DAME ALLAN'S SCHOOLS
building the future

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Teaching Assistant & OPAL Coordinator

Permanent, full-time, term time only.

Independent Day School for over 1250 students

Junior School (3-11)
Senior School (11-16)
Sixth Form (16-18)

Teaching Assistant & OPAL Coordinator

We are looking to appoint a creative, energetic and enthusiastic person to join our vibrant Junior School and Nursery. Our children enjoy an action packed, broad and child centred curriculum that stimulates their young minds and ignites a love of learning. Our purpose built Junior School is an outstanding creative learning environment with superb facilities both indoors and outdoors.

The successful candidate will lead our team of lunchtime supervisory staff, as well as support teachers and pupils in learning activities during the school day, including short term cover of classes. The postholder will need a minimum Level 3 childcare qualification and experience working with pupils in the primary phase. This role deals with a wide variety of people, so effective communication and strong interpersonal skills are essential. We are also looking for someone who can confidently multi-task and prioritise in a busy environment and use initiative to be proactive on a day-to-day basis.

The OPAL Primary Programme:

The Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) Primary Programme, introduced to our school in 2023, is a programme dedicated to utilising play as a key learning and development tool. Research shows that play is fundamental to a child's health, happiness, development, and wellbeing. Therefore, we believe that play provision should be welcoming and accessible to every pupil, underlining our view that when children feel valued and known, they can grow into happy and successful adults.

Job Description

Teaching Assistant:

To work under the guidance of teaching staff to support the delivery of quality learning and teaching and to help raise standards of achievement for all pupils.

- Work under the direction of the SENDCo.
- Develop a thorough understanding of the individual needs of pupils.
- Build positive, constructive relationships with pupils, interacting sensitively and appropriately to support their learning and wellbeing.
- Support pupils to access learning as effectively as possible, working with individuals, small groups or whole classes as required.
- Provide targeted support in core areas including mathematics, reading and writing.
- Offer additional assistance to pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
- Follow agreed learning activities and teaching programmes.
- Support the use of ICT within learning activities and help pupils develop competence and independence in its use.
- Motivate and encourage pupils to engage positively with learning tasks.
- Assist with marking and correcting work in line with teacher guidance.
- Prepare lesson materials and resources as directed.
- Observe, assess, and accurately record pupil progress and achievement.

- Contribute to the evaluation and review of support programmes.
- Promote positive behaviour, manage incidents promptly in line with school policy, and encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Provide pastoral support to ensure pupils feel secure, supported, and happy within the school environment.
- Promote the inclusion, acceptance, and equal participation of all pupils.
- Meet pupils' physical needs where required, while promoting independence.
- Assist with the preparation, maintenance, and organisation of classroom equipment and resources.
- Support the presentation of pupils' work, including the creation and maintenance of displays.
- Provide general classroom and administrative support, including photocopying and other tasks as required.

OPAL Coordinator:

To lead on the operational delivery of OPAL, ensuring a smooth and effective programme each day and taking responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of pupils in your care. This will involve leading a team of staff, preparing engaging activities, and making sure all pupils and staff follow the relevant policies and procedures.

- Work closely with, and report to, the Curricular Lead for Play to support the strategic development of play across the school.
- Lead and support the play team during lunchtimes, including the effective deployment of staff across indoor and outdoor play zones.
- Take a lead role in the effective delivery, monitoring, and ongoing development of the school's OPAL action plan.
- Manage the provision, organisation, and maintenance of loose parts and other play resources to ensure they are safe, accessible, and engaging.
- Support the Curricular Lead for Play with clear and effective communication about play initiatives to the wider school community.
- Contribute to the ongoing development of the school's play environment.
- Support and promote effective risk management in play.
- Support the continued development of high-quality playwork practice within the play team through guidance, modelling, and support.

General:

- Contribute to the overall ethos and vision of the Schools.
- Be aware of and support differences and ensure equal opportunities for all.
- Take responsibility for professional development and attend training as required by the Schools.
- Understand and adhere to Child Protection, Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Hygiene, and Confidentiality and Data Protection policies and procedures.
- Provide emergency first aid (training will be provided as necessary) when needed and contact the School Nurse for assistance as required.

- Undertake other duties and responsibilities as required commensurate with the post.

Person Specification

The successful candidate may possess the following experience, qualifications and qualities:

- Level 3 or higher qualification.
- First Aid qualification, or the willingness to attend training.
- Experience of caring for, or working with, children in the primary age range.
- Good literacy, numeracy and IT skills with good written communication skills.
- Ability to organise activities for children and adhere to defined standards.
- General understanding of child development and learning.
- An understanding of the National Curriculum.
- Commitment to the provision of high quality childcare.
- Positive approach to learning and gaining new skills through teamwork and training.
- Commitment to the highest standards of child protection and safeguarding.
- Recognition of the importance of personal responsibility for health and safety.
- Understanding of health and safety and food hygiene issues.

Personal attributes:

- Professional approach to work.
- Good organisational, record keeping, and planning skills.
- Well motivated and able to work on own initiative and as part of a team.
- Flexible approach to work.
- Able to communicate effectively with children, colleagues, and parents/carers.
- Ability to use own initiative and judgement to solve problems.
- Able to meet the physical demands of the post.
- Flexibility to work outside of normal working hours on occasion, for meetings, training, events etc.
- Calmness, efficiency, and the ability to work under pressure.
- Understanding of Dame Allan's Schools' all-round ethos.
- Commitment to ongoing personal and professional development where necessary.
- Positive and can do attitude.

Ready to Apply?

Additional information about working at Dame Allan's Schools can be found on our Vacancies page.

1. Please read our Application and Recruitment Process and Recruitment Privacy Notice.
2. Download and complete the Application Form found on our website.
3. Complete the Equal Opportunities form.

4. Send your completed Application Form and any additional documents to HR@dameallans.co.uk.

Closing date: noon on Monday 7 September 2026.

Interviews will take place on Friday 11 September 2026.

Terms and Conditions

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30am - 4:30pm, term-time only

Salary: Competitive

Benefits:

- The Schools operate a fee reduction package for children of staff members, subject to their meeting the Schools' admissions criteria.
- All staff may join the School's pension schemes.
- All staff receive free school lunches.
- Access to the Employee Assistance Programme.
- All staff are eligible for free eye tests.
- Access to Cycle to Work scheme.
- School trip travel opportunities.
- A formal contract, detailing terms and conditions, will be extended following completion of all safeguarding/ pre-employment checks.

Questions

For an informal chat about the role, please contact Mr Geoff Laidler, Head of Junior School and Nursery: gm.laidler@dameallans.co.uk.

For any other queries, please contact HR@dameallans.co.uk

Thank you for your interest in applying to work at Dame Allan's Schools.

The Schools are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Applicants must undergo child protection screening, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Excellence. Stability. Happiness. Est 1705.

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RATED EXCELLENT BY THE INDEPENDENT
SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Dame Allan's Schools, Fowberry Crescent, Fenham,
Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 9YJ. T: 01912751500. www.dameallans.co.uk

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