



BEST
BEDFORDSHIRE
SCHOOLS TRUST

BEST Central Team Application Pack

Operations Manager



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www.bestacademies.org.uk



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Bedfordshire Schools Trust and thank you for expressing an interest in our current vacancy.

We are looking for a dynamic Operations Manager to be part of our Central Services Team. This is a highly autonomous role with real impact, overseeing areas including:

- Procurement and contract management for ICT, HR, and other services
- Capital and estates management, including budget oversight and SCA funding
- HR support and leading cross-Trust groups (HR Leads, ICT Leads and Site Agents)
- Health & safety and compliance across all Trust schools
- Lead on projects from conception through to successful delivery
- Lead the development and day-to-day management of BEST House, ensuring it meets Trust needs, enables community use and operates efficiently and sustainably.

You will be the key operational link between Central Services and our school leaders, ensuring our academies can focus on delivering outstanding education while meeting all statutory and regulatory requirements.

What we offer

- A leadership role with genuine responsibility and autonomy with the Central Services Team
- Opportunity to shape and deliver projects that have a real impact across multiple schools
- Working as part of a supportive, forward-thinking Trust leadership team
- Competitive salary with a clear progression framework
- A culture that values professional development and continuous learning
- The chance to make a difference in the education of thousands of children across Bedfordshire



Who we are looking for

Our ideal candidate is:

- An experienced operational leader with strong knowledge of estates, HR, health & safety, finance, and contracts
- Confident in project management, with the ability to take initiatives from conception to completion
- Skilled in leading and developing cross-functional teams
- Highly organised, solutions-focused, and able to work in a fast-paced environment
- Committed to the vision, values, and ethos of BEST

We have collated this application pack to provide you with all the information you should need to enable you to apply for this role.

However, if you would like any further information or would like to make a visit to our trust or any of our academies, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

The closing date for applications: 12 noon, Wednesday 4th February 2026

Interviews are planned for Tuesday 10th February 2026

I look forward to receiving your application.

Mark Liddiard
Chief Operating Officer
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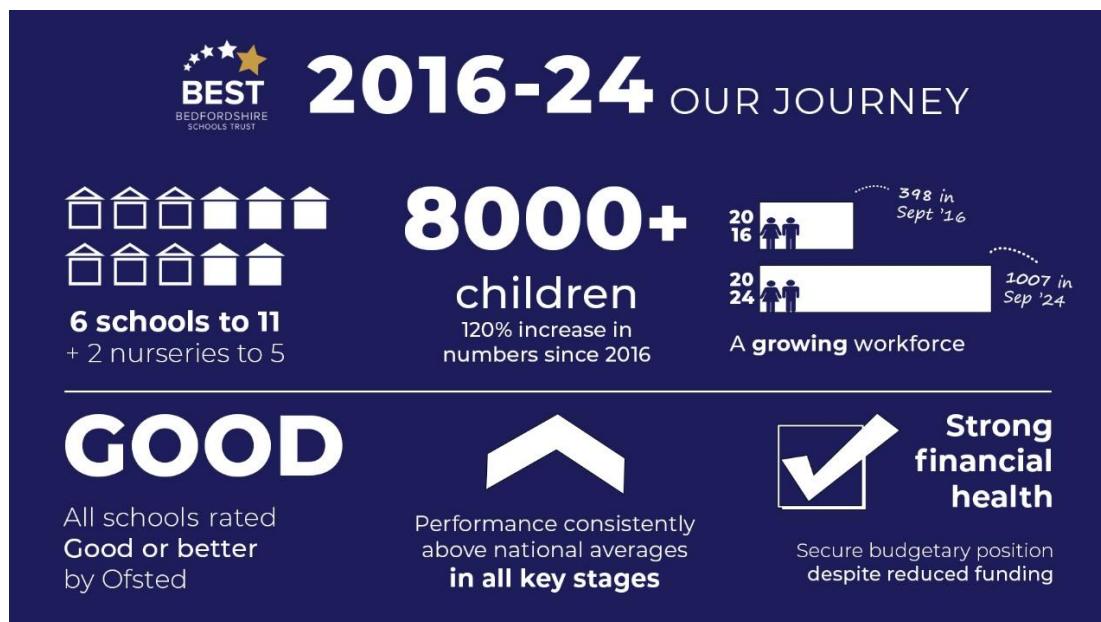
Bedfordshire Schools Trust
Shefford Road, Clifton, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5QS
www.bestacademies.org.uk



ABOUT BEST

The Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) is a multi-academy trust providing exceptional education across a community of 11 thriving schools and five nurseries, delivering first-choice education from Early Years to Advanced Level study.

