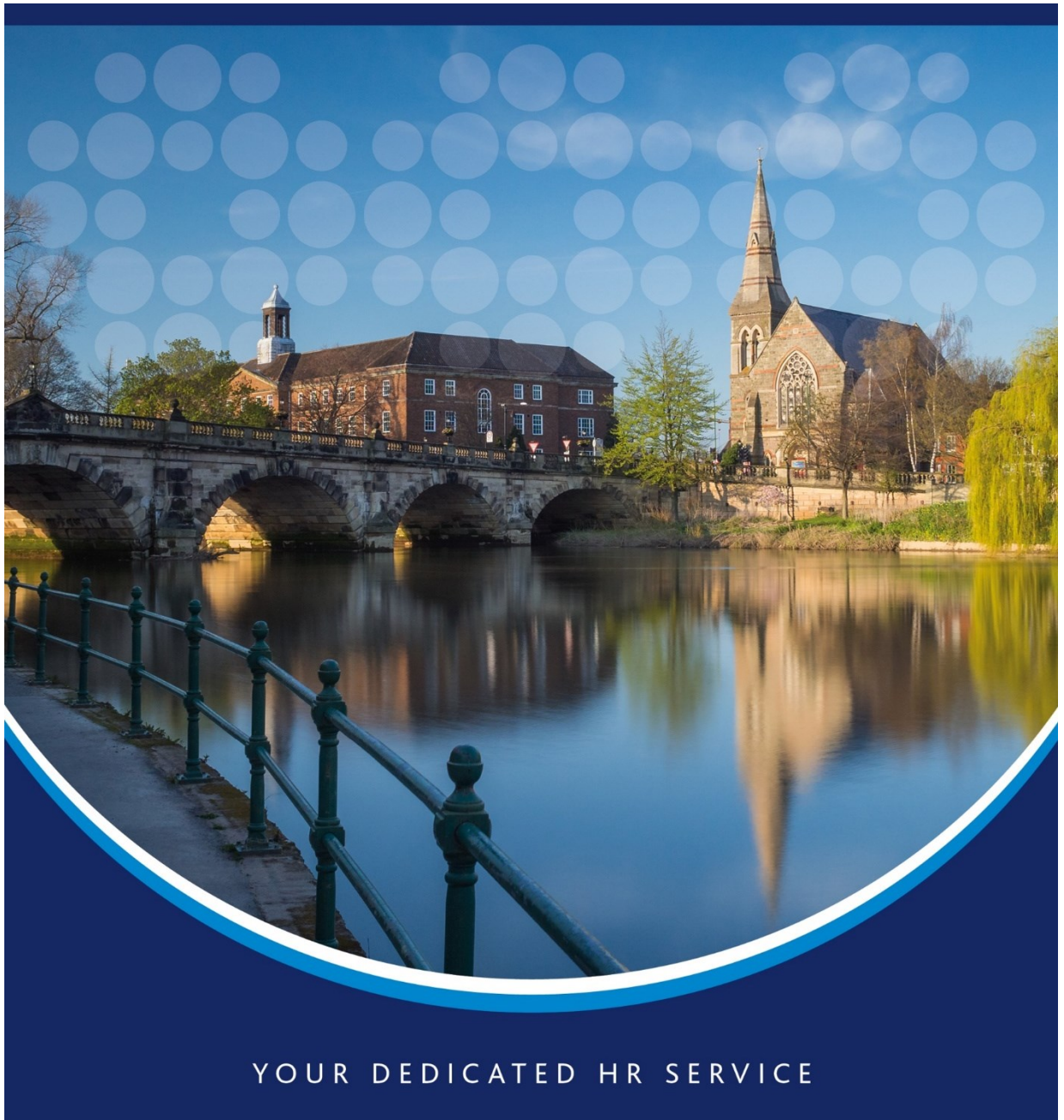


# HR Advice

## Maintained Schools Service Level Agreement 2025/2026



## Introduction from Service Lead

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**Dear Headteacher, Chair of Governors and School Business Manager,**

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Shropshire HR's HR Advice service level agreement (SLA) for maintained schools in 2025-26.

We know it has been another difficult year for our network of schools and academies, and we are committed to continuing to support and work with you to ensure that you are able to focus on your education priorities.

To align ourselves with Council priorities, our team will continue to offer delivery of our service primarily via MS Teams, email, and telephone. We will continue to offer attendance at on-site meetings within this SLA; however, it will first be considered whether attendance by one of the team can be done so remotely.

We also look forward to the expansion of our training offer to schools. We have developed HR modules for school leaders and aspiring leaders and also delivered Governor training all of which we will look to develop further in 2025/2026.

We welcome and value your feedback about our service, should you wish to discuss our HR service or have any further requirement which you would like to see included in future, please don't hesitate to contact me via the contact details below.

