



Lower School Learning Assistant

Required for September 2019

Lower School Learning Assistant

The advertisement in the TES is as follows;

An enthusiastic and talented Learning Assistant to join an outstanding team in this flourishing and forward-looking Prep School where academic standards are high. An active contribution to the wider life of the school is an expectation.

Closing date: **Wednesday 24th April 2019 at 9.00am**

Interview date: **Tuesday 30th April 2019**

Thomas's London Day Schools

Thomas's London Day Schools educates over 2000 children at four schools – Thomas's Battersea, Thomas's Clapham, Thomas's Fulham, and Thomas's Kensington, and in one kindergarten in Battersea. Thomas's Academy, formerly New King's Primary School, joined the Thomas's family of schools in September 2015.

It is our prime concern that children at Thomas's are happy. We provide for their education by giving each child dignity and self-esteem through a sense of achievement, be it academic, artistic, or sporting. The central belief is that all this and more can be achieved if we can be kind to one another.

In these preparatory years we offer a broad curriculum covering a wide range of subjects and skills so that by the time they leave us our pupils will have begun to identify individual areas

of talent. In a positive and stimulating environment we ensure that each child achieves the best academic results of which each child is capable.

Thomas's Clapham

a. The School and its facilities

The school occupies a site on Broomwood Road between Wandsworth and Clapham Commons. It is housed in a Grade II listed building which was built between 1904 and 1908 as the site for Clapham County Girls' School. Thomas's Clapham opened as a school for boys and girls in 1993 aged 4–13. There are currently 653 pupils on roll. Philip Ward took up post as Headmaster in September 2012. Before that he was the Headmaster of Feltonfleet, in Cobham, for twelve years.

The facilities at Clapham include a superb Drama studio and fully equipped theatre space, and separate Art, Pottery and Design Technology centre, newly built in 2001, and an impressive building housing the Reception classes, which opened in 2006. Exciting new outdoor play and learning areas have been created, as well as Mindfulness Place, an enchanting garden dedicated to the school's commitment to teaching Mindfulness.

The Masterplan for a significant refurbishment of the top floor (KS3) teaching areas, and the provision of new and revitalised spaces for catering and dining along with a sports hall for teaching PE, is well developed. The plan also includes the rejuvenation of the School Hall into an Atrium to further support our commitment to Expressive and Performing Arts, oracy, and enquiry based learning. The Year 1 and 2 classrooms were completely refurbished during the summer of 2016. The Year 3, 4 and 5 classrooms underwent their own transformation during the summer of 2017, along with the IT room, and some areas of the Music Department. The recent and on-going investment in digital learning is significant and exciting.

Demand for places in the school is considerable, with most children arriving into the school in Reception. Around twenty girls and boys join the school in Year 7 from Thomas's Fulham. One class of children leave at 11+ for London day and boarding schools, the majority stay until Year 8, sitting 13+ exams for the London day schools, Common Entrance (92% A*–B in 2018) or Academic Scholarship. 56 academic and Co-curricular Scholarships were won in 2018. Approximately 75% leave for boarding schools at the end of Year 8.

b. Inspiring every child

We are a values based school, and our commitment to the Thomas's core values, central to which is kindness, permeates every aspect of school life.

The approach to teaching and learning is exciting, progressive, and challenging. Change is eagerly embraced by colleagues and pupils who share a passion for learning and finding new and better ways of doing things. Creativity, thinking skills and instilling a thirst for independent learning are at the heart of our approach. Traditional and didactic teaching methods would feel alien at Thomas's Clapham with a developing emphasis on enquiry based learning throughout the school. Continuous professional development is a strongly established culture within the school.

Whilst academic standards and expectations are very high, there is a strong emphasis on breadth with a vibrant co-curricular programme. The emphasis on the wellbeing of the whole community is compelling. Wellbeing is actively taught in the time allocated to weekly Inspiring Living lessons, continuously supporting the school wide culture generated by the commitment to Inspiring Living. This is closely aligned to our SOCIAL Time programme which actively teaches and reinforces the importance we attribute to teaching social responsibility, citizenship and the clear benefits of learning outside.

We rolled out a revised curriculum in September 2016, characterised by enquiry based learning, and the teaching of a character skills programme called the 8C's which is woven into every aspect of the curriculum. A commitment to teaching Growth Mindset has instilled a positive and optimistic approach to learning, living and leading which has been very well received.

The school was recognised as Outstanding in each category by Ofsted in February 2018.

c. Approaching 2025

Approaching 2025 is our current strategic development plan which we launched in September 2018. It is the result of an eighteen month long process of consultation and collaboration involving the whole school community. **Approaching 2025** seeks to build seamlessly on all that achieved in the period 2013–2018 as a result of our commitment to the school's first strategic plan, *Inspiring every child*.

Approaching 2025 is, above all else, a collective commitment which puts the children at the heart of our efforts to ensure that at every opportunity we are doing all we possibly can to prepare them for the not insignificant challenges of the mid and later decades of the C21.

d. Thomas's in the future

With the exciting news that Thomas's are to open their first senior school in September 2021, work is currently being undertaken to review existing curriculum and assessment arrangements across the family of schools. The outcomes of this process will inform the design of an enquiry based curriculum from Reception to Year 13 which will be rolled out across the group and into the senior school as it opens.

