

# Student Support Assistant

## Information Pack 2017/18

Our Vision: 'To create a world where physically disabled young people learn to take control of their lives and dare to dream.'

To do this we all strive to 'remove barriers and provide opportunities for physically disabled young people to learn, develop independence and realise their potential.'



# Introduction

You considering applying for a position at Treloar's. We are a large charity and community of around 800 staff and volunteers with a history of supporting young people that goes back to 1908. Working at Treloar's can be hugely rewarding, fun and you will learn so much while you are here whilst supporting the students. It can also be demanding and complex and we want to make sure that you have an understanding of what to expect before coming for an interview. This will help to guide you in completing your application form and preparing any questions you may have which you can ask during your interview. We also want you to feel well-prepared, especially if you've not worked in the care sector before.

This application pack is split into **4** sections:

- 1. Why do students attend Treloar's?**
- 2. What roles are available?**
- 3. What is a 'typical' day?**
- 4. Safeguarding**

Please read each of these sections carefully as these topics will come up during your interview.

## Why do students attend Treloar's?

Each of the students is a unique individual with their own ambitions, aims and dreams for their future. We are a highly specialist nursery, school and college with a long and successful history of supporting students with the most complex needs. We support students with wide range of disabilities but many of the students have one of the two following conditions:

**Cerebral Palsy** – Cerebral Palsy is an umbrella term for a much wider range of linked symptoms that may be completely unique to each person but have a common origin. In very general terms, cerebral palsy is caused by parts of the brain that control movement not developing fully during (or just after) pregnancy. For the students with cerebral palsy, this means that they are likely to have limited movement and most probably wheelchair users (over 95% of the students use wheelchairs). This can also affect their speech and in some cases (but far from all) also their cognitive ability. It is important to remember that cerebral palsy in itself is not a learning difficulty.

**Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy** – Duchenne results in progressive loss of strength and is caused by a mutation in the gene that encodes for dystrophin. Because dystrophin is absent, the muscle cells are easily damaged. The progressive muscle weakness leads to serious medical problems, particularly issues relating to the heart and lungs. Young men (and occasionally young women although the condition primarily affects young men) with Duchenne typically live into their late twenties.

All of the students need some form of additional support. That can range from those who need full support with their movements to those who actually require very little support, but benefit from attending education in a highly adapted environment with easy access to on-site healthcare and physio, occupational and speech & language therapy.

For those students who need more significant physical support, the whole environment of Treloar's has been set up to enable ease of use of equipment so that they can access education with the minimum of barriers. However, even with access to this environment and to a wide range of equipment, there remains an element of physical work involved and staff are required to support with this. If you have any questions regarding the level of physical effort involved in supporting students, please ask for more clarity at the end of your interview.

"I really like Treloar. If there is one thing I could change it would be to make it a forever place or stay as long as I can because it is one of the best places in the country for disabled people." College student quoted by the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

## What roles are available?

Please read the following section carefully and indicate on your application form which role you are applying for.

At Treloar's, approximately two-thirds of the students board for at least part of the week. We have 5 residential houses – Gloucester (School students), Wessex (School and College students), Brewer (College students), Gauvain (College students and 52-week provision) and Evans (primarily students who attend Alton College off-site). On the houses there are a combination of students who stay overnight all week, some who stay just one or two nights (we refer to this as respite) and some students who come only for the day (day students). There are also School, Primary and College classes and even a day nursery. All of the roles involve supporting students with personal care, meeting their nutritional needs (either by eating or by using tube-feeding) within this complex environment. To meet the huge variety of provision available at Treloar's, we have several different roles:

### Student Support Assistant (SSA)

The SSA role is a dual role and you will be working in the classrooms and in the residential houses under the direction of the teacher/tutor when in class and the residential managers and SSA team-leaders when on the house. It can be a rewarding experience working in both the house and the classroom as you are able to get to know the students in both environments, in their home and in an academic setting and it is our most frequently appointed role.

