

**EKO TRUST**

# CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

**2023/24**



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# WELCOME TO EKO



Dear Applicant

Thank you for your interest in a position within Eko Trust. I hope that the information in this pack will assist you with your application and, more importantly, help you to develop an understanding of what it means to work within our Trust.

Our staff team is one of our greatest assets. We seek to recruit the very best staff so that we can deliver the highest quality, most effective education to each and every child.

We can offer a supportive environment with engaged children. We collaborate at all levels, which results in great development and career progression opportunities. We are committed to personalised professional learning opportunities which support our staff in doing their role and also in progressing their careers, and we offer a comprehensive programme of CPD for all staff.

Our exceptional teachers, support staff and leaders come from a wide range of backgrounds, but they all share a deeply held commitment to give our children an outstanding education in an inspiring and happy school environment.

We are dedicated to organisational well-being and offer a range of benefits and support for staff with our wellbeing offer. We pride ourselves in promoting innovation by championing new ideas and ways of working and a supportive environment for staff to develop and flourish.

We look forward to receiving your application and meeting you as part of the recruitment process.

Yours,

*Rebekah*

Rebekah Iyambo  
**CEO Eko Trust**







# TRUST INFORMATION

## OUR VISION

Every member of our community is empowered to learn, to be ambitious and to be resilient.

## OUR VALUES

*drive everything we do*



Vitality



Optimism



Integrity



Courage



Equity

Eko Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust formed in 2016. The Trust has schools in East London and in Suffolk; 5 primary schools and 2 SEMH schools. You can read more about our schools on our website: [Eko Trust](#).

Our Trust is a family of good schools who collaborate to learn to deliver the best educational outcomes for our children.

## OUR COMMITMENT

We are passionate about nurturing, growing and developing people, so that the children and families we serve have the best opportunities to thrive.

The Trust has an absolute commitment to working together and utilising the collective brain that we have within Eko Trust. All our schools, as well as organisations outside of Eko, work together to accomplish things that would not be possible alone, while maintaining the distinctive character of each school.

- **Equity for all** - our people, our children and young people, our families and our staff, you are all part of our vibrant school communities.
- **Every child** will be supported to receive the best education to enable them to access equal life chances.





# OUR VALUES

*drive everything we do*



*Vitality* means we feel healthy, capable and energetic. We have a sense that our actions have meaning and purpose



*Optimism* means we focus on positive outcomes to a greater extent than negative ones. We know optimism is important in coping with difficult life events. We think that optimists are generally happier with their lives than pessimists. We trust that in the end everything will be alright, even if the outcome is different to what we first imagined.



*Integrity* means we live by sound principles and are motivated to behave ethically. This ensures Eko Trust will carry out our charitable objective to advance education for the public benefit.



*Courage* means we have the mental or moral strength and resilience to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear or difficulty whilst going about our work. We will take risks in areas that will improve the education we provide - learning, improving and changing.



*Equity* means we know that everyone is different and needs different things to be able to achieve. Fairness trumps equality. We will do whatever it takes to break down barriers, close gaps, and get everyone to a high-level end point.

# EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

In addition to a rewarding career, we offer an excellent and comprehensive range of benefits for staff to enjoy. These include:

## *Continuous Professional Development and Learning Opportunities*

We place great emphasis on continuing professional development (CPD) and ensuring that our staff can be the best we can be to support our children and the communities they come from.

We are committed to ensuring our staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge, not just for their job now, but with a view to future development and progression.

All staff have at least 3 appraisal meetings with their manager per year. There are a range of informal and formal professional development opportunities for teaching and support staff. Staff also have the opportunity to work in our other schools or shadow staff from our family of schools.

## *Collaborative & Supportive Culture*

We celebrate that we are all part of a big team with a common aim to provide excellent learning for the children at our schools. We have a highly collaborative culture and want to see all staff succeed and be happy.

