

St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust



Chief People Officer Candidate Information Pack





St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust is recruiting:

CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER

Contract Length: Permanent

Salary Range: Highly competitive + benefits

Location: Flexible. The nature of work will largely involve the post-holder carrying out work at different schools within the Trust. There is also a Head office at Shirley Court, Croydon, CR9 5AS.

Accountable to: Chief Executive Officer

We are looking for an exceptional individual to join the Central Services team at St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust, as our Chief People Officer. We currently have four secondary schools and twelve primary schools. We are a growing Trust and are supported by the Archdiocese of Southwark to grow to thirty-five schools over the next three to five years.

We are seeking to expand our central team and appoint an ambitious and enthusiastic Chief People Officer to support our executive central team and our schools. As a growing Trust, this is an exciting opportunity to work directly with the CEO and executive team and develop the people strategy and operational delivery of the St Oscar Romero long-term vision for our people.

This is a high-profile role for an inspirational individual. With a flexible and calm approach, you will share best practice across our schools, draw on the talents of staff and build on our many strengths. Our Catholic Ethos and Mission is at the heart of everything we do and we expect candidates to share and embrace those values.

The ideal candidate will:

- Be a senior human resources professional.
- Have experience of delivering a people strategy and operations in a multi-site organisation.
- Help enable the strategic and operational delivery of St Oscar Romero's long-term vision for our people.
- Have extensive experience of leading, the development and implementation of plans, processes, systems, policies and other initiatives to recruit, develop and retain the Trust's talent at all levels.
- Possess the ability to inspire, empower and challenge staff to lead the next stage of the Trust's journey.
- An excellent written and verbal communicator.
- Align to the mission, vision and values of St Oscar Romero and the Diocese.

In return we offer:

- The opportunity to work within a highly skilled and supportive team.
- A commitment to continue with national pay, terms and conditions.
- Access to the generous Local Government Pension Scheme.
- Staff benefits, including a cycle to work scheme.
- Opportunities for personal and professional growth and access to our Training Portal.
- The opportunity to join a growing Trust.

Closing date: 9:00am Monday 20th April 2026

Interview date: w/c 27th April 2026

Start date: To be agreed

Please also see the Annual report and further information on our website:

www.OscarRomero.co.uk

Advert

Welcome from Allison MacQuire, Chair of the Board St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust



Dear Prospective Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust and for taking the time to explore the opportunities available within our family of schools.

As Chair of the Board, it is my privilege to welcome you to a community of Catholic Schools, rooted deeply in the teachings of Christ and inspired by the life and legacy of St Oscar Romero — a champion of justice, compassion and courage. At the heart of all we do is the belief that every young person is called to live with purpose; and that every child in our care deserves the very best we can provide for them.

We are a growing Trust of distinctive Catholic schools across the Archdiocese of Southwark, committed to excellence in academic and spiritual formation. In our schools, Christ is at the centre of daily life, and our shared mission — to serve children, families and staff with love, dignity and respect — shapes every aspect of our work.

Our Trust values the contribution of every member of staff, recognising that it is our people who bring our mission to life. We are committed to professional growth, collaboration between schools, and fostering a culture where staff feel supported, inspired and empowered to be their best. This means investing in development, building strong communities of practice, and embracing the distinct gifts each colleague brings to our shared purpose.

This information pack is designed to give you a meaningful picture of who we are and what it means to serve within the St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust. I hope it speaks to both your professional aspirations and your vocational calling.

Thank you again for considering joining us. If you feel called to contribute to our mission, I warmly encourage you to apply, and I do hope you get the chance to join our amazing community and family; and be part of our journey in Christ.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Allison MacQuire".

Allison MacQuire
Chair of the Board
St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust



Welcome from Clare Verga, Chief Executive Officer St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust



Dear Prospective Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in the role Chief People Officer at St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust and for taking the time to consider this exciting opportunity.

As Chief Executive Officer, I am honoured to have the privilege to serve our school communities and work alongside dedicated and inspiring colleagues. Our focus is on enhancing the opportunities that Trust membership delivers to each distinctive school community. Through collaboration, partnership, support and challenge, we strengthen the capacity of individual schools to serve as beacons of learning and love.

