



FERNHILL
SCHOOL

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RECRUITMENT PACK



Proud to be part of the

GREENSHAW
LEARNING TRUST

Fernhill School

Sutton

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Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in the role of Headteacher at Fernhill School.

Fernhill School is a new free special school in Sutton that will open on 1 September 2027. The school is located in Rosehill Park in Sutton and will provide 96 places for students aged 11 - 19. It has been specifically designed for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan who have a diagnosis of autism, whose primary need is autism and who have associated cognition and learning needs and social and communication needs. The school will provide a high standard of personalised special education for pupils, fostering a strong sense of belonging and agency. With access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum, pupils will be equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to prepare them for their best possible next steps into adulthood as active, independent and engaged members of their wider community.

Building is now well underway, and we are looking to appoint a headteacher from January 2027 to set, drive and implement the vision for the school.

Fernhill School is part of the Greenshaw Learning Trust, a 'family' of like-minded schools, that collaborate to provide mutual support, share their good practice and learn from each other, whilst retaining and developing our own distinctive character.

The Trust is a vibrant and forward-thinking community of teachers, support staff and learners committed to educating the 'whole child' to enable the best possible outcomes and experiences for pupils. We create safe, calm and purposeful environments to support all pupils to fully engage and benefit from the range of educational opportunities. Our amazing team of teachers and support staff themselves demonstrate and encourage a lifelong love of learning, both within and beyond our curriculum.

As one of the highest performing multi-academy trusts in the country, we currently have schools across South London, Berkshire, Surrey, Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire, and Plymouth. We are continuing to grow and have further schools joining us on a regular basis. The opening of a new special school presents a defining opportunity for Greenshaw Learning Trust to meet its commitment to support all children within the communities it serves to achieve their best outcomes and access the best possible educational opportunities. The headteacher of Fernhill School will have the full support of the Trust Shared Services team.

We strive to be an inclusive and diverse employer and we encourage applications from underrepresented demographics. We recognise the need to achieve a good work-life balance and encourage discussions regarding flexible working across our schools and Shared Service teams. We aim to create the conditions under which our colleagues are able to thrive and to deliver exceptional work for the young people and communities which we serve. To get a feel of life at Greenshaw Learning Trust, please download our 'Why you should work for GLT' recruitment brochure on our jobs portal.

Greenshaw Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, therefore this appointment will be subject to vetting, including an enhanced DBS disclosure.

Please do not hesitate to contact us to seek further information. We would also welcome visits in person and will be able to arrange these at Greenshaw High School with the opportunity to walk around the site of the new school on Friday 6th March or Monday 9th March 2026. Please contact Caroline Grimes cgrimes@greenshawlearningtrust.co.uk to arrange a time to speak and/or a visit. We very much look forward to receiving applications from candidates whose personal qualities, values and experiences support and reflect ours.

Yours sincerely



Amelie Thompson

Assistant Director of Education – SEND and Specialist Provision GLT

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

All children are entitled to equitable access to a broad curriculum and to a holistic approach to their education for their personal, social and intellectual development and every opportunity to maximise their potential.

This is what Fernhill School will deliver for 96 pupils. It will open September 2027.

Fernhill School will cater for 11 – 19 year old autistic pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan with associated cognition and learning needs and social and communication needs. The curriculum will be developed to focus on providing rich learning experiences and preparation for adulthood from the day of their arrival in Year 7 and throughout their school journey.

We have been fully involved in the design process of the new building, maximising educational opportunities through the design. The inclusive design has been viewed through the lens of accessibility and entitlement throughout:

- pupils' entitlement to specialist and appropriate subject-specific teaching areas are reflected in the specialist art, science, food technology and media spaces.
- the building has been designed to reflect their changing age, interest and social dynamics as they journey through the school from pre-teen to young adult; as well as spaces that enable engagement in physical development, sport, enrichment activities and social inclusion.
- spaces to access therapeutic support from Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Mental Health Support and other allied services as well as design to support the adoption of transdisciplinary approaches so therapeutic support enhances their lived experience of the curriculum.
- Spaces that can be opened up to the community building connection and agency for pupils, for example a café space to enable family partnership working or entrepreneurship.

