



CLOWNS NURSERY

MANOR HOUSE PRE SCHOOL



Job Application Pack

Deputy Head (Maternity Cover)

Employment Term: 1st September 2026 - 30th August 2027

Closing Date for Applications: Friday 19th June 2026



ABOUT US

Clowns Nursery Manor House Pre-School is an exceptional independent nursery for children aged 6 months to 4 years and 11 months. Located just moments from Hampstead Heath and Golders Hill Park, our purpose-built setting offers eight bright and spacious classrooms alongside three well-resourced outdoor learning gardens.

We place great importance on each child's individual learning journey, supporting children to develop the skills, attitudes, and mindset needed to approach challenges with confidence, curiosity, and resilience.

We provide a bespoke curriculum that promotes independence, creativity, and the development of a Growth Mindset, alongside carefully embedded initiatives that enrich children's learning and development. Our aim is to ensure every child is equipped to thrive emotionally, socially, and academically.

We are an inclusive and welcoming community where children, families, and staff are valued, respected, and supported. We are proud of the strong relationships we build with families and the consistently high outcomes our children achieve, with many progressing to highly regarded local independent schools.

Clowns Nursery is relentlessly committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



SUMMARY OF THE ROLE

The Deputy Head is a key member of the Nursery's leadership team, working closely with the Head to support all aspects of Nursery life and ensure the highest standards of care, safeguarding, teaching, and learning throughout the setting. The Deputy Head contributes to both the strategic development and day-to-day leadership of the Nursery, helping to shape a warm, nurturing, and ambitious environment in which every child is supported to thrive both emotionally and academically.

The role requires a collaborative and forward-thinking individual who leads by example, inspires and motivates staff, and fosters strong relationships with children, families, and colleagues. Working alongside the Head and wider leadership team, the Deputy Head will uphold and promote the Nursery's ethos, championing excellence in early years education through reflective, evidence-informed practice and a strong commitment to continuous improvement.

The Deputy Head will also act as one of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs), taking shared responsibility for safeguarding, child welfare, and pastoral care across the Nursery. The successful candidate will demonstrate a deep commitment to the wellbeing and development of every child, while ensuring that the Nursery maintains the highest professional and regulatory standards at all times.

This role would suit an experienced Deputy Head seeking the opportunity to further develop their leadership experience, or an existing or well-established Head or senior leader looking to make a meaningful contribution within a warm, ambitious, and highly regarded independent Nursery setting.

This is a fixed-term maternity cover contract from 1 September 2026 to 30 August 2027.

ABOUT THE ROLE

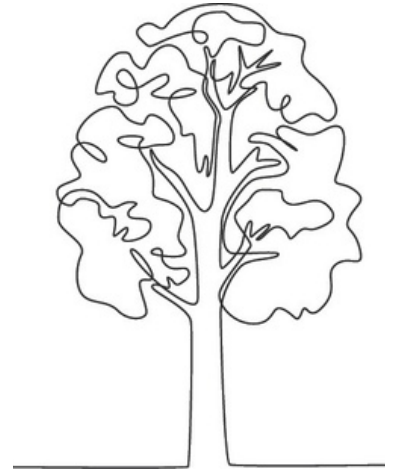
Application deadline: Midnight on Friday 19th June 2026

Interviews: To be confirmed directly with successful candidates

Employment Term: 1st September 2026 - 30th August 2027

Salary: Up to £75k, subject to skills and experience

Contract: Permanent, full-time (46 working weeks per year)



We reserve the right to interview, appoint, and close the advert early depending on the volume of applications we receive.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Private Healthcare

