

# Head of Pre-Prep Recruitment Pack



SOMERHILL  
*We grow amazing people*



SOMERHILL  
*We grow amazing people*

# Welcome to Somerhill

We have a very special school here with a unique offering: the 'best of both worlds', the 'ideal mix' and the 'place I always dreamt of finding' are the comments we often hear from our parents or visitors. With co-educational learning until age 7, Somerhill then offers single-sex classroom lessons until children leave us for senior schools, allowing uninhibited learning and bespoke strategies for the older girls and boys with all the benefits of a co-educational setting.

Our philosophy for the children at Somerhill is straightforward: happy children want to learn. Children are happy if they can play, participate widely and start to master skills of whatever kind, and our stunning setting and outstanding facilities offer endless opportunities for the children to find something that makes them smile.

We believe this offers you the perfect glimpse into our school life. However, to fully appreciate the extraordinary education that we offer and see our vision of confident, curious, and resilient children realised, we invite you to visit us at Somerhill. You will see that this really is an exceptional learning environment where we grow amazing people!



## Our unique school

Somerhill is set in a stunning 400-year-old Jacobean mansion surrounded by 150 acres of beautiful parkland. You will be hard-pressed to find a more glorious setting for a school! We have excellent facilities including a multi-purpose sports hall, astroturf, indoor swimming pool complex and purpose-built music suite to name just a few.

Ours is a mixed ability school. Teachers really invest in the children and know them well, with lessons carefully planned to cater to all abilities.

We have very bright and capable pupils and send more pupils to grammar schools each year than any other local school. Destinations include Tonbridge Grammar School, The Judd School, and The Skinners' School. Some pupils are awarded scholarships at independent schools such as Tonbridge School, Sevenoaks School, Walthamstow Hall and Sutton Valence School at 11+/13+.

We also cater to children who find aspects of their learning more challenging and currently approximately 40 pupils receive additional support.

Located just to the south of Tonbridge, we are readily accessed by a slip road off the A21.

Between the ages of 2 and 7 years, girls and boys are together in the classroom. This environment promotes uninhibited development at an age when playing and learning are often synonymous. From 7 to 13 years, children benefit from a single-sex classroom environment, where girls and boys learn in different and bespoke ways. The moment classes finish, everyone is together - at break and lunch as well as for sports, music, clubs and activities. This really is the best of both worlds for our children.

*endless opportunities*

*'Positive mental health is given high priority' and 'the welfare of pupils is given prime importance.'*

ISI – February 2024.

Taking a holistic approach to education, we nurture academic, personal, spiritual, social and moral growth, enabling our pupils to become confident, curious and resilient individuals going out into the world.

We encourage our pupils to work hard and take pride in their achievements, to think independently, to face up to challenges, to accept responsibility, to develop a broad range of skills and interests and to show concern for others and the environment.

To put it simply: *we grow amazing people.*

## Our school values



*pastorally focussed*



PRE-PREP PALS

A collection of colorful illustrations of various animals: a brown horse with a white saddle, a brown dog, a grey cat, a green turtle, and a yellow chick. Above the horse is a small illustration of a bee.

SOMERHILL  
*We grow amazing people*

## Pre-Prep at Somerhill

Somerhill Pre-Prep is our co-educational Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 setting, welcoming around 200 children aged 2 to 7. Supported by a dedicated team of approximately 38 staff, it is a happy, nurturing place where our youngest learners take their first steps into school life.

Children can join us from age 2 in our pre-school, where play-based learning, outdoor exploration and our much-loved Saplings sessions help them grow in confidence and curiosity. Our EYFS provision includes three pre-school and three Reception classes, offering a warm and secure environment where every child is known and supported.

In Key Stage 1, pupils move into our three Year 1 and three Year 2 classes, where specialist teaching, a broad curriculum and plenty of hands-on learning help them flourish both academically and socially. We are proudly mixed-ability and committed to helping every child achieve their full potential.

Set within our beautiful 400-year-old mansion and 150 acres of woodland, Somerhill Pre-Prep offers an inspiring setting for children to learn, play and explore. As a member of IAPS, we are committed to the highest standards of care and education, and the vast majority of our pupils continue seamlessly into Year 3 at Somerhill.

Warm, welcoming and full of opportunity, our pre-prep is a special place to begin a lifelong love of learning.

