



The GALLERY TRUST



A community of special schools



Headteacher

**Candidate Information Pack
April 2026**

To commence September 2026

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the post of Headteacher at Iffley Academy.

Iffley Academy is a highly successful and well-established special school and the largest of its kind in Oxfordshire, with a current roll of 180 pupils. The academy has a long and proud history, with a school on the Iffley site since the 1960s, and now benefits from a modern, purpose-built learning environment. Judged Outstanding by Ofsted in 2015, 2019 and most recently in 2024, the academy meets the needs of pupils with a wide range of SEND, including Cognition and Learning Needs, Autism Spectrum Condition and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.

Our learning community is built on respectful, trusting relationships and a deep understanding of pupils' individual needs. Through a strong commitment to restorative approaches, high-quality teaching and exceptional pastoral care, we provide a warm, inclusive and aspirational environment. We are committed to equipping pupils with the skills, confidence and independence they need to thrive within their communities and prepare successfully for adulthood.

The Board of Trustees is seeking to appoint an inspirational and dynamic Headteacher to lead and manage Iffley Academy. The successful candidate will be a highly skilled practitioner with strong strategic and operational leadership abilities, significant SEND experience, and a proven track record of driving school improvement while sustaining an inclusive, values-led culture.

Iffley Academy is proud to be part of The Gallery Trust, a growing special multi-academy trust dedicated to improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND across Oxfordshire. The Trust has a strong national reputation and plays a key role in shaping SEND strategy across the county, with seven academies currently open and further growth planned.

As Headteacher, you will work closely with the Trust's Executive Teams, who provide expert support across school improvement, finance, HR, estates, health and safety and governance. This partnership will enable you to focus on what matters most: delivering outstanding teaching and learning, leading a committed school community, and securing the very best outcomes for pupils with SEND.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you again for your interest. We very much look forward to hearing from you.



*Chris Scrivener
Chair of Trustees*



*Kay Willett MBE
Chief Executive Officer*



Headteacher - Advertisement

Location: The Iffley Academy Iffley Turn, Oxford OX4 4DU

Salary: Leadership Scale L25 to L31

Start Date: September 2026

The Board of Trustees is seeking to appoint an inspirational, values-led and dynamic Headteacher to lead Iffley Academy through its next phase of opportunity, growth and continued excellence.

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- A clear and compelling vision for inclusive, high-quality education, with the leadership capability to sustain and further develop an Outstanding special school where every student is supported to thrive and achieve their potential
- A strong commitment to collaborative working, partnering effectively with the CEO, Trust executive teams, Board of Trustees, Local Academy Board, staff, parents and carers, and a wide range of external stakeholders to secure the very best outcomes for students
- Excellent strategic thinking alongside strong operational leadership, ensuring that ambition is translated into consistently high-quality practice
- Substantial senior leadership experience, including recent and credible experience within SEND education
- A proven and deeply embedded commitment to restorative, relational and strengths-based approaches that place wellbeing, belonging and positive relationships at the heart of school culture
- A clear moral purpose and dedication to the inclusion of students with SEND, both within education and as active, valued members of society

The Headteacher will have overall responsibility for the strategic and operational leadership of Iffley Academy and will work closely with the Trust's Executive Teams, benefiting from strong collaboration, professional challenge and support. As the public face of the school, the Headteacher will provide visible, aspirational leadership for staff and students, with a

relentless focus on high-quality teaching and learning, personal development and positive outcomes for all learners.

The Iffley Academy is committed not only to sustaining excellence but to inspiring and influencing others. The academy currently holds the Platinum Arts mark Award and Advanced Status with the National Autistic Society. These nationally recognised accreditations reflect Iffley's outward-facing ethos, commitment to innovation, and role in sharing best practice across schools and the wider community. The successful candidate will actively champion this work, ensuring Iffley Academy continues to be recognised as a beacon of best practice in specialist education.

