

## **Building and Operations Manager Recruitment Pack May 2025**



### **Thank you for your interest in joining Polka**

We are...*"The place to be for children's theatre"* [ayoungertheatre.com](http://ayoungertheatre.com) and *"one of the best-equipped kids' theatres in the world"* Time Out.

Polka Theatre is a pioneering and unique children's theatre venue, staging exceptional productions and developing industry-leading Creative Learning experiences which are accessible for all children to enjoy. In 2024 we won the UK Theatre Award for Most Welcoming Theatre, as well as Merton Best Business.

This recruitment pack is designed to tell you more about us, the job role you would be doing, the skills and knowledge you would bring to the role and the qualities and values we're looking for. It also explains the application process.

If you have any feedback or questions about this recruitment pack or require it in a different format, please let us know. We can be contacted on 020 8543 4888 or email [boxoffice@polkatheatre.com](mailto:boxoffice@polkatheatre.com)



If you would like to have a chat about this role in more detail, please call email Woonie Chan on 020 8543 4888 or email [woonie@polkatheatre.com](mailto:woonie@polkatheatre.com).

Thank you for reading this pack and, if you decide to apply, we look forward to receiving your application by **Monday 9 June 2025 at 9am**.



## About Polka

Polka is a pioneering national theatre for children based in Wimbledon, the first UK venue created exclusively for young audiences. Opened in 1979, we are one of just a handful of dedicated children's venues in the UK. Since then over 4 million children, parents, teachers and carers have been through our doors. Following our £9m redevelopment in 2020/21 we have reimagined Polka for future generations.

Polka is a charity and Arts Council England National Portfolio organisation. Our mission is to empower children to navigate their world through inspirational theatre and creative experiences. Over 100,000 people visit us each year and a further 20,000+ take part in creative learning and community activities. We involve children at every stage of the creative process and lead the way in Early Years theatre for under 6s. Through coproductions and touring we reach children across the UK and internationally.

Inclusivity is and always has been an integral part of the company's offer. In 2007, Polka pioneered relaxed performances for children on the autistic spectrum, a model which continues to be replicated across the cultural sector as Relaxed Performances. We run free ticketing schemes, enabling who otherwise might not be able to attend to experience live theatre for the first time, and a range of initiatives that provide opportunities for children with particular access needs or who live in challenging circumstances to participate in our activities. We offer opportunities for all children and families regardless of age, ability, culture or background, to engage in theatre.

Our website ([www.polkatheatre.com](http://www.polkatheatre.com)) gives you more information about us. We are funded by Arts Council England, London, registered charity number 256979.



## **Working, Wellbeing and Learning at Polka**

Polka's commitment as an equal opportunities employer means we are keen to encourage applications from people from the Global Majority, people across the gender spectrum and people who self-identify as disabled, who are underrepresented in our sector. Our newly redeveloped venue is wheelchair accessible.

As a children's theatre we are generally open during the daytime and weekends, rather than evenings, making us well suited to people who have families and/or other caring responsibilities outside of work. As a community-rooted venue, we are also well suited to people who live nearby and are looking to work locally, rather than travel into or through central London. Our environment is important to us, and we have radically improved our building's sustainability, and our Green Team help to implement practical operational changes.

We want to help people achieve their potential while working at Polka. We prioritise our mental health and the culture of working at Polka by having regular team days to share and learn from each other, providing the opportunity to work flexibly (subject to the type of role) and a range of social events. We invest in our people through training opportunities which help us learn and understand more about working together. Recently this includes trans-awareness, equality, diversity and inclusion and mental health awareness.

