



HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

RECRUITMENT PACK

APRIL 2021

Message from Mr Desmond Deehan, CEO

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the role of Head of Human Resources working as part of our central team and across our academies. Odyssey Trust for Education is seeking a suitably experienced, highly skilled, and innovative Head of HR who will help our trust to continue to grow and provide an excellent standard of service to our academies.

The Trust is in an exciting period of work towards our strategic aims in terms of school improvement. The successful candidate will have the ability to work equally effectively within both schools and their differing contexts, and to provide consistency but with the flexibility to understand the different challenges and needs within each school.

As a Trust, we believe that all schools are different and that their needs emerge from their unique, individual contexts. We work in partnership with our headteachers, local governing bodies, staff, parents and carers to build long-term and sustainable excellence that will have a real impact, first for the children, but also for the staff and wider community. The support given by the Head of HR to our school communities, will play an important role in ensuring that our schools are able to provide a consistently high standard of education.

As CEO I oversee central services including HR, Facilities, IT and Governance. Together with the Chief Financial Officer and the Director of Education, we are building a Trust to be proud of.

If you believe you have the skills and expertise to make a significant contribution to our Trust and its schools, we hope that you will apply. We encourage applications from suitably qualified and experienced professionals. This information pack provides details specific to the Head of HR role.

We value your application and thank you in advance for your time in its consideration and submission.



Mr Desmond Deehan BA (Hons) MA Ed FRSA
CEO/Executive Headteacher

The Odyssey Trust for Education

The Odyssey Trust for Education is a Multi Academy Trust formed in September 2018 to bring together a high performing selective girls' grammar school (Townley Grammar School) and a local mixed secondary modern school (formerly Erith School, now open as King Henry School). At its heart is a belief in the transformational power of a high quality education, the value of diversity and the need for collaboration if we are to change lives and change the world.

The Trust derives its name from the classical poem by Homer, referenced in the Tennyson poem "Ulysses" which describes the journey home of Odysseus after the Trojan War. He and his crew overcome many difficulties and challenges and the motto of the Trust is taken from the poem:

"One equal temper of heroic hearts"

We recognise that, like our young people, we are on a journey that will have many challenges and will often seem uncertain. This "Odyssey" is an ambitious and courageous undertaking and we wish our students to possess that same ambition and courage, to work together to achieve their goals, to overcome their fears and to realise that it is through embracing our struggles with optimism that we truly live.

Our Pledge

To broaden opportunity and drive social mobility for young people, regardless of background or ability, ensuring no student is left behind

At Odyssey, we are inspired and driven by the idea that every student is entitled to a high-quality educational journey that lays the foundation for life-long and life-wide achievement, both in an academic and social sense, to help them thrive as citizens. Regardless of background, ability or context, we believe an education based on inspiration, aspiration and passion is the key to breaking down barriers for students. By being outward-facing, working together and understanding that our personal education journey doesn't end just because we are adults, we can use opportunities to learn from each other to further develop our practice and support every student's journey. We are purposefully pushing the boundaries of school contexts in order to enable social mobility for any student.

We are passionate about **social mobility**. Moral purpose, equality and fairness frame our entire approach.

We are **innovative**. We had a most unusual catalyst for creating a Trust. Our first two schools initially came together as part of a BBC documentary-it was through this experience that we realised how much we could learn from each other and how much more we could do for our students as a group rather than alone. We focus on driving innovation across areas such as inclusion, cultural capital, standards, curriculum and sixth form provision. We are able to build on students' educational experience with a range of extra-curricular activities, international projects and student leadership programmes.

We are **community-centred**. Our schools should be at the heart of their communities. By nurturing every student's educational journey, we are not only helping them to recognise and champion the role they play within society, but also take ownership of helping to build strength, hope and resilience within our communities.

