Barnard Castle School
ESTD 1883

Prep School Teaching Assistant – Maternity Cover

For January 2027

Welcome from the Head of Prep School

Dear Candidate,

We are delighted to offer an exciting opportunity for an experienced Teaching Assistant to join our wonderful Prep School team at Barnard Castle School.

We are incredibly proud of our school, our amazing children and the warm, welcoming community that makes it such a special place to work. Community, Character and Ambition are threaded through everything we do, shaping the experiences and opportunities we provide for every child.

We are looking for an enthusiastic, caring and committed individual who shares our passion for helping children flourish. As a school of broad entry, we celebrate the individuality of every pupil and are dedicated to ensuring that each child feels happy, valued, supported and inspired to achieve their very best.

The successful candidate will be based in our Prep School, working closely with class teachers to create a nurturing, engaging and ambitious learning environment. They will play an important role in supporting and challenging our children, helping them develop the confidence, independence and love of learning that will prepare them for the next stage of their educational journey.

We are looking for a positive, flexible and enthusiastic team player who enjoys working with children, embraces the variety of school life and is keen to contribute across all areas of the curriculum. Above all, we are looking for someone who will bring warmth, energy and a genuine commitment to making a difference to our children every day.

This is a **fixed-term maternity cover position**, and we would be delighted to hear from candidates who meet the selection criteria and would love to become part of our special school community.
We look forward to welcoming someone who shares our values and enthusiasm for giving our children the very best possible start.

With kind regards

Sarah Leonard
Head of Prep School



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About Barnard Castle School

Barnard Castle School is a place where young people discover who they are and what they can become. They develop intellectually, socially, emotionally, and morally. Our students do not just leave with results; they leave ready for life.

We are proud to combine high standards of academic achievement with a deep focus on personal growth. Whether they are trying something new, bouncing back from setbacks or standing up for others, our pupils learn that success is about more than outcomes. It is about character.

At Barney, we teach our students how to think, not what to think. We help them go further by helping them understand who they are. We believe in nurturing pupils who are confident and kind, ambitious, and grounded. This is not a school that chases perfection, but one that fosters courage, humility, and resilience.

Our operational staff play a significant role within the school, and every member of staff is a valued member of the wider community.

Job Description

Job Title: **Prep School Teaching Assistant**

Reporting to: **Head of Prep School**

Role Type: **Full Time, Term Time Only, Fixed Term**

Start Date: **5th January 2027**

Location: **Barnard Castle School, Prep School**

Role Summary:

We are looking to appoint an experienced Teaching Assistant with a particular drive and passion for working across all key stages. The Teaching Assistant will work under the direction of the Prep School Head and the Class Teachers to raise the learning and attainment of pupils whilst also promoting their independence and self-esteem. Duties will include supporting pupils' learning both in and out of the classroom setting, in small groups and individually. The Teaching Assistant will be expected to work as part of a team to help achieve the overall aims and ethos of the school.

Key Responsibilities

- Work alongside the Class Teacher to deliver engaging, purposeful learning experiences across the curriculum, supporting pupils individually and in small groups and adapting support to meet a range of educational needs.

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- Support the development of pupils' English and Mathematics skills, including early reading, phonics, writing and numeracy. Hear pupils read individually on a daily basis, maintain accurate records of progress and plan and lead regular small-group phonics sessions as required.
- Contribute to the observation, assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress, play and behaviour, maintaining appropriate records and sharing significant observations or concerns with the Class Teacher.
- Help create a stimulating, inclusive, and well-organised learning environment. Assist with the preparation, organisation, maintenance, clearing away and storage of classroom resources, equipment and displays.
- Welcome pupils on arrival, support them in settling into the classroom, and relay relevant messages from parents to the Class Teacher. Provide attentive care throughout the school day, offering reassurance when pupils are distressed or unwell, encouraging independence and responding appropriately to individual needs.
- Promote and safeguard the welfare of all pupils at all times, maintaining vigilance and reporting concerns promptly and appropriately in accordance with school policies and procedures.
- Administer basic First Aid for minor injuries, respond appropriately to pupil needs and record incidents in the School's accident book and pupils' diaries, as required.
- Promote high standards of behaviour through positive reinforcement, consistent expectations, and the principles of The Barney Way.
- Foster pupils' confidence, self-esteem, independence, curiosity, determination, responsibility, and pride in their achievements and appearance.
- Support pupils' social and emotional wellbeing, helping to establish a calm, inclusive, and supportive environment. Encourage positive relationships, cooperation, fair play, and the development of appropriate social skills.
- Provide continuity of care and supervision during lunchtime and, where required, mid-morning breaks. Accompany pupils to the dining room, sit with them during meals and assist with serving where necessary.
- Organise and supervise a range of playground activities, helping pupils play safely, cooperate with others, and develop strategies for managing the playground environment.
- Support pupils across a range of curriculum activities, including PE and swimming, encouraging participation, confidence, and enjoyment.
- Contribute to the School's extracurricular programme by offering an after-school activity and supporting other activities as required.
- Assist with plays, productions, Sports Day, concerts, Open Days, parents' evenings and other school events. Accompany classes on educational visits and be prepared to work beyond normal hours when reasonably required for these activities.
- Provide reliable support to the Class Teacher, keeping them informed of matters affecting pupils and communicating effectively with colleagues and parents.
- Reflect on and develop personal practice, participate in relevant meetings and professional development opportunities, and remain willing to learn and adapt to meet the changing needs of pupils and the School.

