

Human Resources Advice

TfC Services to Schools: 2019/2020

Our dedicated Schools Team is proven in delivering HR advice and support services to Schools across the North East. Experts in School Teachers terms and conditions of service, we know and understand your service needs and the complexities of the school environment. That's why all of our existing customers are satisfied with our HR service.



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"The support and advice that I have been given in my first year as a Head Teacher has been amazing, not once have I felt alone and never have I felt too stupid to ask a question. The support I have had from my HR advisor has been first rate and I really do value the job that she does."

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Why choose TFC HR?

We understand Schools

Much like your commitment to the standards you set for yourself in delivering teaching excellence; 'Together for Children' is all about making a difference to the lives of children and families by thinking progressively and in a different way.

In the last 10 years our dedicated schools team has adapted and refocused its provision to keep up with the pace of change within the education sector and the additional challenges that this brings to our customers. We will help you make practical business decisions with a full consideration of the legal framework; thus affording you the protection and assurance of being able to focus on your core business needs.

Given the unique nature of the education setting, we appreciate that you may experience the full and complex range of HR and staffing issues. We are not fazed by this; it's what we do and we are delighted that you are considering our service provision.

We understand your HR needs

All the professionals within our team have a detailed knowledge of various terms and conditions of employment and possess a thorough knowledge of employment law and the appropriate Staffing and Governance Regulations applicable to schools and academies. As qualified members of CIPD we all have access to and fully utilise a range of specialist tools and resources.

Our termly HR updates provide our customers with everything you need to know regarding the impact of any statutory or legislative changes impacting the school and academy workforce and any resulting change to our HR policy framework.

Our offer



Our dedicated Schools Team offer you a package of support, tailored to your specific requirements.



'Not for profit' we are competitively priced.



Qualified and experienced team with over 60 years working with Teachers/Business Support terms and conditions.



Your allocated CIPD qualified Adviser will provide safe, responsive and expert advice.



Passionate about improving the outcomes for children across the region.



Supporting Headteachers/Governors/Directors and Senior Management

Whilst we already work with a number of schools, academies and Trusts, we appreciate that no one governance infrastructure is the same. We will work with you, your Board of Governors/Directors and Senior Management Team in providing expert but sensible and pragmatic HR advice and support across the full range of HR issues.

Our friendly, professional, experienced and knowledgeable team is regularly praised by our existing School and Academy customers for the level of commitment and support they demonstrate to ongoing casework. We understand the need to build individual relationships with your HR Advisers and allocate designated contacts for this very reason.

We will work with you through the most complex of workforce cases, offering advice, assistance, support and flexibility.

Always acting proactively and providing a supportive approach

We welcome new customers by holding an introductory meeting. The primary focus of this is to make introductions to designated advisors, provide an overview of our company ethos and familiarise ourselves with your expectations and policy framework. This is the initial step in what will be a long and supportive journey.

We publish Termly Updates to customers providing you with updates on up and coming employment law changes, strategies impacting upon the school and academy workforce and any changes impacting Company services. We understand that you may have your own policy framework but we will ensure that this is reflective of the changing employment law agenda.

We will always welcome a face-to-face meeting with you and encourage an annual review meeting to discuss delivery of services to the School.

Where feasible we will always try and encourage informal resolution of workforce issues in the first instance but our expert advisers are also on hand to advise you on the application of formal procedures as-and-when the need arises.

What do our customers say?



“I would recommend the service to anyone and admire all within it as they are all knowledgeable and highly professional individuals. I'd have been lost without the team this year and due to their diligence and support I have been able to get through some of the toughest challenges that a head could face! Thank you - sign me up again!!”



“Your support positively impacts on my Headteacher well-being and the well-being of my colleagues.”



“I have had many complex and long running staffing issues this year. I feel that I have been fully supported through each case. Thanks”.

Accountable, flexible and reliable services

We operate customer care principles, central to which is the requirement for a responsive service. You will have a direct line to a named Adviser(s) who will be responsible for supporting you.

HR will be contactable between the hours of:

- i. Monday to Thursday: 8:30 am – 5 pm
- ii. Friday: 8:30 am – 4:45 pm

(Except Bank Holidays)

All telephone enquiries received will be directed to your nominated contact. Correspondence will be acknowledged within 3 working days and contact/response provided within 7 working days (or a holding letter issued if further investigation required). All emails directed to your nominated contact will be acknowledged within these timeframes.

