



Balcarras School



Applicant Pack



The Balcarras Trust came into existence on December 1st 2020. We are a Multi Academy Trust based in Gloucestershire. Prior to this the company (Balcarras School) was a Single Academy Trust.

The Mission Statement of The Balcarras Trust:

The Balcarras Trust is committed to delivering outstanding inclusive, comprehensive education in each of its schools. Every child within the Trust will be expected, encouraged and supported to reach their full potential and, when they leave school, to be fully equipped to go on to be successful in the next phase of their lives.

The Trust will establish and maintain high standards of teaching, pastoral care and behaviour in its schools. No child will be "left behind." There will be excellent opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

Each member of staff in the Trust's schools will be an excellent role model and will play their part in ensuring that each school in the Trust will have its own special ethos. Students will feel proud of their school.



Balcarras is a co-educational 11-18 comprehensive school situated in Charlton Kings on the Eastern side of Cheltenham. Consistently rated outstanding by Ofsted, it has also been recognised by The Sunday Times as the highest performing comprehensive school in the Southwest. Balcarras's performance at A level and GCSE is amongst the highest for any school in the country.





Currently there are three schools in the Trust:

Balcarras: an 11-18 coeducational academy with 1402 pupils on roll. Consistently rated outstanding by Ofsted, the school secures superb outcomes at both GCSE and A level. Recently the school was awarded the Sunday Times Southwest State School of the Decade Award. The school is led by Dominic Burke (Headteacher) who combines this role with CEO of the Trust. Balcarras is the lead school in the GLOW Maths Hub and the Balcarras Teaching School Partnership. Balcarras is located in Charlton Kings and is currently where the Trust's registered office is located.

The High School Leckhampton: a brand new 11-16 coeducational comprehensive academy with an eventual capacity of 900. The school opened in September 2021 initially on the Balcarras site. It transferred to its own purpose built accommodation in September 2022. It now occupies a beautiful campus at Farm Lane in Leckhampton. This facility cost £35 million and is state of the art. The school is led by Helen Wood and has for the first two years of its existence been oversubscribed. It achieved "outstanding" during its first full graded inspection in 2024.

Winchcombe School: a high-performing school with high expectations for their students balanced against a supportive environment to help every individual towards success. The school has been led for the last 6 years by Jonathan Templeton and has gone from strength to strength. It achieved record GCSE results in 2022 and 2023 placing it amongst the most successful secondary schools in the county. The school is relatively small and visitors often comment on the 'family feel' which the school rightly prides itself on. Set in an idyllic location with excellent facilities they offer an environment for learning that is both unique and stimulating. A recent multi-million pound investment has added new and refurbished facilities in Sport, Science, Technology and Drama. The school was last inspected by OFSTED in 2024 and it was rated good in all areas.

In addition the Trust has a wider role as a system leader:

Outreach work: The Balcarras Trust is a leading provider of professional development for educators. The Trust runs the GLOW Maths Hub which is responsible for leading maths education in this region. GLOW has an annual turnover of close to £1 million. The Trust has the contract to run the Teaching School Hub for Cheltenham, Stroud and The Cotswolds.

The Trust runs its own School Direct teacher training programme working alongside the Gloucestershire Initial Teacher Education Programme (GITEP) which is run by the Gloucestershire Association of Secondary Headteachers Limited (GASH). In 2024 Balcarras became the lead school for GITEP.

We mention these initiatives because we believe it demonstrates our commitment to professional development and the importance of collaboration.





Balcarras Aims and Values

We provide our pupils with an education of the highest quality so that they leave us with the qualifications, skills and personal qualities they need to lead a successful life.

To achieve this, we will ensure:

- Our commitment to the highest academic standards
- A caring and stimulating environment
- A wide range of extra curricular activities
- A partnership with parents, business and the local community





What is it like working at Balcarras?

It is a very exciting and rewarding time to be working at Balcarras. Our latest GCSE grades were extraordinary and put us in the Top 30 comprehensive schools in the country based on the percentage of pupils gaining 5+ in English and Maths. At A-level the picture was similar. We were listed by the Sunday Times as the second highest performing comprehensive school in the Southwest in Parent Power published in November 2023. It is this commitment to the highest academic standards, whilst at the same time being a caring and stimulating environment, that makes Balcarras feel different from anywhere else.

