

Forest School Leader Courtlands School



Dear prospective candidate,

Thank you for taking the time to look at our Forest School Leader position at Courtlands School.

Courtlands is a friendly and ambitious school which is part of Transforming Futures Trust in Plymouth which caters for primary aged children (4-11) with Moderate Learning Difficulties and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. Our innovative curriculum is based on meeting individual's needs rather than schemes of work, and it provides a wide range of curriculum and therapeutic input.

Our children love coming to school and enjoy all that we have to offer, through their therapies to the extra-curricular clubs and activities, but most of all the personal relationships they have with their peers and us. They tell us that they feel very safe and well cared for and proud when they make progress. They behave exceptionally well when calmly and consistently supported to reflect on their own needs and learn to empathise with others and to be proud of their own achievements.

We are looking to recruit an outstanding Forest School Leader to join the team. We are looking for people with a real passion for working in an environment with complex but rewarding children in a supportive and compassionate environment. You will complement the work of teachers by taking responsibility for agreed learning activities under an agreed system of supervision. This may involve planning, preparing and delivering learning activities for individuals/groups or short term for whole classes and monitoring pupils and assessing, recording and reporting on pupil's achievement, progress and development. The successful candidates will demonstrate an informed and efficient approach to teaching and learning by adopting relevant strategies to support the work of the teacher and increase achievement of all pupils including, where appropriate, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and use effective behaviour regulation strategies consistently in line with the school's policy and procedures.

We can offer you a motivated and skilled staff team and a real opportunity to make a difference to the future of our wonderful children and school. We look after our staff with award winning care for their wellbeing (National Wellbeing in Schools Award 2019). You will receive training in a wide range of areas and mentoring from a line manager and Leadership team whose door is literally open all the time.

For the last 5 years we have been on a journey to become a trauma informed community, responding to the adverse childhood experiences of many of our pupils, including challenging school experiences before being matched with the right setting for them. We believe that *every* interaction, no matter how fleeting, is the opportunity for an intervention to help our pupils grow as people who know how awesome and valued they are, especially at times they are struggling and communicate through unkind or unsafe behaviour. We want staff who see the children's challenges for what they are, who can use PACE with the best of them, and can remain calm under pressure.

Find out more about who we are and what we do on our website: <https://www.courtlands.transformingfutures.org.uk> where you will be able to download an application form and job description from the Vacancies section

Mark Ruffett
Executive Head Teacher



Who We Are

Courtlands School caters for primary aged children who have Moderate Learning Difficulties, Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH) and other complex needs including autism, ADHD, speech and language difficulties and those impacted by trauma.

Courtlands is a remarkable school with a real feel of positivity, acceptance and camaraderie. You see targeted therapies many other schools do not offer and a curriculum that is designed to meet the additional needs of our pupils. You see learning organised to meet the developmental needs of the children and we have the confidence to buck the trend, stand out, and to aim for the outstanding.

We have a maximum of 100 children here at any one time ranging in age from 4 to 11 years old. We take pupils from Plymouth, Devon and Cornwall and we welcome prospective visits from interested parents, SENDCos or Local Authority Officers.

We have small classes of no more than ten children with high levels of adult support so that our children can make excellent progress. We look at the whole child and help them to improve both their academic achievement and their personal wellbeing. This means that we help them to socialise, eat and play independently, become more active and have better coordination. We help them to learn to swim, ride a bike and look after themselves in every way. Our children make excellent progress and really enjoy coming here as can be seen through their smiles and obvious love for learning.

The levels of progress made by our pupils is significantly above national expectations for like pupils, our attendance is in the top 1% of special schools nationally and our exclusion levels in the lowest 1% nationally. We are a truly inclusive school who believe that the children have a right to have their needs met and not feel excluded from anything.

