

Application Pack

Teaching Assistant – Level 1



December 2021

Dear Applicant

Thank you for responding to our advertisement for the post of Teaching Assistant – Level 1. We are looking to appoint a compassionate and optimistic colleague to join our school and wider Trust community, who will play a role in moving our school to Good and beyond.

Stratton is a vibrant Upper School with around 1,000 students on roll. Due to considerable housing development within and around Biggleswade, the school is set to grow significantly, including a longer term plan to admit students at Y7 to an overall capacity of 1650 students. We are proud of our large and successful Sixth Form and the breadth of curriculum we are able to offer our post-16 students. In every respect we are a truly comprehensive school with a full ability range. As the only provider of Key Stage 4 and 5 education in the town, our challenge is to move effortlessly between preparing Year 13 students for top universities to working with students who, without our support, would have rejected the concept of education. Our students are our best advertisement, although closely followed by our dedicated, creative and passionate staff.

Stratton Upper School joined the Cambridge Meridian Academies Trust in October 2020. The successful applicant will not only join a strong and growing team at Stratton Upper School but also be part of a wider network across our family of schools.

If you think you can make a contribution to our community of staff and students and would like to work and learn in a continuously improving school and as part of a wider trust, then we would be delighted to receive your application. We ask that letters of application do not exceed two sides of A4.

The closing date for applications is 12 noon on Friday 10th December 2021.

We hope you will want to work with us and look forward to hearing from you. Whatever your decision, we wish you good fortune in your search for the right post.

Roz Hodges
Principal

The Learning Support Department

The Learning Support Department offers support to all students in years 9-13; working particularly with the most able, those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those who are early stage English speakers. The department is led by Mr Thomas Laud who is the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO). The SENCO is responsible for coordinating the provision and support of those students identified as having SEND as well as coordinating the support and reviews of students who have statements of SEND.

The department, in conjunction with the Heads of Year and subject teachers, offers support to students in coping with and overcoming their learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Staff work with students to help raise their self-esteem and confidence.

Learning Support has its own suite of rooms where small group and 1:1 teaching takes place delivered by both the SEN teachers and Teaching Assistants. The Teaching Assistants support students both in class and in the Learning Support Department. After school homework clubs are offered to students and some of the more vulnerable students are supported during break and lunch times. The Sixth Form Support Centre is also located within Learning Support. The Sixth Form Support Centre provides individualised support for those sixth form students requiring help to cope with the demands of sixth form courses. Students with short term needs due to personal difficulties are also supported here.

Regular communication with parents occurs through the use of student home school books, year 8 transition meetings, regular Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings, Annual Reviews and parents evenings. Close liaison occurs with outside agencies that support students with SEND and those that are more able, to provide additional support when required.

Job Description

Job Title: Teaching Assistant: Level 1
School/Service: Stratton Upper School
Reports to: TA Co-ordinator
Grade: Level 1D point 1-3
Hours: 32.5 hours per week

Job Purpose:

Support the classroom teacher to facilitate the active participation of children in the academic and social activities of the school.

Principal Accountabilities:

1. Support for children

- Under the direction of the teacher, carry out pre-determined tasks to support student learning.
- Establish and maintain supportive relationships with individual students or small groups to ensure they understand and can achieve the tasks.
- Provide learning support as required for children with special needs, or where English is not their first language.
- Help with the care and support for students, including attending to their emotional and/or physical care needs.
- Support inclusion in the classroom, ensuring all students feel involved with tasks and activities

2. Support for the curriculum

- Under the direction of the teacher, support the school curriculum, including literacy and numeracy activities.
- Support the use of ICT in the curriculum

3. Support for the teacher

- Provide information to help the class teacher plan appropriate work programmes.
- Help to prepare the learning environment for use
- Undertake support activities for the teacher as required, e.g. photocopying, preparation of materials, mounting displays.
- Contribute to the management of student behaviour and take control of minor situations to allow the teacher to continue the lesson

4.Support for the school

- Develop and maintain effective working relationships with other staff.
- Contribute to the maintenance of a safe and healthy environment.
- Attend and actively participate in staff meetings.
- Provide support for school events, e.g. school plays, events.

