

Laboratory General Assistant Permanent role, Term-Time only

Whitgift is a leading independent day and boarding school for boys, with approximately 1500 pupils including over one hundred boarding pupils and flexi boarding pupils. It is set in an attractive 48-acre parkland site in South Croydon enjoying excellent links to London, Surrey and the south coast.

We are seeking to appoint a Laboratory General Assistant for the Chemistry and Biology Preparation room to undertake general duties to assist in the smooth running of resourcing and preparation for lessons for Science Department.

OUTLINE OF POST

The Laboratory General Assistant will provide practical and operational support to the Science Technical Team, helping to ensure that the laboratories and preparation areas are organised, appropriately stocked and ready to support the safe and efficient delivery of practical science.

A key responsibility of the role will be the management of laboratory glassware and equipment, including its collection, cleaning, drying, restocking and appropriate storage, together with maintaining high standards of cleanliness and organisation within designated laboratory and preparation areas. The post holder will also assist with stock monitoring and replenishment and, following appropriate training, may support the preparation of routine stock solutions and other laboratory resources.

Working closely with the Biology and Chemistry Technicians, the Laboratory General Assistant will follow departmental procedures for the safe cleaning and decontamination of laboratory equipment and the handling of laboratory waste. The role will also provide broader practical support to the Science Technical Team as required, including during periods of staff absence and at departmental and school events.

The successful candidate will therefore need to be practical, reliable, proactive and willing to work flexibly as part of a collaborative technical team.

Full training will be provided for duties requiring specific laboratory knowledge or procedures.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To work under the guidance and direction of the Team Lead Technician and, where appropriate, in liaison with the Chemistry and Biology Technicians:

- Take responsibility for the routine collection, cleaning, washing, drying and return of laboratory glassware, apparatus and equipment, ensuring items are clean, safe and ready for reuse.
- Return clean glassware and equipment to designated storage areas and ensure routinely used items are appropriately stocked and readily available to support practical lessons.
- Maintain the laboratory wash-up areas to a consistently high standard of cleanliness, organisation and hygiene, ensuring sinks, draining areas, equipment and associated work surfaces are kept clean, tidy and safe.

- Liaise closely with the Chemistry and Biology Technicians to ensure that glassware, equipment and other laboratory items requiring specialist cleaning or decontamination are handled appropriately and in accordance with relevant risk assessments, COSHH requirements, departmental procedures and CLEAPSS guidance.
- Identify and safely remove damaged or broken glassware and equipment from use, reporting items requiring replacement and following the appropriate departmental arrangements for safe disposal.
- Monitor stocks of commonly used laboratory consumables, cleaning materials, glassware and associated supplies; replenish stock as required and notify or liaise with the appropriate technician regarding items requiring reordering.
- Regularly check and replenish wash bottles, paper towels, roller towels and other agreed laboratory consumables in laboratories and preparation rooms.
- Support the maintenance of clean, safe and well-organised science laboratories and preparation areas, including sinks, workbenches and fume cupboards, within the responsibilities of the role.
- Assist with the safe segregation and disposal of laboratory waste in accordance with departmental procedures, relevant risk assessments, COSHH requirements and CLEAPSS guidance.
- Be familiar with and follow the Science Department Health & Safety Policy, relevant risk assessments, Standard Operating Procedures and CLEAPSS guidance, undertaking required training relevant to the duties of the post.
- Assist the Science Technical Team with wider practical and technical duties as reasonably required, including preparation, organisation, movement and storage of equipment and resources to support the effective day-to-day operation of the Science Department.
- Contribute to wider Science Department and School activities as required, including supporting events such as Open Days, science fairs, exhibitions, departmental activities and other science-related events.
- Work collaboratively with members of the Science Technical Team and teaching staff, communicating effectively regarding equipment, stock, cleaning, safety and practical requirements and contributing positively to the smooth running of the department.
- Uphold safeguarding responsibilities by adhering to school policies and statutory guidance, promoting the welfare of children and young people at all times
- Undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the general nature and level of responsibility of the Laboratory General Assistant role.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Consistently high standards of cleanliness, organisation and safety within laboratories and preparation areas.
- Timely turnaround of laboratory glassware, equipment and resources.
- Accuracy and effectiveness of stock monitoring and replenishment processes.
- Compliance with Health & Safety, COSHH, CLEAPSS and departmental procedures.
- Positive feedback from teaching staff and technicians regarding reliability and support.
- Completion of required training and active participation in departmental development activities.
- Reliable attendance, punctuality and flexibility in support of departmental requirements.
- Positive contribution to departmental teamwork and wider school events.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

To carry out the duties and responsibilities of the post, in accordance with the School's Health and Safety Policy Manual handling, Working at Height and Electricity at Work regulations and relevant Health and Safety Legislation. Ensuring compliance with the Whitgift Science departmental policies and Standard Operating Procedures.

