

Head of

Operations

Recruitment Pack

Note from our CEO



Smile is entering an exciting period of change and opportunity, and our new Head of Operations will help shape what comes next.

Across Hull, East Yorkshire and the wider Humber region, we work alongside charities, volunteers, businesses and public services to help communities thrive. We see the commitment and creativity within our region every day. We also see the pressures people face, and we are ambitious about the difference Smile can make. Turning that ambition into lasting impact takes strong foundations. As our partnerships develop and new opportunities emerge, we need the governance, systems, culture and spaces that allow our people to do their best work. This role will be central to making that happen.

Working closely with me and our leadership team, you will have a strong voice in important decisions: how we organise ourselves, how we support and develop our people, how we use our buildings, and how we prepare for the future. Your judgement, ideas and willingness to challenge will help shape both the organisation we become and what we can achieve for our communities.

There is real work to do. Change brings uncertainty, competing priorities and difficult choices. I am looking for someone who can bring clarity, build trust and turn decisions into action; someone who cares about people and has the confidence to establish high standards and follow through.

In return, you will join a committed, generous team with a clear purpose. You will have the opportunity to make improvements that colleagues can feel in their working lives and that strengthen the support reaching our region. If you are excited by the prospect of helping an ambitious charity through an important chapter, bringing your experience, personality and ideas with you, I would love to hear from you.

Jamie Lewis MBE
Chief Executive, HEY Smile Foundation



Job

purpose

The Head of Operations will provide strategic leadership and oversight of HEY Smile Foundation's governance arrangements, organisational systems and infrastructure, human resources and culture, and buildings and facilities. The role will ensure Smile has the people, processes, controls and resources to deliver its purpose reliably and respond confidently to future opportunities.

Working closely with the CEO and senior leadership team, the postholder will translate organisational strategy into a clear operational plan, strengthen accountability and lead improvements across the charity. They will provide the CEO and trustees with timely information, assurance and practical recommendations on operational performance, capacity and risk.

This is a senior leadership role combining strategic oversight with the ability to secure delivery through colleagues, managers and specialist providers. The postholder will establish clear responsibilities, standards and reporting, intervening directly where necessary and building capacity so that routine delivery does not depend on the CEO.



Role Profile

**Job Title:**

Head of Operations

Reports to:

CEO

Salary:

£43,000

Working Hours:

37.5 hours per week

Location:

Smile operational bases, with travel as required; contractual base to be confirmed

Contract Duration:

Initial one-year fixed-term contract



Key Role

Responsibilities

1. Governance, assurance and organisational risk

- Lead the development and review of Smile's governance framework, ensuring governing documents, policies, delegated authorities and committee arrangements are reflected in clear, consistent working practices.
- Oversee the governance cycle, working with executive support colleagues to ensure timely board and committee papers, accurate decision records, action tracking and an organised schedule of policy reviews and reporting obligations.
- Support trustee induction, development and succession planning, and ensure trustees receive the information needed to scrutinise performance, risk and delivery effectively.
- Maintain effective arrangements for declarations of interest, conflicts management, recording decisions and escalating matters requiring CEO or trustee approval.
- Coordinate operational assurance where Smile acts as corporate trustee or manages services for another charity, ensuring responsibilities, agreements, records and reporting are clearly distinguished for each organisation.
- Lead the organisational risk register and assurance reporting, assigning risk owners, monitoring controls and ensuring material concerns, incidents and overdue actions are escalated promptly.
- Ensure compliance responsibilities have named owners, appropriate specialist advice and a clear reporting timetable, including interfaces with safeguarding, information governance and health and safety.

2. Systems, infrastructure and operational resilience

- Develop and deliver a prioritised operational improvement plan that aligns systems, processes and infrastructure with Smile's strategy, resources and future delivery commitments.
- Provide strategic oversight of IT, digital systems, information management and shared operational services, ensuring they are secure, reliable, accessible and fit for purpose.
- Oversee external IT and systems providers, setting service expectations and monitoring performance, cyber security, access controls, backups and recovery arrangements.
- Ensure consistent use of core systems, including CRM and HR platforms, with clear ownership, sound data quality, appropriate access and practical staff training.
- Strengthen procurement, contract management and supplier oversight through a central record of agreements, obligations, renewal dates and performance.

Key Role

Responsibilities

- Lead business continuity and operational readiness planning, test critical arrangements and reduce dependence on individual staff members through documented processes and cross-training.
- Assess the operational implications of new contracts, projects and organisational changes, advising the CEO on capacity, dependencies and readiness before commitments are made.

