



The **GALLERY TRUST**



A community of special schools



Northern House
Academy

**Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral Lead
and DSL
Candidate Information Pack
Sept 2026**

Northern House Academy is a special school for primary age children who have been identified as having Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. We currently have 92 children on roll and all our pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

We are passionate about children at Northern House having their abilities recognised and celebrated, whilst receiving an excellent education. The whole staff team is committed to very high standards both professionally and in relation to every aspect of our pupils' education.

Northern House Academy is a member of The Gallery Trust, an expanding Special Needs Trust which is dedicated to improving outcomes for SEND learners in Oxfordshire. The Trust has a national reputation for excellence, and is influential in the development of SEND strategy in the county.

Please visit our website to find out more about Northern House Academy. If you would like to visit the school to find out more about this exceptional opportunity before you submit your application, you will be most welcome. Our staff and students will be delighted to meet you!

On behalf of the school, thank you again for your interest and we look forward to hearing from you.

Bex Holmes
Co-Headteacher

Jacob Jeffries
Co-Headteacher

**Assistant Headteacher – Pastoral Lead and DSL
Northern House Academy, Oxford**

Contract Type: Full time, Permanent

Salary: Leadership Scale L8-L12

Start date: 1st September 2026

If you are committed to enriching and improving the lives of young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, if you would like to join a team which delivers an exciting and diverse curriculum which is not driven by the National Curriculum or exam outcomes, and if you want to work in a vibrant Special Academy – we want to hear from you.

Students are taught through a differentiated and bespoke curriculum designed to enhance academic and social development, with a strong emphasis on independence skills. The curriculum delivers a thematic, cyclical approach to provide a meaningful and interesting context for the development of basic skills, knowledge and understanding while providing the relevant National Curriculum requirements. Classes are grouped into stage, not age, allowing for innovative and creative approaches to teaching and learning and are taught predominantly by one class teacher, supported by additional class adults.

The Academy provides support for the social and emotional needs of students through a qualified and skilled therapeutic team, underpinned by a pastoral support team. The offer to students is enhanced by additional specialist therapies and interventions. Our focus is to recruit teachers who are keen to grasp the possibilities offered by the Academy where practice is based on SEN pedagogy and evidence: who would relish getting involved in exciting national professional development projects, and who want to work as part of a multidisciplinary and specialist team. The teaching team actively informs developments and collectively identifies the best ways to improve the school further.

Our unique features include:

- A curriculum model which is designed around our children
- Individual learning pathways which teach the way our students learn and moves away from the “one size fits all” approach.
- An ethos of Restorative Approaches, mutual respect, and social responsibility which creates an inclusive and nurturing community
- A flexible, innovative and student-centred approach, which supports not only excellent teaching and learning, but also the emotional and mental wellbeing of students and their individual needs.

Some examples of our expectations include:

- Delivering highly personalised inclusive lessons
- Completing termly assessments that include multimedia evidence of achievements
- Working closely with other professionals and families
- Being a lead professional in the class, promoting and establishing high standards in your class team
- Supporting in the delivery of our residential trip programme
- Contributing to our continual journey of school improvement

What we can offer you:

At Northern House Academy we are committed and dedicated to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, ensuring all staff maintain a healthy and realistic work life balance. As such we offer our amazing employees the following support packages:

- Three development and wellbeing days across the year. Teachers are not required to be onsite for these days and they are designed to support with, and promote, a positive work life balance
- A robust induction program for all teachers, regardless of experience. During their first year, teachers will be provided with additional time out of class to work closely with an SLT link for support and guidance. This is focused on utilising the policies, procedures and principles that underpin practice within Northern House Academy
- Protected PPA time, which can be taken offsite
- Weekly professional development meetings that finish at 4:00pm and take place twice weekly
- Numerous opportunities and career pathways available with Northern House Academy and provided by The Gallery Trust. Including access to NPQ programs, Master Education pathways, and continuous CPD.
- A committed, positive and friendly staff team with a numerous wellbeing and social events scheduled across the year
- The opportunity to work with our amazing, unique and fantastic pupils who will guarantee that no two days are the same
- The opportunity to work within a supportive and professional teaching team, who are committed to continuous professional development and collaborative school improvement
- Membership to Perk Box, a global employee benefits and rewards platform

If you share our passion for making a real difference to the lives of children and young people with additional needs, this could be a great role for you. Previous special school experience is not necessary, but it is essential you fully share our values, which can be found on our website.

Application Process

To apply for this post, please email an application form to applications@northernhouseacademy.co.uk. The application form and candidate information pack can be downloaded from our website or from The Gallery Trust website www.thegallerytrust.co.uk. If you are unable to download the application form, please call 01865 557 004 to request one.

Please submit your application form by **5pm Sunday 10th May** to on MyNewTerm.

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 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.

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, NCTL 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.



The GALLERY TRUST

A community of special schools

Northern House Academy is one of seven special academies within The Gallery Trust. The Trust is dedicated to improving outcomes for SEND learners in Oxfordshire, striving to provide the best possible special education for all students. As the largest special school Trust in Oxfordshire, we value powerful collaboration and knowledge sharing but fully celebrate the distinct ethos and individuality of our family of schools, located throughout the county of Oxfordshire.

