



## **Job Description**

### **Director of Education**

The purpose of the Director of Education is to oversee the educational provision across Red Balloon. Red Balloon is an educational charity which helps the recovery of severely bullied or traumatised children who are too anxious or frightened to go to school. The recovery programme comprises three components: education, wellbeing and community. The Director of Education will work closely with the Director of Wellbeing and the Chief Executive Officer.

Red Balloon educational provision seeks to raise students' confidence in their learning and empower them to make decisions about what and how they learn, through negotiation. We aim to help young people re-engage with mainstream education, confident in themselves and their ability to learn and having the skills to tackle problems in a logical and creative way.

Our students often join Red Balloon after being out of school for weeks, months or, in some cases, years. They lack confidence, energy and focus. Their experiences have made them distrustful of their peers, teachers and adults, who have let them down. Many students arrive with diagnoses of mental ill-health, such as anxiety, depression or eating disorders. The Director of Education, working with Director of Well-Being, is at the heart of transforming the lives of hundreds of young people each year.

### **Role outline**

To ensure that all Red Balloon students follow a fit for purpose academic programme that is appropriate to their needs and individually negotiated.

To track academic progress across each Centre and RBAir to provide quality data for commissioners, fundraising purposes, parliamentary work and work with other agencies.

To be an active member of the Red Balloon Senior Leadership Team.

To support all staff with opportunities for personal and professional development and help develop a learning culture across Red Balloon.

To ensure that staff understand project-based learning, negotiating the curriculum and growth.

**Accountable to:** Chief Executive Officer of Red Balloon.

**Liaisons:** Director of Wellbeing.

**Direct line management:** Heads/Coordinators of Red Balloon Learner Centres (Cambridge, North West London, Norwich and Reading), Headteacher of Red Balloon of the Air, managers of Satellite Centres (currently Cambridge and Danbury)

**We expect you to:**

- keep up to date on educational development, strategy and thinking
- demonstrate a positive commitment to working with all stakeholders (students/governors/parents/staff/commissioners etc.)
- demonstrate a commitment to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of young people
- contribute to discussions about Red Balloon's wider strategic direction and enablers (e.g. external communications and fundraising).

**Core responsibilities**

- provide leadership and direction in line with strategic priorities and the vision through continued evaluation of school performance
- streamline and maintain effective and efficient systems and procedures for the smooth operation of Centres and Air
- support Centres through ISI inspections and ensure continuous improvement trends in inspection outcomes for all Centres.
- ensure statutory requirements are met
- share strategies for success across all Centres and Air
- develop a 'one team culture and ethos' across all Red Balloon Centres and Air
- increase efficiency and effectiveness through smart centralisation of planning, sharing resources and management support
- be accountable for the implementation and on-going development of the Appraisal and Performance Management
- be a passionate and articulate spokesperson for Red Balloon externally (e.g. with the DfE and the ISA)
- be a visible presence in Centres and Air, maintaining a high profile
- deploy CPD resources effectively and efficiently to achieve Red Balloon aims
- undertake professional development necessary as identified in Improvement Plan or performance management reviews
- participate in continuous professional development and provide support for all Red Balloon Centres and Air

**Role-specific duties**

- *To ensure all Heads/Coordinators/Managers provide high quality education.*

Coaching each of the Centres' Coordinators to develop their talent and capability. This requires frequent visits to each of the Centres to work with each Head/Coordinator/Manager and their

staff; to develop the Head/Coordinator/Manager's capability to work effectively with their staff, conduct performance reviews, problem solve, identify CPD requirements for all staff and contribute to that development as appropriate. This requires the maturity, sensitivity and skill to hold 'difficult conversations'.

- *Ensure all Centres perform to the required ISI standard in inspections (Centres must be either good or excellent otherwise commissioners will not refer).*

Centres undergo two types of inspection. Compliance (each Centre has undergone a compliance inspection during the last three years, is fully compliant and has exceeded the standards) and quality inspection (these are due during the next two years). Centres must meet all regulatory requirements and must provide evidence of high quality professional development through self-evaluation and annual development plans securely grounded in that evaluation. The Director of Education is responsible for ensuring robust safeguarding practices across all Red Balloon.

- *Ensure Red Balloon of the Air provides fit for purpose learning opportunities.*

Whilst Red Balloon of the Air hasn't currently secured registration (more on this below), commissioning authorities rightly audit provision scrupulously - the Director of Education must work with the Head of Red Balloon of the Air to ensure that the provision is fit for purpose and that there is clear data to evidence this.

- *Work with DfE, Ofsted and other agencies to ensure virtual provision is properly recognised.*

A DfE working group, chaired by Dame Christine Ryan, is currently considering how virtual/online provision can be recognised, accredited and inspected. Red Balloon makes an essential and formative contribution to this group.

- *Ensure that all Trustees are fully aware of their responsibilities in terms of Centre governance and that they implement those responsibilities.*

Regulatory requirement 8 (for independent schools) identifies the requirements of leadership and management including the responsibilities of governing bodies. The Director of Education must support Trustees to understand their roles and the ways in which they might implement them and ensure that their practice is 'watertight'.

- *Keep Group Trustees informed about the quality of provision and development opportunities available.*

The Director of Education is part of the central Group management team, led by the CEO. Group Trustees monitor the quality and development of all Red Balloon provision. The Director of Education is responsible for creating a meaningful dialogue with Group Trustees and ensuring

they are kept up to date and appraised of significant matters relating to the Education policy and procedures are Red Balloon. A comprehensive report concerning the quality of provision is required at the end of the year.