The SSA role is based on a 2-week, rolling rota and a full-time contract for this role is for 42 hours per week on average but we do welcome applications for part-time roles also. Below is an example rota for an SSA on full-time hours – **these are only an example** and the rota you would be given would be unlikely to be identical. The main features are the balance of evening and weekend work with daytime hours; most staff will work one weekend in two but this depends upon the needs of the students on the house and will be discussed with you at the point of job offer should you be successful. The number of 'unsocial' hours work you have on your rota will also define your pay.

These roles are **term-time only** meaning that you only take your holidays during the School and College holidays although you receive 12 monthly payments on the last working Friday of each month as your salary is calculated on an annual basis. If you already have pre-booked holiday,

please tell us your time of interview as we will endeavour to honour these dates (although the time may be unpaid).

	Morning		Evening	
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
<b>Monday</b>				
<b>Tuesday</b>	7 :00	16 :15		
<b>Wednesday</b>			15 :45	22 :30
<b>Thursday</b>	9 :00	16 :15		
<b>Friday</b>	7 :00	19 :00		
<b>Saturday</b>				
<b>Sunday</b>				
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
<b>Monday</b>	7 :00	16 :15		
<b>Tuesday</b>	9 :00	20 :30		
<b>Wednesday</b>			15 :45	22 :30
<b>Thursday</b>				
<b>Friday</b>	7 :00	16 :15		
<b>Saturday</b>	8 :00	15 :30		
<b>Sunday</b>			15 :30	22 :30

	Morning		Evening	
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
<b>Monday</b>				
<b>Tuesday</b>	7:00	16:30		
<b>Wednesday</b>	7:00	16:30		
<b>Thursday</b>	7:00	16:30		
<b>Friday</b>	7:00	16:30		
<b>Saturday</b>				
<b>Sunday</b>				
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
<b>Monday</b>			12:30	22:00
<b>Tuesday</b>			12:30	22:00
<b>Wednesday</b>			12:30	22:00
<b>Thursday</b>	7:00	17:00		
<b>Friday</b>				
<b>Saturday</b>				
<b>Sunday</b>			12:30	22:30

## Student Support Assistant – 52 week

This role is similar to the role outlined above, but is residential only. This means that you only work on the house, not in the School or College. This suits some applicants who may be from a more predominantly residential or domiciliary care background. This role may also appeal to staff who wish to take annual leave on a less restricted basis as annual leave can be applied for throughout the year.

Gauvain House is the only house which is able to offer support throughout the year to a small number of the students. This is to support students who have especially complex needs or perhaps struggle to source the support they require in their home setting for a variety of reasons. The house is supported by a nursing team working alongside the SSAs and the management team also work throughout the year.

As this role is 52-weeks, you are entitled take 300 hours of holiday (around 40 days) throughout the year which is booked with your house manager (availability is dependent upon the number of students at any given time etc.). During the holidays you would be supporting students in cooking meals, going on trips, outings to the pub, shopping, gardening etc. which can be very rewarding and enjoyable for the students.

## Night-staff

This crucial role supports the students overnight. A full-time position is generally 33 hours per week but we do employ staff on variety of part-time hours. A night-shift itself is 11 hours long, starting between 8pm and 9pm depending upon the needs of the house – this will be discussed with you at interview stage. In this time you work with the students to support them when getting ready for bed and throughout the night with both regular checks (for those who require it) and responding to requests. In addition to the residential night-staff, we also have a nurse on-site and a 'floating' member of night staff who can be called upon in emergencies.

