

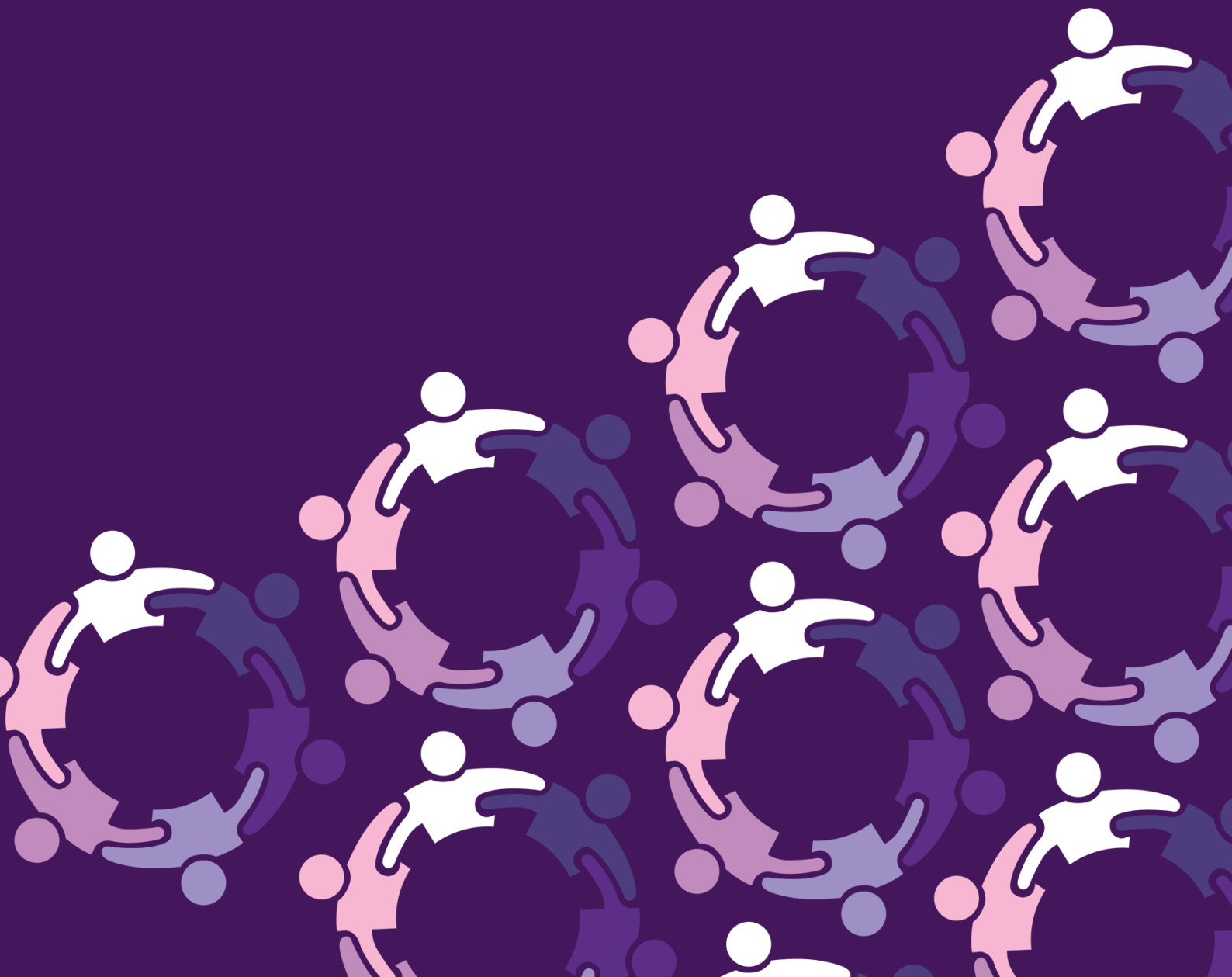


**Croydon  
Education  
Partnership**

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# HR Newsletter

**Autumn Term 2023  
September 2023**



## Introduction

Welcome back to the new academic year we cannot believe that 3 weeks have passed already! We hope you had a smooth start to the year.

