

PATHWAYS EDUCATION

CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR EVERY LEARNER TO FLOURISH

Higher Level Teaching Assistant

Candidate Application Pack
Churt, Surrey

Welcome from the Headteacher

Thank you for your interest in the role of Higher Level Teaching Assistant at Pathways Education.

Pathways Education exists for young people who have not always found a home in formal schooling. Many have experienced difficult educational journeys before they arrive with us. They are at the heart of everything we do, not simply the reason we exist, and we build their voice and agency into how we shape both their own learning and the school around them. Our whole community is built around three values: Wellbeing, Connection and Empowerment.

Human flourishing is becoming the model at the centre of everything we do here, not something we apply to one part of school life alone. Our curriculum is one expression of it, built on the project-based, trauma-informed approach that already sits at the heart of what we do.

For many of our learners, the adult who's actually in the room with them day to day, noticing, adapting, staying calm, building trust, is the person who makes flourishing possible in practice, not just in principle. This role sits at the heart of that: leading learning directly, evidencing progress that matters, and being one of the most consistent, trusted adults a learner encounters.

If that sounds like the kind of work you want to do, we would love to hear from you.

Leeha Watney

Headteacher

At a glance

School	Pathways Education, Churt, Surrey
Learners	Young people aged 9-16 with SEMH as a primary need; all hold an EHCP
Our approach	Small, relational, trauma-informed, personalised and project-based
Our ambition	Meaningful adult lives, with a presumption of employment for every learner
The opportunity	To be one of the most consistent, trusted adults in a small group of learners' daily lives

Salary	Contract	Closing date	Start date
Actual salary £24,503 to £26,713	Full-time, 39 weeks (fixed term)	22 September 2026	As soon as possible

Pathways Community Trust

Pathways Education is one part of Pathways Community Trust, a registered education charity working to build connected pathways into long, happy and prosperous adulthoods for children and young people who may otherwise become disconnected from education, community and opportunity. Our ambition is bigger than any single school or service. We are developing place-based ecosystems in which education, families, employers and communities work together so that young people are known, supported, challenged and connected to meaningful futures.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES. BRIGHTER FUTURES.

Our integrated model

PATHWAYS EDUCATION

Small, trauma-informed specialist schools that act as community hubs, placing personalised education, families, employers and community at the heart of learning.

FUTURE PATHWAYS

Alternative Provision and real-world environments that re-engage learners, build confidence and develop skills through authentic enterprise, employer and community experiences.

PATHWAYS TOGETHER

Family and community support that builds confidence, strengthens understanding of systems and connects people to the right help, networks and opportunities.

What connects us

- Every child and young person deserves to belong.
- Families are experts in their own lives and are partners in the work.
- Communities already possess extraordinary strengths.
- Schools can become the natural heart of their communities.
- Employment should be designed into education from the very beginning.
- Sustainable change happens when services work together around families rather than expecting families to navigate fragmented systems.

Our schools therefore do not sit in isolation. Pathways Education is the specialist-school expression of a wider Trust model in which education, alternative provision, family support, employers and community are deliberately connected.

Why Pathways Education is different

We believe every learner can flourish when the right conditions are intentionally created around them. Our purpose is not simply to educate learners. It is to help them build the confidence, knowledge, relationships, identity, skills and opportunities that enable them to lead meaningful adult lives.

EMPLOYMENT IS NOT THE STARTING POINT. IT IS THE OUTCOME OF FLOURISHING.

A presumption of employment for everyone

Across Pathways Community Trust we start from a presumption of employment: we believe every learner can work and contribute. This is not a prediction about a particular job or a narrow employability programme. It is an expression of ambition. It means we do not wait until Key Stage 4 to begin preparing young people for adulthood. From the earliest point in a learner's journey, curriculum, relationships, projects, community experiences, employer encounters, independence and transition planning should be building the capabilities, confidence and social capital that make meaningful adult life possible.

