



Learning Support Practitioner Application Pack

Full time post - 32.5 hours / week

Part time post – 13 hours / 2 days (Monday and
Tuesday)

Band D Scale Point 9-17

Term time only + 5 INSET Days

The Orchard School

The Orchard School is a Maintained Special School for children with severe, profound, and complex learning difficulties and medical needs. There are currently 174 pupils on roll. Our children range from 4 – 11 years.

We have a purpose-built premises with excellent facilities which include a music and drama studio, white and dark room studios, soft play room, sensory room, swimming and hydrotherapy pools and defined outdoor play areas for differing ages and abilities.

Along with teaching and classroom support staff, the school is supported by a multi-agency team of nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy colleagues, and a teacher of the visually impaired. These staff are based in the school part of the week and have dedicated on-site facilities. There are nursing staff on-site most of the week. Medical out-patient clinics run by consultant paediatricians take place regularly and there are also specialist ophthalmology and occupational therapy clinics in school. Multi-agency teamwork is an essential and highly valued aspect of the school.

We endeavour to provide the very best learning opportunities for all. Our bespoke curriculum is underpinned by the National Curriculum and every child has a personalised learning journey to enable them to achieve their best potential.

Additional information about the school is available on the school website:

www.orchard.sandwell.sch.uk



Learning Support Practitioner

Hours: Full time - 32.5 hours, Term time + 5 INSET Days
Part-time - 13 hours + Term time + 5 INSET Days

Rate of pay: Band D Scale point 9-17 £13.69 – £15.58 per hour
£26,409 - £30,060 (pro rata) + SEN allowance

Contract type: Permanent

Are you passionate about making a difference in the lives of children with complex and profound learning difficulties? Do you have experience working with these exceptional individuals? If so, we have the perfect role for you!

The Orchard School is currently seeking a dedicated and compassionate Learning Support Assistant to join our team. As a Learning Support Practitioner, you will play a vital role in supporting our students with their educational and personal development. This is an exciting time to join The Orchard school as we look to expand our provision to support additional pupils with profound and complex needs

We are looking for:

- **Experience:** We require candidates with previous experience working with children with complex and profound learning difficulties. Your experience in this area will help us provide the best possible support to our students.
- **Adaptability:** Our ideal candidate is someone who can adapt to different situations and be flexible in their approach. We value individuals who can think on their feet and find creative solutions to challenges.
- **Reliability:** We need someone we can count on. Our students rely on us to be there for them, so we are looking for individuals who are reliable and committed to their role.
- **Team Player:** Collaboration is key at The Orchard School. We believe in the power of teamwork and the positive impact it can have on our students. We are looking for candidates who can work well within a team and contribute to our supportive and inclusive environment.

We are currently seeking candidates who are available to work 32.5 hours per week, Monday to Friday during term time. However, we understand that some candidates may only be available for part-time hours. If you are interested in part-time work, please indicate this on your application.

The applicant will need to possess:

- High standards of written and spoken English.
- This post is covered by Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016) and therefore the ability to speak fluent and spoken English is an essential requirement for the role.
- Appropriate qualifications, as detailed on job specification.

If you are passionate about supporting children with complex and profound learning difficulties and are ready to make a positive impact, we would love to hear from you. Join our dedicated team at The Orchard School and help us create a nurturing and inclusive learning environment.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Learning Support Practitioner – level 3
Band/Job Group	Band D
Hours/Weeks	32.5 hours (5 days) per week term time only 13 hours (2 days) per week term time only
Special Conditions	Plus 5 training days
School	The Orchard School
Responsible to	Head Teacher

