GORSE

Trust Catering Manager

Recruitment Pack

Dear Colleague

Many thanks for displaying an interest in the role of Trust Catering Manager at The GORSE Academies Trust.

It goes without saying that the process of appointing to this role is of great importance to all of us within the trust. We employ over 1,500 professionals and teach close to 12,000 children and young people. So, looking after the welfare of our whole community regarding the quality of food and drink that they experience on a daily basis is a critically important role within our trust. This is particularly the case because a very significant proportion of our children and young people come to us from less advantaged backgrounds; for so many of our community the meals that they enjoy at school are their most important meals of the day.

Our trust is exceptionally well viewed by all key stakeholders nationally and regionally. We enjoy an excellent relationship with our local authority, with our Regional Director and the Department for Education more widely. Through a range of Ofsted inspection reports and our position within government league tables we enjoy a reputation as one of the highest performing trusts in the country. We now need to take that standard into our catering programme ensuring as we do that an extensive team of catering professionals are empowered to provide the very best in school meal provision for our children and young people.

We also operate the largest School Centred Initial Teacher Training programme in the country; GORSE SCITT was judged by Ofsted to be Outstanding in all areas of its work in 2018 and forms an aorta of brilliant teachers to our schools and our partner schools across the city region. Those colleagues who are training with us also provide an important area of provision regarding our catering programme.

As a trust we are not driven by the spur of growth, for growth's sake. We remain committed to focusing our work on the Leeds city region and you can get from any one of our schools to another in less than 30 minutes. This is essential to us because we are a tactile organisation which revels in the opportunities provided by partnership, conversation and dialogue. For us, growth has been managed with extreme care. We have combined the sponsorship of a small number of Inadequate schools with the opening of 4 free schools recognising that the challenge of the former is considerably greater than the challenge of the latter.

The successful candidate will need to bring a relevant track record of expertise in providing excellent standards of catering in a complex and rapidly moving environment. They will also need to be motivated to make a real difference for children and young people who would otherwise suffer the consequences of ongoing nutritional neglect. If, having read through the application pack, you do decide to put forward an application then we would love to hear from you.

Yours sincerely

Sir John Townsley
Chief Executive Officer

Leanne Griffiths
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

Trust Catering Manager

Title	Trust Catering Manager
Salary	PO5 (SCP 38-41)
Hours	37 hours per week, Year Round

The Trust Catering Manager will provide strategic leadership for catering services across the trust, ensuring high-quality, compliant, and financially sustainable provision. The role will oversee consistent standards across academies, promote healthy eating, maximise meal uptake, and deliver value for money while ensuring an excellent customer experience.

An Application Pack (including Job Description and Person Specification) is available to download from The GORSE Academies Trust website **www.tgat.org.uk/jobs**, by email to **recruitment@tgat.org.uk**, or by telephone on **0113 487 8888**.

GORSE

About The GORSE Academies Trust

The GORSE Academies Trust is based in the Leeds City region and has an increasingly well-known reputation for changing the deal for children and young adults who come from some of the most impoverished parts of the country.

Our central mission is to ensure that we play a significant role in removing the stubborn link between poverty and academic underperformance. Consequently, our students and our professionals are in the vanguard of the national drive which seeks to prove that where teaching is excellent, leadership inspiring and behaviour standards exemplary all children excel regardless of background.

We have been determined to build slowly, and to manage our expansion and development as a trust in a manner which minimises risk and ensures the continuing excellence of academies within our group. The trust has grown slowly and with great care since it was formed in 2011 and it is still the case that our schools work together in an intimate and highly productive manner.

The trust currently operates fifteen academies including primary, 11-16, Post 16, and Alternative Provision, together with a School Centred Initial Teacher Training centre and a Teaching School Hub.

"Our Trust Catering Manager plays a vital role in the life of our trust. High quality, nutritious food is fundamental to student success. The food they provide is far more than a service; it supports wellbeing, brings our communities together, and ensures that every student is ready to learn and able to thrive in school."

Ben Mallinson
Executive Principal

Why Work for The GORSE Academies Trust?

As a Leeds based trust, all establishments are closely located which lends itself to many opportunities to work closely and collaboratively.

We are committed to providing world class education for all young people within our community and as such recognise the pivotal role that our staff play in this respect.

The trust is committed to high quality professional development for all staff. We understand that by investing in our staff we will create an organisation with shared vision and values that will transform education for young people.