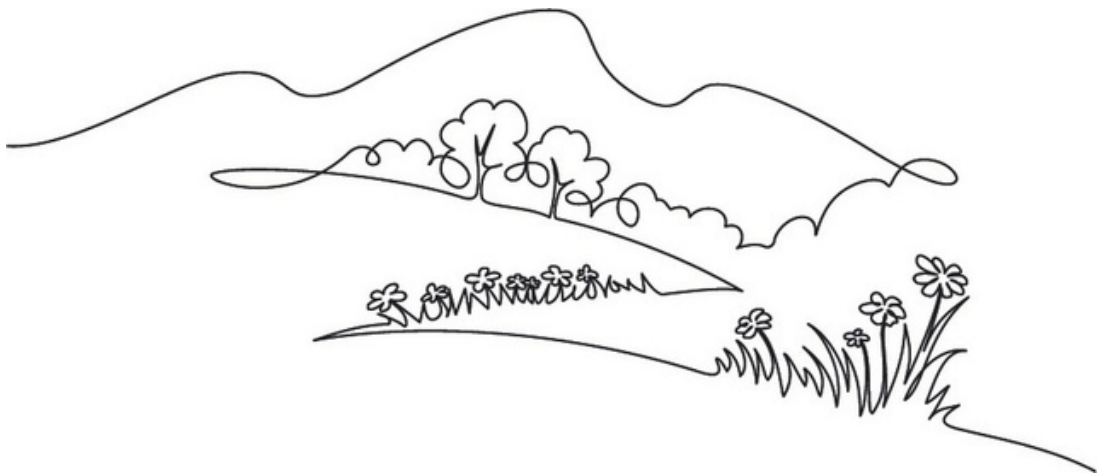
Private healthcare provision.

Additional holidays

In addition to the nursery's scheduled closures (21 days plus bank holidays), the post-holder will receive an additional two weeks of annual leave.

Professional Development

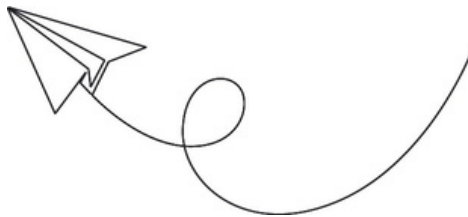
Extensive CPD and bespoke training opportunities to support continued professional development.



MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

LEADERSHIP, STRATEGY & MANAGEMENT

- Work within, promote, and support all staff in the implementation of Clowns' policies and procedures across the Nursery.
- Provide strategic and operational leadership across the Nursery, supporting the Head in achieving and maintaining the highest Ofsted standards.
- Contribute as a key member of the Senior Leadership Team to the strategic direction, development, and continuous improvement of the Nursery.
- Work alongside the Head to establish and sustain a shared vision for high-quality early years provision, leading by example to inspire staff, parents, and children.
- Take overall responsibility for the effective organisation, leadership, and day-to-day operational running of the Nursery in the absence of the Head.
- Act as the senior point of accountability for whole-Nursery leadership, ensuring coherence across teaching, safeguarding, and operational systems.
- Maintain high professional standards of leadership, integrity, and conduct at all times.



DEPUTISING AND DAILY LEADERSHIP

- When deputising, take full responsibility for all aspects of the Nursery's operation including staffing, safeguarding, education, compliance, and communication with external bodies.
- Undertake the full responsibilities of a Head when required, in line with all statutory, legal, and ethical standards.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and ensure compliance with all statutory requirements.
- Lead the Nursery during Ofsted inspections, regulatory visits or formal investigations in the absence of or alongside the Head.
- Ensure Ofsted and relevant external agencies are provided with timely, accurate, and complete information during inspections or investigations.

EYFS LEADERSHIP, TEACHING, ASSESSMENT AND COMPLIANCE

- Provide whole-Nursery leadership for teaching and learning, ensuring consistently high-quality EYFS provision across all rooms.
- Teach a reduced timetable within a Rising3s or 4s class (approximately 40% teaching commitment), modelling outstanding Early Years practice.
- Oversee the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the EYFS curriculum in collaboration with the Head and Early Years Lead.
- Conduct learning walks, peer observations, and scrutiny of children's learning journals, providing feedback, professional challenge, and staff development where appropriate.
- Analyse pupil progress data to identify trends, next steps, and priorities for Nursery improvement.
- Oversee the completion of Two-Year Progress Checks (TYPCs), ensuring accuracy, consistency, and EYFS alignment, and supporting staff with observations and assessment practice.
- Support staff in the preparation of reports, assessments, and parent meetings, ensuring consistently high standards across the Nursery.
- Maintain full awareness of DfE and Ofsted updates and ensure these are embedded across practice.
- Ensure full compliance with the EYFS Statutory Framework and Ofsted Education Inspection Framework.
- Maintain oversight of Nursery policies, procedures, and documentation, ensuring they are regularly reviewed and updated in line with statutory requirements and best practice.
- Lead Nursery readiness for inspection, with particular responsibility for quality assurance, evidence gathering, and continuous improvement.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS AND SENDCO

