

Application Pack for:

Head of Year

We will be reviewing applications and conducting interviews on a rolling basis, so early applications are encouraged.



“Staff receive high quality coaching and training. They benefit from and appreciate the considerable support for their well-being and workload. This professional development and support equips members of staff to carry out their work and teach the curriculum increasingly well.”

Ofsted Report, May 2025

Welcome to Thurstable School

Thank you for already taking the time to find out more about us and the position of Head of Year. We fully appreciate that deciding on your next career step is a big decision and we never take it for granted that you are investing your future in the school. In return we will invest in you as a person and colleague not just an employee.

As you can tell from our strapline, growing character is central to our mission and we are ready for our final assessment to be awarded the prestigious Association of Character Education (ACE) Quality Mark. The emphasis on character is embedded throughout the school from our rewards and recognition system, daily interactions with students and a shared common language. Character is taught, caught and sought. This emphasis on moral virtue and character makes the school a lovely place to work and our staff are valued. They are a wonderful team who are committed and passionate about the school and helping our students and each other be the best versions of themselves. We are a kind school with great heart.

A successful and dynamic school, we are 'restless' in a positive way and we take bold and innovative moves to improve the school. As well as being the first school in Essex to introduce Yondr phone pouches (2024) we were the first school in the East of England to be recognised as a Steplab Hub School for the quality of our Instructional Coaching programme (2022). In 2024/5 we re-thought time as a school and changed our school day and term structure to support the well being and learning of staff and students. This has transformed our CPD model so that this is completed during the school day.

If you are forward thinking, creative and want the opportunity to lead change, this is a perfect time to join Thurstable. As our exceptionally positive Ofsted inspection in May 2025 showed, the school is built on the firm foundations of routines from lessons, behaviour to CPL. Traditional in expectations and innovative in practice, we are incredibly excited for the next phase of our journey,

If you can dream big, work hard, be kind and also have a sense of fun, I genuinely believe that you will really enjoy working at Thurstable. Good luck with your application and please do not hesitate to contact Fiona or myself if you have any questions, would like a phone call or want to come and look around for yourself.

Yours sincerely

James Ketley
Headteacher



Our Mission and Values

Aspire

Respect

Endeavour

Our mission is not just to educate minds, but to shape hearts: **building knowledge and growing character**. We live in a world where information is everywhere. But true knowledge — the kind that helps us think critically, solve problems, and contribute meaningfully — is something we build, step by step, with guidance, curiosity, and discipline. A strong academic foundation empowers us to understand the world, ask better questions, and strive for solutions. But knowledge alone isn't enough.

What we choose to do with that knowledge depends on our character — our integrity, empathy, resilience, and respect for others. These qualities define who we are when no one is watching. They shape our decisions, our relationships, and ultimately, our impact on the world. We are a school that focuses on both knowledge and character creating not just successful students, but good people. People who are ready not only to succeed, but to lead with purpose and kindness.

About Us

- We are an 11-16 school with 944 students on roll and are situated in Tiptree, Colchester which is a semi-rural location. Students come from either the village of Tiptree itself or smaller villages in the locality.
- Thurstable School is a SAT (Stand Alone Academy Trust) and the current Headteacher has been in post since September 2020.
- Ofsted inspected the school in May 2025 grading it as good in all areas.
- The school will be redeveloped through the School Rebuilding Programme.
- The prior attainment of students on entry is broadly average.
- 17 % of students are disadvantaged
- 18% of students are on the SEND register
- The school is 92% White-British with only 1% school classed as EAL.



“ The school carefully considers improvements that could enhance pupils’ learning, and how these should be implemented. ”

Ofsted Report, May 2025

Ten Reasons To Join Thurstable

1 Disruption Free Classrooms & Centralised Behaviour System

Every minute counts and there is a centralised approach to behaviour centred on a warm/strict philosophy and shared routines across the school. Highly visible senior leaders lead on behaviour and support colleagues to maintain high expectations in classrooms.. All detentions are run by senior leaders so that teachers can spend their time preparing great lessons.

2 Sensible Approach To Workload

We recognise the importance of workload and do not use the traditional marking of classwork. Instead, we have a feedback policy based on live marking in the lesson and whole class feedback. We promote the use of online platforms such as Sparx Maths and Reader for homework which is marked and the results of this are used by class teachers to inform their curriculum planning. There are no full written reports and our milestone assessments are marked automatically using Gradecam technology.