Personal Specification

Specification	Level 1
Qualifications	Essential or Desirable
Educated to GCSE grade C standard (or equivalent) in English and mathematics	E
Level 3 or above qualification	N/A
Experience	
Significant classroom experience as a Teaching Assistant or similar	D
Experience of liaising with parents/carers and external agencies	D
Experience of working with students who have Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs	D
Experience of delivering individualised programmes	D
Experience of delivering lessons to small groups	D
Personal and Professional Skills and Attributes	
Ability to build positive and professional relationships with pupils and their parent(s)	E
Ability to motivate pupils to improve and sustain attendance, behaviour and strive for success	E
High level administrative skills	D
Excellent communication skills	E
Highly motivated outlook with the ability to enthuse pupils	E
Highly ambitious on behalf of the pupils	E
High expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and achievement	E
Ability to work as an effective team player	E
Be able to work calmly under pressure with the ability to adapt quickly and effectively to changing circumstances/situations.	E
Have a creative approach to problem solving and use this to inspire and motivate students.	E
Knowledge	
Knowledge of and the ability to support the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum programme in order to develop literacy and numeracy.	D
Good understanding of child development with the ability to apply behaviour management policies and strategies which contribute to a purposeful learning environment.	E
Good understanding of intervention programmes and strategies- especially in Literacy, Numeracy and Behaviour Management.	E
Knowledge of issues surrounding Child Protection and the care of Looked After Children.	E

Procedure for Application

If you wish to be considered for this vacancy you should complete the application form, giving the names and addresses of two referees, and submit a concise letter of application. This should be typed and should include the following information:

- A brief outline of what you have achieved in your present or most recent post
- A statement about why you want this job
- An indication of the strengths and expertise you could offer the school
- How your experience has prepared you for this role

We are not in a position to accept a generic CV instead of an application form. Additional sheets or a separate letter may be attached to the back of the application form if there is insufficient space.

Completed applications should be returned to Nicola Richardson, HR Officer either by post or by email. Email address is: nrichardson@stratton.school

The Academy Council of the school is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and job applicants. We aim to create a supportive and inclusive working environment in which all individuals are able to make best use of their skills, free from discrimination or harassment, and in which all decisions are based on merit.

We do not discriminate against staff on the basis of age; race; sex; disability; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; religion, faith or belief.

The school takes Safeguarding very seriously. As a matter of routine, all successful applicants will undergo DBS and barred list checks. Teaching staff will also be subject to a prohibition check. Disclosure of criminal records will be required for any applicants invited to interview.

Canvassing any member of staff or member of the Academy Council either directly or indirectly, is prohibited and will be considered a disqualification. We do however encourage candidates to discuss very informally either by telephone or by arranging a pre-application visit.

If you have not heard from us within two weeks following the closing date, regretfully you must assume that your application has been unsuccessful on this occasion, in which case the school would like to thank you for your time and your interest in the position.

Stratton Upper School

Stratton Upper is a 13 to 19 school with a roll of around 900 students. This includes approximately 200 students in our Sixth Form. We are the only upper school serving Biggleswade and the surrounding villages. This has both advantages and responsibilities. An advantage is that any competition from neighbouring schools is minimal and this has enabled us to develop increasingly collaborative relationships with them. Our unequivocal responsibility however, is to ensure that we support the needs of all students within our catchment. It follows that we accommodate students from across the full spectrum of ability and that we are truly inclusive.

Information concerning our 2019 exam outcomes can be found on the school website. We are now embarking on an ambitious programme to raise standards, transform our curriculum and help our students realise what they are truly capable of achieving. Our ambition for school improvement continues with even more purpose, driven by our commitment to open as many opportunities for our students as we possibly can.

To achieve our vision we guide our students to be self-motivated, enthusiastic learners who are equipped and inspired to love learning throughout life as much as we do.

In practice, our approach is based on high expectations, high aspirations and high levels of trust. Our starting point is our working assumption that staff and students alike are committed to personal fulfilment and expect to work in an environment of success and respect.

We find there is very little need for traditional lists of dogmatic school rules and attendant lists of sanctions and consequences. Our expectation is that our students will always “do the right thing” because we have inspired them to commit to our shared values, which centre on aspiration, mutual support and of course, learning. When this is challenged (and it is, we are a school with 1,000 13 – 19 year olds!) we resolve the issue swiftly, but we also reflect the extent to which our own actions, as adults and professionals, contributed to the situation.