Main duties and responsibilities

1. Support to pupils

- Participation in the inclusion of children with special needs into the mainstream
- Where appropriate taking charge of a group or class in an emergency situation under the direction and control of the Head Teacher, or other designated member of staff, for a period not greater than one working day.
- Specialist language support to individuals/groups with language and communication difficulties.
- To facilitate the pupil's development and skills in the use of resources including ICT
- To maintain pupils' interests and motivation
- Assisting pupils with dress/changing for activities/personal hygiene
- To support individual/group work across the curriculum to raise levels of achievement.
- Care and welfare of pupils to include toileting and feeding as required
- Escorting pupils around the school premises
- Specialist support to pupils in line with a Statement of Special Needs – EHCP or planned provision. (IEP/ISP)

2. Support to School

- To support the feeding and play activities of pupils during the pupils lunch time period, subject to being given a reasonable rest period (normally not less than ½ hour)
- Advise and assist ethnic minority families.
- Support to Head Teacher in the professional development and training of nursery nurse students, school staff and borough staff.
- Contact and links with those with parental responsibility during the working day, as part of the normal consultative and educational process.

- To contribute to the development of and maintain school policies and procedures.
- Preparation of rooms, equipment and displays.
- Maintain school routine.
- To promote high standards of behaviour throughout the school in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.
- Support ethos of the school.
- Maintenance of safe environment.

3. Support to Teachers

- Contact with parents as part of normal consultative and educational process, e.g. parents evenings.
- To deliver pre-planned programmes of work.
- To plan and organise activities for children and support to teachers in the completion of assessment and other pupil records.
- Undertaking duties on a rota basis during mid-morning breaks.
- To assist the teacher with supervision of pupils on school trips/visits.
- Keeping materials and equipment in tidy/safe manner.
- Liaison with teachers and other staff to obtain, exchange and record information on pupils in accordance with school policy.
- Support the supervision of individuals/groups of pupils.

4. Support with Curriculum

- To contribute to the development of curriculum policies.
- To assist in the teaching of the curriculum.
- Support to teachers in the assessment and monitoring of pupils, in accordance with school policy.
- Contribute to development of school policies and procedures as part of Key Stage team.
- To support individual/group work across the curriculum to raise levels of achievement and to respond appropriately to pupils.
- Participation in working groups on curriculum matters.
- Contribute to curriculum development as part of training days and at any ongoing review meetings.
- Involvement in planning meetings.
- Attendance at staff meetings and appropriate training sessions as required.
- Repair and maintenance of books and equipment.
- Development and preparation of curriculum materials.

5. It is the responsibility of each employee to carry out their duties in line with council policies on equality (please refer to the Policy Statement), harassment, racial equality and the CRE action plan, and be sensitive and caring to the needs of the disadvantaged, promoting a positive approach to a harmonious working environment. Each employee should act as an exemplar on these issues and must where appropriate, identify and monitor training for themselves and any employees they are responsible for in line with these policies and the CRE standards.

6. Use of ICT as required.

Other Duties

- To participate in the operation of the School's Personal Performance Development Scheme.
- It is your responsibility to carry out your duties in line with the Council's policy on equality and be sensitive and caring to the needs of the disadvantaged, promoting a positive approach to a harmonious working environment. You should act as an exemplar on these issues and should identify and monitor training for yourself and any employees for whom you are responsible, in line with this policy, the Equality Standard and obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.
- Such other duties as may be appropriate to achieve the objectives of the post to assist the school in the fulfilment of its objectives commensurate with the post holder's salary grade, abilities and aptitudes.
- The post holder must at all times carry out his/her responsibilities with due regard to the Schools policy, organisation and arrangements for Health and Safety at Work
- This post is covered by Part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016) and therefore the ability to speak fluent and spoken English is an essential requirement for this role.
- The school is committed to the safeguarding of children and all posts are subject to an enhanced DBS clearance.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title	Learning Support Practitioner (level 3)			Directorate	The Orchard School
JE Reference No:		Grade	Grade D + SEN allowance	Service	Schools
Completed By	Elizabeth Hopewell			Date of Issue	June 2025

The Personnel Specification outlines the main attributes needed to adequately perform the post specified. In drawing together the specification, a critical examination of the job description has been undertaken to pinpoint those elements of the post deemed as essential.

