



**Job Title:** Chief Operating Officer

**Hours:** 37.5 hours per week 52 weeks of the year

### **Job Purpose**

The COO will play a key leadership role in supporting the central team and providing direct line management to the Heads and Directors of functional areas (currently, Head of IT, HR Director, Finance Director and Operations Director). The COO will have responsibility for building strong teams, developing these roles, and appointing other staff and functional leaders as the Trust grows. This person will need to empower staff to fulfil their potential, enabling colleagues to develop and deliver a greater level of support for the schools.

### **Key Responsibilities**

- Delivering a cohesive and effective centralisation strategy for the Trust.
- Building a sustainable business model for the operations of the Trust.
- Encouraging innovation across central business operations and leading specific cross-organisational projects and initiatives.
- Leading analysis and developing plans and related workflows to improve efficiency and effectiveness and take cost out of operations in order to improve standards and outcomes for children.
- Taking forward the implementation of a Trust wide IT Strategy in a timely manner, ensuring that it delivers 'any time anywhere' user experience and is effective for central operations.
- Working closely with the Board of Trustees and its committees on all aspects of organisational performance and sustainability.

### **Main Duties**

- Directly oversee HR, operations, IT and finance
- Establishing policies that promote company culture and vision
- Collaborate with the CEO in driving the development of a thriving organisational culture as per the Trust's vision
- Collaborate with the CEO in driving organizational vision, operational strategy, hiring needs, employee productivity
- Translate strategy into actionable goals for performance and growth helping to implement organisation-wide goal setting, performance management, and annual operating planning
- Ensure effective recruiting, onboarding, professional development, performance management, and retention
- Ensure effective operations, including project management, administration and marketing



- Ensure effective compliance and governance, including GDPR, and health and safety
- Ensure financial probity and efficiency
- Ensure effective IT systems and processes
- Oversee the Trust's Risk Register and KPIs with input from all relevant team members
- Develop actionable business strategies and plans that support the delivery of the Trust's KPIs
- Monitor performance with tracking and establish corrective measures as needed, and prepare detailed reports, both current and forecasting
- Build trusted relationships with key partners and stakeholders
- Support the CEO in fundraising
- Support the CEO in business forecasting and planning
- Establish systems to promote communication within the organisation



## **Chief Operating Officer - Person Specification**

The successful candidate will be an experienced leader with a demonstrable track record of having delivered successful business operations, ideally with a significant degree of change, in an organisation of significant scale and/or complexity. They will be a dynamic, proactive person, capable of inspiring teams, working across functions, and effectively navigating a complex stakeholder landscape. The successful candidate will be naturally collaborative and will act as a role model for AST values. They will ideally bring all or most of the following:

- Substantial experience operating at executive director or equivalent level, influencing boards and committees and contributing effectively to wider organisational issues. This could have been gained in the private, public or third sectors.
- Strategic thinker with demonstrable ability to initiate action to resolve problems; overcome barriers; exploit opportunities.
- Developed and delivered comprehensive operational strategy in a complex organisation.
- Experience of working in a variety of environments, demonstrating both sound judgement and independence of mind, as well as authority.
- Experience leading multi-disciplinary teams at a senior level, ideally including experience of leading major projects and significant change.
- Experience in working with governance best practice and applying it in an operating context.
- Previous responsibility for managing human resources with excellent people skills and understanding of complex HR issues.
- Previous responsibility for managing large budgets with excellent financial skills and acumen.
- Proven record of establishing productive working relationships and effective partnership working across internal and external networks.

## **SKILLS & QUALIFICATIONS**

- Relevant degree qualification
- Extensive experience in senior executive leadership positions
- Experience in line managing HR and finance functions
- Demonstrable leadership skills and high personal integrity
- Demonstrable skills in critical thinking, crisis management, risk management and strategic planning
- Understanding of advanced business planning and regulatory issues
- A solid grasp of data analysis and performance metrics
- Ability to diagnose problems quickly and have foresight into potential issues
- Strong experience in successfully developing organisational culture and people development
- Track-record in planning and implementation at a programme management level
- Business plan development and accompanying loan, grant or equity fundraising