All of the roles here require a high degree of specialisation and knowledge. Treloar's has a large number of training courses available; both mandatory and optional. All SSAs are required to already have or work towards a Level 3 QCF in Health and Social Care or Children and Young People's Workforce Development which Treloar's will pay for you to undertake and is a nationally recognised qualification. We train all of SSAs in the following:

- Manual Handling
- First Aid
- Safeguarding
- Food Safety
- Medication Administration
- Infection Control
- Mental Capacity
- Fire Safety
- Basic Feeding
- Equality & Diversity

We also offer more specialist courses such as:

- Mental Health First Aid
- ELKLAN Communication Support
- Acquired Brain Injury
- Sexuality and Further Education Training

"Young people were seen to live their dreams and to embrace them". OFSTED report, 2016

# What is a 'typical' day?

The shortest answer we can give you is that there is no such thing as a typical day. Each student is unique and each day is different, however, there are some common things that you are likely to do each day:

## Moving and Positioning

As mentioned above, nearly all of the students need support with at least some aspects of their moving and positioning; some students may be almost completely reliant on staff to meet their needs in this regard. We have a large range of equipment to support staff in this regard but this part of the role is unavoidably quite physically demanding.

## Washing, Dressing and Toileting

As many of the students have limited mobility, they are also likely to need support with washing, dressing and toileting. Again, we have a huge range of adapted equipment to support the students and staff to undertake these essential tasks safely and all students are assessed by our dedicated team of Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists who provide easy to follow guidelines.

Most of the students require support with their continence. This could include:

- Putting on and removing continence pads
- Maintaining good personal hygiene after bowel movements
- Emptying catheter bags
- Supporting students to use urine-bottles

It is important that we all recognise how personal this is and that we treat the students with dignity and respect when supporting them in this way.

## Medications

Most, if not all, of the students take some form of medication. Some students are completely independent and need no support from staff, some students need much more support. All support staff are expected to be able to provide medications to the students once they have completed their training and competency checks – usually around 6 months after starting employment, this can include:

- Oral medications
- Gastrostomy medications
- Topical creams
- Emergency/Rescue medications

## In the classroom

You will be allocated to a class team and work with a group of students under the direction of the class teacher/tutor. Your role in the classroom will be to work closely with the students to enable them to access all parts of their curriculum and/or their study programme, providing both physical and academic support. You will help them to develop their knowledge, understanding and their skills, supporting them to achieve their aspirations. The students' pathways are very different and very varied and this means that you may be asked to work with students who are developing their independence, social and communication skills, their self-advocacy skills, accessing the community and /or students who are working towards qualifications ranging from Pre-entry to Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications. Students' care and therapy programmes are an integral part of the classroom routines and the students' learning, and as such you will be asked to support them with both these aspects. Your role will include the preparation of materials for lessons and clearing up afterwards, helping to set up the students with their range of equipment and helping them to make the best use of it. Your role will also include helping teachers and tutors to maintain good records of student progress. You will assist with off-site trips and visits and you may be asked to accompany students to off-site work experience placements. Learning does not stop when the students' leave the classroom, and this continuation of learning is a crucial part of our students' learning experience. You will support our students to develop their transferable skills, developing their confidence ready for life after Treloar's.

## Mealtime and Nutritional Support

All students at Treloar's have an Eating & Drinking Profile and their needs identified as Category 1, 2, 3 or 4. The Eating & Drinking Profile gives specific instructions on, for example, how small to cut up food, what kind of textures the student is able to eat, whether they need their drink thickened or, in some cases, whether they eat at all or receive their nutrition via a gastrostomy tube. These profiles are written by the Speech and Language Therapists and Dieticians are completely unique to the student and are updated regularly so must be checked every time you feed that student.

## Making Records

Keeping accurate records of the students' day is an important part of our work. Due to their medical conditions, we need to keep records of what they have done each day, whether they've taken their medications correctly, whether they've been happy or not that day, regular height and weight checks and a myriad of routines and procedures that ensure the students' needs have been met. Being comfortable with using modern IT is a key skill in working at Treloar's and training is available for all of these systems.

## Activities

We have a busy activities program at Treloar's. Staff support students to attend these activities, (on- and off-site) on a regular basis. Even when students are not partaking in scheduled activities, staff should also lead and encourage activities on an ad-hoc basis on the houses. Some of the activities we have on offer on-site are:

- Archery
- Boccia (a game similar to boules)
- Photography
- iPad club
- Nailbar
- Disco
- Movie night
- Horticulture
- Duke of Edinburgh

Below is an example of a student timetable for Monday-Friday. The times and number of breaks will vary depending on what part of the school and college each student attends.

