



George Stephenson
High School

Appointment of HLTA Language and Communication Unit

APT&C Grade 7
(£27,173-£28,562)

37 hours per week - 193 Days Term Time Only

Dear Applicant

Thank you for taking an interest in this position at our school. The information provided is intended to help you decide if we are a school you would like to join. I would also encourage you to look at our website (www.gshs.org.uk) which contains information that will give you a flavour of our achievements and ethos.

George Stephenson High School is an 11-18 Trust School of 1204 students, 112 of whom are in the Sixth Form. We have 134 staff, 80 of whom are teachers, 54 are associate/support staff. Our school has a really positive ethos, with very strong pastoral and academic guidance and a real emphasis on learning in everything we do. As part of our ongoing commitment to inclusive education and meeting the needs of young people across North Tyneside, George Stephenson High School is proposing the development of a Secondary Language and Communication SEND Unit for neurodiverse students.

I genuinely believe the support, care and welfare of our students is second to none. This school is and will always be a fully inclusive school which puts the students at the very centre of all that it does. We want it to be a school that is always a happy, safe and enjoyable place to be. Further to that we want the school to be at the very heart of the local community and to become the school of choice of all who live here. The proposed SEND Unit will provide a highly supportive and structured environment for students whose needs cannot be fully met through traditional mainstream approaches alone.

At George Stephenson High School, we believe we offer the best education possible for all of our young people, as well as a warm and friendly atmosphere. We value the individual differences of our students, encourage them to succeed in everything they do and help them to become caring, confident and responsible young people. We strive to achieve this through providing excellent teaching, fostering the very best relationships, having a personalized and enriched curriculum, having the highest aspirations for all of our students and developing strong partnerships. We also want the school to be at the very heart of the local community and to be the school of choice of all who live here. We are a popular, inclusive and oversubscribed school that is central to our community. The SEND Unit is intended to support students who benefit from smaller teaching groups, personalised learning approaches and a more sensory-sensitive learning environment.

The level of communication with and support from parents is excellent. We have a regular and well-attended Parents Forum, and a wide range of evening Parental Engagement events are held. Attendance at Parents Evenings was over 80% last year – this figure has increased every year for the last five years. Over 500 parents filled in the survey we administer on these evenings and the results were very positive indeed. 97% feel their child is happy here, 98% feel they are both safe and make good progress, 99% feel they are well taught here, 98% feel the school is well led and managed and over 95% would recommend our school to another parent. We are delighted that so many parents are choosing our school and are so positive about it and we believe that this shows a great deal of support from our local community.

We are proud to share that our March 2025 Ofsted inspection confirmed George Stephenson High School as a warm, respectful, and inclusive environment where students feel safe, supported, and inspired to achieve. Inspectors praised our calm and purposeful learning atmosphere, ambitious curriculum, and strong focus on responsive, inclusive teaching. Our provision for students with SEND was highlighted as a key strength, alongside our thriving sixth form and rich extracurricular offer. Ofsted also recognised the positive staff culture, underpinned by strong leadership, a focus on well-being, and a

commitment to professional development. This report reflects our shared ambition to help every student flourish both in and beyond the classroom.

The school is organised into year groups which are split into a number of separate tutor groups. Each year group has a full time non-teaching Guidance Manager who stays with the year group from Year 7 to Year 11 and so gets to know every student very well. Guidance Managers are generally the primary point of contact for parents wishing to discuss progress or problems with the school. They support the work of the form tutors and deal with difficulties referred to them by the tutors or subject staff, as well as recognising and rewarding all positive aspects of students' life in school. Each year group is also supported by a teaching Achievement Support Coordinator who acts as a mentor to students of all abilities. The tutor groups, under the leadership of the Guidance Manager, remain together with the same form tutor through years 7 to 11, meeting for registration periods daily, and in some subjects are taught as a class group in the younger years. A strong sense of coherence and team working is developed over these years. The form tutor has day to day responsibility for our students' welfare whilst they are in the school and have a very important role to play in helping them to settle into their new school. They also closely monitor and track their academic progress, support them to reach their targets and help detect and solve any problems which may arise.

We have made real progress over recent years and are proud of what we have achieved so far. However, we know that we have the capacity to improve still further. We are a forward looking school, committed to giving our students the best possible educational experience. Although increasingly successful, we are not a complacent school. There are many aspects that we can improve further and our challenge is to do this without compromising our existing strengths. George Stephenson High School is a great place to work, with fantastic staff and talented students. I hope you are enthused by the enclosed information and choose to apply.

This is a new post within the school, and we are seeking to appoint a highly motivated, compassionate and skilled Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) to play a leading role within our newly developing Secondary Language & Communication SEND Unit. The postholder will manage the development and day-to-day running of the Unit, providing high-quality support for neurodiverse students with EHCPs who require a specialist learning environment within a mainstream secondary school setting.

This specialist provision will support a small cohort of neurodiverse students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) who require a more structured, nurturing and sensory-aware environment in order to successfully access secondary education

If you are passionate about learning, committed to helping students who need encouragement to succeed, and eager to work alongside friendly, hardworking colleagues, we would be delighted to receive your application. This role offers real potential to make a difference and evolve, allowing you to shape and develop the position in line with the school's needs and your professional strengths.

