



St. Mary's Preparatory School
A love of learning for life

Nursery Manager

Candidate Pack



Overview

We are seeking an experienced and forward-thinking Nursery Manager to lead our Henley-on-Thames nursery through an exciting period of growth and transformation. As part of the formation of a new combined prep school during 2026 and 2027, the Nursery Manager will play a pivotal role in shaping early years provision, culture, and future direction.

You will be a visible, values-driven leader who inspires staff, delights families, and ensures high-quality provision every day. The role includes leading the transition from a term-time-only nursery to a year-round setting, with the ambition of progressing towards Ofsted-registered day-nursery status in time.

What We Offer

- A warm, high-achieving nursery merging into a new combined prep school community.
- The opportunity to build and lead the development and expansion of a nursery.
- Supportive leadership and the opportunity to recruit and develop a team of practitioners.
- High-quality facilities and outdoor spaces.
- Professional development across the Wishford group.

The Nursery Manager reports to the Headteacher and Head of Early Years. As the nursery grows, the Nursery Manager will manage a deputy, administrator and up to four nursery rooms.

In the near future, we are opening the nursery up to the under 2 age group.

Hours, Salary & Benefits

Hours: 40 hours per week, year-round. Permanent role. 8am - 5:00pm

Salary: £38,000 - £42,000 pa based on skills and experience

Benefits:

- Means tested staff discount
- 5% employer pension
- Complementary lunch during term time cooked on site by our inhouse chefs
- 25 days paid holiday + bank holidays
- Access to the group's counselling scheme
- Personal accident at work cover
- Shopping discount card
- Access to fully funded apprenticeships
- Discretionary Christmas stand down
- Opportunities for career development within the Wishford group of schools

Application & Important Info

Applicants should complete the school's application form, which can be found [here](#), and submitted to the email on the form.

We only accept applications on The Wishford Education application form and the application should be accompanied by a covering letter, addressed to the Headteacher Mr Stephen Blundell, of no more than one page. Please do not send a CV.

Applications are on a rolling basis, and interviews will take place at a time that is suitable for both you as the candidate and the School. We reserve the right to close the process at any time should a suitable candidate be found.

St Mary's Prep is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service and an online search on application.

Wishford Education is an equal opportunities employer and welcomes applications from all backgrounds. Appointments will be made solely on merit and will be made without regard to age, disability, gender, nationality, race, colour, ethnicity, or religion.

If you have any queries or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact the School at info@stmarysprep.co.uk or on 01491 573118.

If you need any adjustments for the application or interview process please contact HR@Wishford.co.uk



Job Description

Leadership & Quality

- Lead daily operations with exemplary practice.
- Embed EYFS with effective curriculum planning.
- Maintain high-quality outcomes meeting inspection standards.
- Lead the nursery through change as part of school development.

Change Leadership & Expansion

- Lead transition to year-round provision.
- Prepare for Ofsted day-nursery registration.
- Align development planning for the new combined prep school.

Safeguarding, Compliance & Governance

- Serve as DSL or Deputy for the nursery.
- Maintain safeguarding and statutory records.
- Ensure health & safety and robust ratios.

People & Culture

- Line-manage and develop Early Years staff.
- Lead supervision, appraisals and CPD.
- Champion inclusive practice.

Family Partnership & Community

- Build warm relationships with families.
- Represent the nursery at events.

Operations & Administration

- Oversee rotas, wraparound care and staffing. Manage admissions and transitions.
- Maintain budgets and high-quality learning environments.

Person Specification

Essential Experience:

- Level 3/4/5 childcare qualification.
- Proven EYFS leadership.
- Strong EYFS and KCSIE knowledge.
- Communication and partnership skills.

Desirable Experience:

- Independent/ISI/Ofsted setting experience.
- Change management experience.
- Outdoor learning or specialist coordination.

Disposition:

- Professionalism, reliability, integrity.
- Positive, child-centred approach.
- Strong organisational skills.
- Commitment to school ethos.



Our Mindsets

We go together

We are stronger together, as one global schools' system and operate with our collective goals in mind. We show up for one another, collaborate widely and share generously.

We believe we can

We are driven and passionate about what we do. Determined learners, we progress fast by facing challenges and empower others to do the same. We take ownership of our responsibilities and always believe there is a way.

We stay ahead

We embrace change to stay ahead, whilst maintaining high-standards and best practice. We anticipate the future, not afraid to do things differently, so both our students and our business thrive today and tomorrow.

We share a growth mindset

We always consider the needs and perspectives of others. We are open to new ideas and ways of working, connecting to wider perspectives wherever possible.

Wishford Education

Wishford Education is a leading provider of independent education in the UK. Our group includes independent prep and senior schools, nurseries and day and residential camps. Varied in character but united in ethos, our schools, nurseries and camps understand where the true value of an independent education lies, and provide high-quality learning, outstanding opportunities and a happy, caring environment in which children achieve amazing things. Founded in 2011, the group currently comprises ten independent schools in Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Kent as well as two thriving day nurseries in Wiltshire, an international summer school and an activity camps business. The group is growing and we expect a number of additional schools and nurseries to join us in the near future.

For more information on the Wishford Education group, please visit: www.wishford.co.uk

St Mary's Prep & Nursery

Our Henley nursery is located on St Andrews Road and forms part of the evolving educational landscape in the town. During 2026 and 2027, this setting will join with a partner school at Bell Street, to form a new combined prep school across two sites.

The nursery currently caters for children aged 2–4+, grounded in EYFS practice. Over the coming year, the Nursery Manager will lead expansion to year-round provision and work towards day-nursery Ofsted registration allowing the nursery to offer care to babies from the age of three months.

We have been at the centre of education in Henley for almost 100 years, helping generations of children to learn in a stimulating and inspiring environment. Situated in the heart of the town in a beautiful Victorian townhouse, our vibrant co-ed prep school provides an outstanding education for children aged 3 – 11 years.

Proud of our reputation for delivering academic excellence – the attainment of St. Mary's pupils is above national age-related expectations in all subjects, and our more able pupils are challenged and stretched with a range of classroom work and additional activities.

Our pupils are well prepared to make the transition on to the next stage in their education, with children consistently receiving offers from their first choice of the most prestigious schools in the area, including scholarships and awards.

For more information please visit:
www.stmarysprep.co.uk