



The Sycamore  
Church of England  
Trust

Grow together, Learn forever

# Assistant Director of HR and People Recruitment Pack

**Closing Date:** Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2026

**Shortlisting:** Monday 27<sup>th</sup> July

**Interviews:** Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2026



# Assistant Director of HR and People

<b>Working Hours:</b>	Full time, 37 hours per week
<b>Salary:</b>	Grade 15
<b>Contract:</b>	Permanent, all year round
<b>Required From:</b>	1st September 2026 or soon thereafter

## Shape the Future of People Leadership in a Growing Trust

The Sycamore Church of England Trust is entering an exciting period of growth and development. As our family of schools continues to expand, we are seeking an experienced HR professional to help shape the next phase of our people strategy, organisational culture and workforce development.

This is a unique opportunity to become the Trust's senior in-house HR professional, working alongside school leaders, Trustees and the Executive Team to develop a high-quality, sustainable HR function that supports our staff, schools and communities to thrive.

## Why Join Us?

This role offers far more than traditional HR casework. It is an opportunity to influence strategy, shape culture and help build a people function that supports the future success of our Trust.

### You will have the opportunity to:

- Lead and influence HR practice across a growing Trust.
- Work closely with school leaders, Trustees and the Executive Team.
- Support and develop leadership capability across the Trust.
- Influence Trust-wide people strategy and organisational development.
- Drive staff wellbeing, engagement and retention initiatives.
- Play a key role in supporting organisational growth, integration and change across a developing family of schools.
- Bring your professional expertise to decisions that make a genuine difference to schools, children and communities.
- Continue your own professional development whilst supporting others to grow.

As a Church of England Trust, we place people, relationships, inclusion and community at the heart of what we do. We are committed to creating an environment where colleagues feel valued, trusted and supported to flourish, whilst ensuring our schools remain focused on delivering the very best outcomes for children and young people.

Importantly, you will not be working in isolation. Alongside a collaborative central team, we maintain access to specialist HR and legal expertise, ensuring professional support is available whenever required and enabling you to access additional expertise, training and guidance where appropriate.

## A trust that recognises the importance of work-life balance

We recognise the importance of achieving a healthy balance between professional responsibilities and personal commitments. The Trust is committed to considering flexible working arrangements wherever these can be accommodated alongside the operational needs of the role.

We welcome conversations with prospective candidates about individual circumstances and potential flexible working arrangements.

## Could This Be You?

You will be an experienced HR professional with strong employment law knowledge and substantial experience of complex employee relations, organisational change, workforce planning and organisational development.

You will be comfortable leading organisations and teams through periods of growth, transformation and change, supporting leaders to navigate challenges whilst maintaining a strong focus on people, culture and organisational effectiveness.

Most importantly, you will bring sound professional judgement, credibility, resilience and a collaborative approach. You will enjoy building positive relationships, supporting leaders and helping our Trust to manage change successfully whilst ensuring our schools remain positive places to work and learn.

## What We Can Offer

- A senior leadership role with genuine strategic influence
- The opportunity to shape and develop a growing HR function
- A Trust that recognises the importance of work-life balance
- A supportive and collaborative Executive Team
- Access to specialist HR and legal expertise
- Commitment to ongoing professional development
- A comprehensive wellbeing offer

## Interested?

For an informal discussion about the role, please contact Jo Seddon, Director of Operations.

Applications should be submitted online. We are unable to accept CVs or paper application forms. If you require any reasonable adjustments or support to complete your application, please contact us on 0161 505 2519 or at [recruitment@thesycamoretrust.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@thesycamoretrust.co.uk) and we will be pleased to assist.

**The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be required to undertake an enhanced DBS check.**

## Job Description

<b>Post Title</b>	Assistant Director of HR and People
<b>Reporting to:</b>	Chief Operating Officer (COO)

## Main Purpose of the Role

The Assistant Director of HR & People is the Trust's senior in-house HR professional, responsible for shaping the Trust's people strategy and providing expert advice, professional judgement and leadership across all workforce matters.

The role provides strategic direction, professional oversight and assurance to ensure HR practice is consistent, compliant and aligned with the Trust's values and priorities.

The postholder will lead and develop the Trust's central HR function, working collaboratively with the wider central services team, school leaders, school-based colleagues and other specialist leads, including governance, risk, compliance and finance. Whilst retaining professional accountability for HR practice, the role will draw upon internal capacity, delegated responsibilities and external specialist advice where appropriate to deliver an effective, sustainable and well-supported HR service across the Trust.

This is a strategic leadership role focused on organisational development, workforce planning, change management and the continuous improvement of HR services across the Trust.

## Core Responsibilities and Tasks

### People Strategy, Policy and Culture

- Work with the COO and Executive Team to develop and deliver the Trust's People Strategy.
- Develop the Trust's employee offer, including wellbeing, engagement, retention and staff experience.
- Lead the development and review of HR policies and frameworks, ensuring alignment with Trust values, priorities and legal requirements.
- Use workforce data and insight to inform strategic planning, policy development and continuous improvement.

