



RECRUITMENT PACK

Vocational Lead Teacher

Salary	£35,000-£40,000
Contract	Full time, term time only
Location	OpenGate Education site Tees Valley
Reports to	Head of Centre
Travel	Full UK driving license with occasional travel to OpenGate sites

Help a young person take the next achievable step towards learning.

Welcome to OpenGate Education

We are building an alternative provision offer around the young person, not asking the young person to fit a standard model.

OpenGate Education provides high-quality, responsive alternative provision for children and young people who need a different route to engage, progress and succeed. We work closely with schools, local authorities, families and other professionals to deliver flexible support built around individual need, strong safeguarding and measurable outcomes.

What matters to us

- **Young people first.** We listen carefully, respond to individual need and keep progress meaningful to the young person.
- **Relationships with purpose.** Trust is the starting point, but every relationship is used thoughtfully to help a learner move forward.
- **High expectations with flexibility.** We adapt the route without losing sight of positive destinations and ambitious outcomes.
- **Partnership.** We work openly with families, schools, commissioners and other professionals because sustainable progress is shared work.

- **Safe, reflective practice.** Safeguarding, professional boundaries, accurate recording and supervision underpin everything we do.

The opportunity

You will join OpenGate at an exciting stage of development, with the opportunity to influence how our re-engagement service grows. You will have the freedom to use creativity, practical activities and community opportunities while working within clear safeguarding, quality and outcome frameworks.

Why work for us

We want people to feel well supported, recognised and able to build a long-term career with OpenGate Education.

- **Health and wellbeing prioritised.** A culture that treats staff wellbeing, safe workloads, good supervision and open conversations as essential to high-quality work with family friendly policies to support you.
- **Wellbeing days.** Dedicated wellbeing days to support rest, reflection and sustainable practice.
- **Discounts and perks.** Access to employee discounts and practical perks as part of our developing staff offer.
- **Rewards and retention.** Reward and retention initiatives that recognise commitment and support people to build their future with us.
- **Team recognition rewards.** Regular opportunities to celebrate excellent practice, contribution and the difference colleagues make.
- **Professional development.** Role-relevant training, reflective practice and development opportunities shaped around the work you do.
- **Grow your own career.** We want to invest in people and create genuine routes for progression, including promotion from within as OpenGate grows.
- **Staff uniform.** A practical OpenGate uniform will be provided for a consistent, professional identity when working in the community.
- **Company pension.** Access to a workplace pension in line with the scheme rules and statutory eligibility.
- **High quality environments with small class sizes.** We pride ourselves on individual support for our young people.
- **A rewarding workplace where you will be responsible for positive outcomes.** Our pathways look at future career aspirations and directly feed into our local communities, changing the lives for our young people.

What you can expect from us

- A clear induction and the guidance needed to work safely and confidently in community settings.
- Regular supervision, opportunities for reflective practice and access to leadership support.
- A collaborative team where ideas from frontline practice help shape the service.
- Clear expectations, purposeful plans and a shared focus on evidence of progress.

Who should apply

We welcome applicants with different professional backgrounds. What matters most is your ability to build trust, work safely and help young people make purposeful progress.

Your experience could come from

- Secondary school, Further education, Alternative Provision or SEND/SEMH teaching
- Sports, outdoor learning, creative or vocational coaching
- SEND/SEMH roles
- Training provider services
- Teaching of the wider curriculum and enrichment
- Ex-services or uniformed-service experience combined with youth work, mentoring, coaching or community experience
- Therapeutic, wellbeing or trauma-informed roles

You may be a strong fit if you

- Can connect with a young person who is reluctant to engage or has stopped trusting education.
- Stay calm, dependable with professional boundaries when progress is slow or plans change.
- Can turn a young person's interests into purposeful activities and achievable next steps.
- Are confident working independently, while knowing when to seek guidance or escalate a concern.
- Communicate well with families and professionals and keep clear, accurate records.
- Believe inclusion should be ambitious, practical and centered on better long-term outcomes.