Our ambition is that every learner encounters employers and workplaces, learns through authentic projects and real audiences, develops essential transferable skills, contributes to their community, experiences choice and leadership, and leaves with a credible destination plan and real opportunities.

Education delivered differently

Our learners often need something different from the education that has previously been available to them. We therefore organise learning around the young person rather than expecting the young person to fit a conventional system.

- Relationships before learning: every learner should be deeply known and have a trusted adult.
- Strengths before deficits: we identify potential, interests and aspirations alongside need.
- High expectations without losing safety, compassion or personalisation.
- Project-based learning and authentic, real-world contexts rather than learning that exists only for the classroom.
- Curriculum, EHCP outcomes, emotional wellbeing and preparation for adulthood treated as one connected journey.
- Family partnership, employer relationships and community connection built into the educational model.
- Skills for life, independence, contribution and employment developed throughout the learner journey.
- Learner voice and agency used as evidence that actively shapes provision.

About our Churt school

Set in the Surrey Hills near Churt and Farnham, Pathways Education is a specialist independent school for young people aged 9 to 16 with a primary need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), all of whom hold an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Many of our learners are at risk of becoming NEET without the right support.

Our approach is trauma-informed and relational throughout. Learning is delivered through thematic, project-based units rather than a conventional subject timetable, giving pupils tangible outcomes to work towards and repeated, low-stakes opportunities to practise regulation, collaboration and communication alongside subject knowledge and skills.

Curriculum and EHCP are treated as one connected journey, with a shared graduated approach through Assess, Plan, Do and Review. Our young people have a genuine voice in shaping their learning, not only in how it is delivered to them.

Our Trust's alternative provision and enterprise ventures, including The Cookie Bar and The Bike Hub, are based locally rather than on the school site but are part of the connected Pathways offer. They create opportunities for genuine enterprise, employer engagement and real-world experience rather than simulated work-related activity.

Our values

WELLBEING

Young people and adults need to feel safe, supported and able to flourish.

CONNECTION

Relationships, belonging, family and community are fundamental to learning.

EMPOWERMENT

Voice, agency, high aspirations and opportunity shape meaningful futures.

The Pathways learner journey

Our aim is that every learner will follow a personalised pathway through a consistent methodology. The six stages are interconnected rather than a linear checklist; together they describe the experience we want every learner to have.

1. KNOW ME	We build trusting relationships and understand every learner as a whole person. Flourishing Profile; vocational profile; learner voice; trusted adult
2. DESIGN WITH ME	We co-design an ambitious, personalised learning journey towards adulthood. EHCP outcomes; personalised learning plan; goals; preparation for adulthood
3. GROW ME	We develop knowledge, skills, confidence and independence through high-quality teaching and coaching. Academic learning; Skills Builder; emotional wellbeing; coaching; reflection
4. CHALLENGE ME	We learn through authentic experiences that build resilience and real-world skills. Project-based learning; employer challenges; enterprise; community projects; outdoor learning; public exhibition
5. CONNECT ME	We build relationships, belonging and social capital that open doors. Family partnership; careers education; mentoring; workplace encounters; community connection
6. BELIEVE IN MY FUTURE	We prepare for adulthood and help every learner transition with confidence and hope. Destination planning; transition passport; supported employment; independence; celebration of learning

EVERY LEARNER WILL LEAVE WITH A DESTINATION PLAN, REAL OPPORTUNITIES AND THE BELIEF THAT THEY CAN SHAPE THEIR FUTURE.

What every learner should experience

We are working towards a model in which every young person can expect:

- A trusted adult who believes in them.
- A safe, nurturing and trauma-informed environment.
- High-quality, personalised education.
- Project-based learning and real-world experiences.
- Multiple encounters with employers and workplaces.
- Family partnership and learning that connects beyond the school day.
- Skills for life, independence and emotional resilience.
- Opportunities to contribute to their community.
- High aspirations from day one.
- A pathway to a meaningful adult life.

