



HR MANAGER JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Title	HR Manager
Grade/Salary	P04, £49,056 -£52,194 (FT) pro rata salary, likely to be between approx. (£43,279-£46,047) subject to experience working days and continuous service
Department	School Business Services
Location	Federation Schools
Line Manager	School Business Manager
Line Management of	HR Officer

General Information

The Federation brings schools together to share expertise and provide high-quality, efficient and sustainable services while retaining the individual identity and context of each school.

The HR Manager is a senior member of the Central Federation Core Staff Leadership Team, responsible for leading an efficient, effective and professional HR service across all Federation schools.

Working under the direction of the School Business Manager, the postholder will provide HR support and guidance to employees and leaders, oversee employee records and HR systems, manage sickness absence processes and ensure HR policies and procedures are applied fairly, consistently and transparently.

The role requires the highest standards of integrity, professionalism, confidentiality and sound judgement. The HR Manager will keep the School Business Manager appropriately informed, escalate significant concerns and use the Federation's external HR/legal support where specialist advice is required.

HR systems and processes must be robust, efficient and scalable to support future Federation growth.

Core Purpose

The HR Manager will:

- lead the day-to-day HR service across Federation schools;
- line manage the HR Officer;
- provide professional HR advice and support to staff, managers and senior leaders;
- oversee employee records, HR systems, databases and processes;
- lead sickness absence and attendance management;
- ensure HR policies and procedures are applied consistently and appropriately;
- provide assurance that schools are meeting their contractual, statutory and legal responsibilities as employers;
- monitor workforce data and provide accurate management information;
- support staff engagement, wellbeing, attendance and retention;
- work collaboratively with Recruitment, Payroll, Finance, Compliance and other central services;
- keep abreast of changes in employment law, policy and conditions of service; and
- continually improve HR systems and services across the Federation.

Sickness Absence and Attendance Management

- Lead Federation sickness absence and attendance processes, ensuring policy is applied consistently, fairly and supportively.
- Establish and maintain effective systems for monitoring absence, approvals, triggers and required actions.
- Undertake the initial and informal stages of absence management, including meetings, correspondence and follow-up.
- Provide advice and support to employees and managers throughout the process.
- Coordinate Occupational Health and other appropriate referrals and ensure recommendations are followed through.
- Escalate formal, complex or higher-risk cases to the School Business Manager with appropriate evidence and case information.
- Collate information and documentation for formal meetings, hearings and appeals.
- Monitor absence trends and provide regular management information.
- Work with the School Business Manager to implement strategies to improve attendance at work across Federation schools.

General HR Support and Administration

- Provide a responsive and professional HR service to employees, managers and senior leaders.
- Give practical guidance on HR policies, procedures and employment matters within the scope of the role.
- Support the School Business Manager, Executive Headteacher, Headteachers and senior leaders with employee relations matters.
- Coordinate HR administration relating to sickness, disciplinary, grievance, capability, probation and other employee processes.
- Organise and support meetings, investigations and hearings, including documentation, correspondence, records and follow-up.
- Ensure HR correspondence and documentation is accurate, timely and appropriately authorised.
- Maintain oversight of employee records and ensure information is complete, current and appropriately retained.
- Ensure significant or sensitive HR matters are promptly reported or escalated.

Employer Compliance

- Provide assurance that each Federation school is meeting its contractual, statutory and legal responsibilities as an employer.
- Keep up to date with national and local developments in employment law, HR policy, pay and conditions and relevant guidance.
- Identify implications for the Federation and coordinate required changes to HR practice, systems or procedures.
- Monitor the consistent application of Federation policies and appropriately challenge areas of concern.
- Seek advice from the Federation's external HR/legal provider where cases are complex, high risk or require specialist interpretation.
- Ensure significant compliance or employment risks are reported promptly to the School Business Manager.

Systems, Processes and Employee Records

- Develop and oversee consistent Federation-wide HR systems, processes, templates and service standards.
- Ensure HR databases and employee records are accurate, current and consistently maintained.
- Undertake regular quality-assurance checks and ensure identified issues are resolved.
- Use technology and automation to improve efficiency, accuracy and service delivery.

- Develop systems that minimise duplication and can be scaled effectively as additional schools join the Federation.
- Support the alignment and integration of HR systems and processes when new schools join.
- Ensure information can be monitored and reported at both individual school and Federation level.

HR Data and Reporting

- Produce accurate workforce information and reports for the School Business Manager and senior leaders.
- Monitor trends including absence, attendance, turnover, retention, probation and employee relations.
- Identify emerging issues and recommend appropriate action.
- Maintain effective monitoring systems so that policy triggers, deadlines and actions are not missed.

Employee Support and Engagement

- Promote an approachable, professional and supportive HR service.
- Support employee wellbeing, engagement and retention initiatives.
- Maintain effective relationships with Occupational Health, Employee Assistance and other relevant providers.
- Ensure employees are treated fairly, respectfully and consistently.
- Use staff feedback and workforce information to support improvements to employee experience.
- Communicate HR processes and changes clearly across Federation schools.

Payroll and Employee Changes

- Work closely with Finance and Payroll colleagues to support accurate and timely payroll processing.
- Ensure contractual changes, absence, family leave, starters, leavers, allowances and other HR information affecting payroll are accurate, authorised and communicated by agreed deadlines.
- Maintain appropriate records and controls supporting employee changes.
- Support checking and reconciliation where HR information interfaces with payroll.
- Escalate discrepancies or concerns promptly.

