

HR LEAD APPLICATION PACK



Achieving more together

Integrity • Collaboration • Aspiration • Respect • Equity & Inclusion

Warm welcome to West Midlands Academy Trust (WMAT)

Dear applicant,

We are delighted to welcome you as a prospective candidate to become WMAT's HR Lead. As we move into our second year of operation as a multi-academy trust, your expertise and vision could play a pivotal role in shaping our culture and supporting our mission. We hope that this information pack provides you sufficient insight and information to decide if you have the right qualities, skills and experience to apply for the position.

WMAT was founded by three high performing secondary schools in Birmingham – Hall Green, Kings Norton Girls' and Swanshurst – who transferred into WMAT on 1st January 2025. You would be joining near the beginning of our journey, as we embed and then grow the trust. For the right individual, we believe that this is an extremely exciting HR role.

At WMAT, we are committed to fostering an inclusive and empowering environment for both our staff and students. We believe that strong human resources leadership is essential for attracting, developing, and retaining talented individuals who are passionate about education and dedicated to our students' success.

The three schools have over 500 staff and around 4,000 students. We are working towards HR policy alignment and are about to onboard a single payroll and HRIS provider. Internal procedures remain at school level currently. Alongside finance, HR is our key business area to focus upon; we want to develop an HR function that serves our staff and organisation as well as being compliant. This is a fantastic opportunity for you to lead the establishment of new trust policies, procedures and systems.

At every step, you would be supported by a leadership team full of ambition and optimism, including a Chief Executive Officer and Chief Finance and Operations Officer who are each on secondment from the founding schools. The Board of Trustees has a wide range of skills and experience, including an HR professional. We are committed to ensuring that you grow and develop within the trust.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to be a part of something truly transformative. We look forward to your application and the possibility of welcoming you to our team.

Nicola Raggett

WMAT CEO

Headteacher,

Kings Norton Girls' School

Clare Skinner

CFOO

Karen Slater

Headteacher,

Hall Green School

Mike Dunn

Headteacher,

Swanshurst School

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About the Trust

West Midlands Academy Trust (WMAT) was founded by Hall Green School, Kings Norton Girls' School and Swanshurst School in Birmingham. The school websites can be accessed via www.hallgreen.bham.sch.uk, www.kngs.co.uk, www.swanshurst.org or visit our Trust website at www.wmatrust.co.uk

Mission

At the heart of our Trust is our vision: "Achieving more together." This vision drives everything we do, as we work to equip young people with the knowledge, skills, and mindset to thrive academically, socially, and personally; not only during their time in school, but also in the workplace and in life. The Trust's culture is driven by our vision of "Achieving more together" which is realised through:

- A relentless focus on delivering an excellent Quality of Education across all our academies, ensuring strong progress and attainment for all students.
- A commitment to personal development and well-being for both staff and students.

Culture

- High ambitions and high expectations for all staff and pupils.
- Individual school identities matter – names, logo, uniform etc – not a 'corporate look'.
- Staff focused culture – role of leaders is to facilitate outstanding provision, supporting and enabling all staff to perform exceptionally well and in pupils' best interests.
- Collaborative practice – in all aspects of the trust (peer review, policy development) – horizontal and vertical – collaboration within and between schools is the cultural norm and is built into quality assurance / review processes in all aspects of trust operations.
- Collective responsibility – an issue is everyone's issue, every pupil and staff member is of equal importance across the trust.
- Responsive to context, while strategic in approach – i.e. not one size fits all, but always looking towards the future implications or options.

Operations

- Earned autonomy with accountability – i.e. potentially variable delegations / school freedoms based upon performance and risk.
- Central shared services where they achieve more and / or cost less and / or enhance school leadership capacity to focus on educational provision and where they are accountable to, and work collaboratively with, Headteachers and the executive team.
- Central policies where they increase the ability to collaborate, reduce the risk of non-compliance, and reduce workload.
- Financial sustainability:
 - School led budgeting (including reserves being retained) with expectation of all schools being financially self-sufficient.
 - Maximise funding spent on direct T&L / pupil support.
- "Good growth" – i.e. the right schools at the right time.
- Safe and stimulating physical environment.

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HR and staff of WMAT

HR Principles

The Board of Trustees has approved the following HR Principles for WMAT:

1. Continue to employ all teachers in accordance with School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and Burgundy Book terms and conditions as a minimum;
2. Continue to employ all support staff in accordance with Green Book terms and conditions as a minimum;
3. Continue to recognise those trade unions recognised by Birmingham City Council; and
4. Ensure continuing professional development for all staff.



In recognition of its commitment to employing staff in accordance with national terms and conditions as a minimum, WMAT commits that any proposal that is not in accordance with those principles would require:

- Consultation with all affected staff and the recognised trade unions prior to a decision;
- A 14-day notice period for Trustees of the Board meeting where a decision would be made;
- A requirement for 80% of Trustees to be present at the Board meeting where a decision would be made; and
- A requirement for 80% of those Trustees present at the Board meeting to vote in favour of the decision.