The Personnel Specification is intended to give prospective candidates a better understanding of the position's requirements. It will be used as part of the recruitment process in identifying and shortlisting candidates and in determining an applicant's suitability for employment, whilst giving due consideration to the need to make reasonable adjustments in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

	Essential	N/A	How identified
1. Qualifications			
Maths and English Grade 4 and above NVQ Level 3 in Childcare, BTEC in Childcare or NNEB Please note: Health and Social Care qualifications are <u>NOT</u> considered to be full and relevant	Yes Yes	☐	Formal possession of an appropriate qualification to be verified at interview or from records.
2. Experience			
Must have experience of working with Primary-aged Children with Special Educational Needs including complex and profound needs, challenging behaviour and SEMH needs EYFS working knowledge and embedded experience Knowledge and understanding of Equal Opportunities. Knowledge of Health and Safety issues Knowledge and understanding of the Children Act	Yes	☐	Past employment activity record. Performance in related selection methods, e.g. presentation, group discussion.

3. Training			
Willing to undertake all training necessary to perform the role.	Yes	☐	Past training history from application form and records. Selection process by demonstration of ability to display knowledge and skills at the interview.
4. Special Knowledge			
Full working knowledge of relevant policies/codes of practice and awareness of relevant legislation Working knowledge of national curriculum and other relevant learning programmes Working knowledge of EHCP process and the delivery of personalised learning Clear understanding of EYFS framework Understanding of principles of child development and learning processes and in particular, barriers to learning Ability to plan effective actions for pupils at risk of underachieving Full understanding of the range of support services/providers Ability to self-evaluate learning needs and actively seek learning opportunities Ability to relate well to children and adults Work constructively as part of a team, understanding classroom roles and responsibilities and your own position within these	Able to demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the wide range of needs of SEN pupils. Understanding of Health and Safety Paediatric First Aid would be desirable but not essential	☐	Qualifications held and demonstration of knowledge at interview.

5. Circumstances (personal)			
Ability to work when the school is open (Term Time working) Willingness to work flexibly to meet all of the requirements of the post	Flexibility Willing to work overtime as and when required (preferable)	☐	Ensuring candidates are aware of these requirements from the job description. Interview questions and application details.
6. Disposition			
Ability to motivate individuals to perform effectively. Commitment to working in partnership with parents. Awareness of and respect for, the needs of the individual child and their families, including multi-cultural and inclusive practices. Ability to work with support agencies	Good communication skills at all levels Patient, caring and sympathetic to the needs of SEN pupils Able to work on own initiative and as part of a team	☐	Performance in related selection process, e.g. exercises, group discussion, problem-solving, questions etc.
7. Practical and Intellectual Skills			
Able to communicate effectively (orally and in writing) Ability to use IT technology	Must support the school in maintaining policies such as behaviour/code of conduct Must show evidence of good communication skills both orally and in writing.	☐	Performance in related selection process.
8. Legal Requirements			
DBS Clearance	Satisfactory medical and criminal clearance good references from most recent employer	☐	Application form and interview questioning and references.

THE REMAINING SECTIONS ARE TO BE COMPLETED BY MANAGERS AND ARE FOR THE APPLICANT'S INFORMATION ONLY.

