



Alternative Provision
Nurturing Growth,
Inspiring Potential

We're hiring!

Position: Alternative Provision, **Catering Support Mentor**

Location: Penrith, Cumbria

Start Date: ASAP

Contract Type: Term Time Only. 38 weeks plus 1 week INSET. Includes 5.6 weeks' holiday, spread across 12 monthly salaries. The working day is from 9:30am to 15:00pm, Monday to Friday.

Salary: FTE - £26,820.56. Pro rata (27.5 hours) £17,097.41.

Closing Date for Applications: Monday 16th March 2026 *

*(Please note that we reserve the right to interview suitable candidates as applications are received and may close the vacancy early if an appointment is made).

About The Role: New Leaf Centre is an alternative education provision centre based in Penrith, Cumbria. Providing holistic support to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) challenges. We are looking to add a **Catering Support Mentor** to our hardworking and committed team. This role is within the pastoral team.

Situated on the outskirts of Penrith overlooking Blencathra, New Leaf Centre is a rewarding place to be. You will be working in a therapeutic, nurturing environment that uses nature and animal assisted projects to help those who struggle to access mainstream education settings. Providing an accessible and nutritious lunch is a key part of our offering. We provide a varied and learner inspired menu each day but also need to flex as required to cater for those who have challenges around food and/or need to feel safe enough to eat outside their home setting.

This is a school hours friendly role and unique opportunity for a suitably experienced home cook or catering professional who has lived experience in a family style setting.

Key Responsibilities

- Responsibility for daily preparation of lunches meeting nutritional, dietary, allergy, and cultural requirements.
- Ensuring safe food hygiene practices and compliance with Food Safety legislation.
- Managing and maintaining kitchen equipment, cleaning schedules, and safe storage of supplies COSHH.
- Management, ordering and logging of stock and costs related to catering and cooking.
- Leading cooking-based sessions for learners one to one or in groups to develop independence and life skills.
- Tracking learner participation, skills development, and progress in cooking activities.
- Working with the bigger team on seasonal projects and initiatives.

Candidate Profile:

The ideal candidate will ideally have previous experience of cooking for up to 20 people with a variety of dietary requirements in a well-equipped but largely domestic kitchen. Working alone to provide lunches, planning and organisation skills are a must but so is flexibility and a calm supportive approach.

You will also enjoy working alongside others in a dynamic and changing environment as every day can be different at the Centre.

The ideal person will be able to act as a positive role model and we seek individuals that can recognise the emotional needs of our learners and are able to respond and create appropriate opportunities to engage. You will be a naturally empathetic and nurturing person who is passionate about supporting young people to achieve their potential.

Qualifications And Experience

Essential

- Experience in menu planning, preparation, and nutrition
- Food Hygiene Qualifications
- 2+ years experience of cooking on a similar scale
- Experience in ordering, stock management and cost control.
- Willingness to flex to meet the changing needs of the learners.
- Ability to engage with learners and deliver life skills sessions.

Desirable

- Experience within a coaching, nurturing or pastoral role.
- Understanding of neurodivergent young people.

Application Process: Interested candidates are invited to submit a CV and a cover letter detailing their suitability for the role. Please email you application to Ben@newleafcentre.co.uk Successful candidates will be invited via email for interview week commencing 16 March 2026.

New Leaf Centre is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. We undertake safeguarding checks on all workers in accordance with DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' this may also include an online search as part of our due diligence on shortlisted applicants. All candidates must undertake or have undertaken a valid enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.