



The **GALLERY TRUST**



A community of special schools

HLTA
Candidate Information
April 2026

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the post of Higher-Level Teaching Assistant at Orion Academy.

Orion Academy currently offers places to 74 students, and the roll of the school will rise steadily over the next two years to cater for 108 students, aged from 10 to 18 years: the teacher roles are advertised due to a planned increase in student numbers for September 2026. Students attend from throughout the county, and transfer from our SEND feeder school, Northern House Academy, and from mainstream primary and secondary schools. The Academy moved into new, state of the art buildings in September 2021. Our facilities offer a wide range of exciting curriculum and vocational opportunities to learners, and a fantastic working environment.

All students who attend Orion Academy have an Education, Health and Care Plan, which describes their special needs and drives their educational provision.

Students are taught through a differentiated and bespoke curriculum designed to enhance their personal and social development and academic achievement. We have a strong intent to ensure our students leave with the personal characteristics to thrive in their communities. Classes are taught in stages, not necessarily age, allowing innovation and creative approaches to teaching and learning. The Academy provides support for our students with social and emotional needs through our Academy Community Learning Team, which consists of youth workers, therapeutic and pastoral workers.

Thank you for your interest in Orion Academy. This is an exciting time to join our school and we look forward to receiving your application.



Jessie Shakespeare
Co. Headteacher



Hannah Shuker
Co. Headteacher

The Gallery Trust is a Multi Academy Trust which is dedicated to improving outcomes for SEND learners in Oxfordshire. The aim of the Trust is to provide outstanding education and support for young people with special needs and disabilities, enabled through:

- Commitment to special education – striving to provide the best specialist learning experience for all students
- Opportunities for all to learn – ensuring that students and staff have access to learning pathways which enhance their lives
- Genuine respect and value – creating relationships which promote trust, confidence and respect within environments which are safe and secure

The Trust is on a continuing journey of expansion, growing from a Multi Academy Trust based on a single academy in 2013, to its position as the largest Special Trust in Oxfordshire.

The schools in the Trust are:

- Bardwell School, Bicester
- Bloxham Grove Academy
- A Free Special School in South Oxfordshire, opening date to be confirmed
- Iffley Academy, Oxford
- Mabel Prichard School, Oxford
- Northern House Academy, Oxford
- Orion Academy, Oxford
- Springfield School, Witney

The Trust's vision is to continue to expand over the next five years, supporting a community of converter academies, free schools and sponsored academies. All member academies have the opportunity to share SEND expertise and to work with peers who share common aims and goals.

The Trust is committed to investment in learning, developing system leadership, working in partnership and through a shared vision, enabling all students to reach their full potential.

HLTA Cover Support to start in May
Supporting & Delivering Learning

Grade 9: £34,434 to £37,280 pro rata per annum

Actual annual salary: £24,442 to £26,463

30 hours a week, term time only + 5 inset days (39 weeks a year)

At Orion Academy we believe our children and young people are unique individuals and as such we have designed our school curriculum with their learning and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs at the heart of all we do.

Our nurturing approach seeks to extend our work out into the community; actively supporting, listening and engaging with our families and carers to deliver the best possible environment for our children and young people, thus enabling them to learn effectively, become active and responsible citizens who are well prepared for life after school.

We are committed to delivering this through:-

Our **nurturing approach** that will provide an environment to thrive –

- Where every child or young person is treated as an individual in a safe and nurturing environment that understands that all students can achieve but will require differentiated approaches based on their individual needs.
- With a school-wide family ethos demonstrating our values of empathy, acceptance and mutual respect, so each member of the school community feels valued and supported.

Our focus on **personal development** is designed to –

- Enable our children and young people to become more socially aware and of their responsibilities with a focus on trust and choice.
- Ensure we support our children and young people to make better decisions, coach them how to regulate frustrations, and reflect on their experiences through our restorative practices.
- Help our children and young people to make sense of the changing world and of the importance of diversity and equality of opportunity.
- Enable them to make informed choices and develop the confidence to be successful in their adult lives through our embedded personal, social and health education programme.

Our focus on **celebration and recognition of success** is designed to –

- Encourage and celebrate each student's talents, skills and attributes.
- Develop the confidence and self-belief of the individual – a culture of 'I can' or 'I can't... yet' is ingrained across our school.
- Provide opportunities for our children and young people to be successful and support them in both developing and promoting their individual resilience as well as celebrating the achievements of others.

Our **ambitious curriculum** offer that is designed to –

- Create the capacity to learn and enjoy learning by broadening our students' horizons and extending learning beyond the classroom.
- Use real-world examples and first-hand experience; develop curiosity and a desire to challenge their understanding and deepen learning.
- Prepare our children and young people for their future through our broad and balanced curriculum, providing them with knowledge, core literacy and numeracy skills and experiences as well as a range of qualification pathways.
- Embed key learning and understanding through careful and thoughtful revisiting and reinforcing, whilst increasing student independence.

