



**Rivertree
Free School**

Dream • Discover • Develop

Headteacher - Information Pack



**Bedford Inclusive Learning
and Training Trust**

Achieving • Believing • Collaborating



**Greys
Education
Centre**

Aspirational • Collaborating



**Grange
Academy**

Belong • Believe • Achieve



**St John's
School**

Achieving Together



**Rivertree
Free School**

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Message from the BILTT CEO

Thank you for your interest in the Headteacher position at Rivertree Free School. This is a significant and exciting appointment for both the school and the wider BILTT community. Rivertree has already established itself as a nurturing, ambitious and specialist environment where pupils with SEND are supported to flourish. We are now looking for a leader who can build on these strong foundations and guide the school confidently into its next stage of development. At BILTT, our purpose is clear: to provide exceptional education for children and young people with SEND, ensuring they are valued, understood and empowered to

achieve their very best. Rivertree embodies this purpose. The school has a dedicated and skilled staff team, a supportive community, and a growing reputation for high-quality provision. The next phase is about deepening that impact, strengthening the curriculum, developing leadership capacity, and ensuring that every pupil experiences a rich, personalised education.

We are seeking a Headteacher who shares our moral purpose and who brings both strategic clarity and compassionate leadership. Someone who understands the complexity and joy of working in a specialist setting, who can inspire confidence, and who will champion the needs of our pupils with unwavering commitment. You will be well supported by the Trust, with access to a strong network of leaders, professional development and collaborative opportunities across our schools.

If you are driven by the belief that every child deserves the highest quality education, and you are ready to lead Rivertree into its next chapter, we would be delighted to receive your application. I warmly encourage you to visit the school and meet the team, you will feel the spirit of Rivertree the moment you walk through the door. We look forward to welcoming a leader who will help shape the future of this remarkable school.

Catherine Assink
BILTT CEO



Message from the Chair of Governors

Thank you for your interest in the role of Headteacher at Rivertree Free School. On behalf of the Governing Body, I am delighted to welcome prospective candidates to learn more about our school and the exciting opportunity this role presents.

Rivertree is a vibrant, nurturing and ambitious school that places pupils with SEND at the centre of everything we do. Our Governors are immensely proud of the progress the school has made so far, and we are committed to supporting its continued development as it moves into the next stage of its journey. We are now seeking a Headteacher who can build on our strong foundations, strengthen our specialist curriculum, and lead our dedicated staff team with clarity, compassion and ambition.

As a Governing Body, we are highly engaged, supportive and committed to ensuring that Rivertree provides the very best education and care for every pupil. We work closely with BILTT to ensure strong governance, effective challenge and a shared vision for excellence across the Trust.

We are looking for a leader who shares our belief that every child deserves to thrive, who understands the transformative power of specialist education, and who will champion the needs of our pupils with unwavering commitment. If you are a leader with vision, integrity and a passion for SEND, we would be delighted to receive your application.

We warmly encourage you to visit Rivertree to experience our community for yourself. You will be welcomed by pupils and staff who are proud of their school and excited about its future.

Kerrie Gobindram

Chair of Governors, Rivertree Free School

About Rivertree Free School

Rivertree Free School is a specialist SEND provision serving pupils with a range of needs, including communication and interaction, cognition and learning, and SEMH profiles. Our school is built on the belief that every child deserves a personalised, ambitious and nurturing education.



State-of-the-Art Facilities

Our purpose-built environment includes:

- Adaptable classrooms with flexible learning zones
- Sensory rooms and a sensory immersion suite
- Therapeutic and wellbeing spaces
- Breakout areas
- Accessible outdoor learning environments
- Technology-enhanced learning tools

These facilities allow us to deliver a curriculum that is engaging, responsive and rooted in specialist pedagogy.

Our Community

Rivertree is a school where relationships matter. We work closely with families, therapists and external professionals to ensure every pupil receives the support they need to flourish.



