



Northern
Lights
LEARNING TRUST

**FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER
VENERABLE BEDE CE ACADEMY
APPLICATION
PACK**

Northern Lights



We are a Multi-Academy Trust currently comprising ten schools – primary and secondary – and over 4,200 children and young people in an area stretching from Teesside through to Wearside.



We are a Teaching School Hub, one of 87 DfE centres of excellence for teacher training and development, focused on some of the best schools and multi-academy trusts in the country.



We are an Early Years Stronger Practice Hub, set up by the DfE to provide advice, share good practice and offer evidence-based professional development for early years practitioners.



We provide Initial Teacher Training, a school-based learning opportunity where you will train in a highly personal, supportive and creative environment, with purpose and challenge at the heart of it all.

OUR SCHOOLS



Benedict Biscop CE Academy
Sunderland



Dame Dorothy Primary School
Sunderland



Firthmoor Primary School
Darlington



Grange Primary School
Hartlepool



Hart Primary School
Hartlepool



Holley Park Academy
Washington, Sunderland



Ian Ramsey CE Academy
Stockton-on-Tees



St Aidan's CE Academy
Darlington



St. Helen's Primary School
Hartlepool



St. Peter's Elwick CE Primary School,
Hartlepool



Venerable Bede CE Academy
Sunderland

Every Northern Lights school has its own values and its own vision and that's really important to us because all of our schools are there to serve our community but equally, our Trust is there to serve each other.

We do that with humility and with an openness because at Northern Lights it's not all about the academic – that is really important to us – but we know, as a Trust, we are successful if we have ensured that in an holistic way our children and young people have had every opportunity to experience, to flourish, to thrive, to understand the wonder and the joy of the world around them.

- Jo Heaton OBE, Chief Executive, Northern Lights Learning Trust



Welcome from the CEO

Thank you for your interest in the position of Family Support Worker within Northern Lights Learning Trust.

We are a growing Multi-Academy Trust that is currently made up of 3 secondaries and 8 primaries across Wearside and Teesside, with our central offices based in Seaham. We educate over 4200 pupils and employ over 600 members of staff and serve a diverse range of schools and communities. Each of our schools have their own individual ethos, values and vision, which sit together as part of our Northern Lights vision of 'Shining Together and Stronger Together'. As a CofE MAT, our schools are a mixture of Church and non-Church schools that range in size and levels of disadvantage. We see this diversity as a real strength to learn from and work with each other.

As a Multi-Academy Trust we are at the heart of the current educational landscape, as a designated DfE Centre of Excellence as a Teaching School Hub and DfE Early Years Hub, responsible for teacher development across all ages and phases of education, working with over 300 schools. We are collaborative in our approach and value professional development highly in all we do.

We are looking for someone whose values align with us as a Trust and has the drive and ambition to work collaboratively to provide the best opportunities and outcomes for our young people.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Yours faithfully

Jo Heaton
Chief Executive Officer

Family Support Worker

Fixed Term Contract until December 2027

required as soon as possible

Venerable Bede CE Academy

NJC SCP 18-22

(£31,537 - £33,699) pro rata (FTE)

37 hour per week, term time only, plus 5 inset days

The successful candidate should:

- Demonstrate high expectations of yourself and others.
- Enjoy working collaboratively, being innovative and creative
- Have the skills and knowledge to ensure the school is a safe environment
- Possess excellent organisational skills
- Have an excellent understanding when dealing with children and adults
- Keep calm under pressure whilst maintaining confidentiality
- Have an enthusiasm which would allow you to be supportive of the Trust and school's ethos.

If this is you, we would really welcome your application.

In return you will receive:

- A supportive working environment that puts people at the heart of the organisation
- The opportunity to work as part of a growing Trust and shape this role
- Continuous professional development
- A range of Trust initiatives that improve wellbeing. Current initiatives include an annual wellbeing day.
- National Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Teachers' Pension Scheme/ Local Government Pension Scheme

Employee welfare and benefits package including:

- 24-hour GP access
- Nurse support service
- Mental health services, including stress management, mental health first aid training and bereavement support
- Free Flu vaccinations
- Counselling Services
- Physiotherapy
- Financial wellbeing coaching
- Maternity and Paternity support
- Menopause support
- Access to useful wellbeing resources
- Cycle to work scheme
- Lifestyle savings including discounts on shops, food and drink and days out

CLOSING DATE:

Applications must be received by: Sunday 8th March 2026, 5pm

Shortlisting will take place on: W/c Monday 9th March 2026

Interviews will take place on: TBC

HOW TO APPLY:

Letters of application should be returned, along with a Northern Lights Learning Trust application form, to recruitment@nllt.co.uk or by post to Northern Lights Learning Trust, Spectrum Business Park, Lighthouse View, Building 2, Seaham, SR7 7PR.

