

The **GALLERY TRUST**

A community of special schools



**Orion**  
Academy

**Teaching Assistant  
Orion Academy**

**Candidate Information Pack  
April 2022**



## **Teaching Assistant Grade 7**

**Actual Salary £15,485 to £16,760 (FT £22,627 to £24,491)  
30 hours a week, 38 weeks a year, term time only**

Orion Academy is currently seeking Teaching Assistants to assist and support the Head Teacher and teaching staff in providing high standards of teaching and learning and pastoral care to students.

Orion Academy is a special school for secondary aged students who have Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties. The Academy has 88 students on roll and all students 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 students, 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 students with special educational needs and disabilities
- Promoting high standards in class teams

If you share our passion for making a real difference to the lives of children and young people with special 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.

### **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 students.
- 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 call 01865 771703 to request one.

Please submit your application form by **5pm 26 April 2022** to [recruitment@orionacademy.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@orionacademy.co.uk) or by post to Head Teacher, Orion Academy, Knights Road, Oxford OX4 6DQ.

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.



## ***Welcome from the Head Teacher, Orion Academy***

Orion 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 environment in which to work.

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 88 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 school 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 I look forward to receiving your application.

Lynne Smith  
Head Teacher



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 educational 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 2023/4
- A Free Special School in South/West Oxfordshire, opening date to be confirmed
- 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.

# **JOB DESCRIPTION**

## **Teaching Assistant**

### **Job Purpose:**

To assist and support the Head Teacher and teaching staff in providing high standards of teaching and learning across the curriculum and to promote the academy's vision and ethos.

### **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 duties and responsibilities shown below will be under the reasonable direction of the Head Teacher. The Head 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 academy's grievance procedure will be used to resolve any disagreement arising out of the job description.

The job description involves:

### **Teaching and Learning**

- Assist in the educational and social development of students under the direction and guidance of the Head Teacher, SENCO and class teachers
- Assist in the implementation of Individual Education Plans and Individual Behaviour Plans for students and help monitor their progress
- Provide support for individual students inside and outside the classroom to enable them to fully participate in activities
- Work with other professionals, such as speech therapists and occupational therapists, as necessary
- Assist class teachers with maintaining student records
- Support students with emotional and behavioural needs and help develop their social and independence skills
- Contribute, wherever appropriate, to the display, presentation and celebration of students' work

### **Administrative duties:**

- Support class teachers in photocopying, proof reading and other administrative tasks in order to support teaching
- Undertake other duties from time to time as the Head Teacher requires

### **Standards and quality assurance:**

- 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
- Taking a share of supervisory duties as part of the weekly routine and as necessary

- Take part in Performance Management and appraisal
- Meet deadlines

### **Specific responsibilities agreed between the Head Teacher and the teaching assistant**

In addition to the duties outlined, you may be responsible for the following:

- Support in the delivery of specific key stage interventions
- One to one support for a student with specific medical needs
- Meeting the medical and first aid needs of students including the administration of medicines by mouth or other medical procedures providing appropriate training has been received
- Help with feeding of students at lunch time
- Supporting students with their personal hygiene and personal care
- The physical management (restrictive physical interventions) of students, following appropriate training
- Driving and supporting students in school vehicles
- Supporting students on a range of offsite educational visits

### **General Responsibilities:**

- Taking appropriate responsibility for one's own health, safety and welfare and the health, safety and welfare of students, 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 the Head Teacher

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

	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Professional Qualifications	Grade 4 at GCSE in Maths and English or equivalent in mathematics and English, or suitable equivalent experience	NVQ 2 for Teaching Assistants or equivalent
Experience		<p>Previous experience working in a school environment</p> <p>Previous experience working with SEND</p> <p>Experience of working with or caring for children of relevant age</p>
Professional Knowledge & Skills	<p>Understanding of child development and learning</p> <p>Ability to self-evaluate learning needs and actively seek learning opportunities</p> <p>Ability to work flexibly, throughout the whole school, meeting the needs of students in a range of contexts</p> <p>Willingness and ability to undertake physical management of students, following appropriate training</p> <p>Willingness to undertake First Aid training and to attend to the medical, first aid and personal needs of students.</p> <p>Ability to take an active role in the support of PE lessons</p> <p>Effective use of ICT to support learning</p>	<p>Team Teach trained</p> <p>Understanding of relevant policies/codes of practice and awareness of relevant legislation</p> <p>General understanding of National Curriculum</p> <p>First aid trained</p>
Personal Skills and Qualities	<p>Ability to establish and maintain positive relationships with students, colleagues and parents</p> <p>Good organisational skills</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Ability to remain positive and enthusiastic, including when under pressure</p> <p>Commitment to raising standards</p> <p>Commitment to Safeguarding and the wellbeing and welfare of students</p>	<p>Full driving license</p>





## 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 SEMH 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, recognizing 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.

September 2021