In return, we offer high-quality professional development, the opportunity to work alongside skilled, passionate colleagues across The Gallery Trust, and, above all, the privilege of leading and learning alongside the remarkable students and staff who make Iffley Academy such a special place.

How to apply:

The closing date for the receipt of completed applications: **19th February 2026, 5pm.**

Shortlisting completed and invitations sent: **Monday 23rd February**

Interviews are scheduled for **25th and 26th of February 2026.**

If you would like to visit The Iffley Academy this opportunity before submitting your application, or if you have any questions, please contact Kay Willett MBE:
k.willett@thegallerytrust.co.uk

To apply for this post please complete and submit an application form on MyNewTerm
<https://mynewterm.com/jobs/139312/EDV-2026-IA-00106>

The Gallery Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and expects all staff to share this commitment. Any offer of employment with The Gallery Trust is subject to verification of ID and qualifications, satisfactory evidence of the right to work in the UK, health clearance, and Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Check. The Gallery Trust is an equal opportunities employer, and we welcome applications from candidates from all ethnic and community backgrounds.

About The Gallery Trust

The Gallery Trust is a specialist Multi Academy Trust dedicated to improving outcomes for learners with SEND across Oxfordshire. From its beginnings as a single academy, the Trust has grown to become the largest special MAT in the county and is now widely recognised at a national level for the quality and impact of its provision.

The Trust currently comprises seven special academies, educating nearly 820 students and employing around 450 highly skilled and experienced staff, supported by a strong and well-established professional business services team. In 2026, the Trust will begin the pre-opening phase for its eighth school, Artemis Academy, which is due to open in 2027.

The vision of the Trust is to provide outstanding education through:

- **commitment to special education** – striving to provide the best specialist learning experience for all students, allowing them to reach their potential.
- **opportunities for all to learn** – ensuring that students and staff have access to learning pathways which enhance their lives.
- **genuine respect and values** – creating relationships which promote trust, confidence and respect within environments which are safe and secure.

Our strategic aims are to provide:

- **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.

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. We offer the new Headteacher of Iffley Academy:

- the chance to work with skilled, hardworking, and empowered colleagues, and with our exceptional students
- a comprehensive and thorough induction programme
- tailored and appropriate continuing professional development, designed to support your needs and aspirations
- professional business, commercial and school improvement support and resources
- collaboration and peer support from experienced senior leaders across The Trust

The schools in the Trust are:

- Bardwell School, Bicester
- Bloxham Grove Academy, Bloxham
- Artemis Academy, Faringdon (opening January 2027)
- 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.

About Iffley Academy

Iffley Academy is a vibrant, values-led community special academy for children and young people up to the age of 18 with complex special educational needs and disabilities. All students have Education, Health and Care Plans, with needs primarily relating to Moderate Cognition and Learning Difficulties, Autism Spectrum Condition and Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. Every student is known as an individual, and personalised support sits at the heart of everything we do.

The academy has a long and proud history on the Iffley site and is firmly established as one of Oxfordshire's leading specialist schools. Judged Outstanding by Ofsted in 2015, 2019 and 2024, Iffley Academy is recognised for its inclusive ethos, strong relationships and consistently high standards. It is part of the ambitious and outward-facing The Gallery Trust, a community of special schools united by a shared commitment to special education, opportunities for all to learn, and genuine respect and value.

Daily life at Iffley is shaped by a deep understanding that students learn best when they feel safe, understood and valued. Relationships are the foundation of the academy's culture. A strong commitment to restorative approaches underpins behaviour, wellbeing and learning, supporting students to develop emotional understanding, empathy and responsibility. Behaviour is understood as communication, and staff work collaboratively to identify and respond to unmet need in ways that reconnect rather than exclude.