We look forward to continuing to work with you.



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## Shropshire HR Advice Service Schedule

Our Schools HR Advice service strives to ensure that your school has access to high quality, 'all inclusive' advice and support that will underpin effective management of people issues.

All our schools HR professionals have in-depth knowledge of HR best practice, employment law, pay and terms and conditions as they apply to schools.

We provide robust policies, procedures and guidelines meaning schools can have confidence in the advice received from our team of experienced schools HR professionals.

Our commitment to you under our **Customer Charter** is that we will:

- Provide professional, trusted, and expert advice through access to qualified and experienced HR and OD specialists.
- We will be personable, approachable, open, honest, and responsive in all our dealings with you.
- Provide a service that is tailored to your needs, solution focussed and value for money.
- Ensure clear two-way communication channels where we will actively seek and act on feedback to improve our services to you.

Please find below our service schedule set out in more detail.

Core Service	
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Relationship Management</b>
1.1	Provide a named HR Adviser who will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain regular contact with the school to discuss HR requirements.</li> <li>• Provide timely, accurate and legally sound HR advice.</li> <li>• Advise on pay, terms and conditions for all school staff.</li> <li>• Represent the school and negotiate on the school's behalf with Trade Unions.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support your employee relations casework and provide timely advice and guidance.</li> <li>• Participate in Headteacher recruitment and other recruitment activity according to the needs of the school.</li> <li>• Work with the school to identify and develop strategies to manage HR issues.</li> <li>• Participate in employee relations casework, providing support to governing bodies when necessary.</li> </ul>
1.2	<p>Queries answered at first point of contact wherever possible and closed within agreed timescales. Service response times aim to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Routine queries to dedicated HR advice email address and telephone line to be resolved within 1 working day whenever possible.</li> <li>• Queries to allocated HR Adviser to be resolved within 2 working days of first contact.</li> <li>• Complex advice queries will be subject to an agreed resolution timescale, the aim will be to resolve such queries within one working week whenever possible.</li> </ul>
1.3	<p>Feedback or complaints regarding the Advice service can be raised with the Schools HR Advice Manager who will aim to respond within 20 working days of first contact.</p> <p>Where such matters are not resolved satisfactorily, or no response is received in the above timescale, the matter should be escalated to the Council's HR &amp; OD Manager for a final response.</p>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Policy Support</b>
2.1	<p>Practical advice and guidance by telephone and email/online on the implementation of relevant HR policies and procedures inclusive of, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disciplinary</li> <li>• Grievance</li> <li>• Capability</li> <li>• Appraisal</li> <li>• Managing Allegations</li> <li>• Harassment &amp; Bullying</li> <li>• Managing Absence</li> <li>• Flexible Working</li> <li>• Maternity/Paternity/Shared Parental</li> <li>• Redundancy</li> <li>• Staffing Restructure</li> <li>• Workforce Planning/Skills Audits</li> <li>• Pay Policies</li> <li>• Other relevant employment policies</li> </ul>

2.2	Provide regular updates in relation to policy changes via MS Teams and SLG website.
2.3	Regular review of policies and procedures to ensure that they meet requirements and all relevant legal standards.
2.4	Provide access to a suite of 'model' policies that have been agreed with the relevant trade unions and notification when these policies are updated.
2.5	Facilitate working parties when necessary, involving Headteachers/School Business Managers and Unions to influence and scope future policy development.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>HR Advice</b>
3.1	<p>Support/advise on all casework management including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence management protocols in accordance with the relevant Policies/Procedures, including statutory regulations relating to maternity, paternity, flexible working, and all other related absences.</li> <li>• Support in the referral of staff to an Occupational Health and Safety Service to promote the proactive management of attendance (this is dependent on the school having a contract with an occupational health provider).</li> <li>• Advice on managing staff attendance and support with casework.</li> <li>• Advice to managers and staff on procedures for ill-health retirement.</li> <li>• Support with related investigations and hearings (including appeals).</li> </ul>
3.2	Attend case specific meetings at schools or online on request with reasonable notice.
3.3	Provide advice and guidance on safer recruitment including involvement in Headteacher appointments.
3.4	Provide advice and guidance on drafting Job Descriptions and Person Specifications including benchmarking and evaluating posts against Shropshire's Job Evaluation Scheme when appropriate.
3.5	Provide advice and support in relation to the interpretation of the Teachers Pay and Conditions Document, support staff pay, terms and conditions of service and all other contractual elements.

