



United Learning
The best in everyone™

Briefing Pack for Applicants

Operations Officer

December 2024

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Section 1 – Post Advertisement

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Job title: | Operations Officer |
| Location: | Fir Vale School |
| Starting salary: | £35,000 gross per annum |
| Contract: | Full-time, permanent |
| Start date: | TBC |

We are seeking to appoint an experienced individual to the role of Operations Officer at Fir Vale School. This is an exciting opportunity to support the Operations Manager in embedding systems and processes.

This role requires a focussed individual who is organised and passionate about making a difference for our academy and the local community. The successful candidate will be a highly efficient individual with outstanding attention to detail. This is a challenging role that will bring many rewards.

We will offer you:

- Highly competitive pay above national average.
- 26 days annual leave plus 8 statutory bank holidays per annum.
- An additional day's paid leave awarded per annum.
- Excellent facilities and resources.
- Access to an outstanding professional development programme.
- A respectful working environment.
- Supportive, friendly colleagues who are committed to each other's professional development.
- A chance to become part of United Learning, one of the largest groups of academies in the country.
- Opportunities to work collaboratively with colleagues in each academy across the Cluster and United Learning.
- Excellent employee benefits which include a highly sought-after pension scheme with high employer contributions.
- Access to training through the Apprenticeship Levy.
- Perkbox benefits platform.
- Free on-site parking.
- Access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).
- We encourage open and regular conversations about work-life balance.

Fir Vale School is joining the Yorkshire Cluster of United Learning in the near future. As part of United Learning our aim is to bring out 'the Best in Everyone' and we continuously strive to ensure that students and staff have every opportunity to succeed, with their potential developed to the utmost.

United Learning is one of the largest and most successful Trusts in the country who offers unrivalled Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and training, including opportunities for nationwide networking.

We are looking for:

- An experienced line manager with excellent communication and team building skills.
- Ability and confidence to coach and mentor colleagues.
- A professional with validated operational services experience.
- Experience of developing a high-quality administrative service.
- Strong problem-solving capabilities.

- Ability to present operational proposals in a simple and effective way to senior internal collaborators.
- Good collaborator skills, including an ability to set expectations and balance conflicting demands.
- Report writing and presenting to a variety of audiences.
- Excellent IT skills.
- Ability to effectively contribute to the review and development of policies and procedures.
- You must have good organisational skills and a keen eye for detail.
- Ability to adapt to changing and diverse workload with autonomy and resilience.
- Demonstrate a positive, proactive and professional approach at all times.

Please see the job description and person specification for further detail.

As Fir Vale School is joining United Learning, the advert is hosted by Sheffield Park Academy. To apply, please click the 'Apply Now' button at the top of the advert on Sheffield Park Academy's website using the following link to our vacancies page: [Sheffield Park Academy Vacancies](#) and complete our online application form. Please note that CVs are not accepted. **The closing date for this post is midnight on Sunday 05 January 2025. Interviews will take place soon after.**

If you would like to discuss this exciting opportunity, please contact the PA to Headteacher via email goxley@firvale.com

United Learning is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Employees will, in accordance with statutory guidance, be subject to a comprehensive checking process including references from current and previous employers, health, Right to Work in the UK, an Enhanced DBS check and a further check against the appropriate barred list.

Section 2 – United Learning

The Yorkshire Cluster is part of United Learning which is a large and growing group of schools aiming to offer life changing education to children and young people across England.

Our schools work as a team and achieve more by sharing than any single school could. Our Subject Specialists, Group-wide Intranet, our own curriculum and online learning portal all help us to share knowledge and resource, which supports simplifying work processes and managing workloads for an improved work-life balance.

As a Group we can reward our staff better and provide excellent career opportunities, better pay, employee benefits and ultimately, the satisfaction of helping children to succeed. We also invest in our staff wellbeing. Our academies each have at least eight INSET/training days per year (with three of those solely dedicated to planning) and an ongoing group-wide wellbeing programme. It is an ethos we call ‘the Best in Everyone’.

We are working hard to become a more diverse organisation, which is key to our commitment to bringing out ‘the Best in Everyone’. We welcome applications from everyone committed to this ethos and would particularly welcome applications from black and minority ethnic candidates who are currently under-represented in the Group as a whole. We always appoint on merit. We are open to discussing flexible working options.

<https://unitedlearning.org.uk/>

Section 3 – Letter from the Regional Director

Dear Candidate

Thank you very much for your interest in the role within the Yorkshire United Learning Cluster. The cluster itself is a close-knit group of three Secondary Academies: Barnsley Academy, Sheffield Park Academy and Sheffield Springs Academy, who work alongside a number of local Primary Academies; all from within the United Learning Trust.

