



Trust our knowledge and expertise

Introduction

Welcome to 2019!

I suspect by now that the Christmas break is starting to fade into the distance, and your focus is much more on the task ahead and all that needs to be done in the coming months to support children and young people to become the best that they can be.

The role of staff in making this happen is vital, and our role is to support you to create the right environment for managing staff well – ensuring you have the right people management policies and interventions in place, as well as advising you when difficult staffing situations arise.

The broader legal context means that all this must happen within the context of employment law and the various government initiatives that impact on the workplace.

We have seen an increasing discussion about mental health and wellbeing across society and within the workplace. Wellbeing in the workplace can have a positive impact on retention: in education there has been a focus on the link between wellbeing and workload and the DfE has been providing guidance and support for schools in this area.

This term many schools start to think about recruitment for the next academic year. We have our annual recruitment fair on 2 February to support Croydon schools and to raise the profile of Croydon as a place to build a teaching career.

As well as attracting applicants, recruitment involves selecting the right person for the role. Over the term we will be running two complementary courses to support you with this – Safer Recruitment on 31 January and Recruitment and Selection on 28 February. Safer Recruitment is focussed on the safeguarding aspects of recruitment whereas Recruitment and Selection takes a much more detailed look at the use of various selection techniques including formulating interview questions to suit your selection criteria.

We look forward to working with you over the coming term – whether it is via one of our HR contracts, on an ad hoc basis or at our training sessions.

The HR team

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Apprenticeships

The government introduced the new apprenticeship scheme nearly two years ago. It is not just for people who are starting out on a career, but can also be used to provide accredited development opportunities for existing staff – for example you may have a TA at your school who wants to become a teacher and could follow the teaching apprenticeship route, or you may have a senior leader who wants to undertake a masters as part of an educational leadership apprenticeship.

Many schools are already having to pay the apprenticeship levy anyway, and while the levy only covers training costs (and not salary costs) the overall cost to the school is reduced if you use apprenticeship programmes for existing staff.

While we recognise this type of training may not suit everyone, it may suit some people.

Community schools all pay their levy via the Council and have to make applications for funding to the Council. There is a new lead at the Council who can support you make use of the money you are already paying for apprenticeship programmes – he is Kwabena Kimathi, Kwabena.Kimathi@croydon.gov.uk.

Academies, multi-Academy Trusts, VA and Foundation schools only pay the apprenticeship levy if their annual pay bill is over £3 million. However, all schools and academies can access apprenticeships whether or not they pay the levy. Your HR Consultant can provide you with more information.

More general information about apprenticeships can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work> and specific guidance for schools <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-apprenticeships-for-the-school-workforce>

Payslips

In April 2019, there are going to be new legislative requirements about information on payslips. In particular this relates to those who do not work the same number of hours each week. For the vast majority of roles in schools this will not be applicable. However, if you have staff who are likely to work irregular hours then you need to speak to your payroll provider to ensure that they are going to be ready for the changes.

More information can be found at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/764576/payslips-legislation-april-2019-additional-info-on-payslips.pdf#page=7.

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Wellbeing and teacher workload

The government has been focussing on ways to support schools to manage workload as part of its focus on wellbeing. It is also linked to the numbers of teachers leaving the profession nationally and the reasons they give for leaving.

At the end of July 2018 the government issued a workload reduction toolkit, and this has been followed by a report from the workload advisory group -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-workload-advisory-group-report-and-government-response>

The work supports both the wellbeing and retention agendas, and should encourage dialogue about effective ways of working.

Appraisal

Effective appraisal is dependent on the quality of the appraisal discussions that take place. It works best when the conversation is a two-way process with both manager and employee reflecting on progress and development needs. Regular meetings and a mid-year review in addition to the year-end appraisal meeting provide an enabling framework for this process. When it works really well there will be proactive analysis about interventions and teaching and the impact this is having on pupil progress and individual pupil needs.

Because effective appraisal is a two-way process, supporting the whole staff (and not just the managers who conduct appraisals) to understand how best to prepare for, and engage in, the dialogue is important. Your HR provider may be able to provide guidance about how best to do this, for example Octavo HR can provide a bite size briefing session to staff or prompts to encourage preparation and discussion.

Last term the Council informed community schools that with effect from 1 April 2019 incremental progression would no longer be linked to performance. This means that incremental progression in April of each year will apply as follows:

- Employees will be eligible for an increment if they have headroom in their grade, have been in post for at least six months and have successfully completed their probation.
- Employees who meet the above criteria but were appointed between 1 October and 31 March, become eligible for their increment after six months in post.

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Development

Managing people is always challenging, and we run a number of courses to enable you to do this effectively. They provide an opportunity to reflect on the legislative context for employment, look at policies and the approach you take to handling issues as they arise.

We can run bespoke training sessions across all HR matters, and can also deliver sessions for whole staff groups to ensure there is a consistent understanding of process e.g. sickness absence, appraisal, discretionary leave.

The next courses we have coming up as part of our central programme are:

31 January 2019 – Safer Recruitment (09.30 -16.30)

28 February 2019 – Recruitment and Selection (09.30 -12.30)

14 March 2019 – Disciplinary Processes and Investigation Skills (09.30 – 12.30)

9 May 2019 – Essential People Management Skills for Line Managers, module 1 – (09.30 – 12.30)

9 May 2019 – Essential People Management Skills for Line Managers, module 2 – (13.00 – 16.00)

Recruitment Fair: 2 February, Croydon Park Hotel

On Saturday, 2 February we will be hosting Croydon Schools' teacher recruitment fair at the Croydon Park Hotel from 10am until 1pm.

This is our chance to promote Croydon as a place to teach, with banners across the borough featuring the fair, national and local online advertising since 1 December, and print adverts in local publications from early January. In addition, working alongside our intensive advertising campaign are visits to university recruitment fairs, use of social media and promotion through Croydon websites, job boards and other online media..

Please can you promote the event within your school community – for ideas about how to do this contact Christine Lonsdale, christine.lonsdale@octavopartnership.org . Christine can let you have flyers about the event and links for your website.

The more widely we can advertise, the more contacts we can make, and the more we can increase interest in our Borough and the jobs available in our schools.

Coming Soon

The Employment Rights (Employment Particulars and Paid Annual Leave (Amendment)) Regulations 2018

These regulations are due to come into force on 6 April 2019 (and take effect in April 2020) which will implement parts of the government's Good Work Plan such as the right to be provided with a

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written statement of terms **on day one** (rather than within two months as it is currently). It will also increase the minimum amount of information a written statement must contain.

Obviously, this could potentially have a big impact on schools, with each school having to be in a position to prepare a written statement to each new member of staff in readiness for their first day of work, rather than relying upon the contract of employment, which are not always available on an employee's first day. However, no information on what the new minimum will be has yet been issued, therefore please watch this space.

The new regulations will also introduce a change to the reference period for determining an average week's pay, for the purposes of calculating statutory holiday pay for workers that have no normal working hours (i.e. casuals etc.) from **12 weeks to 52 weeks**. For schools that use the template contracts produced by Octavo/Croydon Council this will be automatically amended by us and you need not do anything. However, if you produce your own contracts then you will need to be aware of this impending change and take steps to be prepared for the change.

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