We know the nature of our work is often driven by unpredictable and unforeseen events, which is why we operate duty arrangements to ensure that your designated contact (or an alternative if they are out of the office on casework) is available to respond; there will always be someone here to help you.

We often work outside of the standard working day ensuring attendance and assistance in decision making at your Board of Governors/Directors meeting and/or the respective sub-committees that sit underneath this. We are available for meetings outside of the school day as we understand that Headteachers and your Board members cannot always be available in the working day.

Our advice is consistent and fully compliant with updated employment law; providing a service that you can fully trust and rely upon.

We operate a robust supervision and appraisal scheme; colleagues receive regular 1:1 meetings and group supervisions for input on complex casework. The progress of individual cases is tracked and performance continually monitored.



"Attendance management support and advice has improved staff attendance."



"Regular and prompt advice on difficult staffing issues."



"Excellent support through a very difficult redundancy process- staff goodwill and relationships were maintained."



"Support and guidance offered through capability procedures and sickness review proved invaluable to the school."



Our Clients

We currently provide services to 80 schools, academies, and trusts across the region.

Our service extends across Special Educational needs provision, Primary, Secondary, Pupil Referral Units and Nursery provision.

We have a positive record of successfully retaining SLAs with schools and academies which is built on a reputation for providing value for money and excellent customer service along with proven knowledge and experience of the school workforce.



The HR Team

Angela Bremner – HR Manager

Angela has a Master's Degree in Human Resource Management since 2001 and is a Chartered member of the CIPD. Angela has managed services to schools and academies for the last 11 years and has spent a further seven in the provision of services to the Social Care and Children's workforce. She is delighted to be leading the delivery of services to schools at Together for Children; helped by a fantastic team of experienced and qualified Advice colleagues.

Angela led on a number of early academy conversions, managing the accompanying transfer out of staff and advising schools on all complex employee relations issues associated with this. Angela has always worked to educate and train colleagues on the unique environment in which you work; ensuring that appropriate advice is provided but also respecting the autonomous nature of your structure.

Angela has delivered safeguarding training to over 200 head teachers and retains a keen interest in the safeguarding agenda in schools. Likewise she maintains a positive relationship with teaching and non-teaching trade unions having managed a number of trade disputes and chaired the Teaching Trade Union Secretaries meeting. Angela has led on countless organisational structures; some involving up to 2000 staff and has previously integrated services as part of the workforce transformation agenda. With a keen eye for performance monitoring; Angela is always looking to improve upon systems and processes of ultimate benefit to our customers.

An experienced manager, Angela knows the importance of supporting the team in managing their casework and ensuring that the needs of our customers are met expediently and efficiently, with the protection you need. We are very proud that our customer base is made up of schools and academies that have left but since returned to us; a testament to the reliability of our service provision.

Angela's role with your Trust will be to manage the dedicated School's Team in the provision of expert HR advice to your MAT. Angela will act as your Account Manager, offering opportunities to meet and review service levels, ensuring that quality is always maintained.

Diane Henderson – Assistant HR Manager

Diane has held a Masters Degree in Human Resource Management since 2007 and is an Associate member of the CIPD.

Diane directly manages our team of HR Advisers and our HR support function, and has provided HR advice within the education sector for the last 15 years. Diane is committed to ensuring that you receive high quality advice and that we meet, and exceed, your customer expectations. Diane carries out regular supervisions with the team to ensure that advice is consistent, appropriate to the needs of your school, and timely.

Diane is particularly specialised in respect of education law and the requirements of the STPCD, and has developed robust Model Pay Policies for schools and academies. Diane regularly deals with more complex issues and has successfully supported senior leaders to manage cases in line with various HR policies, including disciplinary, capability, grievance, attendance, whistle blowing etc. Diane is adept in dealing with the management of organisational change, and has supported numerous schools and Academies through the process of redundancy and/or restructure.

Diane has confidently delivered HR training sessions to school senior leaders to assist schools and academies to manage the full and complex range of HR issues that may be faced working within education.

Diane attends regular meetings of North East Regional HR officers to share good practice and gain updates, advice and guidance from the Local Government Association and NEREO.

