

Building a tech-enabled people strategy

Insights from trust leaders and experts

Learn what HR centralisation looks like across different trusts, and why even the best strategies depend on the systems and data that support them.



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Katie Craker
Managing Director
SAMpeople and FusionHR

Katie has spent her entire career in human resources, with the last 19 years in the education sector. Katie joined SAMpeople and FusionHR in 2011 and has played a pivotal role in the company's growth, as HR Consultant, Operations Director and now Managing Director. With a career rooted in HR experience and leadership, Katie has been instrumental in evolving FusionHR and our Staff Absence Management (SAM) system into SAMpeople, a leading education-focused HR system and highly-regarded HR consultancy services.

Katie worked in HR at Education Bradford in 2007, and prior to this she worked in HR for private sector organisations. Katie has a degree in Business Studies and then achieved her Post Graduate Diploma in CiPD.

Katie is known for her collaborative approach and deep understanding of the challenges facing the education workforce. She is a keen advocate for digital transformation as a means to drive effective leadership decision making, improve staff wellbeing and increase retention in schools.

15 years at
SAMpeople
and
FusionHR

19 years
education
HR experience

2,600 schools and
trusts using
SAMpeople

Building a tech-enabled people strategy

Trusts exist to serve their school community, be that through central services, shared support or enabling best practices. We also know that people are any trust or school's greatest asset, which is why so many trusts I speak to are looking to centralise, or at least partially centralise, their HR function.

Individual schools often don't have the capacity to manage HR effectively on their own, and centralisation brings much-needed consistency. In fact, many trusts begin their centralisation journey with HR and finance, even if they don't explicitly label it as such. Central oversight is essential: when people are your most valuable asset, compliance and consistency are non-negotiable.

In other words, there are lots of reasons why trusts centralise HR, and often do it first: workload reduction for school staff, strengthened compliance, consistency, and clear visibility of people data, all of which enable a more strategic approach to workforce management. *However*, what we see less often is this strategy being supported by the right systems and processes. Without that foundation, the intended benefits of centralisation are rarely fully realised. This raises a few questions. What does HR centralisation really mean in practice? Can you truly be centralised without centralised HR technology, or without any HR tech at all? How can trusts make sure that their people strategy is genuinely data-driven?

We've put together this eBook to explore these questions. You'll hear from:

- Karen Hayes, CEO at Esteem MAT on how an HRIS underpinned their flexible HR model
- Sally Boaden Chief Finance and Operating Officer at Raleigh Education Trust on how their people strategy is scaffolded by centralised systems
- Ella Eccersley, ex-HR Assistant at a Yorkshire-based trust, on her experience with non-education focused HR software

You'll gain insight into how centralisation looks across different trusts, what has made certain models successful, and why even the best strategies depend on the systems and data that support them.

As SAMpeople's Managing Director, I'm always inspired by conversations with trust leaders about what works for them. This eBook is an opportunity to share those insights more widely. Many of our team (including our founder) come from education backgrounds, and that experience directly shapes our approach to HR technology. We strongly believe that your systems should enable, not hinder, your people strategy. Supporting staff and schools with a high-quality, efficient HR service isn't just important, it's essential. I hope this eBook gives you food for thought about what centralised recruitment and HR might really look like at your trust, and how you should underpin whatever model works for you with the right systems.

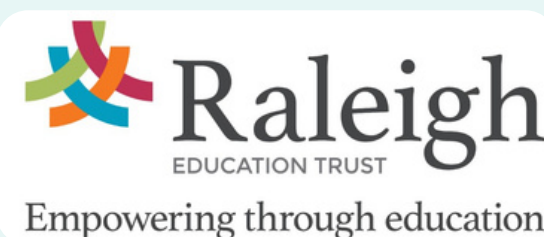
Katie Craker

Managing Director
SAMpeople and FusionHR

Why your people strategy should be scaffolded by systems, and how we achieved this at Raleigh Education Trust



Sally Boaden
Chief Finance & Operating Officer
Raleigh Education Trust



Sally joined the trust in 2021 following a hugely successful career as Chief Finance Officer of an Outstanding Single Academy Trust within the East Midlands and Humberside region. This experience, coupled with her current status as an accredited ESFA School Resource Management Associate (SRMA), has strengthened the Trust central executive team. She brings expansive knowledge and experience to the Trust in all aspects of business support services, including governance, procurement, health & safety, human resources, finance and compliance from primary and secondary settings and academy trusts, bringing over two decades of School Business Leadership experience to the role.