Time	Location	Activity/Task
7:00 – 8:00	House	Following a short handover you will be supporting students to get up and ready for their day. You could be supporting 1 student only or, more often 2 or 3 students. You may be working on your own, or at times with another member of staff.
8:00 – 9:00	House Dining Room	Support students with breakfast and getting to class.
9:00 – 11:00	School/College	Class.
11:00 – 11:45	House	Breaktime. Most students go back to the house to have a toilet break and a quick snack and drink (and a short rest) before going back to class. SSA staff will usually have a short break in this time also.
11:45 – 13:00	School/College	Class.
13:00 – 14:15	House Dining Room	Lunch and break. Students have a range of options made by our catering team. These cater for a huge variety of different diets and textures to enable even students with very specific requirements to have as 'normal' a meal possible with their friends. SSA staff take their lunch break within this time also.
14:15 – 16:00	School/College	Class.
16:00 – 17:00	School	Personal and Physical Development (PPD). School students have an additional hour of educational activities after their formal lesson time. College students either go on to activities or back to the house.
16:00 – 17:45	Across Site	Activities. There are a wide arrange of activities that the students can attend that take place across the site on every day of the week.
17:45 – 18:30	House Dining Room	Dinner. A range of hot and cold foods are available for the students supplied by the catering team as at lunchtime.
18:30 – 22.30	House	Students often go back to the house and either have activities there, or go to social club or other houses, call home or any number things. Some students can find the busy day quite tiring and wish to go to bed fairly early, some like to stay up later. The majority of students will be supported to be in bed by 22:30 when the night staff take over from the day staff.

# Safeguarding

Safeguarding is something that we take very seriously at Treloar's. We have a dedicated Safeguarding Officer, an on-call manager 24hrs a day and a member of the senior leadership team also on-call in case of any emergencies. If you are successful in your application, you will be trained in how to recognise and respond to any safeguarding issues but here is some background information from the policy for you prior to your interview.

## Safeguarding Policy (Excerpts)

- Treloar's Trust recognises the right of all people to live and work in a safe environment and in an environment where they feel safe. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults with care and support needs and will do this by adopting the following principles.
- Everyone at Treloar's has a responsibility to prevent, recognise and act on harm abuse and neglect.
- Everyone has the right to live free from abuse and neglect.
- Everyone has the right to be treated with respect and dignity, with a right to privacy.
- Any activities must take into account and respond to students' race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability and communication needs.
- There is a presumption that information will be shared with those who need to know. Most personal information will only be shared with the informed consent of the student, however, there will be occasions when lack of consent will be overridden, for example when it is used to prevent harm, a crime has been committed or when it is assessed that the student does not have capacity to make the decision.

## Definitions

- Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.
- A child is anyone up until their 18th birthday. Young people below the age of 18 will be referred to as children in this policy.
- An adult with care and support needs is someone 18 years or over and defined in the Care and Support (Eligibility Criteria) Regulations 2014. All adults at Treloar's, by virtue of their being admitted, have care and support needs.
- A parent is anyone with parental responsibility of a child.
- Safeguarding goes beyond protection and involves creating the conditions whereby harm is prevented and students' welfare is promoted.

## Staff

All staff have the following responsibilities to:

- Treat all students with dignity and respect.
- Ensure students' welfare is the paramount consideration in all they do.
- Take action against abuse wherever it is suspected with reference to policy and guidance;
- Cooperate with the police, local authorities, CQC and Ofsted in the investigation of abuse and prevention of harm;
- Reassure students that they will be listened to;

- Work with other professionals to prevent abuse;
- Be aware of the signs of abuse;
- Ensure their training is updated according to Treloar's policy;
- Reporting safeguarding concerns to their manager or DSL without delay;
- Sharing information (within the law) whenever necessary to safeguarding students and promote their welfare.