Collaboration is how we as educators, can further expand our horizons in order to expand the horizons of our students

Odyssey's People Vision

A Great Place to Work



As part of the first phases our people strategy we have introduced:

Additional holiday time for all staff

Every member of the Trust receives an additional week's holiday in the Autumn term. We recognise how intense this period of the year is and what a difference it makes to staff to have sufficient time to recharge. Rather than adjust term dates to recoup this time in the summer we have used our Academy freedoms to provide a two-week half term in Autumn gratis, and without strings attached.

Professional Development

Opportunities across the Trust including secondments both within the Trust and international opportunities. A full range of professional qualifications including NPQ programmes, support with Masters programmes, coaching and mentoring and the progression pathways that include development as system leaders within the Trust.

Flexible working

Allowing staff to be off site and work from home where possible. In addition Odyssey do not impose any arbitrary limit on personal leave. All decisions are made on an individual basis according to circumstances

PEOPLE vision

*“Aspiring to be an exceptional and inclusive place to work,
where all our people are valued, cared for and can flourish”*

Our vision will be delivered with our focus on:

ODYSSEY LEADER

Clear development pathways, feedback and coaching for all our leaders

ODYSSEY INSTITUTE OF CPD

Development pathways for all roles, access to on-going learning and dedicated facilities

ODYSSEY WELL-BEING CHARTER

A culture of caring and well being for all our people and whole school
flexible working

Odyssey Trust Executive Team



Desmond Deehan, CEO/Executive Headteacher

Formerly the Headteacher of Townley Grammar School for 10 years Desmond became the founding CEO of the Trust in September 2018, bringing together Townley Grammar School and King Henry School in a innovative and unique Multi Academy Trust to widen access and opportunities for a diverse range of students. Desmond is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a Trustee of the charity Art History Link Up (AHLU) which widens access to art history education. Desmond has been a Music Champion for the Mayor of London, an Ofsted Inspector and is the Director of the Grammar Schools Alliance (GSA) which aims to widen international links for UK schools, particularly with China. Desmond has featured prominently in national TV and press including the BBC2 documentary “Grammar Schools: Who will Get in?” and is a regular contributor to national educational debate. He has given expert evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Digital Skills and sat on the Educational Advisory Board of the National Youth Theatre.



Heather Whitmore – Director of Education

Heather has worked in various senior leadership capacities for the Odyssey Trust since its inception in 2018, laying the foundations for an exciting and innovative school improvement journey. Her career to date has spanned twenty years in both Grammar and Comprehensive School systems and has been governed by a determination to ensure the very best provision for all, leaving no student behind and supporting the professional development of colleagues both in and beyond the classroom. As Director of Education, Heather leads a central team of exceptionally talented Directors who work collaboratively with school leaders in support of continued and sustained school improvement. The team work to empower and develop a community of talented practitioners who readily engage with research, seek to continually hone and develop practice and are offered high quality professional development opportunities to support this. The Central Education Team foster a collective and unwavering focus on providing a first-class education is built on the values which continue to drive the Trust forward; all students within the Trust will experience an education that is fully inclusive, ambitious, empowering; develops character and cultural awareness, global perspective and social conscience; and nurtures young people on their journey towards taking their place in the world.



Louise Burgess, Chief Finance Officer

Louise Burgess is a CIPFA qualified accountant with 27 years' experience in the public sector. Louise joined Kent County Council as a graduate trainee accountant, and worked with the council for 17 years through a series of promotions across different departments, including Education and Treasury. Louise first became a MAT finance director in 2010 for Future Schools Trust, an established trust with two secondary schools, and was involved in the pre-opening phase of a new primary free school. Louise joined the newly formed Brook Learning Trust in 2012 where she has served for the last 8 years. During that time, she centralised the finance team, introduced a new accounting system, brought payroll in-house, moved to online payments and cashless school systems, and established robust financial controls throughout the organisation. Louise introduced Integrated Curriculum and Financial Planning to Brook Learning Trust in 2014 and this is now the established way of planning budgets. Louise has been a member of the Kent School Funding Forum since 2013, through some of the most challenging years facing the education sector.



