

Operations Director

Permanent

Full Time: 37 hours per week

Salary: Cognus Band 6 up to Directors Band £79,875.83 to £103,903.67 per annum

Location: Cognus Office, London Borough of Sutton and hybrid working

Cognus Limited is a Local Authority Traded Company, which is commissioned by the London Borough of Sutton to provide education services to early years providers, mainstream schools and specialist education settings in Sutton. Wholly owned by the local authority, we deliver a wide range of high-quality services to deliver excellent practice that improve the lives of children, young people, and families in Sutton and beyond.

Cognus Limited is seeking to appoint an experienced and innovative Operations Director to join the Strategic Leadership Team and to lead the day-to-day operational delivery of the company. Reporting to the Managing Director, this role carries delegated responsibility for the delivery of key aspects of Cognus Limited's Business Plan relating to service delivery, safeguarding, business development and team management, with an underpinning priority of delivering excellent outcomes for children, young people and families.

This role supports the Managing Director in setting the Company vision and strategy and the creation and oversight of the company Business Plan and budget. The post holder will review and update company policy related to delivery on a structured cycle and lead on all aspects of operational delivery for the company.

We are looking for somebody with a demonstrable track record of business development and increasing income through trading existing services and developing new opportunities. As the operational lead, the postholder will be expected to possess a leadership style that is underpinned by strongly held values of equality, diversity, integrity, and openness ensuring the Company's service delivery is a model of best practice and meets relevant legislation and professional codes of practice.

The post holder will manage, coach and develop their team of direct reports, ensuring high-quality, efficient and impactful delivery working within budget and driving the future growth of the business using appropriate business development and project management techniques.

Cognus Limited is at a very exciting moment in its evolution and growth, and is now looking for a professional and experienced individual who is passionate about equality of opportunity for all children and young people in education and society; an individual who enjoys a varied workload, is self-motivated and reflective, with strong written and presentation skills, a good



understanding of duties in relation to the job description and is committed to delivering with excellence and pride.

You will give us great commitment and in return we offer an excellent package including:

- i) Starting salary of £79,875.83 to £103,903.67 per annum (Cognus Band 6 up to Directors Band)
- ii) Workplace pension scheme 4% to 8% matched contributions
- iii) 28 days annual leave pro rata (plus Bank Holidays)
- iv) Regular manager support and supervision
- v) Hybrid and flexible working
- vi) Staff benefits package, currently including Employee Assistance Programme, Perkbox and (upon completion of probation) Sovereign Healthcare Cashback plans
- vii) Staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion group and Mental Health First Aiders to support wellbeing and inclusion
- viii) Cognus Coaching Programme
- ix) An ambitious culture with friendly and supportive colleagues

If you are interested and would like to be considered for this role, please apply to recruitment@cognus.org.uk with the completed application form downloaded from <https://www.cognus.org.uk/work-with-us/current-vacancies/cognus-application-form/>, which must also be accompanied by a covering note outlining your suitability (of no more than two sides, minimum font size 11).

The deadline for receipt is midnight on Friday 24th January 2025. Candidates are requested to be available for interview on 28th – 30th January 2025. If you would like more information about this role before applying, please email Joanna Cassey (Managing Director) via Joanna.cassey@cognus.org.uk to arrange an informal chat about the role.

All offers of employment are subject to successful completion of recruitment formalities which includes an enhanced DBS check. These checks must have been completed before the commencement of employment. We expect our staff to have due regard for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and to follow the child protection procedures adopted by the Company and Sutton's Local Safeguarding Partnership.



JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION:	Operations Director
REPORTS TO:	Managing Director
JOB TYPE:	Full time (37 hrs a week), Permanent
GRADE/PAY	Cognus Band 6 up to Directors Band £79,875.83 to £103,903.67 per annum

JOB SUMMARY:

The Operations Director is responsible for the day-to-day operational delivery work of the company, alongside the strategic leadership of a small number of the company's delivery teams and management of related contracts and third-party partners.

The Operations Director is a member of the Executive and Strategic Leadership Team of the Company, as well as part of the Emergency Response Team under the company's Business Continuity Plan. They carry delegated responsibility from the Managing Director for the delivery of most aspects of the annual Business Plan relating to service delivery, quality, safeguarding, customer satisfaction, business development and delivery team management, appraisal and CPD.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES:

- This role will support the Managing Director in setting the company vision and strategy, and the creation and agreement of the Annual Business Plan and budget. The post holder will review and update company policy related to delivery on a structured cycle, ensuring policies are reviewed at least annually.
- The post holder will manage, support and develop their direct reports, ensuring high-quality delivery to budget, managing customer satisfaction and resolution of any complaints.
- The post holder will drive future growth of the business using structured business development and sales techniques.
- The post holder will be a role model of the professional behaviours outlined in the company Code of Conduct documents.

Leadership Responsibilities:

1. Provide excellent leadership and direction to develop and grow the business aligned to the commercial environment in which the company operates, driving consistent high performance at all levels.
2. Provide professional expertise and guidance to lead the development and implementation of operational plans.
3. Provide information to key stakeholders, including the Cognus Board, to enable them to monitor and deliver their objectives and priorities.