Diane values the strong relationships she has developed with Headteachers and senior leaders, and looks forward to working with you to achieve a positive impact on the attainment of your children and young people, and the overall performance of your schools.

Diane's role with your Trust will be to support your designated HR Officer within our School's Team in the provision of expert HR advice and support to your MAT.

Gavin Duncan – Senior HR Adviser

Gavin is an Associate member of the CIPD and a Chartered Member of the CMI.

Gavin is an experienced human resources professional who has worked within the field for 18 years. Throughout this period he has supported a number of local authority functions across a wide variety of HR related matters. In recent years Gavin has focused on the provision of HR advice and support to schools and academies and has specialised in education law and the requirements of the STPCD, Burgundy Book, Green Book and local terms and conditions of employment.

Gavin is the dedicated HR officer for a number of primary and secondary schools as well as various Multi Academy Trusts across Sunderland. Gavin is proficient in supporting schools and academies with managing a broad range of HR related matters including conduct and disciplinary issues, capability, grievance, harassment, redundancy, school reorganisations, TUPE transfers and issues of a safeguarding nature, including attending strategy meetings with the Local Authority Designated Officer. Gavin also regularly supports school and academies with more complex cases such as complaints against senior leaders, industrial disputes and TUPE related matters including the provision of specific advice regarding academy conversions. He is also experienced in working within and supporting highly unionised environments.

Gavin is adept in matters relating to safer recruitment and has successfully delivered safer recruitment training to schools and academies as part of our wider training programme.

Gavin is committed to continuous professional development and ensures that he remains up to date with changes to employment law and HR best practice. He regularly attends external and internal group meetings and can lead discussions confidently.

Gavin is able to form solid working relationships and values those he has developed with all stakeholders. He aims to build on these relationships for the benefit of each individual school and Academy.

Gavin's role will be to support your designated HR Officer within our School's Team in the provision of expert HR advice to your Trust and looks forward to working with you to achieve a positive impact in your schools.

Amanda Hoggett – Senior HR Adviser

Amanda has held a Degree in Business and Human Resource Management since 2004 and is an Associate member of the CIPD.

Amanda's role has involved the provision of HR advice and support to schools and Academies for the last 14 years. Amanda is an expert in areas such as job evaluation and whole school restructures.

Amanda is the dedicated HR officer for a number of nursery, primary, secondary schools and MATs across the city of Sunderland. Amanda is highly skilled in dealing with a broad range of HR issues including attendance management, disciplinary, capability, grievance, harassment, redundancy, staffing reorganisations, TUPE transfers and issues of a safeguarding nature. Due to Amanda's level of experience, she regularly deals with more complex cases.

Amanda has excellent links with regional HR officers, attends group meetings and keeps up to date with good practice across the North East. Amanda keeps abreast of updates issued by the Local Government Association and NEREO to ensure her practice is always up to date.

Amanda is passionate and dedicated in supporting Headteachers and Senior Leaders in schools and academies and understands how her role makes a difference to the lives of the children within the schools she supports.

Amanda's role with your Trust will be to support your designated HR Officer within our School's Team in the provision of expert HR advice and support to your MAT.

Stephen Hoggett – Senior HR Adviser

Stephen is a fully qualified HR Adviser, having gained a Postgraduate Diploma in Human Resources Management in 2011. Stephen is an active Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD).

Stephen has worked within the HR function for 12 years and is currently the nominated HR contact for a number of schools, and academy trusts. During this period Stephen has gained a wealth of experience working closely with Headteacher's, governing boards, trade union representatives, employees and outside agencies.

Stephen is experienced in attending a wide remit of HR meetings in school including attendance review meetings, capability meetings, Governing Board/Personnel Committee Meetings.

Stephen is proficient in responding to a wide range of queries in respect of attendance management, disciplinary/grievance cases, work performance issues, Occupational Health, sick pay, contracts, DBS, redundancies, single status, child protection/safer recruitment, TUPE transfers.

A dedicated professional, Stephen has extensive experience in rolling out HR policies and procedures in a consistent and fair manner. He has a proven ability to support a HR Department by providing accurate, professional advice and guidance to management in accordance with employment law.

Stephen has excellent written and oral communication skills and is able to deal with difficult situations sensitively and effectively. He has extensive experience of working in customer focused organisations and fully understands the importance of maintaining excellent customer service at all times.

