

Rivers

Education Support Centre

Headteacher Recruitment Pack - May 2025







CONTENTS

Welcome From The Chair of Committee	3
Key Facts & Statistics	4
Welcome to Rivers E.S.C	5
The Phoenix Centre	6
Our KS3 Centre	7
Our KS4 Centre	8
Our Values	9
Our New Headteacher	10
What We Can Offer	11
Job Description	12 - 16
Person Specification	17 - 19
How To Apply	20
Important Information	21

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR OF COMMITTEE

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the position of Headteacher at Rivers Educational Support Centre. On behalf of the Governing Body, I am delighted to share with you this exciting opportunity to lead a unique and vital provision that supports some of our most vulnerable students across East Hertfordshire.

Rivers provides support for a wide number of students across all key stages, with separate centres for Primary, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Our work spans a wide range of provision, from outreach and in school support, to short-term respite placements and longer-term alternative education for students who are at risk of or have been permanently excluded from mainstream education. Rivers are at an exciting point in our development as we have begun the process of widening our alternative provision further through work with other ESC's in Hertfordshire and are excited by the prospect of how we can build more opportunities to support the students in the area.

At the heart of our mission is the belief that every child deserves the opportunity to succeed, regardless of the challenges they may face. We are proud of the positive relationships we have built with schools, families, and external agencies, and we remain committed to helping young people achieve the best possible outcomes. This includes supporting successful reintegration to mainstream school wherever possible, or equipping students with the skills and confidence to move on to education, employment or training post-16.

We are now looking for an inspiring and resilient leader who can build on our current strengths and lead Rivers into its next chapter. You will bring a clear vision, strong leadership, and a passionate commitment to improving the life chances of these young people. You will also be able to lead and motivate a dedicated and skilled staff team, work collaboratively with our partners, and continue to develop and expand the high-quality provision we offer with creative solutions to the ever changing demands in this area of education.

This is a challenging but highly rewarding role, and we are looking for someone with the drive, compassion and determination to make a real difference

We welcome visits to the centre, the best way to get a feel for the fantastic work that goes on at Rivers is to see it! To make an appointment, please contact Heather Dunne, PA to the Headteacher on

heather.dunne@riversesc.herts.sch.uk

The closing date for applications is 9am on Friday 20th June 2025.

I hope you will consider joining us on this important journey and look forward to receiving your application.

Thank you once again for your interest.

Yours sincerely,

lan Hawkins

Chair of The Management Committee Rivers ESC

KEY FACTS AND STATISTICS



Rated Good October 2023

Overall outcome	Good
Quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good



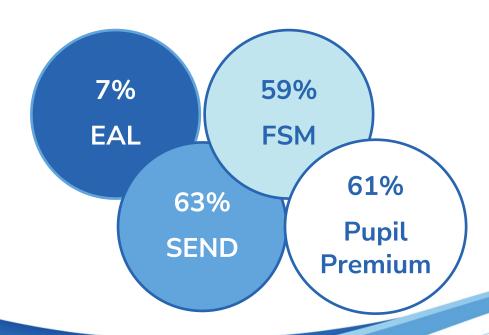


Aged **5 – 16 years**



Phoenix Centre (5 - 11 years) and Key Stage 4 Centre (15 - 16 years) are based at Hoddesdon.

Key Stage 3 Centre (for 11 – 14 years) is in Hertford.



WELCOME TO RIVERS EDUCATION SUPPORT CENTRE

Transforming futures thorough compassionate leadership, purposeful education, and collaborative partnerships.

At Rivers, we support children and young people aged 5–16 across multiple sites in East Hertfordshire. Our students face barriers to learning in mainstream education, often due to social, emotional, or mental health (SEMH) needs. We provide a safe, structured, and nurturing environment where they can reconnect with learning and rebuild their confidence.

A deeply embedded culture of care, creativity, and resilience runs through every aspect of what we do at Rivers. We never give up on a child. Our team constantly adapts provision to meet individual needs, regularly reviewing timetables, strategies, and systems to reflect the changing needs of our students. This flexibility, combined with a strong therapeutic ethos, makes Rivers a truly transformative place, for both students and their families.