## What to do if you are worried a student is being harmed or at risk of being harmed

If you are worried a student may have been harmed or at risk you must discuss the concerns with your manager or the Head of Safeguarding in person or by phone without delay. The whereabouts of the Head of Safeguarding are held with the Principal's Office

If the student is in danger you should first make sure they are safe.

If the student has marks or injuries contact the Health Centre and request they complete a body map on Caresys (our daily record and care planning system). If a nurse is not available complete a skin map.

The Head of Safeguarding or the duty safeguarding manager can be contacted by phone.

If the Head of Safeguarding is not available a message can be left, but must be followed up if no response is received in an hour. If the Head of Safeguarding is still unavailable, another member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) must be contacted. If in doubt, discuss with your senior.

Record the details of any incident and email the Head of Safeguarding. This should include:

- Why you are concerned.
- If it is an incident, what happened;
- If a student has told you something, use their own words;
- Who witnessed it;
- What action you have taken to protect the student;
- What further action is planned.

## What to do if a student tells you they are worried about being harmed

If a student tells you that they have been abused or neglected, or if they are frightened they might be, or if they know some else in that position, follow the **5 R's**.

### Recognise

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief.
- Accept what is being said without judgement.
- Take it seriously.

### Reassure

- Reassure the student, but only so far as is honest and reliable.
- Don't make promises that you can't be sure to keep, e.g. "I'll stay with you" or "everything will be all right now".

- Don't promise confidentiality – you have a duty to report your concerns.
- Tell the student that you will need to tell some people, but only those whose job it is to protect people.
- Acknowledge how difficult it must have been to talk.
- Never agree to keep secrets – be honest.
- Reassure the student that it was the right thing to talk about what happened.

## Respond

- Listen quietly, carefully and patiently.
- Do not investigate, interrogate or decide if the student is telling the truth.
- Don't ask leading questions, e.g. "What did he do next?" This assumes he did something next and you don't know that.
- Ask open questions like "Is there anything else that you want to tell me?"
- Do not criticise the alleged abuser; the student may love him/her and a reconciliation may be possible.
- Do not ask the student to repeat what they have told you to another member of staff. Explain what you have to do next and whom you have to talk to.

## Record

- Write up notes of your conversation as soon as possible
- Record the date, time, place, words used by the child and how the child appeared to you – be specific. Record the actual words used, including any swear words or slang
- If any bruises or other injuries are present ask the Health Centre to record these on a body map on CareSys.
- Distinguish between fact and opinion. Opinions based on your experience and knowledge are important, but you must give evidence about why you hold an opinion.
- Do not assume anything – don't speculate or jump to conclusions.

## Report

- Speak to your manager or phone the Safeguarding Phone.
- Don't rely on email or any other text-based communication.
- Email to the Head of Safeguarding a record of your concern.

# General Information for Interview

If you are selected for interview, you will be contacted by our Human Resources team who will arrange a date and time for you and specify any documentation you need to bring. The interview itself will consist of:

## Tour

A member of the staff team and sometimes a student will take you on a tour of some of the key areas of the site. The tour will last around 25 minutes.

## Test

This is brief test of your maths, reading and written English skills. The test is 30 minutes long and you will not need any special preparation.

## Interview

During the interview, we will ask you to talk about areas such as rights and legislation for people with disabilities, your motivations for applying for this role and safeguarding amongst other topics. You will be interviewed by two senior members of staff and the interview will take approximately 1 hour.

When referring to the job description, please note that the person specification identifies criteria to be used for selecting and assessing different skills and knowledge. In order to shortlist candidates, the relevant criteria are indicated by an **S** on the person specification. Please ensure that your application addresses these areas as applicable. Other criteria will be indicated by an **I** which indicates that we will assess during your interview. Some criteria are indicated by an **S/I** which means that we will assess at interview but would like you to also refer to in your application.