



A unique and rare opportunity to be part of our small, successful school

Kitchen Lead/Head Cook Full time (term time only) position

September 2026 start

£25,000 FTE per annum (£19,519 pro rata)

Steephill School is seeking a reliable, proactive, and hardworking Kitchen Lead to join our dedicated team. The Kitchen Lead is responsible for the effective day-to-day management of the school kitchen, ensuring the provision of high-quality, nutritious meals for pupils and staff. The post holder will oversee menu planning, food ordering, stock control, food preparation, and compliance with food safety and hygiene regulations while maintaining a safe, efficient, and welcoming kitchen environment.

This is a fantastic opportunity to become part of a school community where children are at the heart of everything we do.

At Steephill, you will find:

- Wonderful children who are enthusiastic, polite and engaged
- A warm and supportive staff team who work collaboratively and prioritise the wellbeing and pastoral care of every child
- A welcoming and engaged family community who value partnership
- A school with strong values and high aspirations for every child
- A peaceful school site in a rural setting

Key Responsibilities

Kitchen Operations

- Lead and manage the daily operation of the school kitchen.
- Prepare, cook, and serve nutritious meals in accordance with school standards and dietary requirements.
- Ensure meals are prepared and served on time and to a high standard.
- Maintain a clean, organised, and safe kitchen environment at all times.

Menu Planning

- Develop and implement varied, healthy, and cost-effective menus that meet nutritional guidelines for school-aged children.
- Plan seasonal menus and special event catering as required.
- Accommodate dietary, allergen, cultural, and medical requirements of pupils and staff.
- Seek opportunities to introduce new dishes and improve meal offerings.

Ordering and Stock Management

- Order food, beverages, and kitchen supplies in line with budgetary requirements.
- Monitor stock levels and maintain accurate inventory records.
- Ensure efficient stock rotation and minimise food waste.
- Liaise with suppliers to secure quality products and value for money.
- Receive and check deliveries, ensuring products meet quality and safety standards.

Food Safety and Compliance

- Ensure compliance with all relevant food hygiene, health and safety, and environmental health regulations.
- Maintain food safety management systems, records, and documentation.
- Monitor allergen management procedures and ensure staff awareness.
- Participate in inspections and audits as required.

Team Leadership

- Supervise and support kitchen staff where applicable.
- Allocate duties and monitor performance to ensure efficient service delivery.
- Foster a positive and collaborative working environment.

Budget Management

- Work within agreed catering budgets.
- Monitor food costs and identify opportunities for cost savings without compromising quality.

General Responsibilities

- Promote the welfare and safeguarding of children and young people.
- Follow all school policies and procedures.
- Attend training and meetings as required.
- Undertake any other duties commensurate with the grade and nature of the post.
- Monitoring and maintaining Health and Safety compliance documentation

Person Specification

Essential

- Experience working in a commercial, educational, or large-scale catering environment
- Experience of menu planning and food ordering
- Knowledge of food hygiene regulations and allergen management
- Food Safety/Hygiene Certificate (Level 2 or above)
- Strong organisational and time-management skills
- Ability to work independently and manage competing priorities
- Good communication and interpersonal skills

Desirable

- Supervisory or team leadership experience
- Experience working within a school or educational setting
- Knowledge of school food standards and nutritional guidelines
- Relevant catering or culinary qualification

Working Conditions

- Term-time working with additional days as required
- Daily hours 8am-4pm
- Frequent standing, lifting, and manual handling associated with kitchen duties

Steephill School is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment where everyone feels valued, respected and empowered to thrive. Applications are welcomed from candidates of all backgrounds, cultures and experiences. A diverse staff team enriches our school community and strengthens the education and care we provide for our children.

Prospective candidates are warmly encouraged to tour the school and see Steephill in action. Once you experience our wonderful children, supportive staff and welcoming families, we are confident you won't want to leave!

Steephill School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to an enhanced DBS check, satisfactory references and all safer recruitment checks in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.


Come and discover what makes Steephill so special.

To arrange a visit or find out more, please contact us—we would love to meet you.

If you are interested, please submit your application as soon as possible. We reserve the right to close this vacancy and appoint early if we receive an application from the right candidate

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