4. Lead the operational delivery of a range of services, including Virtual School, Educational Psychology Service, Assisted Travel team and the Therapies Service ensuring the teams deliver the intended outcomes the first time and to agreed levels of quality and cost.
5. Oversee the internal resources teams including Business Support and HR.
6. Manage discrete programmes and projects from the company Business Plan to ensure they deliver their outcomes within agreed standards of cost and time.
7. Identify opportunities for the continual improvement of operations including changes to business processes to deliver high quality, customer-focussed, cost-effective services that meet agreed quality standards and contractual requirements, optimising potential business development opportunities as appropriate.
8. Identify and create new or enhanced service offers to encourage diversification into new delivery areas and services
9. Lead the commercialisation of Cognus Limited's service offer, drive traded income and business development opportunities where appropriate to reinvest into services.
10. Understand and implement company policy in all areas, including Health and Safety and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
11. Ensure ongoing professional development of self and others in the Delivery teams, including professional objective setting and appraisal to support a culture of high-quality organisational performance and a positive coaching ethos.
12. Manage devolved budgets and resources to support the delivery of intended outcomes and demonstrate value for money.
13. Play a lead role in attracting and recruiting new talent and creating career development and succession programmes that facilitate an appropriate level of service excellence.

Budgetary Accountabilities:

To monitor expenditure on allocated budgets and produce regular reports for the management team to enable informed decisions to be made across the company.

Line Management Accountabilities:

- Head of Virtual School
- Principal Education Psychologist
- Head of SEND Support, Early Years and Sensory Impairment
- Business Support Team Manager
- Therapies Team Manager
- Assisted Travel Manager
- Head of HR & Payroll

Mandatory Accountabilities for the company

At a strategic level:



- ensure the well-being of employees and service users by actively promoting and complying with health and safety regulations, policies and procedures.
- champion the promotion of diversity and equality in the development and delivery of services and all aspects of people management.

GENERIC OBJECTIVES:

Contribute to Cognus Limited's business objectives at the appropriate level by ensuring every child matters and has access to education and learning opportunities, including:

- a) Health and safety
- b) Safeguarding and protection of children
- c) Equal opportunities and management of diversity
- d) Data protection
- e) Outstanding Customer care

GENERAL:

SAFER RECRUITMENT:

Cognus is committed to safeguarding and protecting the children and young people that it works with. An offer of employment is subject to safer recruitment practices which include an enhanced DBS check, two professional references acceptable to Cognus Limited, proof of qualifications, proof of right to work in the UK, proof of personal address and employment history covering 5 years and, fitness to work with children (occupational health assessment). These checks must have been completed prior to the commencement of employment. We have a range of policies and procedures in place which promote safeguarding and safer working practices across the organisation.

PROCESSING OF DATA:

- a) You ("the employee") consent to the holding and processing of personal data provided by you to the Company ("the Company") for all purposes relating to your employment, but not limited to administering and maintaining personnel records, paying and reviewing salary and other remuneration and benefits, undertaking performance appraisals and reviews, the compulsory Disclosure and Baring Services check (DBS) details in line with its statutory responsibility to safeguard and protect children and vulnerable service users; maintaining sickness and other absence records and taking decisions as to your fitness for work.
- b) You hereby acknowledge and agree that the Company may, in the course of its general and statutory duties as an employer be required to disclose personal data relating to you for legislative purposes during or after the end of your employment. This does not affect your statutory rights under the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.



CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT:

- a) During the course of your employment, you will have access to and knowledge of Company confidential information and trade secrets.
- b) Disclosure of any of this confidential information and/or trade secrets could have serious financial consequences and/or create serious competitive disadvantages for the Company. There may be material damage, financial or otherwise, deliberate or otherwise, to the Company's legitimate business interest.
- c) Under the terms of this confidentiality agreement, you agree to keep secret and shall not at any time, either during employment or post-employment, use, communicate or reveal to any person any trade secret or confidential information relating to the Company or any Associated Company.
- d) You are aware of the Company's policies in relation to compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation and undertake to act in accordance with these at all times. Any breach of these policies will be dealt with under the Company's disciplinary procedure and action taken can include dismissal without notice.

This job description and person specification outlines the summary of key accountabilities and is not an exhaustive list of duties and, is subject to periodical review and changes in line with the business needs.



PERSON SPECIFICATION: OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

The main duties and responsibilities of the post holder are indicated below, although other duties of an appropriate level and nature will also be required as necessary.

No	Description	Criteria
a.	Understanding of the business of the company (ie education services provision, local authority traded company)	E, S, I
b.	Proven track record of business planning and strategy	E, S, I
c.	Demonstrable track record in business development, project management and/or change management	E, S, I
d.	Possess a highly visible democratic leadership style that is underpinned by strongly held values around equality, diversity, and openness	E, S, I
e.	Experience in budget management and forecasting	E, S, I
f.	Experience in high-quality customer care	E, S, I
g.	Experience in managing Health and Safety at work	D, S, I
h.	Basic knowledge of UK public sector governance arrangements	D, S, I
i.	Experience of policy and procedure creation and oversight	E, S, I
j.	Experience of business development and sales techniques.	D,S, I
k.	High standard of professional behaviour, interpersonal skills and people management skills	E, I
l.	Excellent communication skills, verbal and written	E, I, T
m.	Strong ICT skills and competency, particularly in MS Office (Word and Excel)	E, I, T

KEY:	D	Desirable	I	Evaluated at interview
E	S	Shortlisting criteria	T	Subject to test