The GORSE Academies Trust is committed to provide the following benefits for employees:

- The trust maintains nationally agreed terms and conditions in relation to pay and conditions for teachers and support staff.
- Access to a generous pension scheme.
- Use of a GORSE vehicle throughout the working day.
- £1000 cycle to work scheme.
- An opportunity to collaborate with colleagues across academies and within the central trust teams and multi academy trusts on a local or regional basis.
- Efficiencies of scale and joined up approach to working and developing initiatives, agendas and changing practise.
- A specific career stage pathway of professional development with a commitment to support engagement in recognised professional qualifications.

Job Description

Job Title:	Trust Catering Manager
Grade:	PO5 (SCP 38-41)
Reporting to:	Director of Estates Management
Location:	Trust-wide – central team office and academy based (multi-site)

Job Purpose:

To provide strategic and operational leadership of catering services across the trust, ensuring the delivery of high-quality, compliant, and financially sustainable catering provision for pupils, staff, and visitors. The postholder will lead and support Catering Managers and catering teams across multiple academies, ensuring consistent standards, continuous improvement, and alignment with trust values, statutory requirements, and commercial best practice.

The Trust Catering Manager will be responsible for developing a cohesive, trust-wide approach to catering that promotes healthy eating, maximises meal uptake, achieves value for money, and delivers an excellent customer experience.

"Working alongside our talented and dedicated Head Chef, the Trust Catering Manager will play an important role in the daily life of our Academy. Providing high-quality, nutritious food is essential to supporting children's learning, engagement, and overall success at school. For some pupils, the meal they receive at school is their main meal of the day, making it especially important that food is prepared with care and consistency. By offering exciting and inspiring meal choices that reflect the diversity of our Academy community, our catering provision supports both physical and mental wellbeing, helps children feel valued and included, and ensures they are well nourished and empowered to achieve their very best."

Wayne Little
Vice Principal, The Ruth Gorse Academy

Key Responsibilities:

Strategic Leadership and Service Development

- Provide strategic leadership for catering services across the trust, establishing clear standards, expectations, and performance measures to ensure consistency and quality across all academies.
- Develop and implement a trust-wide catering strategy that aligns with statutory school food standards, trust priorities, and financial objectives.
- Lead on menu development, ensuring menus are nutritious, appealing, inclusive of dietary requirements and allergies, and responsive to pupil, staff, and stakeholder feedback.
- Drive innovation and continuous improvement within catering services, introducing initiatives to increase meal uptake, improve customer satisfaction, and enhance the dining experience.
- Promote healthy eating and positive food culture across academies, working collaboratively with school leaders and wider trust teams.

Operational Management

- Provide effective line management and professional leadership of Catering Managers, including setting objectives, conducting performance reviews, managing absence, and supporting professional development.
- Ensure high standards of food quality, presentation, portion control, and service delivery across all catering outlets, including breakfast provision, break services, lunch services, hospitality, and events.
- Ensure catering operations are delivered efficiently and consistently across multiple sites, adapting provision where necessary to reflect individual academy needs while maintaining trust-wide standards.
- Oversee the effective management of catering facilities and equipment in liaison with the central estates team and academy operational teams, ensuring that defects and repairs are reported and resolved promptly.

Key Responsibilities (cont)**:**

Financial Management and Procurement

- Hold overall responsibility for the financial performance of trust catering services, ensuring effective budget management, cost control, and value for money.
- Develop, manage, and monitor catering budgets, providing accurate financial reporting, analysis, and forecasts to senior trust leaders.
- Ensure robust systems are in place for financial administration, in line with trust Financial Procedures.
- Lead on catering procurement across the trust, ensuring compliance with public sector procurement regulations and trust Financial Procedures, and securing best value through effective supplier management.
- Monitor food costs, gross profit margins, sales volumes, and levels of waste, using data to inform menu planning and operational decision-making.

Compliance, Health and Safety

- Ensure full compliance with all statutory food safety, health and safety, and hygiene regulations across all trust catering operations.
- Ensure that appropriate food safety management systems, including HACCP, are implemented and maintained at all sites, with accurate and up-to-date records.
- Support and oversee the completion of risk assessments relevant to catering activities, working collaboratively with academy and trust health and safety colleagues.
- Ensure catering staff receive appropriate training and certification in food safety, health and safety, and allergen management, and that training records are maintained.

Stakeholder Engagement and Partnership Working

- Work closely with Principals, academy leaders, and operational teams to ensure catering provision meets local needs while aligning with trust-wide standards and budgets.
- Engage effectively with pupils, staff, and other stakeholders to gather feedback and respond constructively to issues or concerns.
- Build positive and productive relationships with suppliers, contractors, and external partners to support high-quality service delivery.

