



ORCHARD
LEARNING ALLIANCE
WHERE EVERYONE THRIVES

July 2026

HR and Payroll Administrator Job Description and Person Specification



The Orchard Learning Alliance is committed to creating a diverse workforce. We will consider all qualified applicants for employment without regard to sex, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, age, disability, marriage or civil partnership.

Job details

Salary range: Grade 5 SCP 12 £28,598fte – SCP 17 £31,022fte

Working hours per week: 25 hours per week.

Hours of work: Flexible to meet the needs of the business, to include the core working day of 9am to 3pm. Some school holiday working is required to complete payroll tasks.

Location: Majority of the time at the Central Office located in Woodley. Role will require travel to schools on occasion (currently Woodley, Early, Spencers Wood and Tilehurst) and some home working is also considered.

Contract type: Permanent, term time only plus 3 additional working weeks (role necessitates some work outside of term time, to be discussed with the successful candidate).

Reporting to: Head of Human Resources & Payroll

Responsible for: n/a

Job purpose

The Orchard Learning Alliance is an Academy Trust, that has already grown to ten schools. As part of this growth, we are looking to appoint an HR and Payroll Administrator to support our Head of Human Resources and Payroll with a range of people and payroll matters. The role will be busy and varied and join a passionate team who firmly believe in the unique culture of our schools and the Trust.



Main Duties and Responsibilities

To provide HR & Payroll administrative support as required and to carry out all duties efficiently and to a high standard of accuracy:

HR Administration:

- Maintain accurate and confidential employee records across the Trust.
- Prepare contracts of employment, offer letters, contract variation letters, and other HR correspondence.
- Support recruitment and onboarding processes including:
 - Advertising vacancies
 - Arranging interviews
 - Obtaining references
 - Completing DBS and right to work checks
 - Coordinate induction process where necessary with schools.
- Ensure compliance with safer recruitment and support the maintenance of the Trust single central record
- Monitor probationary periods and issue associated documentation to relevant line managers
- Support the management of the exit interview process, ensuring completion and accurate record keeping
- Maintain staff absence records and support absence monitoring processes.
- Support schools with Occupational Health referrals and related documentation as required.
- Support the Central team and Schools with HR administration in line with Trust policies and procedures.
- Liaise with external HR providers and payroll services where appropriate.
- Respond to HR and Payroll queries from a shared inbox

Payroll Administration:

- Prepare and submit payroll variations including:
 - Starters and leavers
 - Contractual amendments
 - Overtime and additional hours
 - Sickness and maternity calculations
 - Unpaid leave



- And pension changes
- Work closely with payroll providers to ensure accurate and timely payroll processing
- Responsibility for checking monthly payroll reports and ensuring its accuracy and timely authorisation within the timeframe set by the Trusts Payroll provider
- Respond to payroll and pension queries from employees
- Support pension administration including Teachers' Pension Scheme and Local Government Pension scheme requirements.
- Support Trust where required in training and upskilling on payroll system
- Provide Trust wide reports to Head of Human Resources & Payroll

Compliance and Safeguarding

- Ensure HR and payroll records comply with:
 - Employment legislation
 - GDPR
 - Safeguarding requirements
 - And Trust Policies
- Maintain accurate compliance documentation for internal and external audits
- Support safeguarding checks and employment compliance processes.

Reporting and Administration

- Support Trust leaders and central teams with HR administrative tasks
- Assist with policy implementation and HR process improvements

Whilst the main responsibilities are outlined here, these are not exhaustive.



Peron Specification

Education and Training

Essential

Excellent literacy and numeracy skills - GCSE Maths and English Grade C or equivalent

Desirable

Associate member of the CIPD (or working towards)

Knowledge and Experience

Experience working in a busy office environment carrying out administrative tasks

Experience of working within the education sector (preferably within schools)

Experience managing multiple priorities and meeting deadlines.

Previous experience in a Payroll or HR administrative role

Experience of using Payroll Systems and applicant tracking systems

Skills

The ability to build effective relationships

An understanding of the current Educational environment

Flexible, adaptable and an agent to change

Strong organisational and administrative skills.

Proficient in Microsoft Office

Ability to maintain confidentiality

Excellent attention to detail

Ability to use initiative and manage workload independently

Excellent communication skills

Personal qualities

A willingness to undertake additional training, keep up-to-date with developments and changes in good practice

Enthusiastic, professional team player, able to display humour and strong resolve



Respects confidentiality, deals sensitively with people and resolves conflicts

Supports and demonstrates commitment to the vision of the Trust

Able to work with minimum supervision and as part of a team

Able to work to tight deadlines and under pressure

A commitment to safeguarding & promoting the welfare of children and young people

Safer Recruitment & Safeguarding

Introduction

The Orchard Learning Alliance is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its schools. The Trust complies with the statutory legislative requirements and guidance that seeks to protect children, including 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance. In order to meet this responsibility, we follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants.

Safer Recruitment

Job descriptions and person specifications make reference to safeguarding and child protection. All posts are subject to satisfactory completion of enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate (DBS) checks. All advertisements include a safeguarding statement and commitment.

Application Stage

All applicants are scrutinised to verify identity and academic qualifications, and professional references are requested using our standard pro-forma for short-listed candidates. As a minimum, references should be from the two most recent employers. References are checked against previous employment history and gaps in employment. Professional references must be obtained from work email addresses. Our standard reference proforma makes reference to suitability to work with children and young people. The application form requires applicants to complete a disclosure of any criminal convictions.

Short-listing

Only those candidates meeting the criteria outlined in the person specification will be short listed. All short-listed candidates will be subject to an online search as part of our safer recruitment due diligence.

Interview

Shortlisted candidates will take part in an interview and selection process. Candidates will be asked to address any discrepancies or gaps in their employment history. Candidates will be



reminded of their responsibility to disclose any criminal convictions if they have not already done so. Proof of identity, qualifications and right to work in the UK must also be provided at interview.

Appointment

An enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate (DBS) will be required for all appointed posts. Other pre-employment compliance checks will be carried out. This post is subject to satisfactory references which will be requested prior to interview, an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, online searches, medical check, evidence of qualifications plus verification of the right to work in the UK. For teaching positions, barred list checks and prohibition from teaching checks will also be carried out. For leadership positions, section 128 checks will be performed. All staff will receive a comprehensive induction programme covering all aspects of safeguarding and health and safety.

Probation

All new staff will be subject to the trust probation procedures for a period of 6 months. The probation period is to enable the assessment of an employee's suitability for the job and which includes a review of the performance of new staff in relation to duties, skills, qualifications and experience outlined in the job description and person specification.

This will also include an employee's suitability to work with children and young people and their commitment to safeguarding and child protection.

Equal opportunities

OLA recognises the value of, and seeks to achieve, a diverse workforce and takes positive steps to create an employment culture in which people feel confident of being treated with fairness, dignity and respect, irrespective of their differences. The Trust is committed to the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to the promotion of good relations between all.

General Data Protection Regulation

OLA is committed to ensuring that the privacy of an individual is protected. By signing a contract of employment, the employee is agreeing to the Trust processing their personal data, including 'sensitive personal data' as defined in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), for the purposes of the operation, management, security and/or administrations, as well as complying with applicable laws, regulations and procedures. The information you provide (except Equality Monitoring Information) may be shared with partner organisations that provide services to the Trust. A full list of these organisations is available on request from the CFO.