## Perks and Benefits

We continually strive to make Polka an even greater place to work. We listen to feedback and conversations with staff at our team days. By doing this, we recently reviewed our perks and benefits package and are delighted to make enhancements and add new ones, which are:

- **Flexi-time** – after your first day, you can start work anytime between 9am and 10am and work the corresponding 8 hours (with one hour for lunch) within the needs of the organisation.
- **Extra holiday** – after 1+ year of service an extra day per year, up to 5 extra days.
- **Volunteering days** – up to 2 days off per leave year (pro rata).
- **Sabbatical unpaid leave** – after 3+ years' service.
- **Cycle to work scheme.**
- **Season ticket loans.**
- **Emergency small loan scheme** for salaried and regular casual staff.
- **Pension** – after 3 months you will be automatically enrolled into NOW Pensions scheme in accordance with statutory deadlines and contributions.
- **Additional pension** – an additional 1% of employer pension contribution above statutory minimum after 1 year of service.
- **Complimentary tickets** – for all Polka productions subject to availability.
- **Polka's Café and shop** – generous discounts.
- **Local discounts on shopping**, dining and entertainment through Love Wimbledon card membership.
- **Leisure centre and spa** – corporate discounted rate with local gym, swimming pool and spa around the corner from Polka.
- **Discounted parking** if you need to drive to work, subject to availability.
- **Regular social activities** and team days.





## The Polka Team

We are looking for people who share our mission, vision and values through their work. As part of our team, you will be conscientious, proactive and reliable in your approach to work and have a willingness to learn and adapt to changes. We support and champion each other. You don't need to have a degree, specialist arts qualification or years of experience to work with us. We will support you to fulfil your full potential in your role.

**Mission** To empower children to navigate their world through inspirational theatre and creative experiences.

**Vision** Improving children's lives, bringing communities together, creating ground-breaking theatre.

Our values:

**Child-centred** placing children at the heart of everything Polka does.

**Community** engaging our diverse communities of children, families, educationalists and artists.

**Excellent** pioneering, adventurous, offering the highest quality.

**Memorable** creating magical, meaningful experiences.

**Inclusive** welcoming, accessible, nurturing, supportive, representative.



## This is the role for you, if you:

- Are passionate about high standards of building management and finding ways to continually improve systems
- Are practical, hands-on and understand the importance of H&S
- Want to help champion the work of a specialist and unique national theatre for children

You will play an important role supporting the Head of Operations and Visitor Services, with responsibility for facilitating the efficient and safe running of Polka's buildings infrastructure and systems. You will be practical and hands-on, ensuring the buildings and relevant facilities are proactively maintained and comply with health and safety for everyone working and visiting. Following our recently major capital projects, there are a range of improvements to oversee. You will also need to spend desk-based time on the administrative elements of the role, ensuring vital record keeping is undertaken in a timely way. You will negotiate with and oversee any contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers who are engaged to carry out work to Polka's buildings and facilities, achieving best value service.

## Job Description

**This role is part-time (3 or 4 days per week) and permanent, but we are open to discussing other options.** We will consider applications for flexible working and job-sharing. Further details can be found in the 'Contract Terms and Benefits' section below.

Polka's recently redeveloped building comprises of: two performance spaces, rehearsal/community space, kitchen, café and shop, outdoor play areas, offices, dressing rooms and a newly refurbished flat. Polka also has an offsite workshop on Batsworth Road in Mitcham and from time-to-time host events at other venues, and you will be required to support the teams working there.

## Key Responsibilities

Your job description includes responsibility for:

### Maintenance and compliance

- With the Head of Operations and Visitor Services:
  - ensure that all buildings are presented to the highest standards and are always safe for use by staff and visitors.
  - be responsible for general building repairs and redecoration of the venue e.g. doors, hardware, fixtures, basic plumbing, scheduling contractors where needed and within budget.
- Be a keyholder and act as one of the first responders to theatre building emergencies such as leaks, power outages, heating loss, fire alarms and basic plumbing issues.
- Ensure regular monitoring tasks are completed and logged e.g. fire extinguisher checks, weekly fire alarm, call points and refuge system testing, emergency and building lighting checks, exit routes, fault reporting, etc.
- Ensure regular statutory tests and inspections are completed e.g. fire and security systems, PAT and emergency lighting.
- Ensure all CCTV equipment is operational throughout all theatre buildings in order to meet Polka's data protection, security and insurance requirement.
- Plan and deliver preventative and repairing maintenance during the dark period(s) by taking into account operational needs within the buildings.
- Be the lead contact for and manage Polka's residential flat and associated maintenance such as gas safety, emergency lighting and fire alarm as well as being a point of contact for the tenants.
- Manage the maintenance of the facilities at the offsite workshop on Batsworth Road.
- Monitor energy usage in line with Polka's environmental policy.