The cluster is well-established and has excellent support from locally based cluster central services. These cover Business Management, HR, IT and Site/Estate Facilities. They are led by an Executive Business Manager. This provides our Academies with excellent trained advice and support in these areas; this benefits the leadership and wider staff of every Academy.

United Learning Trust is a national organisation serving Primary and Secondary Academies, all-through Academies and Independent Schools. Our ethos is, “the Best in Everyone”. This is a useful phrase that sums up the work and focus of the organisation. Every decision taken is done with this aim in mind: for staff, for students and for the community. The Trust values of Respect, Determination and Ambition are driven through the Character Programme, which each Academy has carefully interpreted in their own way. The Trust attributes of Creativity, Confidence and Enthusiasm are demonstrated at every level.

United Learning, and Academies within the Yorkshire Cluster, demonstrate a strong commitment to staff CPD and staff wellbeing. If you join our schools you will be inducted, supported and developed in a deliberate way from before you even take up post. Our status as an Academy Trust enables highly competitive rates of pay progression and our employee schemes, such as Perkbox, are an attractive feature of employment.

Above everything, we put young people first and seek to recruit adults who share this view. We work with students, parents and families to provide a structured, supportive experience that enables them to achieve as well as they possibly can and become excellent scholars and rounded individuals. We insist on classrooms and corridors that are respectful, orderly places where everyone is expected to display positive and mature attitudes.

Applying for a new job is a huge investment of time and emotional energy. The recruitment decision has to be right for employee and employer. I would encourage you to seek out any information you need in order to make the important decision to apply and we welcome visits to our schools in advance of applications wherever this might be helpful.

I do wish you the very best with your application and thank you again for considering us.

Best wishes,

Laura Moore
Regional Director
United Learning

Section 4 – Letter from the Principal of Fir Vale School



Thank you very much for your interest in joining Fir Vale School. I am delighted to introduce you to our school and I hope that this application pack provides you with an overview. You are welcome to ring and chat with me prior to applying and come and visit if you can.

Fir Vale School is a diverse and dynamic 11-16 school. We are delighted to be part of United Learning and we work closely with our cluster schools.

We fully subscribe to the ethos and values of United Learning, they are very much values we subscribe to here at Fir Vale School.

Good luck with your application and thank you again for considering Fir Vale School as the next stage in your career.

Best wishes,

Rachel Smith
Headteacher
Fir Vale School

Section 5 – Job Description



Job Description

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Post title | Operations Officer |
| Salary | Band 3 |
| Responsible to | Operations Manager |
| Responsible for | Administration and support staff |
| Role purpose | Organise and supervise administrative systems within the academy. Contribute to the planning, development and monitoring of support services. Management of support staff including coordination and delegation of relevant activities. |
| Relevant qualifications | Business Administration qualification or School Business Professional qualification (or willingness to undertake). |

The postholder must, at all times, carry out their duties and responsibilities within the spirit of United Learning and academy policies and procedures, and within the legislative framework applicable to academies.

Role Summary

The Operations Officer will carry out their role and responsibilities in a manner which is in keeping with the values and vision of each academy within the Cluster.

Under the direction and leadership of the Operations Manager, the postholder will manage the business administration and support to the academy.

Key Responsibilities

Although not an exhaustive list the following gives an indication of the role and associated responsibilities.

Main Responsibilities

- The postholder is responsible for providing professional administrative and business support in partnership with teaching staff to enhance their effectiveness to achieve improved standards of learning and achievement.

- The postholder will deliver the highest standard of business ethos within the administrative function of the academy and supports the most effective use of resources.
- Provide support to senior leaders to ensure continuity of business support in the academy.
- Responsible for the overseeing the work of administrative staff in the academy.
- Contribute to the development of an effective, customer focused business support service which is characterised by high standards of delivery.

People Management

- Oversee the work of academy administration staff ensuring their operational efficiency supports Teaching and Learning, Cluster management, administration service and United Learning functions.
- Manage the performance of academy administration team, assessment and identification of development needs.
- Coach and mentor staff to ensure high-quality service provision is achieved.

Operational delivery

- Contribute to reporting on the progress against the Cluster Development Plans for business services, marketing and catering.
- Contribute to the implementation of system and process improvement as directed by the Operations Manager.
- Provide support to senior leaders and academy staff.
- Oversee the work of administration and support staff.
- To ensure that the administrative function supports each academy's core purpose of Teaching and Learning both efficiently and effectively.
- Ensure academy Management Information Systems are kept up to date and compliant.
- To have due regard for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of staff, children and young people and to follow the Child Protection procedures adopted by the academy.
- Produce appropriate Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on monthly basis in relation to the administrative and business service of the academy, for example, GDPR, Health and Safety.
- Work in liaison with Cluster Managers to ensure robust and compliant delivery at academy level.
- Contribute to ensuring the academy operates within United Learning policies and reporting non-compliance, where appropriate, to Senior Leaders and the Executive Business Manager.

