



**WF Traded
Services**

HUMAN RESOURCES



LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST

HR SPECIFICATION

SCHOOLS HUMAN RESOURCE SERVICES

1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021

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1. Overview of Service Specification

This Service Specification defines the standards of service for the following:

- HR Advice and Support
- HR Employee Relations
- Senior Leadership Recruitment
- Mediation
- Training and Development
- Contracts of employment
- Occupational Health Service
- Employee Assistance Programme

Schools will have access to senior HR team members, who take responsibility for monitoring the quality of service delivery and customer care.

It also specifies the standard pricing for some of the above. For non-standard priced services that have not yet been purchased, we will be delighted to provide you with a quote specific to your circumstances.

2. Service Delivery

Customer service standards are listed below:

2.1 On contact

- We will always be welcoming, helpful and polite at all times

2.2 Telephone Standards

- We will answer all calls, both internal and external, within 5 rings (approximately 20 seconds).
- We will greet callers – good morning/afternoon and give them our name and the service area.
- Ask “How can I help you?”

2.3 Use of Voicemail

We will avoid using answer phones, wherever possible. Where we have to use one, we will ensure that the answer phone messages are up to date i.e. say how long the person is unavailable and provide an alternative contact number. We will aim to respond to any messages received by the end of the next working day at the latest.

2.4 Email Standards

- We will acknowledge emails that require a response within 24 hours.
- We will send a full resolution to emails requiring a response within 5 working days. If the request is complicated and requires more time, we will advise that this is the case within the 5-day timescale.
- In sent emails we will provide a contact name, office address, email address and direct dial telephone number. We will use plain language
- Use a standard email format that will help to improve communication
- We do accept scanned and emailed documents providing they are sent from a recognised, official, email address.
- We will leave an out of office message where not available with an alternative contact

2.5 Letters

- We will acknowledge all letters requiring a response within 4 working days.
- We will send a full resolution to any letters requiring a response within 10 working days.
- If the request is complicated and requires more time, we will advise that this is the case within the 10-day timescale.

2.6 Face to face

- We will aim for customers (Head teachers, Governors and other management appointed representatives) to be seen by the right person by appointment within 3 working days.

3. Client Responsibility

- To ensure that a senior member of the HR team is informed as soon as possible, of any instance where you feel that the standard of service is less than satisfactory.
- To provide accurate and appropriate documentation and information on staffing and employment matters
- Prepare all documentation required for the completion of the service requests using the standard forms and procedures in force at the time.
- Nominate staff as contact points for each and every service to be provided. To specify any time limits or constraints that you are working to.
- To let us know of any change in circumstances that may affect work we are doing for you or advice we have given you.
- To ensure we are fully aware of all relevant facts when dealing with a staffing or employment issue.
- To give as much advance notice as possible when requesting the attendance of a HR representative at a hearing or governing body meeting (including consultation over date and time).
- To liaise with named Advisor to agree times and dates for appointments or attendance at meetings with staff that may be required to ensure availability is met.
- To ensure note takers are provided for all formal staffing meetings/hearings.

4. Service Specifications

SERVICES AVAILABLE AS PART OF THE CORE PACKAGE:

4.1 General

Written guidance prepared and distributed to Head teachers and chairs of governors on changes in;

- Employment law,
- The School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document,
- The Teaching Regulations,
- Other legislation or statutory instruments affecting employment conditions within schools, including changed requirements to contracts of employment.
- National and local conditions of service.
- Consulting with Teacher and Officer Trade Unions.
- Providing and updating model school policy and procedures.
- Giving advice to governing bodies, where the LA has the legal right to do so, in accordance with the relevant Education Acts.

This type of advice would cover:

- Teachers/LGPS Pensions Service.
- Facilitating the provision of estimates for redundancy, severance, premature retirement and efficiency retirement.
- Elements of the work involved in school closures, or amalgamations, transfer to academies (LA led initiatives).
- Strategic development, such as responses to national staffing strategies e.g. remodelling, extended schools, etc.
- Pre-employment checks:

Prohibition checks/list 99/DBS:

- Advising on positive DBS Disclosures.
- References.
- Medical Clearances.
- Asylum and Immigration Act.
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Activity;
- Maintaining HR element of intranet (The Hub) available to schools providing guidance and advice to schools and model policies, job descriptions and template letters etc.

Specialised advice on Employee Relations matters including:

- Discipline and Dismissal.
- Grievance and Collective Disputes.
- Organisational change.
- Capability.
- Ill Health/Attendance Management.
- Severance Payments.

