

Job Description: HR System Change Manager

Reports to: Head of People Operations

Location: Currently operating hybrid working in our West London Office

Contract: Fixed-term contract until June 2027

Pattern: Full Time (standard hours 9am – 5.30pm)

Salary: circa. £65k

About the role:

Ark Schools have recently appointed Midland HR's iTrent as our new HR and Payroll system. This is a significant and complex change programme for Ark, and we are now seeking a Change Manager with experience of delivering a similar implementation and migration project to join our fantastic team to support this transformational change of enabling our new People operating model, ensuring a consistent, compliant, and data-driven experience across our schools.

Ark is an education charity that exists to make sure that all children, regardless of their background, have access to a great education and real choices in life. Our network of 39 schools reaches traditionally underserved communities in Birmingham, Hastings, London and Portsmouth. We educate 30,000 pupils and have nearly 3,000 teaching staff across our network and centrally we support teachers and leaders through our people services and systems.

Working alongside key members of the Ark's central teams, schools, and the supplier, the Change Manager will ensure a smooth transition to the new system working with a dedicated Project Manager and other internal project roles.

The Change Manager's previous experience will be key in ensuring that they can translate their specialist transformation knowledge and expertise into an Ark plan, then through a mixture of direct delivery and delivery through others ensure that the adoption of the new system goes smoothly within central and school-based teams. Experienced in process change and HR systems you will ensure that Ark defines, documents and communicates changes to HR processes, ensuring that communication and training delivered by the project to the business is timely and appropriate.

The Change Manager will, using prior experience of implementing new HR and Payroll systems, contribute to the scoping and support of the pilots and play a key role monitoring configuration, testing and solution signoff ensuring that business process and system changes are captured and embedded into Ark, supporting the central and school teams through the transition period between go-live and the transfer of support to "Business as Usual" operation.

You will work closely with:

- A dedicated Project Manager, responsible for the overall project delivery.
- An experienced Functional Lead/Business Analyst, responsible for configuring iTrent to meet our launch design principles.
- The Project Sponsor and Product Owner, who are key stakeholders in the People Team.

Project Scope:

There are a number of key strands within the project:

- Data Migration between our legacy systems and iTrent
- Technical build implementation of the HR system, including integration and provisioning with other Ark systems (e.g. Entra, Bromcom)
- User acceptance management
- Documentation and handover into BaU support
- Implementation of a new Payroll system and Payroll provider

Alongside our HR system implementation, Ark is currently considering options for Learning Management and the deployment of learning functionality may also fall within scope of the HR System project manager role.

Ideal Candidate:

We are looking for someone with:

- Operational knowledge of Payroll and HR processes and systems.
- Experience working within complex migration projects with multiple workstreams and integrations.
- Experience implanting large-scale, multi-site HR and Payroll systems.
- Experience with Midland HR's iTrent (desirable).
- Knowledge of the education sector (desirable).

Key Responsibilities:

1. Stakeholder Engagement & Communication
 - Identify and work with key stakeholders (HR, Payroll, IT, Finance, line managers, employees).
 - Develop a communication plan to keep stakeholders informed and engaged.
 - Build confidence across all levels of Ark that the deployment of iTrent will be well adopted.
2. Change Impact Assessment
 - Analyse how the new system will affect processes, roles, and responsibilities and document the changes users will need to adopt.
 - Document and communicate change impacts to relevant teams.
 - Work with HR and Payroll leads to mitigate resistance and prepare teams for the transition.
3. Training & Enablement
 - Collaborate with Learning & Development to design training programs tailored to different user groups.
 - Creating reusable change artefacts and playbooks for future system changes
 - Ensure that training materials (e.g., guides, videos, FAQs) are clear and accessible.
 - Monitor training delivered and its effectiveness and adjust as needed.
 - Tracking adoption metrics via analytics (log-ins, completion rates, feedback) and reporting insights to the Project Board.
4. Readiness & Adoption Planning
 - Develop a change readiness strategy, including surveys or assessments to gauge preparedness.
 - Create an adoption roadmap with milestones and success metrics.
 - Develop a network of champions across the business to promote system adoption and benefits.
5. Risk Management
 - Identify potential risks and resistance points related to the change.
 - Develop and contribute to mitigation strategies and contingency plans for adoption related risk.
 - Monitor feedback and adjust change tactics accordingly.
 - Monitor cultural acceptance, network wide engagement and school leadership support
 - Escalate adoption risks and issues through project governance.
6. Feedback & Continuous Improvement
 - Set up channels for user feedback (e.g., surveys, focus groups).
 - Use feedback to refine processes, training, and communications.
 - Support post-go-live activities like hypercare and stabilisation.
7. Alignment with Project Governance

- Ensure change activities are aligned with project timelines, governance structures, and business objectives.
 - Align all change management activities with the cutover plan.
 - Report on change progress to project sponsors and steering committees.
8. Embedding change within a multi-site education setting
- Ensure changes balancing central control with local autonomy

Person Specification:

Qualifications

- Change Management qualifications (desirable) or significant equivalent professional experience

Knowledge & Skills

- Experience in various launch mechanisms, covering iterative implementations (e.g. school by school) rollouts, pilots, multiple pay rolls in an organisation, and 'big bang' implementations, and the ability to critically assess and influence launch choices.
- Able to build trust across senior leadership and school communities; politically astute; capable of balancing pace with sensitivity.
- Experience of HR and Payroll operational processes.
- Previous experience of HR and Payroll migration projects with an understanding of the specific complexities that they generate and how they can be managed.
- Experience of managing change in an HR and integrated Payroll systems migration project across multiple locations and stakeholders.
- Experience with development of stakeholder management plans, communication strategies and training plans.
- Experience of managing changes at organisational and individual level where the changes have been caused by a software migration.
- Experience of running, developing, planning and evaluating training sessions and engagement workshops.
- Experience of working in matrix management project team.
- Experience of leveraging your digital technology skills to influence, instruct and drive change adoption.
- Experience of cross-team working with multiple stakeholders.
- Experience working with schools (ideally within a Multi-Academy-Trust) or another highly devolved, compliance-driven environment (e.g., NHS, local government)
- Experience of implementing Midland iTrent (desirable).
- Strong team player, with experience of managing the work of others within the team through matrix relationships.
- Experience of working with external third parties.
- Experience of working with remote project teams.
- Knowledge of good practice/procedures regarding compliance with data protection legislation

Personal Qualities

- Ability to pursue a change agenda with resilience, managing difficult situations and stakeholders.
- Effective communication skills – both written and verbal.
- Strong stakeholder management skills.
- Ability to use initiative and resolve problems in analytical manner.
- Ability to work independently.
- Attention to detail.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality and handle sensitive information with care.

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 with barred list check.

- The role will be office and home based, with a requirement for the role to be either onsite at a school or in the office 2 to 3 times a week.

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](#).