Our curriculum has been designed from the 'ground up' to meet the needs of the children. Whilst it is based on the National Curriculum, we have adapted and added to what you could expect in a mainstream school. We use specialist approaches such as TEACCH, Makaton, Attention Autism, Precision Instruction and many more to help our children to access the curriculum. We have a unique outdoor environment and we have won national recognition for its innovative use of the outdoors to teach children the value of relationships and transferable skills. We use outdoor activities such as forest school, mountain biking, and problem solving to enhance our wellbeing curriculum and teach our pupils resilience, teamwork, adaptability and perseverance – all life skills that they will need to be successful in the 21st century jobs market.

We have a team of complementary therapeutic workers who provide for the wider needs of our pupils from their emotional needs, through their medical needs to their sensory needs. We use expertise from our school-base occupational therapist and play therapist, and other professionals such as speech and language therapists, CAMHS and paediatricians to design bespoke packages for some of the most disadvantaged children in the area.

We have a reputation for flexibility and making the impossible possible.

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in a role within Transforming Futures Trust. This is an exciting time for the organisation. I hope this brief introduction gives you an understanding of why.

Transforming Futures Trust is made up of three, and soon to be four, academies in the Southwest of England. All our academies provide for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The trust was first formed some time ago. It is now an innovative, secure organisation that is increasingly working alongside local areas to contribute more to the SEND system across Devon, Cornwall and Plymouth.

Although all our academies meet the needs of children and young people with differing needs, Transforming Futures Trust's core aim is to create 'positive futures for all'. We are building a culture of Trauma Informed Practice in all our academies which supports the wellbeing and development of all children and young people, staff, parents/carers and stakeholders and the wider communities they are a part of.

Transforming Futures Trust works with children for whom mainstream education is not right: those who have SEND, some with challenging behaviour; children with mental health concerns; pupils who find the traditional setting of a school intimidating. This is why the people who work for us are highly committed to a core principle that all learners, whatever their ability or background, get the best education possible.

Under the strong, collaborative and considered leadership in our academies, staff benefit from being members of tight communities that work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people. As the trust develops, so does the way we plan to ensure all staff meet their full potential. Professional development and protecting staff wellbeing are priorities for the trust. This means you can rely on the fact we will ensure you will benefit from a smooth induction and suite of training tailored specifically for you.

As a trust we pride ourselves on the impact we have had on many pupils' outcomes. I hope this introduction demonstrates why we think this is a great trust to work for.

We would strongly encourage you to visit our academies

Matt Sambrook
Chief Executive Officer

and see first-hand the purposeful environments within them.

About Us

Transforming Futures Trust works with children for whom mainstream education is not right: young people with behavioural challenges; children with mental health concerns; pupils who find the traditional setting of a school intimidating. It is not an exaggeration to say that we change these young people's lives. Our extraordinary staff can connect with these children and apply the principles of trauma informed care to enable them to reach their potential.

Our core aim is to create 'positive futures for all'. We are building a culture of Trauma Informed Practice in all our schools which supports the wellbeing and development of all children and young people, Head teachers, School staff, parents/carers, stakeholders and the wider communities they are a part of.

We have proven educational practice and strong leadership which has enabled us to develop new provisions across the South West to meet the needs of children and families which have not been met in existing schools in the area. Since it was established, TFT has developed a highly effective internal capacity to support schools in their work with children and young people, helping them to make the biggest difference to their life chances.

Transforming Futures Trust was formally set up on 1st June 2016 (previously known as ACE Schools Multi Academy Trust) with the aim of growing from a single educational provision in Plymouth into a group of Schools across Devon and Cornwall. Our simple aim is to support the development and improvement of the education for all pupils within the Trust and beyond through school-to-school support.



Governance, Responsibility and Leadership

The mission of the Trust is to do our very best for learners. Our schools meet high standards and all of them achieve excellent outcomes. There is one overall leadership team which is responsible for this. It has three parts:

- **The Trust Board** has a new Chair and several new Trustees with a wide range of experience and skills to govern the Trust to a very high standard. They are responsible for making sure our schools are effective.
- **The Executive Team** implements the Trust's strategy and policies. They make sure that all processes run smoothly and efficiently. Our new executive team is making great strides in reducing costs and improving quality.
- **The Senior Leadership Teams** ensure that every student has the best possible experience at school. This includes learning, personal development and skills for their next steps in life. This may be to a mainstream setting, to a next school or further education, or into employment.