Safeguarding is at the heart of our work. With 10 Designated Safeguarding Leads across the organisation, we have robust systems in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care.

Our leadership is strategic, visible, and responsive. While senior leaders don't have regular teaching commitments, they step in to support and cover as needed, ensuring a hands-on and agile approach that keeps us connected to the day-to-day life of the centres.

One of our key strengths is our integrated Outreach Team, which works with both primary and secondary schools across a wide area. Through a tiered model of support, they offer early intervention, behaviour support, and reintegration planning. Their work helps prevent exclusions and supports successful transitions back into mainstream settings. When reintegration isn't the right path, students stay with us for a defined period, with continued outreach support to guide their next steps.

Working at Rivers is both rewarding and challenging. We support some of the most vulnerable children in our community. The work can be demanding, but it's also deeply meaningful. Our team is passionate, resilient, and committed to achieving the best outcomes for every child, whatever their journey may be.

We place a strong emphasis on breaking down preconceptions and building meaningful, trusting relationships with students and families. A calm, well-structured environment, with high staffing levels, open-door classrooms, and clear boundaries, underpins everything we do. Expectations are high, and behaviour is consistently excellent.

THE PHOENIX CENTRE

Primary Behaviour Support and Intervention

The Phoenix Centre plays a vital role in supporting primary aged students (5–11 years old) who are dual-registered with their mainstream school and our provision. It's a place designed for children with complex behavioural, social, emotional, and special educational needs, many of whom have experienced significant trauma.

The Phoenix Centre offers a two-term intervention, but we recognise that every child's journey is different. While reintegration into mainstream education is always the initial aim, the reality is often more nuanced. For many of our students, the level of need and the current shortage of suitable placements, means that more specialised or alternative provision is required.

Our approach at Phoenix is holistic. We focus not only on academic progress but also on nurturing the social and emotional skills that are essential for long-term success. Every child has a personalised timetable, shaped around their individual needs and home circumstances. We work closely with families and external agencies to ensure that each child's experience is safe, meaningful, and supportive.

One of the strengths of the Phoenix Centre is its physical environment. With two classrooms, a sensory regulation room, a spacious playground, access to an AstroTurf sports facility, a forest school area, and a horticulture space, we create a setting that is both stimulating and therapeutic. Our team is always looking for ways to enhance our outdoor provision, reflecting our ongoing commitment to creating spaces where children can thrive.

OUR KS3 CENTRE

Reconnection and Readiness for Reintegration

Our Key Stage 3 Centre offers a nurturing and structured environment for students who have either been permanently excluded from mainstream education or are with us on a short-term, six-week respite placement. The focus is always on supporting students to return to mainstream education wherever possible, with a strong emphasis on reintegration and continuity of learning.

Students on respite placements are reviewed fortnightly to monitor progress and ensure their needs are being met. When reintegration is the next step, our Secondary Outreach Team plays a vital role, working closely with students and their receiving schools to share effective strategies, build staff confidence, and provide ongoing support throughout the transition.

Many of the young people we support have complex needs, and while reintegration can be challenging, we see many students successfully return to mainstream settings. The provision runs until the end of Year 9. For a small number of students, a move to our KS4 Centre may be more appropriate, particularly where specialist provision is needed or while EHCPs and placements are being finalised.

The curriculum follows the National Curriculum and includes English, Maths, Science, ICT, PE, Food Technology, and Art. Learning is highly personalised and differentiated to meet individual needs, with mixed-age teaching groups and Year 9 students typically forming the majority.

We've invested in enhanced facilities to support engagement and wellbeing, including an on-site gym and access to off-site PE providers. Practical subjects like Food Technology and Art are especially popular and are used creatively to inspire and motivate our students.

OUR KS4 CENTRE

Raising Aspirations and Securing Futures

The Key Stage 4 Centre at Rivers offers a unique and highly supportive environment that mirrors the structure and expectations of a small mainstream school, while providing the flexibility and personalisation needed to support some of East Hertfordshire's most vulnerable learners.

