Job Description: Strategic People Business Partner

Reports to: Director of Projects
Location: West London (with flexible working available)
Contract: Permanent
Pattern: Full Time (standard hours 9am – 5.30pm- part hours time will be considered)
Salary: £70,000 to £80,000 (depending on experience)

About the role:

We are looking for an experienced and strategic Senior People Business Partner to play a critical role in shaping and delivering the people strategy for Ark, Ark Start and Ark Curriculum+, and Ark UK Programmes. Working closely with senior leaders across all Ark entities, the Strategic People Business Partner will provide expert advice and leadership across people policy, reward and employee engagement, workforce planning, organisational change, and employer branding. The Strategic People Business Partner will work closely with the Head of People for Ark Schools to ensure consistency where required, aligned to strategic aims.

This role requires an experienced people professional able to apply a commercial outlook to their deep knowledge of the education sector. The Strategic People Business Partner will be able to balance strategic development with hands-on operational delivery with the aim of building and improving organisational performance, ensuring the employees are able and equipped to support the mission and priorities for Ark.

Key Responsibilities:

People Policy, Reward and Employee Engagement

- Lead the development, review and implementation of people policies, ensuring they are legally compliant, aligned to organisational values and support business objectives across Ark, Ark Start, Ark Curriculum+ and Ark UK Programmes
- Monitor emerging employment legislation and people trends, ensuring policies and practices remain current and effective
- Develop and maintain a compelling and coherent reward strategy that supports attraction, retention and engagement of high-performing employees and works across entities within Ark
- Lead on all reward projects including the development of pay frameworks and benchmarking ensuring that Ark remains a competitive employer
- Partner with leaders to embed a positive organisational culture and employee experience
- Use survey data and feedback to develop and implement initiatives that strengthen employee engagement, wellbeing and inclusion across Ark

Workforce Planning, Change Management and Employee Relations

- Act as the senior strategic People partner for Ark leadership teams, providing expert advice and challenge on people and organisational matters
- Lead workforce planning activities to ensure organisational structures, capability and resourcing align with strategic priorities
- Design and deliver complex organisational change programmes, including restructures, consultations, TUPE transfers and redundancy processes
- Provide specialist advice and support on complex employee relations matters, including investigations, disciplinary, grievance, performance and absence management cases

- Partner with Senior leaders across Ark, Ark Start, Ark Curriculum+ and Ark UK Programmes supporting them with strategies to develop high-performing teams and ensure effective people management practices
- Analyse workforce data and trends to inform decision-making and improve organisational effectiveness

Employer Value Proposition, Employer Brand and Talent Attraction

- Lead the development and delivery of Ark, Ark Start and Ark Curriculum+ Employer Value Proposition (EVP), ensuring it clearly communicates what makes Ark a distinctive and attractive employer
- Work collaboratively with recruitment, communications and senior stakeholders to strengthen and promote the employer brand ensuring that this builds organisational strength
- Develop attraction strategies that support organisational growth, workforce diversity and hard-to-fill recruitment challenges
- Use market intelligence and recruitment data to identify talent trends and improve attraction outcomes

Person Specification: Strategic People Business Partner

Qualifications

- CIPD Level 7 qualification or equivalent professional experience
- Educated to degree level or equivalent experience

Knowledge & Skills

- Significant experience in a senior HR or People Business Partner role within a complex organisation, ideally with experience of the education sector
- Proven experience of leading organisational change and workforce planning initiatives
- Strong understanding of UK employment law and HR best practice
- Extensive experience managing complex employee relations cases and providing expert employment law advice
- Experience of developing people policies and frameworks
- Experience of developing employee engagement strategies and action plans
- Experience of supporting reward and recognition initiatives
- Experience of employer branding and EVP development
- Strong analytical skills with the ability to interpret workforce data and trends
- Outstanding written and verbal communication skills

Personal Qualities

- Ability to manage multiple priorities and work effectively in a fast-paced environment
- Strong coaching and relationship-building skills
- Ability to balance strategic thinking with operational delivery
- Excellent stakeholder management and influencing skills, including at executive level
- Strategic and forward-thinking, with the ability to anticipate challenges and identify opportunities for improvement
- Demonstrating sound judgement and integrity when handling sensitive people matters

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.