This is a unique opportunity to set, drive and implement the vision for Fernhill School.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

CONTRACT

Permanent

SALARY

Salary calculated in line with the Headteacher Group 5 Leadership pay scale (Outer London), L20 - L26 (£86,764 - £99,840). A five point pay scale will be agreed within this range depending on the successful candidate.

HOURS OF WORK

32.5 hours per week, full time

PLACE OF WORK

Fernhill School, Thomas Hatch Way, Sutton, Surrey.

PENSION SCHEME

- Under the Social Security Act 1986 the post holder has the right to make their own pension arrangements. They may choose to contribute to the Teachers' Pension Scheme or a Personal Pension Scheme.
- GLT will recognise continuous local government service for redundancy purposes in line with the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government, etc) (Modification) Order 1999.

HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT

Subject to Working Time provisions of the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document your holidays coincide with periods of school closure

PROBATION PERIOD

New employees are required to complete a six-month probationary period.

STATUTORY CHECKS

All employment offers are made subject to checks in line with Government guidance (some of which are dependent upon the role/individual). These include: online checks, evidence of identity and right to work in the UK, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check, overseas criminal record check if the successful candidate has worked or resided overseas in the last five years, confirmation of a satisfactory medical report, satisfactory references, evidence of qualifications, DfE teaching/management barred list check.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post:	Headteacher
Responsible to:	Assistant Director of Education – SEND and Specialist Provision
Responsible for:	Senior Leadership Team

ROLE OVERVIEW

The Headteacher is responsible for managing the daily operation of the school, the supervision of all students and staff, and the school premises. They provide direction and leadership and are accountable for the financial and educational performance of the school.

Greenshaw Learning Trust Headteachers work together as a leadership team, all aiming for the best for every student. An Assistant Director of Education will offer support and guidance, and Headteachers are expected to help lead the Trust, improving professional development for everyone. This is achieved through a supportive environment built on trust, open communication, and shared responsibility for success. The Trust has a set of principles that guide this collaborative approach.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- demonstrate a passion for education and a desire to improve the life chances of all students;
- demonstrate an understanding of the distinctive characteristics of a special school for pupils with autism and associated cognition and learning needs and social and communication needs and how this informs the organisation of the school environment and curriculum
- have the ability to build a culture of continuous learning and development throughout the school community;
- have the ability to adapt rapidly to the challenge of building and growing a new school to achieve all round excellence in teaching and learning;
- assess their approach and style and challenge themselves to think differently about how to best align their leadership to the needs of the school;
- have the ability to empower their staff to trust in their vision;
- maintain and develop the school's ethos of diversity, inclusivity and equality of opportunity; and
- have successful experience as a senior leader with a proven track record of success.
- be part of the leadership of the Greenshaw Learning Trust, working collaboratively with other Headteachers and members of the GLT Shared Service to deliver excellence across all GLT Schools.

LEAD STRATEGICALLY

- Develop the strategic vision for the school, ensuring that it is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted on effectively by all.
- Ensure a positive ethos of challenge and support to maximise the impact on students outcomes, experiences and next steps and promote the development of staff.
- Ensure that planning takes account of the vision and policies of the Greenshaw Learning Trust, the diversity of the school and its wider community and the values of openness, inclusivity and equality of opportunity.
- Develop effective relationships and communications with parents, allied services and the local community that underpin a professional learning community that enables everyone in the school to achieve.
- Create an inspiring professional environment consistent with the values and aspirations of the school and the Greenshaw Learning Trust.
- Work with, and in support of staff across the wider Trust and realising the benefits of school-to-school collaboration and the wider Trust.

