



Hirst Wood Nursery School and Children's Centre

Learning together, growing together.



HEADTEACHER RECRUITMENT JULY 2026



Nationally accredited by Elklan and OCN London
Communication
Friendly Early Years
May 2024 - May 2027

Hirst Wood Nursery School and Children's Centre
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Welcome from the Chair of Governors



Dear colleague

As Chair of Governors at Hirst Wood Nursery School I would like to encourage you to apply for the exciting post of Headteacher.

Hirst Wood is a wonderful place, the staff are hardworking, dedicated and knowledgeable. The retiring Head is approachable and deeply committed to the School. She is dedicated to extending the quality of teaching and learning and is a highly skilled leader. She is supported by an experienced SLT consisting of Deputy Head and Business Manager.

The children are enthusiastic learners, they learn independence, social skills, confidence. They learn to share, to collaborate, to accept and understand their peers. The whole team at Hirst Wood are very open to adapting their approach, taking on board new methods and ideas to give every child the opportunities that they deserve to learn and grow. We have a wonderful learning environment, both inside and out, the atmosphere is welcoming and calm, parents are made welcome and show their appreciation through their positive comments.

The Governing Body is strong and supportive and excited to be part of moving Hirst Wood forward with the appointment of a new Headteacher, please feel free to organise a visit to school and see what we have to offer.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely
Ruth Trattles
Chair of Governors



Our Ethos and Values



We expect everyone to do their best

There are high expectations of everyone. Children are provided with high quality learning opportunities so that each child attains and achieves all that they are able to by learning through fascination and creativity.

Everyone in our school is important and included

We promote an ethos of care and trust where every member of our school community feels that they belong and are valued. We all have a unique and important part to play in our school's success.

We recognise everyone's uniqueness

There will be no invisible children here. We recognise everyone's uniqueness and achievements. We recognise learning in all its forms and are committed to nurturing lifelong learners.

We are a safe school

We are committed to improving children's confidence and self-esteem. We know that safe and happy children achieve.

We are proud of our school and the community we serve

We are privileged to have a diverse school community who care passionately about education and the global environment. We build highly effective relationships with parents and carers.

We will energise our vision by:

- Nurturing enthusiasm for teaching and learning
- Enjoying what we do and knowing learning is fun
- Believing that we are the best and we have the best

We will drive our vision through:

- Planning, assessment, monitoring & evaluation
- Policies and procedures
- Professional learning and training
- Appraisal and performance management

We will measure the things that we value

Good progress and attainment and we will value the precious things that can't be measured in our school – the number of children who found a conker, rolled down a hill, painted with their hands and were fascinated by the wind, sun, rain, snow, ice and saw the wonder in all of the world around them.



About our Nursery School

We are inclusive in all that we do and our learning community is based on the celebration of both similarities and difference and we place high importance on respecting each other; there are no invisible children here. We aim for our school to be a place of possibilities; a place where children and childhood are honoured, their ideas and abilities are both valued and celebrated. We motivate, inspire and challenge children in their learning, to create a space where fascination, creativity and endless possibilities for learning are at the core of what we do.

We believe that when teaching and learning is relevant, thought provoking and inspiring, children will develop a true passion for learning. This passion will encompass and support every aspect of growth – physical, social, emotional, intellectual and moral. We believe that when a child has the freedom to explore the world around them and share memorable experiences with their peers and highly trained practitioners, learning becomes joyful and long-lasting. We have an amazing learning environment that includes a wilderness garden where children have the opportunity to experience the Forest School plus a dedicated fire and tools area. We offer a range of enticing and motivating experiences for children both indoors and outdoors to develop their sense of awe and wonder that enables them to take pleasure in exploring and investigating the world around them.

Our curriculum is built on a constructivist approach, with children building their own curriculum through our wonderfully enticing and enabling environment. We use a mix of approaches, children learning through play, through interested adults who model new skills and vocabulary, and they learn from each other. We support children in their delight in discovering and experiencing the world around them which we hope will develop into a lifelong love of learning. Our curiosity-based style is an enticing way of embracing education in early childhood.

We offer a range of enrichment opportunities such as Forest School, dough disco, music and movement, gardening club, All Aboard, Storytellers group – all of which has skilfully adapted to the needs of the children to ensure high levels of involvement, sustained shared thinking opportunities and developmentally appropriate practice to support and extend knowledge and understanding.





Our Inclusive Practice



Hirst Wood Nursery School is an inclusive mainstream Nursery that has been additionally resourced by the Local Authority to provide Early Years Enhanced Specialist provision that welcomes and values everyone. We strive to support all children to enable them to make the best possible progress, achieve well, to become confident children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education. Teaching and supporting children with SEND is a whole school responsibility requiring a whole school response, and we are proud of our commitment to high quality early years inclusive practice.