Sally is a member of the Institute of School Business Leadership (ISBL) and the National Network of Special Schools for School Business Professionals and accredited as an ESFA School Resource Management Associate. She actively supports the Association of BAME Business Leaders in Education group, WomenEd and the National College of Education. Sally has achieved a Masters in Educational Leadership and Management and a Level 6 School Business Management qualification.

She has a passion for ensuring MATs are well run through the proper use of public money and compliance with the regulatory frameworks. She strongly advocates that robust regulatory compliance is the bedrock of school support to deliver the best possible outcomes for our children young people.

6 schools

2 Local Authorities

“Transitioning to a centralised HR system wasn’t just a tech upgrade; it was a strategic necessity to underpin our hybrid working model.”

Raleigh Education Trust is a diverse trust comprising six schools, ranging from a three-form-entry primary to unique alternative provision and special-needs settings. As we expand across three different shires in the East Midlands, the question which often comes up is: are we fully centralised? My answer is no.

Since the beginning, we have been committed to a hybrid model. Our schools retain autonomy in decision-making, and our principals lead their teams, focusing on children and education. We have a very clear workflow of who does what between the central teams and our schools. In our hybrid model, each school has a Senior Administrator; however, they do not have autonomy over systems and processes. The trust central team consists of an external HR Advisor taking the role of HR Director, an HR Advisor and then a Payroll and HR Officer. The central team handles everything else: HR cases, finance, and complex administration, so school leaders just pick up the phone, tell us what they need, and we deal with it.

When I joined the trust, we didn’t have an HR system. It was immediately clear to me that holding data physically in every school was not a sustainable way of working. I had to drive to a school just to look at a contract of employment! What I knew we needed was to have everything in a central place, not scattered across five or ten different locations. Not only that, but our trust model necessitated the ability to communicate en masse and, crucially, monitor absence and HR trends. Transitioning to a centralised HR system wasn’t just a tech upgrade; it was a strategic necessity to underpin our hybrid working model.

Implementing a transformational system

I led the HR system project to find the right fit, which brought us to SAMpeople. The system offered us a centralised place for people data management, addressing our challenges of needing to upgrade our communication and monitor absence effectively. The implementation journey was a true team effort. Our Senior Administrators in the schools did the heavy lifting of inputting data, while I met with line managers to teach them the system.

I’ll admit, being impatient, I thought we’d be done in five minutes! In reality, it took longer, but having a “system champion” was a massive help. It allowed staff to ask those “I know Sally told me five times, but how do I do this again?” questions without feeling judged. It was easy to win hearts and minds because the staff realised the system made their processes clear, controlled, and tightened the ship. The introduction of a system has given them a foundation of HR that they didn’t really have before. Everybody is doing the same thing in the same way. It’s helped them manage their staffing a lot better.

Introducing an HRIS has transformed us. It’s underpinned our hybrid model of working across the trust. It’s given us HR and people data at the touch of our fingertips. It’s provided us with accountability in our procedures and processes. Seeing our strategy be scaffolded by systems just gives us that confidence in what we’re doing. It’s allowed us to be proactive rather than reactive. By having people data at our fingertips, we’ve seen phenomenal results:

- **Reduced absence:** In our first year, we reduced long-term absence by two and a half years and short-term absence by 18 months.
- **Accountability:** We brought in the expectation that return-to-work and probation meetings actually happen.
- **Efficiency:** I estimate that SAMpeople allows us to save an hour a day for every Senior Administrator across the trust. We've drastically reduced administrative workloads for our staff. We've improved the efficiency of our communication between the trust and the staff.
- **Compliance:** Having the SCR online in SAMpeople has been just phenomenal. I can now confirm our Single Central Record (SCR) is compliant in minutes, rather than digging through spreadsheets and files.
- **Saved money:** We've reduced paper usage to zero with online personnel files, reduced expenses on travelling between schools and saved huge amounts of money on reduced absences. It saves time, and time is money!
- **Becoming an employer of choice:** You simply cannot achieve that with outdated paper applications, no oversight of people data and clunky processes. Introducing SAMpeople Recruit provided that "lightning bolt" moment. I'll never forget the first candidate who went through the whole process, from applying online to having her information seamlessly pushed into the HR system. Processes and procedures have been vastly improved just by bringing on a system.

The whole HR system is a game-changer for us. The efficiencies that SAMpeople has brought to the trust are phenomenal. It's got us where we are today, and radically reduced the administrative burden from a vast array of staff along the way. We use every single part of the system, every single day.

