

Job Title

School Chef and Life Skills Instructor

Location

Options Trent Acres – Brookfield College

Hours

40 Hours per Week | Monday to Friday, 8:00am – 4:00pm

Job Purpose

The School Chef and Life Skills Instructor plays a vital role in supporting the health, wellbeing and development of students by providing high-quality, nutritious meals and meaningful life skills education.

This unique role combines responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school kitchen with the delivery of practical cooking and life skills sessions. The successful candidate will create a welcoming and safe kitchen environment where students can develop confidence, independence and valuable skills for adulthood through hands-on learning experiences.

The postholder will ensure that all food is prepared and served to the highest standards while supporting students to actively participate in food preparation, cooking activities and work-related learning opportunities where appropriate.

Key Responsibilities

Catering and Kitchen Management

- Plan, prepare and serve fresh, balanced and nutritious meals for students, staff and visitors.
- Develop varied and appealing menus that meet nutritional standards and accommodate dietary requirements, allergies and individual needs.
- Prepare specialist meals for students and staff with specific dietary requirements.
- Lead the day-to-day operation of the school kitchen, ensuring consistently high standards of food quality and presentation.
- Manage food purchasing, stock control and ordering processes to ensure efficient use of resources and budget management.

- **Monitor portion control and food quality while reducing waste through effective menu planning and stock rotation.**
- **Check deliveries, process invoices and liaise with suppliers to resolve any discrepancies.**
- **Maintain a clean, safe and organised kitchen environment at all times.**
- **Ensure compliance with Food Hygiene, Food Safety, Health and Safety, COSHH and all relevant legislation and school policies.**

Life Skills and Student Development

- **Plan and deliver engaging cooking, food preparation and life skills sessions for students.**
- **Support students to develop practical cooking skills, food safety awareness and healthy eating habits.**
- **Embed cooking and food preparation activities into the wider curriculum where appropriate.**
- **Encourage students to develop independence, confidence and employability skills through practical learning experiences.**
- **Facilitate opportunities for students to participate in food preparation, kitchen-based activities and work experience opportunities where suitable.**
- **Adapt learning activities to meet the individual needs, abilities and learning styles of students.**
- **Monitor and celebrate student progress, achievements and engagement in life skills activities.**

Teamwork and Communication

- **Work collaboratively with teaching and support staff to ensure the catering service meets the needs of students.**
- **Build positive relationships with students, colleagues, parents and external professionals.**
- **Contribute to creating a positive, inclusive and supportive school environment.**
- **Attend relevant meetings, training and development opportunities as required.**

Person Specification

Essential

- Experience working within a catering, hospitality, school, care or high-volume kitchen environment.
- Strong practical cooking skills and a passion for preparing fresh, nutritious food.
- Knowledge of food hygiene, food safety and safe working practices.
- Ability to plan menus and cater for a wide range of dietary requirements.
- Experience managing stock, ordering processes and food budgets.
- Excellent organisational and time management skills.
- Confidence delivering practical sessions, training or group activities to young people.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work independently while contributing positively as part of a wider team.
- Flexible, reliable and committed to maintaining high standards.

Desirable

- Experience working in a school or educational setting.
- Experience supporting children and young people with additional needs.
- Food Hygiene Certificate (Level 2 or above).
- Previous experience delivering cooking, life skills or vocational learning sessions.
- Understanding of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Safeguarding

Options Trent Acres is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All successful applicants will be subject to appropriate safeguarding and pre-employment checks, including an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references.