Since forming in 2016, we have grown significantly into one of the largest trusts in the county. We now educate 8,000 children across the area, from nursery age to advanced level study, and have over 1,000 members of staff.



Our mission is '*to grow the BEST in everyone*', and we believe in fostering high expectations, hard work, and a collaborative community of schools. Together, our schools add value, strive for excellence, and continually improve.

It is our aim to grow the BEST in everyone, and everything we do is driven by our values.



We will:

- Always put children first
- Collaborate to support and compete to challenge
- Provide community-based provision
- Have the courage to be compassionate

Our aims can only be achieved if we recruit, retain and develop the highest quality workforce – and we want those we employ to be valued in the workplace.

As a single employer, we are able to offer all our staff a fantastic range of benefits, including an excellent working environment, opportunities for career development and training, and discounts and deals that will help save you money.

Full details can be found in our BEST People staff benefits brochure, available for download from our MyNewTerm careers page, or on our website at www.bestacademies.org.uk/jobs

The last 10 years of BEST have been a real success story – and we are looking forward to an exciting future.



OUR SCHOOLS AND NURSERIES

The 11 schools that make up the BEST family are:

- Campton Academy, Campton
- Castle Newnham, Bedford
- Etonbury Academy, Arlesey
- Gothic Mede Academy, Arlesey
- Gravenhurst Academy, Upper Gravenhurst
- Langford Village Academy, Langford
- Lawnside Academy, Biggleswade
- Pix Brook Academy, Stotfold
- Robert Bloomfield Academy, Shefford
- Samuel Whitbread Academy, Clifton
- St Christophers Academy, Dunstable

We also have five nurseries:

- BEST Nursery (Arlesey)
- BEST Nursery (Langford)
- BEST Nursery (Shefford)
- School-based nursery provision at Gothic Mede Academy
- School-based nursery provision at St Christophers Academy



HOW TO APPLY

We use an application form, rather than asking for CVs, for most vacancies. This ensures all applicants present their information in the same standardised format and tell us only what we need to know.

Apply online via the MyNewTerm website at [MyNewTerm](#) before the closing date.

Closing date: 12noon, Wednesday 4th February 2026

Interview date: Tuesday 10th February 2026

BEST is an equal opportunities employer and we are committed to encouraging equality, diversity and inclusion among our workforce.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All offers of employment will be subject to satisfactory pre-employment checks and references, including enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.

Strictly no agencies.

We look forward to receiving your application.



JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	Operations Manager
Salary/Grade Range	CBG12 (points 35-40) - £46,142 to £51,356
Job Type	Full time, permanent
Hours	37 hours per week, Monday to Friday (full year)
Reporting to	Chief Operating Officer

Purpose of Role

The BEST Operations Manager plays a vital role in ensuring our academies thrive by providing outstanding operational support across the Trust. Leading with autonomy, they manage a wide range of areas including capital and estates, ICT and HR contract management, health and safety, HR support, and insurance renewal. Responsible for the day-to-day oversight of all operational Service Level Agreements, they ensure contracts are effectively monitored and delivered. Working closely with school leaders, the Operations Manager enables each academy to focus on excellence in education, maintains compliance with statutory requirements, and drives strategic initiatives that support the growth and success of Bedfordshire Schools Trust.

- To provide excellent operational support to schools and nurseries
- To manage significant operational aspects of BEST with high levels of autonomy
- To ensure BEST is compliant with relevant statutory and regulatory requirements
- To support the strategic development and growth of BEST
- To oversee significant budgetary areas such as School Condition Allocation funding
- To uphold the vision and values of BEST



Duties and Responsibilities

- To lead and manage across a broad range of operational and development areas across the Trust with high levels of autonomy, including: capital and estates, contract management of the ICT and HR contracts, health & safety, human resources support, insurance renewal
- To be responsible for the day-to-day management and oversight of all operational Service Level Agreements including IT, HR, H&S and Capital & Estates, ensuring ongoing monitoring of contracts
- To lead on the capital programme of works for schools, nurseries and the Pendleton centre managing the budget with the central finance team.
- Ensure robust procurement and delivery in order to maintain the estate in accordance with priorities and any relevant legislation, reporting as appropriate to the Community, Capital and Estates Committee
- To lead on developing and maintaining the Trust's Health and Safety Policy and oversee processes in schools to ensure legal compliance and best practice e.g. use of Smartlog; reporting processes in line with policy; progression of actions on annual H&S audits
- To lead and oversee the operational implementation of significant operational change such as procurement and tendering for new services and products (e.g. ICT contract, BromCom implementation), renegotiating with existing providers and oversight of operational SLAs
- To act as a key link for school Principals and other senior leaders within the organisation – responding to queries, advising and working to ensure school level compliance with statutory responsibilities across a wide range of areas
- To work with the COO in respect of the growth and development of the Trust - supporting new schools to join the Trust; two tier developments and sport/community facilities operated by BEST.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and statutory responsibilities for all Trust HR policies, in accordance with the Policy & Statutory Document Schedule, obtaining guidance from the Trust's HR consultant as appropriate.
- To manage the HR function for the Central Team and Principals, ensuring all legal requirements are met and that the highest levels of confidentiality are maintained at all times.
- To ensure accurate and timely reporting to trustees on key operational and