Our inclusive provision offers families of children with SEND a range of options to meet their specific support needs. To ensure that children with SEND have access to their education and are adequately supported, all colleagues have opportunities to access a wide range of professional training opportunities to ensure that the needs of the children are met and we are continually developing our expertise and the highest quality educational provision.

We offer a personalised curriculum for each child, starting from their "All About Me" records of achievements that reflects their personal interests, learning and curiosities. Children with SEND also have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP), which uses a small step approach to support their learning, this is co-constructed in partnership with parents and reviewed termly, with small steps towards the longer term EHCP targets.

We are proud to hold the IQM Centre of Excellence and also Flagship School Status. Some comments from the report are below

"There is a collective and unwavering commitment from all stakeholders to ensuring that every child fortunate to attend Hirst Wood Nursery School is supported to thrive, with the care and wellbeing of the whole child placed firmly at the heart of all practice. The 'Child in the NOW' model has always been at the heart of this schools practice, this championing of a holistic approach to teaching and learning ensures that wellbeing is not only recognised but celebrated, with a highly bespoke and personalised learning journey crafted and honed for every child."

Advert

Headteacher

Contract Term: Permanent

Salary: L11 - L17 (£67,898 - £76,772)

Start date: 1 January 2027

The Governing Body of Hirst Wood Nursery School is seeking to appoint an aspirational and inspirational leader to the post of Headteacher, following the retirement of our highly valued and successful Headteacher after many years of dedicated service. Since 1932, Hirst Wood Nursery School has proudly served the World Heritage Site of Saltaire and its surrounding communities. We are committed to providing high-quality, inclusive and integrated early years education that makes a meaningful difference to the lives of children and their families. Our well-resourced provision supports children aged two to five years and is underpinned by a strong belief that every child deserves the very best start in life.

We have a long-standing reputation for excellence in early years education and are immensely proud of our children, families and the strong partnerships we have built within our community. Our stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments foster creativity, curiosity, independence and confidence, enabling children to thrive as enthusiastic and capable learners. As a designated Early Years Enhanced Specialist Provision, we work closely with families and professionals to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Places within this provision are allocated by the Local Authority, and inclusion is at the heart of everything that we do. We are seeking a strong, compassionate and aspirational leader who will drive the school forward and lead with integrity, warmth and high expectations.

The successful candidate will:

- Be relentlessly ambitious for the school, its children, its staff and the wider community.
- Be forward facing and work alongside colleagues, enabling them to model outstanding practice, build strong relationships with pupils, and remain closely connected to the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- Be a strategic thinker with the resilience, determination and dedication to lead through challenge and change.
- Be a passionate champion of inclusion, safeguarding, equality, diversity and belonging.
- Model the highest professional standards and foster a culture of care, mutual respect, wellbeing and continuous development.
- Take an evidence-informed approach to all aspects of school leadership, teaching, learning and curriculum development.
- Have experience of monitoring and evaluating the quality of education, observing practice and providing incisive feedback that supports professional growth and improvement.
- Have a proven track record of system leadership, mentoring, coaching and developing colleagues through positive relationships built on trust and mutual respect.
- Engage fully with our school and wider community, bringing people together in a collaborative and positive environment underpinned by shared values and a commitment to excellence for all.

In return, we offer:

- A school where children are happy, motivated to learn and encouraged to follow their interests through a rich and engaging learning environment.
- An experienced, enthusiastic and supportive staff team committed to achieving the very best outcomes for every child.
- A highly experienced and dedicated governing board with a strong commitment to collaborative working and effective governance.
- A positive, ambitious and caring school community with a strong moral purpose, a commitment to excellence and a genuine sense of belonging for all.

Tours of the school are welcomed, please contact office@hirstwoodnsc.co.uk to arrange a suitable date and time.

All applications will be responded to following shortlisting.

A candidate pack which includes the Job Description and Person Specification and details of how to apply for the position can be downloaded from www.prospectsonline.co.uk. Please note that CVs are not accepted.

Closing Date: 12 noon, 11 September 2026

Shortlisting: 15 September 2026

Selection Interviews: Wednesday 23 & Thursday 24 September 2026

The school prides itself on being an equal opportunities employer and abides by Safer Recruitment Practices. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. An online search will be carried out at shortlisting. All other Pre-employment checks including a DBS check, will be completed during the recruitment process.

Job Description

Salary: L11 - L17

Hours: Full time

Contract type: Permanent

Reports to: Chair of Governors for the Governing Body

Responsible for: All staff and pupils within the School



This Job Description is illustrative of the general nature and level of responsibility of the role. It is not a comprehensive list of all tasks that the Headteacher will carry out. The post-holder may be required to do other duties appropriate to the level of the role.