As part of the Balcarras Trust, our teaching staff have access to outstanding professional development networks including NPOs and ECTs if appropriate.

Balcarras is a great place to work, from staff football and wreath making sessions to Chinese cookery – Balcarras creates opportunities for staff cohesion. We recently ran a whole Trust staff inset on staff wellbeing that covered topics such as physical well being, mental well being, financial wellbeing and reducing workload. Both staff and pupils benefit from Buddy the school dog who is the one of best appointments ever made!



What is the surrounding area like?

Members of staff moving into the area to join Balcarras have a wide variety of locations from which to choose. There are the large urban areas of Cheltenham and Gloucester together with the many modern housing developments clustered around them, the older market towns such as Cirencester and the smaller villages and hamlets of the Cotswolds. Within a short distance of the school it is possible to find both the facilities of a thriving urban area and the tranquility of unspoiled countryside.

Balcarras occupies an attractive site at the very edge of Charlton Kings. The woods and fields of the Cotswold escarpment rise up to the east and south east, while in other directions there is housing surrounding the old village centre.

Head Science Technician – General Job Description

JOB TITLE:	Head Science Technician (Full time—term time only)
HOURS:	Full time - term time only plus one inset day in September
RESPONSIBLE TO:	Head of Science
GRADE:	Point 18 - 21 £26,255.55-£27,592.43 Actual salary (FTE £30,559-£32,115)

Task	Action
Technician responsibilities	• Prepare resources and assemble apparatus • Set up multi-media resources (including data logging, projection, mobile devices, cameras, videos, SMART boards, tablets, etc) • Source and maintain adequate stocks of consumables • Give technical advice to teachers, other support staff and pupils • Assist in practical classes and carrying out demonstrations where applicable • Obtaining materials by local purchase • Maintaining photocopied resources
Health & Safety	• Actively contribute to the assessment, monitoring and review of both health and safety procedures and information resources • Keep up-to-date with health & safety requirements through attendance at courses and reading publications • Provide technical advice and support on health and safety issues to teaching and trainee technical staff • Carry out risk assessments for technician activities • Be responsible for the safe treatment and disposal of used materials including hazardous substances (e.g. sharps and dissection material) and responding to actual or potential hazards • Responding to chemical hazards such as spills • The healthy and safe storage and accessibility of equipment and materials • Check fume cupboards, pressure vessels; carrying out safety checks, etc. • Organise, store and check the condition of for example chemicals, radioactive sources, biological specimens and equipment. Fill up reagent bottles and jars. Make stock solutions. • Attend appropriate departmental meetings

Head Science Technician - General Job Description continued

Task	Action
Wider contributions to the Science Department	• Help research topical issues to keep displays current and eye-catching; change and put up displays in the laboratories and corridors • Contribute to the production of displays at key events such as open evenings, STEM week etc. • Construct and modify apparatus for use and helping with the development of novel practical apparatus as appropriate. This includes testing experiments and checking those included in SOW • General laboratory clearing/cleaning of bench surfaces/reporting instances of graffiti/ cleaning of equipment and checking for damage • Monitor distribution and collection of textbooks; covering and monitoring the conditions of textbooks • Photocopy resources as directed by departmental teaching staff to support practical work
In addition to these responsibilities, the Head Technician will:	• Act as line manager to the technicians in the department • Ensure that the technicians are up to date with training and attend appropriate training courses • Take overall responsibility for ordering and stocking consumables and equipment • Oversee distribution of resources such as exercise books, textbooks, revision guides etc. • Oversee formatting of official documentation such as schemes of work, worksheets, homeworks and tests. • Work with technicians and teaching staff to keep displays in the department well maintained and engaging • Oversee the practical delivery and give guidance for extra-curricular events such as STEM week, open evenings, curriculum days, primary school visits etc. • Be partly responsible for the design and delivery of extra-curricular clubs such as science club and astronomy club



Head Science Technician – Person Specification

We're looking for a friendly, organised person with a real 'can do' attitude and a drive for doing a great job. The role will offer a variety of tasks and responsibilities – making a flexible/adaptable approach to your work essential.