Working in an Eko Trust school means that you are always supported, whether you are a support member of staff, an ECT, QT or Head. There is always a wealth of knowledge and a network of people on the same journey as you, working to the same goals with a range of different skill sets, that you can access whenever you need to.

Being part of our Eko Trust family of schools means you are never on your own. Our staff work in teams across schools in areas such as safeguarding, assessment and teaching to conduct case reviews, and always support each other in looking at alternative ways of delivery. This means we work together to share the workload.



## *Employee Assistance Programme & Occupational Health Service*

Our employee assistance programme offers 24/7 access to a free, confidential employee assistance helpline, providing guidance and advice on personal and work-related matters, staffed by trained counsellors. Our Occupational health service is a confidential service for all our staff, offering advice on personal health, safety and welfare at work.

## *National Terms and Conditions and Access to Pension Schemes*

Pay awards are applied in line with national agreements, and we offer incremental pay progression. We offer access to the Teachers' Pension Scheme and the Local Government Pension Scheme.

## *Workload & Wellbeing*

Staff well-being is instrumental to our success, and that's why we provide non-contractual benefits such as the Schools Advisory Service (SAS). They offer well-being and medical support, including annual nurse visits to the school, fast-tracked GP appointments and medical operations to help staff get well soon. They also provide independent counselling to our staff and their families. Our Wellbeing Policy focuses on changes to workplace practices and culture to support the well-being of our staff and to make our Trust an excellent place to work.

Eko Trust is proud to be part of the cycle-to-work scheme, encouraging people to make healthier and more environmentally-friendly lifestyle choices. The scheme allows you to buy the equipment you need to travel to school. You can save up to 42% on your equipment, whether you are in need of a bike to get you to and from the office, or you also need to pick up things like lights, a lock, a helmet and other kit for cycling throughout the year.

## *Family-Friendly Policies*

The Trust offers flexible working to encourage staff to have a better work-life balance, including part-time hours, term-time-only working and job shares, and we offer generous policies and great entitlements in respect of Maternity, Paternity and Adoption..

## *Money Saving Deals & Vouchers*

Our Employee Benefits Platform allows all staff to access a range of products and services at reduced rates as well as discounts from a huge range of retailers.

## *Trade Union Recognition*

We work closely with Trade Unions that represent our Teaching and Support Staff. We meet termly with employee representatives to proactively and positively manage employee relations.





# EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES & SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Eko Trust is an equal-opportunity employer. We welcome applications from all suitable candidates, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age or other protected characteristics.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and vulnerable adults and fulfilling our statutory obligations as detailed in the DfE statutory Guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

It is important for us to recruit candidates who share this commitment and therefore we apply robust recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that the people selected are suitable and that all candidates are subject to appropriate pre-employment checks. You can read our Safeguarding Policy [here](#) and our Job Applicant Privacy Notice [here](#).

## Your Application

Where the role you are applying for involves engaging in regulated activity relevant to children, you should be aware that it is an offence to apply for the role if you are barred from engaging in regulated activity relevant to children

## Interview

If you are invited for an interview for a position working with, or with access to sensitive information relating to children and young people, we shall assess your suitability by considering the following:

- your motivation to work with children and young people;
- your ability to form and maintain appropriate relationships and personal boundaries with children and young people;
- your emotional resilience in working with challenging behaviours; and
- your attitude to the use of authority and maintaining discipline.

## Pre-Employment Checks

The following pre-employment checks will be undertaken prior to appointment:

- Identity check
- References
- Occupational Health pre-employment screening
- DBS check (as appropriate)
- 'Barred List' Check (as appropriate)
- Evidence of qualifications applicable to the role
- Prohibition from Teaching Check (Teachers)
- Confirmation of registration with applicable registered body
- S128 Direction checks for managerial positions
- Additional checks for overseas candidates
- An online search (this will be carried out before your interview)

## Pre-Employment Checks (Cont)

Before any unconditional offer, successful candidates will also be asked to complete a self-declaration form to declare any unspent (current) and spent (old) criminal convictions, police cautions, final warnings or reprimands which are not protected (or filtered out) by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013.

## Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

All posts with the Trust are exempt from the requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974, meaning that all convictions, cautions and bind-overs, including those regarded as 'spent', must be declared on application.

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working with us. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

## False Information

Please note that providing false information is an offence and could result in your application being rejected or your dismissal from employment if you are appointed. The matter may also be referred to the police.

## Further information

If you have any concerns or questions about answering questions about your criminal history, please contact Helen Cunningham, Trust Leader for People, at [hcunningham@ekotrust.org.uk](mailto:hcunningham@ekotrust.org.uk)  
You can also seek further information from organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, NACRO (<https://www.nacro.org.uk/resettlement-advice-service/>) or Unlock.







# GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS ON OUR APPLICATION PROCESS

Once you have found the role you want to apply for, you need to make sure your application form gives you the best possible chance of getting an interview. The following tips will help you in the application process.

## Completing your Application

- Complete all parts of the application form
- Use clear, plain English. Do not use all block capitals or all lowercase
- Check your spelling and grammar. Read what you have written back to yourself; does it make sense?
- Tailor your application form to the job you are applying for by carefully reading the job description and matching your skills and experience to the criteria in the person specification (found at the end of the job description)
- The 'supporting information' section is your opportunity to really sell yourself. You can include information here that is not already covered elsewhere in the application form such as your skills, knowledge or experience relevant to the post, a brief explanation of any gaps in your employment
- Always back up what you are saying with tangible and relevant examples of your experience, achievements and any resulting key learning. So rather than just writing 'I am a good team player', give examples of teams you have been part of, your role within those teams and an explanation of what you achieved through working collectively.
- Don't forget to complete the equal opportunities monitoring form and send this with your application to the email address stated.

## Shortlisting

We will use the information in your application form (but not the equal opportunities monitoring information) to draw up a short list of candidates to be invited to interview. Shortlisted candidates will be contacted within 2 weeks of the closing date.

## The Selection Process

If your application is successful at the shortlisting stage, you will be asked to attend an interview with questions that relate to the essential criteria required for the role and our values. Some roles require you to take a test or give a presentation as part of the selection process. We will let you know in advance if this is the case.

In certain circumstances, we may decide to complete our selection process virtually. This might be by asking you to attend an interview online using certain software such as Microsoft Teams or Skype and asking you to undertake tests.



## Tips for virtual interviews

- Prepare for a video interview in the same way you would a live interview – be prepared to tell your story and think about questions to ask. While the medium may be different, the objectives of the interview are the same.
- Test your software before the interview. Make sure you're familiar with the settings and menus in case you need to make adjustments during the interview.
- Keep the recruiter's contact details handy in case technical issues prevent you from completing the interview and flag them immediately so that we can help you reconnect or reschedule.
- Ensure you have an appropriate user name, not a nickname – being thoughtful about these small things, just like you would at an in-person event, goes a long way.
- Try to join the event from a quiet room where you won't have any distraction
- Join the meeting on time
- Ensure you have a notepad and pen handy to write down useful information
- Always dress for the interview – you will feel more prepared and confident
- Be patient because sometimes the connection will lag and can lead to talking over one another. Try to limit internet traffic at home during your interview to avoid lag disruptions.
- Certain platforms have a "raise hand" function to indicate you'd like to ask a question.
- Don't forget to smile if you're on video conference – let your enthusiasm show!



## If you are successful following interview

If you are successful at interview stage, we will contact you by telephone to make a conditional offer. This will be followed up in writing asap. We will chase referees for references if we have not already received them and ask you to complete an online occupational health pre-placement questionnaire.

If the opportunity to work in our dynamic and ambitious organisation attracts you, we would be delighted to receive your application.

If you have any questions about working for us, please contact [hcunningham@ekotrust.org.uk](mailto:hcunningham@ekotrust.org.uk)

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