Our students follow a core academic curriculum, working towards GCSEs in:

- English Literature
- English Language
- Maths
- Biology
- Art

Alongside this, we offer:

- Functional Skills qualifications in English and Maths
- A wide range of Level 2 vocational qualifications in subjects such as Business, PE, and Teamwork
- A dedicated Employability programme, where students build CVs, prepare for interviews, and take part in a week of work experience
- The opportunity to undertake the Duke of Edinburgh Award (Bronze & Silver)

This curriculum is designed to prepare students not only for academic success but also for life beyond school. Students are supported in exploring post-16 pathways through tailored college visits and even university visits, to raise aspirations, particularly for those from families with no prior experience of higher education.

Every student has a bespoke provision map, whether or not they have an EHCP. These maps guide personalised timetables and support strategies. Some students attend full-time, while others follow blended programmes involving college placements, extended work experience, or therapeutic interventions. This flexibility ensures that each young person has a pathway that suits their individual needs and goals.

A standout feature of the centre is our family support work; working closely with families and external agencies to coordinate care and reduce barriers to engagement. Many students arrive with complex needs and low trust in education. Our approach, starting with a warm, personalised setup meeting, helps rebuild confidence and connection from day one.

OUR VALUES

Respect

Having respect for ourselves, other people and our environment



Readiness

To move on to the next stage of life, be it back into mainstream school or on to new opportunities after year 11.



The 4 Rs



Relationships

Developing positive relationships and behaviours with peers, staff and family.



A never give up attitude which equips students with the drive to succeed in even the most challenging

OUR NEW HEADTEACHER

Rivers ESC is seeking an exceptional leader to advance our vision of inclusive, high-quality education for children whose needs are better supported in alternative settings. This is a unique opportunity for an experienced headteacher or senior leader who can manage complexity, inspire staff, and drive continual improvement across two distinct sites.

The successful candidate will be deeply committed to improving life chances for vulnerable students. They will bring a proven track record of leading across diverse settings, with the systems-thinking, strategic vision, and people skills required to lead effectively in a multi-site environment.

They will need to be highly effective in managing time and priorities, embedding robust processes while ensuring presence, accessibility, and support for staff.

This role demands a leader who can build and maintain strong partnerships with local schools and external agencies. They will understand the importance of flexible and responsive provision, working collaboratively to meet the evolving needs of students and the wider education community.

A deep understanding of alternative provision, or the willingness and capacity to develop this quickly is essential. We are looking for someone with the confidence and credibility to represent Rivers ESC externally, the emotional intelligence to lead through challenge, and the creativity to shape bespoke solutions for students who have disengaged from mainstream education.

Above all, they must believe in the value of every child and be committed to helping them rediscover their potential.

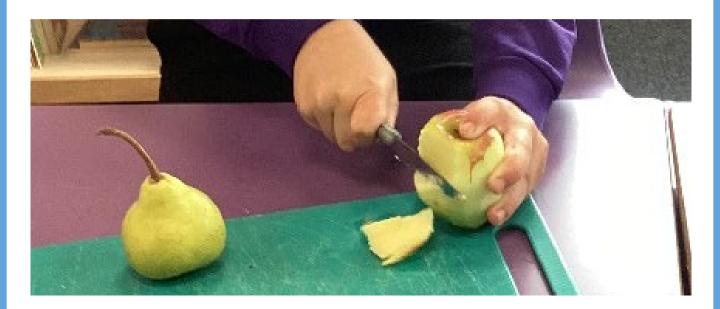


WHAT WE CAN OFFER

We are proud to offer a well-established and highly supportive environment in which a new Headteacher can thrive.

- You will be joining a setting with experienced, committed staff, including strong deputies and a wider team with deep understanding of our students and their needs.
- Our Management Committee brings together a wealth of expertise, including leaders from primary, secondary, and SEND sectors, who are actively engaged and committed to the ESC's continued success.
- You will also benefit from close working relationships with other ESCs and access to professional mentoring and support.
- We provide a salary range of L21–L27, reflecting the scale and complexity of the role, as well as access to wellbeing initiatives such as onsite gym facilities.

