



Northern
Lights
LEARNING TRUST

HEAD OF SCHOOL HOLLEY PARK ACADEMY



Northern Lights



We are a Multi-Academy Trust currently comprising 12 schools – primary and secondary – and over 4,600 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



Tilery Primary School,
Stockton-on-Tees



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 Head of School within Northern Lights Learning Trust.

We are a growing Multi-Academy Trust that is currently made up of 3 secondaries and 9 primaries across Wearside and Teesside, with our central offices based in Seaham. We educate over 4600 pupils and employ over 700 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 OBE
Chief Executive Officer

Head Of School

Thank you for your interest in the Head of School post at Holley Park Academy.



Holley Park Academy, located in Ayton, Washington, is a thriving one-form-entry primary school with over 180 pupils currently on roll from Nursery to Year 6. Since joining Northern Lights Learning Trust in 2022, we have become part of an expanding network of schools, offering excellent opportunities for collaboration, professional development, and the sharing of best practice. We are proud to serve a busy, local community and are committed to our vision: 'Work Together, Achieve More' which permeates all aspects of our school culture and ethos.

Our school was judged 'Good' by Ofsted in 2024, reflecting our dedication to high standards and strong outcomes for all pupils. At Holley Park, we nurture a culture based on the 5 Rs— Resilience, Respect, Responsibility, Resourcefulness, and Reflection— which underpin our approach to learning, personal development, and the way we support every child to thrive.

We are seeking a passionate and dynamic Head of School who shares our values to join our school leadership team. This is an exciting opportunity for an experienced educator who is enthusiastic about shaping the future of a nurturing, inclusive school. You will play a key role in leading and supporting high quality teaching and learning, driving school improvement initiatives, and fostering a strong, collaborative culture where both staff and pupils flourish.

Please find attached further details about the vacancy. If you would like to discuss the role in more detail, or visit the school, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Head of School

Permanent position required from
September 2026.

Salary available upon request.

Teachers' Pay and Conditions

Do you have the motivation and passion to ensure the best outcomes for pupils?

Do you value professional development of all staff?

Can you lead a school to be the best it can be, with the guidance of the Associate Head Teacher?

Do you want to work in partnership across local schools and wider within a Trust that puts children at the heart of all it does?

Do you...

- Have senior leadership experience in a Deputy or Assistant Head role within a primary school?
- Have successful experience of improving teaching and learning?
- Have successful experience of school management?
- Have evidence of impact on whole school improvement?
- Believe in holistic, inclusive education for all children?
- Place children at the heart of your decision making?
- Lead by example and believe in the importance of relationships?

If so, 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

Details of the school can be found on the school website

[Holley Park Academy - Home](#)

For further information about the role, please contact Leanne Yates, Associate Headteacher, leanne.yates@nlt.co.uk

Visits to the school are welcomed and available:

12th March at 1:00pm

12th March at 3:30pm

17th March at 2:00pm

17th March at 4:00pm

To book a place for a visit, please contact Natalie Rippon (HR Advisor) 0191 594 7033 (option 2) or natalie.rippon@nlt.co.uk

CLOSING DATE:

Applications must be received by: 9am Wednesday 25th March 2026

Short Listing will take place on: Thursday 26th March 2026

Interviews will take place on: Monday 30th and Tuesday 31st March 2026.

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.

JOB DESCRIPTION

POST: Head of School at Holley Park Primary School.

RESPONSIBLE TO: Board of Northern Lights Learning Trust, CEO, and Local Governing Body.

RESPONSIBLE FOR: All staff and resources. Operational management of the school.

SALARY BAND: Available upon request

START DATE:

KEY PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:

To provide vision and leadership for the life and work of the Trust, so that the designated school's aims are implemented in accordance with the policies of Northern Lights Learning Trust and the local governing body.

The duties outlined within this job description are in addition to those covered by the latest School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. It may be modified by the CEO or Associate Headteacher in consultation with the post holder to reflect or anticipate changes in the job.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES:

LEADERSHIP

Under the guidance of the Associate Headteacher, be responsible for:

- The Leadership of the school, sharing the vision and transferring the vision into reality.
- Upholding the Culture and Ethos of the school which is based on the school values and the Trust values
- Working as part of the leadership team across the school and the wider Trust to ensure best outcomes for pupils.
- Raising standards across the school with particular reference to academic performance.
- Developing, inspiring and motivating effective teams to raise standards across the school.
- Ensuring equality of opportunity for all, through careful strategic planning and curriculum design.
- Developing, implementing and monitoring management structures and procedures to ensure that the school achieves its curriculum and pastoral aims through the attainment of the school development plan.
- Advising the local governing body on the formulation of policy and its implementation to ensure the enhancement of the quality of learning in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- Ensuring that the statutory requirements for the curriculum are met and curriculum provision is appropriate and relevant to the needs of all children.