Current staff

Each school currently has:

- **Hall Green:** Approximately 125 staff (includes approximately 63 teachers and 75 support staff). Cleaning and catering are outsourced.
- **Kings Norton Girls':** Approximately 130 staff in total (includes approximately 70 teachers and 60 support staff). Cleaning is in house and catering is outsourced.
- **Swanshurst:** Approximately 220 staff in total (includes approximately 138 teachers and 87 support staff). Cleaning is outsourced and catering is in house – staff are included in support staff total.

Additional support

WMAT has access to external HR and legal support, including for HR, which you would be able to call upon where required.

Job Description

Post Title:

HR Lead

1. Base

The main place of work would be Swanshurst School with the postholder being required to travel between schools within the trust as required to effectively fulfil their duties.

2. Contract

Full time – 37 Hours. Term time + 2 weeks.

Annual leave to be taken during school holidays unless authorised by the CEO.

3. Salary

Grade 5B, points 36-40 (£43,505 to £47,354 actual)

4. Main Purpose

- To provide the Trust with specialist HR knowledge and expertise to ensure compliance, to promote employee wellbeing, motivation, retention, productivity and performance and ultimately enhance the student experience
- To be a trusted adviser on all aspects of the HR function and employee relations matters across the Trust
- To lead the development and delivery of HR related projects and policies as and when required
- To lead the learning and development of HR Team members in schools and, more widely, to support the development of line managers' people/employee relations skills
- To lead, working closely with the CFOO, an efficient and effective payroll and pension function
- To ensure that HR systems/databases, policies and procedures are developed, maintained and updated in a compliant, effective, manner efficient and support the WMAT mission and principles.

5. Key Responsibilities

Employee relations

- Provide pro-active and tailored support to line managers across the range of employee relations casework including grievance, disciplinary, capability etc
- Foster an open employee relations culture where colleagues feel comfortable raising concerns and are open to suggestions for improvement
- Provide support and advice to employees on work related matters
- Support the delivery of sound absence management practices which includes holding health review meetings, liaising with occupational health providers and working to reduce the impact of long-term absence
- Be wellbeing champion for the trust in line with DFE Well-Being charter
- To ensure that there are arrangements in place to secure Staff Voice
- To ensure that there are arrangements in place to receive feedback from staff if they leave WMAT, and from candidates (both appointed and unsuccessful) regarding the

Job Description

application and selection process, including regular and / or thematic, including staff surveys

- Utilising a strong knowledge of Keeping Children Safe in Education, support any reviews into allegations against individuals working onsite (including Low Level Concerns)
- Provide guidance on any restructures or reviews of employees' Job Descriptions
- Lead engagement with trade union representatives, including both scheduled engagement (such as a JCC) or on any proposals that require consultation.

Compliance

- Remain up to date with changes to legislation to ensure that the Trust's HR practices meet its statutory employment, equality, safeguarding and health and safety obligations and reflect best practice in the school / academy sector
- Support the CFOO and Executive Team in the development and review of employment related policies to ensure compliance and support the WMAT mission and principles; ensure that due consultation is completed and that any changes to processes are communicated accordingly (including the development of employee guides in key areas)
- Work collaboratively with the HR Team in schools to ensure that all actions relating to Safer Recruitment are managed appropriately e.g. accurate maintenance of the Single Central Record, pre-engagement checks for volunteers etc
- Ensure the schedule of Trust policies remains up to date
- Lead the completion of the workforce census
- Documents are retained in line with GDPR
- Ensure that the Trust complies with requirements for data collection, publication and / or reporting to external organisations (for example, diversity, gender pay gaps etc).

HR policy and practice

- Be responsible for the development, maintenance and administration of the HRIS and all data within it
- Be responsible for the WMAT template contracts of employment for teaching and support staff (all-year and term-time contracts).
- Ensure that processes for recruitment, induction, contract variation, and staff leaving employment are clear and are consistently applied.
- Support the CFOO and Executive Team in the scoping, development and delivery of projects across the range of HR practice relating to the people strategy.
- If appropriate, take the lead on specific projects, delegating work as needed with the HR Team
- Act as the Investigating Officer in disciplinary casework, or support the Investigating Officer when that is a colleague
- Support the CEO and Headteachers in instances of allegations or grievance.
- Lead evaluation of workforce and staff attendance data to identify when triggers for formal action have been reached (such as sickness absence or special leave), and lead / support Headteachers in progressing cases appropriately and providing reports for trustees.

Job Description

- Develop, agree, and monitor / analyse workforce and staff Key Performance Indicators, including reporting to the Executive Team and Board of Trustees.

Payroll

- Working in conjunction with the outsourced payroll providers, CFOO, school HR teams and the Executive Team, support delivery of the payroll process to include the accurate inputting of instructions into the online system and verifying payroll reports
- Complete any pay-related calculations accurately
- Support the annual pay review processes including the preparation of communications to staff
- Develop a strong working knowledge of pensions/benefits/ statutory and organisational deductions to be able to provide sound advice to employees' queries.
- Ensure completion of statutory requirements including pensions, auto enrolment, P11ds, pension end of year certificates, IR35 as appropriate.