We recruit professionals who share our vision, who focus on the long game, knowing that schools thrive on quality relationships between staff and students.

Candidates should be aware of our adherence and commitment to these values.

The holistic experience of being a Stratton student is of vital importance to us. Our staff are incredibly giving of their time, which means we can offer a vibrant, extracurricular range of activities. In 2014, we took part in a humanitarian expedition to Peru, in 2016 students returned from a similar expedition to Borneo and our latest humanitarian visit returned in August 2018 from Costa Rica.

Performing and visual arts are a strength with regular multimedia exhibitions, drama, music and dance productions. Our sports facilities are excellent and support a full range of individual and team sports and we have recently partnered with the Norwich City FC Regional Development Programme to offer a football programme to our post-16 students. We also have an ambition and drive to become a centre of STEM excellence within the local authority.

General Information

Our Stratton catchment area incorporates the town of Biggleswade and a number of small villages in the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire countryside.

Biggleswade lies on the A1 and mainline railway, making it an ideal town for commuting into London (35 min to King's Cross). Other centres of employment include Cambridge, Bedford, Stevenage,

Milton Keynes and Peterborough. Each of these towns and cities are accessible within 45 min travel time from Biggleswade. Employment in Biggleswade has traditionally been in market gardening and engineering. Both these industries still have a presence in the area, but are no longer the significant employers they once were.

Biggleswade is set to expand over the coming years. Population is expected to rise by at least 25% and we are already seeing significant economic investment in the town. Biggleswade has been featured in a number of national newspapers as *the* place to live, combining with its strong communication links, reasonable house prices and of course, good schools!

The school is ready for an expected expansion in numbers due to these demographic changes. Our new science centre was opened in September 2017 and has provided the additional 13 classrooms needed.

The welfare and well-being of all members of our community is of central importance and we expect staff, pupils and students to give high priority to the needs of others and their development. The school is known for its strong pastoral care and support for students with special educational needs and disabilities.

We aspire to be a school where learning is fun and fosters the joy of learning within the boundaries of good order and discipline.

Staff Development

Stratton Upper School places a great deal of emphasis on the continual development of its colleagues. We are an outward facing school and play a significant role in the following organisations:

The Biggleswade Community Union of Schools (BCUS) an association of all education providers in our area dedicated to developing seamless education provision from ages 0 to 19;

Central Bedfordshire Upper Schools Heads Group;

Central Bedfordshire Teaching School;

The Academy of Central Bedfordshire, an alternative provision free school established by the Central Bedfordshire Upper Schools;

Cambridge University Department of Education;

Colleagues expect to engage in professional development through a mixture of school-based training, addressing holistic priorities and an individual assessment of needs.

Final Comments

We are fastidious in our recruitment of new colleagues. Potential applicants must share our vision and commitment to providing the very best education to our students that we possibly can and promote our ethos. Applicants must be team players who are able to see how their contribution fits into the bigger picture. They must be dedicated, skilled, highly professional individuals who are passionate about their work and enjoy working with others that share these values.

Choosing to apply for a job is potentially life changing. It is important that we assist you as much as we possibly can in assessing whether we are the right environment for you, as much as we assess whether you have the right skill set and attitude for us. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require additional information, or would like to visit us as part of your application process.

DBS and the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy

In accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service Code of Practice this policy is made available to all job applicants at the outset of the recruitment process. The DBS Code of Practice is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-code-of-practice>

- As an organisation which uses the Disclosure and Barring service, the Governing Body of the School complies fully with the DBS Code of Practice and undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.
- We meet the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. A DBS check will therefore be carried out before appointment to any job at the School is confirmed. This will include details of convictions cautions and reprimands, as well as 'spent' and 'unspent' convictions. A criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to obtaining a position.
- We are committed to the fair treatment of applicants on all protected grounds and in relation to all history of offending.
- We promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their competencies, qualifications and knowledge.
- Application forms and recruitment information will contain a statement that job applicants will be required to disclose their criminal record if they are invited to interview and a DBS check will be carried out if they are offered the job. The information will only be seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the job sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the job before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
- We ensure that people at the School who are involved in the recruitment process have access to professional advice to identify and assess the relevance and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working at the School. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.