- Monitor and have oversight of the catering provision. Liaise closely with the Operations Manager, Executive Business Manager, Catering Team and Catering Company to review service delivery and constantly work to increase uptake and improve standards.
- Participation and attendance at meetings, as and when required.
- Actively create partnerships, working relationships with likeminded establishments, develop key links to generate and/or evidence good practice on whole-academy initiatives.
- Actively participate in the academy duty rota as and when required.
- Contribute toward special projects relevant to the post that may arise from time to time.
- Network with other academies and associated establishments to share best practice.
- Contribute to staff meetings and briefings.
- Ability to meet the need to be flexible in workings hours in some instances.

Health and Safety

- Work in liaison with the Cluster Facilities and Projects Manager on matters of Health and Safety compliance and management of risk at academy level.
- The postholder is the academy's designated Health and Safety Coordinator.
- Ensure the accident reporting database, including near misses and violence to staff is maintained.
- Assist in record keeping with regard to Health and Safety, ensuring standards are met and records are up to date and accurate.
- To be conversant with Health and Safety regulations and ensure they are complied with, although not definitive, this will include maintaining central records for risk assessments, accident management, violence to staff forms, trip management, etc.
- Ensure systems are in place to enable the identification of hazards and risk assessments and make recommendations to the Operations Manager in view of the Risk Register.
- Undertake the duties of an Educational Visitors Coordinator:
 - Responsible for the effective co-ordination, organisation and management of educational visits. Ensuring all United Learning rules and regulations regarding trips are adhered to.
 - Ensure all necessary paperwork is completed accurately, risk assessments have been done and budget implications considered.
 - Book transport and venues for trips verifying transport companies used are on CHAS register and also on the academy's list of approved users.
- Audit the adherence of academy policies and procedures, for example, signing in and out.
- Lead on ensuring the academy's policy schedule is maintained and kept up to date, liaising with key colleagues and referencing to United Learning policies and procedures.

Data Protection

- The postholder is the academy's designated Data Protection Officer and will undertake all responsibilities associated with the role in-line with United Learning policy and procedure. This includes (although not definitive) leading on the following:
 - Subject Access Requests (SARs)
 - Freedom of Information
 - Third Party requests

Governance

- Administer governance arrangements in liaison with academy Principal, including:
 - Administer governance documentation in-line with the annual Governance Business Plan.
 - Ensure governance arrangement are compliant and operating to expected standards.
 - Support the maintenance of records in relation to training undertaken by Local Governors.
 - Support the induction process for newly appointed Local Governors.

Personal Competences

- Ability to contribute to the development of Business and Operations systems.
- The postholder will be required to evidence through actions the level of knowledge of services within the academy.
- Actively seek to maintain and develop knowledge in appropriate areas.
- Skilled in the management and troubleshooting of Business and Operations related systems.
- Support new academies joining the Cluster with system implementation, training and understanding of United Learning policies.

General

- Develop excellent working relationships with colleagues internally, centrally and externally.
- Be an effective and flexible member of the team.
- Ensure any documentation produced is to a high standard and is in-line with the in-house style.
- Participate in training and other learning activities as required.
- Participate in the Performance Management process.
- Provide appropriate guidance and supervision and assist in the training and development of staff as appropriate.
- Represent the academy at events as appropriate.

- Support and promote the academy and United Learning’s ethos, contributing to strengthening relationships between academies in the Cluster and between the Cluster and central office.
- To be aware of and comply with United Learning policies and procedures relating to Child Protection, Health and Safety, security, confidentiality and Data Protection, reporting all concerns to the appropriate person.
- To actively participate in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and act as a positive role model across the academies and United learning.
- The above duties are not exhaustive and the post-holder may be required to undertake tasks, roles and responsibilities as may be reasonably assigned to them by the Executive Business Manager and Principals.
- This job description will be kept under review and may be amended via consultation with the individual, Executive Business Manager and Human Resources as required.

Information

This post may involve both evening and weekend work and the post-holder will need to demonstrate a large degree of flexibility and willingness to work unsocial hours. The need to adapt working hours around the business need of the academies and Cluster is an expectancy of the job role.

The information contained above is to help staff understand and appreciate the work content of their post and the role they are to undertake in the organisation. However, it should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to outline all duties and responsibilities, a document such as this does not permit every item to be specified in detail. Broad headings have therefore been used in which case all the usual associated duties are included in this job description.