Collaborative Working and Federation Leadership

- Contribute actively as a member of the Central Federation Core Staff Leadership Team.

- Work collaboratively with Headteachers, senior leaders and managers across Federation schools.
- Work closely with Recruitment, Payroll, Finance, Compliance and other central functions to provide joined-up services.
- Maintain productive relationships with external HR/legal advisers, trade unions, Occupational Health and other professional services.
- Support workforce planning, organisational change and Federation projects as directed by the School Business Manager.
- Contribute to planning for Federation growth and the integration of additional schools.
- Keep the School Business Manager appropriately informed of significant HR matters, emerging risks and service issues.

Line Management

- Line manage the HR Officer, setting clear expectations and priorities.
- Monitor workload, quality, accuracy and service standards.
- Provide support, feedback and development.
- Build resilience and shared knowledge within the HR function.

Professional Standards

The HR Manager must demonstrate:

- absolute integrity, professionalism, discretion and confidentiality;
- sound judgement and appropriate escalation;
- fairness, consistency and transparency;
- outstanding communication and interpersonal skills;
- exceptional accuracy and attention to detail;
- patience, diplomacy and sensitivity;
- confidence to provide appropriate professional challenge;
- strong organisation and the ability to manage competing priorities;
- accountability and follow-through;
- commitment to continuous improvement and Operational Excellence;
- up-to-date professional knowledge; and
- commitment to safeguarding, equality and inclusion.

General Requirements

The postholder will work under the direction of the School Business Manager and within Federation policies, procedures and delegated authority.

The postholder will work flexibly across Federation schools according to service requirements.

This job description is not exhaustive and may be reviewed as legislation, organisational requirements and the Federation develop.

The Federation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. Appointment will be subject to appropriate safer recruitment and pre-employment checks.

HR MANAGER – PERSON SPECIFICATION

(Assessment: A = Application | I = Interview | T = Task)

Qualifications and Professional Knowledge

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Good standard of education including English and Mathematics at GCSE or equivalent.	✓		A
Relevant HR qualification, such as CIPD, or currently working towards an appropriate HR qualification.		✓	A
Sound knowledge of HR practice, employee relations and employment responsibilities.	✓		A/I
Understanding of sickness absence and attendance management.	✓		A/I
Awareness of employment legislation and the importance of keeping professional knowledge current.	✓		A/I
Familiarity with Operational Excellence principles, including standardisation, continuous improvement, effective systems and data-informed service improvement.	✓		A/I
Knowledge of education employment conditions and school HR practice.		✓	A/I

Communication and Professional Skills

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Outstanding written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to communicate clearly and professionally at all levels.	✓		A/I/T
Excellent interpersonal skills with patience, diplomacy and sensitivity.	✓		I
Ability to provide practical HR guidance and appropriate professional challenge.	✓		I/T
Sound judgement, including knowing when to act, escalate or seek specialist advice.	✓		I/T
Exceptional accuracy and attention to detail.	✓		A/I/T

IT, Systems and Data

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Excellent IT skills, including strong competence in Microsoft 365.	✓		A/T

Confident using HR databases, digital systems and electronic employee records.	✓		A/I
Ability to develop efficient systems, processes, trackers and templates.	✓		A/I/T
Able to analyse and present workforce information clearly.	✓		A/I/T
Confident using technology and automation to improve service quality and efficiency.	✓		A/I

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Relevant experience providing HR advice, support or administration.	✓		A/I
Experience of sickness absence and employee relations processes.	✓		A/I
Experience maintaining accurate and confidential employee records.	✓		A/I
Experience applying policies and procedures consistently.	✓		A/I
Experience developing or improving administrative or HR systems and processes.	✓		A/I
Experience producing and using management information or workforce data.	✓		A/I
Experience working collaboratively with Payroll, Finance or other professional services.	✓		A/I
Experience supervising or line managing others.	✓		A/I
Experience of education, the public sector or another regulated environment.		✓	A/I

Professional Approach and Personal Qualities

Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Assessment
Demonstrates absolute integrity, professionalism, discretion and confidentiality.	✓		A/I
Fair, consistent and objective in approach.	✓		I
Highly organised and able to manage competing priorities and deadlines.	✓		A/I/T
Takes ownership and follows actions through to completion.	✓		A/I
Able to work independently keeping senior leaders appropriately informed.	✓		A/I
Collaborative, approachable and service-focused.	✓		A/I

Able to balance employee support with organisational requirements and policy.	✓		I
Proactive, solution-focused and committed to continuous improvement.	✓		A/I
Able to contribute to systems and processes that are sustainable and scalable as the Federation grows.	✓		A/I
Commitment to safeguarding, equality, diversity and inclusion.	✓		A/I

Key Requirement

The successful candidate will combine strong HR capability with excellent communication, systems and service-management skills. They must be trusted to handle sensitive information, apply policy consistently, exercise sound judgement and recognise when matters require escalation or specialist professional advice.

A school or education background is desirable but not essential. The Federation is seeking the right person with the professional judgement, HR experience, systems capability, integrity and values required to deliver an outstanding HR service across its schools.