These three teams work together to help our pupils achieve the best possible outcomes for themselves and their communities.

Our Vision

We stand for excellence in education, uncompromising professionalism, and solution-focussed support, with our pupils at the heart of everything we do.

Our Values

**Valuing the individual
and our service to them**

**Compassion and
caring for everyone**

**Professional
excellence in all we do**

**Valuing growth and
releasing potential**

Celebrating Success



Feedback

“The relationships we have with the pupils are really strong” Teaching Assistant

“It's been so nice having him at ACE, with all the support he has been given” Parent

“The changes over the last year have been very positive and much appreciated. I feel supported rather than pressurised” Teacher

“TFT is just brilliant. I couldn't ask for a better school. You work miracles” Parent


“I think the whole term has been a good news story, my pupils have been amazing demonstrating positive attitudes, resilience, patience, understanding, humour and a great work ethic and I truly believe that we are transforming futures” Teacher

“Having worked for TFT for only a short time and I have been impressed at how the pupils are supported” Teaching Assistant

“The work we do at TFT is brilliant and I am delighted to have joined the team this September” Teacher

“My son is loving it. He has changed dramatically particularly in his confidence levels. I wish he could have come sooner” Parent

“I feel supported in my role by the SLT, my line manager and the team of staff I work with. The role is extremely challenging, which is why that support is so important” Pastoral Lead



About The Role

Job Title: Forest School Leader

Salary Range: UQT 1-6 Scale, £19,797 - £30,467 - depending on qualifications and experience.

Contract Type: Permanent

Job Description

In response to the needs of specific pupils, we are seeking to appoint a Forest School Leader. The core purpose of this role is to facilitate and enable access to learning for the individual pupils. In addition, the successful postholder will provide specific therapeutic support in line with the pupils' Education Health and Care Plan for which full training will be delivered.

You will work with a team of Teachers and Teaching Assistants to equip pupils with life skills that will enable them to thrive as independent, skilled adults who can navigate the multiple demands of the wider world. We are looking for proactive, resilient practitioners with the ability and flexibility to act as a key person for an individual student, delivering specialist and learning support, alongside assisting with the teaching and learning across the full curriculum accessed by each student.

We are developing an excellent reputation for providing student-centred learning and support with the highest level of challenge to ensure our pupils attain the highest standards of personal, social, emotional and academic development. We have 100 pupils currently on roll, all of whom are in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan. If you want to help us deliver bespoke, innovative education tailored to the needs of our unique pupils, then we would love to hear from you.

Job Purpose

The main purpose of the job is to:

- To plan, prepare and deliver a range of Forest School sessions to classes, with support from assistants as appropriate.
- To Assist with the provision of LOtC activities and, through the process of training and involvement, facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of LOtC lessons across the curriculum.
- Under the direction/instruction of Senior Staff, provide general support to pupils and staff, including preparation, routine maintenance of resources/equipment and facilitate student progress academically, socially and personally.

Responsibilities

Support for pupils in accessing learning activities in a variety of settings, including vocational placements and Learning Outside the Classroom, as directed by Teacher/Senior Staff to include:-

- To create and maintain an engaging, fun and supportive environment, demonstrating flexibility in planning and running sessions in response to varying/changing needs of children.
- To assist in the selection, procurement and proper application of a range of specialist outdoor learning equipment, including maintenance of Personal Protective Equipment to a safe working level in accordance with manufacturers guidelines and national standards, and reporting any equipment which needs repair or replacement.
- To undertake clerical tasks associated with student log books or outdoor equipment, for example, record keeping (both manual and computerised), filing, photocopying, message taking, as required.

