

Assistant Headteacher – Teaching & Learning

About Haven Nook School

“Haven Nook School is a very special place.”

Haven Nook is a small, independent special school in the heart of Canterbury, removing barriers to learning for young people aged 11–18 with social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs.

We are passionate about transforming outcomes for our students by igniting a love for life and learning. Every day, our dedicated team creates a safe, nurturing, and aspirational environment where each young person can flourish academically, socially, and emotionally.

The Role

We are looking for an innovative and experienced Assistant Headteacher (Teaching & Learning) to join our senior leadership team. This role focuses on driving excellence in classroom practice, ensuring that teaching, learning, and curriculum design across the school are engaging, evidence-based, and inclusive.

You will work alongside the Head of School and the Governing Body to maintain and enhance high standards, develop staff expertise, and ensure every pupil achieves their full potential.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Support the Head of School in the operational and strategic leadership of Haven Nook.
- Contribute to the school improvement plan and whole-school development priorities.
- Lead on curriculum design and assessment frameworks that meet diverse pupil needs.
- Report to the Governing Body on teaching and learning standards and progress.
- Promote a culture of high expectations, continuous improvement, and wellbeing.
- Act as Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) when required.

Teaching and Learning

- Lead the development and delivery of high-quality teaching and learning across the school.
- Support teachers through mentoring, coaching, and professional dialogue.
- Oversee curriculum planning to ensure it is broad, balanced, and personalised.
- Promote innovative, evidence-based pedagogical approaches in SEND and therapeutic education.
- Ensure effective systems for monitoring pupil progress and achievement.
- Use assessment data to identify trends and lead interventions for improvement.
- Support consistent implementation of school policies on assessment, marking, and feedback.

Staff Development and Leadership

- Line manage teaching staff to promote best practice and professional growth.
- Lead staff training and development linked to teaching and learning priorities.
- Model excellent classroom practice and lead by example in inclusive teaching.
- Encourage reflective practice, teamwork, and collaboration across all departments.
- Support staff wellbeing and foster a positive, professional working environment.

Other Responsibilities

- Lead or contribute to the induction of new staff.
- Manage or support subject teachers in developing schemes of work and assessment systems.
- Coordinate enrichment, curriculum enhancement, and pupil engagement activities.
- Contribute to whole-school monitoring, evaluation, and reporting to governors.
- Support the development of digital learning, resources, and assistive technology.
- Work collaboratively with the SENDCo to align teaching approaches with pupil needs and EHCP outcomes.
- Participate in wider school events, community projects, and promotional activities.

Person Specification

Essential:

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
- Significant teaching experience within a special or inclusive setting.
- Proven success in leading or improving teaching and learning outcomes.

- Strong understanding of curriculum design and assessment practices.
- Excellent leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills.
- Commitment to safeguarding, inclusion, and continuous improvement.

Desirable:

- Experience in a small school or SEMH/ASC setting.
- Knowledge of trauma-informed, therapeutic, or relational pedagogy.
- Experience of middle or senior leadership in a specialist setting.
- DSL qualification or training.

Why Join Haven Nook School?

At Haven Nook, every day brings the opportunity to make a meaningful difference. You'll join a supportive, values-led team committed to creativity, nurture, and transformation.

If you are strong leader of teaching and learning who believes in the power of education to transform lives, we would love to hear from you.

We offer:

- A caring, collaborative school culture.
- A small, values-led independent school with a warm, family ethos.
- Small class sizes and opportunities to shape whole-school practice.
- A chance to work with inspiring students who thrive with the right support.
- The satisfaction of helping young people rediscover a love of learning and confidence in their abilities.
- Support for career development (including THRIVE) and leadership progression.
- Access to Yulife wellbeing and medical support App; life insurance, pension and health care cash plan.
- A committed, creative, and compassionate team environment.

Safeguarding and Equal Opportunities

Haven Nook School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff must hold or be willing to obtain an Enhanced DBS check and undergo social media due diligence checks.

We are proud to be an equal opportunities employer that celebrates diversity, inclusion, and belonging.