LEAD THE SCHOOL

- Ensure that quality of learning is at the centre of the organisation and management of the school.
- Ensure that the school's systems, organisation and processes are well considered, efficient, fit for purpose and uphold the Greenshaw Learning Trust principles of transparency, integrity and probity.
- Develop and propose the school's annual budget consistent with the school's priorities and in line with the policies and decisions of the Greenshaw Learning Trust.
- Monitor and review the use of premises and resources to ensure they contribute effectively to providing an efficient and safe learning environment consistent with the values of the school and the Greenshaw Learning Trust and propose priorities for expenditure.
- Produce, propose and implement agreed, evidence-based plans for the development of the school and its facilities in the light of changing requirements and priorities.
- Ensure that systems and styles of communication within the school are effective and appropriate.
- Use a process of self-review to set targets for personal development and to manage their own work-life balance.

LEAD TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Ensure that the school's curriculum is broad, balanced, diverse, flexible and offers opportunities for all students to be successful and engaged.
- Set appropriate and challenging curriculum targets for all students that inform and are informed by students' EHCP outcomes.
- Maintain and develop an effective system for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and for improving practice, drawing on relevant research evidence and robust data analysis.

- Contribute to the wider teaching and learning developments across the Greenshaw Learning Trust.
- Create the conditions for creative, responsive and effective approaches to teaching and learning that enable students to become effective, enthusiastic and independent learners.
- Maintain and develop an effective assessment, recording and reporting system that informs appropriate and aspirational curriculum design and celebrates all forms of student achievement and progress.
- Promote a culture that encourages every student to develop their confidence and positively engage in and feel part of the school and the wider community.
- Maintain and develop strategies to enable high standards of behaviour and attendance.
- Provide a safe, calm and purposeful environment for all students and staff, focused on safeguarding students and supporting pupils' engagement in school and the wider community.

LEAD STAFF

- Proactively develop among all school staff the effective professional relationships, good order and high morale and understanding of accountability that lead to the best possible student outcomes and experiences.
- Create an environment that encourages ideas and contributions from staff and values the achievements of individuals and teams.
- Ensure that the systems for induction, performance management and professional development of school staff lead to the maintenance of high standards, to a professional learning culture for all staff and to the identification of the potential for leadership.
- Lead in the recruitment and selection of all school staff.
- Manage the effective deployment of all staff within the school, recognising issues related to work-life balance.
- Manage the work of the school leadership team, promoting autonomy and delegating appropriate tasks and ensuring the support needed for each member's development is in place.
- Identify emerging talents, coaching current and aspiring leaders in a climate where excellence is the standard, leading to clear succession planning.
- Support the work of the wider Trust through the strategic deployment of staff where appropriate.

LEAD IN THE COMMUNITY

- Represent and promote the school and the Greenshaw Learning Trust to its stakeholders and partners.
- Maintain and develop an effective partnership with parents and carers to support students' achievements, personal development and preparation for adulthood.
- Collaborate with other agencies to support a transdisciplinary and holistic approach to each pupil's development, to safeguard the health and happiness of every student, and to promote preparation for adulthood.

SAFEGUARDING

- Be keenly aware of the responsibility for safeguarding children and to help in the application of the Safeguarding Policy within the school.
- Comply with the school's Safeguarding Policy to ensure the welfare of children and young persons.
- Greenshaw Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people therefore this appointment will be subject to vetting, including an enhanced DBS disclosure.

Greenshaw Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The duties and responsibilities in this job description are not restrictive and you may be required to undertake any other duties that may be required from time to time. Any such duties should not however substantially change the general character of the post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The successful candidate will meet the following person specification. Please note that the listed criteria will form the basis of the selection process. Applicants should address all elements of the Person Specification, demonstrating experience and where appropriate citing supporting examples, within their application.