Teaching and learning take place in well-structured class groups, with highly skilled staff differentiating learning to ensure all students can access, engage and succeed. The academy offers a comprehensive and ambitious curriculum, underpinned by robust assessment processes and a clear focus on personal development, independence and preparation for adulthood. Learning is enriched through excellent partnerships with community organisations, including Oxford University's Gardens, Libraries and Museums, providing students with meaningful, real-world experiences beyond the classroom.

Iffley Academy is a genuinely warm and inclusive community. When a student joins the academy, every effort is made to ensure they settle quickly, feel safe, enjoy coming to school and build positive friendships. Families are viewed as essential partners in this journey; they are welcomed, listened to and supported, becoming part of the wider Iffley community.

For a prospective Headteacher, life at Iffley offers the opportunity to lead within a highly successful school that balances compassion with high expectations, and stability with innovation. It is a place where leadership is relational, practice is reflective, and the impact on students, families and staff is both visible and deeply rewarding.

About the Role

Iffley Academy is seeking an exceptional Headteacher to lead the academy through its next stage of development, building on a strong legacy of success while shaping the future direction of the school. This is an opportunity to lead a well-established, highly respected special school that combines stability, ambition and a deep commitment to inclusive, values-led practice.

The successful candidate will be an experienced and credible leader with a strong track record in SEND and inclusive education, gained in either special or mainstream settings. They will bring a deep understanding of effective teaching, learning and assessment for students with complex needs, alongside the ability to lead curriculum development that is ambitious, coherent and rooted in preparation for adulthood. A secure grasp of restorative, relational and trauma-informed practice will be essential, as will a commitment to safeguarding, wellbeing and inclusive behaviour cultures.

The Headteacher of Iffley Academy will be committed to the following core principles:

- a broad, ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum that balances academic learning, personal development and preparation for adulthood
- a relational and restorative approach that prioritises emotional safety, belonging and positive behaviour support
- high-quality teaching developed through coaching, professional dialogue and sustained investment in staff development
- strong, trusting partnerships with families and carers, recognising them as integral members of the school community
- effective multi-agency working to meet the complex needs of students and secure the best possible outcomes
- continuous improvement through reflective practice, robust self-evaluation and engagement with evidence-informed approaches

As the strategic leader of a large and diverse school community, the Headteacher will need to combine clarity of vision with operational rigour, emotional intelligence and resilience. They will be an articulate and visible leader, able to inspire confidence, build capacity in others and sustain high standards through collaborative leadership.

This role offers the opportunity not only to lead an outstanding school, but also to contribute to system leadership across The Gallery Trust. The successful candidate will work alongside highly skilled colleagues across the Trust, shaping SEND practice more widely and supporting the Trust's continued growth and impact across Oxfordshire.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Headteacher

Responsible to: Chief Executive Officer, The Gallery Trust

Core Job Purpose:

- To work collaboratively with the Trust Executive Teams to support strategic oversight and development, and the operational management of the school
- To be responsible for the day to day running of the school
- To articulate to stakeholders the vision, ethos and values of the Gallery Trust through leadership of Iffley Academy
- To be accountable for the progress and achievement of students and the quality of learning and teaching in the school
- To work in partnership with the Chief Executive Officer and the Trust Executive Teams to implement the agreed policies and practices of the Gallery Trust
- To ensure a secure and safe learning environment that promotes the welfare of students and staff, and fulfils statutory and Trust policies and practice
- To fulfil all the professional duties as laid out in the School Teachers Pay and Conditions documents and the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers.

Introduction:

The performance of all the duties and responsibilities shown below will be under the reasonable direction of the CEO and Directors of Education.

This job description will be reviewed at least annually and any changes will be subject to consultation. The school's grievance procedure will be used to resolve any disagreement arising out of the job description. Other relevant policies may be the County Council's Stress as Work policy and the Dignity at Work policy.

Responsibilities

Shaping the Future

The Headteacher will ensure that their leadership demonstrates commitment to promoting and developing the existing excellent practice at Iffley Academy.