The bird's-eye view of people data

Today, my "view" of the trust has changed completely. With Power BI linked to our HR data, I can look at attrition rates, trends by gender or age, and pinpoint exactly why people are leaving. If the CEO asks how many staff have ten years of service, we can answer in seconds.

For any trust leader on the fence about introducing an HR system to underpin their strategy, I would ask: How can you know your workforce across multiple schools without a system? Without it, there is no accountability and no scalability.

What's next?

We've built a solid foundation by underpinning our people strategy with a strong HR and recruitment system. Four years ago, I just wanted to see a contract; now, I'm looking toward automation. I want the system to trigger every process - from payroll and finance to recruitment updates - the moment a leaver's date is entered. We've made strong progress, but now it's about taking our ways of working to the next level.

"For any trust leader on the fence about introducing an HR system to underpin their strategy, I would ask: How can you know your workforce across multiple schools without a system? Without it, there is no accountability and no scalability."

“Strategically centralised, operationally diversified”

How systems underpinned our flexible HR model at Esteem MAT



Karen Hayes
Chief Executive Officer
Esteem Multi-Academy Trust



Karen provides strategic leadership to ensure high-quality education, strong outcomes, and inclusive provision for pupils with complex and specialist needs. Karen’s leadership is firmly rooted in education. She was the highly successful Principal of Derby Pride Academy for eight years, one of the county’s first Alternative Provision free schools. Under her leadership, the academy achieved multiple outstanding Ofsted judgements and built a strong reputation for high expectations, safeguarding, inclusion, and positive pupil transition and destinations. Earlier in her career, Karen held senior executive roles in school business management, giving her a strong operational and financial foundation. This enables her, as CEO, to align educational ambition with effective systems, governance, and resources.

Alongside headship, Karen held trust-wide responsibility as School Improvement and Development Advisor for Alternative Provision, supporting leaders to strengthen curriculum quality, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding across AP settings. She later became Director of Partnerships and Provision, leading education strategy, system collaboration, and commissioning arrangements with local authorities to improve access to high-quality provision.

Karen is an experienced Ofsted Inspector and a committed advocate for Alternative Provision and inclusion and is an Executive Board member of PRUsAP UK, supporting PRU and AP leaders locally and nationally.

14 schools **5** Local Authorities **1152** members of staff

Esteem MAT is made up of 14 schools, mostly special and AP settings. What is important to understand about our model is that it has been designed to grow with us. We recently refreshed our strategic aims for 2025 to 2030. Education remains our first domain, with ‘people, culture and wellbeing’ as our second.

I would not describe our flexible model as fully centralised. Rather, we are strategically centralised and operationally diversified. We have always had a central HR function at Esteem, consisting of a Director of People and Culture, or a HR Manager and a small HR team working across our schools. Over the last year, we have introduced a regional business leader model. These colleagues sit within the central team but work across our schools, providing on-site support. We now have three regional business leaders supporting seven of our 14 schools.

Alongside this, our schools have operational leads managing day-to-day functions. Some schools also have dedicated business managers due to their complexity and size, while others operate shared executive models. In essence, our model is flexible to the needs of each school, underpinned by a strong central structure that provides consistency.

There is rarely a perfect moment to centralise, but there is a point at which not doing so becomes a risk. As a trust grows, informal arrangements become increasingly difficult to sustain. We reached that point around 18 months ago. While we had a central function, practice varied significantly across schools, increasing legal and operational risk. Growing complexity highlighted the need for greater consistency.

Our schools are rightly diverse in their curricula and pedagogy. However, core business functions such as financial management and recruitment require consistency. Centralisation for us was about protecting the organisation, supporting leaders, and ensuring fairness. We wanted every member of staff to receive the same quality of support, regardless of where they worked.

Rationalising our systems

As the trust grew in complexity, our flexible model remained effective, but the systems underpinning it had not kept pace. We were operating across multiple platforms without a single tenancy, which meant systems did not connect or enable effective information sharing. This created siloes and limited oversight of HR data and processes. For example, onboarding a member of staff required input across multiple systems, creating inefficiency and duplication. This was not sustainable.

One of our strategic priorities for 2025–2030 is business efficiency. A key part of this is ensuring that our systems support, rather than hinder, our ways of working. We had strong central structures in place, but needed systems that aligned with and strengthened these structures.