Our Next Chapter

We are ready for a leader who will:

- Strengthen our specialist curriculum
- Deepen therapeutic practice
- Build leadership capacity
- Raise expectations and outcomes
- Enhance our role within BILTT and the wider SEND community

Our Curriculum and SEND Approach

Our curriculum is meaningful, ambitious and personalised. It is designed around pupils' EHCP targets and aims to develop communication, independence, confidence and emotional wellbeing.

Curriculum Intent

We aim to:

- Build independence and life skills
- Develop communication and social understanding
- Provide rich, engaging learning experiences
- Prepare pupils for adulthood
- Celebrate individual strengths

Teaching and Learning

Our teaching is grounded in:

- Specialist SEND strategies
- Visual supports and structured routines
- Adaptive teaching
- Trauma-informed practice
- Multi-disciplinary collaboration

Assessment

Assessment is personalised, meaningful and designed to capture small, incremental steps of progress.



Therapeutic Integration

We work closely with speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, educational psychologists and SEMH specialists.

Preparing for Adulthood

We focus on independence, communication, functional learning and community engagement from the earliest stages.





B I L T T

**Bedford Inclusive Learning
and Training Trust**

Achieving • Believing • Collaborating



About BILTT

BILTT (Bedford Inclusive Learning and Training Trust) is a specialist Multi-Academy Trust dedicated to providing exceptional education for children and young people with SEND. Our schools serve pupils with a wide range of needs, including communication and interaction, cognition and learning, SEMH, and complex profiles requiring personalised, therapeutic and highly adaptive approaches.

Across the Trust, our purpose is clear: to ensure every pupil is valued, understood and empowered to achieve their very best.

Our Vision

We believe in inclusive, ambitious and compassionate education. We are committed to ensuring that every pupil receives a curriculum that is meaningful, personalised and designed to develop independence, confidence and lifelong skills.

Our Values

- Child-centred practice – pupils' needs and aspirations guide every decision.
- Ambition for all – high expectations and high-quality teaching for every learner.
- Collaboration – working together across schools, families and professionals.
- Integrity – doing what is right, not what is easy.
- Continuous improvement – learning, reflecting and striving for excellence.



Why Work for BILTT

Joining BILTT means becoming part of a SEND Trust that is deeply committed to its staff, its pupils and its values. We believe that exceptional education is only possible when the people delivering it feel supported, developed and valued.



A Strong Ethos and Purpose

You will be part of a Trust that is unapologetically child-centred, with a clear commitment to improving life chances for pupils with SEND.



A Supportive, Collaborative Culture

BILTT schools work closely together, sharing practice, resources and expertise. Leaders benefit from:

- Peer support
- Cross-school projects
- Shared problem-solving
- A culture of openness and trust



Wellbeing at the Heart

We recognise the demands of working in SEND and prioritise staff wellbeing through:

- Supportive leadership
- Manageable systems
- Access to wellbeing resources
- A culture that values balance and humanity



Professional Growth and Development

We invest heavily in staff development, offering:

- Specialist SEND training
- Leadership development pathways
- Coaching and mentoring
- Opportunities to collaborate across schools
- Access to Trust-wide networks and expertise



Innovation and Autonomy

We encourage creativity, evidence-informed practice and new ideas. As a Headteacher, you will have the autonomy to shape your school while being supported by the CEO and a strong central team.



Making a Real Difference

Every day, you will see the impact of your work on pupils' confidence, independence and happiness. Few roles are as rewarding.