Main Tasks/Actions

- Articulate and promote the school's agreed educational vision and values
- Share this vision and values with all members of the school community, securing their understanding and commitment and creating a shared culture
- Translate the vision and values into agreed objectives, ensuring that the school's planning, policies and procedures promote sustained improvement
- Embracing the Trust's 'Living our values' strategy, 'Leading Learning' tool kit and People Strategy.

Leading Learning and Teaching

The Headteacher will lead a learning community which promotes positive attitudes to learning amongst students and staff and achieves excellence across all school activities.

Main Tasks/Actions:

- Demonstrate the principles and practice of effective teaching and learning
- Ensure a consistent and continuous school wide focus on student achievement which reflects the agreed vision and values, monitoring progress
- Analyse and use data to inform strategies for improvement
- Ensure that learning is at the centre of strategic planning and resource management
- Establish creative, responsive, and effective approaches to learning and teaching, embedded in a culture and ethos of challenge and support where all students engage with learning, have high expectations and can achieve success
- Implement strategies and practice which achieve standards of behaviour and attendance which reflect the school's expectations
- Implement an appropriate curriculum which takes account of the needs and aspirations of all students, including the acquisition of skills for independence and independent living
- Implement an effective assessment framework
- Monitor, evaluate and review classroom practice and promote improvement strategies.

Developing Self and Working with Others

The Headteacher's relationships with students, parents/carers and staff should demonstrate a belief in their unique contribution as individuals, valued and respected by all. They will recognise and act upon their own potential for growth and that of others.

Main Tasks/Actions

- Treat all people fairly, equally and with respect to create and maintain a positive culture in line with the school's agreed vision and values
- Build a collaborative learning culture within the school community and actively engage with other schools, both within and outside the trust
- Maintain effective strategies and procedures for staff induction, professional development and appraisal
- Ensure effective planning, allocation, support and evaluation of work undertaken by teams and individuals, including clear delegation of tasks and responsibilities
- Develop and maintain a culture of high expectations and aspirations for themselves and for others, celebrating the achievements of staff and taking appropriate action when performance is unsatisfactory
- Participate in arrangements for review of their own performance, reflecting on their personal contribution to school achievements and taking account of feedback from others
- Have regard for the well-being of themselves and others, managing their workload to promote a healthy work-life balance and encouraging and enabling others to do likewise.

Managing the Organisation

In partnership with the Executive Teams, including the Directors of Schools, the Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that key principles and priorities for the school are identified and achieved.

Main Tasks/Actions

- Be responsible for the day to day running of the school
- Create a structure which reflects the school's values, and enables the management systems and processes to work effectively in line with legal requirements
- Produce and implement evidence-based improvement plans for the development of the school and its facilities
- With the Executive Teams, including the Chief Operating Officer and Directors of Schools, manage the school's financial and human resources effectively and efficiently
- Recruit, retain and develop staff appropriately, managing their workload to enable achievement of the vision and goals of the school
- Manage and organise the school's environment efficiently and effectively to ensure that it meets the needs of the curriculum, health and safety regulations and the school community.

Securing Accountability

The Headteacher is accountable for the performance of the school and will be supported by the Trust's School Improvement and Business Executive Teams.

Main Tasks/Actions

- Work in partnership with the Trust's Executive Teams, drawing upon the expertise and experience of these stakeholders to support the operational management of the school
- Work with the Local Academy Board, enabling it to meet its responsibilities by giving objective professional advice and regular accounts of the school's progress
- Develop systematic and rigorous procedures for school self-evaluation which are appropriate and enable collaboration, sharing knowledge and understanding, celebrating success, and using the outcomes of evaluation to further improve the school
- Ensure that all available data is used to identify strengths and weaknesses of the school and to inform planning for improvement
- Ensure that individual staff accountabilities are defined, understood and agreed and are subject to review and evaluation
- Develop and present a coherent, understandable, and accurate account of the school's performance to a range of audiences and stakeholders

Strengthening Community

The Headteacher is responsible for communicating the vision of the school and The Gallery Trust to the local and wider community and beyond.