This prompted a shift in how we view our trust’s digital ecosystem. A key question now informs all procurement decisions: does this system integrate with our existing platforms? We no longer invest in systems that operate in isolation. This rationalisation has provided a single, central source of truth for our people data. As CEO, this gives me confidence that

information is secure, accessible and not reliant on individuals. People move on; systems provide continuity. Some colleagues had prior experience of SAMpeople and recognised the standardisation and efficiency it could bring.

The HRIS provides a central platform for all people data, while still allowing schools to manage day-to-day operations through individual dashboards. This balance aligns closely with our model of strategic centralisation and operational flexibility.

The accessibility of the system enables our central team and regional business leaders to provide support from any location, removing previous barriers created by disconnected systems.

We have now established three core data sources across the trust to avoid duplication:

- Pupil Data: Arbor (MIS)
- People Data: SAMpeople (HR)
- School Improvement Data: SchooliP

Bringing schools along: consultation and peer advocacy

With any change, particularly in a trust that places strong emphasis on culture, it is essential that staff feel engaged and supported. This is especially important when working with people data, as staff are our most valuable asset.

To address concerns about loss of autonomy, we ensured consultation took place at all levels. This is now standard practice for introducing new systems or processes. Our monthly “Stronger Together” briefing brings together headteachers and business leaders, ensuring alignment and shared understanding.

We have found that the most effective approach to implementation is through peer influence. New systems are piloted in a small number of schools, and those schools then share their experience and impact. Colleagues respond more positively to peer feedback than to central direction, as they can see the relevance to their own context.

Some staff expressed concern that increased system use might reduce the need for their roles. It was important to address this directly. Our message was clear: this is not about reducing people, but about enabling them to work more effectively. Professional judgement and human interaction remain central to everything we do.

Our aim is to streamline processes so that leaders can focus on their core purpose: delivering high-quality education. Systems support this by improving efficiency, providing clarity and reducing duplication.

A staff survey in 2024 indicated that satisfaction with the central HR function was lower than expected, particularly in relation to communication and consistency. Addressing this became a priority. The introduction of an HRIS, specifically SAMpeople, played a significant role in improving this. It enabled consistent processes, clearer communication through the employee portal, and a more structured approach to managing workforce matters.

A follow-up survey in November 2025 showed a marked improvement in satisfaction, with HR demonstrating the greatest increase across the trust. Staff particularly value automated approvals, leave and mileage tracking, and the structured approach to managing employee relations.

“Our people and culture domain now has a defined set of KPIs, which means the trust board has access to high-quality data to support effective challenge and accountability.”

Realising the benefits

A centralised HR model supported by a robust HRIS has delivered significant benefits:

- Greater consistency of practice across the trust
- Reduced legal and safeguarding risk
- Increased leadership capacity

There have also been additional benefits from improved data visibility. With integrated systems, we now have a more complete view of our workforce and organisational performance. We have seen a reduction in the escalation of employee relations matters. Previously, limited visibility meant issues could progress quickly. With clearer processes and oversight, concerns are now addressed earlier and more effectively. The speed and quality of support have improved. Our HR team can quickly build a comprehensive picture of an individual's circumstances and provide appropriate support in a timely way.

For us, the true benefit is in how staff experience the organisation. This includes timely, responsive support and meaningful professional interactions. Automating administrative tasks such as leave and mileage processes has reduced duplication and released time back to staff.

Previously, HR data was held across multiple spreadsheets and systems, making it difficult to manage. It is now held in a single, central platform, supporting a more professional and efficient approach.

This consistency is visible to staff and has contributed to a positive cultural shift. The central HR function is now seen as enabling and supportive, reinforcing our commitment to putting people first.

Our people and culture domain now has a defined set of KPIs, which means the trust board has access to high-quality data to support effective challenge and accountability.

Looking ahead: growth and resilience

Our next priority is to maximise the impact of our systems at a pace that is manageable for staff. We are introducing additional SAMpeople modules in phases, with the next focus being the Single Central Record, moving away from spreadsheets and linking directly to our people data.

As we continue to grow, strong central systems are essential. They allow us to integrate new schools effectively and support future development.

For a growing trust, operating without centralised systems becomes increasingly fragile. Having a coherent and connected system architecture underpins transparency, resilience and consistency. It enables us to operate professionally and efficiently, while maintaining a strong focus on our people.

How can software support centralisation?



