Barnet Special Education Trust

Assistant Head

Oak Lodge School, Barnet Special Education Trust

Full time, Permanent | Outer London Leadership Scale £58,497 to £68,799

Oak Lodge is a special school for young people aged 11-19 with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs. We are part of Barnet Special Education Trust, a values-led multi-academy trust committed to providing exceptional education and support for children and young people with SEND across Barnet.

We are seeking a dedicated Assistant Head to lead our personal development provision. This is a rewarding opportunity to work with young people with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs, designing and delivering programmes that prepare them for meaningful and fulfilling futures.

Why this role?

- Shape whole-school strategy as part of a small, dynamic Senior Leadership Team
- Lead innovative work experience and enrichment programmes specifically designed for learners with SEND
- Make a tangible difference to post-19 outcomes and life chances
- Benefit from excellent professional development through Barnet Special Education Trust's network of SEND specialists
- Work in a therapeutic, person-centred environment with high staff-to-student ratios

You'll be responsible for:

- Designing and delivering an accessible work experience programme tailored to our students' needs
- Leading our enrichment and clubs provision, ensuring inclusive and engaging opportunities
- Overseeing intervention groups and educational visits
- Ensuring excellent post-19 outcomes through preparation for adulthood planning
- Supporting staff development in SEND best practice, including autism, communication strategies, and adaptive teaching
- Embedding positive regulation support approaches across the school, including proactive strategies, de-escalation techniques, SCERTS and trauma-informed practice

What We're Looking For

Essential experience:

- Demonstrable experience working with young people with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs
- Experience of person-centred planning and working with multidisciplinary teams
- Understanding of communication, sensory and regulatory needs and how to adapt approaches accordingly

Leadership qualities:

- Commitment to inclusive practice and high expectations for all
- Empathetic, resilient and flexible approach
- Passion for making a difference to the lives of vulnerable young people

Knowledge and skills:

- Understanding of supporting student regulation and alternative communication methods
- Knowledge of SEND legislation and best practice
- Experience (or strong interest in developing) work experience, enrichment or preparation for adulthood programmes

Desirable:

- Experience in a secondary special school setting
- Specialist qualifications in autism, learning disabilities or therapeutic approaches

What We Offer

- A **small, dynamic, and supportive leadership team** within a specialist SEND setting
- The opportunity to **shape whole-school strategy** and make a real difference to young people's lives
- A **collaborative environment** with excellent professional development opportunities across Barnet Special Education Trust
- A strong commitment to **staff wellbeing and development**
- The chance to work in a **rewarding, inclusive school community** where every achievement is celebrated

If you are an experienced and motivated educational leader with a passion for personal development, enrichment, and SEND, we would love to hear from you.

To Apply

Please submit your application to **vacancies@bsentrust.org** or via the **DFE vacancies website**, along with a cover letter detailing how you meet the person specification for this role, particularly your experience of working with young people with additional needs.

For an informal discussion, please contact the school office on **0208 4446711 to speak to Annie Dobbin (Head of HR) or Charlotte Charlesworth (Headteacher)**. Alternatively, email annie.dobbin@bsentrust.org or charlotte.charlesworth@oaklodgeschool.org.

Closing date: 5pm, Friday 24th April 2026

Interview date: Tuesday 5th May 2026

What Happens Next

After the closing date (5pm Friday 24th April 2026):

- Shortlisted candidates will be contacted by **Wednesday 29th April 2026**
- We will request references at shortlisting stage
- **Shortlisted candidates will be asked to complete a criminal record self-declaration form prior to interview**
- **We may carry out online searches as part of our due diligence checks. Any concerns identified will be discussed with you at interview**
- Interviews will take place on **Tuesday 5th May 2026**

Interview day will include:

- Tour of Oak Lodge School and our specialist facilities
- Meeting with students and staff
- A presentation task (details will be provided in advance to shortlisted candidates)
- Formal panel interview
- Opportunity to ask questions about the role and school

Successful candidate:

- Conditional offer subject to satisfactory completion of pre-employment checks, including:
    - Enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information
    - Barred list check
    - Prohibition from teaching check
    - Reference checks (minimum of two references)
    - Verification of identity, right to work in the UK, and qualifications
    - Medical fitness check
    - Checks for any periods of living or working outside the UK (if applicable)

Start date: September 2026

Unsuccessful candidates:

- Will be notified by email within 2 working days of the interview
- Feedback will be available on request

If you require any adjustments to the interview process, please let us know when you're invited for interview.

Safeguarding Statement

Barnet Special Education Trust is wholly committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. This role involves working with vulnerable young people with special educational needs.

All appointments are subject to:

- Enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information
- Barred list check
- Prohibition from teaching check (where applicable)
- Reference checks
- Verification of identity, right to work, and qualifications
- Satisfactory completion of all pre-employment checks in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Barnet Special Education Trust is committed to creating a diverse workforce. We'll consider all qualified applicants for employment without regard to sex, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, age, disability, marriage or civil partnership.

Unfortunately, Barnet Special Education Trust is unable to offer sponsorship and proof of right to work in UK will be required for this post.