This is a rewarding, challenging, and hugely impactful role. We are looking for someone who is not only ready to lead, but to shape the next chapter of Rivers ESC's journey, championing excellence, inclusion, and opportunity for every student in our care.



JOB DESCRIPTION

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for providing leadership to Rivers Education Support Centres to secure success and continuous improvement, ensuring high quality education for all its students and improved standards of teaching, and learning in line with statutory requirements.

To gain this success, the Headteacher must:

- Demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct both within and outside school.
- Uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Always serve in the best interests of the school's students.
- Establish high quality education by effectively managing teaching and learning to realise the potential of all students.
- Forge a compelling vision to guide the school to its next stage of development.
- Develop a strategy with our community and other schools to provide clear educational pathways for our students as they grow older.
- Ensure sustainable growth and financial security for the school.

Appointment is subject to the current conditions of employment of Headteachers, contained in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document, the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and all other current education, employment and health and safety legislation.

The post holder is expected to have regard to <u>the National Standards</u> <u>of Excellence for Headteachers</u> at all times, as detailed on the next page:

SECTION 1: ETHICS & PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Headteachers are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of principled and professional conduct. They are expected to meet the teachers' standards and be responsible for providing the conditions in which teachers can fulfil them.

Headteachers should uphold and demonstrate the Seven Principles of Public Life at all times:

SELFLESSNESS, INTEGRITY, OBJECTIVITY, ACCOUNTABILITY, OPENNESS, HONESTY, LEADERSHIP.

Headteachers uphold public trust in school leadership and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour both within and outside school:

- Build relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position.
- Show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain.
- Uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit their position, students' vulnerability or might lead students to break the law.

As leaders of their school community and profession, Headteachers:

- Serve in the best interests of the school's students.
- Uphold their obligation to give account and accept responsibility.
- Know, understand, and act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.
- Take responsibility for their own continued professional development, engaging critically with educational research.
- Make a positive contribution to the wider education system.

SECTION 2: HEADTEACHERS' STANDARDS

1. CENTRE CULTURE

- Establish and sustain the ethos and strategic direction of Rivers ESC in partnership with the Management Committee and wider community.
- Strengthen Rivers ESC's presence and reputation within the local education and care landscape, including with partner schools, the local authority, and agencies.
- Create a culture where students experience a positive and enriching Centre life, that prioritises inclusion and achievement for all.
- Promote a culture of aspiration and ambition that prepares students for their next steps and life beyond the Centre
- Uphold positive and respectful relationships across the community and a safe, orderly, and inclusive environment.
- Ensure high staff professionalism and accountability for delivering excellent outcomes.

2. TEACHING

- Ensure consistently high-quality teaching and learning across both sites through clear expectations and evidence-informed approaches tailored to the needs of vulnerable students.
- Maintain a curriculum and pedagogy that reflects the specialist nature of the setting and meets the needs of students with SEMH and additional vulnerabilities.
- Promote teaching which is adaptive and restorative, enabling engagement and achievement.
- Ensure teaching is underpinned by high levels of subject expertise and developmental feedback.

3. CURRICULUM & ASSESSMENT

- Ensure a broad, personalised, and coherent curriculum across both sites that sets out the knowledge, skills, and values students need.
- Set and monitor targets for improvement in line with Rivers ESC's priorities and context.
- Establish strong curriculum leadership that supports professional collaboration and sharing between sites.
- Develop curriculum access and progression routes that support reintegration or transition to appropriate next steps.
- Ensure robust, fair, and proportionate assessment practices that celebrate progress from individual starting points.
- Keep families informed about the curriculum and student progress through clear and sensitive communication.

4. BEHAVIOUR

- Establish and sustain high expectations of behaviour for all students, built upon relationships, rules and routines, which are understood clearly by all staff and students.
- Ensure high standards of student behaviour and courteous conduct in accordance with the behaviour policy.
- Implement consistent, fair, and respectful approaches to managing behaviour.
- Ensure that adults within the school model and teach the behaviour of a good citizen.