3 Evidence Informed Teaching - No FADS

Teaching is kept simple at Thurstable and codified through our Habits of Excellence framework. The teacher is the expert in the room and our classrooms are characterised by clear routines and practice inspired by Lemov's Teach Like A Champion. Evidence informed teaching strategies are practiced and refined through our high quality coaching programme.

4 Established Coaching Programme

Like Dylan Wiliam, we believe 'every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough, but because they can be even better'. That's why our teachers receive regular coaching sessions so that they can reflect on and refine their practice. We do not carry out formal, graded lesson observations as we believe our focus should be on helping teachers improve, rather than prove their practice.

5 CPD In The School Day - Curriculum Development Focus

We believe that the traditional model of CPD after school that does not finish until the late afternoon is ineffective. Staff are thinking about their next day's lessons and are often tired after a full day of teaching. Therefore we have changed our school day so that on a Friday the school finishes at 14.05 for students and there is then 70 minutes of CPD each week. The majority of this time is given to departments to work on centralised curriculum planning that reduces staff workload.

“ Staff at all levels are determined for all pupils to achieve highly and be fully prepared for adulthood. ”

Ofsted Report, May 2025

“ The school has high expectations of pupils’ behaviour. Pupils understand these and most meet them. ”

Ofsted Report, May 2025

Ten Reasons To Join Thurstable

6 Two Week October Half Term

A two-week October half term is a fantastic benefit for staff, offering a well-earned break during one of the longest stretches of the school year. It provides valuable time to recharge ensuring staff return refreshed and motivated. We believe that happy, well-rested staff leads to better student learning, which is why we prioritise wellbeing with an extended autumn break.

7 First Yondr Phone Pouch School in Essex

The Yondr phone pouch system is a game-changer for teachers, creating a focused, distraction-free classroom where students are fully present and engaged. By securely locking phones away during the school day, Yondr helps improve behaviour, boost attention spans, and encourage genuine social interaction. Our unique genuinely phone free school means that teachers can teach without interruptions and students can thrive. It's just one of the ways we prioritise respect, focus, and meaningful learning.

8 No After School Meetings, Enrichment Clubs Instead

There are no after school meetings at Thurstable. Instead we ask teachers to lead an enrichment club for one hour a week on anything that inspires them. We call these clubs our Elective Programme and we run over fifty different clubs from D& and Creative Writing to BSL, Forensic Science, Racquets and our Ivy League Programme. The Elective Programme allows students to see staff in a different context and promotes positive student and staff relationships and our value of respect.

9 We Promote Staff Well-Being

We have re-thought our marking policy, configuration of the school term and day to support staff well-being. There is a dedicated staff well-being group who meet with the Headteacher and HR Manager on a half termly basis. In addition, all strategic Big Moves go through a whole staff consultation process to make sure we get to the right outcome for the school. We value our staff and the Headteacher meets every member of staff once a year for a ‘stay interview’ to get feedback and see how we can support career development. We regularly celebrate staff through our ABCD Awards and half termly free cakes. All staff have access to the Education Access support programme as well as receiving free flu jabs and NHS health checks at the school.

10 A Culture Where Children Smile and say Good Morning

We teach character through our Morning Meeting programme but ultimately we shape character through our daily interactions with students. We catch character through the commendation card that all students carry and celebrate their character in doing the right thing when no one is watching. Wanting our students to live our values and show great character is going beyond behaviour management and makes it such a rewarding place to work as our students and staff model and reciprocate great character in every interaction from the gate to the classroom.

Job Description

Post Title: Head of Year

JOB PURPOSE

To contribute to the development of a strong, effective school with an emphasis on promoting a culture of educational excellence, within a caring and secure environment enriched with the values of discipline, mutual care and respect which extends beyond the school into the wider community.

JOB SUMMARY

- Ensure and deliver effective pastoral support so that individual students and groups of students are supported to actively participate in learning and reach their full potential.
- Support the raising of standards in the school by leading and delivering pastoral support to a year group of students; and within that year group by providing support to individual students and their families.
- Be responsible for managing and addressing the needs of students who need help to overcome barriers to learning in order to achieve their full potential.
- Be responsible for supporting the improvement of student punctuality, attendance and behaviour and assist the school's pastoral programme in reducing disruption and raising student achievement and progress.
- Contribute to effective transition from other schools ensuring the student well-being on entry.

KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Enacting our Mission and Values as a School of Character

- Promote the Trust's vision of 'Building Knowledge, Growing Character'
- Champion the Trust's values of 'Aspire, 'Respect' and 'Endeavour';
- Embody our mission and values in all of our interactions with students and colleagues so we are truly a school of character and meet the requirements of an ACE accredited school.

2. Securing Accountability

- Be accountable for the pastoral and academic performance of students within the year group.
- Provide data and contribute to target setting within the year group in line with whole school and individual student targets.
- Analyse student-tracking data, identify underperformance, and contribute to planning appropriate interventions and monitor their impact.

3. Strengthening the Community

- Contribute to stakeholder engagement and communication with parents, carers and families within the year group.
- Work effectively in partnership with external agencies including health services – organise drop-ins, vaccinations, presentations to year groups and the whole school as needed.
- Secure learning opportunities within the year group to promote community cohesion.
- Arrange and promote activities within the year group e.g. identify links to year charities and co-ordinate fund-raising activities.

- Contribute to strategies for developing student leadership and student voice within the year group and the school.
- Be a professional advocate for the school in all contexts.

4. Leading the Year Team

- Lead and co-ordinate the work of a year team including keeping the SLT informed of important information on individual students or year team issues/developments.
- Contribute to developing the year group identity, creating relationships within, across and outside the school.
- Plan, run and keep minutes of year team meetings – agenda items to include discussion of each high-risk students and agreeing further action (if needed); sharing performance information relating to attendance, punctuality, behaviour; feedback of issues emerging from quality assurance checks of morning registration; and information about key pastoral events affecting that year group team.
- Monitor and quality assure the Morning Meeting, TLR and PSHE programme for each class in the year group of responsibility at least half termly and provide appropriate feedback to individual tutors.
- Meet half termly with each tutor to review the form's performance and the Morning Meeting and TLR programme.

5. Attendance and Punctuality

- Monitor attendance and punctuality.
- Produce half termly class and year group attendance and punctuality reports
- Make daily follow-up phone calls to parents of absent students who have been identified as at-risk of failing to achieve academically, to challenge absences and encourage early return to school.
- Monitor attendance using weekly and half termly reports (above) – in liaison with the Attendance Team ensure all parents are contacted by phone and/or letter where attendance is below agreed target at the end of subsequent half-terms.
- In liaison with the Attendance Team meet with any parents where attendance is below agreed target at the end of subsequent half-terms. With the Attendance Team, agree an action plan detailing attendance target, monitoring arrangements and actions to be taken if targets are not met, including the use of formal sanctions such as a fixed penalty notice.
- Maintain an up-to-date risk register of high risk students in designated year group i.e. those students whose attendance or punctuality is of concern and those who are at-risk of under-achieving academically where actions taken so far have been ineffective – discuss these in LABS meetings and agree action plan for each. Ensure all information relating to above is recorded electronically using the Google Drive, Arbor or other agreed whole school system.
- Support the timely movement of learners from lesson to lesson through presence on the corridors between each lesson.

6. Student Behaviour

- Monitor the behaviour of students using Arbor or other agreed whole school systems.
- Ensure form tutors, and SLT link receive regular detailed information and reports (according to their level of need and involvement) on all students in the form class and year team.
- Work with SLT to identify all students in the year who may need pastoral input because their behaviour in lessons, around school or outside of school is causing concern (potential high need students).
- Produce detailed action plans for each high-risk behaviour student (those already on report) and those at risk of being high risk (potential) in their year group.
- Meet daily with all students on HOY reports – make sure they have the report each morning and that it is signed by an appropriate staff member at the end of each day.
- Ensure effective communication with the parents – make regular contact with parents to discuss student behaviour for all students on report – meet with parents at the end of each report and agree a plan for monitoring behaviour going forward.
- Undertake regular checks on uniform and equipment to ensure that students adhere to school policies.