Ella Eccersley
HR Consultant at FusionHR
Former MAT HR Assistant in
Yorkshire trust

Ella joined FusionHR as an HR Consultant in 2024, bringing valuable experience from her previous role as an in-house HR Assistant in a Multi-Academy Trust. Based at a secondary school, Ella looked after a wide range of HR areas such as admin, casework, payroll and recruitment. In Ella's current role at FusionHR, she works closely with our FusionHR trusts, who are often using SAMpeople alongside their HR support. By having access to their SAMpeople systems, Ella can provide timely, informed support across case work and more.

2 years at
SAMpeople
and FusionHR

4 years as a
trust HR
Assistant

2,600 schools and
trusts using
SAMpeople

Trusts are complex organisations with plenty of moving parts. Many are managing their HR and recruitment data and processes via disparate systems, spreadsheets or even paper. These siloed processes and data management often lead to an increase in administrative workload, risks to data compliance and a lack of strategic oversight for senior leaders.

Having a strategic focus on your people is a top priority for most trusts. But without aligned systems underpinning a trust's people strategy, how can MAT leaders streamline their processes to reduce workload, use reporting and analytics to inform people initiatives, and proactively support their people in relation to health and wellbeing?

Can you have a centralised HR model without an HRIS?

Many trusts centralise their HR functions to help ease pressure on the staff in their schools and allow for central oversight of people and HR data. As we've explored in some of the articles from trust leaders, MATs often have a central HR team from the outset, but a lack of aligned systems holds them back from working consistently across their schools and providing strategic support.

An HRIS (HR information system) is the foundation to this. By implementing a central piece of software like an HRIS, it provides that central pillar which upholds the central function. This means that central teams are able to take on strategic work that might get pushed down in priority for staff battling the everyday demands of working directly in a school. Alongside a strong strategy, a centralised HR and recruitment system allows trusts to have a 'birds-eye' view in real-time of their schools and people data.

Centralising HR without an HR system in place can be tricky. How will you make sure policies and procedures are consistent in all your schools? How will data be passed up to the central team quickly and accurately? Without a well-integrated HR system, it's left to the central trust HR team to chase down people data and documents via email and phone, or travel individually to each school, by which time, data is already out of date. This challenges the benefit of having a centralised HR team for efficiency to alleviate workload from school-based staff.

From speaking to our trusts that managed centralised models before introducing an HR system, they regularly mention that while they could see the benefits of having a centralised team, they couldn't reach their full potential without a centralised system. Our trust leaders said that schools were working differently, with variation in their practices and were having to physically travel to schools to collate HR data. It became apparent that working in a centralised model needed to be underpinned by a strong central place to store data, access insights and manage best practice processes across the trust. As a growing MAT, the risks of compliance anomalies, siloed data and processes increase as more and more schools are added.

Why generic business-focused HR software fails trusts

Education HR is complex. The right management tool needs to be not only configurable, but also intuitive, agile, and aligned to school life. For example, a business-focused HR system would not provide term-time-only adjustments, a single source of truth for staff data, in-year changes and safeguarding. Many HR systems are built for private sector businesses, lacking flexibility for education. While large HRIS deliver a wide range of services across HR functions, they are built around a generic enterprise model. This means they are complex to set up and therefore reliant on corporate-size IT support to function, all of which makes it not fit for purpose in education. On top of that, it's difficult to extract staff data and the systems don't integrate well with other critical education systems, such as an MIS.

In my previous role as a MAT HR Assistant, our HR software wasn't built for education, so it couldn't cope with term-time-only contracts and specific education HR requirements. We couldn't run dual contracts, and absence statistics weren't dynamic. We had to work manually and check that the system had done things correctly. With none of our systems talking to each other, we had to input data three times across different systems – including Oracle, SIMS and even spreadsheets. Moving employees from onboarding to hiring meant we had to download and reupload documents in each system, setting up staff profiles again.

Our absence management process was clunky, using a system that just wasn't fit for purpose. We had to upload absences and manually edit tracking, as the system didn't understand the nuances of term time and multiple contracts. Ultimately, we ended up using spreadsheets because it was just easier. Personnel files were across two separate systems that didn't speak to each other. Staff would have to manually sign and scan in documents to two places. With 140 staff, it was a lot of paper!

The business-generic software also didn't understand the hierarchy of working in schools and trusts, with principals and senior leaders needing oversight of staff, as well as line managers. Reporting was in another application, which itself was overwhelming and difficult to navigate. Employees with more than one role in the trust showed on reports as multiple employees; the system would report 200 staff, whereas it was actually 140, some with multiple contracts. The system was clunky and did not alleviate manual admin as we had hoped. In short, non-education-specific systems were hindering us.