SECTION 2: HEADTEACHERS' STANDARDS

5. ADDITIONAL, SEN & DISABILITIES

- Lead and support outreach provision that enables students with complex needs to thrive in mainstream settings where appropriate.
- Ensure Rivers ESC is inclusive and has ambitious expectations for all students, including those with SEND and complex SEMH needs.
- Lead and quality assure outreach and reintegration work that supports students' wider development and successful transitions.
- Work closely with families and external professionals to ensure collaborative support plans that reflect student needs.
- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable students to access the curriculum and learn effectively.
- Ensure statutory duties related to the SEND Code of Practice are met in full.

6. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Embed a culture of reflective practice and development across both sites, supporting staff wellbeing, retention, and improvement.
- Ensure all staff have access to relevant training, supervision, and coaching, including specialist CPD in behaviour, trauma-informed practice and SEND.
- Prioritise the professional development of staff, which is consistent with the approaches laid out in the standard for teachers' professional development.
- Celebrate and share strengths within and across the Centres while tailoring support to individual and team needs.

7. ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- Lead the internal organisation and operational management of Rivers ESC with clarity, compassion, and purpose.
- · Ensure the protection and safety of students and staff through effective approaches to safeguarding.
- Oversee the effective and equitable deployment of resources to meet the needs of both sites and their students.
- Work with senior leaders to ensure resources are used efficiently and provide value for money.
- Prioritise and allocate financial resources appropriately, ensuring efficiency, effectiveness, and probity in the use of public funds.
- · Align financial planning with curriculum priorities to ensure equitable and strategic resource deployment.
- Ensure robust systems, policies and compliance procedures are in place, understood, and implemented consistently across the Centres.
- Ensure staff are deployed and managed well with due attention paid to workload.
- Ensure rigorous approaches to identifying, managing, and mitigating risk.

SECTION 2: HEADTEACHERS' STANDARDS

8. CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

- Model principled and resilient leadership to foster a culture of transparency, equity and trust.
- Develop leadership capacity at all levels and promote a culture of shared accountability.
- Embed sustainable improvement plans aligned with Rivers ESC's distinct context and student cohort.
- Use data, evaluation, and stakeholder voice to identify barriers and drive strategic improvement.
- Lead high-impact initiatives and ensure consistency of quality across all key stages..
- Monitor, adapt and review implementation strategies to ensure long-term impact.

9. WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

- Build and maintain strong relationships with parents/carers, agencies, schools, and other services to enhance student outcomes and welfare.
- Represent Rivers ESC at local, regional and national forums to strengthen influence and opportunities for students.
- Promote collaborative working across the education sector and multi-agency networks.
- Engage the community in the life of Rivers ESC and build partnerships that benefit the Centres' development and students' future pathways
- Maintain constructive relationships with professional associations and trade unions.

10. GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

- Understand and embrace the role of governance and ensure robust accountability across both sites.
- Work closely with the Management Committee to shape, deliver and evaluate strategic direction.
- Ensure that advice and guidance from the LA and DfE is appropriately communicated to inform school policy.
- Work with the governing board to shape, communicate and deliver a clear strategic vision that drives sustained improvement.
- · Ensure that staff know and 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.
- Ensure robust safeguarding arrangements, including Prevent duties, are in place and effectively monitored.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

A candidate will only be considered for shortlisting and move forward in the remaining person specification criteria if they meet the initial essential criteria under qualifications, knowledge and experience.

It is important to provide examples using the STAR acronym (situation, task, action, result) relating to the person specification criteria.

		Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessment stage
Qualifications, knowledge and experience:	Degree and qualified teacher status	E	√	✓
	Experience of working with or knowledge of all KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4 students and staff.	D	✓	√
	Recent and significant school leadership experience as a Headteacher or as a Deputy headteacher with experience across all areas of school leadership	E	√	✓
	Thorough understanding of Child Protection and Safeguarding and commitment to safeguarding as part of the duty of care	Е	✓	√
	Experience in leading or supporting outreach and reintegration initiatives for students with SEMH or complex needs	D	✓	√
	Demonstrates an awareness of the wider education context.	Е		✓
School culture:	Ability to articulate a clear vision for the future and provide strategic direction for staff, students and the community.	E		√
	Proven record of inspiring, enabling and motivating others, promoting positive and respectful relationships across the school.	E		√
	Ensures a culture of high staff professionalism, holds others to account.	Е		√
	Upholds ambitious educational standards for all students.	E	./	./