### HR Leadership and Professional Advice

- Provide senior professional advice on complex workforce matters, employee relations issues and workforce risk.
- Ensure HR practice across the Trust is consistent, proportionate and legally compliant.
- Build leadership capability through coaching, guidance and support.
- Provide assurance to the COO on the quality and effectiveness of HR delivery.

## Job Description

### **Employee Relations and Workforce Change**

- Oversee and quality assure complex employee relations casework.
- Provide professional challenge and judgement to leaders on workforce matters.
- Lead or support organisational change, restructures, consultation processes, TUPE transfers and workforce integration activity.
- Manage relationships with external HR and legal advisers, ensuring advice is used effectively and strategically.

### **Compliance, Risk and Assurance**

- Maintain oversight of HR-related compliance, including employment law, safer recruitment and statutory requirements, working with the Governance and Risk Lead, compliance colleagues and school-based teams where responsibilities overlap.
- Ensure effective processes for maintaining, monitoring and auditing the Single Central Record.
- Identify, manage and escalate workforce-related risks.
- Provide assurance that HR systems, processes and records are robust, compliant and well evidenced.

### **Workforce Planning, Pay and Performance**

- Support workforce planning, organisational design and staffing structures across the Trust.
- Oversee pay, performance, progression and terms and conditions frameworks.
- Provide guidance on the application and interpretation of employment terms, pay arrangements and workforce policies.
- Lead or support engagement and consultation with recognised trade unions.

### **Systems, Improvement and Leadership**

- Oversee the effective use of HR systems, reporting and workforce data.
- Drive continuous improvement in HR processes, systems and ways of working.
- Promote a positive, values-led and supportive culture across the Trust.
- Contribute to Trust-wide strategic planning and organisational development as part of the wider leadership team.
- Support the development of the HR function, ensuring responsibilities are appropriately delivered through central services, school leaders and external partners.

## Corporate Responsibilities

**All employees of The Sycamore CE Trust have a responsibility for, and must be committed to, safeguarding, and promoting the welfare of children and young people and for ensuring that they are protected from harm.**

In addition, we expect all employees to:

- Be aware of, support and contribute to the ethos and values of the Trust.
- Recognise own strengths and areas of expertise and use these to support and advise others.
- Participate in training and other learning activities and performance development as required.
- Familiarise themselves with, and adhere to, all relevant Trust Policies and Procedures
- Comply with the Trust's Health and Safety requirements.
- Maintain high professional standards of attendance, punctuality, appearance, conduct and positive, courteous relations with students, parents, and colleagues

This is an outline job description only and the post holder will be expected to undertake duties commensurate within the range and grade of the post or any other reasonable duties as directed by the Trust. Duties may be subject to periodic review, in consultation with the postholder, to reflect the changing work composition of the Trust.

Person Specification		
Qualifications, Knowledge, Skills, and Experience	Essential or Desirable	Assessment Method
<b>Education and Qualifications</b>		
Relevant HR qualification (e.g. CIPD Level 5 or above)	Essential	Application Form, Interview, Certificates
Evidence of relevant and recent professional development	Essential	
Chartered Member of CIPD (or working towards)	Desirable	
Significant senior HR experience within education, public sector or similarly complex organisations.	Essential	
<b>Knowledge and Understanding</b>		
Strong understanding of employment law and HR best practice	Essential	Application Form, Interview, Reference
Knowledge of HR compliance requirements, including safer recruitment and safeguarding	Essential	
Experience of workforce planning, organisational change or TUPE	Essential	
Understanding of HR risk management and assurance	Essential	
Experience of working with trade unions and consultation processes	Essential	
<b>Key Skills and Experience</b>		
Significant experience operating at a senior HR level, providing professional advice on complex workforce matters	Essential	Application Form, Interview, Reference
Experience of managing complex employee relations casework	Essential	
Ability to operate with a high degree of professional autonomy and sound judgement	Essential	
Experience of leading and developing staff	Essential	
Experience of using HR systems and workforce data to inform decision-making	Desirable	
Experience of working across multiple schools or sites	Desirable	

Skills and Attributes		
Highly effective communication skills, with the confidence to advise and appropriately challenge senior leaders	Essential	Application Form, Interview, Reference
Ability to manage competing priorities in a fast-paced, growing organisation	Essential	
Collaborative, resilient and professional approach	Essential	
Values-driven, aligned with the ethos of a Church of England MAT	Essential	
Additional Requirements		
Willingness to work flexibly within the scope of the role	Essential	Application Form, Interview
Willingness to work flexibly across Trust schools and central services, using technology and in-person engagement to build effective relationships and support service delivery.	Essential	