Main Tasks/Actions

- Ensure that effective strategies, systems and support are in place to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people in the school and co-operate and work with relevant agencies for the protection of children
- Act as the public face and main advocate of the school and the Trust
- Enable students to develop an understanding of their responsibility to others and provide the means for them to respond positively to this
- Create and implement positive strategies for promoting understanding that everyone is equal, and in particular for challenging racial and other prejudices and for dealing with harassment
- Create and maintain an effective partnership with parents and carers to support and improve students' achievement and personal development
- Seek opportunities to invite stakeholders (parents and carers, community figures, businesses and other organisations) into the school to enhance and enrich the school and its students
- Engage in dialogue with all stakeholders to build partnership and understanding of shared values, beliefs and responsibilities, reflecting on and taking account of their views.

Other

The range of responsibilities listed above is not exhaustive and is subject to change at the direction of the CEO. This job description is subject to annual review.

The Headteacher is required to meet the general requirements of the post as specified in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document.

The Gallery Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Headteachers must ensure that the highest priority is given to safeguarding children and young people. The successful candidate will be required to undergo an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Any offer of employment with The Gallery Trust is subject to verification of ID and qualifications, satisfactory evidence of the right to work in the UK, satisfactory references, health clearance and NCTL and Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Check.

The Headteacher works for The Gallery Trust based at Iffley Academy. However, the Trust reserves the right, in exceptional circumstances, to deploy staff to different locations depending on the needs of the overall Trust.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Headteacher, Iffley Academy

	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications	<p>Qualified to work and teach in the UK</p> <p>Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)</p>	<p>NPQH achieved or in progress</p> <p>Qualified to degree level or equivalent</p> <p>Additional qualification or training in leadership of SEND</p>
Experience	<p>Successful leadership and management at a senior level in education</p> <p>Successful teaching experience in a SEND setting</p> <p>Experience of having led, at a senior level, significant changes or improvements in a school</p> <p>Extensive knowledge of safeguarding procedures</p>	<p>Successful leadership and management at a senior level in a special school</p> <p>Experience of research or engagement with external evaluators to embed evidence-informed practice</p>
Strategic Leadership	<p>Ability to provide clear educational vision and direction</p> <p>Ability to inspire and motivate all stakeholders</p> <p>Evidence of developing effective strategies for school improvement</p> <p>Ability to work in partnership with stakeholders</p>	<p>Working at a senior level in school improvement planning</p>

Leading Teaching and Learning	<p>Understand the principles of effective teaching and learning for children with a range of special needs</p> <p>Successful experience of monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of teaching and learning</p> <p>Understanding the role and impact of assessment</p> <p>Secure knowledge of statutory requirements relating to curriculum and assessment</p> <p>Experience of leading curriculum innovation</p>	<p>Experience of using coaching, mentoring and professional dialogue to develop teaching practice, build staff confidence and capability, and secure sustained high standards of teaching and learning across the school.</p>
Leading and Managing Staff	<p>Ability to lead, manage and motivate across the school community</p> <p>Ability to establish positive working relationships</p> <p>Ability to plan, allocate, delegate, support and evaluate work undertaken by individuals and teams</p> <p>Successful experience of identifying the need for, and leading, in-service training</p> <p>Experience of dealing with HR issues</p>	<p>Experience of embedding reflective practice in schools</p> <p>Significant experience of taking a lead role in performance management of staff including leading lesson observations</p>
Managing Resources	Ability to manage, monitor and review available resources, ensuring value for money	Successful experience of managing budgets
Personal Skills and Qualities	<p>Strong commitment to raising standards</p> <p>High expectations of self and others</p> <p>Ability to establish and maintain positive relationships, including with parents</p> <p>Ability to remain positive and enthusiastic, including when under pressure</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Effective computing skills for both teaching and management</p>	