

For April 2025 or September 2025

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
Teaching Assistant



Our mission is to develop academically successful, community minded, self-confident and well rounded individuals who are well prepared for their futures.

Westbrook Hay is a thriving co-educational independent day school. Pupils enjoy a broad curriculum, achieve excellent results and have the all-important confidence to succeed.

The school roll is currently at a record high of around 380 pupils and in September 2023 announced that it is growing its Senior Section of the school from Year 8 to Year 11 and will begin offering GCSEs.

Our ethos is to be a welcoming, inclusive community that provides the best for, and expects the best from us all.

The school is well known locally for its warm and welcoming atmosphere. This is something we cherish and, even though we are potentially going to grow slightly in size, we do not want to lose this ethos.

We believe our ethos separates us from larger competitor schools in our locality. This ethos is generated by the staff and their relationships with the pupils and parents. It has been regularly described as 'friendly and professional'.

We are seeking a new Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Teaching Assistant who can help us with achieving our mission and thrive under this ethos, supporting our youngest pupils to reach their full potential as they move through the school.



Our History



Westbrook Hay School, founded in 1892 by Augustus Orlebar in Bedford, has evolved over 130 years, relocating and renaming itself multiple times. Originally a small establishment with just two pupils, it grew under successive leaderships and moved to its current location at Westbrook Hay in 1963. It transitioned from a boarding school for boys to accepting day pupils and girls in the late 1970s.

Located between Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire, the school's beautiful location boasts 26 acres of parkland overlooking the Bourne Valley. For example, the school has a purpose-built Pre-Prep and is planning a new specialist STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) building to cater for GCSEs. The Performing Arts Centre was added in 2016 and boasts impressive facilities for dance, drama and music. Specialist facilities also include a Science Laboratory, DT Workshop, Sports Hall, Swimming Pool, an ICT Suite and an Art Studio.

Under various heads the school has expanded and modernised, while continuing to prepare students for prestigious senior schools such as Bedford, Berkhamsted, Haileybury, Millfield, Stowe and St Albans. The school now moves into a new phase of development becoming an all-through school to 16.





Long Term School Strategy

In September 2023, Westbrook Hay announced that it is growing its Senior Section from Year 8 to Year 11 to begin offering GCSEs.

The decision was made in reaction to the changing local market, from a position of financial strength and due to demand from current and prospective parents.

This process has started extremely well with record numbers of pupils joining into Year 7 and new starters into Year 8. The first Year 9 cohort will be in place for September 2025.

School Structure

The school is growing to form three main sections



Pre-Prep: for pupils from Nursery to Year 2, this section of the school is two form entry and consists of approximately 140 boys and girls.



Prep: for pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, this section of the school is two or three form entry and consists of approximately 190 boys and girls.

Seniors: currently just Lower Seniors, Years 7 and 8, this section of the school consists of approximately 60 boys and girls. Under our long term strategy we will be adding Upper Seniors, Years 9 to 11, with the aim of having around 40 pupils in each year group.



EYFS at Westbrook Hay

At Westbrook Hay we are dedicated to nurturing each pupil's uniqueness. This spans from their formative years and continues into their GCSE years where we take pride in providing an environment where well-rounded individuals can flourish and succeed.

Academic life at Westbrook Hay encourages effective, life-long learning habits, through a broad and engaging curriculum. Key to our academic success is the fact that every pupil is well-known in our close-knit community. Classes are small and our teachers ensure that they do all they can to support pupils with learning on an individual basis.

Curriculum

In EYFS our topic-based curriculum aims to develop all areas of a pupil's learning and emphasis is placed on building confidence. The pupils learn through play and the opportunity to interact with their peers, benefitting from a small and attentive environment. Pupils in EYFS have daily access to our Outdoor Classroom where they have room to explore, create and imagine. They also regularly go on walks and expeditions around the school, visiting our orchard, pond and woodland areas.

Further into their time in Nursery and moving onto Reception, the pupils receive a more structured approach to their education as the foundations for literacy and numeracy are established. EYFS Staff help pupils become familiar with the phonics system that is used throughout Pre-Prep, giving a firm foundation for reading. In Nursery, in addition to the Class Teacher, the children are taught by specialists in Physical Education and Dance. French, Music and Games are added in Reception.

Enrichment

Pupils in EYFS enjoy a wide variety of enrichment activities. From an early age the pupils are encouraged to take part in annual performances, including the Dance Display, Harvest Assembly, Nativity Production, Pre-Prep Poetry Recitation and Shakespeare Festival.

Reception pupils may also choose to participate in the Westbrook+ after school programme, which offers clubs such as ballet, ball skills, construction, fencing and taekwondo. By giving our pupils plenty of choice, we know that we are providing them with opportunities to try something new, find their niche and to thrive.