Personal Responsibilities

- Demonstrate professionalism, integrity, and leadership in line with the Seven Principles of Public Life and the trust's values (Diligence, Integrity, Rectitude and Kindness).
- Carry out all duties in accordance with trust policies and procedures, including those relating to safeguarding, health and safety, equality and diversity, confidentiality, and data protection.
- Maintain strict confidentiality in all aspects of the role.
- Willingly engage in training and continuous professional development relevant to the post.
- Contribute positively to the overall ethos, culture, and aims of the trust.

Any Special Conditions of Service

- The post is subject to a satisfactory enhanced DBS background check, relevant right to work documentation, suitable references and the successful completion of the trust's probationary period.
- Occasionally there may be a requirement to work off-site and undertake work outside normal office hours to meet the variable nature of workloads and deadlines and to support academy events.
- Contribution to the overall ethos/work/aims of GORSE.
- GORSE operates a No Smoking/Vaping Policy.

Person **Specification**

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
Grade C or above in GCSE English and Mathematics (or equivalent).	✓	
Managerial Food Safety/Food Preparation or equivalent at NVQ Level 3 or above.	✓	
NVQ Level 3 or above in Management and Leadership/Customer Services/CIPD.		✓
Supervisory Health and Safety Qualification.		✓
HACCP Qualification Level 2 or above.		✓
Knowledge and Skills		
Strong understanding of food safety legislation, health and safety requirements, and allergen management.	✓	
Ability to lead, motivate and develop teams across multiple sites.	✓	
Strong written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders.	✓	
Strong organisational skills with the ability to prioritise and manage competing demands.	✓	
Good IT skills, including the use of spreadsheets and financial systems.	✓	
Ability to analyse data and use it to inform decision making.	✓	
Willingness to travel regularly between academy sites and spend time in kitchens.	✓	
Knowledge of public sector procurement systems.		✓
Evidence of commitment to continuous professional development.		✓
Experience		
Proven experience of managing catering operations across multiple sites or large-scale catering services.	✓	
Experience of leading and managing teams, including performance management and staff development.	✓	
Experience of menu planning and development.	✓	
Experience of financial management, including budgeting, cost control and financial reporting.	✓	
Experience of procurement and supplier management.	✓	
Experience of working within the education or public sector.		✓
Experience of managing catering services within a multi-academy trust or similar organisation.		✓

Employment is conditional on confirmation of the right to work in the UK – either as a UK or Irish citizen, under the EU Settlement scheme or having secured any other relevant work visa. Please note that, as a sponsor licence holder, we only provide sponsorship for teacher vacancies.

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Personal Effectiveness		
Highly motivated, proactive, and solution focused.	✓	
Ability to work independently while contributing effectively to a wider team.	✓	
Strong attention to detail with the ability to maintain high standards.	✓	
Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines.	✓	
Professional, approachable, tactful and diplomatic manner.	✓	
Continuous Professional Development		
Evidence of commitment to Continuing Professional Development.	✓	
Other Conditions		
Enhanced DBS Clearance.	✓	
Commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.	✓	
Right to work in the UK.	✓	

We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful candidate will be subject to full employment checks, including an enhanced DBS disclosure and barring service check. We promote diversity and aim to establish a workforce that reflects the population of Leeds.

"Across all of our academies, food and nutrition play a vital role in not only ensuring our pupils receive at least one healthy meal each day, but also in galvanising our diverse communities. The Trust Catering Manager is an integral role, working in harmony with school leaders, families and each of our catering teams to ensure the nutritional and dietary needs of every child are met and exceeded. Our children, in our communities deserve the very best; sustenance and service."

Sam Done
Principal, Little London Academy

Next Steps

Should you wish to have an informal discussion about this role or to arrange to visit our trust then please do so through contacting the Chief Executive Officer's Personal Assistant Christine Watson at **christine.watson@tgat.org.uk**

To Apply

Applicants are requested to submit a completed Application Form which can be downloaded on the trust website at **www.tgat.org.uk/jobs**

Closing Date

The closing date for applications is **Monday 9 November 2026 - (9:00am)** and interviews will be held **Tuesday 17 November 2026.** Completed applications should be emailed to **recruitment@tgat.org.uk.**

GORSE

We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children, and applicants will be subject to full employment checks, including an enhanced DBS disclosure. We promote diversity and aim to establish a workforce that reflects the population of Leeds.

TGAT Policy Statement on the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders 2018

The GORSE Academies Trust use 'OnlineSCR' for the processing of safeguarding checks – their privacy notice can be seen at: https://onlinescr.co.uk/policies/privacy-policy/.