



Job Description: Head of Operations

Reporting to: Operations Director

Location: Pontefract, with travel to various locations.

Contract: Permanent

Working Pattern: Full-time

Salary: c. £50k

About the Role

Part of the Ark charity, Ark Start is a start-up nursery venture aiming to ensure that every child has access to an excellent early years' education and that families have access to flexible and affordable childcare. Ark Start currently has 7 nurseries in London and are planning to expand quickly over the next year. This expansion includes a target of 12 nurseries in West Yorkshire over the next few years and so we are looking for a Head of Operations, based locally, to take the lead on all operational aspects (both project-managing the set-up and overseeing the business as usual) for all nurseries in this area.

The successful candidate will be passionate about Ark's mission and values. They will excel in a range of different duties (including project management, premises and compliance, contract management/ procurement and office management) as well as communicating with external and internal stakeholders (including a team based across different geographical areas) all while demonstrating high levels of attention to detail in their work.

The role would suit a dynamic Operations Manager with a strong sense of social justice, who would relish the challenge of building Ark Start in West Yorkshire. With the support of an established Operations Team for Ark Start, based in London, and infrastructure within the wider charity, this role would suit someone keen to take a lead across all areas of Operations, with the opportunity to develop further in a fast-growing start-up organisation.

Key Responsibilities

- Manage implementation of all aspects of the West Yorkshire nurseries' operational requirements, working with the HR, Admissions and Premises managers (in London) to promote standardisation across the network, while ensuring individual nursery-specific requirements are met.
- Work with the Director of Operations and Deputy Director of Early Years to identify the requirements of a regional team. Working with the Deputy Director of Early Years, ensure this team is motivated, with high levels of commitment and productivity in their roles.
- Represent Ark Start in meetings with external partners and potential partners
- Identify potential sites for new nurseries
- Project-manage the set-up of new sites and, working with the Deputy Director of Early Years, ensure successful opening of all new nurseries.
- Support in identifying local fundraising opportunities and community links

- Report on projects and operational performance of the nurseries for submission to Management Team and the Board

Project Management for New Sites

- Manage tenders and contract negotiations for build and refurbishment projects.
- Manage capital projects, ensuring scope and delivery are as required, cost effective and on time
- Manage legal contracts and requirements and ensure all legal documentation is in place.
- Working with the Deputy Director of Early Years, build relationships, and liaise with, stakeholders, including school principals, Local Authorities, Ofsted, funders
- Work with the HR Manager to ensure local recruitment is managed efficiently and staff are in place for opening.
- Work with the Finance Manager to ensure that all FFE and resources are tracked, delivered and payments processed correctly.
- Work with the Ark Start Operations Teams to ensure all policies and procedures are implemented and fit for purpose.

Business-as-Usual Management

- Ensure all nursery sites are safe, smart and equipped to support educational delivery
- Ensure all compliance checks and health and safety audits are carried out regularly with all actions followed-up promptly.
- Ensure all reactive and planned maintenance is carried out promptly and effectively
 - Develop sustainable environmental and energy efficient systems to contribute to financial efficiencies.
 - Be flexible and able to respond to situations as they arise, including emergency situations.
 - Manage catering, premises maintenance and cleaning contracts ensuring all aspects of the service level agreements are met.
- Develop and maintain risk management and business continuity plans for the West Yorkshire Team.
- Maintain effective administration systems, including systems for monitoring and reporting on all operational functions and tracking contract agreements and renewals.
- Manage the IT service (provided by Ark), including computer equipment, software, telephony and printing
- Working with the Deputy Director of Early Years, support the local HR, recruitment, finance and admissions officers
- Work with the HR Manager to ensure local recruitment is managed efficiently.
- Support the Finance Manager with local procurement and deliveries, ensuring the best value for money purchasing is achieved locally.

Other

- No job description can be fully comprehensive, and from time to time the successful candidate may have to undertake other professional duties as directed by the Operations Director.

Person Specification: Head of Operations

Qualifications

- Educated to degree level or equivalent
- Professional management qualification desirable

Knowledge & Skills

- Ability to manage several projects at once, prioritising accordingly to meet deadlines
- Confident in implementing procedures and processes within operational departments
- Able to work with a range of internal and external partners
- Knowledge and experience of managing procurement and contracts for services
- Strong IT, systems, administrative and organisational skills
- Excellent written and oral communication skills

Personal Qualities

- Genuine passion for, and a belief in, the potential of every child
- Strong alignment with Ark's mission and values
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, comfortable and confident working with internal and external stakeholders at all levels
- Ability to make sound judgements and assess potential problems
- Professional integrity and resilience, understanding the importance of confidentiality and discretion
- Thrives in fast paced and often ambiguous environments, with the ability to multi-task and prioritise competing deadlines
- Highly collaborative and flexible approach
- Customer driven, pragmatic, action-oriented style

Other

- Right to work in the UK (essential)
- Commitment to equality of opportunity and the safeguarding and welfare of all students
- Willingness to undertake training
- This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check

Ark is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in its academies. In order to meet this responsibility, its academies follow a rigorous selection process to discourage and screen out unsuitable applicants.

Ark requires all employees to undertake an enhanced DBS check. You are required, before appointment, to disclose any unspent conviction, cautions, reprimands or warnings under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar you from employment - this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred. To read more about Ark's safer recruitment process, please click this [link](#).

We aim to build a diverse and inclusive organisation where everyone – staff and students – can do their best work and achieve their full potential. We want to reflect and represent diverse perspectives across our organisation

because we know that doing so will make us stronger and more effective. To know more about Ark's diversity and inclusion commitments, please click on this [link](#).