



[www.springriverschool.org](http://www.springriverschool.org)

**Forest School Teaching Assistant in an Outdoor Educational Program inspired by Waldorf Education, grades K-3**

Status: Part-time/Non-Exempt

Hours are 10 hrs per week on Wednesdays and Thursdays from August-May (potential for more hours combined with classroom TA position)

*Pay Scale: \$11-\$14/hr*

Reports to: Lead Forest Teacher

Position Summary: The Spring River Forest School teacher assistant (TA) will work with the Lead Forest Teacher in the designated local park (outdoor classroom) including set up and clean up. The TA will assist the lead teacher by setting an example in the outdoor classroom of patience, kindness, and openness, fostering confidence, and helping students grasp basic concepts for their grade level. This level of teaching involves interactive learning with games, artistic activity, visual aids, music, and other tools to keep students engaged and challenged. The TA may be asked to take small groups of students aside for focused learning and should expect to teach in a setting of combined grades.

Skills: Being a TA requires patience, creativity, and a commitment to teamwork with the Class Teacher. TA's should understand how to communicate with children, and be willing to learn how to efficiently address behavioral problems. The TA must be able to hold confidentiality and professionalism with the parent/teacher bond, be able to work in a team setting with colleagues, follow school guidelines and policies, and have excellent communication skills.

Other responsibilities

- Assist in setting up and cleaning up of the "classroom."
- Participate in bi-weekly staff meetings.
- Assist Class Teacher in teaching planned curriculum.
- Must be fully present and aware of children and surroundings at all times.
- Help Class Teacher prepare and lead daily activities such as circle, story, watercolor painting, drawing, gardening, mathematics, science, and nature activities.
- Help Lead Teacher prepare and lead daily activities such as outdoor cooking, baking, nature and beach hikes, special outdoor activities like kayaking, fishing, camping, and building fires, depending upon the unfolding rhythm and festivals of the year.
- Assist Class Teacher with arrival and dismissal procedures
- Visually check the daily location of Forest school for trash and safety hazards. Assist in cleaning up and/or relocating as needed.
- Become familiar with Forest school locations, trails, and bathrooms.
- Carry a backpack always, equipped with a first aid kit and NE Florida Snake, Insect, and Plant guides.
- Carry a cell phone at all times.

- Dress appropriately for weather and activities – Swimsuit, rash guard, hiking shoes, shorts and pants, Bog boots, rain pants, rain jacket, and hat, down or similar jacket for cold weather.
- Have consistent & regular communication with the Class Teacher & Pedagogical Director via cellphone and email, and a working voicemail and communication device.

#### Required Qualifications

- A deep love for children, respect for parents, enjoyment of working in collaboration with colleagues, joy, and enthusiasm in your work, and a commitment to self-development.
- Good written and interpersonal communication skills
- Ability to work effectively with a diverse range of people
- Commitment to Waldorf Education
- Must be comfortable spending 100% time outdoors in all weather.

#### Preferred Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree in Education
- Waldorf Education Certification or the willingness to complete Waldorf Education Certification
- 1+ years teaching experience

Physical Demands The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the Essential Duties of this job. Reasonable accommodation may be made for individuals with disabilities to perform the Essential Duties.

- Arrives ready to work at the scheduled time and is rarely absent unexpectedly
- Able to have a full range of motion to be able to locate children and examine the environment for hazards.
- Able to move classroom supplies in and out of the building/vehicle each morning/afternoon.
- Must be able to be outdoors, on their feet, for a minimum of 6 hours per day in all kinds of inclement weather while being physically active
- Must be capable of assisting in lifting, holding, and carrying a child up to 55 lbs.
- Must be capable of lifting an outdoor wagon weighing 20-30 lbs.
- Must be capable of carrying a backpack weighing up to 20 lbs. for up to 6 hours.
- Must have the stamina to hike/explore in temperatures anywhere from 35F to 100F
- Must be able to swim/be able to rescue any children in danger (meeting Lifeguard Certification requirements)
- Must be able to reach and lift overhead, bend, stoop, climb trees and other natural structures and kneel
- Must be physically capable of crouching and crawling
- Use hands to finger, grasp, feel, or otherwise manipulate objects, tools, or controls.

#### Work Environment

- The Essential Duties of this job are performed outdoors.
- The schedule will run from August-May; the full school calendar is to be provided.

NOTE: This job description indicates the general duties and physical requirements of work performed by the employee with this job designation. It should not be interpreted or construed as a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, qualifications, and physical requirements required of the employee assigned to this job, as these might vary from day to day or as business needs demand.

EOE Statement: We are an equal employment opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

It is the policy of Spring River School to provide equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, disability, status as a covered veteran, or any other legally protected status, in accordance with federal and state law, and not to discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including recruitment, hiring, placement, compensation, benefits, promotion, demotion, layoff, termination, and all other terms and conditions of employment.

About Spring River School Spring River School is an initiative of Jacksonville Educational Community, a non-profit educational organization. Spring River was founded by parents and local educators from the community who were driven by a common desire to create a transformative educational experience focused on the whole-child approach. This led to the creation of Jacksonville's first Waldorf-inspired K-8 outdoor education program.

We began in 2014 by gathering in local parks for seasonal community festivals and parent education study groups. The following year we began offering homeschool enrichment classes that included World Languages, Movement, Handwork, Nature Immersion, and Dramatic Arts. Based on the needs of our growing community, we expanded to include a full offering of academic main lessons and enrichment classes, all taught by experienced professional educators. We also developed the area's first K-5 Nature Immersion Forest School, which meets in local preserves and parks.

Spring River was established out of love and respect for childhood and a common understanding that teaching is an art. We serve approximately 100 students from all over the Jacksonville area. We are excited about our newest offering: Spring River's Dewdrops, an unstructured parent-led playgroup with outdoor meet-ups once a week at local parks. This playgroup is for caregivers and their young children, ages birth to 5. Beginning in the fall of 2020, Spring River took our programming 100% outdoors on daily field trips and is the only "All Outdoor School" in Northeast Florida. Our families are registered homeschoolers, and we believe that is what serves our community best at this time; however, our strategic plan includes steps toward Florida Independent School status and AWSNA (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America) accreditation in the future, while still continuing to serve and support our homeschooling families.

Spring River supports and embraces diversity in all of its forms, including differences in ethnicity, cultural and religious heritage, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, geographic origin, and family structure. We provide our students with a rich, inclusive curriculum that reflects the world in which we live and fosters a safe atmosphere where every member of the

community is respected, and multiple viewpoints can be peacefully expressed. Diversity within our community is an asset. For this reason, we actively cultivate this diversity in all aspects of school life including the composition of our student body, staff, and leadership. We commit to work through the tensions that arise in the midst of genuine community and to use those tensions as a vehicle to self-reflect critically and fearlessly. We believe this commitment to diversity will help prepare today's children for tomorrow's world.

Our Mission: To encourage independent thought, nourish imagination and cultivate social responsibility.

Our Vision: An educational experience that embodies a reverence and respect for the intellectual, artistic, social, physical, emotional, and spiritual life of each student.