Qualifications and transferable experience

A relevant qualification in vocational practice. If your background is not a traditional education route, but you can demonstrate safe practice, effective work with young people and the qualities described in this pack, we encourage you to apply.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Vocational Lead Teacher

Leading vocational learning and supporting site leadership

Organisation	<i>OpenGate Education</i>
Salary	35-40K
Contract	Full time, term time only
Reporting to	Head of Centre
Location	OpenGate Education site in Tees Valley, with occasional travel as required

About OpenGate Education

OpenGate Education provides high-quality, responsive alternative provision for children and young people who need a different route to engage, progress and succeed. We work closely with schools, local authorities, families and other professionals to deliver flexible support built around individual need, strong safeguarding and measurable outcomes.

Role purpose

The Vocational Lead Teacher will lead the development and delivery of practical, purposeful vocational learning that helps young people rebuild confidence, develop skills and prepare for further education, training and employment. The postholder will teach small groups and individual learners, coordinate agreed vocational pathways and support colleagues to deliver engaging, inclusive programmes for learners with varied needs and starting points.

The role also carries deputy responsibilities. Working closely with the Head of Centre, the postholder will support daily coordination, staff development, learner welfare and quality assurance, and deputise for the Head within agreed delegated authority. Teaching remains the central responsibility, with protected time for vocational leadership. The allocation will be agreed before appointment and reviewed as the provision develops.

Key responsibilities

Vocational teaching and learner development

- Plan and deliver engaging practical and vocational lessons in an agreed specialism, using clear learning objectives and appropriately sequenced activities.
- Teach small groups and individual learners, adapting tasks, resources and assessment for SEND, SEMH needs, disrupted education and differing starting points.
- Use initial assessment to identify interests, strengths, support needs and suitable learning and qualification goals.
- Embed literacy, numeracy, communication, digital skills and employability within relevant practical activities.
- Help learners develop independence, teamwork, problem-solving, safe working habits and pride in their achievements.
- Assess learning, provide constructive feedback and maintain accurate records and portfolios of progress and achievement.
- Use consistent routines and relational approaches to help learners engage, manage challenges and sustain participation.

Vocational curriculum and qualification leadership

- Work with the Head of Centre and Directors to develop a coherent vocational offer linked to learner needs, progression routes and available resources.
- Coordinate agreed pathways, which may include land-based learning, hospitality, sport, hair and beauty, creative enterprise, employability, construction or other approved areas.
- Lead delivery within personal competence and coordinate suitably qualified colleagues or partners for other specialist areas.
- Develop schemes of work, practical projects and assessment plans that connect learning with real-life and workplace contexts.
- Support the selection and implementation of appropriate qualifications and ensure delivery and assessment meet awarding-body requirements.
- Coordinate portfolio completion, assessment deadlines and internal quality assurance with designated assessors and quality assurance staff.

- Monitor participation, achievement and progression across vocational programmes, identifying gaps and improving delivery.
- Build links with employers, colleges and delivery partners to support careers learning, visits and suitable progression opportunities.

Deputy responsibilities and site coordination

- Support the Head of Centre to establish clear daily routines, communicate priorities and maintain a safe, welcoming and purposeful learning environment.
- Coordinate daily staffing, timetables, cover and learner activities when delegated, escalating capacity or safety concerns promptly.
- Support staff with practical guidance, modelling effective practice and contributing to supervision, induction and professional development.
- Line-manage designated colleagues where agreed and contribute to appraisal and the identification of training needs.
- Contribute to site improvement planning, learner reviews, quality assurance and commissioner reporting.
- Support responses to incidents, welfare concerns and complaints within delegated authority, keeping the Head of Site and Directors informed.
- Coordinate agreed operational matters during the Head's absence; escalate decisions beyond delegated authority, including significant safeguarding, staffing, financial or placement decisions.

Safeguarding, welfare and positive behaviour

- Follow safeguarding procedures, maintain professional boundaries and identify, record and report concerns immediately.
- Work closely with the Head of Site and safeguarding team to support learners' welfare and consistent implementation of individual support plans.
- Undertake deputy DSL responsibilities only if formally appointed and appropriately trained; deputy site duties do not automatically confer DSL responsibilities.
- Use calm, relational and restorative approaches to behaviour and support colleagues with de-escalation and consistent expectations.
- Monitor attendance and engagement in vocational sessions and contribute to coordinated follow-up and support.
- Contribute to individual plans and reviews, including relevant EHCP outcomes and transition or reintegration goals.