Susan Holmes – Senior HR Adviser

Susan is a fully qualified HR Adviser and has held a CIPD qualification since 2003 and is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD).

Susan's role has involved HR advice and support to the Careers Service and Sunderland City Council including Directorate, Local Authority Trading Companies, Schools and Academies for the last 18 years.

Previously to this Susan has worked as a Business Manager for the Careers Service. Susan has specialised in all aspects of employment law and provides HR advice for guidance to schools and academies.

Susan is the HR Adviser for a number of nursery, primary schools and MATs across the city of Sunderland following policies and procedures to provide support to Headteachers in attendance management, capability, disciplinary, grievance, redundancy and staffing restructures, harassment and safeguarding issues.

Susan has a good working relationship with Headteachers and their Senior Leaders, Governing Boards and their personnel committees, trade union representatives and employees. Susan is proficient in dealing with issues relating to sickness meetings, grievance and disciplinary meetings, capability meetings, child protection strategies with multi organisations, TUPE transfers, redundancy and staff reorganisation meetings and was involved in a Job Evaluation project across the Directorate, Schools and MAT's.

Susan has extensive skills and ability to provide consistent accurate advice and guidance using written and oral communication skills in a confidential and sensitive manner to provide an excellent customer service to support your MAT.

Leanne Questa – Senior HR Adviser

Leanne has a Degree in Business and HR Management and has been an Associate member of CIPD since 2006.

Leanne started her HR experience within the corporate centre of a Local Authority. She was required to provide HR and Advice to a variety of operational areas and specialised in employee relations. She was required to be the HR lead for various improvement programmes as well as assist with policy development and other corporate initiatives. Leanne has been involved in the provision of HR advice and support specifically to schools and Academies for the last 8 years.

Leanne has vast experience in advising managers on how to apply employment law and practice in real situations following employment policies and has experience with working in situations where joint working with other professionals is required. As Leanne has experience of working with all areas within a Local Authority she is particularly able to adapt well to the situation she is working in.

She has attended many Committee meetings with Elected members and more recently Governing Board meetings. In doing so she has demonstrated that she has good subject knowledge and can adapt her explanation of the advice to suit the audience.

Leanne currently looks after a mixture of nursery, primary, special and secondary schools of various sizes some of which are maintained and some are academies. She is able to deal with a broad range of HR issues including Attendance management, disciplinary, capability, grievance, harassment, redundancy, staffing reorganisations, TUPE transfers and issues of a safeguarding nature.

Due to her level of experience Leanne is also able to support less experienced members of the team. Leanne has undertaken leadership training to team leader level and regularly applies the skills developed through this training within the team.

Leanne has attended Regional and internal HR working groups and can lead discussions confidently. She is able to form good working relationships with all stakeholders to ensure that the HR needs of each individual establishment are met.

Our Service offer to you

We know that budget pressures play a part in the selection of your HR Service offer. Just like you, we are a not-for-profit organisation with a passion for maximizing our resources to keep the School, its staff and children safe.

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We also know the importance of forecasting your SLA spend which is why we have designed a pricing structure that is transparent with no hidden costs. It is also flexible and adaptable to your unique school environment.

Core Service

We provide specialist, professional advice and guidance on the following:

- ✓ Employment legislation;
- ✓ Terms and conditions of employment including the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, 'burgundy' book and 'green' book;
- ✓ Application of your employment policies;
- ✓ Salary, pay progression and grading;
- ✓ Safer recruitment and the Single Central Record;
- ✓ Pay Policy application and pay appeals;
- ✓ HR and employment aspects of academy conversion and TUPE transfer;
- ✓ Trade union consultation;
- ✓ Provision of information, advice and support to prepare and appear at Employment Tribunals and court cases*

We will support you to manage your HR issues through the provision of information, advice and guidance, attendance at formal meetings (in line with TfC HR Advice model policies and procedures**) and quality assurance of investigative reports in respect of:

- ✓ Attendance issues, including support in writing referrals to Occupational Health;
- ✓ Disciplinary allegations;
- ✓ Grievance claims;
- ✓ Capability/Performance Issues;
- ✓ Allegations of abuse;
- ✓ Organisational change, including staffing restructures and redundancies.

