Lunchtime Assistant

Job Information

Reports to: Headteacher / Lunchtime Supervisor
Grade: RG2 (SP 3-4) no gateway progression
Location: School Site
Health & Safety Responsibility: Level 2

Job Purpose

The Lunchtime Assistant helps to ensure that pupils have a safe, positive, and enjoyable lunchtime experience. Working across Reception, KS1 and KS2 on rotation, the role supports children's wellbeing, healthy eating habits, and safe play. Lunchtime Assistants help create a calm, inclusive atmosphere that reflects Coley Primary School's Therapeutic Thinking approach — modelling kindness, consistency, and prosocial behaviour in every interaction.

Safeguarding & Compliance

The post holder must follow all safeguarding, child protection, health & safety and data protection policies. An enhanced DBS check is required.

- Follow all safeguarding and child protection procedures in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL or DDSL.
- Maintain professional boundaries at all times, following the Staff Code of Conduct.
- Maintain strict confidentiality and comply with GDPR and data-protection requirements.
- Be alert to signs of vulnerability, harm, neglect or unmet needs and act on concerns promptly.
- Complete any mandatory refresher training (e.g., Prevent Duty, First Aid, KCSIE) as required.
- Uphold and model the school's values, behaviour expectations and Therapeutic Thinking ethos.
- Follow emergency, lockdown, first aid and critical incident procedures as required.
- Support the school's commitment to equality, inclusion and safer working practices.
- Check school email at least weekly to stay up-to-date with safeguarding updates, operational messages and key announcements.

Key Duties and Responsibilities

Healthy Eating and Mealtime Support

- Encourage pupils to enjoy their meals in a relaxed, calm way.
- Offer gentle encouragement towards healthy eating choices in line with the school's Healthy Packed Lunch Guidelines — without policing food or making children feel judged.
- Provide reassurance and support for children who are reluctant or nervous eaters, encouraging but never forcing.
- Promote good table manners and positive social behaviour at mealtimes.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

- Model calm, respectful communication at all times in line with Coley's Therapeutic Thinking Policy, which emphasises prosocial behaviour, emotional regulation and relational approaches.
- Use supportive, non-confrontational language and co-regulation strategies to help children manage emotions during busy lunchtime periods.
- Encourage cooperative play, turn taking, and inclusion during outdoor activities.
- Support simple restorative conversations following minor disagreements, helping children return to class in a settled, regulated state.
- Report more significant behaviour concerns to the Midday Supervisor or class teacher according to the Behaviour Policy.
- Promote and uphold Coley's whole school values and expectations, modelling kindness, respect and fairness.

Supporting Safety and Supervision

- Supervise pupils during lunchtime both indoors and outdoors, ensuring their safety at all times.
- Maintain awareness of different age group needs, particularly supporting Reception and KS1 children with safe eating routines.
- Follow EYFS appropriate choking prevention practices, such as encouraging safe sitting while eating, calm eating pace, and ensuring pupils do not run or play with food in their mouth.
- Be vigilant around allergies, checking that children with known allergies are seated safely, follow their agreed plans, and avoid exposure to allergens (in line with whole school procedures).
- Report any serious injury, illness, or safety concern immediately to the Lunchtime Supervisor or relevant member of staff.

Environment and Practical Duties

- Keep eating areas clean and tidy, wiping tables, clearing spillages, and maintaining safe floor spaces.
- Clean up after sickness or accidents following school procedures.
- Ensure classrooms and play areas are left ready for afternoon learning.
- Assist with lining up, transitioning pupils back into class, and ensuring all children leave outdoor spaces when lunchtime ends.

General Responsibilities

- Build warm, supportive relationships with pupils, being aware of and responding sensitively to individual needs.
- Maintain confidentiality, safeguarding awareness and professional conduct at all times.
- Participate in required training, including safeguarding, first aid, allergy awareness, Therapeutic Thinking and health and safety.
- Support the overall ethos and aims of the school, contributing positively to children's wellbeing across the school community.

Person Specification

Qualifications / Training

- Good literacy and numeracy skills appropriate to the role.
- First aid training
- Training in Therapeutic Thinking

Experience

- Experience working with children in a school setting.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- Practical, proactive and flexible approach to work.
- Calm, patient and reliable approach.
- Ability to use supportive, therapeutic language and uphold the school's approach to behaviour.
- Ability to follow instructions and work effectively as part of a team.
- Awareness of food safety, choking prevention, allergy procedures and general health and safety.
- Warm, friendly manner with a focus on inclusion and fairness.
- Ability to stay consistent in behaviour expectations and act as a positive role model.
- Willingness to undertake additional training as needed.

Coley Values – Lunchtime Assistant

At Coley Primary School, our values guide every interaction. Lunchtime Assistants play a vital role in creating a safe, inclusive, nurturing environment where children feel supported and ready to learn. Through warm relationships, calm supervision, and consistent modelling of prosocial behaviour, Lunchtime Assistants help pupils develop positive habits, respectful friendships and a sense of belonging.

Belonging

Creating a welcoming, calm lunchtime environment where every child feels seen, included and supported.

Respect

Treating pupils with fairness, kindness and empathy, encouraging them to respect each other and their environment.

Honesty

Communicating clearly and professionally with pupils and colleagues, modelling trustworthy behaviour.

Curiosity

Noticing children's emotions, needs and interactions, and responding thoughtfully and sensitively.

Courage

Remaining calm in challenging moments, using therapeutic approaches to help pupils regulate and restore relationships.

Pride

Taking pride in creating pleasant mealtime experiences and positive playtimes that help children return to learning refreshed and settled.