7. Student Guidance and Support

- Maintain and review a single risk register of students who are designated as being concerns relating to attendance, punctuality, behaviour and/or achievement, safeguarding
- Meet with each student in the year group once each term to discuss progress, identify any concerns and address queries to ensure personalised support for their welfare and academic development.
- Contribute to comprehensive assessments of students to determine those in need of help.
- Ensure students who are absent due to a prolonged illness, injury or incapacity are provided with adequate resources for learning at home.
- Manage, plan and oversee suitable provision for students in their reintegration to school following a period of exclusion/absence.
- Keep in contact with parents of students in the year group, and in particular, with those needing more careful monitoring relating to attendance and punctuality, behaviour, bullying or medical needs - ensuring positive family support and involvement.
- Take steps to prevent bullying and support victims of bullying – keep records using the Google Drive logs of all bullying incidents and actions taken. Do checks in with all students who have been victims of bullying to ensure there has been no repeated behaviours.
- Where children have medical needs – ensure this is recorded on Arbor and ensure appropriate information is shared with the Year team and subject teachers as needed.
- Meet regularly with the year council – feedback from students about the quality of pastoral programmes, any issues particularly relevant to that year group.
- Work with the year team to ensure effective use of rewards and sanctions – keep detailed records using Arbor or other agreed whole school systems.
- Organise, co-ordinate and run termly celebration of achievement assemblies – including the administration and collection of information from subject teachers, the buying and distribution of certificates and prizes; and organising assembly input including (if required) external speakers.

8. Support Teaching and Learning

- Contribute to coaching, mentoring and sharing good practice, within the year group, throughout the school and with partner schools.
- Contribute to individual student records ensuring they have up-to-date details of the curriculum support, input and alternative intervention / support that has been provided using Provision Mapping or other agreed whole school system.
- Support the school's drive for excellent academic results by ensuring students needing intervention receive support, encouragement and guidance as appropriate and necessary to raise individual student achievement and aspirations.

9. Other Responsibilities

- Comply with policies relating to child protection, health and safety, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to a nominated person.
- Help organise, and attend, parents' evenings for designated year team and support the running of open evenings, induction days and events for students and parents
- Support the delivery of enrichment activities and trips including accompanying and supervising students as needed.
- Ensure effective communication of all pastoral information and events including ensuring all events, visitors or trips (and all classes, teachers affected) are included in briefing notes.
- Contribute to the wider life of the school.
- Carry out any such duties as may be reasonably required by the school.

10. Records Management

- All staff who create, receive, and use records in the course of their job are responsible for ensuring that records are managed appropriately. It is therefore likely that this post-holder will have responsibility for record-keeping as part of the role. Employees are required to be conversant with the school's policies and procedures on records management.

Person Specification



Building Knowledge, Growing Character

“ At the heart of everything we do lies our core values of aspire, respect and endeavour, values that are lived and not just laminated. ”
Mr Ketley, Headteacher



Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications & Experience		
A* - Cs at GCSE/Equivalent including English and Maths.	✓	
A Level		✓
Degree		✓
Evidence of Continuous Professional Development.	✓	
Experience of Educational Leadership & Management		
Working with young people in an education setting.		✓
Providing pastoral support within an education setting.		✓
Professional Knowledge & Understanding		
Ability to maintain positive relationships with students and other adults.	✓	
Ability to speak in front of large groups of students and small groups of staff.	✓	
Ability to work effectively and sensitively with a range of groups and individuals.	✓	
Ability to prioritise, work quickly and accurately, particularly under pressure and to meet deadlines.	✓	
Ability to work unsupervised, use own initiative and make appropriate decisions.	✓	
Ability to address sensitive matters with a caring approach and appropriate confidentiality.	✓	
Strong verbal and written communication skills.	✓	
Ability to use ICT confidently to communicate, review data and present information to others.	✓	
Personal Qualities		
Commitment to working flexibly before and after school as required to promote the welfare of learners.	✓	
Highly organised, literate and articulate.	✓	
A passionate belief in the school's mission statement.	✓	
A strong belief in the value of education	✓	
Highest levels of professional and personal integrity.	✓	
A strong commitment to the personal, spiritual, social and health development of students	✓	
Personal resilience, persistence and perseverance.	✓	
Willingness to participate in further training and development opportunities	✓	
A strong belief in the value of education in developing character	✓	
A passionate belief in the school's vision of 'Building Knowledge, Growing Character'	✓	
A strong commitment to the school value of Aspire	✓	
A strong commitment to the school value of Respect .	✓	
A strong commitment to the school value of Endeavour'	✓	
Commitment to support the school's agenda for safeguarding and equality and diversity.	✓	



“ True character is doing the right thing when no one is looking ”



Thurstable School
'Building Knowledge, Growing Character'

Aspire | Respect | Endeavour