That's why so many of the trusts that I now work with, view SAMpeople as a breath of fresh air. The system is designed from the ground up to reflect the realities of schools and trusts because our team have all been there.

SAMpeople started out as an HR consultancy, made up of on-the-ground specialists who had either worked in trusts themselves or built up years of expertise around what a good people strategy looked like. Fifteen years of doing consultancy and hearing trust leaders' stories, led our team to realise that a strong strategy needs to have the right software to back it up, and that the right education-first HRIS didn't yet exist. That's how SAMpeople came to be, which I think is a really strong reflection of the genuine foundation that the right software can bring to people strategy at trust-level.

Because of the education-first lens of our team right from the beginning, SAMpeople is completely structured around education HR best practices, designed to align with a trust's procedures, policies, SCR and workforce census needs, and structure. Our team were also aware that in education, there's no such thing as one size fits all, and so SAMpeople is designed to scale with trusts of all shapes and sizes.

All of this is why we also have SAMpeople Recruit and SAMpeople Payroll. Ultimately, it comes back to alignment, and really benefitting from that central structure when your software allows you to take action, have oversight and have a single source of truth all from one place. Having the full HR ecosystem in one place, allows trusts to manage their people from vacancy creation to onboarding, all the way through to retirement. HR software should do more than just generate reports or store staff data. The right solution helps people managers follow best practice and statutory processes, provides context for every staff interaction, and frees up time to focus on higher-impact, strategic work.

Having access to a central suite of education-first HRIS products would have been so impactful for me in my previous role, which is why I now love working for the team that delivers on that promise. I often think about how it would have been so simple to push new hires, along with their documents and vetting checks, straight into an employee profile in the HR system, and what my role would have looked like. I know from my own experience that trusts can feel like chaotic places; you have to wear so many hats when you work in education, no matter your role. I was once herding children to avoid an air ambulance helicopter landing in the playing fields whilst trying to manage interviews! Having a piece of software which makes at least the HR part of the job easier, would have been such a win for me.

People first, supported by systems

All in all, trusts are working hard to put their people first. Every trust I speak to puts such high value on their workforce, and rightly so. What we're really trying to show MATs out there, based on years of experience and anecdotes directly from trust leaders, is that in order to deliver on a strong, centralised people strategy, your software needs to move with you and underpin you all the way.

6 ways HR software underpins people strategies in trusts

Specialist HR software, designed for education, is valuable for schools of any size – but it becomes essential for trusts facing growth, centralising services, and supporting a growing workforce. Without effective systems in place, it’s difficult to gain the visibility and oversight needed to truly understand staffing challenges, let alone manage them proactively.

But HR software should do more than just generate reports, or store staff data. The right solution helps people managers follow best practice and statutory processes, provides context for every staff interaction, and frees up time to focus on higher impact, strategic work.

Here are six ways trust leaders tell us HR software underpins their people strategies and supports HR excellence across their trust.

Gain a complete trust-wide view of staffing

A centralised dashboard provides instant, clear oversight of staff turnover, absences, HR casework and recruitment activity across all your schools – without needing to chase individual HR leads or school leaders. This makes it easy to spot where issues are emerging, and identify schools that need extra support or intervention such as those experiencing high absence costs or increased turnover.

Promote consistent HR best-practice and centralised processes

When everyone works from the same system, you can easily share trust-wide policies and establish consistent ways of working, supported by built-in triggers, workflows and approval processes. Absence management, for example, can be standardised with custom approval workflows and automated trigger guidelines – either applied trust-wide or tailored to schools as needed.

Free up HR teams for strategic initiatives

Self-service features allow staff to keep their personal data up-to-date, request time-off, track CPD and access documents independently. Automated workflows for line managers – such as leave approvals and return to work reminders – significantly reduce time spent on manual administrative tasks. Central HR teams benefit from comprehensive reporting tools, BI dashboards and streamlined policy management, giving them increased capacity to focus on strategic people projects that drive the trust forward.

Reduce absence and support employees

Automated absence tracking and trigger dashboards ensure a clear and consistent absence policy is applied for all schools. Ability to set monitoring periods and track attendance improvement ensures you stay in control of the absence case. Trend analysis across schools, departments and terms enables timely support for staff and helps inform a robust wellbeing strategy.

Enable data-driven recruitment and retention strategies

With the full visibility of your workforce and detailed reports on turnover and absences, central HR teams can clearly identify gaps and develop targeted interventions for wellbeing, flexible working and staff engagement. Using your own data to inform decisions and drive improvements leads to smarter recruitment and retention across the trust.