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications and training		
Degree.	x	
Qualified Teacher Status.	x	
Higher qualification in education and/or management		x
Achieved NPQH		x
Skills and experience		
Successful leadership at Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher level in a special school or highly inclusive setting	x	
Developing and implementing effective strategies for assessment and curriculum design to support students with complex SEND to make strong progress against agreed aspirational outcomes from their starting points	x	
Developing and implementing strategies for effective transdisciplinary working with allied services to improve student outcomes and experiences	x	
School development planning and evaluation	x	
Effective planning to positively manage risk for pupils with complex SEND so as to maximise their access to educational experiences and opportunities	x	
Using evidence, including collaboration from other leaders locally and nationally to inform strategic planning	x	
Resource and financial management, monitoring and evaluation	x	
Management of non-teaching staff	x	
Change management		x
Managing a new building / build project		x
Personal attributes		
Provide strategic and creative leadership to maintain and develop a school vision with quality learning for all at its centre	x	

Be aspirational for all learners and understand how this translates into a special school context for children with complex special educational needs	x	
Work in partnership with all operational services to secure a safe, calm and enabling environment for all learners	x	
Work in partnership with the Governing Body and the wider Trust in taking the school forward	x	
Lead by example to inspire, motivate, influence and empower staff and students	x	
Through personal commitment, maintain and develop the GLT ethos of diversity, inclusivity and equality of opportunity	x	
Set priorities and agree and achieve ambitious goals and targets	x	
Work collaboratively with others, delegating appropriately	x	
Create an environment in which staff accept their responsibility for students' learning outcomes and experiences	x	
Seek and act on feedback from others, including work colleagues and governors	x	
Build and maintain effective relationships and communicate appropriately with governors, staff, pupils, families and allied services	x	
Develop, maintain and extend appropriate partnerships with the local council, other schools, children's services, parents and the local community	x	
Demonstrate emotional resilience, empathy and flexibility when dealing with challenge	x	
Committed to the safeguarding of children	x	
Professional Knowledge and Understanding		
Current educational issues, including national policies, priorities and legislation	x	
A deep understanding of effective pedagogy and strategies for teaching pupils with autism and associated cognition and learning needs and social and communication needs	x	
A deep understanding of and commitment to proactive strategies to support pupils with autism and associated learning cognition and learning needs and social and communication needs	x	
A deep understanding of the specific characteristics of leading a special school for pupils with autism and associated learning cognition and learning needs and social and communication needs	x	
A deep understanding of the role of non-teaching staff in securing a safe, calm and enabling environment for pupils with autism and associated learning cognition and learning needs and social and communication needs	x	
Principles and practice of educational inclusion, diversity and access	x	

Developing choice and flexibility to meet the learning needs of every pupil	x	
Managing staff, including recruitment and selection and professional development	x	
Quality assurance systems, including school review, self-evaluation and performance management	x	
Legal issues relating to managing a school including Child Protection Procedures, Equal Opportunities, Race Relations, Disability, Human Rights, Employment and Health and Safety legislation	x	

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

APPLICATION

To apply for a vacancy, please register for an online account and complete the online application form on the GLT website. In the application form you should demonstrate how you meet the requirements set out in the person specification. Include specific examples which support your application. You will have the opportunity to upload additional documents in support of your application if required.

Please ensure you enter your correct email address when registering for your online account. This is the email address we will use to contact you about your application.

Applications must be received no later than 11.59pm on **Wednesday 11th March 2026**. Applications received after this date will not be considered. We reserve the right to interview candidates as applications are received and close the advert prior to the closing date should an appointment be made.

INTERVIEW PROCESS

Interviews will be held on **Monday 23rd March** and **Tuesday 24th March (for candidates taken through to the final round)**. Shortlisted applicants will be invited by email to attend an interview by **Tuesday 17th March 2026**. References may be taken up after shortlisting. Please indicate on your application form if you are happy for us to do so. As part of your interview, you may be asked to undertake a practical test related to the knowledge and abilities in the person specification.

TAKING UP POST

The successful applicant will take up the post on 1st January 2027



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