



HEAD OF OPERATIONS RECRUITMENT PACK

WHENYOUWISHUPONASTAR.ORG.UK



A LETTER FROM OUR CEO, JOE WILLIAMSON



Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in joining *When You Wish Upon a Star*. I'm truly delighted that you're considering becoming part of our charity at such a meaningful and exciting time in our journey.

Since 1990, we have been granting the wishes of children living with life-threatening or terminal illnesses - creating moments of magic, hope, and joy when families need them most. In 2025, we proudly celebrate our 35th birthday. This incredible milestone is a testament to the power of compassion, community, and the belief that even in the most difficult times, dreams can come true.

We are a small but mighty team, united by a shared commitment to making a real and lasting difference in the lives of children across the UK. Every role at *When You Wish Upon a Star* plays a vital part in delivering our mission.

If you believe in the power of a wish, and if you're ready to use your talents to help change lives, we would love to hear from you.

Warm wishes,

Joe Williamson

Chief Executive Officer

When You Wish Upon a Star



ABOUT WHEN YOU WISH UPON A STAR



When You Wish Upon a Star is a UK charity with a simple but powerful mission: to grant the wishes of children living with life-threatening or terminal illnesses. Since our founding in 1990, we have brought joy, hope, and unforgettable memories to thousands of children and their families during some of the most difficult times in their lives.

From magical trips to Lapland to meeting a favourite celebrity or experiencing a dream adventure, every wish we grant is uniquely tailored to bring smiles, lift spirits, and provide precious moments of happiness and togetherness.

In 2025, we celebrate our 35th birthday - three and a half decades of wish-granting magic made possible by the dedication of our supporters, volunteers, and staff. As we look to the future, we are more ambitious than ever to grow our impact, reach more children across the UK, and continue delivering life-changing moments that truly matter.

By joining our team, you'll become part of a passionate, child-focused charity that believes in the extraordinary power of a wish.



THE ROLE

The **Head of Operations** will be a key member of the leadership team, supporting the CEO to deliver the charity's strategic ambitions and ensure operational and organisational excellence.

You will provide senior oversight of governance, compliance, quality and impact, facilities management, safeguarding, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), and staff development. You will lead by example, embedding strong values, high standards, and a culture of care, accountability, and inclusion, ensuring that the charity's people, systems, and structures enable us to deliver outstanding experiences for the children and families we serve.





KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic and Operational Leadership

- Work closely with the CEO to translate the charity's strategic objectives into clear operational priorities, annual plans, and measurable outcomes.
- Provide senior leadership across all operational areas, ensuring efficiency, quality, and continuous improvement in delivery and support functions.
- Act as a trusted advisor to the CEO and Board, providing insight, challenge, and strategic support to inform key decisions.
- Lead cross-departmental initiatives that enhance collaboration, strengthen impact, and promote innovation in how the charity operates.
- Deputise for the CEO as required, representing the charity with professionalism and integrity at internal and external meetings.
- Budget management and effective delegation.

Governance, Compliance and Risk

- Ensure effective governance systems are in place to support transparent, compliant, and ethical operations.
- Oversee the development, review, and implementation of policies, ensuring they are current, accessible, and aligned with best practice and statutory requirements.
- Manage the charity's risk register and ensure robust processes are in place for monitoring, reporting, and mitigating organisational risks.
- Support the CEO and Board of Trustees in meeting their regulatory duties under charity law, data protection, health and safety, and safeguarding legislation.

Quality, Impact and Continuous Improvement

- Develop and embed a charity-wide impact and evaluation framework to measure the effectiveness and reach of our work.
- Work with programme teams to collect, analyse, and present data that demonstrates the difference our wishes make to children and families.
- Lead on internal reporting and contribute to external reporting for supporters, partners, and stakeholders.
- Promote a culture of reflection and learning, where insight and evidence drive improvement and innovation.
- Ensure quality assurance processes are in place and regularly reviewed to maintain high standards in service delivery and support functions.



KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

- Serve as the charity's Designated Safeguarding Lead (or in a senior safeguarding capacity), ensuring safeguarding remains at the heart of our culture and practice.
- Oversee the implementation, review, and training of safeguarding policies and procedures across all regions and activities.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers, and trustees understand their safeguarding responsibilities and are supported to uphold them.
- Champion EDI by embedding inclusive values and practices across all areas of work, from recruitment and training to programme design and delivery.
- Lead initiatives that promote diversity, equity, and belonging, ensuring our charity reflects and respects the communities we serve.

Facilities and Resources Management

- Lead the management of the charity's premises, ensuring a safe, welcoming, and compliant environment for staff, volunteers, and visitors.
- Oversee maintenance schedules, and health and safety procedures to ensure best value and operational reliability.
- Support the implementation of sustainability initiatives, reducing the charity's environmental footprint through efficient resource management.
- Ensure all operational processes, systems, and IT infrastructure support effective communication and data integrity across the organisation.

People and Organisational Development

- Support the CEO to embed a positive and people-focused culture that prioritises wellbeing, development, and performance.
- Support line managers in creating clear objectives, strong team engagement, and opportunities for growth and progression.
- Oversee recruitment, induction, performance management, and learning and development frameworks to build a capable, motivated workforce.
- Implement initiatives to strengthen leadership capability, staff resilience, and cross-team collaboration.
- Promote a values-led culture of inclusion, recognition, and mutual respect, where every individual feels empowered and valued.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

All applicants should already have the right to work in the UK.

Essential Experience and Skills

- Proven experience in a senior management, operations, governance, or organisational development role within the charity or not-for-profit sector.
- Strong understanding of charity governance, compliance, and risk management.
- Experience developing and embedding impact measurement and evaluation systems.
- Proven track record of leading and developing teams, fostering professional growth, and driving organisational culture change.
- In-depth knowledge of safeguarding legislation and best practice in children's or vulnerable persons' settings.
- Demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, with the ability to translate principles into practice.
- Excellent organisational, communication, and influencing skills, with the ability to manage complex priorities and deliver results.
- Experience managing restricted and unrestricted budgets.

Desirable Criteria

- Experience within a children's charity or health-related setting.
- Familiarity with Charity Commission reporting, GDPR, and ISO, Fundraising regulator style quality frameworks.
- Experience managing facilities, health and safety compliance, and contractors.



TERMS OF APPOINTMENT



Role title: Head of Operations

Reports to: Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Location: Nottingham (hybrid working considered)

Hours: Full-time (35 hours per week)

Salary: Starting salary of £40,000 per annum

Closing date: 10th November 2025

Start date: 6th January 2026

Contract: Permanent

PERKS AND BENEFITS

- 25 holidays rising up to 30 over 5 years plus bank holidays
- 3 day Christmas holiday shutdown
- 2 Wish Maker days
- Level 2 Westfield Health EAP
- Flexible working hours
- Generous enhancements above statutory minimum employee entitlements e.g. Maternity/Paternity/Sickness/Bereavement etc
- Behind Every Wish Wellbeing initiative
- Personalised Workforce development plans
- Annual training and continued professional development budget

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please submit the following documents:

- Covering letter addressing relevant experience for the role (two A4 pages max)
- Current CV (two A4 pages max)

Please send your application to: joe.williamson@whenyouwish.org.uk



When you wish
upon a star

[WHENYOUWISHUPONASTAR.ORG.UK](https://whenyouwishuponastar.org.uk)

CHARITY REG: 1060963 COMPANY REG: 3280440 OSCR REG: SC049019