

Job Description - Head of Estates

Reporting to - Executive Director

The postholder will work in close partnership with the Director of Finance to ensure clear separation of delivery and financial accountability, in line with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation and DfE governance expectations.

Main Purpose

- The Head of Estates will provide Trust-wide strategic leadership and direction for the Estates and Facilities function across Kingston Educational Trust's portfolio of schools, setting standards and priorities and providing assurance that the estate supports and enhances the Trust's educational vision and objectives.
- The role will lead, develop and manage a multidisciplinary Estates and Facilities team, with direct line management of Facilities Managers and strategic oversight of site and cleaning staff, fostering a culture of accountability, professionalism and continuous improvement.
- Working in close partnership with the Executive Director, School Leaders and Central Trust teams, the Head of Estates will act as a strategic advisor on estate-related matters, ensuring alignment between estate strategy, educational delivery and long-term Trust growth.
- The postholder will be responsible for the development and implementation of the Trust's estates strategy, including asset management planning, prioritisation of investment, and governance and strategic leadership of major capital projects across existing and new school sites.
- The Head of Estates will establish Trust-wide compliance frameworks and provide assurance that statutory, regulatory and education-sector requirements — including health and safety, training, safeguarding and environmental sustainability — are met, providing assurance to the Trust Board and senior leaders.
- The Estates Manager will provide Trust-wide strategic leadership for Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bids and the development of wider estates funding strategies.
- Provide strategic oversight of lettings across the Trust, working in partnership with the Finance Director to optimise site utilisation and resource deployment.
- The role will champion best practice in estate management, setting Trust-wide expectations and performance measures, driving efficiencies, value for money and sustainability, while ensuring the provision of safe, high-quality and future-ready learning environments for pupils and staff.

Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Estates Leadership

- Provide strategic leadership for the Trust's estates and facilities function, ensuring the school estate is safe, compliant, well maintained and fit for purpose, supporting the Trust's educational vision and long-term sustainability.
- Develop, implement and regularly review a Trust-wide estates strategy and asset management plan, aligned with organisational priorities, pupil place planning and financial strategy.
- Ensure the estate strategy reflects DfE School Estate Management Standards, incorporates sustainability and climate action objectives, and responds to emerging sector guidance and best practice.
- Provide clear, timely and accurate assurance reporting to the Trust Board and relevant Committees on estate condition, compliance, risk, capital investment and strategic performance.

Governance, Risk and Assurance

- Provide professional assurance to the Trust Board, Audit & Risk Committee and Executive Team on the effectiveness of estates governance, compliance and risk management arrangements.
- Maintain and regularly review the estates risk register, ensuring risks are identified, mitigated and escalated in line with the Trust's risk management framework and DfE expectations.
- Support internal and external assurance activity, including DfE reviews, condition surveys and statutory compliance audits, ensuring timely implementation of recommendations.
- Maintain clear audit trails, records and evidence to demonstrate compliance with DfE funding conditions, capital guidance and statutory responsibilities.

Operational Estates Management

- Lead the strategic planning and management of estates budgets, including School Condition Allocation and other DfE capital and revenue funding streams, ensuring value for money and alignment with Trust priorities.
- Maintain a comprehensive understanding of the condition, suitability, sufficiency and compliance status of the Trust's land and buildings, using data to inform prioritisation and investment decisions.

- Oversee the assessment of estates provision and the strategic procurement, tendering and contract management of Trust wide external services, in line with Trust policies and DfE funding and assurance requirements.
- Provide Trust-wide strategic oversight and assurance that maintenance and compliance activity is prioritised, planned and delivered by Facilities Managers in accordance with statutory requirements and DfE guidance, minimising disruption to educational delivery.
- Embed performance management, sustainability and environmental efficiency across the estate, actively managing energy and water usage and driving continuous improvement.
- Provide oversight and quality assurance of the accurate and timely completion of the annual Department for Education Land and Buildings Collection Tool return.
- Set Trust-wide standards and assurance arrangements to ensure all third-party use of Trust premises is managed in line with safeguarding requirements, Trust policies and relevant legislation.
- Provide professional estates advice to Headteachers and school leaders, supporting business continuity and emergency planning.
- Build and maintain strong working relationships with school leaders, site teams, Central Trust staff, contractors, professional advisers and regulatory bodies.

Capital Programme and Project Delivery

- Provide strategic leadership for the planning and delivery of capital programmes and projects, ensuring robust governance, risk management and project controls from inception to completion.
- Lead the development of project briefs, procurement activity and contractor appointments, ensuring compliance with DfE guidance and Trust financial regulations.
- Oversee the delivery of major and minor capital works, including new builds, refurbishments and condition improvement projects, ensuring delivery to agreed time, cost and quality parameters.
- Monitor project progress, manage risks and dependencies, and ensure lessons learned are embedded to support continuous improvement.
- Promote innovation and best practice in estate design and delivery, ensuring the estate supports inclusive, safe and high-quality teaching and learning.

Compliance, Health and Safety

- Ensure full compliance with all relevant legislation and statutory requirements, including health and safety, fire safety, asbestos management, building safety and safeguarding-related premises duties.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of statutory and regulatory requirements and ensure robust systems are in place for monitoring, reporting and assurance.