Practical learning safety and resources

- Complete and review activity, equipment and location risk assessments before delivery, implementing appropriate controls.
- Ensure learners receive suitable instruction, supervision and protective equipment and understand safe working practices.
- Check that tools, equipment and learning spaces are suitable, maintained and used only by appropriately competent staff and learners.
- Maintain clear arrangements for equipment storage, stock control, cleaning and the reporting of defects or incidents.
- Plan resources and purchases within agreed budgets, working with the Head of Centre and Director of Business.
- Ensure visits, external delivery and employer activities follow organisational safeguarding, consent and risk assessment procedures.

Partnership working and recording

- Work with families, referring schools, commissioners and colleagues to support individual learning and progression plans.

- Contribute to referral suitability discussions, induction, learner reviews and transition planning.
- Provide timely information on attendance, engagement, skills development and qualification progress.
- Maintain accurate records and handle learner and staff information securely in line with organisational procedures.

Key relationships

- Young people, parents and carers
- Head of Centre, Director of Operations, Director of Business and safeguarding team
- Teachers, vocational tutors, support staff, outreach practitioners and operations colleagues
- Schools, commissioners, SEND teams and other professionals
- Employers, colleges, awarding bodies, assessors and delivery partners

Person specification

Essential experience and knowledge

- A recognised teaching qualification relevant to the role and evidence of effective teaching practice.
- A relevant vocational qualification and/or substantial occupational experience in at least one pathway suitable for the provision.
- Successful experience of planning, delivering and assessing practical or vocational learning for young people.
- Experience of supporting learners with SEND, SEMH needs, disengagement or other barriers to education.
- Experience of coordinating a curriculum area, project or team and supporting colleagues to improve practice.
- Understanding of safeguarding, professional boundaries and appropriate escalation of concerns.
- Knowledge of risk assessment and safe supervision of practical activities, tools and equipment within an agreed specialism.
- Ability to adapt learning for different starting points and maintain accurate evidence of progress.
- Good communication, organisational and digital skills, with the ability to work effectively with families and professionals.

Desirable experience and knowledge

- Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) or Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status.
- Experience of alternative provision, specialist education or secondary-age vocational learning.
- Experience of deputy leadership, line management, pastoral coordination or daily site operations.
- Experience of vocational qualifications, including assessment portfolios and awarding-body quality assurance.
- Assessor or internal quality assurance qualifications relevant to the programmes delivered.
- Experience of developing employer partnerships, careers activities or progression routes.
- Knowledge of trauma-informed, relational and restorative practice and support for neurodivergent learners.
- Deputy DSL experience and relevant training, or willingness to undertake training if appointed to this responsibility.

Skills and personal qualities

- Able to make practical learning accessible, engaging and purposeful for young people who may lack confidence in education.
- Able to combine hands-on teaching with curriculum leadership and proportionate deputy responsibilities.
- Calm, dependable and confident making decisions within agreed authority and seeking support when needed.
- Able to build trusted relationships while maintaining clear boundaries and high expectations.

- Organised, resourceful and able to manage competing demands without compromising safety or learning quality.
- Able to coach colleagues, communicate clearly and contribute to a consistent team approach.
- Committed to inclusion, learner voice and meaningful progression.
- Flexible and enthusiastic about helping to shape a new provision.

Measures of success

- Learners engage in vocational learning and make evidenced progress in practical skills, confidence and independence.
- Vocational programmes are well planned, safe and linked to suitable qualifications or progression goals.
- Assessment records and portfolios are accurate, timely and meet relevant quality requirements.
- Learners develop employability skills and access informed, achievable next steps.
- Colleagues receive effective support and vocational teaching improves through review and development.
- Deputy responsibilities provide reliable continuity of site leadership within agreed authority.
- The teaching and leadership allocation supports effective delivery and timely completion of responsibilities.

Additional requirements

- The vocational specialism, teaching allocation, line-management arrangements and deputy responsibilities will be agreed before appointment and reviewed as the provision develops.
- The role requires regular on-site attendance and flexibility to support relevant meetings, visits, training and occasional off-site activities.
- Appointment will be subject to appropriate safer recruitment and pre-employment checks, including an enhanced DBS check, satisfactory references, identity, right-to-work and relevant qualification checks.
- The postholder must complete required training and follow organisational safeguarding, data protection and health and safety procedures.
- The duties listed are not exhaustive. The postholder may be expected to undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the level and purpose of the role.

OpenGate Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff are expected to share this commitment and to report concerns immediately in accordance with OpenGate Education's safeguarding procedures.