Have peace of mind that HR compliance is being met

A trust-wide HR system allows HR compliance to be maintained consistently across all schools. It stores contractual and payroll records accurately, updates the Single Central Record in real time, and replaces static spreadsheets with dynamic cloud-based tools. Workforce Census requirements are met automatically in line with DfE requirements, and policies and contractual documents can be distributed and tracked for staff acknowledgement, supporting standardisation and compliance trust-wide.

Why SAMpeople is the UK's fastest-growing education HR system

SAMpeople has been designed and refined by our team of education HR specialists, with over two decades of hands-on experience supporting HR in schools and trusts. Since launching in 2021, SAMpeople now helps over 2,600 schools and trusts across the UK to support their staff, reduce manual workload, increase operational efficiency and oversight, and drive HR best-practice.

Trust level overview with MAT dashboard

Central teams and senior leadership can access reports, statistics and HR data at a glance with a dynamic dashboard of key HR metrics. Pull reports from across schools, filtering to specific details where required to understand the complete picture of your staff.

Secure GDPR compliant storage

Making SAMpeople your source of truth for all employee information ensures compliance with data protection regulations but also ensures payroll changes are accurately tracked and managed and reported on the payroll export report. With a clear audit trail, HR and payroll teams can eliminate discrepancies and reduce the risk of payroll errors, supporting compliance and transparency. With a cloud based HR system, you can move away from paper based files and searching individual computers and improve data accuracy. HR teams can access information from anywhere anytime, allowing for flexible working across school sites and other locations.

Create consistent processes and policies

With built-in workflows and automated reminders, you can quickly and easily implement consistent processes across the trust. Absence management and return to work meetings are handled consistently from school to school, making sure employees are treated fairly. Share policies trust wide and communicate changes to employees at the touch of a button.

"The most impactful module has to be the reporting module; being able to get insights into what's going on in the organisation has been genuinely transformational. It is really incredible and something we couldn't do prior to having an HR system. SAMpeople has saved us huge amounts of time as an organisation. That's time that we can spend on more value-adding activity that ultimately contributes to improving teaching and learning in the classroom, which is, fundamentally, why we're here."

Sarah Casemore, HR Director, The Arbib Education Trust

"The absence management module was most impactful for being able to see across the organisation and understanding trends. It gave us the opportunity to work with school leaders to challenge what the data is saying so that we get the culture right in all of our schools and that all staff are being equally supported."

Mathew Atkinson, CEO, Priestley Academy Trust

Compliance and Single Central Record management

Our Single Central Record and compliance management features give you peace of mind that documents and records are up-to-date. You can focus your attention on what's needed with built-in flags, alerts and expiries. Give each school their own Single Central Record and access these at trust level for reviews and audits.

Help staff self-service with the MySAM employee portal

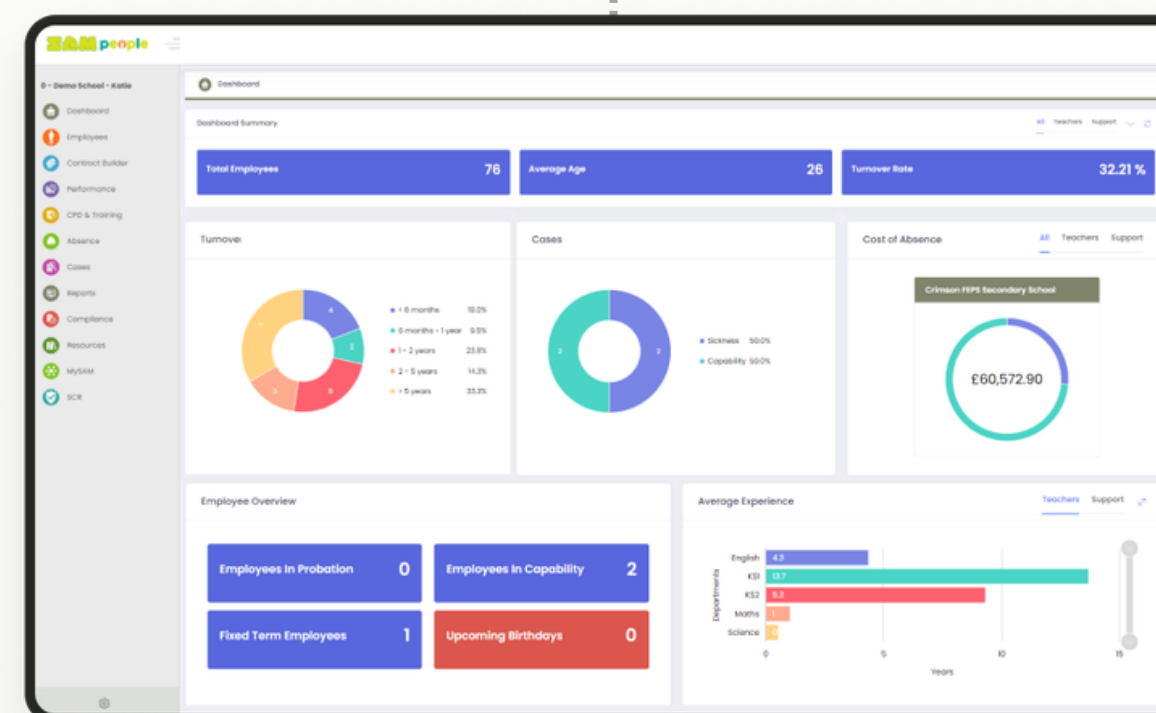
Our employee self-service portal gives employees a simple way to request leave, manage their personal details, view their CPD and performance objectives and submit additional hours and expenses. With mobile friendly access, encouraging engagement has never been easier.