- Lead the development, implementation and review of Trust-wide health and safety policies and procedures, ensuring a safe environment for pupils, staff and visitors.
- Establish Trust-wide compliance frameworks and provide assurance that regular site audits, inspections and risk assessments are completed by Facilities Managers, and that appropriate training is provided for all relevant staff, including fire safety and asbestos awareness.
- Provide assurance that accurate records are maintained and that all statutory inspections, compliance actions and remedial works are completed, monitored and evidenced.
- Champion a culture of compliance, accountability and continuous improvement, with zero tolerance for unmanaged risk.

Leadership, People and Culture

- Lead, inspire and develop a multidisciplinary Estates and Facilities workforce, with direct line management of Facilities Managers and strategic oversight of site and cleaning staff.
- Set clear objectives, performance standards and accountability frameworks, fostering a culture of professionalism, collaboration and service excellence.
- Ensure appropriate training, coaching and development opportunities are in place to build capability, resilience and succession within the estates function.

Trust Growth and Strategic Change

- Lead estates planning to support Trust growth and change, including new schools, expansions, reconfiguration of provision and changes in pupil numbers.
- Provide estates due diligence and professional advice in relation to school transfers, openings, closures or significant estate change, working in partnership with the Executive Team and the DfE.
- Ensure estate capacity, condition and compliance considerations are fully integrated into Trust-wide strategic and financial planning.

Safeguarding, Equality and Inclusion

- Promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people in accordance with Trust safeguarding policies and statutory guidance.
- Demonstrate a strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and education-sector expectations.

Additional Information

- A full, clean driving licence is essential.
- The post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.
- The role requires flexibility, including attendance at evening meetings, site visits and emergency response where required.

This job description will be reviewed annually and may be amended to reflect changes in Trust priorities, DfE guidance or organisational needs.

Person Specification – Head of Estates

Category	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications & Professional Status	<p>Degree-level qualification or equivalent professional experience in estates, facilities, construction, property, engineering or a related discipline.</p> <p>Relevant professional qualification or membership (e.g. RICS, CIOB, IWFM, IOSH or equivalent), or commitment to achieving one.</p> <p>Evidence of ongoing professional development.</p>	<p>Chartered status with a relevant professional body.</p> <p>Formal qualification in project management (e.g. PRINCE2, APM) or health and safety management.</p>
Strategic Leadership & Experience	<p>Significant senior-level experience leading an estates or facilities function within a complex, multi-site organisation.</p> <p>Proven experience of developing and delivering a strategic estates or asset management plan aligned to organisational objectives.</p> <p>Experience of providing professional advice and assurance to senior leaders, committees or boards.</p> <p>Demonstrable experience of leading and developing multidisciplinary teams.</p>	<p>Experience working within the education sector, preferably within a multi-academy trust or large school group.</p> <p>Experience supporting organisational growth, change or transformation, including new sites or estate reconfiguration.</p>

Category	Essential	Desirable
Operational & Financial Management	<p>Proven experience of managing estates budgets and capital and revenue funding streams, delivering value for money.</p> <p>Strong experience of procurement, tendering and contract management in a regulated or public-sector environment.</p> <p>Ability to use estates data and condition information to inform prioritisation and risk management.</p>	<p>Experience of managing DfE capital funding, including School Condition Allocation or similar programmes.</p> <p>Experience implementing sustainability, energy management or carbon-reduction initiatives.</p>
Capital Projects & Programme Delivery	<p>Proven experience of leading and delivering capital projects, including refurbishments, condition improvement works or new build projects.</p> <p>Strong understanding of project governance, risk management and contractor performance.</p> <p>Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously while maintaining quality, cost and time controls.</p>	<p>Experience of delivering capital projects within live educational environments.</p> <p>Experience working with professional advisers, consultants and design teams.</p>
Compliance, Health & Safety	<p>In-depth knowledge of statutory and regulatory requirements relating to estates and facilities, including health and safety, fire safety, asbestos management and building compliance.</p> <p>Proven experience of implementing robust compliance, assurance and audit systems.</p>	<p>Formal health and safety qualification (e.g. NEBOSH or equivalent).</p> <p>Experience benchmarking practice against the DfE School Estate Management Standards.</p>

Category	Essential	Desirable
	Ability to interpret and apply DfE guidance within an education context.	
Safeguarding & Equality	<p>Clear understanding of safeguarding responsibilities in an education setting and commitment to promoting the welfare of children and young people.</p> <p>Commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, with knowledge of relevant legislation and best practice.</p> <p>High standards of professional integrity, accountability and confidentiality.</p>	Experience promoting inclusive practice across estates and facilities functions.
Skills & Personal Attributes	<p>Strategic thinker with the ability to translate vision into deliverable plans.</p> <p>Excellent communication skills, able to present complex information clearly to a range of audiences.</p> <p>Strong leadership presence, with the ability to influence, challenge and build effective relationships.</p> <p>Highly organised, resilient and able to manage competing priorities.</p>	<p>Experience working in partnership with external agencies, regulatory bodies or local authorities.</p> <p>Demonstrable commitment to innovation and continuous improvement.</p>
Additional Requirements	<p>Full, clean driving licence and willingness to travel regularly between Trust sites.</p> <p>Willingness to work flexibly, including occasional evenings and emergency response.</p> <p>Enhanced DBS clearance.</p>	