The Lower School at Thomas's Clapham

Thomas's Clapham is divided into 3 stages, the Lower School, (Reception to Year 2), the Middle School (Years 3 and 4), and the Upper School (Years 5 – 8). Within a large and vibrant school, this allows the Head of each area of the school and their staff to tailor the curriculum specifically to the academic and pastoral needs of the children at each stage of their development.

Mrs Hannah Tongue is the Assistant Head – Head of the Lower School. She is supported by a Deputy Head of Lower School, and an Early Years Leader. The welfare of the children in each year group is overseen by Year Leaders. There are a maximum of 4 classes within each year group in the Lower School and staff support each other with planning, organisation and sharing areas of expertise.

The children are in classes of no more than 21 in the Lower School, and stay with their form cohort for most lessons. The form teacher is responsible for teaching Mathematics, English, Enquiry (Science, History and Geography) and Inspiring Living as well as overseeing the pastoral care of their form. The class teachers are supported by a team of Learning Assistants.

Job specification – Lower School Learning Assistant

The successful candidate for this post will have at least a Level 3 qualification relevant to the post, either experienced in or trained to assist with children's learning.

a. Accountable

- To the Assistant Head – Head of Lower School.

b. Responsible

- For supporting all aspects of learning in the Lower School.

c. Key areas of responsibility

- To carry out all the usual duties of a Learning Assistant.
- To fulfil all the responsibilities of a Learning Assistant.
- To promote high quality teaching and learning of the National Curriculum.
- To help to ensure that the classroom is an invigorating environment for effective learning, embracing pupils' work on paper, display and in the general atmosphere created in the classroom
- To assist the children's learning in all areas of the curriculum
- To be accessible and amenable to regular parental contact, and develop successful and professional relationships with parents
- To maintain and manage the physical resources in the learning environment
- To undertake supervisory duties
- To run an assigned weekly club
- To help with year group productions
- To attend staff meetings, school INSET, and attend professional courses to enhance teaching effectiveness and qualifications
- To support and contribute strongly to the corporate life of the school (eg contributing material to newsletters, the school magazine, the web site, attending events etc)

- To comply with all Health and Safety requirements
- To ensure the best possible practice
- To play a full part in the life of the School

d. Person specification

We want to appoint a qualified Lower School Learning Assistant. A sense of humour, adaptability, a commitment to team work, and a strong desire to make a difference are vital to our philosophy. A can do, will do attitude must be the driving intent of the successful teacher, allied to a sensitive and sympathetic approach to the overall role.

In addition to the candidate's ability to perform the duties of the post, the interview will also explore the issues relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including;

- Motivation to work with children and young people.
- The ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and boundaries with children and young people.
- Emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours.
- Attitudes to the use of authority and maintaining discipline.

The day at Thomas's Clapham is dynamic and busy, and we shall certainly look for, and reward, a strong commitment to the whole life of the school.

We would be delighted to welcome applications from colleagues currently working in the maintained sector. However, understanding our high expectations, a commitment to working very hard and clear evidence that you are going to get fully involved in the life of this excellent school is paramount. You need not have worked in a prep school before, but you do need to have empathy with the ethos and spirit of prep schools and independent education in general.

Other areas of School life

All teachers appointed to Thomas's Clapham are expected to contribute fully to the extracurricular and pastoral life of the School.

Pastoral care is a strong feature of life at the school, and all teachers are expected to share in this responsibility, in this case as a KS1 Form Teacher.

The School expects its teachers to contribute whole-heartedly to other aspects of school life by drawing upon their own interests and enthusiasms. The richness of the school depends upon teachers who, for example, coach games, support and organise clubs and society meetings, or take children on trips and residential expeditions.

Salary and support

A competitive salary and conditions are offered.

This post offers a very exciting opportunity to work in one of the outstanding prep schools in the country.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

The successful candidate will be expected to commit to the following;

Thomas's London Day Schools is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring check.

Applications

A brief letter of application, curriculum vitae (CV) and a completed and signed application form, should be addressed to Hannah Tongue, Assistant Head – Head of Lower School. The application deadline is **9.00am on Wednesday 24th April 2019**.

Mrs Hannah Tongue, Assistant Head – Head of Lower School – would be delighted to talk on the phone to any candidate who would like to know more about the post. She can be contacted either at the School by phone (020 7326 9300) or by email – htongue@thomas-s.co.uk

Details of the post and application forms are available from the school website:

www.thomas-s.co.uk/Working-at-Clapham – or from Mrs Viki Stanton on 020 7326 9300

or email vstanton@thomas-s.co.uk

Interviews will take place on **Tuesday 30th April 2019.**

H Tongue/V Stanton

March 2019

This role falls within the category of regulated activity, therefore you will be required to have an enhanced DBS check and a barred list check. Should you receive any cautions or convictions whilst in our employment these must be reported immediately to your line manager.

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 and work in accordance with our child protection policies and procedures.

The post holder's responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young persons for whom he/she is responsible, or with whom he/she comes into contact will be to adhere to and ensure compliance with the school's policies at all times. If in the course of carrying out the duties of the post, the post holder becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school, he/she must report any concerns to the school's Safeguarding Officer or Deputy.