A group of sixteen schools, we are made up of four secondaries and twelve primaries. We are on an exciting journey. A journey of growth that has as its goal, our determination to provide the young people in our schools the very best that Catholic education has to offer. Sponsored by the Archdiocese of Southwark, the development of our Trust is key to our Archbishop's education strategy for the future. As such, we are growing our Trust to become a group of thirty-five Catholic schools over the next three to five years.

This post is a new role in the growth of St Oscar Romeo. We are seeking to appoint a highly motivated and skilled professional to strategically lead the human resources function across the Trust and also to lead on the successful implementation of a Trust People Strategy. As part of our commitment to deliver outstanding central services, that allow school leaders to focus on their core educational purpose of achieving the best possible outcomes for pupils, we are seeking an outstanding leader of people who can realise the highest possible quality of services to support our educational vision.

This is an exciting opportunity to help shape and drive St Oscar Romero's strategic objective to lead, develop and care for people in our Trust. Ideally, you will have significant experience of leading, managing and driving a proactive and consistent human resources service, preferably in the education field, successfully developing and implementing people and human resources strategies and practices. The post holder can expect a high degree of support from the Board of Directors, Trust Executive and team, leadership teams and school staff.

Our commitment is guided by the teachings of Christ and His Church. We care for, support and educate our children and young people to the highest possible standards. Our schools are inclusive and are driven by a passion to do the very best for every child and young people in our care. Every day we strive to add value to our schools to ensure they are vibrant, exciting, welcoming places, so our children and young people learn, grow and flourish.

Information about the role can be found in this candidate information pack. Further information about the Trust can be found in the Annual report and on our website. If you would like to arrange a telephone appointment to discuss the role, please contact Sarah Yusuf-Watson by email at syusufwatson@oscarromero.co.uk by Thursday the 26th March 2026, or after the Easter break from Monday 13th April 2026.

Completed applications should be submitted by 9.00am on Monday 20th April 2026. Interviews are set for the week beginning Monday 27th April 2026.

We hope this exciting opportunity and joining our Trust is of interest to you and we look forward to receiving your application.

Yours faithfully,



Clare Verga
Chief Executive officer
St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust





Chief People Officer

Accountable to: Chief Executive Officer

Post Type: Permanent

Salary: Highly competitive + benefits

Working Pattern: Full time

Location: Flexible. The role will be based at our Head office at Shirley Court, Coloma School and will involve working at schools within the Trust.

Disclosure Level: Enhanced DBS

Responsible for:

- Working alongside the CEO and Executive Team to support our Headteachers, school leadership teams and school staff.
- The role will include strategic and operational leadership of Trust professional human resources services including policy development, compliance, contract management, recruitment, retention and professional development.
- Strategically design and implement our Trust People strategy.
- Leadership and oversight of human resources processes including performance management.
- Embed our Catholic Life and Mission ethos and culture across the Trust.



Main Purpose of the job

The Chief of People Officer will help enable the strategic and operational delivery of the St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust's long-term vision for its people strategy. The post holder will report to the Chief Executive Officer and will play a lead role on all employee relations matters. They will also lead on the development of communications in the St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust, ensuring these enable two-way feedback and ensure all stakeholders feel connected and supported by the Trust.

Leadership and Management

- To lead, develop and implement the Trust People Strategy.
- Alongside academy HR teams deliver a comprehensive Trust HR service including the provision of professional and confidential HR and employment law support, advice and guidance.
- Formulate and implement the HR strategy and associated policies within the organisation working alongside executive and educational leaders.
- Develop and implement a workforce plan for the Trust, including identifying skills gaps and modelling staff deployment options.
- Provide support, coaching and training to all leaders on the people management implications of policy and strategy.
- Monitor and analyse workforce statistics and report on these to other Trust leaders.
- To work closely with Trust staff responsible for delivering HR activities to ensure consistency in approach across the Trust.
- To implement and manage the introduction of HR management information systems.
- Take responsibility for employee relations and case management in relation to sickness absence, disciplinary issues and capability processes.
- Lead on restructuring and redundancy processes across the Trust. Provide advice and supports to leaders in managing change.
- Contribute to the due diligence, TUPE, onboarding and project management process for academies wishing to join the Trust for any HR aspects including consultations and restructuring exercises.
- Work with unions and professional associations, maintaining strong and effective relationships that support the Trust's employment approach and responsibilities.
- Develop effective professional working relationships with stakeholders at all levels, including colleagues, HR advisors, legal teams, local governing bodies, trustees, trade union representatives and external agencies.