		Essential/ Desirable	Application form	Assessmen t stage
		Ess	Арр	Ass
	Experience in leading curriculum development and collaboration across multiple sites or settings.	D	√	√
nent:	Clear understanding of the curriculum and how to ensure this can be effectively accessed by all.	Е	√	√
Teaching, curriculum & assessment:	Reviews and monitors progress against agreed, measurable targets.	E		✓
culum 8	Absolute commitment to inclusion and to ambitious expectations for all students including those with SEND and higher attainers	E	✓	✓
ng, curri	Knowledge and experience of working with young people with SEND across the primary and secondary phases.	E	√	√
Teachii	Able to understand the needs of young people with challenging behaviours and develop strategies to successfully manage this.	Е	√	√
	Experience of deploying and managing staff to deliver effective outcomes.	Е	√	✓
	Evidence of appropriate and recent professional career development for the role of headteacher.	Е		√
ional ment:	Has successfully undertaken approved safer recruitment training.	D		✓
Professional development:	Commitment to prioritising the continued professional development of all staff (including themselves) in the best interests of the individual, the team and the school.	E	√	√
	Successful track record of developing staff through effective performance management.	D		✓
Organisational management/ continuous school improvement:	Have had active involvement in effective school self-evaluation and development planning.	D		✓
	Have had responsibility for whole school policy development and implementation.	D		√
	Experience of leading change effectively and successfully.	Е	√	✓
Orga agem hool i	Clear commitment to promoting safeguarding, health and safety and the wellbeing of students and staff.	Е	√	✓
man	Ability to review and analyse key data to develop evidence-informed strategies for school improvement.	Е	✓	√

HOW TO APPLY

How to apply

This recruitment is managed by HFL Education, in line with the latest guidance on safer recruitment. Please apply on the Teach in Herts website, using the standard online application form. CVs will not be considered. Should you need support, please contact leadership.recruitment@hfleducation.org. Please ask us if you require information about this vacancy in an alternative format.

Application Form

Applicants must use the standard application form provided (CVs are not accepted). Please complete all aspects of the form fully. Include your full work history, explaining any gaps since leaving school education, and include any relevant training you have completed, particularly those in recent years which have helped to prepare you for headship.

Person Specification and Personal Statement

When writing your personal statement, it is important you address each of the requirements in the person specification. Be sure to evidence additional aspects such as training and qualifications together with your background and experience.

References

In line with safer recruitment guidance, we normally request references after shortlisting. Please make sure your referees are aware of your application and are able to provide a swift turn around if needed. Preferred referees are your last two employers, and you should provide their official organisation email address for us to contact. One referee will be your last Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Pay range:	L21 - L27 Fringe (£82,825 - £94,758)
Start date:	January 2026 or sooner
Closing date:	Friday 20 th June 2025 at 9am
Shortlisting date:	Monday 30 th June 2025
Interview date:	Monday 7 th July 2025
Visits to the school:	To make an appointment, please contact Heather Dunne, PA to the Headteacher on heather.dunne@riversesc.herts.sch.uk
School website:	www.riversesc.herts.sch.uk
School address:	Key Stage 4 Centre: Old Essex Road. Hoddesdon. EN11 OAA Key Stage 3 Centre: Churchfields, Hertford. SG13 8AE



Rivers Education Support Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Appointment to this post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check as well as other pre-appointment checks, including an online check, as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024).

To help us meet our high standards and aspirations of a fully diverse and inclusive workplace, we strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from all backgrounds to apply and to join us.

RIVERS E.S.C



Key Stage 4 Centre/DSPL3 and 4
Secondary Outreach/DSPL4 Primary Outreach.
Old Essex Road. Hoddesdon. EN11 0AA

01992 534841 www.riversesc.herts.sch.uk



Key Stage 3 Centre/DSPL3 Primary Outreach.
Churchfields, Hertford. SG13 8AE
01992 34841 www.riversesc.herts.sch.uk



