



JOB DESCRIPTION

Partnerships and Operations Co-ordinator

Building trusted partnerships and creating a clear, responsive route into high-quality alternative provision.

Organisation	OpenGate Education
Salary	£33,000 per annum
Contract	Full-time, permanent
Reporting to	Nancy Wright Director of Business
Location	OpenGate Education North

About OpenGate Education

OpenGate Education is developing a high-quality, responsive alternative provision offer for children and young people who need a different route to engage, progress and succeed. We will work closely with schools, local authorities, families and other professionals to provide flexible placements and outreach support built around individual need, strong safeguarding and measurable outcomes.

Role purpose

Partnerships and Operations Coordinator will be a key member of OpenGate Education's early team. The postholder will build and maintain relationships with commissioners, schools and referral partners, coordinate the admissions journey from first enquiry to placement, and help establish the systems and administrative foundations needed as the organisation grows.

This is a varied role for someone who combines warmth and credibility with excellent organisation and follow-through. The postholder will ensure that partners receive a professional, responsive service and that every referral is handled safely, efficiently and with the learner's needs at the centre.

Key responsibilities

Partnerships and commissioner engagement

- Develop positive, trusted relationships with local authorities, schools, multi-academy trusts, SEND teams and other referral partners.
- Act as a first point of contact for placement enquiries, introductions and partnership discussions, ensuring prompt and professional follow-up.
- Support the leadership team with commissioner engagement, meetings, presentations, provider events and visits.
- Maintain a structured pipeline of prospective partners, referrals and opportunities, including agreed actions and follow-up dates.
- Help communicate OpenGate's core placement offer and developing outreach programmes, including school-based interventions to support behaviour, engagement and inclusion.
- Gather feedback and market intelligence from partners to help shape services around local need.

Admissions and referral coordination

- Manage the referral and admissions process from initial enquiry through assessment, offer, placement start and review.

- Coordinate the collection and review of referral information, including education, SEND, safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and risk information.
- Arrange initial meetings, visits and assessments with learners, families, schools and relevant professionals.
- Ensure placement decisions are supported by complete information, clear expectations and appropriate risk assessment, escalating concerns to senior leaders where required.
- Prepare placement documentation, service agreements and confirmation communications, and ensure records are complete and securely maintained.
- Track referral conversion, reasons for declined or withdrawn referrals, start dates, attendance and placement status to support capacity planning.
- Coordinate regular communication and reviews with referring partners so that progress, concerns and next steps are clear.

Operational and administrative support

- Help design and embed practical systems, templates and processes for admissions, communications, record keeping and partner management.
- Provide flexible administrative and project support across the organisation during mobilisation and early growth.
- Support recruitment and onboarding administration, safer recruitment checks, training records and other people processes as required.
- Maintain accurate trackers, databases and management information, producing clear reports for senior leaders.
- Support meetings through scheduling, preparation, note taking and action tracking.
- Handle personal and sensitive information confidentially and in line with data protection requirements.

Safeguarding, quality and compliance

- Promote the welfare of children and young people and follow all OpenGate safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Ensure safeguarding information is identified, recorded and shared appropriately throughout the referral and admissions process.
- Support accurate evidence and records for commissioner assurance, quality reviews and future regulatory activity.
- Work in accordance with health and safety, equality, confidentiality and data protection requirements.
- Contribute to a culture of high expectations, inclusion, professionalism and continuous improvement.

Key relationships

- Director of Business and Director of Operations
- Centre leadership, teaching and pastoral colleagues
- Local authority commissioners, SEND and inclusion teams
- School and multi-academy trust leaders, DSLs, SENCOs and pastoral teams
- Learners, parents and carers
- External professionals, training providers and community partners

Person specification

Essential experience and knowledge

- Experience in admissions, referrals, school administration, HR administration, partnerships or a comparable coordination role.
- A strong understanding of professional administration and the importance of accurate, timely records.
- Experience of building effective working relationships with a range of internal and external stakeholders.
- Experience of managing competing priorities, following actions through and meeting deadlines with limited supervision.
- An understanding of safeguarding and confidentiality in an education, children's services or similarly regulated setting.
- Confident use of Microsoft 365 and digital systems, including Word, Excel, Outlook and shared trackers or databases.

Desirable experience and knowledge

- Experience within alternative provision, SEND, inclusion, education commissioning or children's services.
- Knowledge of local authority and school referral or procurement arrangements.
- Experience supporting safer recruitment, onboarding or wider HR processes.
- Experience using an MIS, CRM or referral management system and producing management reports.

Skills and personal qualities

- A confident and personable communicator who can build trust with schools, commissioners, families and colleagues.
- Highly organised, with strong attention to detail and the ability to create order in a developing environment.
- Proactive and solutions-focused, with the confidence to take ownership and use sound judgement.
- Warm, professional and responsive, particularly when handling sensitive or challenging conversations.
- Commercially aware and able to balance learner need, suitability, capacity and organisational requirements.
- Committed to inclusion and improving outcomes for children and young people.
- Comfortable working flexibly as responsibilities evolve during organisational growth.

Measures of success

- Referral partners experience OpenGate as responsive, credible and easy to work with.
- A healthy and well-managed pipeline of commissioner, school and referral relationships is established.
- Referrals move through a clear, timely and safeguarding-led admissions process.
- Admissions, partnership and compliance records are accurate, complete and readily reportable.
- Leaders have reliable information on demand, conversion, capacity and partner feedback.
- Practical systems and processes are embedded that can scale as OpenGate opens further provision.

Additional requirements

- The role will involve some travel to schools, local authority offices, partner meetings and OpenGate sites. A full driving licence and access to transport are therefore essential.
- Appointment will be subject to appropriate pre-employment checks, including an enhanced DBS check and satisfactory references.
- The duties listed are not exhaustive. As an early appointment in a growing organisation, the postholder will be expected to undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the level and purpose of the role which could be across the two regions where required.

OpenGate Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. All staff are expected to share this commitment.