Job Description

ROLE TITLE	Head of HR Business Partnering
CONTRACTED HOURS	37 hours per week, 52 weeks per year
LOCATION	Hybrid working: two days onsite, with homeworking and travel to Trust locations as required.
GRADE / SCALE POINT – SALARY	Grade 8 scp 40-45
PENSION SCHEME	LGPS
REPORTING TO	Chief People Officer
RESPONSIBLE FOR	HR Business Partners, with direct line-management responsibility

INTRODUCTION

Unity Schools Partnership is a partnership of schools at the heart of our communities, working together so every child is known, included and receives a brilliant education that prepares them for empowerment, fulfilment, and success.

Our schools aim to be places where children belong, enjoy learning and develop the confidence, knowledge, and fluency they need for the next stage of life. We want all pupils, regardless of starting point, to flourish as kind, confident citizens who celebrate difference and achieve beyond reasonable expectations. Teaching is informed by evidence, expert subject knowledge, and a strong curriculum, so that pupils make progress every day.

Our staff know their work matters. We nurture ambition through clear pathways, high-quality professional development and opportunities to grow, lead, and extend their impact across the Trust. Rooted in civic responsibility and inclusion, our leaders work with others to remove barriers, address inequity, and improve life chances for children and families. We collaborate deliberately, innovating and sharing practice for the benefit of pupils within our schools and beyond. Our staff brings the Trust's values of Integrity, Inclusion and Kindness to life through the way we work with pupils, families, colleagues, and communities, ensuring they are visible in our decisions, relationships, and everyday practice.



The Trust's ambition is for its schools to become routinely strong over the next three years, underpinned by high performance, strong collaboration, and the capacity to support improvement across the wider education system.

CORE JOB PURPOSE

Lead the HR Business Partnering team so that Trust schools and central teams receive the operational and strategic HR support they need. By strengthening people management and reducing avoidable HR workload, enable leaders to focus on their core work and contribute to the Trust's ambition for every child to receive a brilliant education.

Working with the Chief People Officer and the Head of Transactional Services (HR and Payroll), contribute to the development and implementation of the Trust's objectives, People Strategy, and workforce strategy. Lead agreed corporate HR priorities, including policy development, consistent employee lifecycle processes, organisational change, and Trust-wide implementation.

Provide direct line management, coaching and supervision to the HR Business Partners, consulting the Chief People Officer where necessary. Use workforce data and HR metrics to make informed decisions, agree team priorities, and take practical action that enables leaders to focus on their core work.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Head of HR Business Partnering will lead a reliable and responsive HR service that reduces the operational burden on schools and enables school and central leaders to focus on their core responsibilities.

Leadership and service delivery

- Lead, coach, and develop the HR Business Partnering team, ensuring consistent, timely and customer-focused support.
- Act as the senior HR partner to schools and central teams, resolving issues efficiently and escalating only where necessary.
- Simplify HR processes, improve manager capability, and remove avoidable operational workload from schools.
- Work closely with transactional HR, payroll, and finance to make sure queries reach the right team and are resolved promptly.

Workforce planning and attendance

- Support delivery of the People Strategy and workforce plan using reliable HR data and insight.
- Lead the Trust's strategic approach to improving staff attendance, using data to identify trends, target support and hold leaders to account for effective absence management.
- Develop practical interventions that improve employee wellbeing, engagement, recruitment, retention, performance, and succession planning.
- Provide clear workforce reporting and recommendations to senior leaders.

Employee relations and organisational change

- Provide expert oversight of complex employee relations cases, supporting early resolution and consistent application of Trust policies.
- Coach HR Business Partners and managers to handle people matters confidently, fairly and at the appropriate level.
- Lead major restructures, consultations, TUPE transfers, and other organisational change, working effectively with staff and trade unions.
- Alongside the Chief People Officer, oversee dismissal, settlement, and Employment Tribunal matters.

Policy, development, and improvement

- Lead development and implementation of clear, legally compliant HR policies and consistent employee lifecycle processes.
- Design and deliver practical people-management training for the HR team and Trust leaders.
- Lead priority HR projects, improve systems and processes, and ensure the service responds to legislative and organisational change.
- Promote collaborative, professional and solutions-focused working across the Trust.

ROLE INTERFACES

- Chief People Officer
- Head of Transactional Services (HR and Payroll)
- HR Business Partners and wider HR and payroll teams
- Trust Executive Team and central team leaders
- Headteachers, governors, school leaders, managers, and employees
- Finance and other central teams
- Trade unions and employee representatives
- External advisers, legal representatives, and relevant agencies

SAFEGUARDING

Unity Schools Partnership is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at all times. All postholders are responsible for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children they come into contact with, in line with the Trust's and schools' safeguarding policies, procedures and statutory guidance.

The postholder must be alert to signs that may indicate vulnerability, harm, or risk, and must respond promptly to any concern. This includes sharing information appropriately, following the Trust's safeguarding procedures and working with designated safeguarding and pastoral colleagues so that concerns are recorded, supported, and escalated without delay.

Where the role involves direct work with children, families, or external agencies, the postholder must maintain accurate records, professional boundaries, and safe working practices at all times.

The post holder is required to hold a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

GENERAL

1. Actively contribute to and promote the overall ethos, values and reputation of the Trust and its schools.
2. Participate in training, professional development and performance review as required.
3. Maintain high standards of professionalism, tact, and diplomacy in dealings with pupils, parents, staff, governors, partners, media contacts, and visitors.
4. Maintain confidentiality and exercise discretion in relation to sensitive information, safeguarding matters, and the Trust's business at all times.
5. Act as an ambassador for the Trust within local communities and beyond, promoting a positive and professional image.
6. Undertake any other reasonable duties commensurate with the grade of the post, as requested by the line manager.

Person Specification

CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Qualifications	CIPD Level 7 qualification or an equivalent relevant qualification; alternatively, relevant experience demonstrating the knowledge and skills needed to deliver the strategic and operational HR responsibilities of this role. Evidence of continuing professional development.	Chartered CIPD Member.
Knowledge	Current knowledge of employment legislation and HR best practice.	Knowledge of current education-sector workforce issues.

	Strong knowledge of employee relations, organisational change, attendance management and policy development. Understanding of workforce data, HR metrics, and management information.	Knowledge of STPCD, the Burgundy Book and NJC Green Book provisions.
Experience	Significant experience as an HR Business Partner or HR Manager in a large or complex organisation. Line-management experience and experience advising senior leaders. Experience of managing complex employee relations cases and formal HR processes. Experience of leading organisational change, for example restructuring, TUPE, consultation or redundancy processes. Evidence of using HR data to improve HR activities, for example staff attendance. Designing and delivering HR training, coaching, and manager development.	Experience supporting schools or a multi-academy trust. Experience in a unionised environment. Experience of job evaluation, organisational development, or succession planning.
Skills and Aptitudes	Strong leadership, coaching and team-development skills. Excellent communication, influencing and negotiation skills, with credibility at senior level. Sound judgement, resilience, and the ability to find practical solutions to complex issues under pressure. Ability to make commercially aware decisions that balance workforce needs, operational delivery, value for money and organisational risk.	Project management skills.

	Strong analytical, organisational, and problem-solving skills, with attention to detail. Works collaboratively and provides a helpful, responsive service. Handles sensitive information with absolute discretion and maintains confidentiality. Current driving licence and ability to travel between Trust sites.	