3. Human resources, leadership and culture

- Lead Smile's people and culture priorities, aligning workforce planning, organisational structure, skills and management capacity with strategic objectives and available resources.
- Oversee the employee lifecycle, including recruitment, induction, probation, performance review, development, retention and exit arrangements, ensuring consistent and fair practice.
- Ensure HR policies, employment records and working arrangements are maintained and applied appropriately, drawing on qualified HR and employment advice when needed.
- Support and challenge managers to lead effectively, set clear expectations, hold meaningful supervision conversations and address performance or conduct concerns promptly.
- Oversee employee relations and organisational change processes, ensuring sensitive matters are handled fairly, confidentially and within delegated authority.
- Build a culture of accountability, collaboration, inclusion and continuous improvement, using staff feedback and workforce information to identify and address concerns.
- Monitor workload, wellbeing, absence and organisational capacity; recommend practical changes that support sustainable delivery and reduce avoidable pressure on staff.
- Lead a proportionate learning and development plan, strengthen succession and cover arrangements, and ensure staff and volunteers receive the induction and training relevant to their roles.

4. Buildings, facilities and health and safety

- Provide strategic oversight of buildings and facilities owned, leased or managed by Smile, including the Crown, Smile Hub and property responsibilities undertaken for JB Willows, within the relevant agreements and delegated authority.

Key Role

Responsibilities

- Develop a coordinated property and facilities plan covering use of space, condition, planned maintenance, accessibility, safety, environmental performance and future requirements.
- Ensure landlord, tenant and managing-agent responsibilities are clearly understood, documented and monitored, with appropriate specialist property advice where required.
- Oversee facilities providers, maintenance contractors and building-related services, ensuring clear standards and timely resolution of issues affecting occupants.
- Maintain oversight of premises compliance, inspections, insurance, risk assessments and remedial actions, with named responsible persons and competent specialist support.
- Lead organisational health and safety arrangements, ensuring suitable policies, training, incident reporting, emergency procedures and escalation routes are implemented and reviewed.
- Monitor occupancy, building condition and maintenance requirements, advising on priorities and operational risks.
- Oversee approved moves, fit-outs and improvement works against agreed scope and programme, escalating changes and securing required approvals before commitments are made.

5. Strategic leadership and delivery

- Set clear operational priorities with the CEO, ensuring responsibilities, milestones and delivery expectations are understood across the organisation.
- Lead and develop staff and providers within the operational remit, with clear objectives, service standards, reporting and accountability for delivery.
- Provide concise reporting to the CEO, leadership team and trustees on operational performance, workforce capacity, compliance, property risks and improvement progress.
- Contribute to organisational strategy, represent Smile with relevant partners and deputise for the CEO within agreed responsibilities and delegated authority.
- The role operates within Smile's Scheme of Delegation. The CEO and trustees retain their respective decision-making and governance responsibilities; specialist advice and formal approvals must be obtained where required.

Person

Specification

Essential Skills & Experience

- Significant experience in a senior operations or organisational leadership role, with evidence of improving governance, systems, people management and organisational resilience.
- Ability to translate strategy into a realistic delivery plan, prioritise competing demands and lead change within constrained resources.
- Sound understanding of charity governance, delegated authority, risk management and assurance, with experience supporting senior leaders or boards to make informed decisions.
- Experience overseeing HR and developing managers, strengthening culture and addressing sensitive people matters with sound judgement and appropriate advice.
- Experience overseeing digital systems, suppliers and operational processes, including information security and business continuity arrangements.
- Experience overseeing buildings or facilities, contractors and health and safety arrangements, recognising when competent specialist input is needed.
- Clear communication, constructive challenge and relationship management skills; able to establish accountability and deliver improvements through others.
- Integrity, discretion and commitment to Smile's purpose, values, inclusion and staff wellbeing.
- Relevant professional qualification or equivalent substantial experience, and ability to travel between Smile's operational sites as required.

Desirable

- Experience in a charity, VCSE organisation or similarly complex, multi-site environment, including corporate trustee or shared-service arrangements.
- Relevant qualification or professional development in governance, HR, operations, facilities or health and safety.

This description outlines the principal responsibilities. Other reasonable duties consistent with the seniority and purpose of the role may be required. Priorities will be agreed with the CEO and reviewed regularly.

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