Learning and development

- Utilise opportunities through day-to-day operational work and more formalised training to develop HR professional knowledge and expertise of staff across WMAT, especially the HR Team.
- Support the development of a CPD programme for line managers to include delivery of training sessions and the development of materials to all employees relating to HR policies.

Trust growth

- Support due diligence, conversion, joining and TUPE processes leading up to, during and after onboarding of new schools to the Trust, demonstrating flexibility to work with new colleagues as needed.

6. Additional duties

- Occasional evening and weekend work could be required
- Ability and willingness to travel regularly between school sites
- Any other reasonable tasks commensurate with the role, which could involve non-HR project work with the Executive Team.
- To undertake appropriate personal professional development including adhering to the principle of performance management.
- To have a responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and young people you are responsible for or come into contact with.
- To ensure all tasks are carried out with due regard to Health & Safety and GDPR

This Job Description may be amended at any time, following consultation between the Trust and the post holder. These are broad descriptions of the types of duties/activities expected of the post and are not an exhaustive list.

The Trust retains the right, as a condition of your employment, to require you to undertake

Job Description

such other duties as may reasonably be expected of you in this post. These duties will correspond to the general character of the post and are commensurate with its level of responsibility.

All employees are required to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and follow trust policies and the staff code of conduct.

Additional information

The role is subject to and with the benefits of the Terms and Conditions for local government staff (The Green Book), except where you are informed in writing that a local condition applies.

Under the Asylum and Nationality Act 1996 you will be required to prove your eligibility to work within the UK.

An offer of employment for this post will be subject to a satisfactory enhanced disclosure clearance through the Disclosure and Barring Service in England and Wales.

WMAT is an equal opportunity employer. It is committed to make any necessary reasonable adjustments to the selection process, job role and working environment that would enable access to employment opportunities for disabled people. Where a disabled applicant is being assessed the recruitment panel's decisions will be based upon an assessment of that person's expected capabilities once reasonable adjustments have been made.



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Person Specification

The following outlines the key skills and experiences required for this position. The selection process will assess each candidate against the criteria listed below, expecting candidates to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of each area, and to show evidence of having applied (or awareness of how to apply) this knowledge and understanding in an appropriate context. You should refer to these requirements when completing your application, and short-listed candidates will be expected to demonstrate these through the selection process.

Education and qualifications

Essential

- A-C Grades in Maths & English GCSE or equivalent
- CIPD Level 5 qualification or equivalent experience
- Record of continuous HR related CPD

Desirable

- CIPD Level 7
- Payroll Qualification
- Educated to degree level or equivalent in areas such as employment law, organisational development

Knowledge and experience

Essential

- At least two years of being in a middle/ senior HR position in the education sector
- Experience of line management
- Experience of payroll functions
- Be an expert user of a HR and Payroll system
- Experience of leading change management, including TUPE, reorganisation and redundancy
- Experience of HR recruitment and selection procedures.
- Experience of managing and leading employment casework, including investigations.
- Experience of advising and managing staff on a variety of HR issues such as salary and absence.
- Experience of leading staff training and development.
- Experience of drafting complex letters, reports and advisory notes
- Proven experience of managing multiple projects and working to tight deadlines.
- Experience of working with Disclosure and Barring Service/safeguarding protocols.
- Full clean Driving Licence with business insurance

Desirable

- Experience of working within the academy or education sector
- Experience of working with trade unions

Person Specification

Knowledge and understanding

Essential

- Excellent knowledge of statutory regulations, including employment law and guidance relating to the post
- Able to plan and lead projects and change initiatives
- Analyse data to evaluate performance and plan an appropriate course of action for organisational improvement
- Lead and manage to successfully achieve agreed goals
- Be an effective team member that works collaboratively and effectively with others
- Deal successfully with situations that may include tackling difficult situations and conflict resolution
- Desire to undertake professional development relevant to the role

Desirable

- Knowledge of child protection and safeguarding policies.
- Sound understanding of equal opportunity issues within the workplace and the importance of culture and ethos and how these impact on morale, high expectation, and high standards.

Characteristics and competencies

Essential

- Excellent communication including verbal and written skills
- Competent with IT and Microsoft Office
- Good organisational skills
- High expectations of self and high professional standards
- The ability to prioritise within a demanding workload
- A high level of accuracy and attention to detail
- Proactive and able to take control of situations
- Personable
- Excellent communication including verbal and written skills
- A high level of integrity, confidentiality and discretion.
- Ability to work alone as well as lead a team

Other requirements

Essential

- Excellent record of attendance
- List 99 / enhanced DBS clearance received prior to starting in post
- Eligible to work in the UK

How to Apply

Potential applicants are welcome to discuss the role with one of the Headteachers of the schools establishing WMAT – please contact Clare Skinner, Chief Finance & Operations Officer to arrange a discussion (cskinner@wmatrust.co.uk)

The timetable for appointment is as follows:

Closing date	8am on Friday 6th February 2026
Invitation to selection day	Monday 9th February 2026
Selection day	Friday 13th February 2026

To submit an application please do this [via MyNewTerm](#).