- Act as the Nursery SENDCo (statutory role) with full responsibility for SEND provision, EHCPs, and external agency coordination.
- Ensure full compliance with the EYFS Statutory Framework and all safeguarding and welfare requirements.
- Lead the development, implementation, and monitoring of SEND support plans and interventions.
- Liaise with external professionals and agencies regarding SEND cases, ensuring appropriate escalation and statutory compliance.

SEND, INCLUSION AND EXTERNAL AGENCIES

- Work in close collaboration with the Assistant Head & Inclusion Lead, who leads the implementation of inclusive practice across the setting.
- Oversee multi-agency working where cases require statutory SEND input or escalation beyond inclusion coordination.
- Hold statutory responsibility for SEND provision and outcomes across the Nursery.
- Ensure clear systems for escalation, monitoring, and intervention for children with additional needs.



SAFEGUARDING (DSL) RESPONSIBILITIES

- Alongside the Head, act as lead Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the Nursery, sharing overall responsibility for safeguarding systems, child protection procedures, and the promotion of children's welfare across the setting.
- Ensure all safeguarding concerns are managed appropriately, promptly, and in accordance with current statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025) and Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance, and best practice, ensuring all changes are effectively implemented, embedded, and communicated across the Nursery.
- Work closely with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), social care, and other external safeguarding agencies as required.
- Ensure safeguarding information is accurately recorded, securely stored, and shared in accordance with Data Protection legislation and statutory requirements.
- Lead and support a strong safeguarding culture across the Nursery, ensuring all staff receive appropriate induction, ongoing safeguarding training, and regular support to remain fully compliant with current safeguarding policies and procedures.

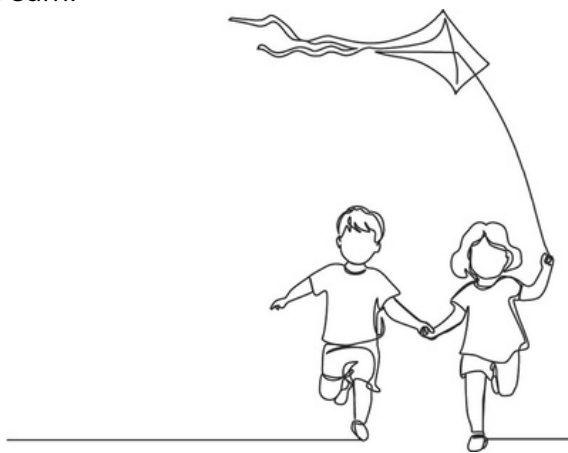
Alongside the Head, the Deputy Head holds lead Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) responsibility for the Nursery, with overall accountability for safeguarding systems, escalation procedures, and statutory child protection compliance. The **Assistant Head & Inclusion Lead** supports safeguarding in a Joint DSL capacity, focusing on day-to-day implementation, coordination, and monitoring of practice across the Nursery. Complex or high-level safeguarding concerns are escalated to the Head and Deputy Head for statutory oversight and final decision-making.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Provide line management and professional leadership to Nursery staff, ensuring clear expectations and accountability.
- Undertake staff supervision, observation, and appraisal processes in line with Nursery policy.
- Support recruitment, induction, and performance management of staff alongside the Head.
- Lead on staff performance where concerns arise, ensuring appropriate support, monitoring, and development plans are in place.
- Contribute to the Nursery CPD programme, ensuring training supports whole-Nursery improvement priorities.
- Maintain oversight of staff standards, wellbeing, and professional conduct.

PARENT PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION

- Develop and maintain strong, professional relationships with parents and carers.
- Support the resolution of parental concerns and complaints in line with Nursery procedures and safeguarding requirements.
- Ensure high-quality communication regarding children's learning, progress, and wellbeing.
- Represent the Nursery in parent meetings and events alongside the Head and Senior Leadership Team.



ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Undertake any other duties reasonably required by the Head in line with the seniority of the role.
- Support wider Nursery initiatives including nutrition, sustainability, and environmental responsibility.

