

Principal of Addington Valley Academy

October 2026

Candidate Information Pack



Working together to transform lives

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Introduction

Orchard Hill College Academy Trust is seeking to appoint a Principal at Addington Valley Academy. This pack sets out background information regarding Addington Valley Academy, the organisation it is part of, key

responsibilities of the role, the personal qualities, skills, experience and qualifications required to undertake the role and the application process.

Location : **Addington Valley Academy,
Field Way New Addington Croydon CR0 9AZ**

Salary : **L24-L31 £94,322 - £111,202
(Outer London Teachers Leadership Group)**

Welcome Message

Thank you for your interest in the role of Principal at Addington Valley Academy. I very much hope the information we have provided gives you an insight into our school, the organisation that the school is part of and what we are looking for in this Principal post holder.

We are delighted to be recruiting for this role due to the promotion of the current post holder to a more senior position within the Trust, highlighting the opportunities available for talented leaders to grow and develop their careers within OHCAT.

Every learner is important, and we are ambitious for their education. We aim to guide and support their learning, enabling them to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that recognise and fill gaps in understanding and move learners forward. The foundations set for lifelong learning prepare our learners and young people well for a positive future.

Academic learning is complemented through a joint educational and therapeutic model of support. The school has its own therapy team who work towards helping young people overcome their barriers, so they are in a place to learn continuously and make the most of opportunities offered.

As a team we strive for excellence in all areas, working to be the best that we can be for our learners and young people who deserve the absolute best we can offer.

Working together to transform lives is what we do and across the whole organisation we have a range of experts and practitioners who advocate for children and young people with SEND to ensure they receive the best possible opportunities to achieve their full potential.

It is an exciting time to be Principal of Addington Valley Academy and part of OHCAT, and we look forward to receiving your application.

Ian Valvona,
Interim Chief Executive Officer



Our School

Addington Valley Academy is a co-educational special school specialising in autism and complex needs and addresses the social communication, cognitive, sensory and social, emotional, and behavioural needs of learners aged 2-19.

It is located in New Addington and our new purpose-designed school is equipped to

meet the needs of learners with autism and complex needs.

Our school enhances the experience of parents and carers and progress of children and young people through effective collaborative working and joined up service delivery with partners, especially health, education and family support practitioners.

Vision



Practices



Partnership



Heart

To redefine what's possible for every Autistic child through leading practices, partnerships and heart.



Our Vision



Practices

We deliver a high-quality, inclusive curriculum with high expectations for every autistic child. Our practice is underpinned by strong training and evidence-based approaches, ensuring staff have the expertise to provide meaningful learning experiences and support every child to succeed.



Partnership

Strong partnerships sit at the heart of our work. Every child is known and supported through clear systems and leadership, while close collaboration with families, other OHCAT schools and the wider community strengthens provision and outcomes.



Heart

We are a caring, inclusive community where learners, families and staff feel safe, valued and respected. Wellbeing is central to all we do, supported by personalised learning and a wide range of therapeutic provision to help every child thrive.

Values

Wellbeing. Independence. Communication. Achievement.

Our provision and curriculum are grounded in a communication-led, positive-behaviour model. This approach incorporates therapeutic practices, sensory integration, and tailored support that enable learners to access both the core and wider curriculum, helping them make sense of the world around them.

Wellbeing – We prioritise the physical and emotional wellbeing of our learners and their families.

Independence – We equip learners with the skills and confidence they need to prepare for adulthood and thrive beyond their time at Addington Valley Academy.

Communication – We ensure every learner can express their wants, needs, and views, empowering them to advocate for themselves.

Achievement - When learners are supported to reach their full potential in Wellbeing, Independence, and Communication, they are able to accomplish meaningful and lasting Achievement.

Job Description Principal

The Principal at Addington Valley Academy leads the school in providing a supportive, high-quality education for learners with autism and complex needs. They foster an inclusive environment where learners can achieve academic success, build resilience, and develop

life skills, while working closely with staff, families, and the community to ensure each learner reaches their full potential.

The Principal will report to a member of the Trust's Executive Senior Leadership Team.

Core Responsibilities

The Principal will:

- Maintain a high-quality educational environment for learners with autism and complex needs
- Ensure the continued development of the school and make a significant contribution to high-quality organisation, leadership and management
- Play a full and active role in supporting and promoting every aspect of the school
- Attend Local Governing Body meetings
- Accept the collective responsibility of the SLT and respect its confidentiality when this is agreed to be necessary
- Strategic leadership of safeguarding and child protection
- Ensure that the school meets its statutory duties as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice
- Keep abreast of developments within education and the special sector at local, national and international level
- Represent the school on local authority forums
- Management and control of risks, organisation, leadership and management



Organisation, Leadership and Management

The Principal will:

- Uphold the aims and objectives of the school and ensure implementation, monitoring, development and review of policies to support these aims
- Work closely with the Local Governing Body, and OHCAT ESLT on strategic school improvement planning and school self-evaluation
- Work closely with the OHCAT Finance team to manage the school's budget and ensure effective financial planning, efficient use of resources and best value for money
- Develop and maintain an appropriate staffing structure
- Oversee the quality of annual and other reports to families to ensure a consistently high standard of reporting
- Develop and maintain effective communication between learners, staff, parents/carers, governors and the wider community
- Assist in identifying advice and support for parents/carers and families
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion in line with OHCAT policies
- Ensure equality of opportunity and of access for all members of the school community
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Health and Safety procedures and assist the premises team in ensuring that the health and safety needs of learners and staff are met as far as is practicable and that health and safety policy guidelines are adhered to
- Lead on the creation, implementation and evaluation of the schools' development plans and self-evaluation documentation
- Assist with the wider improvement of community partnerships and the further development of extended service provision
- Promote professional development for all staff and support the delivery of a whole school programme of INSET in line with current improvement priorities and performance management targets, as well as targeted INSET for groups and individuals
- Lead INSET as appropriate and manage budget
- Act as an appraiser for teachers and members of the senior and middle leadership team
- Be responsible for overseeing the induction programmes for all new staff
- Liaise regularly with administrative staff in monitoring learner attendance, and implement school policy in order to minimise learner absence
- Ensure that class and school timetables run efficiently and that there is appropriate balance of subjects across key stages
- Be the key link for multi-agency colleagues including medical, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, drama therapy and music therapy in order to effect best outcomes for learners and their families
- To support colleagues with the development of a programme of integration and inclusion in line with other partner schools

Management of Teaching and Learning

The Principal will:

- Assume a shared responsibility for assessment, recording and reporting of learners' progress, both quantitative and qualitative, ensuring progression and continuity and sending relevant information on learners' attainment to the LA/DfE
- Ensure effective long, medium and short term planning and development of the curriculum
- Ensure that all learners have quality of access to the whole curriculum, maintaining a stimulating, relevant and effective learning environment in which the individual needs of learners are met
- Share responsibility for all monitoring and quality assurance activity and play an integral role in developing staff and raising standards and in other provisions within the OHCAT family
- Offer consistent pastoral support for learners and provide expert guidance on the management and positive support of behaviours that challenge
- Promote effective collaboration between staff within and between departments, to ensure coherent planning, consistency of educational opportunities for learners and high standards of teaching and learning
- Ensure that the planning and delivery of the curriculum is tightly focused (including the National Curriculum as appropriate) and tailored to meet learners' individual needs across the school
- Oversee the quality of structured programmes of work-related learning and work experience, including careers and information advice and guidance, for learners and families

Management of People

The Principal will:

- Lead on the recruitment and selection of teaching and support staff
- Be responsible for overseeing the induction programmes for all new staff
- Develop and maintain excellent working relationships with and between all staff, including multi-agency colleagues
- Maintain a positive team ethos through effective communication and shared discussion and training
- Work with other SLT members to oversee timetables, assembly and duty rotas and weekly information lists to ensure the smooth operation of the school
- Have corporate responsibility for day-to-day management of staff, including arranging cover for staff absence
- Monitor staff attendance with HR and address these issues effectively as they arise

The Self-Improving School System

The Principal will:

- Create an outward-facing provision which works with other schools and organisations in a climate of mutual trust and challenge - to champion best practice and secure excellent achievements for all learners
- Develop effective relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues in other public services, to improve academic and social outcomes for all learners
- Challenge educational orthodoxies in the best interests of achieving excellence, harnessing the findings of well evidenced research to frame self-regulating and self-improving schools
- Shape the current and future quality of the teaching provision through high quality training and sustained professional development for all staff
- Model entrepreneurial and innovative approaches to service improvement, leadership and governance, confident of the vital contribution of internal and external accountability
- Inspire and influence others - within and beyond schools - to believe in the fundamental importance of education in young people's lives and to promote the value of education

Other

- Ensure the health and safety of learners, staff and visitors in keeping with OHCAT's Health and Safety policy.
- Participate in appropriate continuing professional development and staff training opportunities to update or develop new skills
- Ensure personal and corporate currency with regard to national and local policy developments, initiatives and legislation
- Promote compliance with policies adopted by OHCAT, e.g. Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety
- Undertake such other duties of a similar nature as required by the ESLT



Skills and Abilities

To demonstrate the skills and understanding of high-quality teaching, including ability to coach and mentor others to:

- Interest, encourage and engage learners
- Provide appropriate levels of challenge, so that learners make good progress
- Use relevant and meaningful curricula, and methods and resources that enable all learners to learn effectively
- Use assessment information effectively to plan next steps in learners' learning
- Make effective use of time
- Secure high standards of behaviour and outstanding attitudes to learning
- Be able to create rigorous monitoring systems with deputy and middle leaders
- Make effective use of teaching assistants and other support staff
- Enable learners to acquire new knowledge and skills
- Enable learners to develop the skills to work independently and collaboratively
- Enable learners to develop self-esteem and respect for others
- Create a well organised, stimulating learning environment in line with the school policies
- Work with new technologies

The job description is subject to review and change in consultation with the post holder.



