



Student Support Practitioner Application Pack

8.33 hours/week

11:40 – 1:20pm Monday - Friday

Band C Scale Point 5-8

Salary rate – £25,583 – £26,824

(Actual salary £5,029 - £5,342 per annum)

Term time only

The Orchard School

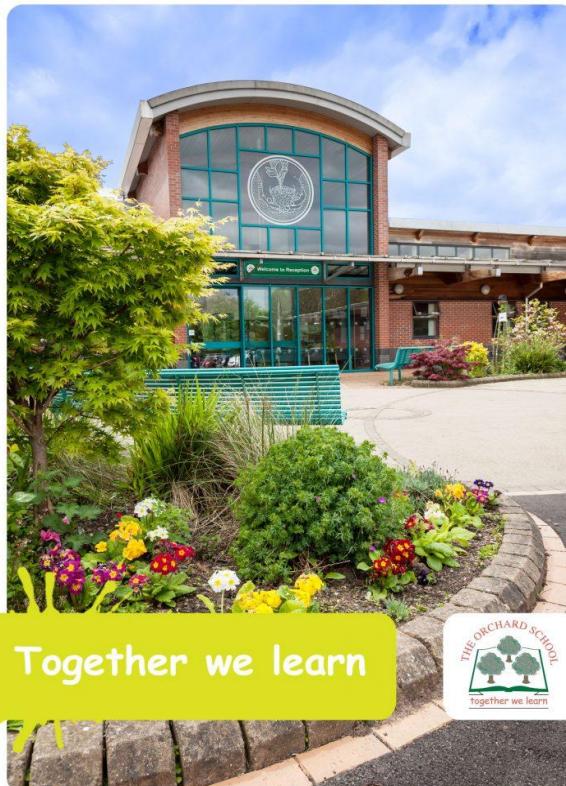
The Orchard School is a Maintained Special School for children with severe, profound, and complex learning difficulties and medical needs. There are currently 173 pupils on roll and our children range from 4 – 11 years.

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 the majority 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



Student Support Practitioner

Hours: **8.33 hours per week, term time only**
11.40am -1.20pm Monday-Friday

Rate of pay: **Band C SCP 5-8 £25,583 - £26,824) pro rata**
£13.26 - £13.90 per hour Term time only

Contract type: Permanent

An exciting opportunity has arisen for the Orchard School to appoint Student Support Practitioners. We are looking for exceptional candidates to join our team, who have a passion for supporting children with special educational needs.

As a Student Support Practitioner, you will be responsible for supervising the children during the lunch period at The Orchard School from Monday to Fridays. Your main duties will include assisting with the partaking of food, engaging and encouraging play activities, and assisting with the children's hygiene requirements, which may include toileting and laundry tasks.

To ensure the best fit for this role, shortlisted candidates will be required to attend the school for a short pre-assessment with the children at lunchtime. This will help us determine your suitability for the role and allow you to experience firsthand the environment in which you will be working. The pre-assessment will take place on **Monday 9th February 2026 from 11.30am to 1.30pm.**

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.

At The Orchard School, we strive to create an inclusive and supportive environment for our students with special educational needs. We are seeking individuals who are dedicated, compassionate, and have a genuine interest in making a positive impact on the lives of these children.

If you are passionate about supporting children with special educational needs and believe you have the necessary skills and qualities to excel in this role, we would love to hear from you. Please submit your application as soon as possible, as interviews will be held shortly after the pre-assessment.

Previous applicants need not apply.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Student Support Practitioner
Band/Job Group	Band C – SCP 5-8
Hours/Weeks	8.33 hours per week 11:40am -1:20pm – Term time only
Special Conditions	Attend training as and when required Annual holidays must not be taken in term time
Thematic Area	Children & Young People's Service
School	The Orchard
Responsible to	SSP Team Leader

Working directly for the SSP Team Leader, you will be expected to carry out the following:

1. Duties and Responsibilities are:

- Changing and toileting students as necessary
- Use of hoists for lifting students
- Supervision of hand-washing before and after meals
- Ensuring the care, health and safety of students
- Escorting children to and from the Dining Room
- Assisting the children with eating, table manners, use of cutlery, cutting of food, serving, etc. This may include the feeding of some students, dependant on their needs
- Supervising the return of table equipment to the 'Returns' counter
- Cleaning up any spillages etc in the Dining Room
- Cleaning hygiene areas as necessary/directed
- Supervision of children before and after their meal as well as in the playground
- Use of washing machines and tumble driers to wash student clothing when required Organising games and activities
- Undertake any training deemed relevant to this role. This may be out of normal hours of work
- Such other duties as may be allocated from time to time

2. Regulations

All employees must adhere to the Authority's Regulations governing the Catering Service in Schools with particular reference to those relating to Food Hygiene and Health and Safety at Work.