The John Whitgift Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young and elderly people in their care and expects all staff to share this commitment.

To comply with the Whitgift Equal Opportunities policy and to ensure positive relationships are upheld within the school community, through effective communication, in line with professional norms.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

To ensure that all services within the areas of responsibility are provided in accordance with the school's commitment to high-quality service provision.

This job description will usually be reviewed annually and may be subject to amendment or modification at any time after consultation with the post holder. It is not a comprehensive statement of procedures and tasks but sets out the main expectations of the school in relation to the post holder's professional responsibilities and duties.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

Essential

- Able to work as an effective part of a team.
- Able to work in a fast-paced environment
- Able to work efficiently and calmly during periods of pressure
- Effective verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to work on your own initiative.
- A smart appearance, commensurate with the high standards of the school.
- Familiarity with health and safety regulations relevant to science laboratories.
- Reliability, punctuality, and a professional attitude.
- A proactive, collaborative and flexible approach to work.
- Respect for confidentiality and safeguarding procedures.
- Diligent in completing mandatory training, including safeguarding and prevent training.
- Willingness to contribute to the wider life of the school, including the support for science-related events or clubs.
- Ability to prioritise workloads and manage deadlines.
- Able to perform manual handling tasks safely; comfortable with lifting, cleaning, and bench-level work.

Desirable

- An A-Level (or equivalent) in a science subject.
- COSHH and Health & Safety certifications are an advantage.
- Understanding of waste disposal and control procedures relevant to school laboratories, including appropriate risk assessment practices.
- Manual Handling training for safe movement of equipment and materials.
- First Aid trained
- Experience with inventory management and equipment maintenance in educational or laboratory settings.
- Previous experience of caring for animals, or an interest in animal care and willingness to undertake appropriate training in animal husbandry.

FURTHER INFORMATION

All our staff benefit from a competitive remuneration package, including:

- A Pension Scheme (with Life Assurance cover)
- Free access to an Employee discount Club
- Discounted school fees for the Foundation Schools (permanent posts only)
- Access to our onsite gym (available at select hours) and our swimming pool (when available, access is extended to staff)
- Membership with BUPA
- Onsite parking, when available
- Lunch is available onsite during term time

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

This position is offered as a full time, permanent, term-time only contract.

The Laboratory General Assistant will work 5-days per week. The hours are 8.00am to 5.00pm (40 hours per week) with a one-hour unpaid lunch break. There will be an occasional requirement for flexibility with start and finishing times to meet the needs of the department or for school events throughout the year. Any changes will be agreed with your line manager and mutually agreed in advance.

The salary range for this post will be Point 18-20 on the Whitgift Foundation Support Staff Salary Scale. The full-time salary is £33,147 to £34,904 gross pay per annum, dependent on qualifications and relevant experience. The pro rata salary range is **£26,517 to £27,923** to reflect Term Time only.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

We welcome applications from all parts of our community as we aspire to attract staff that match the social and cultural diversity of our student intake.

To apply, please visit www.whitgift.co.uk/vacancies. If you have questions regarding the vacancy, please feel free to contact Mrs Jennifer Petey, Team Lead Technician, on 02086889222 or email j.petey@whitgift.co.uk. For any general queries, please telephone 020 8688 9222 or e-mail the Human Resources Department at SchoolHR@whitgift.co.uk.

We invite interested candidates to apply as soon as possible as applications will be reviewed on a daily basis, and interviews may take place at any time. This vacancy may close earlier than the stated deadline if sufficient applications are received, so early submission is encouraged.

In line with Home Office requirements under the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, all successful applicants will be required to demonstrate their right to work in the UK by presenting original documents evidencing their identity and eligibility to work in person. Right to work checks may also be completed using the Home Office online right to work checking service (share code).

The School also requires sight of original qualification and professional membership documents as detailed in the application.

Whitgift School (part of the John Whitgift Foundation) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Where applicable, applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service, online media checks and overseas checks. It is an offence to apply for a role at the school if you know that you are barred from regulated activity with children.

All roles within the school involve contact with children and are therefore classed as regulated activity. Child protection and safeguarding are the responsibility of everyone who works or volunteers in our school. All staff must be committed to providing a safe environment for children and supporting the school's safeguarding ethos.

The post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Applicants are required to declare all convictions and cautions, even those that are "spent" unless they are "protected" under the DBS filtering rules, to assess suitability to work with children. Shortlisted candidates will be asked to disclose information relevant to safeguarding prior to interview.

October 2026