- Ensure that sustainability is embedded in all areas of work and actively seek opportunities to improve sustainability (e.g. change of supplier or process).

### **Contractors and suppliers**

- Be responsible for the building systems and external suppliers, including the following contractors and subcontractors:
  - HVAC (heating, ventilation, cooling)
  - Fire Alarm
  - Security (Door access, CCTV, Intruder Alarm, keys)
  - Electrical (Main building intake and distribution)
  - Plumbing (Water supplies, drainage)
  - Access (Lifts, doors, shutters)
  - Building Management Systems
  - General Maintenance (carpentry, painting, fixings)
  - Cleaning.
- Schedule, monitor and record external contractors for regular maintenance and annually review for best prices in the market.
- Work with suppliers to get best prices and determine other building and hygiene needs and contracts.
- Manage annual general maintenance budget, including service contracts and utilities.

### **Health and Safety (H&S)**

- Ensure all maintenance work carried out abides by H&S legislation with safe systems of work in place.
- Conduct general fire and H&S risk assessments for the theatre buildings.
- Support the Head of Production who is the Team Lead for the H&S Team, attending regular meetings and contributing to the H&S Team.
- Keep up to date with H&S regulations specific to building equipment, the management of a public building and industry advice pertaining to safe working within relevant guidelines.

### **Offsite buildings and projects**

- Support the teams working offsite at Batsworth Road workshop or pop-up venues, to help find contractors and suppliers to work on these sites, tender joint contracts and collaborate on procurement processes, ensuring that the interests of all parties are represented.

### **Training and general**

- Together with the Visitor Services Manager, lead training sessions for relevant team members to familiarise and refresh them with fire and evacuation procedures and the building's systems.
- Attend quarterly meetings of the Operations Working Group when required.



- Open and close the building as needed on the schedule as part of the Operations Team, be a key holder and ensure that at no point is the security or safety of the venue compromised when opening and locking up.

### **All team members are expected to**

- Champion and honour Polka's vision and values (you can find these on the previous pages).
- Maintain confidentiality and abide by Polka's policies and procedures.
- Follow Health and Safety rules at work.
- Follow Safeguarding rules and legislation.
- Actively ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is part of Polka's culture.
- Contribute to Polka's Environmental Action plan by thinking and working sustainably.
- Contribute towards Polka's fundraising goals, this may include research, writing applications, advocacy and managing relationships.
- Take part in operational teams to help share learning, find joint solutions and drive change.
- Participate in all training, development and wellbeing initiatives as required.
- Undertake any other duties as may be reasonably required.



### **Person Specification**

In your application, please make sure you show us how you would bring the following skills, knowledge and experience, that we are looking, for to this role. We

value the different experiences that people bring to a job role and will always look to provide opportunities for you to learn more about your job role and help you gain more experience working at Polka. There are some areas we have suggested are beneficial but not essential to have.

#### Essential:

1. Familiarity with statutory responsibilities in relation to the management of a public venue and practical hands-on experience of ongoing building maintenance
2. Demonstrable experience of managing or assisting with the management of a commercial building or public venue, it doesn't have to be within the theatre or arts industry although this would be desirable
3. Familiarity with building plant and systems, managing Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) schedules
4. Proven ability to organise projects and people, giving the attention required, within a set timeframe or by a deadline and within budget (managed by you).
5. Proven ability to write and speak eloquently in order to communicate concisely with people internally and manage/negotiate with contractors and suppliers externally to achieve best value and manage difficult conversations.
6. Ability to work well in a team and independently, dealing with a diverse range of people at all levels using diplomacy, discretion and patience.
7. Ability to use Microsoft Office: Outlook, Word, Excel, on a regular basis.