We provide model policies and procedures in relation to:

- ✓ Appraisal Policy for Teachers
- ✓ Attendance Management
- ✓ Capability Policy for Support Staff
- ✓ Capability Policy for Teachers
- ✓ Code of Conduct
- ✓ Disciplinary
- ✓ Flexible Working
- ✓ Grievance
- ✓ Leave of Absence
- ✓ Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff
- ✓ Maternity / Adoption Rights
- ✓ Organisational Change
- ✓ Recruitment
- ✓ Teachers' Pay policy, reflective of any changes to the STPCD
- ✓ Whistleblowing

These policies are reviewed regularly and updated in line with current good practice and legislation.

Support is provided over the telephone, via email or face to face. The core service includes attendance at formal meetings only, in line with TfC HR Advice model policies and procedures**. This includes the provision of an Adviser to support with formal investigations, and an alternative impartial Adviser to attend and support at the hearing stage. **Please note that if you require the Adviser who supported at the investigative stage/hearing stage to attend any subsequent hearing, a separate charge will be incurred.**

*Legal costs may be included within the Legal SLA but clarification will be required based on each individual case. (Barrister fees will be passed onto you at cost).

**Attendance at meetings outside of our model policies and procedures may incur an additional charge, based on our daily rate.

Enhanced Service

This includes all of the services offered within the 'Core Service' plus a package of additional support.

- ✓ Quality assurance of your Single Central Record (SCR);
- ✓ Note-taking and production of typed notes following formal meetings;
- ✓ HR support for Investigating Officer at a hearing involving complex cases;
- ✓ Attendance at individual consultation meetings and selection interviews during redundancy process;
- ✓ Provision of redundancy estimates.

Please note that we reserve the right to charge an additional fee to those schools / academies buying the core or enhanced service where intensive HR support is required, for example, with complex industrial disputes.

HR Expert

This service is specifically for schools, academies and Trusts who have an in-house HR professional. We can provide a sounding board and can provide additional capacity when you need it. This is a bespoke service in line with your requirements and could include a range of options, including impartial support with the later stages of complex cases, or reviewing/developing HR policies that suit your needs. The price for this service will be subject to negotiation, based on a daily rate of £350.

Pay As You Go

In addition to our core and enhanced services, we can also provide the following services on a 'pay as you go' basis, based on a daily rate of £350.

- ✓ Mediation
- ✓ Pay and Grading Review
- ✓ Strategic Leadership Management
- ✓ Senior Staffing Appointments
- ✓ Independent Investigating Officer
- ✓ Support with complex industrial disputes
- ✓ Policy development based on your individual needs
- ✓ Policies and Procedures specific to your school/academy/trust
- ✓ Recruitment Panel Support
- ✓ Attendance of HR to support Investigating Officer at a hearing or attendance of HR to support Hearing Officer at an appeal hearing.

For more information regarding the 'Pay as you go' services, please contact Angela, Diane, or your designated HR contact.

Training for Directors, Heads of Service and Senior Staff

In addition our team of specialist advisers can offer bespoke training on managing sickness absence, the investigation of allegations (disciplinary/safeguarding), safer recruitment and the management of performance. Dependent upon your requirements we would very much like to work with you to build a programme of support tailored to your school needs.

The price for additional bespoke training would be outside of your standard package and charged according to a daily rate, plus venue costs etc.

Our costs

Our inclusive 'core' offer is offered for a 12 month period from 01/09/2019 to 31/08/2020.

Schools choosing to buy the 'enhanced' offer will be charged an additional flat fee on top of the 'core' offer. Please contact Angela or Diane for further details.

Data Processor

In order to deliver the HR service specified in this service level agreement we will act as Data Processor, collecting and using personal information in respect of your prospective employees, employees, former employees and volunteers, in compliance with General Data Protection Regulation requirements. By signing up to this service level agreement, schools and academies have given consent for TfC HR to act as Data Processor.

Services to Schools and Academies Account Managers:
Angela Bremner (MA, HRM, CIPD)
HR Manager

angela.bremner@togetherforchildren.org.uk
0191 561 7557

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Diane Henderson (BA Hons, MSc HRM, CIPD)
Assistant HR Manager(Schools Team)

diane.henderson@togetherforchildren.org.uk
0191 561 1371

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We look forward to working with you!

Please contact Angela or Diane for more information; we welcome a face-to-face, email or telephone call to clarify any aspect of our service offer.



putting
the child first