9. Background Checks			
Please ✓ required check(s) referring to Section 9 of Guidance on completing individual sections of the Personnel Specification			
The post is subject to the following Background Check(s) which will be undertaken, where applicable, following a conditional offer of appointment.	a) Enhanced DBS with Children's and Adults Barring List Check	☐	Only one or none of these checks (a – f) may be applicable.
	b) Enhanced DBS with Adults Barring List Check	☐	
	c) Enhanced DBS with Children's Barring List Check	☒	
	d) Enhanced DBS Check	☐	
	e) Standard DBS Check	☐	
	f) Basic Disclosure Check	☐	
	Police Vetting Check	☐	This check may also be required in addition to one from (a-f) above
	No Check Required	☐	
10. Politically Restricted Post			
Is this post a "politically restricted post"?		☐ Yes	☒ No
Applicants can gain further information on Politically Restricted posts in the "Information for job applicants' booklet".			
11. Main Physical Activities/ Requirements of the Post.			
Please ✓ if activity requires to be undertaken.			
The Council will make reasonable adjustments that are necessary for the successful candidate to undertake any of these activities			
Lifting / manual handling / client handling	☒	Prolonged standing or sitting	☐
Working at heights	☐	Prolonged working with vibrating tools / machinery	☐
Working in confined spaces	☐	Bending / Squatting / Kneeling	☒
Working outdoors	☒	Manual cleaning /domestic duties	☐
Agricultural / gardening work	☐	Food Handling	☐
Work requiring respirators or masks	☐	Rotating shift work or night work	☐
Work requiring hearing protection	☐	Driving Duties HGV / LGV/ Minibus / Passenger carrying	☐
Work with skin irritants / allergens / respiratory irritants/fine particles	☐	Any other driving duties	☐
Significant use of computers	☐	Using restraint	☒
Working with children or vulnerable adults	☒	High mental stress content	☐
Permanent night work	☐	Physical / sport / leisure duties	☐
Lone working	☐	Regular walking on uneven ground	☐
Working with challenging behaviours	☒		
Other main physical activities not listed above	Personal care of children		
12. Safety Critical Posts			
A pre-employment/placement medical assessment with Occupational Health is required for any employee who is undertaking a safety critical post.			
A safety critical post is one that is likely to be exposed to:-			
• Noise e.g. gardeners using mowers and highways road workers) • Vibration ○ Hand/arm vibration (e.g. gardeners using blowers and/or strimmers, road workers, arborists, cleaners using buffers and countryside workers) ○ Whole body vibration (e.g. tractor drivers)			

- Hazardous substances (i.e. solvents, fumes, dusts, biological agents and other substances hazardous to health) (e.g. School Design and Technology Technicians)

Also, the following posts: Fleet Drivers (where it is an essential requirement of the job to hold a valid driving licence in order to carry out the duties of the role), Trading Standards Officers, Vehicle Mechanics, School Crossing Patrol Operatives, employees working with asbestos and employees with responsibility for the health and well being of children and adults during the night require a pre-employment/placement medical.

Other Night workers (e.g. care workers and concierge staff) will be given the option to receive pre-employment/placement screening if they are offered the position

Having reviewed the criteria outlined in Section 12 is this post a "Safety Critical" post?

☐ Yes

☒ No

13. Language Requirements

Is this post covered by part 7 of the Immigration Act (2016), and therefore, the ability to speak fluent and spoken English is an essential requirement for this role? For example:

- The employee will work in a customer-facing role.
- The employee is required to speak to members of the public in English and this forms a regular and intrinsic part of the role.

☒ Yes

☐ No

The employee requires a command of spoken English, to enable the effective performance of the role.

APPLICATION PROCESS

If you have the experience and passion to join our team, application forms are available on the school website and should be returned to **SIPS Education Ltd, 2nd Floor Guardian House, Cronehills Linkway, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 8GS** or emailed to hr@sips.co.uk. Please note we will only accept applications using the school application form which is found on the school website.

If you require more information about how to apply for the post, please call 0121 296 3000. Please ensure application forms are signed if sending via email. If you provided an email address, correspondence will be sent via e-mail.

If you are successful in being short-listed for interview, you will be contacted via email within 28 working days of the closing date. **Please ensure you check your junk/spam boxes as well as your inbox in case any correspondence has been delivered there.**

Closing date: Friday 5th December 2025 @ 12.00 noon

Shortlisting: Monday 8th December 2025

Interviews: Wednesday 17th December 2025

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. An Enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check is required for this post. An **online search** will be undertaken on all shortlisted candidates. This search does not form part of the shortlisting process, and you will have the opportunity to discuss any issues of concern that may arise from this search at the interview.