



# Chessbrook

## Education Support Centre

Courage | Pride | Resilience

**Candidate Brief**

**Teaching Assistant /  
Learning Support  
Assistant**

Chessbrook ESC

Tolpits Lane

Watford

Hertfordshire

WD18 6LJ

Telephone: 01923 212025

[www.chessbrook.herts.sch.uk](http://www.chessbrook.herts.sch.uk)

*Chessbrook ESC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and visitors to share this commitment. All post holders are subject to a satisfactory full enhanced, with list checks, Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS).*

*As an equal opportunities employer, Chessbrook ESC is committed to the equal treatment of all current and prospective employees and does not condone discrimination on the basis of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, gender identity, or marriage and civil partnership.*

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## Welcome from the Headteacher



Dear Applicant,

I am delighted you have chosen to apply for the post of Teaching Assistant/Learning Support Assistant at Chessbrook ESC. This is an exciting time to be joining our school.

Chessbrook is an exceptionally successful organisation which proudly serves its family of schools within South West Hertfordshire, providing support to approximately 1000 local children, young people and families each year.

Our fundamental values, encapsulated by Courage, Pride and Resilience (CPR), permeate every facet of our approach. Upon joining Chessbrook, many students arrive with negative learning experiences, feelings of rejection, and a complete disconnection from the education system. Our CPR values are the driving force behind nurturing self-assured, capable, and tenacious individuals, rekindling the flame of education and learning.

In March 2022, the government's green paper outlining proposed changes to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Alternative Provision in the UK acknowledged the exceptional contributions that Chessbrook makes to its students, families and schools. Our involvement in the research for the Alternative Provision Quality Toolkit resulted in Chessbrook being featured as a noteworthy case study, further acknowledging our exceptional practices in this domain.

Following this publication, we were honoured with an invitation to Westminster to provide evidence and field questions on our approach to reducing permanent exclusions through early early intervention. Hearing the CEO of a prominent Alternative Provision Multi Academy Trust express his intent to implement the 'Chessbrook model' across all the schools in his Trust underscored the outstanding practices we have cultivated over the years.

Chessbrook provides timely and tailored support, enabling the majority of students to continue learning in mainstream schools. This ensures that those with the most complex needs gain access to an ambitious and personalised curriculum at our centre.

We offer a high level of pastoral, including the assignment of a dedicated Personal Learning Mentor who will advocate for each student throughout their journey at Chessbrook. Our standards and expectations are exceptionally high. We are unwavering in our commitment to educate, challenge and inspire our young people to reach their aspirations.

Our highly motivated and expertly trained staff team is diligent in identifying gaps in prior development and learning, ensuring that every student receives the essential support for success from the moment they walk through our doors. Students and their families immediately experience the warmth and robust network of support available to them.

Our objective is for all students to attain qualifications and experiences necessary to advance to the next stage of their educational journey and into adulthood.

To explore more about what we have to offer please browse our website:

[www.chessbrook.herts.sch.uk](http://www.chessbrook.herts.sch.uk)

If you would like to arrange an informal visit or have any questions about the role please contact Suzanne Briscall (Headteacher PA and HR Manager) on 01923 212025.