As Headteacher, you will:

- Provide strategic leadership rooted in moral purpose
- Strengthen our specialist SEND curriculum
- Drive high-quality teaching and learning
- Build leadership capacity
- Ensure exceptional safeguarding and wellbeing
- Work collaboratively across BILTT
- Champion the needs of pupils with SEND

Job Description

Main Duties and Responsibilities

- Lead Rivertree Free School into its next phase of growth, strengthening its identity as a high-quality specialist provision for pupils with SEND.
- Serve as the lead professional and a positive role model within the Rivertree community, embodying BILTT's values and ambitions.
- Embed and continually refine a clear, ambitious vision for Rivertree that places pupils with SEND at the centre of all decision-making.
- Drive exceptional outcomes for all pupils through uncompromising ambition, high expectations and a deep understanding of specialist provision.
- Lead within a strategic framework that ensures Rivertree remains effective, self-evaluating, self-improving and outward-facing.
- Model the highest standards of professional conduct and practice for all staff.
- Secure ongoing improvement across all aspects of the school, with a particular focus on the quality, coherence and impact of the SEND curriculum.
- Develop senior and middle leaders into confident, expert practitioners in SEND education and leadership.
- Champion collaboration across BILTT and beyond, sharing specialist expertise and contributing to the wider development of SEND practice.

Qualities and Knowledge

- Demonstrate a strong moral purpose rooted in improving life chances for pupils with SEND, ensuring Rivertree provides a dynamic, personalised and aspirational education.
- Model optimism, emotional intelligence and positive relationships with pupils, families, staff, professionals and the wider community.
- Lead with integrity, creativity, resilience and clarity, drawing on your own expertise and that of others to build a highly skilled specialist workforce.
- Maintain a deep, current understanding of SEND education, national policy, specialist pedagogy and the evolving landscape of special schools.

- Operate with political and financial astuteness, translating BILTT and national policy into meaningful practice within a specialist setting.
- Communicate a compelling vision for Rivertree and the Trust, inspiring staff and pupils to excel.
- Demonstrate experience in leading change, school improvement and curriculum development — particularly within SEND contexts.

Pupils and Staff

- Set ambitious standards for all pupils, ensuring barriers to learning are removed and equality of opportunity is embedded throughout the school.
- Secure excellent teaching and learning through a deep understanding of how pupils with SEND learn, and of the specialist strategies, therapies and curriculum design that enable them to thrive.
- Lead the continued development of a rich, personalised SEND curriculum that is meaningful, sequenced and responsive to pupils' needs.
- Promote an open, collaborative culture where classrooms are shared learning spaces and best practice is continuously developed.
- Create an environment where all staff feel valued, motivated and supported to develop their specialist knowledge and skills.
- Identify and nurture emerging talent, coaching aspiring leaders and ensuring strong succession planning across the school.
- Hold all staff to account for their professional conduct, practice and impact on pupil outcomes.
- Monitor, evaluate and continually improve the quality of teaching, ensuring that assessment, progress and provision are robust and meaningful for pupils with SEND.
- Ensure that challenging, personalised targets are set for pupils and that whole-school achievement continues to rise.

Systems and Processes

- Ensure Rivertree's systems, structures and processes remain efficient, transparent and aligned with the needs of a specialist setting.
- Provide a safe, calm and well-ordered environment that prioritises safeguarding, emotional wellbeing and the holistic development of pupils with SEND.
- Implement rigorous and fair performance management systems that support staff development, address underperformance and celebrate excellence.
- Work proactively with Governors, ensuring they are well-informed, confident in their role and able to provide effective challenge and support.
- Lead strategic, curriculum-led financial planning to ensure resources, staffing and specialist equipment are deployed effectively and sustainably.
- Distribute leadership across the organisation, building strong teams with clear responsibilities and shared accountability.

The Self-improving School System

- Position Rivertree as an outward-facing school that collaborates with other BILT schools, local partners and national SEND networks to champion best practice.
- Build strong relationships with external professionals and agencies to improve academic, social and therapeutic outcomes for pupils.
- Challenge outdated or ineffective practice, using research and evidence to drive innovation and excellence in SEND provision.
- Shape the quality of teaching through high-quality professional development, coaching and specialist training.
- Model innovative approaches to leadership, governance and service improvement, embracing internal and external accountability.
- Inspire others — within and beyond the Trust — to recognise the transformative power of education for pupils with SEND.
- Ensure Rivertree remains Ofsted-ready, with a clearly articulated curriculum intent, robust implementation and strong evidence of impact through moderation and accountability systems.