Across the year pupils have opportunities in school to extend their learning through visiting companies such as Zoo Lab and Wonderdome. In Reception pupils have their first external school trip. Linked to their current topic, these trips and visits enrich pupil enjoyment and understanding of a topic, as well as build on skills such as independence and responsibility.



Overview of the Role



We are seeking a candidate to join the Pre-Prep Department as an EYFS Teaching Assistant. Working from Monday to Friday, starting at 07:30 and finishing three days a week at 16:00, once at 16:30 and once at 17:30. An outstanding and inspiring practitioner, the successful candidate will have expert curriculum knowledge and an insatiable appetite for learning. We are looking for someone who is able to build our pupils' confidence and curiosity, enjoying the opportunity to develop practice in this ambitious and successful school.

Pre-Prep Department

The Head of Pre-Prep leads the Pre-Prep Department, which consists of Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants for a Nursery Class and two-form entry from Reception to Year 2. The Head of Pre-Prep is assisted in leading this section of the school by the Pre-Prep Academic Lead, Pre-Prep Pastoral Lead and Head of Nursery.

The ideal candidate will demonstrate a desire to work independently and as a part of the Pre-Prep team, it is vital that they will fit in well with the hardworking nature of the existing staff. The postholder will be expected to work collaboratively within their year group.

Teaching Assistant

The EYFS Teaching Assistant will work closely with Pre-Prep Staff, supporting individuals and groups in lessons. Teaching Assistants will also be expected to deliver small group intervention, as directed by the Class Teacher, undertake some administrative tasks and provide cover for absent colleagues.

Job Description



Key Responsibilities

The purpose of this job description is to outline the main responsibilities of an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Teaching Assistant. It is not restrictive and includes any other reasonable requests that may arise.

The safety and well-being of the children in School is paramount at all times. An EYFS Teaching Assistant is responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children for whom they are responsible, or with whom they come into contact. An EYFS Teaching Assistant will adhere to and ensure compliance with the School's Child Protection Policy at all times. If in the course of carrying out their duties, an EYFS Teaching Assistant becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the School, it is their responsibility to report any concerns to the school's Designated Senior Lead for Child Protection or the Head.

An EYFS Teaching Assistant will be line-managed by the Head of Pre-Prep.

Pupil Support

- Support individual pupils and groups, under the direction of the Class Teacher, introducing activities and using a range of strategies to support all pupils in their learning
- Be proactive in the pupils' learning and encourage the pupils to reach their potential
- Demonstrate excellent curriculum knowledge and set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge the pupils
- Help pupils to access the full curriculum, at the same time promoting independent learning both inside and outside of the classroom, as well self-reliance and interdependence
- Support the wellbeing of pupils, reporting problems to relevant staff as appropriate

Staff Support

- Be flexible and willing to assist staff in any area of the school as reasonably requested
- Meet regularly with the Class Teacher to discuss pupil progress and to plan and review support
- Provide administrative support, such as: displaying work, filing, photocopying, tidying after lessons or activities, typing and other reasonable tasks for Prep-Prep Staff

- Contribute to discussions on making decisions and recommendations about practice, routines and organisation of space, to maximise learning opportunities of all pupils
- Provide cover for absent colleagues and be willing to teach lessons independently, as required by the Senior Deputy Head

Other Responsibilities

- Actively support the school's vision, values and ethos
- Participate in co-curricular school activities including clubs, day and residential trips



Person Specification



Personal Qualities

The successful candidate will have the personal qualities to gain the respect of pupils, parents and colleagues. Most important perhaps is the ability to work, not just independently, but also as a team member.

Those applying should prove that they have a passion for EYFS, have a track record of success which would enhance Westbrook Hay's academic culture and have excellent pastoral skills that ensure the happiness of our pupils. The position would suit teaching assistants who are able to support pupils of all abilities to reach their full potential and help them to thrive.

The new EYFS Teaching Assistant will join a school where staff development is important and ambition is encouraged. Applicants will be expected to show that they have relevant educational experience as per the person specification. A good understanding of and a commitment to the ethos of a co-educational independent school will be important but it is not essential to have worked in an independent school in the past.

Skills, Experience, Qualifications, Knowledge and Personal Attributes

All staff at Westbrook Hay are expected to embrace and demonstrate in their professional lives the School's values of courage, independence, integrity, reflective learner, responsibility and togetherness.