This job description will be reviewed annually as part of the performance management process and may be subject to amendment or modification at any time after consultation with the postholder. Elements of this job description and changes to it may be negotiated at the request of either the postholder or the incumbent of the post.

I accept my job description and job title as detailed above.

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Name (print) | |
| Sign | |
| Date | |

Section 6 – Person Specification



Person Specification

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Post title | Operations Officer |
| Salary | Band 3 |

| Education and Qualifications | Essential | Desirable |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Business administration qualification | X | |
| Excellent literacy and numeracy to support delivery in the role | X | |
| Evidence of further professional development and training. | X | |
| School Business Leadership qualification | | X |
| A formal Health and Safety qualification. | | X |
| Experience | Essential | Desirable |
| Experience in a similar role in a business service function providing administration and support. | X | |
| Experience of producing documentation to support managers and leaders. | X | |
| Experience operating in a fast-paced environment. | X | |
| Experience of supervision or management of a team. | X | |
| Experience of contributing to a high-quality administrative service. | X | |
| Experience of using management information systems. | X | |
| Knowledge and Skills | Essential | Desirable |
| Knowledge of what an effective administrative service can offer. | X | |
| Good interpersonal skills to ensure effective communication at all levels. | X | |
| Good competency in office applications, for example, Microsoft Office. | X | |
| Good written and verbal communication skills. | X | |
| Understands and uses organisation systems to report on compliance and performance issues and action failures at the appropriate level in the organisation. | X | |
| Ability to effectively contribute to the review and development of organisational policy. | X | |
| Ability and confidence to mentor colleagues. | X | |
| Management | Essential | |
| Acts as a role model for professional behaviour and good practice. | X | |
| Sets the pace for action and demonstrates commitment to achieving goals. | X | |
| Actively supports the implementation of improved systems and processes. | X | |

| Teamwork | Essential | Desirable |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Recognises the contribution and achievement of colleagues. | X | |
| Keeps colleagues, stakeholders and/or customers informed of progress. | X | |
| Treats others fairly, openly and consistently. | X | |
| Expresses disagreement or challenges views calmly, constructively and tactfully. | X | |
| Supports and co-operates with colleagues. | X | |
| Personal Attributes | Essential | Desirable |
| High levels of discretion, confidentiality, and awareness of Data Protection. | X | |
| High levels of personal and professional integrity. | X | |
| A facilitative approach to problem-solving and a 'can do' mindset. | X | |
| Good written and verbal communication skills. | X | |
| Ability to prioritise, multitask and manage workloads while maintaining a flexible response to urgent requests. | X | |
| Good interpersonal skills and ability to work with stakeholders at all levels. | X | |
| Organised and good attention to detail. | X | |
| Maintains high standards and takes initiative to make things better. | X | |
| Make recommendations for improvements to enhance quality of service. | X | |
| Ability and willingness to travel regularly to locations within the cluster. | X | |
| Ability to drive and the use of a vehicle is advantageous. | | X |

Section 7 – The Appointment Process

These notes are intended to guide you when making an application.

The Application Form

The application form is accessible via the 'Apply' link on the job advertisement. Please complete the application form neatly, fully and accurately, including exact dates. You are requested to submit a concise application. CVs are not accepted.

Education and Training

State your qualifications and any training you have undertaken relevant to the post.

Present Appointment

Make it clear what your present post is, which establishment you work in and who your employer is.

Previous Appointment

When completing this section it is important that you offer a continuous record, or an explanation of any gaps to allow full account to be taken of your experience, for example, child raising, voluntary work.

Referees

Suitable referees are people who have direct, recent experience of your work and who are in responsible positions. References will be taken if the candidate is successfully short-listed for interview. We may need to contact them at short notice so please be specific with regard to contact addresses including e-mail and telephone numbers.

The Supporting Statement

The supporting statement is regarded as a very important part of your application. You should make statements that demonstrate how your qualifications and experience match the post.

Arrangements for Interview

Shortlisted applicants will be contacted as soon as possible after the closing date. Referees are contacted prior to the interview stage for teaching and support staff posts. We would ask that all shortlisted applicants read the safeguarding information on the academy website/s prior to attending the interview.

The Interview

Candidates will be invited to interview at the academy during which time they will have the opportunity to meet staff and students and see the academy at work.

Feedback

Feedback is offered to those candidates who are shortlisted, interviewed and not recommended for appointment. It is hoped that this information will help you with future applications.

Section 8 – Visitors/Contacts



Fir Vale School
Owler Lane
S4 8BG

Website: <https://www.firvale.com>

Email: enquiries@firvale.com

Telephone: 0114 2439391

As part of United Learning our aim is to bring out 'the Best in Everyone' and we continuously strive to ensure that students and staff have every opportunity to succeed, with their potential developed to the utmost.