

An aerial photograph of Westbrook Hay school. The main building is a large, multi-story brick structure with a central bay window and a covered entrance. To the left, there is a smaller white building. The school is surrounded by green lawns and a formal garden with a central circular pond and several rectangular flower beds. A gravel path leads from the garden towards the building. In the background, there are more trees and a hill.

For November 2026

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Teaching Assistant (Maternity Cover)

Westbrook Hay



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 370 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. From September 2026 we will welcome our first Year 10 cohort.

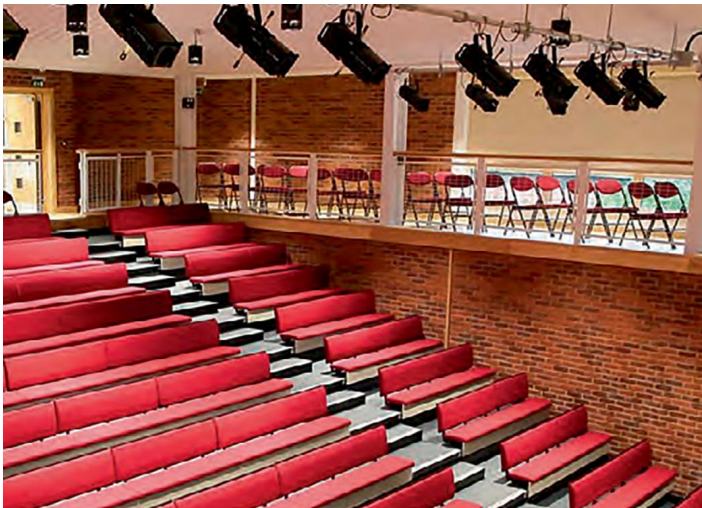
Our ethos is to be a welcoming, inclusive community that provides the best for, and expects the best from us all.

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 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 has very recently upgraded many of its specialist facilities. The Performing Arts Centre, added in 2016, offers

impressive provision for dance, drama and music. Our new specialist facilities include two Science Laboratories with a prep room, a refurbished and modernised DT Workshop, a new ICT suite, an extended and upgraded Art Centre, six new changing rooms, and a state-of-the-art Food Technology room. These are in addition to our Sports Hall, Swimming Pool and modern, spacious classrooms.

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. Our First Year 9 cohort are now in place and thriving.



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 115 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 175 boys and girls.



Seniors: currently just Years 7, 8 and 9 this section of the school consists of approximately 80 boys and girls. Under our long term strategy we will add Years 10 and 11, with the aim of having around 40 pupils in each year group.

Pre-Prep 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. Music and Games are added in Reception.

In Pre-Prep, pupils in Key Stage One are predominantly taught by their Class Teacher. The pupil-teacher relationship is fundamental and the grounding for the child's development. Academic progress is carefully monitored through termly assessments and Pupil Progress Meetings ensure that all children fulfil their potential. Key Stage One Class Teachers teach Phonics, English, Maths, Computing, Guided Reading, Outdoor Learning,

PSHE and Topic. Subject Specialists are timetabled to teach Key Stage One pupils in Dance, French, Games, Music, Outdoor Learning and Physical Education, allowing them to make the most of our excellent facilities. Subjects such as Art, Geography, History and Science are delivered through Topic Lessons. The wide range of topics covered across Pre-Prep allows pupils to explore ideas through cross-curricular activities and provides opportunities to direct their own learning.

Pre-Prep Enrichment

Pupils in Pre-Prep enjoy a wide variety of enrichment activities. Pupils in EYFS are encouraged from an early age to take part in annual performances, including the Dance Display, Harvest Assembly, Nativity Production, Pre-Prep Poetry Recitation and Shakespeare Festival. All pupils also take part in annual performances at Harvest, Christmas and our Shakespeare Festival, while many choose to join the Pre-Prep Choir, Informal Concerts and LAMDA.

Reception pupils may 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, and in Years 1 and 2 pupils go on a trip or visit once a term. 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 as a Teaching Assistant in our Reception class. 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 our Early Years Department, consisting of Nursery and Reception, and Key Stage One, consisting of Year 1 and 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 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 Teaching Assistant will work closely with the 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

The purpose of this job description is to outline the main responsibilities of the 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. The Teaching Assistant is responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children for whom they are responsible, or with whom they come into contact. The 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, the 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 Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection or the Head.

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 full 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 as 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 Pre-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 Headmaster

Other Responsibilities

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

No job description can cover all aspects of a role and consequently responsibilities are likely to evolve and change overtime.

Person Specification

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.

Essential: the attributes, skills, qualifications and experience that a candidate **must have** in order to be considered for the role.

Desirable: those that would **strengthen an application** but are not strictly necessary.

Advantageous: nice to have, but not a key requirement of the role.

Qualifications and Knowledge

GCSE Grades 9 to 4 (A* to C) including English and Maths	Essential
Full and relevant DfE-approved Level 3 Early Years / Childcare qualification (e.g., Level 3 Early Years Educator, NCFE CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Childcare, NVQ Level 3 in Childcare, NNEB, T Level in Early Years, or QTS/EYTS). OR a recognised Level 3 Teaching Assistant qualification (e.g., NCFE CACHE Level 3 Certificate/Diploma In Supporting Teaching and Learning).	Essential
Candidates must meet DfE EYFS ratio requirements	Essential
Knowledge of current best practice in EYFS and Key Stage One learning and teaching	Essential
Evidence of ongoing professional development	Essential
Knowledge of safeguarding requirements within a school	Essential
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 Pre-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



Salary and Benefits

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
- Commitment to continuing professional development
- Enhanced Family Leave
- Cooked lunches and refreshments throughout the day provided
- 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 of leave either in the morning or afternoon
- Small class sizes, a beautiful rural location and excellent facilities
- 50% fee remission is offered (pro rata) for children of school staff subject to availability of place
- The security and opportunity that comes from working in a school that is part of a charitable group of school (Mill Hill Foundation)



Application and Recruitment Process

The appointment is for November 2026 with Fixed term contract until July 2027, although the school may wait until the following term for the right candidate.

Key Dates

Application Deadline: Tuesday 01 September 2026

Interviews will be held: w/c Monday 07 September

We reserve the right to appoint before the closing date.

Please note that we are unable to accept applications unless they are made on our own application form. Due to the number of applications the School receives shortlisted candidates will be contacted to be invited for an interview.

The Mill Hill Education Group reserves the right to interview candidates ahead of the closing date and applications will be considered as they are received.

The Mill Hill Education Group is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children. As part of our Recruitment Checks, the appointed candidate will be subject to a Social Media and Enhanced DBS Check.

The schools apply for an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for all positions at the schools which amount to regulated activity. The role you are applying for meets the legal definition of regulated activity with children.

If you are successful in your application you will be required to complete a DBS Disclosure Application Form. Employment with the schools is conditional upon the schools being satisfied with the result of the Enhanced DBS Disclosure. Any criminal records information that is disclosed to the schools will be handled in accordance with any guidance and/or code of practice published by the DBS. It is an offence for a person barred from working with children to apply for this post.

The Mill Hill Education Group is committed to Equal Opportunities and welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Successful applicants will also be expected to keep up to date with annual safeguarding training, DfE guidance and School specific safeguarding information.

If this new opportunity sparks your enthusiasm and you wish to be part of our team, please click the button to complete your Application Form.

APPLY

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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