The Balcarras Trust

Applicant Pack

HR Advisor

The Balcarras Trust

The Balcarras Trust came into existence on December 1st 2020. We are a Multi Academy Trust based in Gloucestershire. Prior to this the company (Balcarras School) was a Single Academy Trust.

The Mission Statement of The Balcarras Trust:

The Balcarras Trust is committed to delivering outstanding inclusive, comprehensive education in each of its schools. Every child within the Trust will be expected, encouraged and supported to reach their full potential and, when they leave school, to be fully equipped to go on to be successful in the next phase of their lives.

The Trust will establish and maintain high standards of teaching, pastoral care and behaviour in its schools. No child will be “left behind.” There will be excellent opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

Each member of staff in the Trust’s schools will be an excellent role model and will play their part in ensuring that each school in the Trust will have its own special ethos. Students will feel proud of their school.

Currently there are three schools in the Trust:

Balcarras: an 11-18 co-educational academy with 1432 pupils on roll. Consistently rated outstanding by Ofsted, the school secures superb outcomes at both GCSE and A level. In 2021 the school was awarded the Sunday Times Southwest State School of the Decade Award. The school is led by Dominic Burke (Headteacher). Balcarras is the lead school in the GLOW Maths Hub and the Balcarras Teaching School Partnership. The Trust owns Balcarras' land which comprises 19.5 acres and buildings of some 11,000 square metres.

The High School Leckhampton: a new 11-16 coeducational comprehensive academy with an eventual capacity of 900. The school opened in September 2021 with an intake of 120 pupils initially operating on the Balcarras site before moving to its purpose built site at Farm Lane in Leckhampton. Next year the school will have a pupil population in excess of 700. The school achieved an 'outstanding' rating in its first OFSTED inspection in 2024. The High School Leckhampton is led by Helen Wood who is also Interim CEO for the Trust. The site comprises 13 acres and buildings of some 7,000 square metres. The Trust has a 125-year lease on the site at Farm Lane.

Winchcombe School: an 11 to 16 school in the Cotswolds with 530 pupils on the roll. The school joined the Trust in November 2023 and is rated 'Good' by OFSTED. As a relatively small school Winchcombe prides itself on the quality of its pastoral care. In September 2025 Parin Gohil will take up the headship of the school. Winchcombe occupies a beautiful site in the Cotswolds which extends beyond 20 acres. The Trust owns the land and the buildings.

In addition the Trust has a wider role as a system leader:

Outreach work: The Balcarras Trust is a leading provider of professional development for educators. The Trust runs the GLOW Maths Hub which is responsible for leading maths education in this region. GLOW has an annual turnover of close to £1 million. The Trust also has the contract to run the Teaching School Hub for Cheltenham, Stroud and The Cotswolds. This involves turnover of well over £250,000
The Trust also operate the Gloucestershire Initial Education Partnership, an 80 place teacher training programme, in conjunction with the Gloucestershire Association of Secondary School Leaders.

Future Development: The Balcarras Trust is open to the possibility of growth although we don't seek growth for its own sake. We have very good relationships with a number of schools locally and we are open to the possibility that some of these schools might join the Trust in the future.
In any case the Trust will grow as the current pupil number increases. This will require a larger central services team and a more extensive offer to our schools.

HR ADVISOR

Job Description

4 days per week, 52 weeks per year

Salary: £28,563

It is expected that all staff will interact appropriately and sensitively with pupils and colleagues.

JOB PURPOSE

The Trust HR Advisor is responsible for providing and managing a comprehensive, centralised HR operations service to the Trust and its Academies.
The main place of work will be The Balcarras Trust central office, however the post holder must be able to travel and be prepared to work flexibly according to the needs of the business.
Provide HR strategic leadership across the Trust with travel to various locations.
Providing overall strategic and operational leadership and management of all aspects of HR.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Key strategic elements of the job

- Drive alignment between HR strategy and policy.
- Lead & support the HR Team in the delivery of the strategy across the Trust.
- Provide direction, support and advice in relation to the day to day HR function of the Trust, this includes, but is not limited to, employee relations, employee wellbeing, resourcing, pay and reward, terms and conditions, planning, monitoring, appraising, and reviewing staff performance and any absence management issues.
- Continually develop your knowledge and understanding keeping up to date with any Employment Law or Education changes to assist with the decision making process and ensure that all actions are in line with guidance provided by any relevant body.
- Manage complex employee relations casework and preparation of papers including dispute resolutions, disciplinaries, grievances, investigations, absence, change management, restructures and redundancy.
- Promote and embed a culture of wellbeing, inclusion and engagement across all academies.
- Support the efficient and effective recruitment of staff across the Trust, ensuring Safer Recruitment processes are adhered to at all times.