People, Recruitment and Retention

- Contribute to the Trust's strategies in relation to recruitment and retention, succession planning and talent management, and learning and development.
- Be responsible for coordinating recruitment across the Trust, for Headships central and Trust central team.
- Work with Trust Leaders to support candidate shortlisting and selection, providing relevant advice as necessary.
- Manage the Trust's procedures for conducting pre-employment checks and ensure safer recruitment practices are adhered to throughout the recruitment process.
- Work with Trust Leaders to ensure new members of staff have an induction programme appropriate to their role.

Performance, Pay and Conditions

- Oversee effective pay and performance management processes across the Trust, ensuring that these align with the Trust's strategic plans and aims.

Employee Engagement and Well-being

- Lead the Trust Wellbeing and People strategy.
- Develop, implement and monitor staff wellbeing and engagement programmes, and report on the impact of these to Trust Leaders as appropriate.
- Act as the point of contact for staff questions about HR policies and procedures.
- Work with other Trust leaders to consult with staff on job satisfaction, helping them to implement changes or improvements where appropriate.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- Ensure the equality, diversity and inclusion policies and procedures are robust, effective and applied across all settings.
- To support, recruit, manage, develop and motivate a committed, effective and diverse workforce that understands its roles and enables dignity and equality in all aspects of service delivery.

Ensuring Compliance

- Ensure that relevant legislative and educational employment knowledge is kept up to date within the Trust and wider academy HR teams, advising on the interpretation and implementation of changes to ensure that all policies and procedures are up to date and legally compliant.
- Ensure that the Trust is compliant with equality legislation, in terms of arrangements for pay and conditions across the Trust, providing professional recommendations and implementing action plans to address any inconsistencies of approach.
- Ensure that the Trust complies with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Develop and maintain all HR related policies and procedures, systems and processes to reflect the Trust's business aims and focus, underpinned by statutory compliance, best practice, and added value.
- Ensure all HR related statutory reports and returns (e.g workforce census, gender pay gap reporting etc) are accurate and completed on time.



- Ensure Trust Leaders compliance with the requirements of safer recruitment.
- Ensure that HR record keeping, including the Single Central Record is accurate and compliant across the Trust.

Governance

- Provide strategic leadership for governance across the Trust, ensuring the Board of Directors and Local Governing Bodies operate effectively, transparently, and in line with best practice.
- Develop and continuously improve the Trust's governance structures, policies, and schemes of delegation, ensuring clear accountability and strong oversight across the Trust.
- Oversee governance compliance and assurance, including statutory returns, board effectiveness reviews, and adherence to the Academies Trust Handbook.

Other

- To review and update allocated HR sections of the Trust strategic risk register and Trust key performance indicator tracker.
- Provide timely and accurate HR information to the Directors, CEO, Trust Leaders and Trustees, as appropriate, to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Respond appropriately to emergencies or urgent issues and manage their consequences (this may include out of hours contact).
- To have regard to the rules and regulations that govern the financial and corporate compliance requirements of a public sector organisation.
- Ensure probity, propriety and adherence to the Nolan Principles and Trust Leadership Principles both with personal conduct and throughout the Trust.

Safeguarding Children

- The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff to share this commitment and to undergo appropriate checks, including enhanced DBS checks. We also expect full compliance with all statutory policies and procedures on safeguarding and child protection.

Confidentiality

- We expect all staff ensure that confidentiality is maintained and work in line with agreed Trust policies and protocols. Staff are also expected to maintain statutory responsibilities e.g. Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

General

- The above responsibilities are subject to the general duties and responsibilities contained in the Statement of Conditions of Employment. The duties of this post may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the post or level of responsibility entailed. Undertaking any other duties which may be reasonably assigned and regarded as within the responsibilities of the post, subject to the proviso that any changes of a permanent nature shall be incorporated into the job description in specific terms.
- The post holder will be expected to have an agreed flexible working pattern to ensure the relevant functions are fulfilled through direct dialogue with the CEO and Directors.