Applications will only be considered on receipt of an application form, CV's and other forms of application will not be accepted. For further information, please contact the school on 0191 5239745.

Details of the school can be found on the school website:

www.venerablebede.co.uk

JOB DESCRIPTION

Post: Family Support Worker

Responsible to: SLT and Head of School

Salary band: NJC SCP 18-22 (£31,537 - £33,699) Pro Rata (FTE)

Start date: As soon as possible

Key purpose of the role:

The Family Support Worker provides practical, emotional, and early intervention support to children, young people, and their families, helping them overcome challenges that affect attendance, learning, behaviour, or wellbeing. The role promotes positive home school relationships, strengthens family resilience, and ensures pupils are supported to achieve their full potential.

This includes completing or contributing to Early Help processes, delivering direct support, liaising with agencies, and contributing to the safeguarding culture of the academy.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Early Help & Assessment

- Undertake or contribute to Early Help Assessments, identifying needs, strengths and risks.
- Support families to follow structured support plans, updating these as circumstances change.
- Carry out regular home, school, and community visits to monitor progress and provide practical and emotional help.
- Assist with gathering the voice of the child to inform assessments and planning.

Direct Support to Children & Families

- Provide guidance on routines, behaviour management, child development, home management, and parenting strategies.
- Support children and families experiencing difficulties such as bereavement, financial stress, mental health needs, relationship breakdown, or social/emotional challenges.
- Offer direct work with pupils to ensure their views are captured and shared appropriately.

Championing Vulnerable Children

- Act as a champion for vulnerable pupils, ensuring that their needs are understood, prioritised, and appropriately escalated.

- Advocate for children during multi-agency meetings and internal safeguarding/pastoral discussions.
- Monitor vulnerable pupils closely and work with staff to reduce barriers to learning and wellbeing.

Multi-Agency Working

- Build strong relationships with external agencies including social care, health services, CAMHS, early help teams, voluntary organisations, community groups and youth services.
- Facilitate or contribute to Team Around the Child (TAC) or Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings, ensuring accurate minutes and follow-up actions.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of local services for effective signposting.

Safeguarding & Pastoral Support

- Identify and act on safeguarding concerns following academy, trust and statutory procedures.
- Maintain clear, accurate, confidential records of all casework.
- Support pupils' emotional, social, and behavioural development through appropriate intervention and pastoral care.

Attendance, Behaviour & Engagement

- Work alongside attendance and pastoral teams to reduce persistent absence and lateness.
- Encourage positive behaviour strategies in school and at home.
- Support families to engage fully with school life, enrichment opportunities and community-based activities.

Engagement With External Organisations & Events

- Arrange appearances from relevant organisations – such as health services, support charities, youth workers, early help teams, etc. – at school and trust events including parents' evenings and family engagement sessions.
- Promote awareness of support pathways available to families by coordinating external partner presence at key events.
- Develop positive partnerships that extend support beyond the school setting.

Administrative & Professional Responsibilities

- Manage a personal caseload, prioritising workload effectively.
- Take part in supervision, training, and reflective practice opportunities.

- Contribute to parent/carer workshops, support groups, or academy-led initiatives.
- Ensure all interventions are recorded accurately and submitted for quality assurance where required.