The Balcarras Trust

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (continued)

- Be responsible for the creation and maintenance of single central records that meet the required OFSTED standards and that will combine into a single Trust record.
- Produce management reports as required and undertake statistical analysis to accurately assess the current working practices of the Trust aiming to improve efficiency. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring there is a Trust wide overview of staff absence issues and the completion of any required government statistical returns.
- Develop & drive HR policies and processes which are efficient and effective and ensure legislative compliance at all times.
- Manage and implement staff wellbeing policies and initiatives.
- Lead on the provision of support and advice to the Trust and school leadership teams on HR related issues as required, including providing professional developmental support to senior and middle leaders, in all aspects of HR including the application of Trust policies.
- Provide first line advice on current and existing terms and conditions and benefits for employees and managers, providing information about best practice where appropriate.
- Ensure best value and quality of service from all the relevant HR service level agreements with regards to recruitment advertising platforms.
- Lead on recruitment and selection strategies and manage talent and succession planning.
- Align recruitment across the Trust by preparing applicant packs and adverts.
- Ensuring the effective role out of the recruitment system.
- Liasing with Finance to prepare and issue contracts. Where possible aligning current contracts and job descriptions across the Trust.
- Establish a HR System that is used efficiently and effectively across the Trust.
- Participate in the implementation of specific projects, procedures and guidelines to help align the workforce with the strategic goals of the organisation.
- Ensure that HR metrics are produced regularly and reported to a wide range of committees, including the Executive Team and Trustees.
- Provide advice and guidance on TUPE to the Executive Team and Trustees where appropriate, including taking the lead on HR due diligence and the staffing side of TUPE Transfers where appropriate.
- Report on the duties, workload, performance and functions of the HR Team via data based KPIs.
- Ensure that the board and committees are provided with data they require with regard to staffing issues, which might include attending meetings.

Partnership or Corporate Working

- Lead on policy development, consultation and implementation process.
- Represent HR and the Trust at working groups, meetings and corporate groups.
- Lead and manage projects, collaborating with other colleagues and Academies as appropriate.
- Ensure that a high-quality HR provision is provided to Trust academies. Ensure a consistent high level of service to all Trust employees providing a seamless service and a whole team approach.
- Support Headteachers, Governors but also Trustees on any operational HR matters, including supporting at hearings under HR policies and procedures and attending Trustee meetings when necessary. Also supporting managers with performance management.
- Multi-site organisation – support and guidance to those staff with a HR element to their roles in individual schools/academies.
- Work with external consultants that may be brought into the Trust to support specific projects.
- Work with other relevant authorities, departments, solicitors regarding conversions of schools / academies into the Trust.
- Attend HR working group meetings as required.
- Attend JNCC union meetings as required.
- Resource Management
- Lead and implement service developments as needed.
- Advise appropriate action to colleagues and develop and implement guidance and action plans to enable and facilitate the delivery of key initiatives.
- Skills Development
- Ensure development of the central HR Trust team, for specific project work to establish and deliver a responsive, professional HR Service.

Safeguarding

- Provide advice in relation to safeguarding and child protection concerns that relates to staff within the Trust including attending relevant meetings. Work closely with other key external agencies i.e. Police, Local Authority etc.
- To be committed to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults, raising concerns as appropriate.
- Know about data protection issues in the context of your role.
- Maintain confidentiality as appropriate.
- Have an awareness and basic knowledge where appropriate of the most recent safeguarding legislation.

Systems and Information

- Develop management information systems to support the Trust and its academies.
- Provide useful, meaningful and relevant data to support operational HR elements of the service.
- To establish key HR systems and promote the benefits of the systems with Managers. Support Managers to use systems and monitor compliance.
- Requirement to use a range of computer systems. Adopt new ways of working when new systems are introduced, use systems to manage and progress case work, analyse and report on relevant data and to maintain effective communication.
- To establish key HR systems and promote benefits of the systems with School Leaders, support School Leaders to use systems and monitor compliance.
- To work with schools/academies to ensure effective review of workforce census.
- To undertake statutory responses to the required authorities including workforce questionnaires, DfE etc.
- Creation of reports to complete statutory requirements such as Gender Pay Gap, salary disclosures, etc.

Planning and Organising

- Lead on the project management of new schools looking to join the Trust including the gathering and assessment of Due Diligence information on new schools.

Data Protection

- To comply with the Trusts policies and supporting documentation in relation to Information Governance this includes Data Protection, Information Security and Confidentiality.
- Know about data protection issues in the context of your role

GENERAL

- To maintain confidentiality and discretion regarding sensitive information
- To comply with all necessary policies and procedures relating to child protection, equality and diversity, health, safety and security and reporting all concerns to the appropriate person
- To represent the Trust at all times in a professional, positive and helpful way
- To be conversant with relevant IT and software, and keep up to date with developments in IT
- To respect and value all colleagues, children and parents, encouraging a positive and diverse working environment
- To participate in the Trust's appraisal programme
- To undertake training where this is appropriate
- To contribute pro-actively to meetings and discussions as required, and to participate in the whole Trust team
- To be compliant with GDPR
- To ensure that all health and safety instructions are followed and that all reasonable care is taken not to do anything that might endanger yourself or others
- To report any health and safety issues to the Site Manager

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY
None

SUPERVISION RECEIVED
CFO

PRINCIPAL CONTACTS

- Regular contact is essential to build a positive working relationship with Heads, Managers, and employees, ensuring they have trust in the advice provided.
- Regular contact to maintain positive working relationships with external service providers to ensure a quality HR service is provided.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS
- This post may involve working some flexible hours on a planned basis

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
The postholder is required to assist in the implementation of The Balcarras Trust equal opportunity objectives and the school's Equal Opportunities Policy.

This job description is not necessarily a comprehensive definition of the role, and the post holder may be required to undertake such other tasks appropriate to the level of the appointment as may be required. This job description sets out the main duties of the post at the date when it was drawn up. Such duties may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or the level of responsibility entailed. Such variations are a common occurrence and cannot of themselves justify a reconsideration of the grading of the post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Essential	Desirable (if not attained, development may be provided for successful candidate)
Knowledge	
• Good working knowledge and understanding of employment legislation and demonstrable practical experience of applying this • Good understanding of application of HR policies/procedures in practice to result in required outcomes	• Knowledge of National, Local Authority and other relevant Terms & Conditions of Service
Experience	
• Significant and proven working knowledge, experience and understanding of HR in Education, preferably within a school or MAT environment • Experience of managing high level of varied and complex HR casework within a unionised environment • Experience of leading a multi-disciplinary HR team and service (including recruitment, HR administration and HR advisory services). • Experience of managing TUPE transfers, restructures and redundancies. • Experience and understanding of safeguarding within Education HR. • Experience and understanding of various terms and conditions of employment within a school environment. • Proven and effective experience in supporting change management programmes • Experience of coaching and developing School Leaders • Experience of developing, maintaining and continuously reviewing HR policies, procedures and training gin line with employment law and education policies. • Working in a pressurised environment and able to manage a busy workload with competing priorities.	• Experience of managing a number of HR related SLAs including occupational health, employee benefits, recruitment advertising, payroll and pensions.

Occupational Skills	
• A knowledge and understanding of reward strategies and their impact upon the recruitment and retention of staff. • Ability to develop positive and effective professional relationships with all stakeholders including Trustees, LGBs, Academy leaders and the Central Management Team. • Effective interpersonal skills including tact, diplomacy and negotiation. • Evidence based decision making skills and solution focused perspective. • Well-developed verbal and written communication skills. • Efficient in the use of ICT with ability to interpret and analysis data • Communication, presentation and interpersonal skills • Problem solving skills and the ability to find innovative solutions • Commitment to the performance management culture with the ability to set high standards, deliver objectives and challenge School Leaders appropriately • A coaching-based approach to support School Leaders and develop • Delivering briefings and training to School Leaders • Flexibility and ability to work with ambiguity • Time management skills • Strong commitment to the Trust values and ethos • Standards driven • Ability to work outside normal academy hours in line with academy and community needs • Ability to travel to multi-site locations across the Trust	• Coaching/mentoring

Qualifications	
• Level 5 CIPD • Educated to degree level or equivalent • Membership of CIPD or eligibility with equivalent experience • Safer Recruitment Training	
Other Requirements	
• Enhanced DBS clearance • Tact, diplomacy and initiative • Commitment to customer orientated service delivery at a high level. • Be flexible and work as part of a team. • Can positively lead and implement change in line with agreed plans to ensure the continuous development and improvement of the service, meeting the Trust's and school's/academy's objectives. • A positive professional who can adapt to change • Commitment to Equal Opportunities • Ability to travel	

Selection Process

- After the deadline for the position has passed there will be a shortlisting meeting with the CEO and CFO to review the applications.
- Qualifications, experience and suitability for the post will be considered during the shortlisting process.
- Unsuccessful applications will be notified by email. Unsuccessful candidates can request feedback by email.
- Successful applicants will be invited for interview by telephone or email.
- References will be requested at this stage.
- Please stipulate clearly on you application form should you wish for your references not to be checked prior to job offer.
- A formal letter confirming the interview arrangements and plan for the day will then be emailed to candidates including details of documentation that will be required to be presented on the day.
- One of the requirements of the day will be to complete a “Declaration of Criminal Record and other information” check.
- If you have a DBS certificate from your current work place, you will be required to show this.
- Candidates will be required to undergo a formal interview (including safer recruitment questions) and where appropriate a task. All information concerning the day will be provided in the formal letter.
- A decision will be made on the day where possible.
- Both successful and unsuccessful candidates will be notified by telephone where possible.

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The Balcarras Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We particularly welcome applications from underrepresented groups including ethnicity, gender, transgender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion. Please also read the Recruitment Selection and Disclosure Policy within “How to apply” which includes our policy on recruiting ex-offenders. All posts are subject to an enhanced DBS check and receipt of two satisfactory references.

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www.thebalcarrastrust.co.uk

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