*beautifully unique*



SOMERHILL  
*We grow amazing people*

# Head of Pre-Prep

## Application process

All interested candidates are invited to visit the school prior to the application deadline. Please email Jess May (jmay@somerhill.org) to arrange a visit.

Applications should be submitted using the official [application form](#) and must include:

- A full CV
- A covering letter
- Contact details of two referees

## Timeline for applicants

- Closing date for applications: 24th June 2026
- Interviews: 2nd July 2026
- Start date: January 2027

Somerhill is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All appointments are subject to enhanced DBS checks and safer recruitment procedures.

We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer. We actively promote diversity within our workforce and welcome applications from all sections of the community, regardless of sexual orientation, race, age, gender, disability, religion or belief.

## Job Description: Head of Pre-Prep

Somerhill is an extraordinary place to learn and work. Nestled in 150 acres of parkland, our school offers a unique combination of history, beauty and vibrancy. We believe passionately that early childhood should be filled with joy, curiosity and possibility, and our pre-prep provides the perfect environment for children to take their first steps into education with confidence and wonder.

We look forward to welcoming applications from existing Heads of Pre-Prep or Deputy Heads, who will bring warmth, insight and inspiration to this vital stage of school life. This is a rare opportunity to lead a thriving pre-prep and shape the earliest experiences of Somerhill children.

### **About the role**

The Head of Pre-Prep looks after approximately 200 pupils across Nursery, Kindergarten, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, and oversees a team of more than 35 dedicated staff, including the Deputy Head of Pre-Prep, Head of EYFS, teachers and teaching assistants. Working closely with the Head and the Senior Leadership Team, you will ensure excellence and consistency across EYFS and Key Stage 1, monitor children's progress, and use assessment to drive continual improvement.

The role brings a high degree of day-to-day autonomy while remaining deeply connected to the wider leadership of the school. With a strong focus on pastoral care, well-being, behaviour and family partnerships, you will help create a nurturing and inspiring environment for our youngest learners.

You will also contribute to staff development, admissions, marketing, health and safety compliance, and the smooth running of daily operations while teaching for part of the week to remain closely connected to pupils and model best practice.

## **Leadership and vision**

- Provide clear, confident leadership across the pre-prep, modelling the values and ethos of Somerhill.
- Work closely with the Head and Senior Leadership Team to align the pre-prep with whole-school priorities.
- Translate strategic aims into meaningful plans that staff can embrace and deliver.
- Engage staff, pupils and families in a shared vision for the EYFS and Key Stage 1.
- Promote a culture of ambition, joy and high expectations for all pupils.
- Regularly review the effectiveness of the provision and recommend improvements.
- Ensure the pre-prep continues to develop, innovate and move forward.

## **Academic excellence and curriculum oversight**

- Oversee the curriculum across EYFS and Key Stage 1, ensuring it is rich, progressive and age-appropriate.
- Ensure high-quality teaching and learning across all year groups, including Saplings (our Forest School).
- Monitor assessment, progression and attainment, analysing data to inform planning and intervention.
- Ensure lessons provide appropriate challenge for all learners, including the most capable.
- Support the development of literacy, numeracy and early learning foundations.
- Oversee arrangements for inspections and ensure that the pre-prep maintains strong outcomes.
- Support the ongoing development of co-curricular provision, including sport, art, drama and music.

## **Pastoral care and safeguarding**

- Champion the well-being, behaviour and emotional development of all children in the pre-prep.
- Ensure a warm, inclusive environment where every child feels safe, valued and known.

- Work closely with the SEN department and pastoral team to support children with additional needs.
- Act as a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), ensuring robust safeguarding practice.
- Support parents with concerns, transitions and individual pupil needs.
- Model calm, consistent and nurturing leadership in all pastoral matters.

### **People leadership and professional development**

- Provide strong leadership to all staff within the pre-prep, fostering a collaborative culture.
- Lead staff recruitment, induction and deployment across the pre-prep.
- Coordinate professional development, INSET and training for teaching and support staff.
- Ensure effective performance management, including observations, book scrutiny and appraisals.
- Support staff well-being and create an environment where individuals can flourish.
- Promote continual professional learning and reflective practice.
- Maintain a modest teaching commitment to stay connected with pupils and model excellent practice.