Our **personalised provision** that –

- Is responsive to the needs of each student but is uncompromising in expectation. We will be relentless in our support for our children and young people to achieve beyond their expectations.
- Understands that whilst a student's needs are recognized and met, they are not confined by them; we do not define a future based on a child or young person's past and we are unapologetic in our approach in wanting our students to continue to push the boundaries of their potential.

Our commitment to **working in partnerships with our parents and carers** which demonstrates that –

- We believe our children and young people will achieve their best when families and our school work together in a partnership.
- Effective working relationships are characterized by open and honest communication in order to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Our **specialist and expert workforce** who –

- Are passionate and committed to working in special education and will know each student as an individual, recognising their unique talents, skills and interests.
- Have developed strong and positive relationships with our children and young people in order to support them effectively.
- Have expertise, specialist knowledge and an understanding of a child or young person's needs that embraces the most recent and evidence-based research will result in the best possible outcomes for students

- Are committed to working with therapeutic specialists and external agencies to enhance our provision for our students and their families.
- Support children and young people to recognise and value their own learning journey.

The role of the HLTA – Cover Support complements the professional work of teachers by taking responsibility for agreed learning activities under an agreed system of supervision. This may involve planning, preparing and delivering learning activities for individuals/groups, or short term for whole classes and monitoring pupils and assessing, recording and reporting on pupils' achievement, progress and development.

If you share our passion for making a real difference to the lives of children and young people with special needs, this could be the opportunity you are looking for. In return for your contribution to our team, you will work in an environment, which is innovative and well resourced, and in a role which is rewarding and fulfilling. We will provide you with induction and training, and the opportunity to join the Local Government Pension Scheme, one of the largest public sector pension schemes in the UK.

Benefits of working at Orion Academy, part of The Gallery Trust

Career Progression

- Be a key member of a friendly and supportive staff team who are dedicated to achieving the best for every one of our pupils
- Participate in high quality professional development opportunities which are tailored to your needs and to your career aspirations
- Develop your career in The Gallery Trust, an expanding and successful organisation which offers opportunities for progression, secondments and collaborative working with colleagues across our schools

Financial

- Competitive salaries for teaching and support staff based on School Teacher Pay and Conditions Document and the NJC Green Book
- Perkbox membership
- Access to LGPS pension linked to salary life assurance
- Contribution towards glasses and eye tests for DSE use
- Salary sacrifice schemes, including cycle to work

Wellbeing

- 24/7 access to a free Employee Assistance Programme to provide confidential advice and guidance
- Excellent induction processes, and strong line management structures to promote your wellbeing at work

- A culture which is open to employee ideas and encourages open dialogue
- Regular staff surveys to gain feedback on wellbeing and to drive improvements
- The opportunity to join colleagues for social events
- Family friendly policies, which promote your wellbeing
- The opportunity to work in a new, purpose-built school building, which offers an exciting environment in which to teach and learn, located just a short drive from Oxford's ring road
- Free car parking and cycle storage
- On-site catering

Application process

To apply for this post please submit an application form via the MyNewTerm portal.

The deadline for applications is **Friday 24th April, 5:00pm**. Interviews are provisionally scheduled to take place on **Thursday 30th April**.

Please ensure you detail any gaps in employment and use the selection criteria which is contained in the job pack when you prepare your application, as shortlisting for interview will be based on how closely you demonstrate your ability to fulfil the essential criteria.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone feels welcome, respected, and supported throughout our recruitment process. If you have a disability, are neurodivergent, or have any additional needs that may require adjustments at any stage of your application or interview, please let us know via recruitment@orionacademy.co.uk

Visits to the academy are encouraged. Please contact Jessie Shakespeare or Hannah Shuker at Orion Academy, to arrange an informal visit and conversation. We look forward to hearing from you.

We do not accept CVs. If you are shortlisted, we will take up written references before your interview so please provide permission for this and provide accurate phone and email contact details for your referees. One of your referees must be your current or last employer, and if you are employed in a school, must include your current Head Teacher. If you have previously worked in a school, your referees must include your most recent Head Teacher

Orion Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be subject to an Enhanced DBS check, Occupational Health check and a probationary period of 6 months. The Orion Academy is an equal opportunities employer and we welcome applications from a range of ethnic backgrounds to represent diversity in line with our school community.

The Gallery Trust is a Special Multi Academy Trust which is dedicated to improving outcomes for SEND learners in Oxfordshire. We strive to provide the best possible specialist learning experience for all pupils.

Our Strategic Aims

- **Places where innovation drives learning** – our schools have a clear purpose, they educate the whole child and prepare them for adulthood. Everything we do, from our curriculum offer to our pastoral care, is meaningful and driven by the needs of learners.
- **Places where relationships drive engagement and achievement** – our schools are built around exceptional relationships. We provide excellent experiences, growth, and opportunities for pupils and staff, and specialist working environments and resources.
- **Places which provide exceptional knowledge and support** – our schools are supported by a skilled and experienced central team which provides high quality school improvement and central support services.
- **Places which inspire and influence** – our schools are committed to collaborating with our local and national partners and communities to ensure that children and young people with SEND receive the education and opportunities they deserve.

