

Job Description: HR Advisor

Reports to: People Business Partner

Location: Pontefract, West Yorkshire (with some travel to schools across the network; flexible working available)

Contract: Permanent

Pattern: Full Time (37 hours per week)

Salary: £35,412 to £38,220 (depending on experience)

About the role:

We're looking for a confident, approachable HR professional who is passionate about supporting people and delivering high-quality advice. This role will primarily focus on employee relations casework, so a strong skill set and confidence in this area is important. Alongside this, there will be opportunities to get involved in wider HR activity and projects across the Trust.

We're looking for someone with a strong HR generalist background and solid employee relations experience, who can build positive, trusting relationships and take a calm, pragmatic approach. You'll be confident providing clear, practical advice, while also being willing to get involved more widely and contribute to the ongoing development of our People Function.

Our schools are supportive, welcoming environments, and the people you'll work with are a real asset to the Trust. You'll partner with leaders and colleagues who value practical, people-centred HR support.

Key Responsibilities:

Employee Relations & Policy

- As the named HR lead for employee relations in Pontefract schools, act as the first point of contact for day-to-day ER queries, providing clear, pragmatic and solutions-focused advice and seeking guidance from the wider People team
- Support a full range of ER casework including disciplinary, grievance, attendance, capability, safeguarding concerns, probation and appeals
- Coordinate casework end to end: preparing case packs, organising meetings, supporting meetings, note-taking and drafting outcome letters
- Using absence data, support leaders in managing sickness in line with policy and disability legislation, including liaising with Occupational Health and supporting return-to-work plans
- Embed robust probation management for all new starters, ensuring reviews are completed on time, issues are escalated promptly, and clear advice is given on next steps
- Ensure leaders understand and follow Ark policies and processes; escalate complex or high-risk cases to the People Business Partnering team
- Monitor ER activity across schools, ensuring actions are completed promptly and documentation is accurate and compliant

HR Systems, Data & Assurance

- Maintain accurate records on the HR system and produce HR/ER correspondence and store it in line with document management and compliance best practice
- Support the People Officer in ensuring an accurate and compliant Single Central Record (SCR) for each school, completing assurance checks and providing cover as required to ensure continuity and compliance

Stakeholder Engagement & Collaboration

- Work collaboratively with Central People Team (Business Partners, AskHR, People Operations, Recruitment) to ensure high-performing support services for schools
- Build effective relationships with school leaders and Office Managers; act as the named HR lead for operational ER queries and assurance
- Support implementation of updated policies, guidance and HR ways of working across the Pontefract region, ensuring managers understand requirements and expectations
- Contribute to regional and network projects and continuous improvement initiatives; share best practice across schools

Other

- Support the People Business Partner and the wider Pontefract People team to ensure all HR activity is up to date, well organised and delivered efficiently, with all processes completed on time and in full compliance with statutory, safeguarding and Ark policy requirements
- Future role requirements may see responsibility for line management as the Trust expands

Person Specification: HR Advisor

Qualifications

- GCSE English & Maths (or equivalent)
- CIPD Level 5 (or equivalent) preferred; willingness to work towards Level 5 if currently Level 3
- Additional employment law or ER specific training (desirable)

Knowledge & Skills

- Proven HR generalist experience delivering day-to-day HR services, with a strong focus on employee relations and attendance management
- Experience providing clear first-line HR and ER advice to managers, with confidence to escalate appropriately
- Experience supporting employee relations casework, including disciplinary, grievance, capability, attendance and probation matters, as well as preparing case documentation, taking notes and drafting outcome letters
- Experience supporting attendance management, including OH referrals
- Understanding of core employment legislation and the ability to apply it pragmatically in schools
- Strong understanding of KCSIE requirements and their application within schools
- Strong administrative and organisational skills, with the ability to manage competing priorities across multiple schools
- Excellent written and oral communication skills with strong attention to detail
- Strong IT skills (MS Office) and Applicant Tracking System (ATS)/HR system experience
- Experience in the education sector (desirable)

Personal Qualities

- Professional, discreet and resilient, with the integrity to handle sensitive and confidential matters appropriately
- A confident communicator who can build credibility and positive relationships with school leaders and managers
- Collaborative and proactive, with the ability to work effectively across regional and Central People teams and use initiative to drive work forward
- Sound judgement, with the ability to identify potential risks, make informed decisions and escalate appropriately
- A positive team player who is adaptable, supportive and willing to contribute across the wider People team

Other

- Right to work in the UK
- 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](#).