Qualifications and Knowledge

GCSE Grades 9 to 4 (A* to C) including English and Maths	Essential
NVQ Level 3 Teaching Assistant Qualification or equivalent	Essential
NVQ Level 4 or Higher Level Teaching Assistant Qualification or equivalent	Desirable
Knowledge of current best practice in EYFS learning and teaching	Essential
Evidence of ongoing professional development	Essential
Knowledge of safeguarding requirements within a school	Essential

Skills and Experience

Experience of working in an educational setting	Essential
Experience of providing cover for absent colleagues and being willing to teach lessons independently	Essential
Ability and enthusiasm to teach both boys and girls	Essential
Ability to make accurate and productive use of assessment	Essential
Ability to nurture and develop an ethos of high standards, personal fulfilment and academic success	Essential
Ability to plan time effectively and meet deadlines	Essential
Ability to problem solve and offer solutions	Essential
Ability to take responsibility and show initiative	Essential
Ability to work within a dedicated and hardworking team	Essential
Effective management of pupil behaviour	Essential
Excellent administrative and organisational skills	Essential
Excellent communication skills to a range of audiences	Essential
Experience of planning and leading teaching & learning activities	Essential
Experience of working in an 'all-through' school	Desirable
Experience of working in the independent sector	Desirable



Personal Attributes

A teaching assistant with the ability to collaborate with colleagues and contribute positively to the goals and team spirit of the Prep & Learning Support Departments and the wider staff team	Essential
Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and how this applies to the role	Essential
Commitment to inspiring all pupils to develop a life-long passion for learning	Essential
Commitment to ongoing professional development	Essential
Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people	Essential
Commitment to the benefits of coeducation	Essential
Commitment to providing excellent opportunities for all pupils in the school	Essential
Excellent IT skills	Essential
High levels of emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills	Essential
Passionate about the wellbeing of all pupils, inspiring others through their care, enthusiasm and expertise	Essential
Positive role model	Essential



An EYFS Teaching Assistant is expected to be:

Personal

- Able to demonstrate high levels of interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence;
- Patient and kind, yet determined;
- Able to demonstrate integrity at all times;
- Loyal to the school and an embodiment of Westbrook Hay's values and mission its vision, mission and ethos;
- A lover of learning who is always willing to learn themselves;
- Empathetic to the plight/work of others and flexible enough to adapt their expectations to support others' needs and challenges whilst delivering the highest quality of education;
- Understanding of the impact of their own behaviours on others, being a personal and professional role model for the community.

Professional

- Committed to putting our children first;
- A champion of the Westbrook Way Charter;
- A leader and a manager;
- Passionate about their subject, inspiring others through their expertise and enthusiasm;
- An outstanding teacher of their subject who is keen to coach other teachers to reach the highest standards;
- Courteous, professional and respectful to all, at all times;
- Discreet and professionally sensitive;
- Able to be at the forefront of educational thinking in their subject;
- Organised, meticulous and a first-rate administrator who has excellent IT literacy;
- Resilient and able to recover quickly from professional setbacks;
- Proactive and creative when problem solving;
- Able to lead others with a flexible approach;
- Able to meet deadlines;
- Confident, articulate and willing to offer ideas;
- Hard working but able and willing to delegate effectively;
- Able to manage differences of opinion and bring disagreement to an effective, respectful conclusion, being accepting when in the minority;
- Competent in monitoring and evaluating the performance of individual teachers in their subject.

Leadership

- Committed to making Westbrook Hay a first-choice school;
- Open minded to change, new ideas and shifts in strategy;
- Able to play their part in the completion of a strategic plan;
- Able to motivate and energise others to achieve the school's mission;
- Able to identify operational weaknesses and opportunities and suggest actions for improvement;
- Be able to lead change and develop a culture of reflection, evaluation and improvement.



Salary and Benefits

This is a teaching assistant position, the salary will be competitive and dependent on experience.

What can we offer you?

- A fantastic team of staff to work with and be a part of
- A school that is rated 'Excellent' by ISI with waiting lists in operation in a number of year groups
- Commitment to continuing professional development
- Enhanced Family Leave
- Free cooked lunches and refreshments throughout the day
- Membership of the Employee Assistance Programme
- Opportunities to attend events organised by the Staff Social Committee
- Receipt of a 'Golden Ticket' for assisting with an overnight event, which enables staff to apply for a half day either in the morning or afternoon
- Small class sizes, a beautiful rural location and excellent facilities
- 50% fee remission is offered for children of school staff, subject to availability of places