General

- Duties may evolve over time; the postholder is expected to undertake responsibilities relevant to the nature and scope of the Headteacher role.
- Work in accordance with current and future Academy policies, procedures and legislation, supported through induction and ongoing professional development.
- Promote and actively uphold safeguarding responsibilities, ensuring that Rivertree is a safe, vigilant and protective environment for all pupils and staff.

Person Specification

Qualifications & Professional Development

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
- Evidence of sustained professional development, including SEND-specific training.
- NPQH or willingness to undertake.
- Degree or equivalent qualification.

Experience

- Successful senior leadership experience in a school, ideally within a SEND or specialist setting.
- Proven track record of improving outcomes for pupils, including those with complex needs.
- Experience of leading curriculum development, with strong understanding of SEND curriculum design and assessment.
- Experience of managing staff performance, coaching and developing others.
- Experience of working with external agencies, therapists and multi-disciplinary teams.
- Experience of working with Governors/Trustees and contributing to strategic planning.
- Experience of managing budgets and resources effectively.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Deep understanding of SEND pedagogy, specialist strategies and inclusive practice.
- Strong knowledge of safeguarding, statutory SEND frameworks and relevant legislation.
- Understanding of how to use data meaningfully for pupils with SEND.
- Knowledge of effective behaviour support, SEMH approaches and trauma-informed practice.
- Understanding of the role of a Headteacher within a Trust context.
- Awareness of national developments in education and SEND.

Leadership Qualities

- A strong moral purpose centred on improving life chances for pupils with SEND
- Ability to articulate and deliver a clear, ambitious vision
- High levels of emotional intelligence, resilience and integrity
- Ability to inspire confidence, trust and respect across the school community
- Capacity to lead change, challenge underperformance and drive continuous improvement
- Ability to build strong, positive relationships with pupils, families, staff and partners
- Commitment to distributed leadership and developing others

Skills and Abilities

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to analyse complex information and make sound decisions
- Strong organisational and strategic planning skills
- Ability to model outstanding professional conduct
- Ability to create a safe, calm and well-ordered environment
- Ability to lead high-quality professional development
- Ability to work collaboratively within and beyond the Trust

Personal Attributes

- Optimistic, compassionate and child-centred
- Reflective, open-minded and committed to learning
- Courageous in decision-making
- Passionate about inclusion and equity
- Committed to safeguarding and wellbeing for all

Safeguarding

Rivertree Free School and BILTT are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff are expected to share this commitment. The successful candidate will undergo an enhanced DBS check, social media checks in accordance with our safeguarding policies.

Application Process

To apply, please submit:

- A completed application form available via <https://mynewterm.com/jobs/150792/EDV-2026-RFS-99784> together with a supporting statement (maximum 3 pages) outlining:
 - Your vision for leading a specialist SEND school
 - How your experience aligns with the person specification
 - How you would contribute to the next phase of Rivertree's development

Visits to the School

We strongly encourage prospective candidates to visit Rivertree. This is the best way to experience our ethos, meet our pupils and staff, and see our facilities in action.

To schedule an initial discussion and/or to arrange a visit with BILTT's CEO, please contact her PA Chelsie Tear via email - chelsie.tear@bilft.org or call **01234 745064**.

Selection Process

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a two-stage interview process, which may include:

- School tour
- Leadership tasks
- Panel interviews
- Meeting pupils and staff

We will provide full details upon shortlisting.

The deadline for applications is: Sunday 1st March 2026 (Midnight).

Please note, we reserve the right to close the application date early should we receive a sufficient number of suitable candidates for shortlisting to take place, therefore, early applications are encouraged.

Interview Date: TBC

Rivertree Free School Facilities