Comprehensive case work and performance tracker

Simplify case and performance management so HR teams can securely log, monitor and update every case stage in one centralised system. Relevant documents, communications and evidence are stored in a single, easily accessible location. When preparing for meetings, hearings or performance reviews, quickly compile historical information and supporting evidence and prepare a summary report or produce a hearing bundle in minutes – streamlining the process, and enabling HR teams and line managers to be confident and prepared.

Avoid duplication with MIS sync

Reduce duplication of admin tasks by integrating your HR software and MIS. Data flows between the system to make sure you are always up-to-date.



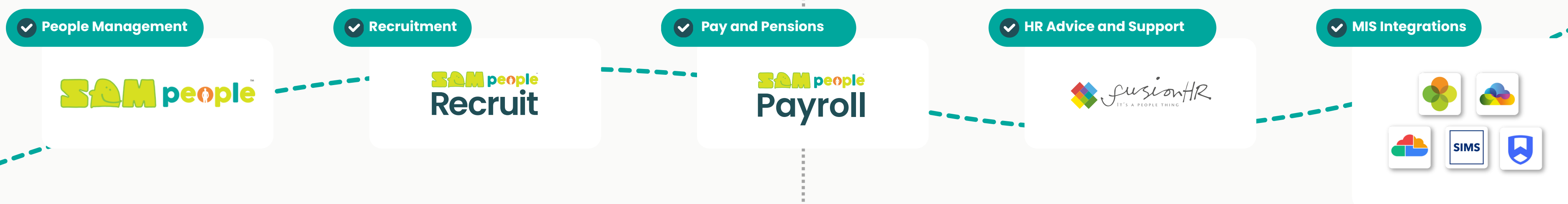
How else can we help you

Simplify and connect the whole employee journey

From hiring to payroll to case management – our suite of integrated products and services help you streamline, support and join up every aspect of people management in education.

"The impact has been amazing, we are seeing change and we are seeing each school engaging with the systems. It's helping build an inclusive culture."

Sally Boaden, Chief Finance & Operating Officer, Raleigh Education Trust



We help over 2,600 schools and trusts to:

Finally understand the complete picture of their staff

Our products join up all your staff data, so you can track every interaction. Turn scattered touchpoints into clear insights about absences, recruitment, retention and wellbeing, and know exactly where to focus your attention.

Scale HR without increasing headcount

With a strong HR infrastructure, it's easy to roll out consistent processes and policies and treat everyone the same way. And with our people services team at FusionHR, HR advice, consultancy and strategy is only a phone call away.

Dramatically reduce HR admin for everyone

With self-service tools for employees, and helpful reports, automations, alerts and templates for managers, HR quickly becomes less of a mountain.

We're education people, people

We created SAMpeople because we've been there.

Founded by former school staff and our education HR specialists at FusionHR, we're bringing together decades of HR expertise with the latest in people management technology.

Read our story at sampeople.co.uk/about

What's next? Get in touch or see us in action

Get in touch 

Get in touch for a discovery call and demonstration. Our team will discuss your initial requirements, challenges and get you booked in for a demo.



Download our brochure 

Download our brochure to learn more about our HR, recruitment and payroll services and explore our key features.



Book a demo or find out more at

→ sampeople.co.uk

→ 01924 907319