Robert Leitch, Headteacher, King Henry School

Rob became Headteacher of King Henry School in June 2020. He was previously Deputy Headteacher of a large comprehensive school in the London Borough of Bromley. In addition to his school-based roles, Rob has also been a school governor, and served as Cabinet Member for Education in the London Borough of Bexley in 2016-17. Throughout his teaching career, Rob has achieved his NPQML, NPQSL and NPQH and is passionate about creating inclusive school environments where every young person can thrive.



Nevita Pandya, Headteacher, Townley Grammar School

Nevita has been at Townley Grammar School, a large (1600+ students) selective girls' school with a co-educational sixth form since 2004, where she started her career teaching Computer Science and IT. Nevita has shown transformative leadership across the school; she is most proud of her contributions to STEM both nationally and internationally. Nevita has developed Computer Science within Townley and outwardly through pioneering global links. Townley's bespoke annual student experience in Silicon Valley is an example of how this outward looking approach has delivered tangible outcomes to the lives of many students. During the trip to Silicon Valley, students gain unprecedented access to Google, Adobe, Facebook, Microsoft as well as innovative start-ups. Nevita has proven experience of innovative leadership and has advised the Department for Education on Computer Science, culminating in writing the National Curriculum for Computing. STEM has grown significantly at Townley and is now a fundamental part of the whole school vision. Nevita's innovative curriculum approach and appreciation of character and knowledge rich curriculum components have seen her lead on the embedding of our bespoke and diverse Townley 21c curriculum

Education Innovations

The first Trust formed of a Grammar School and a Secondary Modern in partnership within a selective authority. Both schools share the same times of the day and curriculum structure as well as the same term and holiday dates. Key staff work across both schools. Our Wonder Years curriculum, while tailored to each individual school, shares a common thread and purpose.

Ambit

Monday afternoons across the Trust are dedicated to interest led learning. Regular classes finish early to allow students to engage in a range of extra- curricular programmes. Teachers are able to participate in training during this time. This is because we know that life-long learning is driven by passion and interest.

International partnerships

Townley Grammar School has a well- established international wing, Townley Global, which provides sustained and meaningful interaction with international partners including India and China. Through this all students within the Trust will have the opportunity to participate on the global stage. This is because we know that the world is bigger than your school, your local community or even your country and our young people must take their place in the world.

Arts and Culture

As a Trust we have made Arts and Culture a key pillar of our curriculum offer. Led by our Director of Arts and Culture and comprising the subjects of Drama, Dance, Music and Art & Photography together with extensive extra-curricular opportunities. This is because we know that social mobility cannot be achieved without access to a rich arts offer

Inclusion Strategy

Led by our Director of Inclusion and based within Motum, our Inclusion Hub at the heart of King Henry School, our strategy is focused on overcoming the barriers our young people face. Through specialist support for our students together with ongoing training for our staff. Because we know that real inclusion means keeping students in school and helping them and their teachers to face their challenges together

Equality, diversity & inclusion

A key driver for the Trust is to promote equality and diversity, both in terms of what we teach, how we teach and who works for us. We have therefore been working on decolonising curriculums, reviewing behaviour policies and engaging with recruitment, retention and progression of a diverse workforce that represents the communities we serve. As with all our endeavours this is a journey and its success will depend very much on the people who choose to take that journey with us.



London Borough of Bexley

The London Borough of Bexley is situated in south east London, with neighbours Royal Borough of Greenwich and London Borough of Bromley to the west and Kent to the east.

Bexley has more than 100 parks and is one of the greenest boroughs in London. You can see the 200-year-old oak tree and historic house at Danson Park or stroll around the stunning landscaped gardens at Hall Place.

Bexley was one of the safest boroughs in London in 2018, according to Met police figures. There were 16,388 reported crimes in Bexley from November 2017 to November 2018. It was the 5th safest borough after Merton (4th), Richmond (3rd), Kingston (2nd) and Sutton (1st). Bexley had 99 percent fewer reported crimes than Westminster which had a chilling 66,438.

The incredible home of artist couple William and Jane Morris, The Red House, can be visited in Bexleyheath. It's an iconic example of arts and craft architecture and is open to the public.

