



# Old Palace of John Whitgift School

Independent Girls' School

Pre School to Sixth Form



## Learning Assistant Application Pack

May 2023



# Letter from the Head

Dear applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Learning Assistant at Old Palace School of John Whitgift Prep School, South Croydon. This is a full time, permanent position from September 2023. We are looking for someone to join our wonderful Prep team, who is both experienced in supporting pupils in the classroom and who shares our love of children's books. The ideal candidate would like to be part of our Prep English team, championing our beautiful school library and supporting our reading culture.

Old Palace provides an excellent education for girls aged 3 to 18 across our Senior and Prep School sites. I am very much looking forward to appointing a Learning Assistant to join the Prep staff, led by the Head of Prep, Jodene Panteli.

In this pack, you will find a wealth of information about Old Palace, the John Whitgift Foundation and the requirements for the role.

Additional information on the school can also be found on our website:  
[www.oldpalace.croydon.sch.uk](http://www.oldpalace.croydon.sch.uk)

I hope that after reading this information, you will be interested in applying for the Learning Assistant post at Old Palace and I look forward to receiving your application.

**Jane Burton**  
Head

# Introduction to Old Palace School

Old Palace is a very special, unique and stimulating environment for both students and colleagues alike. We have high expectations for every student at Old Palace who enjoy a first class, academic education and are able to experience a wealth of opportunities to enable them to develop as an individual through an outstanding extra-curricular and enrichment provision. We are very proud of the wide range of different clubs, activities, trips and events that the school provides across a whole range of areas including music, sport, dance, drama and so much more.



**Mrs Jodene Panteli**  
Head of Preparatory

We have two sites; Our Prep School is based in South Croydon (and includes Pre-Prep provision from age 3) and our Senior School in Central Croydon. The Senior School has the unique benefit of Grade 1 historical buildings coupled with modern teaching facilities and specialist spaces. It is well worth looking at the history of the school on our school website.

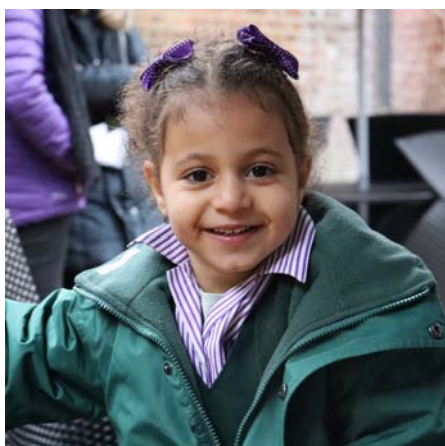
In total we have around 600 students at the school, with around 470 of these at the Senior School including just under 100 in the Sixth Form. The main points of entry to the school are at Reception, Year 7 and then again at Year 12.

allows us to offer places to bright girls who otherwise would not be able to access independent education.

The academic strength of the school is reflected in the public exam results. Old Palace has high level of attainment and progress at both GCSE and A level. The 2019 Sunday Times Parent Power rankings saw the school ranked as the highest girls' independent school in the local area and in 2021 our A Level results placed us in the top 1% of schools in the country. When students leave us they go on to study a range of courses at well-regarded universities including Oxford and Cambridge.



Old Palace encourages and nurtures the special qualities of each and every individual entrusted to the school. The superb pastoral care is one of the foundations of the school and ensures that every student is well supported as they move through the school. Our aim is that our students leave us as capable, confident and connected individuals ready to be successful in their future lives. The Old Palace community is vibrant and diverse. We are a multi-cultural and multi-faith school united by common values and high expectations. As part of the John Whitgift Foundation we benefit from a generous bursary scheme which



# The John Whitgift Foundation



There are three schools in the John Whitgift Foundation: Old Palace, Trinity and Whitgift. The foundation provides support to Old Palace in a variety of ways and being part of a family of high performing schools brings many benefits in terms of collaboration and staff development opportunities.

All staff at Old Palace are employed by the John Whitgift Foundation and receive a number of benefits including fee discounts for any child accepted into one of its schools.

The Foundation also supports the schools through its generous means tested bursary scheme where around 48% of students benefit from fee assistance, which is demonstrated at Old Palace by the diverse student community representing all backgrounds and faiths.

## Old Palace Prep School

The Prep School is based at Melville Avenue site in South Croydon and educates girls from Pre School through to Year 6.

Alongside the academic provision sits a wealth of extra-curricular and enrichment activities; a wide range of different sports with swimming at the senior school, a rich and diverse musical education, drama, dance and many other exciting opportunities.





