



The **GALLERY TRUST**



A community of special schools



**Graduate Teaching Assistant  
Candidate Information Pack  
July 2022**



Orion Academy is seeking a Graduate Teaching Assistant for a fixed 12-month role. The Academy provides education for secondary aged students with a range of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, including Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs, and Cognition and Learning Needs on its site on the outskirts of Oxford. The Academy moved into new, state of the art buildings in September 2021. The new facilities offer a wide range of exciting curriculum and vocational opportunities to learners, and a fantastic working environment.

Orion Academy is part of The Gallery Trust's growing community of special schools alongside Iffley Academy, Bardwell School, Mabel Prichard School, Northern House Academy, Springfield School and Bloxham Grove Academy. Bloxham Grove Academy is currently in the pre-opening stage and will open in 2023/2024. The Trust is also in the planning stage for an additional new free special school in the South or West of the county.

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

Orion Academy currently offers places to 87 students, and the roll of the school will rise steadily over the next three years to cater for 108 students, aged from 10 to 18 years. Students attend from throughout the county, and transfer from our SEND feeder school, Northern House Academy, and from mainstream primary and secondary schools.

Students are taught through a differentiated and bespoke curriculum designed to enhance academic and social development, with a strong emphasis on independence skills. Classes are grouped into stage, not age, allowing innovative and creative approaches to teaching and learning, and are taught predominantly by a 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 Trust pastoral support term. The offer to students is enhanced by additional specialist therapies and interventions, which include Digby, our lovable therapy dog! Please visit our website for more information.

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.

Harry Paget-Wall Collins  
*Executive Head Teacher*

Lynne Smith  
*Head Teacher*



## **Graduate Teaching Assistant**

Grade 8

Actual annual salary: £17,395.63 to £19,316.62 per annum

Full Time Equivalent: £25,419 to £28,226 per annum

Work Pattern: 30 hours per week, 38 weeks per year (term time only)

Contract: Fixed Term 12-month position

*Are you a graduate who has a keen interest in supporting students with Special Educational Needs and are looking to gain a years' experience working within a special education academy?*

*Would you like to be part of a dedicated team that delivers a bespoke curriculum, emphasising positive learning experiences, social development and independence skills?*

*Would you like to work alongside experienced SEN Teachers that offer both academic and vocational opportunities to students?*

The Gallery Trust have an amazing opportunity for anyone looking to become a Teaching Assistant, with hopes to become a teacher in the future. The Graduate Teaching Assistant position at Orion Academy is for individuals who wish to begin a career pathway towards teaching, with a strong commitment to professional development.

The Graduate Teaching Assistant will assist and support the Executive Head Teacher, Head Teacher and teaching staff in providing high standards of teaching, learning and pastoral care to pupils.

Orion Academy is a special school for secondary aged pupils who have Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties. The academy has 88 pupils on roll and all pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Orion 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 currently has six special schools in the county, with a further two schools in the planning stages.

All aspects of the role and responsibilities are focused on providing positive experiences for pupils, supporting with their education and pastoral care, and liaising with families to get the best possible outcomes.

The role includes:

- Supporting teachers and colleagues to deliver highly personalised and bespoke lessons
- Working closely with other professionals and families
- Supporting the creation of a climate for success for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
- Promoting high standards in class teams

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

Working at Orion Academy offers many benefits. We can offer you the opportunity to:

- 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.
- work in a new school building which is an exciting and innovative environment, with free parking, located within a short drive of Oxford's ring road.
- contribute to the Local Government Pension Scheme
- enjoy generous Local Government employment terms and conditions, based on NJC Green Book

In a staff survey undertaken in March 2022, 100% of responses said that staff were proud to work at Orion Academy, that they enjoyed their role and that they regarded their work as meaningful.

## **Application Process**

To apply for this post, please email an application form to [recruitment@orionacademy.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@orionacademy.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](http://www.thegallerytrust.co.uk). If you are unable to download the application form, please email [recruitment@orionacademy.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@orionacademy.co.uk) to request one.

Please submit your application form by **31<sup>st</sup> August 2022** to [recruitment@orionacademy.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@orionacademy.co.uk) or by post to Recruitment Office, Orion Academy, Knights Road, Oxford OX4 6DQ.

We reserve the right to fill these positions before the closing date if we receive a high volume of suitable applicants.

### **Interview Date: 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

Any applications received early in the advertisement period, which meet the selection criteria and are shortlisted, will be invited to attend an interview on 12th August 2022. This is with a view to starting any successful applicants from 1st September 2022.

Any applications received later in the advertisement period, which meet the selection criteria and are shortlisted, will be invited to an interview early in September 2022.

### **Final Closing Date: 31st August 2022**

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. If you have previously worked in a school, your referees must include your most recent 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, 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.

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Graduate Teaching Assistant**

#### **Job Purpose:**

To provide support for SEMH students, the teacher and the academy in order to raise standards of achievement for all our students by utilising advanced levels of knowledge and skills when assisting with planning, monitoring, assessing and managing classes, and to encourage students to become independent learners, to provide support for their welfare, and to support the inclusion of students in all aspects of school life.

#### **Introduction:**

This job description describes in general terms the normal duties which the post-holder 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 duties and responsibilities shown below will be under the reasonable direction of the Executive Head Teacher. The Executive Head Teacher and Head Teacher 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.

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.

#### **Planning:**

- Plan and deliver learning activities to students/groups, adjusting activities according to students responses/needs.
- Plan and prepare lessons with teachers, participating in all stages of the planning cycle, including in lesson planning, evaluating and adjusting lessons/work plans.
- Develop and prepare resources for learning activities in accordance with lesson plans and in response to students need.
- Contribute to the planning of opportunities for students to learn in out-of-school contexts in line with schools policies and procedures.

#### **Teaching and Learning:**

- Provide detailed verbal and written feedback on lesson content, students responses to learning activities and students behaviour, to teachers and students.
- Motivate and progress students' learning by using clearly structured, interesting teaching and learning activities.
- Be aware of and support difference and ensure all students have equal access to opportunities to learn and develop.
- Promote and support the inclusion of all students, including those with specific needs, both in learning activities and within the classroom.
- Use behaviour management strategies, in line with the Academy's policy and procedures, to contribute to a purposeful learning environment and encourage students to interact and work co-operatively with others

- Evaluate students' progress through a range of assessment activities.
- Assess students' responses to learning tasks and where appropriate, modify methods to meet individual and/or group needs.
- Monitor students' participation and progress and provide constructive feedback to students in relation to their progress and achievement.
- Maintain and analyse records of students' progress.

#### **CPD:**

- Undertake specialist training to help develop the skills and competencies to effectively support students with communication and interaction needs.
- To take part in the academy's CPD programme by participating in arrangements for further training and professional development
- To engage actively in the Performance Management Review/Appraisal process
- To work as a member of a designated team and to contribute positively to effective working relations within the school

#### **Other:**

- Supervise individuals and groups of students throughout the day, including supervision in the classroom, playground and dining areas;
- Escort and supervise students on educational and out of school activities
- To help to implement academy quality control systems procedures and policies and to adhere to these
- To take part, as may be required, in the review, development and management of activities relating to the curriculum, organisation and pastoral functions of the academy
- To attend staff briefings and team meetings etc. in accordance with the academy calendar
- To take part in marketing and liaison activities such as Open Evenings, Parents Evenings etc.
- To contribute to the development of effective subject links with external agencies and develop opportunities for students to engage in enterprise activities etc.
- Any individual tasks as deemed necessary and as instructed by the Principal or line manager.

#### **Standards and Quality Assurance**

- Provide specialist advice and guidance as required
- Support the aims and ethos of the academy
- Set a good example in terms of dress, punctuality and attendance
- Attend team and staff meetings
- Be proactive in matters relating to health and safety
- Participate positively in training and professional development
- Take part in support staff appraisal
- Meet deadlines as required

## **General Responsibilities**

- Taking appropriate responsibility for one's own health, safety and welfare and the health, safety and welfare of pupils, visitors and work colleagues in accordance with the requirements of legislation and locally-adopted policies; including taking responsibility for raising any concerns with an appropriate manager and for reporting accidents and incidents appropriately
- To carry out other duties as may be reasonably assigned by line manager
- Be aware of and support difference and ensure equal opportunities for all
- Be aware of and comply with the Academy's policies and procedures
- The jobholder is expected to observe their obligations in accordance with the Academy's Safeguarding Policy, and to report any concerns that they may have regarding a child or young person's welfare to the appropriate person.
- The jobholder is expected to comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Any information they have access to, or are responsible for, must be managed appropriately and any requirements for confidentiality and security observed. Information must not be disclosed to any person or Authority without observing the correct procedure for disclosure as set out in the School's Data Protection Policy

**Selection Criteria**  
**Graduate Teaching Assistant, Orion Academy**

	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Education/Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Degree qualification or equivalent</li> <li>• Grade 4 at GCSE in Maths and English (Grade C on old scaling) or equivalent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NVQ 2 for Teaching Assistants or equivalent</li> </ul>
Experience		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous experience working in a school environment</li> <li>• Previous experience working with SEN</li> <li>• Experience of working with, or caring for, children or young adults of a relevant age</li> </ul>
Professional Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of child development and learning</li> <li>• Ability to self-evaluate learning needs and actively seek learning opportunities</li> <li>• Ability to work flexibly, throughout the whole school, meeting the needs of pupils in a range of contexts</li> <li>• Willingness and ability to undertake physical management of pupils, following appropriate training</li> <li>• Willingness to undertake First Aid training and to attend to the medical, first aid and personal needs of pupils.</li> <li>• Ability to take an active role in the support of PE lessons</li> <li>• Effective use of ICT to support learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team Teach trained</li> <li>• Understanding of relevant policies/codes of practice and awareness of relevant legislation</li> <li>• General understanding of National Curriculum</li> <li>• First aid trained</li> </ul>
Personal Skills and Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to establish and maintain positive relationships with pupils, colleagues and parents</li> <li>• Be able to inspire and motivate</li> <li>• Be creative, friendly and approachable</li> <li>• Good organisational skills</li> <li>• Good communication skills</li> <li>• Ability to remain positive and enthusiastic, including when under pressure</li> <li>• Strong commitment to raising standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full driving license</li> </ul>

# The GALLERY TRUST

A community of special schools

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, Bloxham, to open in January 2024
- A Free Special School in South Oxfordshire, to open in January 2025
- Iffley Academy, Oxford
- Mabel Prichard School, Oxford
- Northern House Academy, Oxford
- Orion Academy, Oxford
- Springfield School, Witney
- The Grove (satellite provision of Orion Academy)

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.



## Aims

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.

July 2022