ equivalent. They will be expected to have had experience in working with, and be able to relate to and empathise with, children.

#### 1. Classroom Preparation

- 1.1 To prepare classroom and associated areas for use, setting out/putting away equipment, apparatus etc.
- 1.2 Make up and maintain work or topic cards/ sheets/ books and other teaching aids - as necessary. To prepare work and notices for display, or other, purposes. Assist with / arrange displays and interest tables.

#### 2. Planning and Organisation

- 2.1 To plan, prepare resources and teach a phonics group, following the agreed format of Read Write Inc Phonics (if working in a year group which teaches phonics)
- 2.2 To participate in the planning process and discuss with relevant members of the teaching staff programmes for the lesson/ day/ week/ term.
- 2.3 To assist with the general management and organisation of children and resources/ equipment which relate to the support of children.
- 2.4 To assist with planning, organising and supervising educational visits and outings.
- 2.5 To participate in the planning process and contribute to the formation of: -
  - strategies and appropriate future patterns of study
  - care plans (if relevant)
  - pupil profiles.

#### 3. Working with Children

Under the guidance/ direction of relevant member(s) of the teaching staff :

- 3.1 To work with individuals or specific groups of children on activities, such as:-
  - reading, writing (including Additional Learning Support initiatives)
  - practical, creative, physical activities
  - the use of specialised equipment e.g. computer software.
  - environmental studies
- 3.2 To assist with the supervision of children: -
  - within classroom settings
  - during School assembly
  - at play/ meal times
  - on outings and educational visits
  - using cloakrooms/ washrooms
  - changing before/ after recreational activities



- not participating in an activity.
  - 3.3 To assist children with: -
    - toileting (only if Key Stage 1)
    - the attainment of personal hygiene skills
    - the removal/ replacement of clothing/ footwear.
  - 3.4 To constructively help children to participate in activities by adapting and/or interpreting lessons and instructions accordingly. To refocus children and ensure that they are 'kept on task'.
  - 3.5 To guide and assist the development of children's:-
    - social behaviour, attitudes and skills
    - independence skills
    - language, literacy, mathematical, scientific, technological, manipulative and physical skills.
  - 3.6 To assist with the implementation of specific learning, behavioural modification and therapy programme(s).
  - 3.7 To support children with sensory/ physical problems - as and when necessary, e.g :-
    - assist in mobility training
    - assist in the provision of physical management programmes
    - assist with alternative methods of communication with non-communicative children.
  - 3.8 To assist in the formulation, implementation and maintenance of Pupil Profiles as prepared by the class teacher or SENCO.
- 4. Assessment of Children**
- 4.1 General observation of children, giving feedback to appropriate staff - as relevant.
  - 4.2 To monitor children's progress, or otherwise, identifying particular needs, difficulties, problems and, to discuss these with relevant member(s) of the teaching staff.
  - 4.3 To keep formal records of activities undertaken and retain evidence of developmental achievements
  - 4.4 To assist with assessment of activities, e.g. baseline/key stages.
  - 4.5 To provide information for, and contribute to, the annual review process and/ or case conferences. To attend any relevant meetings concerning the social and/ or educational needs of the child(ren) – as required/directed.
- 5. Care and Welfare**
- 5.1 To assist with support care/first aid - when necessary. Similarly to enter details of accidents in the record book and to deal with minor medical needs - such as checking phonic ear, hearing aids etc. When necessary, to issue prescribed medication - in line with the Schools policy and procedures and following prior agreement with the parent(s).
  - 5.2 To ensure Health and Safety regulations are complied with at all times.
- 6. Professional Relationships**
- 6.1 As necessary, to liaise with appropriate members of staff and, as directed, with parents, and representatives from professional support services e.g., health visitors, school nurse, social workers, psychologists and other agencies.
  - 6.2 To support persons undertaking training and work experience.
  - 6.3 To liaise with the School's Special Needs staff - as required and to contribute to the needs of the Governing Body, in relation to SEN, via the SENCO.



## **7. Administration**

- 7.1 To undertake specific administrative tasks - associated with those children receiving special care or attention - as relevant and directed.
- 7.2 To complete general administrative tasks, such as photocopying, as relevant and directed.

## **8. Other Associated Tasks**

- 8.1 Such as :-
  - attending and contributing to staff meetings – as appropriate
  - attending relevant courses/ training to develop experience and broaden awareness
  - participating in all aspects of School life
  - reinforcing the standards and expectations that exist within the School.
- 8.2 To ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times.
- 8.3 To promote the positive image of the School within the local community.
- 8.4 To participate with the School's appraisal process.

## **Liaison with other Agencies**

1. Liaise with other agencies as necessary, maintaining confidentiality at all times.
2. Support the school links with the local community.
3. Work alongside governors, involving them in the life of the school.