Excellent adult practice

Culture is created through adult behaviour. We expect our adults to model the practice we want learners to experience:

- Relational practice
- Trauma-informed practice
- Restorative practice
- High expectations
- Coaching before telling
- Inclusive practice
- Reflective practice
- Evidence-informed practice

These expectations are supported through professional standards, coaching, observation, professional development and a culture of continuous improvement.

The role: Higher Level Teaching Assistant

Responsible to: Headteacher

You will provide high-quality, trauma-informed support to learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), promoting inclusion, progress and wellbeing. The role involves supporting and enhancing the teaching and learning process, covering lessons when required, and contributing to the planning and delivery of differentiated, responsive learning experiences.

As a leader of learning, you will actively contribute to learner progress by generating, articulating and using high-quality evidence to inform next steps, helping to create the psychologically safe, nurturing and relational environment that reflects the ethos and values of Pathways Education.

We are looking for someone who aligns more with the idea of a coach than a traditional teaching assistant: someone who asks good questions, builds independence rather than dependence, and helps a learner find their own way to an answer rather than simply providing it.

YOU ARE OFTEN THE MOST CONSISTENT ADULT IN A LEARNER'S DAY.

Teaching and learning

- Work collaboratively with teachers to enhance learning, inclusion and attainment for all learners.
- Deliver high-quality learning experiences, including covering lessons and teaching HLTA-led sessions with appropriate SLT support.
- Adapt and differentiate teaching, resources and approaches to meet diverse needs, ensuring accessibility and engagement.
- Implement effective trauma-informed behaviour strategies in line with EHCPs and school policy.
- Ensure progress in HLTA-led sessions is monitored, evidenced and used to inform next steps.

Mentoring and learner support

- Build safe, trusting, trauma-informed relationships that promote psychological safety and wellbeing.
- Support learners to develop self-regulation, independence and reflective skills.
- Address emerging challenges throughout the day, using relational practice and maintaining appropriate communication with parents where required.
- Generate and present high-quality evidence of learning and development for learners supported or taught by you.

Planning and preparation

- Prepare and organise learning environments and resources that support engagement, safety and independence.
- Contribute to planning by designing structured, motivating activities tailored to learners' prior knowledge, capabilities and needs.
- Reflect on the effectiveness of teaching approaches, adapting provision in collaboration with teachers and SLT.
- Demonstrate flexibility in planning to respond to changing needs, interests and curriculum priorities.

Monitoring and assessment

- Observe, record and evaluate learner progress using school assessment systems.
- Bring forward clear evidence and insight to progress meetings, annual reviews and decision-making processes.
- Provide timely and informative feedback to teachers, SLT and parents to guide interventions and provision.

Collaboration

- Work effectively with colleagues, therapists and other professionals to ensure joined-up provision for learners.
- Share expertise and model effective practice, contributing to the development of less experienced staff.
- Support collaborative problem-solving around learner needs, curriculum adaptations and provision planning.

Professional development

- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of SEND, trauma-informed practice and effective pedagogy.
- Engage actively in professional reflection, supervision and the practitioner development process.
- Demonstrate leadership of learning by supporting curriculum development, contributing to school improvement and modelling best practice.
- Draw on specialist advice appropriately and develop professional relationships across the team.

Safeguarding

- Promote a culture of vigilance, safety and wellbeing across the school.
- Uphold all safeguarding responsibilities in line with KCSIE and school policy.
- Bring a practical understanding of contextual safeguarding, recognising that risk to our learners can sit outside the school gates as much as within them.
- Contribute to early identification of concerns, including low-level concerns, and communicate promptly with the DSL.
- Model safeguarding as a shared responsibility across the staff team.

Wider professional responsibilities

- Uphold and promote the ethos, values, vision and trauma-informed approach of Pathways Education, engaging fully with INSET, meetings and ongoing professional development.
- Maintain high professional standards, including conduct, attendance, punctuality and integrity.
- Carry out reasonable additional duties to ensure the smooth running of the school.
- Follow all Health & Safety, Data Protection and organisational policies, and demonstrate responsible use of systems, resources and information at all times.

Person specification

We are interested in the person behind the experience as well as the experience itself.