statutory areas such as capital and estates (including budget management of School Condition Allocation funding), health and safety reports, policy developments, in line with the Trust's governance arrangements

- To manage BEST House and the associated budget, ensuring that the environment meets all statutory requirements; to develop and implement a strategy to promote the commercial sustainability of the facilities
- To lead HR, ICT and Site Agent cross Trust groups to encourage and promote best practice and a cohesive Trust wide approach
- Develop effective relationships with all stakeholders, including contractors, to ensure effective service delivery and operational performance, flagging any concerns to the COO as necessary
- To line manage, develop and oversee the BEST Business Administrator role
- To work closely with the BEST Compliance Manager, Operations Team and the wider Central Services team
- To attend a variety of meetings to represent BEST and/or the COO
- To prepare and file statutory returns as required e.g. Trade Union Facilities Time; Gender Pay Gap Report; Capital Spend Survey, Land and Buildings Collection Tool and applications to the DFE for acquisitions/disposals
- Liaise with agencies such as local authorities, Department for Education, Ofsted, HSE as required
- To work with wider colleagues within the Trust e.g. Finance, School Improvement teams etc. to ensure coherent and comprehensive support is provided to all academies within the Trust

Please note, while every effort has been made to explain the duties and responsibilities of the post, each individual task undertaken may not be identified.

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



PERSON SPECIFICATION

Job Title: Operations Manager

Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Education & Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree or equivalent qualification or significant experience in a relevant discipline (Business Administration, Facilities Management, HR, Education Management) • Evidence of continuing professional development in operational leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional qualifications in School Business Management, facilities management, HR, health & safety (e.g., NEBOSH, IOSH, CIPD) • Project management qualification • Leadership or management training in education or other relevant sectors • Formal CDM awareness/training
Professional Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant experience in an operational management role • Experience managing estates, capital projects, facilities, contracts, and budgets • Experience managing HR functions • Experience ensuring statutory compliance across health & safety, employment, and operational policies • Experience in line management and staff development • Experience in procurement and contract management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in a large educational trust or public sector organisation • Knowledge of School Condition Allocation funding. • Experience reporting to senior leadership boards, committees, or trustees • Experience working with external agencies (LA, DfE, HSE) or similar agencies • Experience leading groups/networks such as HR Leads, ICT Leads, Site Agents, and School Business Managers • Experience managing operational change programmes, including procurement and tendering



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience managing projects from conception through to completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience supporting growth initiatives such as schools joining a trust or an organisation
Professional Skills and Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong knowledge of operational management across estates, capital, HR, H&S, contracts, and compliance • Understanding of statutory requirements in HR, health & safety, estates, and educational governance • Financial management and budget oversight skills (including School Condition Allocation) • Ability to develop, implement, and monitor operational policies and procedures • Excellent organisational, project management and prioritisation skills • Understanding of procurement, contract negotiation, and CDM regulations • Ability to take a project from conception through to completion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of IT systems and software relevant to school operations (e.g., Smartlog, BromCom or similar) • Knowledge of Trust governance structures and statutory reporting obligations (e.g., Gender Pay Gap, Trade Union Facilities Time) • Knowledge of capital project funding, DfE estates management processes • Knowledge of change management methodologies • Understanding of risk management frameworks in multi-academy trusts • Knowledge of operational and income generating strategies for schools
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong leadership and people management skills; ability to motivate and develop teams • Professionalism, discretion and confidentiality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to deputise effectively for senior leaders • Ability to influence and build strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, both written and verbal • High level of initiative, problem-solving, and decision-making ability • Ability to lead cross-functional groups • Ability to see projects through from conception to completion • Strong commitment to the vision, values, and ethos of BEST 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to operate strategically and contribute to organisational development • Resilience and adaptability in a fast-changing, high-demand environment • Collaborative approach and ability to work across multiple sites and teams
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We are committed to the safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare and offers of employment are subject to DBS clearance

