



Northern
Lights
LEARNING TRUST

**CATERING ASSISTANT
AT 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 Catering Assistant within Northern Lights Learning Trust.

We are a growing Multi-Academy Trust that is currently made up of 3 secondaries and 7 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

Welcome from the Head of School



Thank you for your interest in the post of Catering Assistant at Venerable Bede, where it is my privilege to serve as Head of School. We are a popular secondary school serving our local community. We sit on the border of Ryhope, Silksworth and Doxford Wards in Sunderland, but we have pupils who attend our school from across the City and beyond. It is our goal to provide an inclusive education, within the context of our local community, in which the rights of everyone are respected, regardless of personal beliefs. We are proud to be a school at the heart of our community.

We are a medium sized secondary school, built to accommodate 900 pupils. Our fundamental aim is to equip our pupils with the qualifications and skills which they will need to take their place in a modern British society. We hope that we play our part in helping our pupils understand how to live "Life in all its fullness" (John 10:10). Our mission statement is "To create a stimulating, secure and caring environment within which all members of our community will realise their potential in the light of the Christian Gospel." This is embodied in our school motto: "Soar to the Heights Together".

We want all of our pupils to reach their full potential. For each of our pupils we hope that with the guidance and support of their families and teachers, each of them will be able to develop their individual talents and fulfil their lifelong goals. I firmly believe that all children should have equal chance of success. It should be our goal in schools to enable all pupils to thrive, instilling in them a thirst for knowledge, and enabling them to understand how they play their part in unlocking their potential.

Thank you for your interest in our academy. Visits to the school are welcome, by prior agreement. Please contact Donna Mitchell on 0191 5239745 to express an interest.

Tracey Burgess
Head of School

CATERING ASSISTANT

**Permanent position required for as soon as possible
SP2 £24,413 (£11,299 pro rata actual)
20 hours per week, Term time only plus 5 days
(INSET)**

Northern Lights Learning Trust are looking for a catering assistant to provide daily support in the school kitchen at Venerable Bede CE Academy. The suitable candidate should be enthusiastic, organised and welcoming. The role entails setting up and serving school lunches whilst maintaining a high standard of food hygiene and safe working practices. You will work closely with the Kitchen team and under the supervision of the Lead cook. Experience of working in a school environment is advantageous however not essential for this role.

The successful candidate should have:

- Excellent communication skills
- A positive attitude, flexibility and adaptability
- High expectations of self and others
- Work well as part of a team

If this is you, we would really welcome your application

Details of the school can be found on the school website: <https://www.venerablebede.co.uk/>

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: 23rd January 2026

Shortlisting will take place on: w/c 26th January 2026

Interviews will take place on: w/c 26th January 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: Catering Assistant 20 Hours

Responsible to: Lead Cook

Salary band: SP2 £24,413 (£11,299 actual)

Start date: February 2026

Key Purpose of the role:

To actively participate in the daily operation of the school kitchen and set up and service of school lunches under the supervision of the Lead Cook. You will need to be self-motivated and have a can-do attitude. Experience of food preparation would be desirable though training would be given to the right candidate.

To carry out all duties to the required high standards of food hygiene, food handling and safe working practices, in line with School protocols and in agreement with the Lead Cook.

Duties

1. Assist in managing deliveries, the storage and rotation of all kitchen stock.
2. Simple food preparation including making salads, sandwiches, paninis. Chopping, grating and cooking of food items using ovens, fryers, grills and other equipment.
3. Preparing the lunch hall and clean down after service.
4. Sweeping, mopping, washing-up, emptying bins, cleaning equipment and surfaces.
5. Assist with temperature recording and completing H&S forms and kitchen records.
6. Assist with periodic deep cleans including ovens, fridges, floors and surfaces.
7. Willing to undertake simple training including necessary food and hygiene certificates and allergy training.
8. Occasional additional hours may be required.

Health & Safety

1. Maintain stocks of food under appropriately hygienic conditions and ensure stock rotation.
2. Ensure that all agreed health and safety policies, COSHH regulations and HACCP procedures are complied with.
3. Work safely at all time and fully support health and safety inspections.
4. Prepare, cook and serve meals in line with required standards.

5. Assist with transfer of food items from cooking areas to service warming trolleys.
6. Adhere to a high standard of personal cleanliness and hygiene.
7. Report immediately any machinery faults or unhygienic areas to the Lead Cook.
8. To be aware of the responsibility for personal Health, Safety and Welfare and that of others who may be affected by your actions or inactions.
9. Co-operate with the employer on all issues to do with Health, Safety & Welfare.
10. To carry out general kitchen duties including washing dishes, cleaning kitchen equipment and machinery, setting and clearing dining room furniture and food waste.

Supporting Pupils

1. Serve meals to pupils and staff, being aware of and taking into account medical conditions.
2. To ensure high standards of food presentation and cleanliness.
3. Act in a polite and helpful way when interacting with pupils.
4. Supervise pupils in the dining hall (during the lunch break) supporting wider staff to ensure good order and discipline in accordance with school policies.
5. Encourage the development of social skills and self-discipline amongst the pupils, e.g. eating in a socially acceptable manner, tidying away waste and displaying good manners.
6. Deal with or report, to the nearest member of the staff, incidents that are seen or reported regarding pupils' welfare.

Other Duties

1. Set a good example in terms of personal presentation, attendance and punctuality.
2. To action cleaning jobs from the rota, as requested by Lead Cook.
3. Efficient use of services including gas, electric and water.
4. Work within the performance management process of the School, to evaluate performance and take full advantage of the training and development available.
5. To carry out work in accordance with policies and procedures included in Food Safety, COSHH, Risk Assessment, Food Hygiene, Data Protection and Health and Safety.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION
CATERING ASSISTANT**

CATEGORY	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	METHOD OF ASSESSMENT
APPLICATION FORM	1. Completed application form		Application
EDUCATION AND TRAINING	2. Food hygiene certificate or willingness to undertake 3. Food allergen training or willing to undertake		Application E2-3
EXPERIENCE	4. Experience of working in a business kitchen environment 5. Experience of working in a service environment/ customer service.	6. Experience of working in a school kitchen 7. Experience of Health and Safety in the Workplace 8. Food preparation experience.	Application E4-5 / D6-8

APTITUDE AND SKILLS	9. Good standard of personal hygiene 10. Can work in a pressurised environment 11. Ability to follow instructions and use equipment safely 12. Can work independently and use initiative 13. Ability to meet deadlines 14. Ability to work in a team 15. Ability to use specialist equipment such as kitchen knives, catering appliances etc.	16. Basic knowledge of kitchen hygiene and safety standards, including manual handling 17. Ability to wear uniform provided, and maintain cleanliness standards	Application E10,11,15 / D16 Interview E9-15 / D17
PERSONAL QUALITIES TO INCLUDE	18. Be flexible and able to switch designated role in the kitchen as and when needed. 19. To hold integrity, honesty, confidentiality, reliability and teamwork in high regard. 20. To have a person-centred approach, being able to relate to young people.		Application E19-20 Interview E18-20

OTHER	<p>25. Have the ability to meet the physical demands of the role.</p> <p>26. Recommendation from both referees</p> <p>Fully enhanced DBS clearance with children's barred list check</p>	24. Strong recommendation	References Enhanced DBS certificate
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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