

Huckleberries Wild Learning Centre

Learning Support Assistant Job Description (supply cover)

Job title:	Learning Support Assistant (supply cover)
Hourly rate:	from £15.22 to £17.77 depending on experience
Contracted hours:	6.5 hours per day, 4 days per week, term time only (36 weeks). Note: This is initially a temporary contract from 6 January 2025 to 14 February 2025. Job sharing will be considered. After this date the role will become ad-hoc supply cover as required, to cover for staff absences
Contract type:	Business to Business Contract for Services (self-employed)
Reporting to:	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

About Huckleberries

Huckleberries is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), initially established as a Community Interest Company in 2019. Our vision is to transform the lives of children and young people, by valuing their uniqueness, nurturing their curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking, and inspiring a lifelong love of learning and environmental stewardship. We are expanding our current provision to develop **Huckleberries Wild Learning Centre**, which combines:

Our current **Nurture Farm** which helps children experiencing emotional or mental health challenges to recover, flourish, and re-engage with life and learning. It provides short-term, nature-based therapeutic support for children struggling in traditional school environments.

Our (new) **Self-directed Learning Centre** which offers a part time alternative to mainstream education for children struggling to thrive in school, or those who are electively home educated. It provides an alternative to mainstream education, fostering creativity, curiosity, critical thinking, autonomy, and self-directed learning. We provide children and young people 'a place to be me,' freedom to self-direct their learning, pursue their passions and explore real-world challenges.

We currently work with children aged 5-12 years but plan to grow alongside our children

The role

As a Learning Support Assistant, you will work closely with our Learning Guides and volunteer Mentors to nurture the emotional well-being, creativity, curiosity, and autonomy of children who attend the Wild Learning Centre. You will:

- Provide tailored support and pastoral care to children, meeting their individual needs across both our Nurture Farm and Self-directed Learning Centre.
- Be passionate about progressive, self-directed learning and help create a safe, inspiring space for children to thrive and engage.
- Support children through their learning journey, encouraging autonomy, curiosity, and creative exploration.

- Support children through the 'unschooling' process, guiding them to explore their interests, meet learning goals, and collaborate on their ideas and projects.
- Be compassionate and empathetic with a deep respect for children and young people, understanding their behaviour as unmet needs.
- Use the natural environment as your classroom, embracing the therapeutic potential of nature connection.
- Provide pastoral care and ensure children feel safe, supported, and inspired.
- Work across our Nurture Farm and Learning Centre, tailoring support to the individual needs of each child.
- Think creatively and collaborate effectively in a dynamic and growing Charity

This is a unique opportunity to move beyond the constraints of traditional education and embrace a human-centred, relational, and trauma-informed ethos, helping children to thrive and learn on their own terms.

Key responsibilities

Supporting Learners

- Provide therapeutic care for children attending Huckleberries, ensuring their physical and emotional well-being.
- Cultivate within each child the sense that Huckleberries is a safe 'place to be me', where adults and friends can be trusted.
- Provide trauma-informed relational practice, supporting the emotional well-being of learners and staff.
- Help learners plan and execute projects, fostering play, critical thinking, creativity, and a love of learning.
- Provide constructive feedback on learner projects.

Connectedness

- Foster an understanding of self-awareness and interconnectedness between peers, animals, and nature, to cultivate compassion and understanding of the World.
- Use effective behaviour management strategies consistently in line with Huckleberries policy and procedures to ensure a safe and nurturing learning environment for all children
- Facilitate sociocracy through consensual circles to help children understand consensus and develop agency

Community engagement

- Collaborate with families to support the transition to self-directed learning

Safeguarding and safety

- Uphold safeguarding policies, report concerns, and always ensure learners' safety.
- Ensure compliance with health and safety procedures.
- Promote a safe, welcoming environment, including care for animals and resources on site.

Teamwork and development

- Work collaboratively and consensually with colleagues.
- Supervise the session if the Learning Guide is temporarily unavailable

- Reflect on your practices, pursue professional development, share learning and expertise, and participate in team supervision and appraisals
- Keep up to date and contribute to Huckleberries Policies and Procedure

Measures of success

Measure	Evidenced through
Provide quality therapeutic, trauma informed, emotional, and practical learning support and inspiration to children and young people. Work closely with Huckleberries staff, practitioners and mentors to deliver a cohesive, interesting and creative learning opportunity for children and young people that enhances their emotional wellbeing and incorporates and develops their strengths and learning preferences.	Monitored through supervision. Feedback from schools, parents, children and young people. Progress of children and young people as indicated by their termly Boxall Profile report, Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaires (SDQ) (where relevant) and learning portfolios
Help every child to feel safe and secure at Huckleberries, and to meet their goals.	Child Feedback. Positive outcome against SDQs, targets, learning portfolio
Compliance with procedures and reporting requirements	Monitored through supervision and compliance performance

Person Specification/Competencies

Knowledge, experience, skills and attributes needed for the job. Essential competencies will be tested at application (A), interview (I) and probation (P) stage

Requirement	Evaluated
Essential	
Experience working with and/or lived experience of children with emotional/mental health needs	AIP
Learning Support qualification or experience in a school or other setting supporting children in their play or learning	AIP
Passion for self-directed, nature-based outdoor learning	AIP
Understanding of trauma informed approaches and a holistic view of child development	AIP
Curious, creative, collaborative thinker and do-er; Ability to work independently and show initiative	IP
Experience of identifying and managing safeguarding and child protection issues relating to children and young people	AIP
Strong organisational and communication skills, dependable and punctual	AIP
Desirable	
Familiarity with sociocracy, democratic learning or restorative justice	AIP
Neurodivergent/dyslexic thinking skills	IP

Additional Information and Requirements

Relationships	Multi-agency working may be required
Physical & mental demands	The job is physically demanding and requires a good level of fitness and mobility. There is no 'indoors' other than stables, a welfare cabin and firepit shelter and compost loo (we are in the process of buying a yurt). The postholder may be exposed to information about a child's situation and circumstances, which may be distressing, and they will be expected to engage with clinical supervision or other support, to build and maintain resilience and wellbeing.
Confidentiality	It is important to ensure information of a sensitive &/or personal nature is not disclosed to or discussed with inappropriate persons, and all information is held in accordance with GDPR and other legal requirements
EDI	All duties are undertaken in line with our EDI policy
H&S	Promote a health and safety culture, through activities, tool use, behaviour management, rules and procedures
Safeguarding	We are committed to safer recruitment and the safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff to share this commitment. Enhanced DBS checks will be required
IT skills	Competence in use of technology is required, including MS365 and Office applications and cloud storage systems

This job description serves to illustrate the type and scope of what is required for the above post and to provide an indication of the required level of responsibility. It is not a comprehensive or exclusive list and duties may be varied from time to time, they will not however change the general character of the job, or the level of responsibility entailed. This job description may be amended at any time in consultation with the postholder.

Date of last review: 27/11/2024