With best wishes

Steve McShannon  
Headteacher



# Our Values & Ethos



<b>Courage</b>	<b>Pride</b>	<b>Resilience</b>
<p>Chessbrook students exemplify courage and a willingness to explore new lessons, engage in various activities, and establish connections with both fellow students and staff.</p> <p>Within our broad curriculum, we extend opportunities for our Key Stage 3 (KS3) students to cultivate courage. This curriculum combines practical and academic elements, nurturing a genuine passion for learning from an early stage. Simultaneously, within our Key Stage 4 (KS4) programme, students actively participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award, which pushes them out of their comfort zones to embrace novel challenges. This award not only encourages our KS4 students to try new things but also complements their leadership development, fostering the confidence to communicate effectively with their younger peers and staff.</p>	<p>Recognising and taking pride in students achievements holds significant importance and at Chessbrook, we keenly observe the distinctive skills, talents, and attributes of our students, even those they might not always recognise in themselves. Within our lessons, we actively work to nurture and enhance these talents. As students gather the courage to share their unique experiences, our dedicated staff create opportunities to further develop and celebrate them.</p> <p>Chessbrook is committed to valuing and acknowledging the diverse accomplishments of every individual in various forms. Our annual awards evening serves as a platform to highlight and celebrate these achievements, fostering a strong sense of pride within our community.</p>	<p>Navigating life as a young person can be quite demanding, and at our school, we place a strong emphasis on the importance of resilience in every aspect of our approach. Our curriculum is designed to be both exciting and challenging and we support students to be resilient in order to achieve success. We have exceptionally high standards because we firmly believe that they are the key to long-term success.</p> <p>In addition to our aspirational environment, we incorporate inspiring stories into our circle time sessions. These stories come from our own staff or guest speakers, who share their experiences of how they've had to embrace the value of resilience in their own lives. These narratives serve as powerful sources of motivation, allowing our students to learn from real-life examples and gain insights into the practical application of resilience.</p>

# Working at Chessbrook

## Locality

Chessbrook is situated 1.8 miles from Watford town centre. Transport links are good, with access to public transport, major roads and the M25 is only a few miles away. Watford town centre offers many sports, leisure and arts facilities, an extensive shopping centre and a good range of accommodation, including flats and houses to rent.



## Development

Chessbrook has an excellent, well-qualified team of staff who are dedicated to their own professional development and the development of others. We actively encourage staff to undertake CPD and have a programme of weekly sessions through the academic year. All staff have access to The National College and can request to undertake external CPD.



## Wellbeing

Chessbrook has an established wellbeing programme for staff with an active committee who deliver a variety of events throughout the academic year. We have signed up to the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter and are fully committed to supporting our staff.



# About the role

This is a unique and exciting opportunity to join our school. We are looking for a Teaching Assistant/Learning Support Assistant who thrives working in a dynamic, fast-paced environment, to work part or full time hours (up to 37 hours per week) for term-time only. The successful candidate will join our outstanding team to support the growing demands of our extended services and the alternative provision offer within South West Herts.

We are looking for somebody who:

- Is motivated by supporting the positive wellbeing of others
- Enjoys the challenge of supporting and developing children and young people
- Builds strong positive relationships with students, staff and outside professionals
- Enjoys partnering with colleagues across the school community and externally
- Has exceptional communication and interpersonal skills and a 'can-do' attitude
- Is willing to undertake CPD and training relevant to the post and the development of the organisation

We can offer:

- An inspiring and happy school environment, with a highly skilled and supportive team of staff
- A commitment to personal and professional development, with a vast range of CPD opportunities
- Opportunities to develop professionally as part of our Associates Programme
- A rewarding post with the opportunity to be part of an exceptional team
- Opportunities to expand your professional networks through our collaborative approach
- A supportive Management Committee who work in partnership with the school community
- A package of support for your health and wellbeing (EAP and Occupational Health)
- Free use of our onsite gym
- A free annual flu vaccination
- Free onsite parking
- Access to professional 1:1 coaching
- Membership to the Teacher Pension Scheme / Local Government Pension Scheme
- HCC Cycle to Work scheme
- Active Staff Wellbeing Committee

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# Job Description

**Job Title:** Teaching Assistant/Learning Support Assistant

**Responsible to:** Alternative Provision Coordinator/AP & Comms Lead

**Grade & Salary:** HCC H3: FTE Salary Range: £23,500 - £23,893

- Actual Salary Range (based on 37 hours per week/term time only): £19,650 - £19,978