- Model excellent social and communication skills and relationships. Support and encourage pupils to engage in learning activities, and promote positive behaviour
- Assist with the supervision of pupils during off-site activities, including training placements
- Be knowledgeable of, and comply with Policies and Procedures relating to: Safeguarding; Health & Safety; Security; and Confidentiality – reporting all concerns to the Designated Person/s
- Be aware of, and support difference, and ensure all pupils have equal access to opportunities to learn and develop
- Be an excellent and effective role model for the standards of behaviour expected of pupils
- To support in the development, monitoring and evaluation of EHCPs and related student paperwork linked to academic, social and personal progression
- To carry out any other reasonable duties and responsibilities within the overall function, commensurate with the grading and level of responsibility of the post.

Support for the School to include:

- Contribute to the overall ethos, vision, values and mission of the school and Trust
- Appreciate and support the role of other professionals, and maintain positive working relationships
- Attend relevant meetings as required; participate in training, learning activities, performance development, and maintain record of own professional development

General Duties

- Enabling independence in lifeskills, learning and navigating the social and academic world
- Employing a range of strategies to recognise and reward achievement of self-reliance for pupils
- Using specialist (curricular/learning) skills/training/experience to support pupils
- Assist with the development and implementation of EHCPs and Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- You will be responsible for keeping and updating records and for the marking of pupils' work recording achievement/progress encouraging pupils to interact and work co-operatively with others and engage all pupils in activities
- Undertake activities to assist teachers in the delivery of the curriculum
- Promote and ensure the health, safety and appropriate behaviour of pupils at all times
- Support the teacher by assisting in the production of lesson/work plans, worksheets etc. within an agreed system of supervision
- Liaise with parents/carers as agreed with the teacher
- Provide objective feedback and reports, as required, to the teacher on student achievement, progress and other matters
- Prepare and maintain curriculum equipment/resources as directed by the teacher to meet lesson plans/relevant learning activities
- Operate office equipment in the provision of clerical and administrative support e.g. photocopier
- Provide short term cover for the absence of the teacher
- Support the intimate care and administering medicines to identified individuals within an agreed safeguarding structure.
- The post holder will be expected to work within a Trauma Informed framework, using attachment friendly strategies to connect and build relationships with individual and groups of pupils.
- Ensuring maintenance of a clean, safe, and orderly working environment
- Timely and accurate preparation of routine equipment, resources, materials, as instructed, ensuring quality/safety
- Undertake record keeping as directed
- Monitoring and arranging orderly and secure storage of learning resources

Skills & Job Knowledge

Essential

- Personal experience of a range of LOTC activities such as canoeing, climbing, hill walking etc.
- Ability to plan and deliver environmental education-based activities to a wide age range of children
- Experience of supporting young people with SEMH needs, including but not limited to social, emotional and mental health, speech, language and communication needs

Desirable

- Experience of supporting with the supervision of young people during off-site activities
- Experience of managing groups during Outdoor Adventurous Activities
- Evidence of supporting the writing and mentoring of IEPs and Pastoral Support Plans
- Evidence of involvement in extracurricular activities
- Evidence of supporting in developing/delivering differentiated programmes of work
- Knowledge of SEN and statutory assessment procedures, and the SEN Code of Practice
- Experience of working with young people who suffer from social communication and mental health complications

Skills

Essential

- Understanding of how children and young people learn in a practical context
- The ability to carry out risk management procedures in an outdoor context
- Can organise own workload and that of support staff
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work within school community teams, and wider community teams
- Ability to produce clear and accurate reports
- Ability to follow instructions, and to use initiative to work with young people in a variety of settings, in and outside of the school e.g, including but not limited to after school clubs, Food & Nutrition, P.E./Outdoor Education, and Vocational placements
- Ability to work within corporate policies
- Awareness of Equal Opportunities and Health & Safety, Child Protection Procedures and Safeguarding & Welfare
- Ability to maintain good discipline and challenge negative behaviour
- Support in the development of Individual Learning Plans and Five Point Scales

Desirable

- Ability to anticipate likely actions and outcomes of students in outdoor activities and react accordingly (Dynamic Risk Assessment)
- Experience of using Evolve
- Evidence of communicating & cooperating with a range of Children's and Young People's Services
- Training and experience of communication strategies, assessment of young people's needs and successful working with families.
- Keyboarding skills required to support the use of ICT in learning activities. Post holder may be required to use specialist equipment/resources and aids to support individual students.