Head Of School

- Managing the performance of the school's staff through the provision of appropriate procedures of appointment, induction, performance management to maximise effective learning.
- Promoting effective relationships through networking with internal Trust colleagues, external bodies, notably parents, other schools and the wider community which promotes a positive image of the school.
- Monitoring and evaluating standards of teaching, learning, resource usage and management effectiveness and implementing appropriate change strategies where required working alongside staff using a coaching approach, to achieve success.
- Managing pastoral and welfare systems for all members of the school community to create a positive and caring ethos.
- Carrying out a Designated Safeguarding Lead role or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead role.
- Creating a vibrant learning environment across the school to scaffold learning and celebrate achievements.
- Analysing and interpreting school data to improve performance and have a thorough understanding of assessment procedures.
- Undertaking self-evaluation across the school, identifying with the Associate Headteacher, school improvement areas, writing subsequent action plans and Self-Evaluation Forms.
- Working collaboratively with the Trust Central Education Team
- Working in partnership effectively with all schools in the Trust
- Leading the whole school curriculum development and be accountable for improvement.
- Planning for and support Early Career Teachers and staff at all stages of their career, supporting and holding staff accountable for their performance.
- Developing inspirational leadership within Northern Lights Learning Trust.
- Developing a knowledge of risk management and produce and manage risk assessments across the school working with support staff.
- Supporting the development of the school through seeking external funding and accreditation.
- Planning, delivering and reviewing lessons which are appropriate to the age and ability of the children so as to facilitate progression in children's learning.
- Setting and assessing appropriate work and recording results in accordance with the school's assessment and marking policies to provide regular feedback and monitoring of progress.
- Managing the school environment to create a positive learning environment which makes effective use of available resources.
- As directed by the Executive Team, the Head of School will contribute to the wider work of Northern Lights Learning Trust by engaging in trust-wide initiatives and supporting collaborative improvement across schools
- Work collaboratively to support the work of the Teaching School Hub's remit where able and Early Years Stronger Practice Hub, as directed by the Executive Team.
- To undertake any professional duties of the Associate Headteacher reasonably delegated to them by the Associate Headteacher in accordance [but not exclusively] with Teacher's Pay and Conditions.

OTHER DUTIES:

- Carry out any other duties commensurate with the role that the Associate Headteacher may direct from time to time.
- Participate in the Performance Management system for the appraisal of own performance.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES- THE POST HOLDER MUST:

- Demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, staff and volunteers;
- Demonstrate a thorough understanding of safeguarding and safer recruitment policies and procedures, and their application within an educational setting/environment;
- Act in compliance with data protection principles in respecting the privacy of personal information held by the Trust;
- Comply with the principles of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to the management of Trust records and information;
- Carry out their duties with full regard to the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy, Code of Conduct - Staff Behaviour Policy, Child Protection Policy and all other Trust Policies;
- Comply with the Trust Health and Safety rules and regulations and with Health and Safety legislation.

PERSON SPECIFICATION HEAD OF SCHOOL

CATEGORY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
APPLICATION	1. Well-presented and complete application form.		1 Application
QUALIFICATIONS	2. Qualified Teacher Status and degree or equivalent 3. Evidence of continued and relevant professional development	4. Higher degree/diploma 5. NPQH or further professional development	2- 5 Application and Certificates
EXPERIENCE	6. Successful teaching experience across primary age range. 7. Recent senior leadership and management responsibility in a school at Deputy/Assistant Head level. 8. Experience of leading on aspects of school improvement identified through the school's self-evaluation process, demonstrating impact. 9. Successful experience of monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of education through substantial curriculum knowledge 10. Experience of managing and enhance the performance of all staff, including use of coaching/mentoring. 11. Experience of leading professional development 12. Successful experience of working with parents and carers as partners, with secure knowledge of effective strategies to engage, empower and involve families in all aspects of school life.	13. Experience of managing an aspect of the delegated budget and the principles of best value	6. Application 7-13 Application/Interview
SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE	14. Ability to plan strategically, analyse, interpret and act upon relevant school improvement information and data.		14-17 Application/Interview 18-21 Interview

15. Proven ability to lead and manage staff and develop high performing teams.
16. Ability to work in partnership with the Local Governing Body.
17. Secure understanding of inclusion, and successful experience of meeting the needs of children of varying abilities including vulnerable pupils and those with SEND through the identification of and removal of barriers.
18. Excellent oral and written communication skills.
19. Demonstrate organisational skills, work under pressure and determine priorities to meet tight deadlines.
20. Thorough understanding of safeguarding
21. Strong and secure understanding of school accountability frameworks and statutory requirements, with the ability to lead staff in meeting these expectations and using them to inform strategic decision-making.

PERSONAL
QUALITIES

22. Ability to empathise with children of all ages and to lead staff in applying trauma-sensitive, relational, reparative and self-regulation-focused approaches that are calm, consistent and supportive, whilst maintaining high expectations of behaviour.
23. Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to motivate and inspire others.
24. Ability to develop and sustain effective relationships with the school community.

22-28 Interview

	<p>25. Ability to be reflective and self-critical.</p> <p>26. Clear vision for the development of primary education, with the ability to create and sustain a school culture where every child, family and staff member feels a strong sense of belonging</p> <p>27. Commitment to promoting equal opportunities and meeting the educational, social and emotional needs of all children.</p> <p>28. Commitment to high standards and continuous improvement.</p>		
OTHER	<p>29. Satisfactory References</p> <p>30. Satisfactory Enhanced DBS</p>		References 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 contact hradmin@nllt.co.uk