**Working Hours:** Up to 37 hours per week

**Working Weeks:** Term-time only (38 weeks per year)

**Contract Type:** Permanent

## JOB OUTLINE

### a) Purpose of the Job

- To support the delivery of lessons within the centre and on Alternative Provision
- To build relationships with all students
- To support, motivate and challenge students within the centre and Alternative Provision settings to ensure they achieve
- Ensure the continuity of all Chessbrook practices, and ensure the behaviour policies and safeguarding standards are maintained
- Contribute effectively to the wider Chessbrook team

### b) Duties

- Establish positive and productive working relationships with students, developing an understanding of their needs and actively promote the inclusion of all students
- To support/deliver lessons within the centre ensuring that our outstanding practices are always upheld
- To support/deliver sessions within the Alternative Provision programmes ensuring that our outstanding practices are always upheld
- To contribute to and/or write any requested reports or updates in relation to student progress
- To accurately record student data to help track progress
- To support the Alternative Provision Coordinator with setting up AP packages for Chessbrook students, including the monitoring of progress
- To carry out regular Quality Assurance visits (QA) of Alternative Provision, including coordinating QA visits and maintaining up-to-date files/records
- Respond to any immediate problems or emergencies at an Alternative Provision session according to Chessbrook's policies and procedures
- To attend daily debrief, weekly staff meeting and CPD sessions as directed
- To take positive steps to identify and overcome any barriers to learning

- Manage behaviour to ensure a positive learning environment
- To be a positive role model, creating a positive environment in which to motivate and encourage learners
- To act as a Personalised Learning Mentor for students in line with the school's guidance on Personalised Learning Mentors at Chessbrook. To develop relationships with the student and close family to ensure that the student has a suitable and varied amount of personalised learning, is completing the work set by the subject teacher, act as a timely link between Chessbrook, parents/carers and the student, celebrate success and act quickly if disengagement occurs
- To take reasonable care for the Health and Safety of yourself and others in undertaking your work, cooperate with the employer on all matters relating to health and safety; not to intentionally interfere with or misuse any equipment or fittings provided in the interests of health safety and welfare; report immediately to the school office any serious or immediate danger; report immediately to the line manager any shortcomings in the arrangements for health and safety; ensure that you only use equipment or machinery that you are competent to use or have been trained to use
- Attend relevant meetings, and keep up to date with the day-to-day work of the school
- To ensure that the safety and welfare of others is continuously considered, including appropriately recording and reporting any concerns relating to abuse and child sexual exploitation. To be familiar with the Chessbrook ESC Safeguarding procedures and to read and understand associated documentation (*Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people in educational settings, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Staff Handbook*) and comply with their requirements to safeguard and protect the welfare of children, young people and adults
- To be aware of responsibilities and expectations outlined in the Code of Conduct
- To be aware of the Whistleblowing Policy and report any genuine concerns in relation to the conduct of others in the school, which are in the public interest such as fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by employees or Management Committee of Chessbrook ESC. Where the concerns are about safeguarding children or young people, the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection should be notified
- Demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct
- To understand and uphold the obligation as an employee under prevailing data protection legislation when processing personal data
- Other duties that are consistent with the post and the need for staff to work flexibly

**Additional information:**

The post holder is required to contribute to and support the overall aims and ethos of the school. All staff are required to participate in training and other learning activities, and in performance management and development as required by the school's policies and practices.

*Whilst every effort has been made to explain the main duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task undertaken may not be identified.*

*This job description is current at the date shown, but following consultation with you may be changed by the Leadership Team to reflect or anticipate changes in the job which are commensurate with the salary and post.*