As we enter the next phase of our development and build on our many successes, we want to embrace future challenges and opportunities. The Trust is on a continuing journey of expansion, growing from a Multi Academy Trust based on a single academy in 2013, to its position as the largest Special Trust in Oxfordshire. There are currently six special academies in the Trust located throughout Oxfordshire, with an additional academy opening in January 2024, and a further academy scheduled to open in 2026. The Trust's vision is to continue to expand over the next five years, supporting a community of converter academies, free schools and sponsored academies, and providing outreach and other opportunities. All academies collaborate to share SEND expertise and best practice, and work in partnership with peers who are committed to common aims and goals.

The Board of Trustees believes that by providing the support of highly experienced and specialised school improvement and business teams, school leaders are empowered to focus on the standards of teaching and learning, and in meeting the operational and strategic demands of running their schools.

Job Description

PURPOSE

To complement the professional work of teachers by taking responsibility for agreed learning activities under an agreed system of supervision. This may involve planning, preparing and delivering learning activities for individuals/groups, or short term for whole classes and monitoring pupils and assessing, recording and reporting on pupils achievement, progress and development.

SUPPORT FOR PUPILS

- Assess the needs of pupils and use detailed knowledge and specialist skills to support pupils' learning
- Establish productive working relationships with pupils, acting as a role model and setting high expectations
- Promote the inclusion and acceptance of all pupils within the classroom
- Support pupils consistently whilst recognising and responding to their individual needs
- Encourage pupils to interact and work cooperatively with others and engage all pupils in activities
- Promote independence and employ strategies to recognise and reward achievement of self-reliance
- Provide feedback to pupils in relation to progress and achievement

SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS

- Provide cover for teaching and TA absences
- Organise and manage appropriate learning environments and resources
- Within an agreed system of supervision, plan challenging teaching and learning objectives to evaluate and adjust lessons/work plans as appropriate
- Monitor and evaluate pupil responses to learning activities through a range of assessment and monitoring strategies against pre-determined learning objectives
- Provide objective and accurate feedback and reports as required on pupil achievement, progress and other matters, ensuring the availability of appropriate evidence
- Record progress and achievement in lessons/activities systematically
- Follow the academy's agreed behaviour policy to anticipate and manage behaviour constructively, promoting self control and independence

- Supporting the role of parents in pupils' learning and contribute to/lead meetings with parents to provide constructive feedback on pupil progress/achievement etc.
- Administer and assess/mark tests and invigilate exams/tests
- Production of lesson plans, worksheet, plans etc., as appropriate

SUPPORT FOR THE CURRICULUM

- Deliver learning activities to pupils within agreed system of supervision, adjusting activities according to pupil responses/needs
- Use ICT effectively to support learning activities and develop pupils' competence and independence in its use
- Select and prepare resources necessary to lead learning activities, taking account of pupils' interests and language and cultural backgrounds
- Advise on appropriate deployment and use of specialist aid/resources/equipment

SUPPORT FOR THE ACADEMY

- Comply with and assist with the development of policies and procedures relating to child protection, health, safety and security, Safeguarding, confidentiality and data protection, reporting concerns to an appropriate person
- Be aware of and support difference and ensure all pupils have equal access to opportunities to learn and develop
- Contribute to the overall ethos/work/aims of the academy
- Establish constructive relationships and communicate with other agencies/professionals, in liaison with the teacher, to support achievement and progress of pupils
- Take the initiative as appropriate to develop appropriate multi-agency approaches to supporting pupils
- Recognise own strengths and areas of specialist expertise and use these to lead, advise and support others
- Deliver out of academy learning activities within guidelines established by the academy
- Contribute to the identification and execution of appropriate out of academy learning activities which consolidate and extend work carried out in class
- To carry out other duties as may be reasonably assigned by the Headteacher
- If appropriate, undertake recruitment, induction, appraisal, training, mentoring and line management for other teaching assistants.

Selection Criteria

Experience

- Successful experience of working with pupils with special educational needs in a classroom environment, promoting high standards of behaviour whilst delivering appropriate and interesting lessons.
- Working effectively with individual pupils, groups of pupils and whole classes across the age range within the academy

Knowledge and skills

- Ability to use ICT for professional and curricular purposes
- Ability to assess pupil progress
- Ability to deliver lessons at short notice
- Ability to plan and prioritise
- Understanding of the curriculum
- Understanding of child development and the learning process
- Ability to use a range of behaviour management strategies in accordance with behaviour policies

Personal qualities

- Ability to work calmly under pressure
- Effective and supportive team member
- Willing to develop and learn new skills
- Flexible, adaptable and willing to respond to the academy's needs on a daily basis, and to changing circumstances and situations
- Good organisational and time management skills
- Hard working and committed
- Able to communicate effectively and sensitively with staff and pupils: good interpersonal skills
- Ability to take responsibility and work with autonomy within set boundaries

Your application should clearly demonstrate how well you meet the above key criteria.