Area	Essential	Desirable
Safeguarding	A strong, practical understanding of safeguarding, including contextual safeguarding, recognising that risk to our learners can sit outside the school gates as much as within them.	KCSIE-aligned training beyond the statutory minimum; experience using a low-level concerns pathway.
Qualifications	Level 3 Teaching Assistant qualification or equivalent, or a willingness to undertake the training upon appointment; Level 2 qualifications in English and Maths (GCSE Grade C/4 or above).	HLTA qualification, or willingness to undertake it; training in areas such as Autism, Dyslexia/Dyscalculia, Zones of Regulation, or other SEND-specific programmes.
Experience	Demonstrable experience in an educational setting, supporting SEND learners; experience of working 1:1 and in small groups with learners with additional needs.	Experience in a specialist provision or mainstream SEND support; experience within a trauma-informed or SEMH/SEND provision; experience contributing to progress reviews or multi-agency working (for example OT, SaLT, therapy teams); lived experience of different industries or sectors, or experience supporting enterprise or employer-facing projects.
Knowledge and skills	Understanding of the National Curriculum and how to adapt it for SEND learners; knowledge of autism and other SEND, including sensory and communication challenges; understanding of trauma-informed principles, or willingness to undertake training; ability to generate and use evidence of learning; strong organisational, ICT and communication skills; ability to differentiate lessons and manage behaviour effectively.	Knowledge of Functional Skills and delivering accredited educational programmes.

Area	Essential	Desirable
Personal qualities	Commitment to trauma-informed, relational practice; high expectations for all learners; positive attitude, resilience and adaptability; strong interpersonal skills; commitment to safeguarding; ability to act as a leader of learning, showing initiative and reflective practice.	Enthusiasm for contributing to the wider school community.

Belonging at Pathways

Belonging is central to what we want for our learners, and it matters just as much for the adults who work with us.

WE WANT OUR WORKFORCE TO REFLECT THE DIVERSITY OF THE COMMUNITIES AND YOUNG PEOPLE WE SERVE.

Pathways Education and Pathways Community Trust are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. We welcome applications from people of all backgrounds and particularly encourage applications from groups that are under-represented in education.

We welcome applications regardless of age, disability, sex, gender identity or gender reassignment, race, ethnicity or nationality, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, caring responsibilities, socio-economic background or any other aspect of a person's identity or lived experience.

We are committed to making our recruitment process accessible and inclusive. If you require reasonable adjustments at any stage of the application or interview process, please let us know. Requests for adjustments will be treated respectfully and will not disadvantage your application.

We select candidates on the basis of their skills, experience, values and ability to fulfil the requirements of the role. Our commitment to inclusion sits alongside our unwavering commitment to safeguarding children and young people.

Safeguarding

Pathways Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Our recruitment process follows safer recruitment practice throughout. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check, satisfactory references, identity and right-to-work checks, and all other pre-employment checks required in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Independent School Standards.

How to apply

To apply, please send:

- A full CV, including a complete record of your career history.
- A supporting statement.

Applying differently: Apply with Bloom

On receipt of your expression of interest, together with your CV and supporting statement, we will send you a link to complete Apply with Bloom. Rather than asking you to work through a traditional list of skills and attributes, Bloom will ask you to consider the role we've described and tell us what you think someone needs to draw upon to do it exceptionally well. We will then explore the experiences and evidence behind your answer.

In line with safer recruitment practice, you will also be sent a safeguarding declaration to complete and return as part of your application.

Tell us about you

Your supporting statement should tell us about you: who you are, and how you feel you align with our human flourishing model and our presumption of employment for every learner.

We want to hear your voice, not a template. Tell us in the way that feels most authentic to you.

Applications to	Email	Closing date	Interviews
Leeha Watney, Headteacher	leeha.watney@pathways- ed.org	22 September 2026	Early October 2026

FLOURISHING LEARNERS. STRONGER COMMUNITIES. BETTER FUTURES.

Opportunities for all. Ambition without limits.