The Orchard School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title	Student Support Practitioner			Directorate	Children's Services
JE Reference No:				Service	Schools
Completed By	Elizabeth Hopewell			Date of Issue	January 2026

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			
What does the job require in the way of: - Level of formal qualifications required to carry out the job. Describe these by level of attainment and by subject matter where appropriate, e.g. Degree, HNC, Professional Qualifications, GCSE's, CIPFA etc. Consider carefully whether these are absolutely necessary.	Basic literacy & numeracy skills, although a formal qualification is not necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Formal possession of an appropriate qualification to be verified at interview or from records.
2. Experience			
What does the job require in the way of: - Specific related job experience and in what type of working environment. What kind of life experience could supplement or replace this? Which is more important to the success of the job?	Experience of working in a childcare or care context within a Special Educational Needs Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Past employment activity record. Performance in related selection methods, e.g. presentation, group discussion.
3. Training			

<p>What does the job require in the way of: -</p> <p>Specific and/or specialist training in order to do the job, e.g. training in recruitment and selection, supervisory, management, interpersonal skills.</p> <p>Apprenticeship in a recognised trade. Practical training in the use of specific equipment, word processing etc.</p>	<p>Willing to attend relevant training i.e. behaviour management, moving & handling etc.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Past training history from application form and records.</p> <p>Selection process by demonstration of ability to display knowledge and skills at the interview.</p>
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4. Special Knowledge			
<p>What special knowledge is required in order to perform the job properly, e.g. a knowledge of employment legislation, accounting, financial planning regulations, languages, computer systems, local area etc?</p>	<p>Able to demonstrate an understanding of SEN needs.</p> <p>Awareness and understanding of Health and Safety.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Qualifications held and demonstration of knowledge at interview.</p>
5. Circumstances (personal)			
<p>What kind of personal circumstances are required to do the job properly? The ability to work shifts, weekends etc. The willingness and ability to travel and stay away from home.</p> <p>Willingness to live-in if the job requires. Ability to drive, car ownership.</p>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Ensuring candidates are aware of these requirements from the job description. Interview questions and application details.</p>
6. Disposition			

<p>How far does the job require: -</p> <p>Being steady, dependable, persevering, persistent, even tenacious, being difficult to distract or discourage. Getting on well with others, working readily with others, co-operating, and influencing others. Depending on oneself rather than others, relying on own resources, accepting responsibility, leadership qualities, ability to motivate others. Ability to cope with monotony, neatness, accuracy of work, attention to detail.</p>	<p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Patient, caring and sympathetic to the needs of SEN students.</p> <p>Able to work on own initiative and as part of team.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Performance in related selection process, e.g. exercises, group discussion, problem-solving, questions etc</p>
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7. Practical and Intellectual Skills

<p>What practical and intellectual skills are required for performing the job effectively? Does the person need to be a practically orientated person; should they be able to make decisions, should they be able to understand information derived from complex reports? What degree of manual dexterity is needed? Does the applicant need to be mechanically minded?</p>	<p>Must support the school in maintaining policies such as behaviour/code of conduct.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Performance in related selection process.</p>
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8. Legal Requirements

<p>Are there any limitations or requirements imposed by statute that candidates must comply with, e.g. special qualifications, minimum age range etc.? Are there any "Genuine Occupational Qualifications" as defined in legislation which apply to this post?</p>	<p>Enhanced DBS Check for Regulated Activity</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Application form and interview questioning and references.</p>
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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](#)

<p>The post is subject to the following Background Check(s) which will be undertaken,</p>	<p>a) Enhanced DBS with Children's and Adults Barring List Check</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Only one or none of these checks (a – f) may be applicable.</p>
	<p>b) Enhanced DBS with Adults Barring List Check</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<p>c) Enhanced DBS with Children's Barring List Check</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

where applicable, following a conditional offer of appointment.	d) Enhanced DBS Check	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	e) Standard DBS Check	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	f) Basic Disclosure Check	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Police Vetting Check	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	No Check Required	<input type="checkbox"/>	This check may also be required in addition to one from (a-f) above

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Prolonged standing or sitting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Working at heights	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prolonged working with vibrating tools / machinery	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working in confined spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bending / Squatting / Kneeling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Working outdoors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Manual cleaning /domestic duties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agricultural / gardening work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Food Handling	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Work requiring respirators or masks	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rotating shift work or night work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work requiring hearing protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	Driving Duties HGV / LGV/ Minibus / Passenger carrying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work with skin irritants / allergens / respiratory irritants/fine particles	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other driving duties	<input type="checkbox"/>
Significant use of computers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Using restraint	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Working with children or vulnerable adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	High mental stress content	<input type="checkbox"/>
Permanent night work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical / sport / leisure duties	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lone working	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regular walking on uneven ground	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working with challenging behaviours	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
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?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
13. Language Requirements <p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>The employee requires a command of spoken English, to enable the effective performance of the role.</p>		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

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.

Previous applicants need not apply.

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: Wednesday 4th February 2026 @ 9am

Shortlisting: Thursday 5th February 2026

Pre-Assessment Day: Monday 9th February 2026

Interviews: Thursday 12th February 2026

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.