Person Specification

Qualifications	Essential	Desirable
Degree or equivalent professional qualification in an appropriate discipline or appropriate work experience.	Y	
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Level 7 qualified.		Y
Willingness to obtain other qualifications relevant to HR or improve the level of qualifications and knowledge available to support the work of the Trust.	Y	
Faith Commitment	Essential	Desirable
Practising Catholic.		Y
Understanding the context of Catholic Education.	Y	
Understanding of Catholic values and empathy working for the Catholic Church.	Y	
Experience	Essential	Desirable
Proven track record of strategic and operational HR management.	Y	
Ability to confidently handle TUPE situations taking into account legal implications.	Y	
Familiarity with best practice change management, restructuring and redundancy processes and experienced in coaching managers through this, and leading where necessary.	Y	
Experience of working with Trade Unions.	Y	
A confident user of Microsoft Office and experience of HR management information systems.	Y	
Experience of successfully leading and line managing staff.		Y
Knowledge of statutory requirements and legislation relating to employment law.	Y	
Knowledge of payroll provision and pension schemes.	Y	
Full working knowledge of relevant HR policies and procedures.	Y	
Collaborative working in a large, multi-site organization.		Y
Experience of HR in an educational setting.		Y
Knowledge of School Teachers Pay and Conditions.		Y

Person Specification

Training	Essential	Desirable
Recognised training in workplace HR issues (e.g. appraisal).	Y	
Recognised training or qualifications in relation to HR legislation e.g. Equality Act and the Employment Rights Act.	Y	
Evidence of continued and up to date professional development.	Y	
Awareness of requirements for Academy Trusts.		Y
Knowledge, Skills and Ability	Essential	Desirable
To work constructively as a part of a team, or individually, understanding school responsibilities and the post holder's position within these.	Y	
Exceptional administrative, IT, and communication skills and a positive, versatile approach to work with exceptional attention to detail.	Y	
Ability to interpret information and to devise policy/practices.	Y	
The ability to set priorities to enable work to be done effectively under pressure and to meet deadlines.	Y	
Ability to maintain strictest confidentiality and integrity at all times.	Y	
High standards of professional behavior and ability to liaise with all stakeholders in a professional manner.	Y	
Ability to manage own time effectively and demonstrate initiative including establishing priorities within own workload.	Y	

Personal Circumstances	Essential	Desirable
Must have the ability to be flexible and work to the requirements of the Trust.	Y	
A willingness to travel between sites. A valid full driving-licence and access to a motor vehicle is therefore beneficial.		Y
Disposition and Attitude	Essential	Desirable
Be emotionally intelligent: know when to direct, when to challenge and when not to; be able to inspire, present a positive perspective at all times; be able to listen and show awareness of others sensitivities; to have personal pride and lead by example.	Y	
Enthusiastic, flexible, team player.	Y	
Desire for professional development.	Y	

Person Specification

Personal Qualities	Essential	Desirable
Excellent attendance and punctuality.	Y	
Ability to use personal judgement.	Y	
Ability to use own initiative.	Y	
Excellent personal organisation, commitment and self motivation.	Y	
Honest, reliable and trustworthy.	Y	
Ability to be sensitive to the needs of others.	Y	
A sense of humour, warmth, energy, stamina and resilience.	Y	
Willingness to reflect upon their experiences in a critical and constructive manner.	Y	



How to apply:

The deadline for receipt of applications is **9:00am on Monday 20th April 2026**

If you would like to arrange a telephone appointment to discuss the role, please contact Sarah Yusuf-Watson by email at syusufwatson@oscarrromero.co.uk by Thursday the 26th March 2026, or after the Easter break from Monday 13th April 2026.

Applicants should complete the Catholic Education Service Leadership form, available in supporting documents. Please use the personal statement in your application form to demonstrate how you meet the person specification, with evidence provided wherever possible of outcomes and positive impact.

Candidates will be shortlisted on how well they demonstrate the knowledge, skills and attributes set out in the job description and person specification.

Completed forms should be submitted to: HR@OscarRomero.co.uk

Should you have any queries please contact HR on 0207 202 8199.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview in the week commencing on Monday 27th April 2026.

The interview process will consist of a series of job-related exercises designed to give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate the key attitudes, skills and knowledge required for the role. Shortlisted candidates will be fully briefed at the beginning of the process and supported throughout the day.

Safeguarding: St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff and volunteers are expected to behave in such a way that supports this commitment. Appointment to this post will be subject to satisfactory shortlisting and pre-employment checks, including an Enhanced DBS check.

St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust

