



The **GALLERY TRUST**



A community of special schools



**Home School Link Worker
Candidate Information Pack
April 2022**



Home School Link Worker

Grade 9

Annual full time equivalent gross salary: £28,226 to £30,984

Actual part time gross salary: £23,933 to £26,271

40 weeks per year (termtime plus 10 days): 35 hours per week

Orion Academy wishes to appoint a Home School Link Worker to join our Student Wellbeing and Therapeutic team to enhance relationships with parents and carers and to improve outcomes for our students, all of whom have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The successful candidate will make an important contribution to the wellbeing and progress of students through the development of strong and constructive relationships with parents and families and efficient liaison with a range of agencies. An important part of this role is to develop positive links between families and the school, and to encourage open communication, so you will be an effective communicator with strong interpersonal skills.

You will help families to access external support by guiding them to appropriate agencies, and will visit parents and carers in their homes, providing advice, guidance and training to individuals and groups. You will be proactive and creative in your approach to providing support and will be prepared to work flexible hours to meet the needs of parents and families.

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, one of the largest pension schemes in the UK
- enjoy generous Local Government employment terms and conditions, based on NJC Green Book, with 6.61 weeks paid holiday entitlement

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.

Please get in touch if you would like to visit before applying, you will be most welcome.

Application Process

To apply for this post, please email an application form to 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. If you are unable to download the application form, please call 01865 771703 or email recruitment@orionacademy.co.uk to request one.

Please submit your application form by 5pm on 26 April 2022 to recruitment@orionacademy.co.uk or by post to the 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.

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.



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 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 I look forward to receiving your application.

Lynne Smith
Head Teacher

JOB DESCRIPTION

Home School Link Worker Grade 9

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 Trust's and school's vision and ethos.

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 Head Teacher. The 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.

Job Purpose

- To form constructive working relationships and communications with families to enable effective support for students' access to learning and attendance.
- To enhance links between parents/carers and school to improve student outcomes.
- To facilitate access for students and parents to support and opportunities from agencies and organisations.
- To develop personalised plans for students in partnership with family and professionals in the school, in order to determine the strengths, needs, and goals of students, and provide advice, guidance and support to achieve them.

Home School Links

- Encourage communication between the school and families and ensure good communication with and between colleagues at Orion Academy.
- Establish supportive, positive, and constructive relationships with students, families and wider family networks.
- Work directly with students and families, individually and in groups, to provide practical support, advice and guidance.
- Encourage and support parents to attend meetings in school and with other agencies.
- Carry out home visits to support families, providing outreach support.
- Engage families in activities and training.
- Deliver Family Links training and run parent groups as a Parent Leader.
- Develop links with local and national agencies which provide and promote opportunities for parents and students.

Support for students

- Help to improve student attendance by monitoring and offering assistance through a range of strategies: support school processes relating to attendance.
- Establish productive working relationships with students: act as key worker.
- Actively seek information regarding activities, courses, organisations and opportunities to provide support for students to broaden and enrich their lives.
- Take a role in managing and delivering pastoral support and interventions to students.
- Provide information and advice to enable students to make choices about their own learning/behaviour/attendance.
- Provide feedback to students in relation to progress, achievement, behaviour, attendance etc.
- Support students' access to learning using appropriate strategies, resources etc.
- Work with other staff in planning, evaluating and adjusting learning and pastoral support.
- Provide objective and accurate feedback and reports as required, to other staff on students' achievement, progress and other matters, ensuring the availability of appropriate evidence.
- Assist students and families in providing information and support in times of transition.
- Liaise with other educational establishments to support transitions.

Work with external agencies

- Develop relationships with agencies, professionals and key workers who can provide advice, guidance and opportunities to students and families.
- Attend meetings to represent the Academy.
- Help families to access information, guidance, funding, benefits and services, completing referrals to external organisations where appropriate.
- Work closely with other agencies ensuring that follow-up work is completed and all concerns are well informed.

Reporting, monitoring and administration

- Liaise with school colleagues to ensure a consistent and cohesive approach to support for students.
- Keep clear records of meetings and contacts, recording actions to be taken.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of actions and strategies, providing reports as required.
- Support with the preparation of data.
- Maintain effective record keeping, filing and processes
- Undertake administration, e.g. deal with correspondence, phone calls etc

Standards and quality assurance

- Provide specialist advice and guidance as required.
- Support the aims and ethos of Orion Academy and The Gallery Trust.
- 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.

General Responsibilities

- Take 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.
- 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
Home School Link Worker, Orion Academy

	Essential	Desirable
Education/ Training	<p>Educated to at least GCSE standard, or relevant experience in absence of formal qualifications</p> <p>Good numeracy and literacy skills</p> <p>Good keyboard and computer skills</p> <p>Ability to use a range of software packages, including Word and Excel</p>	<p>Training in community work, counselling or in facilitating parenting groups</p> <p>Training in working with families</p> <p>Training in Children's Care, Children's Learning and Development, or Childcare and Education</p> <p>Training in Family Links/Parent Group Leader training</p>
Experience	<p>Knowledge and understanding of Keeping Children Safe in Education and Safeguarding procedures</p> <p>Relevant experience, e.g. family support worker, education, social work, youth work, mentoring, counselling or similar</p> <p>Experience of working with students, parents/carers and families</p> <p>Experience of providing training to individuals and small groups</p>	<p>Experience of working in an educational establishment</p> <p>Experience of working with students with SEND</p> <p>Experience of providing an outreach service and visiting families within their homes</p>
Skills and Abilities	<p>Ability to manage relationships across multiple settings with different people</p> <p>Good organisational and administration skills</p> <p>Effective communication skills with a confident and friendly approach</p> <p>Ability to facilitate discussion and lead small group sessions</p> <p>Good networking skills</p> <p>Ability to work to deadlines and under pressure</p> <p>Ability to use initiative and work proactively and flexibly</p> <p>Excellent attention to detail</p> <p>Understanding of the principles of child development and learning, and barriers to learning</p>	
Other requirements	<p>Willingness to attend Family Links training</p> <p>Willingness to attend Parent Group Leader training</p> <p>Understanding and commitment to equality of opportunity, participation, diversity and responsibility</p> <p>Committed to and be able to promote the aims of the Academy and the values of the Trust</p> <p>Committed to the welfare, wellbeing and Safeguarding of students</p> <p>Willing to undertake training</p> <p>Understanding the need for confidentiality</p>	

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 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 can 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.

September 2021