- *Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of legal requirements re Association Independent Schools (the status of all RB Centres) and Alternative Provision (the likely future status of Red Balloon of the Air).*

Statutory requirements and recommendations are frequently changed. The Director of Education must keep abreast of all such changes that apply to Red Balloon and ensure that all areas of provision adapt and/or respond appropriately.

- *Ensure that the information required by commissioners is submitted by the Centres, Satellite Centres and RBAir.*

This involves liaising with potential commissioning local authorities and schools and requires the submission of required information both at the point of application and throughout the registration process. Most authorities now operate a *preferred purchasing systems* (a range of names is used). It is essential that Red Balloon be registered within those systems.

- *Represent Red Balloon at the Independent Schools Association (ISA).*

The Director of Education is the nominated person that enables Red Balloon to belong to ISA. ISA offers considerable support to its members and each member is expected to offer support to other members as appropriate.

- *Influence DfE/CSJ and other educational bodies with regard to Alternative Provision (AP).*

Red Balloon considers that education should be available to *all* students and that, whilst the vast majority of young people have their needs well met within mainstream, there is a small number of young people who require something different. We want to be part of the different raft and to enable ministers and DfE staff to understand the need for such provision and for funding to support it.

- *Any other duties and responsibilities that may be delegated by the CEO and Trustees.*

## **Performance indicators**

- Inspection outcomes;
- Success rate in applications to potential commissioners;
- Centre performance e.g. about students and finance, against agreed outcomes (jointly with Centre Heads/Coordinators);
- Red Balloon of the Air performance against agreed outcomes (jointly with Head);

- Student numbers increasing at an agreed level;
- Feedback from:
  1. CEO
  2. Centre Head/Coordinators and Head of RBAir
  3. Chairs of Trustees (to include Group)
  4. Group Education Trustee

## **Person specification**

We are looking for an experienced and innovative senior education professional. They will combine a record of successful strategic leadership and sustainable performance improvement with imagination, creativity and determination to succeed. Our new Director of Education will be an exceptional leader with the energy, rigour and gravitas to represent Red Balloon effectively at the most senior levels in education. They will demonstrate the following experience, skills, knowledge and personal attributes:

## **Experience**

A proven track record of successful, senior education leadership:

- of raising standards with measurable outcomes and clear evidence of a positive personal contribution to the development of a successful school and/or local authority or academy trust;
- of making effective innovations in line with Red Balloon curriculum and pedagogy;
- of outstanding practice in one or more settings;
- managing people effectively, demonstrating an appropriate balance between empowerment, support, challenge and assertiveness;
- working in and contributing to an organisation that appreciates the importance of technology assisted learning and improving this provision
- experience of working with young people with special educational needs and those who find it difficult to access learning because of their mental ill-health.

## **Skills and knowledge**

- a detailed understanding of the school improvement process and the ability to apply it in challenging circumstances;
- a thorough appreciation, knowledge of and commitment to the ethos, philosophy and practice of Red Balloon;
- a thorough knowledge of child protection and safeguarding;
- a detailed knowledge of assessment and the use of data to track student progress;

- extensive knowledge of developments in curriculum, pedagogy and technologies;
- knowledge of performance evaluation and management;
- financial management skills and entrepreneurial awareness;
- knowledge of the relationship between financial and human resources and educational outcomes;
- the capacity to make productive contributions to the national education debate;
- first-class ambassadorial skills with an ability to present Red Balloon in an authoritative and persuasive manner;
- an understanding of the impact of mental ill-health on young people's capacity to learn and of appropriate strategies;
- appreciation of project-based learning and growth mindset;
- understanding the role of IT in the education of students in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### **Personal attributes**

- a strong commitment to the vision and aims of Red Balloon;
- high levels of energy and personal impact with the authority to command the respect of current and prospective Head/Coordinators and senior stakeholders across the education sector;
- a strong team player with good interpersonal skills and the ability to work effectively as part of a growing organisation;
- highly entrepreneurial and ambitious with energy, charisma and a plethora of new ideas for external engagement;
- the capacity to contribute to wider educational policy development, government green papers and roundtables, research in education and educational journals particularly for the benefit of Red Balloon;
- advising the senior leadership team on educational initiatives and developments;
- the skills to act as an ambassador for Red Balloon communicating the vision and ethos to prospective commissioners and the wider community;
- having the necessary skills to build professional relationships with the Department for Education, partner organisations and other external stakeholders;
- resilience and the ability to work under pressure.

### **Essential**

- qualified and experienced teacher;
- University degree;
- experience as a senior manager either within mainstream or special/alternative provision;

- understanding of and empathy with Red Balloon philosophy and practice;
- thorough knowledge of education law;
- excellent presentation skills (verbal);
- excellent report writing skills;
- excellent interpersonal skills;
- willingness and ability to travel to the Centres;
- sound understanding of the use of technology to facilitate communication and data gathering;
- strategic and team leadership.

### **Desirable**

- NPQH qualification;
- other further qualification in management or education (eg diploma, Master's degree, PhD, MBA);
- CPD accredited training in SEND and/or mental health issues (eg children who self-harm).

4 June 2019