THE CANDIDATE

Qualifications

Essential

- Degree-level education or above; or
- Qualified Teacher Status (Primary), with Early Years specialism and/or experience; or
- A full and relevant Level 5 qualification or above in Early Years

Desirable

- Senior leadership qualification
- Safeguarding or DSL-specific training at an advanced level

Experience

Essential

- Significant senior leadership experience within an Early Years or primary setting (ideally 5+ years)
- Leadership of teaching and learning within the EYFS, including curriculum development, assessment, and quality assurance
- Responsibility for safeguarding practice, including contributing to or leading DSL duties within a school or nursery setting
- SENDCo or SEND leadership experience, including working with EHCP processes
- Leadership of pastoral care and responsibility for promoting children's wellbeing across a setting.

Desirable

- Experience of multi-agency working with external professionals (e.g. Early Help, social care, health services)
- Involvement in Ofsted inspections, including preparation, evidence gathering, and/or leadership contribution
- Leadership of staff development, supervision, and performance management



Skills and Abilities

- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to engage confidently and professionally with children, parents, staff, and external professionals
- Strong leadership skills with the ability to inspire, motivate, support and hold staff accountable to high professional standards
- Highly developed interpersonal skills, including tact, discretion, diplomacy, and professionalism when managing sensitive or confidential matters
- Excellent organisational, time management, and prioritisation skills, with the ability to manage multiple responsibilities within a busy environment
- Emotional resilience, sound judgement, and the ability to remain calm and effective under pressure
- Strong pedagogical understanding of the EYFS and the ability to model outstanding practice
- Ability to interpret data and use assessment information to drive improvement
- Proven ability to lead staff development through mentoring, supervision, and performance management
- Confidence using Microsoft Office
- Ability to produce high-quality reports and professional documentation
- Confidence in leading meetings and parent engagement activities, and delivering training

Knowledge and Understanding

- Secure and detailed knowledge of the EYFS Statutory Framework and Ofsted Education Inspection Framework
- Strong knowledge of safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025) and Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Understanding of SEND legislation, EHCP processes, and inclusive practice within Early Years settings
- Strong knowledge of child development and high-quality Early Years pedagogy
- Understanding of health and safety requirements, safer recruitment, and regulatory compliance within an Early Years environment
- Understanding of equality, diversity, and inclusion principles, and the ability to embed these effectively within Nursery practice
- Understanding of effective multi-agency working and early intervention strategies
- Commitment to reflective practice, evidence-informed improvement, and continuous professional development



Personal Qualities

- Passionate about high-quality Early Years education and committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for all children
- Strong moral purpose and an unwavering commitment to safeguarding, child welfare, and inclusive practice
- Calm, resilient, and professional, with the ability to manage complex situations with sensitivity and sound judgement
- Reflective and forward-thinking practitioner, committed to continuous improvement
- High levels of integrity, discretion, confidentiality, and professionalism
- Strong alignment with the ethos, values, and culture of Clowns Nursery
- Proactive, solutions-focused, and able to demonstrate initiative and leadership in a fast-paced environment
- Warm, energetic, and positive, with a genuine commitment to creating a nurturing, ambitious, and inspiring environment for children
- Able to build and maintain strong, respectful relationships across a diverse Nursery community.

Assessment Methods

- Application form
- Interview
- Professional references
- Leadership and/or EYFS practice observation
- Scenario-based leadership assessment (including safeguarding discussion)
- Review of written tasks





HOW TO APPLY

Candidates will need to submit a fully completed application form. We do not accept CV's as a form of application.

Please complete the application form which can be found [online here](#).

Applicants must be willing to complete an application for an Enhanced DBS certificate and provide us with two reference contacts. We will seek references for shortlisted candidates after interview. **The closing date for all applications is midnight on Friday 19th June 2026.**

We welcome candidates to contact the Operations Manager and arrange to visit the nursery and meet the Head and Deputy Head prior to the deadline date for applications.

Interviews will be confirmed directly with successful candidates

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to an on-site interview to meet the children and staff.

Applicants will be asked to complete written and practical tasks, including observations, planning and teaching a lesson, details of which will be sent out in the interview confirmation email.