Undertake supervision duties and other reasonable responsibilities as required, contributing positively to the wider life, smooth running, and efficient organisation of the School.

Candidate Specification

Essential Criteria:

- Teaching Assistant Qualification or similar
- Experience of working with children in an educational setting
- Ability to support literacy, numeracy and wider curriculum learning
- Understanding of children's learning, development and behaviour
- Effective teamwork and communication skills
- Ability to promote positive behaviour, independence and self-esteem
- Commitment to safeguarding, welfare and pupil safety
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
- Flexibility to undertake classroom, pastoral and supervisory duties
- Reliability, professionalism and positive role-modelling skills
- Willingness to uphold school policies and contribute to the school's ethos

Desirable Criteria:

- Experience of supporting phonics and early reading
- Experience of supporting pupils with SEND
- Current First Aid qualification
- Experience of monitoring progress and maintaining pupil records
- Experience of organizing extracurricular activities or clubs
- Experience of supporting school trips, performances and events
- Skills in sport, music, drama, art or other activities
- Experience of working across multiple key stages
- Confidence using educational technology and digital resources

As a member of Barnard Castle School staff:

- Demonstrate consistently high standards of professionalism, reliability and conduct.
- Build positive and respectful relationships with pupils, parents, colleagues and visitors.
- Communicate clearly, professionally and sensitively.
- Support an inclusive, welcoming and collaborative working environment.
- Promote the School positively to current and prospective families and visitors.
- Support and uphold the School's policies, including safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection.
- Take an active interest in School life and contribute ideas for improving the way we work.
- Be willing to support the wider School community and School events where appropriate.

Support and Professional Development

The Prep School Teaching Assistant will be supported and appraised by the Head of Prep School.

This job description outlines the principal duties and responsibilities of the role. It is not intended to be exhaustive.

The duties may be reviewed periodically and amended following consultation with the post holder to reflect the changing needs of the School. Employees will be expected to undertake other duties commensurate with the level and responsibilities of the post as reasonably requested.

Terms and Conditions

Type: Full Time, Term Time Only, Fixed Term

Hours: 8.15 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Salary: £23,642

Paid Holidays: 20 days holiday per year plus bank holidays deemed to be taken in school holidays.

Pension: In accordance with current pension legislation, Operational Staff are automatically enrolled in The Pensions Trust Flexible Retirement Plan scheme unless they choose to opt out. More information is available on request.

Other Benefits:

Use of the school gym, sports facilities and swimming pool, free meals during term time, free parking, and access to various social activities throughout the year.

Recruitment Process

Enquiries

If you have any questions about the role in advance of applying, please contact Sarah Leonard, the Head of Prep School, prep@barneyschool.org.uk who will be pleased to have an informal discussion.

Applications

If you feel that you can meet the above requirements, then please submit a letter of application along with the Barnard Castle School application form to the Bursar. Only applications containing the requested information will be considered.

Applications should be sent to:	
Mrs S M Metcalf Barnard Castle School Barnard Castle County Durham DL12 8UN	Telephone: 01833 696098 Email: hr@barneyschool.org.uk
Application Dates:	**Deadline for applications: Monday 6th December 2026 at 9am** **Interviews in School: W/c 14th December 2026**

Applicants should read carefully the application procedure – guidance for applicants, Policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders and the Disclosure policy and the Safer Recruitment policy.

Barnard Castle School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and all applicants will undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and an enhanced DBS and Barred list check with Disclosure and Barring Service.
Barnard Castle School is an equal opportunities employer.

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