Skills & Personal Attributes

The successful candidate will demonstrate:

- Excellent communication and active listening skills.
- Ability to build trusting and effective relationships with families, pupils and professionals.
- Empathy, resilience, and calmness in challenging or emotionally demanding situations.
- Strong organisational and time management abilities.
- A solution focused, non-judgemental, and sensitive approach to family support.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
- Competent IT skills for maintaining accurate case records.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

FAMILY SUPPORT WORKER

CATEGORY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
APPLICATION FORM	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Completed application form. Well-structured letter of application, outlining suitability for the post. <p>Application</p>		Application
QUALIFICATIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Willingness to participate in relevant training and development opportunities. GCSE grades (or equivalent) C or above in English and Maths. Training in first aid and medication or the willingness to undertake such training. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Child Protection training. Training in literacy/numeracy strategy. Training in Special Educational Needs strategies NVQ Level 2 or equivalent in a relevant discipline OR a degree. 	Application
EXPERIENCE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recent and relevant experience of working with and/or caring for children within a specified age range, preferably within an educational setting. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Experience of working in an Academy environment. 	Application
SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE	<p>Ability to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Relate well to children and adults. Work effectively within a team environment, understanding classroom roles and responsibility Build effective working relationships 	<p>Knowledge of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Child Protection. Equal opportunities and recognising the nature of the diverse Academy Community Understanding of basic technology – computer, video, photocopies etc. Understanding of Attachment Awareness 	Application Interview

	<p>with all pupils and colleagues.</p> <p>15. Promote a positive ethos and role model positive attributes.</p> <p>16. Work with children at all levels regardless of specific individual needs.</p> <p>17. General understanding of national curriculum and other basic learning programmes/techniques.</p> <p>18. Experience of resource preparation to support learning programmes.</p> <p>19. Effective use of ICT to support learning.</p> <p>20. Good communication skills.</p> <p>21. Good numeracy and literacy skills.</p> <p>22. Be able to maintain confidentiality.</p> <p>23. Good listening skills.</p> <p>24. Manage behaviour of children in a positive and supportive manner.</p> <p>25. Awareness and basic understanding of the Academy curriculum.</p> <p>26. General awareness of inclusion, especially within an Academy setting.</p> <p>27. Relevant knowledge of First Aid</p>	<p>and Trauma Informed Practise</p> <p>32. Knowledge of therapeutic interventions such as Theraplay and Lego therapy.</p>	
<p>PERSONAL QUALITIES</p>	<p>33. To be able to contribute to the Christian ethos of the Academy.</p> <p>34. To be reliable and conscientious.</p> <p>35. A desire and ability to learn new skills.</p> <p>36. Perseverance.</p> <p>37. Being a team player.</p> <p>38. A flexible approach to work [some out of</p>		<p>Application Interview</p>

	hour's work may be necessary]		
OTHER	39. Recommendation from both referees. 40. Fully enhanced DBS clearance with children's barred list check.		References Enhanced DBS certificate

References:

References will be requested prior to interview, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and the applicant does not give consent to do so on the application form. Please contact us to discuss further if you do not consent.

DBS:

Northern Lights Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. An application for a DBS certificate will be submitted for all candidates once they have been offered the position. For posts in regulated activity, the DBS check will include a barred list check. During the recruitment process, any offences, or other matters relevant to the position will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Any offer of employment will be subject to receipt of a satisfactory DBS Enhanced Disclosure.

Safeguarding:

Northern Lights Learning Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all professionals should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.

Pre-employment occupational health:

Pre-employment occupational health checks are an essential part of the selection and recruitment process to assess if any reasonable adjustments are required. In some circumstances, an appointment with Occupational Health may be required to assess fitness for the role.

Equal opportunities:

Northern Lights Learning Trust are an equal opportunity employer. We want to develop a more

diverse workforce and we positively welcome applicants from all sections of the community. Applicants with disabilities will be granted an interview if the essential job criteria are met.

Artificial Intelligence and Recruitment at Northern Lights Learning Trust

Northern Lights Learning Trust is committed to embracing innovation while maintaining fairness and integrity in our recruitment processes. We recognise that candidates may choose to use AI tools to support the preparation of their applications. While this is acceptable, we expect all submissions to reflect the applicant's own experiences, values, and suitability for the role and it is essential that AI is used appropriately.

AI must not be used to:

- provide misleading or false information at any stage of the application journey
- inflate or invent qualifications, skills or experience
- complete assessments as part of the recruitment process
- create generic responses and copy them into your application

If you have any questions about the use of AI in your recruitment process with us, please email:
hadmin@nllt.co.uk