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.

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 seven special academies in the Trust, with 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

Responsible to: Co-Headteacher

Introduction:

This job description describes in general terms the normal duties which the postholder will be expected to undertake. However, the job or duties described may vary or be amended from time to time without changing the level of responsibility associated with the post.

The performance of all the duties and responsibilities shown below will be under the reasonable direction of the Co-Headteachers. The Co-Headteachers or other Senior Managers will be mindful of her/his duty to ensure that the employee has a reasonable workload and sufficient support to carry out the duties of the post.

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

Overview

The Assistant Headteacher, Pastoral Lead, forms part of the core senior leadership team alongside the Co-Headteachers, providing strategic leadership of pastoral systems to ensure a fully integrated approach between behaviour, wellbeing and learning.

The Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) works in close partnership with the Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion, SEND and Personal Development) to ensure that inclusive provision and pastoral systems are aligned.

The post holder, as Designated Safeguarding Lead, will lead the operational management of safeguarding, ensure safeguarding systems are fully compliant with statutory guidance and embedded within the culture of the school.

The Co-Headteachers retain overall accountability for safeguarding across the academy

Northern House Academy's approach is rooted in relational practice, nurture and high expectations, ensuring pupils feel safe, understood and able to engage positively with learning. The Assistant Headteacher will play a key role in ensuring relational approaches underpin behaviour systems, pastoral provision and staff practice across the academy.

As a member of the Senior Leadership Team, the Assistant Headteacher will contribute to whole-school leadership and will deputise for the Co-Headteachers when required.

Key Responsibilities

Safeguarding and Child Protection (DSL)

- Act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the academy.
- Ensure safeguarding systems are robust and compliant with statutory guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Maintain oversight of safeguarding concerns and ensure appropriate responses and referrals.
- Work closely with external agencies including social care, police and safeguarding partnerships.
- Ensure safeguarding records are accurate, secure and appropriately maintained.
- Provide safeguarding training and updates for staff.

Behaviour and Relational Practice

- Shape and evaluate the whole school Pastoral Strategy
- Lead the continuous improvement, development and implementation of the academy's behaviour systems
- Promote relational and restorative approaches to behaviour support.
- Ensure behaviour systems support pupils to develop self-regulation and positive relationships.
- Monitor behaviour data and ensure appropriate interventions are implemented.

Attendance and Engagement

- Lead the continuous improvement, development and implementation of the academy's attendance and engagement systems
- Monitor attendance patterns and ensure appropriate support is implemented.
- Work with families and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance.

Pastoral Provision

- Provide leadership for pastoral systems across the academy.
- Ensure pupils' wellbeing, emotional regulation and readiness to learn are effectively supported.
- Ensure pastoral provision reflects the relational ethos of the school.

Leadership and Staff Development

- Support staff to develop relational practice and trauma-informed approaches.

- Lead professional development relating to behaviour, safeguarding and pastoral practice.
- Promote collaborative working and reflective practice across staff teams.

Partnership with Families and Agencies

- Develop strong partnerships with parents and carers.
- Work collaboratively with external agencies to support pupil wellbeing.

Whole School Leadership

- Contribute to the leadership of the academy as a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Deputise for the Co-Headteachers when required.
- Contribute to school self-evaluation and improvement planning
- Lead on areas of the school's Raising Achievement Plan
- Use data to **evaluate impact and drive continuous improvement**
- Align pastoral systems with **curriculum intent and pupil outcomes**
- Represent the academy in Trust and external meetings where appropriate.

**Selection Criteria
Assistant Headteacher, Northern House Academy**

	Essential	Desirable
Professional Qualifications	Qualified teacher status or Significant leadership experience in a specialist or inclusive educational setting.	
Experience	<p>Strong knowledge of safeguarding legislation and statutory processes.</p> <p>Experience leading behaviour systems and pastoral provision.</p> <p>Experience working with pupils with SEMH needs</p> <p>Experience of school leadership.</p> <p>Evidence of effective involvement in school improvement, planning and monitoring</p> <p>Evidence of strategies developed for target setting and monitoring performance in order to raise pupil achievement</p>	
Professional Knowledge & Skills	<p>Awareness of current initiatives, issues and legislation</p> <p>Experience of using ICT effectively</p> <p>Knowledge and experience of developing a purposeful learning environment and using a range of strategies to promote good behaviour</p> <p>Respect for pupils' social, cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic backgrounds with an understanding of how these may affect their learning</p> <p>Understanding the role of teaching assistants in maximising pupils' learning</p> <p>Knowledge and experience of applying a framework of curriculum planning which: includes long and short term plans; requires learning objectives to be identified for classes,</p>	Team Teach trained

	group and individuals; enables monitoring, assessment and recording of pupils' progress	
Personal Skills and Qualities	<p>Ability to establish and maintain positive relationships with pupils, colleagues and parents</p> <p>Strong commitment to raising standards</p> <p>Good organisational skills</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Ability to remain positive and enthusiastic, including when under pressure</p>	