3.6	Notification of nationally/locally negotiated changes to pay, terms and conditions of service.
3.7	Provide support with change projects, e.g., reorganisations/restructures, TUPE transfers and lead, if appropriate, consultation and implementation.
3.8	Provide relevant, current and accurate information through MS Teams and Shropshire Learning Gateway, and Shropshire HR website.
3.9	Provide advice on the requirements for pre-employment checks for all new starters and re-joiners in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance'.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Management Information</b>
4.1	Provide case specific management information reports with associated advice and guidance.
4.2	Provide model letter templates related to all HR casework either as part of a policy/procedure or when requested.
4.3	Archive case management records in a secure and safe environment and in accordance with GDPR and Council Retention Schedule.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>What we require from you</b>
5.1	Be open and honest with us about your ambitions and plans so that we can make sure that the right interventions are put into place.
5.2	Involve us at the earliest possible stage of your thinking processes so that we can work with you to identify potential risks and opportunities.
5.3	When seeking advice provide all background details so that we can give accurate and complete advice.
5.4	If adopting our model Policies and Procedures do so in a timely manner in the way that is required by the school's constitution.
5.5	Respond to any requests from us for further information in a timely manner so that we can resolve issues quickly.
5.6	Feedback to the Schools HR Advice Manager if you have any thoughts about how our service could better meet your needs and requirements.
5.7	Immediate contact where suspension is being considered.

## Training and Development

We will continue to deliver our training offer to schools during 2025/2026, set out below.

As feedback consistently indicates this to be convenient for school-based delegates, we will continue to deliver our short courses on-line, primarily via MS Teams. Additionally, we will further develop our face-to-face (F2F) training program to provide schools with options regarding attendance. We will schedule face-to-face training throughout the year, but can offer bespoke, school-based training for groups of staff upon request.

Our training events are subject to additional charge, typically on a per delegate basis. For bespoke, whole school or school-based training for groups of staff, we will provide an individualised quote, following discussion of your requirements.

### Breakfast Briefings and Bitesize Courses

These sessions have proved to be useful and beneficial to school leaders/line managers throughout 2024/25 and will continue to be offered free of charge to subscribing schools.

### Cancellation and postponement

If there are insufficient numbers of attendees, we reserve the right to postpone and/or reschedule a training event. We aim to give delegates at least 48 hours' notice of the same.

### Non-attendance

Where a school or delegate provides less than 2 working days' notice of their non-attendance on a training course, we reserve the right to levy an administration charge of half of the course cost, per non-attending delegate.

Course Title	Online Cost (per delegate)	F2F Cost (per delegate)
<p><b>Single Central Record Audit</b></p> <p>This audit is conducted on-site by HR Advisors in line with the statutory requirements of KCSiE.</p> <p>The audit focuses on ensuring that confidential personnel records for staff, governors, contractors and volunteers are recorded and stored appropriately.</p> <p>A review of a representative sample of personnel files will be undertaken to ensure that record keeping is robust and in line with the requirements of an Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>Please contact your HR Advisor to discuss the audit process in more detail and/or to book a date.</p>	N/A	£250 conducted on-site by an HR Adviser (approx. 3 hours).
<p><b>Managing Absence (2x half day or 1 day)</b></p> <p>Sickness and absenteeism costs organisations money and time and can potentially decrease workplace cohesion. This course will explore how you can reduce absence, create an attendance culture, and improve workplace productivity.</p>	£75	£100

<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Online Cost (per delegate)</b>	<b>F2F Cost (per delegate)</b>
<b>Essential Conversations (full day)</b> Practical one-day course designed to help develop the essential tools, knowledge, and techniques required to effectively address performance issues with staff.	N/A	£140
<b>Safer Recruitment (full day accredited / half day refresher)</b> Meets the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education and the School Staffing Regulations 2009. The refresher course meets the minimum requirements and provides an ongoing update annually. The full day course offers a more interactive and practical session.	£75 (half day)	£140 (full day)
<b>Single Central Record – Best Practice (2 hours)</b> Covers the legislative and procedural updates set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, with reference to Shropshire HR's SCR template. Aimed at those responsible or who have delegated responsibility for maintaining the school's Single Central Record.	£55	£85
<b>When things go wrong - managing disciplinary, grievance and capability issues (half day)</b> How to carry out robust investigations and understand how to differentiate between conduct and capability. Gives an understanding of possible causes of conflict and how to reduce the risks.	£75	£100
<b>Performance Management &amp; Appraisal (half day)</b> Aims to cover the key skills necessary for carrying out appraisals, and to produce structured performance plans.	£75	£100
<b>Conflict Resolution in the Workplace (half day)</b> Aims to give Schools the confidence in dealing with and resolving workplace conflict internally using early interventions and when to use external Mediation support.	£75	£100
<b>Pay and Conditions of Employment (half day)</b> An overview of pay and terms and conditions of employment for school leaders, teachers and support staff.	£75	£100
<b>HR Essentials for School Leaders &amp; Governors</b> Aimed at Governors and leaders who have a role in respect of HR processes and procedures. Delivered workshop style with the opportunity to ask questions and share best practice.	£75	£100