Please submit a letter of application (no more than two sides of A4) and a completed application form by noon, 8th July 2026 for the attention of Mrs Angela Cowen (Headteacher's PA).

Yours sincerely



Mr. Peter Douthwaite
Headteacher

HLTA (Language and Communication Unit)

GRADE/SALARY: APT&C Grade 7 (£27,173-£28,562)

WORKING HOURS: 37 hours per week

JE CODE: D172

RESPONSIBLE TO: SENCO/ Assistant Headteacher

Purpose of the Role

To manage the development and day-to-day running of the Secondary Language & Communication SEND Unit, providing high-quality support for neurodiverse students with EHCPs who require a specialist learning environment within a mainstream secondary school setting.

To lead on the delivery of structured teaching, sensory regulation and communication support programmes which enable students to:

- access learning successfully,
- develop independence,
- improve communication skills,
- regulate emotions,
- engage positively with both specialist and mainstream environments where appropriate.

Main Responsibilities

Support for pupils

- Plan and deliver personalised learning and intervention programmes aligned with EHCP outcomes
- Support a small cohort of students, adapting provision to individual needs
- Create a structured, calm, and predictable learning environment
- Act as a key adult, supporting wellbeing, engagement, and relationships
- Support students during transitions and less structured times
- Use positive behaviour and regulation strategies
- Facilitate appropriate access to mainstream lessons and wider school experiences

Leadership of the SEND Unit

- Support the SENCo in leading and developing the provision
- Provide day-to-day guidance to support staff within the unit
- Monitor quality of provision and promote consistent, high standards
- Contribute to planning, evaluation, and improvement of the unit
- Ensure EHCP provision is delivered, monitored, and reviewed effectively
- Maintain accurate documentation, including pupil profiles and provision plans
- Promote strong understanding of student needs across staff

Teaching & Learning

- Work collaboratively with teaching and pastoral staff to support inclusive practice
- Adapt resources and teaching approaches to meet communication and sensory needs
- Deliver targeted interventions (1:1 and small group)
- Monitor, record, and report on student progress
- Provide clear feedback to staff, parents, and external professionals

Curriculum Support

- Contribute to the design of a personalised, developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Ensure focus on communication, regulation, literacy/numeracy, and life skills
- Support functional learning and independence
- Develop and maintain appropriate specialist resources
- Promote engagement through practical and experiential learning

Working with Parents and External Professionals

- Build positive partnerships with parents and carers
- Act as a key contact within the provision
- Work with external professionals (e.g. SALT, EPs, OTs)
- Contribute to EHCP reviews and multi-agency meetings
- Support smooth transitions for students

Contribution to the school

- Promote inclusive practice across the school
- Support staff in developing SEND expertise
- Engage in professional development
- Contribute to meetings and whole-school initiatives

Additional Requirements

1. Enhanced DBS check from the Disclosure and Barring Service
2. Two references from current and previous employers (or education establishment if applicant not in employment)
3. Children's Barred persons list Check

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and young people. Please note this position will require an Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service.

Employees will be expected to comply with any reasonable request from Line Manager to undertake work of a similar level that is not specified in this job description.

It is understood that areas of responsibility are from time to time subject to review and are negotiable in the light of the needs of the school and the professional development of the staff.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

HLTA (Language and Communication Unit)

Area	Criteria	R	A
	Requirement - E = Essential - D= Desirable Assessment by Application =A Interview process = I		
Skills Knowledge Aptitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong understanding of autism and communication needs 	E	AI
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of sensory regulation and neurodiversity 	E	AI
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to create structured, supportive learning environments 	E	AI
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of SEND Code of Practice and EHCP processes 	E	A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong communication and teamwork skills 	E	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to build positive relationships and adapt learning 	E	AI
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience in SEND or specialist provision 	D	A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of visual communication systems 	D	A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience with sensory or communication interventions 	D	A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life skills programme experience 	D	A
Qualifications and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current NVQ level 2 in English and Maths or equivalent and willingness to work towards 	E	A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet Higher Level Teaching Assistant standards or equivalent qualification or experience. 	E	A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training in relevant learning strategies, specifically literacy interventions and assessments. 	E	A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist skills/training in curriculum or learning area e.g. bi-lingual, sign language, ICT. 	D	A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree in a relevant discipline (e.g., English Literature, Education) is desirable. 	D	A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training relating to Autism/SLCN/sensory needs 	D	A
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience working with children of relevant age in a learning environment 	E	AI
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience supporting students with additional needs 	D	AI
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience delivering personalised learning programmes 	D	AI
Disposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to work on own initiative and as part of a team with minimal supervision, 	E	I
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A friendly, positive, and flexible approach 	E	I

What We Offer

Opportunity to shape and develop a new specialist provision

Strong and supportive leadership team

Commitment to staff wellbeing and development

A passionate and inclusive SEND team

Meaningful opportunities to improve outcomes for vulnerable young people