Role Summary

The Headteacher will:

- Serve in the best interests of the school's pupils.
- Build positive and respectful relationships across the school and wider community.
- Uphold public trust in school leadership and maintain high standards of ethics, behaviour and professional conduct.
- Establish and promote a distinctive school vision, underpinned by core values and a moral purpose

Core Purpose

- Establish and sustain the school's ethos and strategic direction together with the governing board and through consultation with the school community
- Establish and oversee systems, processes and policies so the school can operate effectively
- Identify problems and barriers to school effectiveness, and develop strategies for school improvement that are realistic, timely and suited to the school's context
- Make sure these school improvement strategies are effectively implemented
- Monitor progress towards achieving the school's aims and objectives
- Allocate financial resources appropriately, efficiently and effectively
- Abiding by the Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education and the Seven Principles of Public Life (The Nolan Principles).

Job Description



Role Responsibilities

School Culture

- Uphold public trust in school leadership and maintain high standards of ethics, behaviour and professional conduct.
- Inspire and motivate pupils, staff and members of the school community to excellent standards of achievement.
- Build positive and respectful relationships across the school community.
- Serve in the best interests of the school's pupils.
- Promote positive and respectful relationships across the school community and a safe, orderly and inclusive environment.

Managing the School

- Ensure staff and pupils' safety and welfare through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of duty of care.
- Prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness and probity in the use of public funds.
- Manage staff well with due attention to workload.
- Ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing and mitigating risk.

Continuous School Improvement

- Make use of effective and proportional processes of evaluation to identify and analyse and identify priority areas for school improvement.
- Develop appropriate evidence-informed strategies for advancement as part of well-targeted plans which are realistic, timely, appropriately sequenced and suited to the school's context.
- Ensure careful and effective implementation of measurable strategies, which lead to sustained school improvement evidenced over time.

Development

- Ensure staff have access to appropriate, high standard professional development opportunities.
- Keep up to date with developments in education.
- Seek training and continuing professional development to meet own development needs.

Job Description



Governance, Accountability and Working in Partnership

- Understand and welcome the role of effective governance, including accepting responsibility.
- Ensure that staff understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account.
- Ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties.
- Work successfully with other schools and organisations.
- Maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues to improve educational outcomes for all pupils.

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

- Lead the development of an ambitious, inclusive and play-based curriculum that reflects the unique strengths and needs of young children and secures strong foundations for future learning.
- Ensure that teaching and provision are informed by current research and evidence relating to early childhood development, learning and SEND.
- Promote high-quality interactions, communication and language development as central to children's learning and wellbeing.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of education across the nursery and specialist provision, using evidence to drive continuous improvement.
- Ensure assessment is meaningful, developmentally appropriate and used effectively to inform planning and provision for individual children.

Inclusive Practice

- Provide strategic leadership for the school's Enhanced Specialist Provision, ensuring high-quality, personalised support for children with complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.
- Promote a child-centred approach that places children's wellbeing, communication, learning and development at the heart of decision-making.
- Lead and develop inclusive practice across the school, ensuring that provision is responsive, ambitious and personalised
- Work collaboratively with parents, carers, health professionals, therapists, the Local Authority and other agencies to secure the best possible outcomes for children with complex needs.
- Ensure statutory responsibilities relating to SEND, inclusion, equality and accessibility are fully met.
- Foster a culture of high aspirations for all children, recognising and celebrating individual progress and achievement.
- Ensure staff have the knowledge, confidence and expertise to meet a diverse range of learning, communication, sensory, physical and social-emotional needs.
- Promote inclusive environments, both indoors and outdoors, that enable every child to participate, engage and thrive.
- Promote the school as a centre of excellence for early years education, inclusion and SEND within the local and wider community.

Community and Partnership Working

- Build strong and trusting relationships with families, recognising parents and carers as partners in their children's learning and development.
- Promote the maintained nursery school as a centre of excellence for early years education, inclusion and SEND within the local community.
- Work collaboratively with schools, early years settings, and Local Authority partners to support effective transitions and improve outcomes for children and families.



