SPARK
EDUCATION TRUST

Trust HR Officer

Candidate Information Pack






Closing Date: 12.00pm, Monday 2nd December 2026

Contents

Welcome from the CEO	3
Trust HR Officer	4
Job Description	5
Person Specification	7
How to Apply	9
Employee Benefits	10

Welcome from the CEO

Dear Applicant,

I am immensely proud to be Chief Executive of Spark Education Trust. We are a Trust comprising 4 secondary and 11 primary schools located across the Tees Valley and we provide opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential, whatever their starting point. We know that this is best achieved in encouraging environments where mutual and self-respect is promoted. We want to grow confident young people able to work independently and think creatively in a fast-changing world.

We have high expectations for everyone, aspiring to excellence in teaching and achieving impressive standards is all areas of school life. Success beyond the classroom in sport and the arts are features of life across our Trust.

For our staff we provide positive working environments, a commitment to the highest quality professional development, opportunities to collaborate to create excellence and encouragement to forge career success.

Trustees, governors and leaders collaborate closely to ensure excellence in all aspects of Spark Education Trust. Our core values are mutual respect, hearty collaboration and courageous ambition and these drive our work ensuring that Spark schools are wonderful places to work.



Louise Spellman

Trust HR Officer

Job Title: Trust HR Officer
Location: Central Team at Spark Education Trust based at Whinstone Primary School (Ingleby Barwick)
Start Date: As Soon As Possible
Actual Salary: £35,570 – £38,510 whole time working, £31,516 - £34,896 term time plus 10 days (Grade J, SCP 23 to 26)
Hours of Work: 37 hours per week, whole time or term time plus 10 days (working pattern to be agreed)
Contract Type: Permanent
Closing Date: 12.00pm, Wednesday 2nd December 2026
Interviews: Wednesday 9th December 2026

About the Role
We are seeking an experienced and proactive HR professional to join our Central Team as a Trust HR Officer. This is an exciting opportunity to play a key role in supporting school leaders across Spark Education Trust, providing high quality HR advice and guidance that helps our schools deliver the best possible outcomes for pupils.

Working closely with Headteachers, senior leaders, governors and the wider Trust team, you will provide expert support across a broad range of employee relations and workforce matters. You will act as a trusted HR adviser, helping managers navigate complex issues, implement best practice and ensure compliance with employment legislation and Trust policies.

Based at our central offices at Whinstone Primary School, you will also work across our schools as required. Reporting to the HR Director, this varied and rewarding role offers the opportunity to make a tangible difference to staff and leaders across the Trust.

Key responsibilities include:

- Building strong professional relationships with leaders, governors and stakeholders across the Trust to deliver an excellent HR service.
- Providing professional HR advice and guidance to school leaders and managers on a wide range of employment matters and employee relations casework.
- Monitoring, analysing and reporting workforce data, including staff absence trends, to support informed decision making.
- Leading and supporting recruitment and safer recruitment processes across the Trust.
- Designing and delivering training, briefings and development opportunities for managers on HR matters.
- Supporting the development and implementation of HR policies, initiatives and continuous improvement projects.

How to Apply
If you would like an informal discussion about the role, please contact Shellena Hussain, HR Director, at vacancies@sparkeducation.org.uk.

Please complete the application form and return it by email to vacancies@sparkeducation.org.uk, addressed to Shellena Hussain, HR Director.

For more information about Spark Education Trust, please visit our website by clicking here.

Safeguarding Notice
The Spark Education Trust is committed to safer recruitment practice and pre-employment checks will be undertaken before any appointment is confirmed. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check. The post you are applying for is exempt from the rehabilitation of offender's act 1974. We will also carry out an online search on shortlisted candidates to help identify any incidents or issues that are publicly available online.

Job Description

JOB TITLE:	HR Officer
REPORTING TO:	HR Director
GRADE:	Grade J, SCP 23 to 26
JOB SUMMARY:	Act as a named contact for schools across the Trust, providing professional advice and guidance tailored to the individual needs of each setting on a broad range of staffing-related casework issues. Deliver a high quality HR service in line with the Trusts policies and best practice.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Operational/Management:

- Provide advice and guidance on the whole range of employment issues and case work, leading on case work as appropriate.
- Ensure links between Trust service areas are developed and maintained to provide an efficient service.
- Provide a proactive HR advisory service, working with managers, staff and stakeholders to achieve service aims and targets and ensure the implementation of HR best practice and compliance with Trust HR policies.
- Act as a "coach" to managers, supporting and advising managers to effectively manage staff, and providing 'critical friend' challenge on working practices as required.
- Develop, deliver and evaluate interventions, including training and workshops to managers on people management matters to ensure managers have the required knowledge, skills and understanding of key HR policy, procedure, initiatives and changes.
- Provide a complete 'end to end' service delivery, establishing ownership and closure as needed.
- Operate as a reflective practitioner in relation to personal skills and operating practices, as well as engaging in a peer review approach.
- Support managers presenting cases to employment related panels e.g. disciplinary and in addition, provide advice to panels as required.

Resource Management:

- Utilise management information to facilitate achievement of objectives.
- Provide high quality solution focussed advice and guidance on relevant terms and conditions and employment policies, in a complex environment of a multi-academy trust, suggesting improvements to and updating HR policies as required by the HR Director.
- Identify and recommend appropriate action to the HR Director, develop and implement guidance and action plans to enable and facilitate the delivery of key initiatives and HR process improvements.
- Provide support to other team members, actively participating in a 'buddy' support system and reflective sessions

Communications

- Develop and maintain effective relationships with school leaders to ensure a high quality service
- Respond effectively to queries from customers, ensuring the highest level of customer care by assuming ownership and closure including accurate and timely responses to clients, acting as a query escalation point within the HR team as appropriate.
- Responsible for developing and maintaining effective relationships with HR colleagues, managers, partners and stakeholders.