You may have some or all of these skills:

- ⇒ Friendly and approachable.
- ⇒ Great written and spoken communication skills.
- ⇒ Excellent interpersonal skills – able to develop and build relationships with people from all backgrounds/organisational levels.
- ⇒ Ability to work to deadlines; remaining calm under pressure.
- ⇒ Comfortable working independently and managing a variety of tasks and priorities.
- ⇒ Attention to detail/accuracy.
- ⇒ Team player.
- ⇒ Strong organisational skills.
- ⇒ Flexible/adaptable working style.

The job description sets out the main duties of the post. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.

General Job Description – Science Technician

JOB TITLE: Science Technician

RESPONSIBLE TO: Head of Science / Head Science Technician

GRADE: Science Technician: Point 7-10 £21,883 - £22,953.05 Actual salary
(FTE £25,584 - £26,835)

JOB PURPOSE: To provide technical and administrative support to science teaching staff

Task	Description
Co-ordinate use of science resources	Preparation of practical resources.
To ensure the maintenance of a healthy and safe working environment.	Actively contributing to the assessment, monitoring and review of both health and safety procedures and information resources. Keeping up to date with health and safety requirements and with developments in practical science. Safe disposal of waste materials and hazardous substances eg sharps, dissection material. Responding to chemical hazards such as spills. Organising, storing and checking the condition of chemicals and
To contribute to the design, development, setting up and maintenance of resources and events.	Constructing and modifying specialised apparatus. Setting up and caring for plant and animal collections. Assisting with Open Evening, Taster Day, Induction Day, Year1/2 practical sessions, STEM week, CSI days and extra-curricular
Routine and non-routine cleaning, maintenance, calibration, testing and repairing of equipment.	Checking equipment for damage. Cleaning and repairing equipment. Maintaining power packs, balances,



General Job Description continued

Task	Description
Ensuring chemicals in reagent and stock bottles are full.	Filling up reagent bottles and jars. Making stock solutions.
Maintaining laboratories and lab resources.	General laboratory cleaning. Cleaning and mending lab equipment such
Maintaining stock levels.	Checking stock and letting head technician know when stock is low.

This job description sets out the main duties of the post at the date shown below. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.

Person Specification

The successful candidate should have excellent organisational skills. **No experience is necessary** but a willingness to learn new skills and a proven interest in physics would be an advantage.

Training for the role will be provided by in-house training and external courses.

You may have some (or all) of these skills:

- ⇒ Great organisational skills.
- ⇒ Calm under pressure.
- ⇒ Background or interest in science
- ⇒ Problem solving.
- ⇒ Good time management.

The ideal candidate would have:

- ⇒ A-level in one of the sciences or equivalent qualification.
- ⇒ Excellent IT skills.
- ⇒ Experience as a technician.



Selection Process

- ⇒ After the deadline for the position has passed there will be a shortlisting meeting with the Headteacher, Head of Department/Line Manager to review the applications.
- ⇒ Qualifications, experience and suitability for the post will be considered during the shortlisting process.
- ⇒ Unsuccessful applications will be notified by email. Unsuccessful candidates can request feedback by email.
- ⇒ Successful applicants will be invited for interview by telephone or email.
- ⇒ References will be requested at this stage.

Please stipulate clearly on your application form should you wish for your references not to be checked prior to job offer.

- ⇒ A formal letter confirming the interview arrangements and plan for the day will then be emailed to candidates including details of documentation that will be required to be presented on the day.
- ⇒ One of the requirements of the day will be to complete a "Declaration of Criminal Record and other information" check.
- ⇒ If you have a DBS certificate from your current work place, you will be required to show this.
- ⇒ Candidates will be required to undergo a formal interview (including safer recruitment questions) and where appropriate a task. All information concerning the day will be provided in the formal letter.
- ⇒ A decision will be made on the day where possible.
- ⇒ Both successful and unsuccessful candidates will be notified by telephone where possible.

For all enquiries about this position please email jobs@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

<https://www.thebalcarrastrust.co.uk>