# Person Specification

Essential	Desirable	Assessed through
<b>General Qualifications and Experience</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English and Mathematics to Grade C / 4 or above (or equivalent)</li> <li>Experience of supporting and/or delivering small group sessions in a school environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Herts Steps training (Therapeutic Behaviour)</li> <li>Thrive training</li> <li>TA Level 3 Qualification</li> </ul>	Application form Certificates
<b>Skills, Knowledge and Understanding</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of working within a school, Further Education environment</li> <li>Understanding of safeguarding and child protection procedures</li> <li>Ability to work with a wide range of stakeholders</li> <li>Good IT skills, particularly in relation to accurate record keeping and report writing for management purposes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experience of Google and Google Drive</li> <li>Experience of working with School Management Information Systems (e.g. SIMS)</li> <li>Knowledge of working in Alternative Provision</li> </ul>	Application Form Interview
<b>Professional Ethos and Commitment</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High expectations for self and others and a strong commitment to the school's strategic purpose, commitment and intent</li> <li>Ability to establish sound professional relationships with children, colleagues and parents</li> <li>Commitment to promote home-school partnerships</li> <li>Ability to work cooperatively as a member of a team</li> <li>Willingness to attend training as required</li> </ul>		Interview

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Willingness to contribute to whole school development</li> <li>● Willingness to be involved in the wider life of the school</li> </ul>		
<b>Personal Qualities</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enthusiastic and positive attitude</li> <li>● Ability to plan time and organise work effectively</li> <li>● Ability to use own initiative, be proactive and able to identify appropriate solutions to problems</li> <li>● Self-evaluate and adaptable to changing circumstances and new ideas</li> <li>● Good written and oral communications skills</li> <li>● Commitment to acting with integrity, honesty, loyalty, and fairness to safeguard the assets, financial probity and reputation of the school</li> <li>● Demonstrate a commitment to celebrating diversity and promoting community cohesion in a multicultural setting</li> <li>● Be a positive role model</li> <li>● Sense of humour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Brings personal interests and enthusiasm to the school community</li> </ul>	Interview



# How to Apply

## Application Information

You can apply for this role by:

- Completing and submitting the application form on Teach in Herts [www.teachinherts.com](http://www.teachinherts.com)
- Completing the application form available on the school website [www.chessbrook.herts.sch.uk](http://www.chessbrook.herts.sch.uk) and email to: [HR@chessbrook.herts.sch.uk](mailto:HR@chessbrook.herts.sch.uk)

## Key dates for the recruitment process

Closing date for applications: **Wednesday 8th May 2024, 10.00am**

**Shortlisting:** All candidates will be contacted by email, both those shortlisted and those not successful by **Friday 10th May 2024, 12.00pm**

Interview date: **Wednesday 15th May 2024**

Estimated Start Date: **June 2024** (or sooner if available, to be agreed at interview)

## Additional information

*Chessbrook ESC reserves the right to make an appointment before the closing date, so early applications are encouraged.*

**A visit to the school is encouraged and can be arranged by contacting Suzanne Briscall on 01923 212025.**

Please be aware that applications via CV only will not be considered. We may contact you to fully complete application forms in order for you to be considered. You will be asked to sign applications submitted online. Unless candidates request otherwise, references will be sought in advance.

Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a Criminal Records Self Declaration Form prior to interview.

The interview process for teachers is in two parts:

**Part One** - will take the form of an observed lesson and/or any other tasks deemed necessary for the role. You will be sent the information for the lesson in advance.

*The lesson observation feedback will be discussed with the interview panel and a decision made at this point whether to proceed to Part Two.*

**Part Two** - candidates who are successful following the observed lesson and/or any other tasks set, will proceed to the formal interview.

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As part of our Safer Recruitment, Chessbrook ESC will conduct online searches of shortlisted candidates. This check does not form part of the shortlisting process itself and candidates will have a chance to address any issues of concern that arise during this search at interview.

We aspire to have a diverse and inclusive workplace and strongly encourage suitably qualified applicants from a wide range of backgrounds to apply and join Chessbrook ESC. We operate an anonymised shortlisting process.

This post is classed as having a high degree of contact with children or vulnerable adults and is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. An enhanced disclosure will be sought through the Disclosure & Barring service as part of the school's and Hertfordshire County Council's pre-employment checks. All those required to have a DBS check are required to inform the school at the earliest opportunity of any conviction, caution or bind-over that they have received or any police investigation which may lead to one of these. Failure to do so, without legitimate cause, would be a serious breach of school discipline.