Application and Recruitment Process

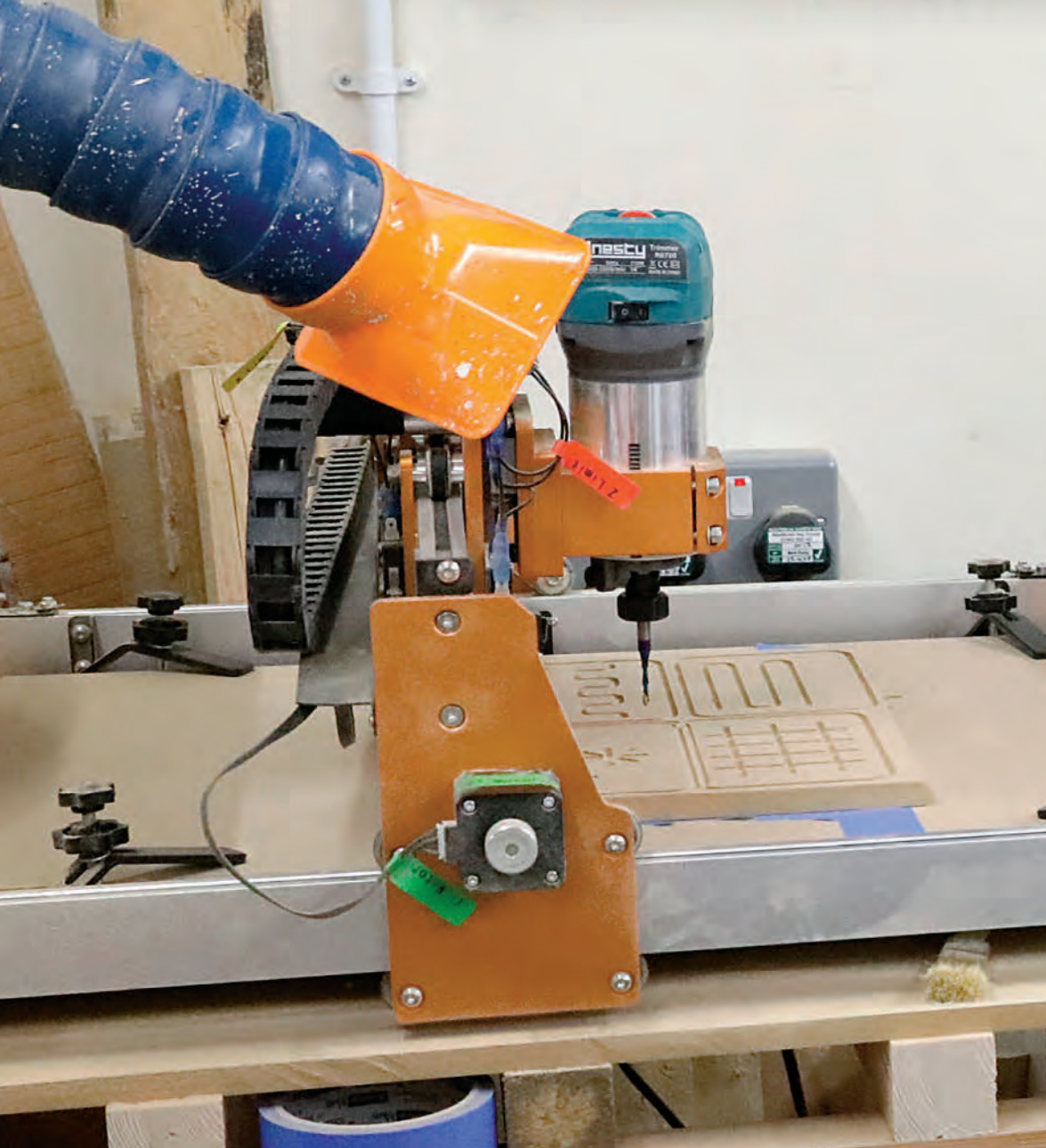


The deadline for the receipt of applications is 12:00 on Thursday 30th January. To apply for this position, please complete an application via the TES website. Further information or any enquiries can be requested from our HR officer, Mrs Rachel Franklin (rachel_franklin@westbrookhay.co.uk).

It is anticipated that interviews will be held on the week beginning Monday 10th February. Although the programme is yet to be confirmed it will include an interview and support of a lesson or activity. Candidates will be offered a tour of the school and lunch, if the timing is appropriate. We reserve the right to appoint a candidate prior to the close of the deadline and would encourage early applications.

This appointment is for April 2025 or September 2025 but it is possible for the successful candidate to start earlier if appropriate. Early applications are encouraged and the school reserves the right to make an appointment before the closing date.

Compliance Requirements



The appointment is subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks in accordance with DfES guidance, to satisfactory references, satisfactory clearance from the DBS, proof of identity and qualifications and a satisfactory medical report. Westbrook Hay is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. All successful applicants will be required to undergo child protection screening including checks with current and previous employers and the Disclosure & Barring Service.





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