Person Specification

A Application Stage

P Pre-employment check stage (inc. References)

I Interview and Assessment Stage

E - Essential

D - Desirable

Qualifications

Holds a degree level qualification or equivalent.	E	A, P
Holds Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or other recognised teaching qualification.	E	A, P
Holds a Professional Qualification or working towards gaining a NPQH or CEPQH or equivalent.	D	A, P
Evidence of further professional development, for example NPQSL, National Award for SEN Coordination.	D	A, P

Experience

Successful Senior leadership of a Primary or Nursery School setting (age range 2 to to 11 years) minimum 3 years.	E	A, I
Successful teaching or leadership at a School with a nursery provision.	E	A, I
Experience of developing, reviewing the School's strategic plan, together with the Governing Body, ensuring that key objectives are used to develop School improvement plans.	E	A, I
A clear understanding of what constitutes a high performing school and what needs to be done to achieve, and maintain that standard.	E	A, I
A proven track record of building and implementing a culture of high performance, accountability and ethical standards from all groups of colleagues across the School.	E	A, I
Experience of managing change, raising attainment, setting high expectations and continually raising standards of teaching and learning.	E	A, I
Able to implement a climate of learning which enables the best outcomes for all pupils.	E	A, I
A strong commitment to the personal & professional development of all staff through appraisal and the provision of high quality continuous professional development.	E	A, I
Experience of building successful partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders.	E	A, I
Strong negotiation and communication skills.	E	A, I
Experience of leading and embedding high-quality inclusive practice, with a demonstrable commitment to equity, belonging and ensuring outstanding outcomes for all.	E	A, I
Experience of effective financial planning, use of resources & reporting to a range of audiences.	E	A, I



Person Specification

A Application Stage

P Pre-employment check stage (inc. References)

I Interview and Assessment Stage

E - Essential

D - Desirable

Leadership Qualities		
Abides by the Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education and the Seven Principles of Public Life (The Nolan Principles).	E	A, I
Ability to establish and sustain the School's ethos and strategic direction in partnership with those responsible for governance and through consultation with the School community.	E	A, I
Ability to champion a culture which is inclusive, supportive, promotes diversity and equality, with commitment to success for all children.	E	A, I
An experienced, outstanding leader who is committed to ensuring the best possible outcomes for children and the community using data analysis, evaluation and identifying and implementing strategies to achieve this.	E	A, I
Is a visible and high-profile role model with a professional approach that demands excellence, confidence, trust and respect through inspiring and empowering colleagues to succeed.	E	A, I
Ensures staff have access to high-quality, sustained professional development opportunities to raise standards of teaching and learning for all children.	E	A, I
Creative, enthusiastic, proactive and flexible, a good listener, caring and empathetic.	E	A, I
Able to communicate a shared vision to a wide range of audiences and inspire others to embrace new challenges and ideas.	E	A, I
Committed to safeguarding, inclusion and promoting the welfare of all stakeholders.	E	A, I
An innovative leader, with a clear understanding of educational opportunity and how this can be translated into best practice for the School.	E	A, I
Has extensive experience of curriculum monitoring, evaluation of teaching, review of planning documents, teaching & learning objectives, provision maps, IEPs and the production of analytical action plans to ensure sustained improvements for curriculum development and outcomes for children.	E	A, I



Person Specification

A Application Stage

P Pre-employment check stage (inc. References)

I Interview and Assessment Stage

E - Essential

D - Desirable

Knowledge and Skills

A proven track record as an effective senior leader, demonstrating improvements in raising the quality of teaching and learning, educational standards & Ofsted categories.	E	A, I
Up to date knowledge and understanding of the Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework and experience of curriculum design for primary age ranges (2 to 8 years).	E	A, I
Up to date knowledge of national policy, legislation, financial frameworks and School governance.	E	A, I
Excellent analysis of data, its interpretation and presentation and understands the use of performance data to inform future planning and development.	E	A, I
Operates with financial astuteness, within a clear set of principles centred on the School's vision.	E	A, I
Ability to embed clear quality assurance systems that drive consistency and improvement in performance across the School.	E	A, I
Effective IT skills to analyse and extract data to produce succinct action plans, reports and School improvement priorities to ensure sustained progress.	E	A, I
Experience of conducting staff induction, mentoring colleagues, performance management reviews and supervision meetings to ensure the pastoral welfare of the School community.	E	A, I
Able to deal sensitively with a range of different stakeholders, demonstrating patience, understanding, and active listening whilst also being willing to have difficult conversations.	E	A, I

Equal Opportunities Information

Equality

Hirst Wood Nursery School welcomes pupils and staff from a wide range of backgrounds. We believe that their different cultures, talents and life experiences bring richness and vibrancy to school life and help to create an environment that supports us all in learning from each other.

We take seriously our duties to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people of all backgrounds. This duty is set out in the Equality Act of 2010, which covers sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy or maternity.

Disabled Applicants

Disabled applicants are guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential requirements of the Personnel Specification. As an equal rights employer our school is committed to make any necessary reasonable adjustments to the selection process, the job role and the working environment that would enable access to employment opportunities for disabled people. Where a disabled applicant is being assessed the selection panel's decisions will be based on an assessment of that person's expected capabilities once reasonable adjustments have been made.

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