Qualifications

Essential

- GCSE English and Maths (5-9/A*-C) or Adult Literacy & Numeracy Level 2 equivalent

Desirable

- Forest School Level 3 Certification
- Experience of supporting with the supervision of young people during off-site activities
- Other Outdoor specific NGB award(s)
- Two-day NGB Specific Emergency First Aid
- Teaching assistant related qualification
- Youth work related qualification
- Other equivalent qualification relevant to children/young people

Physical Requirements

Essential

- Ability and willingness to work outside in sometimes cold, wet and uncomfortable conditions all day, and possibly overnight
- Participate in off-site and in-house extra-curricular programmes

Desirable

- Mini-bus driving certificate
- Ability to visit and provide support in a variety of setting including, but not limited to all TFT settings, in-home support and community-based learning.
- Full driving licence

Professional Expectations:

- Contribute to the overall ethos/work/aims of the school
- Appreciate and support the role of other professionals, and maintain positive working relationships
- Attend relevant meetings as required
- Participate in training, learning activities, performance development, and maintain record of own professional development
- Undertake other duties appropriate to the grade of the post and as required by the student, in line with their Education, Health and Care Plan. Act at all times in accordance with appropriate legislation and regulations, codes of practice, the provisions of the Trust's constitution and its policies and procedures
- Undertake all duties with due regard to the equalities policy and relevant legislation.
- Work within the requirements of the Trust's Health and Safety policy, GDPR performance standards, safe systems of work and procedures

Personal Qualities

- Patience, acceptance, curiosity, and empathy with and for the children
- Team player
- Punctuality and reliability is essential
- Resilience, energy, and a solution focussed attitude
- Confidentiality
- A strong work ethic will need to be demonstrated

Our Schools

Alongside Courtlands School, Transforming Futures Trust is made up of two more academies based in the South West of England. All our academies provide for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).



ACE Tiverton is a new specialist secondary school, educating pupils with ASC and linked social, emotional and mental health needs. Our learning family is built upon strong, trusting relationships, a deep sense of belonging and high aspirations for our pupils in every area of their lives. We challenge everyone in our school team to embrace learning, take risks and be the very best they can be.



ACE Schools, based over three localities, is an alternative provision academy based across Cornwall, Plymouth, and Devon. We support up to 500 pupils each year ranging from Year 1 to Year 11. Pupils that we work with often have complex needs and don't currently attend mainstream or special schools' settings. Our aspiration for all pupils is that we can support them to return to a specialist or mainstream settings and our focus is providing our young people with the skills necessary to make this transition successful.



What we are learning today

SENSORY AREA

Harley

Working With Us



Transforming Futures Trust is a great place to work - across our schools we have over 300 talented members of staff, in a variety of teaching and support roles. Our alternative provision and special school academies are nurturing, inclusive communities which combine creative and engaging learning opportunities with a culture of respect.

The Trust attracts people who are up to the challenge of working in our innovative and exciting environment to improve outcomes for children and young people. The rewards are seeing the difference we make every day and being part of a caring and supportive team.

As a large alternative provision that is part of a Trust we can offer you as future employee many exciting benefits:

SCHOOL DAY

The school day for pupils runs from 9.00am – 3.10pm

HEALTH ASSURED

Health Assured provide our employees with support to enable you and your immediate family the best in life. Their 24/7 confidential support service can be used for a variety of issues including;

- Legal information
- Housing concerns
- Family issues
- Financial information

CPD

All members of staff have CPD sessions that take place on a Tuesday and Wednesday from 3.30pm – 4.30pm.

INDUCTION AND QUALIFICATIONS

When you join us, you will be given an induction to our school and provided with Safety Intervention (physical intervention training) as part of this induction. This induction will continue with a comprehensive package which includes, trauma informed practice and in-depth safeguarding training.

DELT SHARED SERVICES

Delt provide management and assistance in IT, HR, Finance and Estates functions for Transforming Futures Trust. Staff within these teams may work for Delt but they support Transforming Futures Trust solely.