### **Operational, compliance and resource management**

- Ensure smooth day-to-day organisation of the pre-prep, maintaining a calm and purposeful environment.
- Work with the Head, Bursar and Finance Manager to manage budgets and resources effectively.
- Oversee financial, human and physical resources to ensure value for money and high-quality provision.
- Monitor and review resources, identifying surpluses, deficiencies and improvement needs.
- Ensure staff deployment supports the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning.
- Oversee compliance, policies, risk assessments and health & safety requirements.
- Lead the planning, resourcing and continued development of the Nursery provision.

## **Partnerships, community and external relations**

- Work closely with families, building strong, open and trusting relationships.
- Support admissions, meet prospective parents and represent the pre-prep at key events.
- Engage actively with the Somerhill Parents' Association.
- Strengthen partnerships with local schools and nurseries.
- Represent Somerhill at community events and in the District 2 IAPS pre-prep heads' forum.
- Promote Somerhill within the local and wider community.
- Support marketing activity and help communicate the strengths of the pre-prep.

## **Leadership and management (person specification)**

- Ability to articulate and implement a clear vision for the pre-prep.
- Excellent communication skills (written and verbal).
- Strong problem-solving skills and experience of handling complex challenges.
- Financial and resource management capability.
- Proficient ICT skills and ability to use digital tools effectively.
- Confidence analysing data to inform decision-making.
- Ability to manage competing demands and deadlines.
- Skilled delegation and team leadership.
- Resilience, adaptability and the ability to remain calm under pressure.
- A genuine joy for working with young children.

*We grow amazing people*

# Employee Benefits



## Support

Professional support through regular appraisals and CPD opportunities



## Pension

Generous defined pension contribution scheme



## Salary

Competitive salary package, regularly benchmarked



## Reward

Staff recognition and reward opportunities



## Cover

Group life assurance



## Well-being

A range of well-being activities including fitness classes, tennis and book club. Free access to all on-site sports facilities on dedicated days



## Lunch

Free hot lunches, salad bar and refreshments during term time

# Conditions

## **Format of applications**

Formal applications will only be accepted via the official Somerhill Application Form which will be published alongside this pack. All completed applications should be sent to [recruitment@somerhill.org](mailto:recruitment@somerhill.org). A tour will form part of the interview process but please visit our website for further information: [www.somerhill.org](http://www.somerhill.org).

## **Child protection**

All staff have a responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children with whom they come into contact and are always required to adhere to and ensure compliance with the school's Safeguarding Policy Statement. If, in the course of carrying out their duties, a member of staff becomes aware of any actual or potential risks to the safety or welfare of children in the school, they must immediately report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## **Safer recruitment and offer conditions**

Somerhill is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be offered the role conditionally, subject to the satisfactory completion of a number of background checks including but not limited to: an enhanced DBS check with the children's barred list check, the taking up and verification of references, the verification of career history and medical fitness to undertake the role. The complete list of required checks will be provided to the successful candidate.

## **Health and safety**

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and subsequent legislation, the school is obliged to provide you with a workplace and working conditions which, so far as is reasonably practicable, are safe and without risk to health. You are required by health and safety legislation to take reasonable care for your own health and safety and for the health and safety and others.

## **Further information**

We are an equal opportunities employer and we welcome applicants from all backgrounds. We celebrate the diverse backgrounds that make up our community and consider it important that people from a diverse range of backgrounds are represented in our setting.

This job description is not intended to be a comprehensive statement of procedures and responsibilities, but instead sets out the principal expectations of the school in relation to the post holder's professional responsibilities and duties. We are looking for an individual who is adaptable, flexible, and willing to carry out the wide range of duties that are likely to be required to make a success of this role. Please note we reserve the right to close prior to the application deadline or extend the deadline depending on the number of applications received. Early applications are encouraged.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Jess May at [recruitment@somerhill.org](mailto:recruitment@somerhill.org) for any general queries.



SOMERHILL  
*We grow amazing people*



# SOMERHILL

A beautifully unique independent prep school for girls and boys aged 2-13

Somerhill, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 ONJ | 01732 353124 | [recruitment@somerhill.org](mailto:recruitment@somerhill.org) | [somerhill.org](http://somerhill.org)