# Job Description

The primary responsibility of a Learning Assistant at Old Palace is to support the excellent standard of education for all students in our school. The Learning Assistant reports to, and is supported by, the Head of Prep.

To achieve this, the successful candidate must be an excellent classroom practitioner with the ability to work with emotional intelligence, energy and integrity. The post holder will also reflect the values and strategic vision of Old Palace through their own practice.

In addition, Old Palace Prep is looking for someone to continue to champion this much-loved and stunning part of our school, during timetabled and dedicated time to do so.

## Main Responsibilities

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### Core Purpose

- Maintain a commitment to safeguarding and to promoting the welfare of children and young people.
- Maintain an inviting library, working alongside the English Leader and Head of Prep, to support the promotion of a love of reading in all pupils.
- Professionally model an infectious love of children's books.
- Organise opportunities for pupils to engage with topical and relevant literature in collaboration with the English Leader.
- Promote children's development within a secure, safe and stimulating environment that is appropriate to the ages and stages of development of the pupils.
- To support the class teacher in providing high quality teaching and learning.
- To effectively manage the behaviour of the pupils in line with procedural guidance and to implement planned interventions for pupils with additional needs.
- To support children in their learning.
- To carry out lunchtime and playtime duties and open library sessions during breaks.

### Professional Contribution

- Supervise pupils when requested i.e. undertake duties and cover for colleagues when appropriate, teach pupils when their teacher is not available.
- Have an awareness of and follow school health and safety policy and codes of behavior.
- Maintain good order at all times and safeguard pupils' health and safety.
- Keep up to date with school policies and remain sufficiently aware of the personal circumstances and problems of individual pupils.
- To act confidently and consistently with colleagues, whilst respecting confidentiality.
- To support the teacher in developing and maintaining an exciting and well organised classroom environment.
- Liaise with staff responsible for leading the curriculum and subject areas as required.
- Support with the identification of needs of pupils and meet their needs with appropriate intervention and teaching strategies, guided by teachers and the SENCo.
- Adopt professional standards of behavior and appearance at all times.
- Work as a supportive member of the Prep team.
- Consult colleagues for guidance and share best practice.
- Follow relevant documentation and policies.
- Have high expectations of pupils including a commitment to ensuring they can achieve their full educational potential and to establishing fair, respectful, trusting, supportive and constructive relationships with them.
- Attend staff and planning meetings and other relevant meetings as required.

# Job Description

## Other

- Promote the general progress and well-being of individuals so that pupils may reach their full potential.
- Provide guidance and support to pupils as appropriate.
- Undertake such other duties as the Head may reasonably request from time to time.
- Contribute to the high quality extra-curricular provision at the school through the delivery of a book or reading-related club.
- Contribute to productions and performances and other school events.
- To provide first aid.



## Payscale

The postholder will benefit from a competitive salary and as an employee of the John Whitgift Foundation will be entitled to a range of benefits.

These will include:

- Membership of the Support Staff Personal Pension Scheme
- A generous discount at any one of the three Foundation Schools (maximum of 50% of salary)
- Membership of the BUPA healthcare cashback scheme
- Free, high quality lunch each day
- Opportunity to apply for the Cycle to Work Scheme
- Season Ticket Loan
- Various other discounts on goods and services

# Person Specification

The following criteria will be used when assessing the suitability of applicants:

**Essential: without which candidates will be rejected**

**Desirable: useful for choosing between two strong candidates**

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Qualifications</b>	A minimum of Level 3 qualification in Childcare, Support Teaching or equivalent.	Up to date Paediatric first aid certificate.
<b>Experience</b>	<p>Track record of supporting teaching at Primary level in either the independent school or state school sectors.</p> <p>Experience of working in a team to provide excellent provision for all pupils.</p> <p>Proven track record of supporting the teacher to raise standards.</p> <p>Experience of effectively involving parents with their children's development.</p> <p>A portfolio of relevant training and CPD.</p> <p>Experience in using ICT as a teaching and learning tool.</p> <p>Experience of working with and supporting children with additional needs.</p> <p>Experience of working with pupils in 3-11 age range.</p>	<p>Experience of working in a library or book shop.</p> <p>Experience of using Accelerated Reader.</p> <p>Delivering specific Reading, Writing and Maths interventions and working with pupils in small groups or on a 1:1 basis.</p>
<b>Knowledge, Skills and Abilities</b>	<p>Excellent knowledge of children's literature, current authors and ideas for promoting reading for pleasure.</p> <p>Ability to deliver small group and 1:1 interventions effectively, and where needed, whole-class library sessions.</p> <p>Ability to build and maintain effective relationships with pupils, treating them equitably with respect and consideration.</p> <p>Be proactive, support the teacher, work under pressure with good organisational skills and the ability to prioritise and manage time effectively, seeking support when needed.</p> <p>Excellent knowledge of children's literature, current authors and ideas for promoting reading for pleasure.</p>	<p>A good understanding of the link between mental health and learning.</p> <p>A sound understanding of inclusion and making the curriculum accessible to all learners.</p>

# Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
<b>Knowledge, Skills and Abilities</b> <i>continued...</i>	<p>Ability to deliver small group and 1:1 interventions effectively, and where needed, whole-class library sessions.</p> <p>Ability to build and maintain effective relationships with pupils, treating them equitably with respect and consideration.</p> <p>Be proactive, support the teacher, work under pressure with good organisational skills and the ability to prioritise and manage time effectively, seeking support when needed.</p> <p>Ability to identify own training needs and participate in training and evaluate own learning.</p> <p>Ability to support the teacher to establish a purposeful, safe and enabling learning environment which complies with current legal requirements, national policies and guidance on the safeguarding and well-being of children.</p> <p>Understanding of behaviour management techniques for groups and individuals.</p> <p>Ability to recognise and take account of the diversity of the school community .</p> <p>Commitment to the academic, social, emotional and cultural development of all students including their understanding of British values.</p>	<p>A good understanding of the link between mental health and learning.</p> <p>A sound understanding of inclusion and making the curriculum accessible to all learners.</p>
<b>Professional Skills</b>	<p>High professional standards and expectations.</p> <p>Able to inspire and motivate pupils .</p> <p>To take the initiative in a range of situations.</p> <p>Be able to build positive relations with staff, pupils and parents and to act professionally at all times.</p> <p>To understand the importance of safeguarding and to be sensitive to confidential issues within the school .</p> <p>Be approachable, accessible, flexible, a good listener and a team player.</p> <p>Good communication skills, both written and oral.</p> <p>Good organisational skills.</p> <p>Excellent and unequivocal references.</p>	

# Person Specification

	Essential	Desirable
Personal Qualities	<p>Possess an infectious love of children's books and reading for pleasure.</p> <p>Excited by new books and ensuring representation in children's literature.</p> <p>Excited by working as part of the larger Old Palace school community.</p> <p>Committed to the principles of independent and single sex education.</p> <p>Demonstrates high levels of emotional intelligence.</p> <p>Ability to adapt to changing circumstances and needs.</p> <p>Approachable with excellent interpersonal skills.</p> <p>Willingness to share expertise, skills and knowledge.</p> <p>Ability to self-reflect.</p> <p>Able to show sensitivity and flexibility as circumstances demand.</p> <p>Uphold the ethos and reputation of the school.</p>	



# Notes to Application



## Safeguarding

Old Palace School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Candidates are expected to demonstrate a sound understanding of leadership of, and contribution to, a safeguarding environment.

The successful candidate will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS with barred list check followed by safeguarding training as part of their induction.

The Old Palace Safeguarding Policy can be found [here](#).

## Your application

If you would like to apply for the position of Learning Assistant at Old Palace Prep School, please complete the application form, which can be found on the Old Palace website vacancies page:

<https://www.oldpalace.croydon.sch.uk/about/vacancies>

## Timescales

<b>Closing date:</b>	<b>Wednesday 7 June 2023 at 12 noon</b>
<b>Shortlisting:</b>	<b>Thursday 8 June 2023</b>
<b>Interview date</b>	<b>Friday 16 June 2023</b>

If you are shortlisted, we will take up references prior to your interview unless otherwise specified.

## School visit

If you would like to visit the Prep School, please contact the Prep Office to arrange: [prepoffice@oldpalace.croydon.sch.uk](mailto:prepoffice@oldpalace.croydon.sch.uk)

## Contact Details

Further enquiries about this position or application process are welcome.

Please contact:  
Mrs Jane Thomas  
Head's PA

[hmsec@oldpalace.croydon.sch.uk](mailto:hmsec@oldpalace.croydon.sch.uk)  
020 8256 1881





# Old Palace *of* John Whitgift School

Independent Girls' School

Pre School to Sixth Form

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