## **Health and Safety**

All Employees are required to ensure that they:

1. Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and any other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
2. As regards any duty or requirements imposed on his or her employer or any other persons by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, co-operate with him or her so far as necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with.
3. All staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the health and safety aspects of their work and to avoid conduct which would put them or anyone else at risk.
4. Be familiar with the School's Health and Safety Policy and any and all safety regulations as laid down by the governing body.
5. Completed the Health and Safety Checklist and returned to line manager.
6. Ensure health and safety regulations, rules, routines and procedures are being applied effectively by both staff and pupils.
7. See that all plant, machinery and equipment is adequately guarded and is in good and safe working order.
8. Not make unauthorised or improper use of plant, machinery and equipment.
9. Use the correct equipment and tools for the job and any protective equipment or safety devices which may be supplied.
10. Ensure that toxic, hazardous and highly flammable substances are correctly used, stored and labelled.





11. Report any defects in the premises, plant, equipment and facilities which they observe. Defects should be reported on the sheet in the staff room or reported to caretaker or SLT.
12. Take an active interest in promoting health and safety and suggest ways of reducing risks.
13. Report all defects on the maintenance forms and return them to the office
14. Complete and action risk assessments for all potentially hazardous on/off site activities
15. Use, but not misuse things provided for your health, safety and welfare
16. Do not undertake unsafe acts
17. Inform Head of Establishment of any "Near-Misses"
18. Raise health, and safety and environmental issues with pupils – in child friendly speak explaining to them how they can help to keep themselves safe.

### **Other**

To have professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which you teach, and maintain high standards in your own attendance and punctuality

Note: This job description is not your contract of employment or any part of it. It has been prepared only for the purpose of school organisation and may change either as your contract changes or as the organisation of the school is changed. Nothing will be changed without consultation.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An enhanced DBS will be sought from the successful candidate.



## **Person Specification - Teaching Assistant**

### **Education**

- Maths and English GCSE or equivalent (required)
- A Level or above (desirable)

### **Knowledge and Experience**

- Working with children between the ages of 4 and 11 years

### **Skills and Abilities**

- Effective communicator both verbal and written
- Diplomacy, influencing and persuasiveness skills
- Excellent time management and ability to prioritise workload
- Ability to work independently as well as part of a team

### **Personal Qualities and Interests**

- Approachable and empathetic
- Flexible in approach with a can-do attitude
- Able to stay calm under pressure
- Reliable and act with integrity



## **Staff Benefits - Teaching Assistant**

**Salary:** Grade 4 (scale points 4-5) (2024 salary rates £12.65 - 12.85/hr)

**Parking:** Free onsite car parking available. Bike storage is also available.

**Pension scheme:** Support staff are eligible to join the Oxfordshire Pension Fund (19.9% employer contribution from Oxfordshire County Council)

**Paid Annual Leave:** 5.5 weeks paid holiday, plus bank holidays

**Paid Sick Leave:** Paid Sickness and Compassionate Leave allowances

**Childcare:** Subsidised wraparound childcare for children who attend the school during working hours

**Wellbeing support:** Access to a package of free health and wellbeing services including counselling & physiotherapy

**Staff discounts & benefits:** Including long service awards, Cycle to Work scheme and Oxfordshire County Councils discount scheme featuring deals on national attractions, entertainment, days out, theme parks, holidays, insurance and many national retailers.

**Catering:** Low-cost healthy lunches available when working, free hot drinks provided for staff

**Professional Development:** Regular training opportunities offered

**Beautiful location:** Located 15 minutes north of Reading in a thriving South Oxfordshire village



## How to Apply

A full job application pack and application form can be downloaded here:

[SCPS Vacancies](#)

Deadline for applications - Application forms should be submitted via email as soon as possible and at the latest, by **9am Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025** to:

[recruitment@sonning-common.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:recruitment@sonning-common.oxon.sch.uk)

We reserve the right to close this vacancy early if we receive sufficient applications for the role. All applications must use the form provided. CVs cannot be accepted.

Following shortlisting successful candidates will be invited to an interview, pending satisfactory references. Further details about interview arrangements will be provided to those shortlisted.

Interviews: **week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

Start Date: **negotiable**

Visits to the school are most welcome by appointment. Please contact Kirstin Honor, our Office Manager ([office@sonning-common.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office@sonning-common.oxon.sch.uk)) to arrange a time.

### Safer Recruitment

Oxfordshire Schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This post involves the type of work with children and young people that requires applicants to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service check and appropriate Right to Work clearances in line with our recruitment and selection practices. The possession of a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from obtaining this post. All users are considered confidentially and according to the nature of the role and information disclosed.

Sonning Common Primary is an Equal Opportunity Employer.