4.2 Human Resources Advice and Support

- A termly HR newsletter, providing the latest information to changes within the education sector or employment matters.
- Updates and additions as necessary to the Schools HR page on intranet (The Hub).
- Advice and support on restructuring, reorganisation & staff surplus (redundancy), including attendance at meetings (subject to availability outside working hours).
- Advice and support on complex & sensitive employee relations issues.
- Attendance of HR staff when dealing with disciplinary, capability and grievance hearings/processes (subject to availability if outside standard working hours).
- HR support at employment tribunals (provided school has sought, and not acted contrary to, advice from the LA).
- Advice & support on the application & interpretation of local & national conditions of service and on employment law.
- Attendance of HR staff, by request (and if outside standard working hours, by availability), to advise governing body or its committees on HR matters.
- Advice and support from HR staff on child protection issues involving school staff.
- Advice on the drafting of correspondence relating to HR matters.
- Support to schools with employee relations issues, liaison with trade unions and professional associations.

4.3 HR Employee Relations Service

The team will provide a responsive and enabling service to assist schools in managing staffing/employment relations' matters. Many matters may be resolved informally or using early stages of appropriate procedures and advice from the HR team may be given by telephone or in person, as appropriate. The team offer advice and support in the following areas:

4.3.1 Discipline and Dismissal

- Informal and Formal procedure.
- Investigations, including tripartite investigations with Children's Services and the Police in cases involving child protection.
- Assisting with the preparation of case statements.
- Assisting in the presentation of cases to panels of governors; assistance with the presenting of cases at employment tribunals.
- Suspension of staff.
- Dealing with Trade Union or legal representatives.

4.3.2 Grievances and Collective Disputes

- Assisting in resolving problems informally (mediation is available at an additional cost).
- Advising on the informal and formal procedure.
- Assisting with the preparation of statements of case.
- Assisting in the presentation of cases to panels of governors.

4.3.3 Organisational Change

- Preparation for management of change (guidance on early retirement options, termination of contracts including non-renewal of contracts).
- Supporting and advising in consultations with staff and Trade Unions.
- Explanation and advice to managers on redundancy, redeployment and TUPE.
- Assisting with the preparation of proposals.
- Assisting in the presentation of cases to panels of governors.
- Presenting cases at employment tribunals.

4.3.4 Capability

- Advising managers on the Informal and formal process.
- Contact with trade union and legal representatives.
- Assisting with the preparation of statements of case.
- Assisting in the presentation of cases to panels of governors.
- Presenting cases at employment tribunals.

4.3.5 Ill Health/Sickness Management

- Advice on the referral to appropriate Medical Advisor.
- Identifying and supporting the preparation of an action plan in cases of unacceptable attendance records.
- Handling individual cases of concern/visiting absent employees.
- Advising managers on the formal process (using the Sickness Management policy).
- Assisting in the preparation of statements of case.
- Assisting in the presentation of cases to panels of governors.
- Presenting cases at employment tribunals.
- Explanation and advice to managers regarding ill health retirements.

4.3.7 Processing Job Evaluation Requests

- To undertake requests for job evaluation within 10 working days of receipt of all necessary information

4.3.8 Recruitment and advertising

- To give advice on employment law, good practice and equality/diversity in recruitment.
- To provide advice and guidance on filling vacancies.
- To provide advice on the drafting and placing of advertisements.
- To provide advice and assistance on the preparation of job descriptions and person specifications within 5 working days of any request. Advice on the appropriate grading of staff, including the job evaluation of support staff in accordance with the Council's job evaluation scheme.

4.3.9 Organisational Development

The Head of Schools HR Service or appointed representative is available to work with Governors, Head teachers and senior school staff to help achieve business objectives and change.

They will work in partnership with the school leadership and collaborate with Council managers and HR services to:

- proactively identify areas where HR can add value and ensure effective solutions.
- support delivery of leadership development and succession planning, change management, organisational development.

The HR Service will operate as a critical friend by adopting a business focused approach to HR issues and recommend appropriate solutions to your changing priorities.

5 Additional Separately Charged Services

5.1 Senior Leadership Recruitment

Recruiting for the Senior Leadership team is one of the most important tasks a governing body will undertake. Appointing high-quality Head teachers and Senior Leaders to lead teaching and learning in schools is something under the direct control of governors that positively affects school improvement.

We can provide you with the right support and guidance to ensure that you follow the correct procedures in line with legislation and the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document.

This support package could include:

- Advising the school on statutory requirements, where appropriate, on recruiting Head teachers and other members of leadership team.
- Advice on design and format job descriptions and person specifications.
- Assistance with the placement of job advertisements, advising on sample text, effective media, publications dates and deadlines in line with resignation dates etc.
- Support with ensuring compliance with recruitment and equalities legislation.
- Helping you establish appropriate shortlisting criteria and a sifting process.
- Agreeing with you, appropriate assessment exercises and interview questions (led by governors' knowledge of the school and its challenges).
- Producing the relevant paperwork to support the selection process and ensuring this is kept as a safe and secure record.
- Liaising with the designated School Improvement Consultant and senior Local Authority or Trust representatives during the process.
- Administering the recruitment process, including provision of application packs to candidates and provision of completed application materials to governing bodies. Support to governing bodies during the recruitment process.