Person Specification

QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

Qualified to degree level and above	Essential
Qualified to teach in the UK	Essential
Right to work in the UK	Essential
Recent and relevant professional development	Essential
Evidence of budget management skills and resource planning	Essential
A further post-graduate qualification relevant to the post	Desirable

EXPERIENCE

Experience of effective and impactful leadership in an educational setting	Essential
Evidence of significant recent experience of responsibility for staff management and deployment	Essential
A proven track record of recent and successful teaching of SEN learners	Essential
Evidence of effective financial planning, efficient use of resources and obtaining best value for money	Essential
Evidence of the ability to scrutinise a range of data and make recommendations about school improvement following the analysis of the same	Essential
Evidence of supporting strategic school improvement planning and school self- evaluation	Essential
Recent evidence of using effective strategies to raise achievement for SEN learners	Essential
Experience of effective and impactful senior leadership within a specialist provision	Desirable

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING RELEVANT TO THE POST

Excellent understanding of current developments and best practice in teaching and learning, particularly as it relates to achieving high rates of progress for SEN learners	Essential
Have a commitment to all SEN pathways	Essential
Experience of working with learners with autism and complex needs.	Essential
Broad subject knowledge of core curriculum and foundation subjects	Essential
Understanding of effective strategies for maintaining high quality attitudes to learning and positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour within the classroom and wider school and community context	Essential
A deep understanding of equality of opportunity issues and how they can be successfully addressed within a special school context	Essential
Knowledge and understanding of current best practice and statutory guidelines as it relates to child protection and safeguarding	Essential
Recent evidence of using effective strategies to raise achievement for SEN learners	Essential
Experience of effective and impactful senior leadership within a specialist provision	Desirable
Evidence of leadership qualities including ability to lead, motivate and enthuse others	Essential
Excellent people skills delivered with emotional intelligence	Essential
Evidence of the ability to plan, implement and evaluate at a strategic and high level	Essential

Person Specification

Ability to use analytical skills to translate high-level vision and planning into meaningful action	Essential
Ability to provide a model of best practice within the classroom and other learning settings across the school	Essential
Ability to take a leading role in the promotion of a school ethos, culture, vision and mission that promotes high achievement and standards and high aspirations for learners	Essential
Excellent communication skills, both orally and written, including with learners, parents/carers, other staff and external agencies	Essential
Ability to be a person-centered practitioner	Essential
Evidence of the ability to lead high quality in-service training.	Essential
To be flexible, accessible and approachable	Essential
Evidence of the ability to provide leadership to a team in planning, implementing and evaluating the curriculum and raising achievement	Essential
A commitment to furthering own professional development and to the principle of continuous improvement	Essential
Confident and competent with a range of IT.	Essential
Excellent attendance record	Essential

Benefits of working at Orchard Hill College Academy Trust:

Why join OHCAT?

OHCAT is an exciting, forward-thinking organisation, and we offer many benefits to attract and keep our staff, contributing towards maintaining and improving wellbeing, and encouraging our required behaviours, achievements, values, and skills.

Here are just a few reasons to join OHCAT:

- Pathways for progression within the trust, ensuring you can grow and thrive in a supportive and inclusive environment
- Pension Scheme - you will be enrolled in either the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) or the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS), both offering life cover and financial protection for your family
- Salary Sacrifice Schemes (Cycle Scheme, Employee Car Lease Scheme and Home Electronics Scheme)
- Employee Wellbeing - We support employee wellbeing with access to counselling, mental health support, generous leave, flexible working, and enhanced parental leave including Employee Assistance Programme, MyGym Discounts, Corporate Eyecare Scheme and Free Virtual GP Appointments
- Employee Discounts (Blue Light Card, Costco Membership, Discounts for Teachers, and more)
- Other (Season Ticket Loan and Employee Referral Scheme)

The Appointment Process

Informal Discussion and School Visit

To arrange an informal discussion about the role with our Interim CEO, **Ian Valvona**, or our Regional Director of Education, **John Reilly**, or to arrange a visit to the school with John, please use the contact details below.

For discussions with Ian Valvona, please contact **Beverley Davidson**:

Telephone: 0203 897 7001

Email: bdavidson@orchardhill.ac.uk

For discussions with John Reilly or to arrange a school visit, please contact John directly:

Email: jreilly2@ohcat.org



Orchard Hill College Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