#### Desirable:

8. Proven knowledge of H&S legislation and procedures, including ideally Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER), Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) and IOSH Level 3 in H&S.
9. It is beneficial if you have practical skills in one or more of the following: electrical/technical, general repair and decorations, carpentry/joinery, plumbing, drainage, information technology.
10. The following qualifications/certifications are beneficial but if you've not got them or they've lapsed Polka will arrange and pay for them: IOSH Level 3, First Aid, Fire Marshal, Working at Height.
11. Experience in dealing with domestic tenants and managing the tenancy.

You will be required to have a valid [Disclosure and Barring \(DBS\) certificate](#) or be willing to undergo an enhanced DBS check (at Polka's expense) if a job offer is made subject to this being obtained.

## Contract Terms

This role is part time (3 or 4 days per week) and permanent. We will consider applications for flexible working and job-sharing so please let us know your preference for this in your application. It is normally based at Polka Theatre, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1SB.

**Job title** for this role is Building and Operations Manager. Your manager will be Head of Operations and Visitor Services. You will be responsible for building maintenance contractors. You will work closely with the Visitor Services Manager, Commercial and Hires Officer, Head of Production.

**Salary** is £29,000 to 32,000 per year pro rata, depending on experience (so 4 days per week would be £23,200 – 25,600, for example).

**Hours** you will need to work are 24 or 32 hours per week including a lunch break of 1 hour, worked over 3 or 4 days per week. You may need to work some additional hours, including evenings and weekends, and travel out of London when required (we operate a Time Off In Lieu, 'TOIL' system).

**Holiday** 28 days per year pro rata including bank/public holidays (after 1+ year of service an extra day per year, up to 5 extra days).

**Probationary period** your appointment is subject to satisfactorily completing a 3-month probation period. Your notice period during probation is 2 weeks for both you and Polka.

**Notice period** 2 months for both you and Polka.

## How to apply

**Deadline** 9.00am on Monday 9 June 2025

**Interview** 17 or 25 June 2025

**Ideal start date** 11 August 2025



Please complete and send the following to Woonie Chan at [woonie@polkatheatre.com](mailto:woonie@polkatheatre.com) or post it to them at Polka Theatre, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon SW19 1SB. Remember to include 'Building and Operations Manager' as your email subject line or on the envelope.



- Current CV and short cover letter telling us how you meet the Person Specification.
- If you would prefer, you are welcome to send us a short video or audio file (no longer than 5 mins), telling us about yourself, your current and previous job roles and/or work experience, as well as your knowledge, skills and experience.

Please also complete/send us:

- Privacy notice form – download it, as a Word document, from our [website](#)
- Complete our Equality Monitoring survey by visiting Survey Monkey website [Survey Monkey website](#)

The Equality Monitoring Survey is anonymous and is not sent to the person who receives your application. It helps us understand whether we are succeeding in promoting equality of opportunity and encouraging representation. It is completely separate from your application, and we do not connect the two.

Once you have sent us the documents above, by the deadline, we will let you know we have received your application.

## **Interview Process**

We will shortlist the applicants we would like to meet for an interview. Our shortlisters will be looking for you to have done the following:

- Sent us a completed application before the deadline.
- Clearly shown us how you share our values and the things we've mentioned in the 'What sort of people work for us?' section above.
- Given us examples of how you meet the points in the 'Person Specification' section above.
- Given us relevant information about your work history/experience and any training (remember to make sure to tell us about any gaps when you weren't working).

We will offer interviews to the applicants who have shown us these things most strongly.

All applicants will receive a response from us to confirm whether or not they have been selected for an interview. We aim to give at least half a weeks' notice ahead of the interview date.



Interviews will be held in person at Polka Theatre with Woonie Chan, Head of Operations & Visitor Services, and one other member of staff. Initial interviews can be arranged via Zoom if needed.

We will let you know if there is anything in particular that we need you to prepare in advance.

All applicants who attend an interview will be offered feedback. It is not possible for us to give individual feedback if you have not been selected for an interview.

Thank you very much for your interest in this role. We look forward to hearing from you.