5.2 Mediation

Mediation is a form of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Mediation is fast and cost effective. Most issues are resolved in a day. Mediation is successful in over 90% of the cases.

Benefits of Workplace Mediation;

- Avoid being involved in decision making that can lead to a conflict of interest
- Having a professionally trained person to help parties solve their differences of opinion.
- Bringing an objective new perspective to parties' problem.
- Presenting solutions that avoids litigation or arbitration.
- Saving management / Human Resources time.
- Reducing management stress and costs.
- Retain skilled staff.

Mediation is an effective method for addressing a variety of work-related matters, including:

- Unresolved issues with an individual, project team or management group.
- A conflict that is just not getting solved and is sapping energy from the organisation.
- Unusual or high employee turnover in the workplace.
- Lack of agreement between manager and employee or manager to manager.

5.3 Training and Development

We can offer a range of bespoke training events on HR and employment related issues:

- Absence Management, Disciplinary etc.
- Employment Law updates.
- Safer Recruitment.
- Governor training.

If you have any training requirements, then we will be happy to discuss and devise a training package to suit the needs of your school.

5.4 Employment Contracts

While our expectation is that schools will have appropriate Human Resource administrative arrangements in place for the issuing of employment contracts and will not need a full service from the Council, these can be provided for Schools at an additional cost.

5.5 Occupational Health Service

The service

The Council's Occupational Health Service (OHS) is currently provided by Medigold who have clinics in Stratford, Romford and other locations.

In terms of our Occupational Health Service, which is there to assist the School in managing the health and well-being of its staff, the provision that is on offer includes:

- Pre-employment medical questionnaires – to assist schools in ensuring that successful candidates are fit to perform the duties they have been employed for.
- Occupational Health referrals - where a member of staff's absence/health is causing you concern and you would like professional advice.
- Workplace assessments - advice on workplace adjustments, either on a temporary or permanent basis depending on requirements:
- Vaccinations - such as seasonal flu, hepatitis B, hepatitis A and tetanus are available for employees considered at risk of exposure (at a charge to the school).
- Wellbeing - blood Pressure & BMI checks and advice.

5.6 Employee Assistance Programme

The purpose of the Employee Assistance Service is to provide practical information, resources and counselling to help staff balance their work, family, and personal life. This service is also currently provided by Medigold. Areas covered include but are not limited to the following:

- Work-life balance, Careers, Anxiety and Depression
- Relationships, Bereavement and Loss
- Family issues
- Child care, Stress, Bullying and Harassment
- Health and well-being, Elder care, Education
- Debt, Life events. Consumer Rights
- Disability and Illness, Immigration, Workplace pressure

Our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) service provides confidential assistance with any work, personal, or family issue. The programme can save you time and legwork by searching for services in your local area, such as child care and elder care providers.

6 Customer Feedback

We will routinely use customer feedback to inform service development. We will seek your views using a combination of the following methods:

- Annual satisfaction survey
- Complaints, compliments and comments;
- Evaluation of specific events or interventions;
- Specific user, partnership and focus groups.

Appendix 1 - Generic Charging Information

HR Employee Relations Service and HR, Admin & Payroll Support Service package

The method for calculating the cost of the service offer is based upon the elements of general service support that the School has indicated a need for. The quotation for your school will be provided to you separately.

Pay as you use services

Senior Leadership recruitment –	Price on application
Mediation –	£100 per hour
Job Evaluations	£75 per evaluation
Employment Contracts	£515.00 per annum £25.00 per contract

NQT support - The Service Provider will offer additional services on a quotation basis in response to a written statement of requirements from the Client including;

- External quality assurance which includes: lesson observations, feedback, a written report, discussion with NQT, Induction tutor and Head teacher/Principal regarding their support programme,
- NQT training programme (CPD),
- Monitoring and support for NQT at risk of failing

Occupational Health – schools and academies are invited to subscribe to this separately on a per pupil basis.

Employee Assistance Programme – schools and academies are invited to subscribe to this separately on a per pupil basis.

Appendix 2 - Contact Information for HR Employee Relations,

HR EMPLOYEE RELATIONS SERVICE	
Our address:	Schools HR Team 3 rd Floor Sycamore House Forest Road Walthamstow E17 4JF
Key Contacts:	
Gerry Kemble, Head of WF Traded Services	0208 496 4300
Donna Carby, Senior HR Advisor	0208 496 4909
Carlene Reid, Senior HR Advisor	0208 496 1383
Louise Constantine, Project Officer	0208 496 4430
Sylvia Harper, NQT Co-ordinator	0208 496 3414
Schools HR helpdesk	020 8496 4430
Email: SchoolsHR.helpdesk@walthamforest.gov.uk or firstname.surname@walthamforest.gov.uk	