- As appropriate, acts as a mentor/coach to other staff, leading on development activities for the team as required.

Systems and Information

- Requirement to use a range of computer systems including, MS Office and appropriate HR 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 utilise key HR systems and promote benefits of the systems with managers, support managers to use systems and monitor compliance.

Other Responsibilities:

- Be aware of and comply with policies and procedures relating to Safeguarding, health, safety and security, confidentiality and, reporting all concerns to an appropriate person.
- Be aware of and comply with data protection in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Trust Policies.
- Contribute to the overall ethos/work/aims of the school
- Appreciate and support the role of other professionals
- Attend and participate in relevant meetings as required
- Participate in training and other learning activities and performance development as required
- Recognised own strengths and areas of expertise and use these to advice and support others
- Show a duty of care and take appropriate action to comply with Health & Safety requirements at all times
- Demonstrate and promote commitment to Equal Opportunities and to the elimination of behaviour and practices that could be discriminatory.

SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- To demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, staff and volunteers.
- To demonstrate a thorough understanding of safeguarding and safer recruitment policies and procedures, and their application within an educational setting/environment, supporting Schools and the Central Trust team with their Single Central Record and the application of Safer Recruitment as required in accordance with the current DfE statutory guidance for Keeping Children Safe in Education.

The duties and responsibilities listed are indicative of the tasks that will be performed and are not intended to be an exhaustive list. The post holder will be expected to take on additional responsibilities appropriate to the role as they arise.

Person Specification

JOB TITLE:	Trust HR Officer

	Essential	**Desirable**
QUALIFICATIONS/ TRAINING:	• Good standard of literacy and numeracy to level 2 or equivalent	• HR related qualification or Graduate or Associate membership of CIPD or equivalent • Degree
EXPERIENCE:	• Significant experience of managing and advising on a wide range of HR related issues with minimal supervision • Successfully leading on casework and taking a risk-based approach • Leading/supporting school workforce projects • Supporting Trust strategies/service developments • Experience of advising and supporting managers to address staff issues resulting in desired outcome • Working in a pressurised environment and able to manage a busy workload with competing priorities	• Experience of working in a education environment • Experience of coaching and developing managers • Proven and effective experience in supporting change management programmes
SKILLS/KNOWLEDGE:	• In depth knowledge of employment legislation covering a wide spectrum of issues • Good understanding of application of HR Policies/procedures in practice to result in required outcomes • Policy implementation skills • IT skills and ability to interpret and analysis of data • Communication, presentation and interpersonal skills • Problem solving skills and the ability to find innovative solutions • Influencing and negotiating skills • Risk management and assessment • Commitment to the performance management culture with the ability to set high standards, deliver objectives and challenge managers appropriately • A coaching based approach to support managers and develop • Delivering briefings and training to managers • Flexibility and ability to work with ambiguity	• Schools and local management of schools • Knowledge of National and Local Conditions of Service • Knowledge of change management processes • Policy formulation skills • Mentoring

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:	● Motivation to work with children ● Ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children ● Committed to own continuing professional development ● Access to own vehicle and ability to travel across all schools within the Trust ● Suitable to work with children ● Committed to Equality and Diversity ● Commitment to working as part of the team and supporting the vision and aims of the Trust.	

How to Apply

Application forms and further details are available on the Trust's website –

www.sparkeducationtrust.org.uk

Please make sure that the application form is completed and returned via email to vacancies@sparkeducation.org.uk, addressed to Shellena Hussain, HR Director.

Applications submitted on anything other than the official application form and applications from agencies will not be accepted.

Please note that feedback will only be given to shortlisted candidates, if you do not receive an invite to interview within 30 days of the advert's closing date assume that you have been unsuccessful in your application for this post.

Confidential References

Two referees should be nominated, including one from your current/most recent employer – Those from an education setting must provide the Headteacher as one of their references or to be signed and checked by the Headteacher.

Job Description

Details the main responsibilities for this post and the personal and professional qualities required.

Person Specification

Sets out the criteria to be used for the shortlisting process.

Closing date: 12.00pm, Wednesday 2nd December 2026

Interviews to be held: Wednesday 9th December 2026

Employee Benefits

Wellbeing

Free and confidential support.

Up to six sessions of structured counselling, if recommended.

Pensions

All eligible staff automatically join either The Teachers Pension Scheme or the Local Government Pension Scheme upon the start of their employment.

As members of these schemes, employees have access to the full range of membership benefits including a Death in Service payment is included in the Teacher Pension Plan and Local Government Pension Scheme.

Cycle to work

We also provide a cycle to work scheme, which is a recognised Inland Revenue salary sacrifice scheme through www.greencommuteinitiative.uk which enables staff to access a new bike and bike equipment.

Work Life Balance

We provide a generous Annual Leave entitlement for Support Staff of 27 days leave, rising to 32 days leave following 5 years' service, in addition to statutory bank holidays.

As we are supportive of flexible working, we have many staff working on individual working arrangements and we offer many roles working term time only contracts, to assist with individuals work life balance.

Professional Development

As we believe in supporting and developing our staff, we offer extensive career development opportunities and actively seek to develop and promote staff where possible.