As with all academic years in school, it is sure to be another busy year!

Back in July the teacher's pay award was agreed by the teaching unions and the Government will consider the consultation responses before the final STPCD 2023 is laid in parliament.

In this newsletter, we have provided an update on the pay award for support staff and potential strike action from GMB, changes to our pay policy in recognition of the teacher's 2023 pay award, latest updates to the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 statutory guidance and provided the HR Checklist for the Autumn Term.

This term's HR Hot Topic is about the forthcoming Flexible Working Reforms 2023 with a link to bespoke support for schools. We have added links to Senior Mental Health Training, the Workforce Reduction Report and information on the Workforce Reduction Taskforce for your interest.

We would like to draw your attention to the Contact Details at the end of the newsletter. The HR advice line email has changed to [educationhr@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:educationhr@croydon.gov.uk).

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about the items in this newsletter or any other workforce matters.

We are looking forward to working with you over the coming Autumn Term.

*The School's HR Team*



## Pay Award 2023 and potential strike action.

### Teachers.

The draft version of the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) was issued on 19 July 2023 following the publication of the School Teachers' Review Body's (STRB's) 33rd Annual Report alongside a communication from the Secretary of State accepting the STRB's recommendations for the academic year 2023/24.

The Government's deadline for statutory consultees to respond to the proposed pay award (draft STPCD 2023) closed on 21 September 2023. Once the Government has had time to consider the consultation responses, the final STPCD 2023 will be laid in parliament for a 21-calendar day 'praying period' to enable Members of Parliament (MPs) to raise any objections. The DfE have estimated this will take place around mid-October 2023. This is the statutory process and while in theory this means an MP could submit changes to the STPCD, this has never happened in practice although it is possible.

Once the praying period has concluded, the Department for Education (DfE) is expected to publish the final, updated School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) 2023 early in November. The pay award will therefore need to be backdated to 1 September 2023.

The Government has accepted the School Teachers' Review Body's (STRB's) recommendations in full for 2023. Headlines include:

- 6.5 per cent uplift to all pay points and allowances for both teachers and leaders,
- apart from a higher uplift for M1 of 7.1 per cent for England and 6.8 per cent for the Fringe.

The government will meet the costs of this pay rise above 3.5%.

As is our practice we will be consulting with the unions about the pay scales in appendix 5 of our Pay Policy once the final version of STPCD is available.

### Support Staff.

All support staff trade unions voted to reject the pay offer of an increase of £1,925 (pro rata for part-time employees) to be paid as a consolidated, permanent addition on all NJC pay points 2 to 43 inclusive with effect from 1 April 2023. For Outer London Boroughs this will be £2,229 (pro rata for part-time employees). The pay offer also includes an increase of 3.88% on all allowances (as listed in the 2022 NJC pay agreement circular dated 1 November 2022) with effect from 1 April 2023.

Unison subsequently balloted their members for industrial action. Unison's disaggregated ballot closed on 4 July. The ballot did not meet the threshold for lawful industrial action to take place and such Unison will not be pursuing strike action.



Unite announced the results of their strike ballot on 7 August that its council membership in education and early years services across 10 councils have voted for industrial action. Arrangements for targeted strike action is taking place across schools and councils in the Autumn Term

GMB are in the process of conducting disaggregated industrial action ballots in some councils and schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The strike ballots opened on 12 September and will close on 24 October.

The National Employers have again reaffirmed the local government services ('Green Book') pay offer as full and final and urged the unions to now settle this year's pay round, in response to another request from them for an improved offer.

We will continue to keep you updated as developments arise.

### **Pay Policy.**

The Model Pay Policy document will be published with the updated pay scales as soon as the STPCD 2023 comes into force.

Pay Statements for teachers need to be issued by 31 October. We have prepared draft ones, pending the final version of STPCD and these will be finalised once STPCD is agreed.

### **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2023.**

Keeping Children Safe statutory guidance has been updated and came into force on 1 September 2023.

As a reminder, the guidance states that, "It is essential that **everybody** working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that those staff who work directly with children read **at least** Part one of this guidance.

Governing bodies and proprietors, working with their senior leadership teams and especially their designated safeguarding lead, should ensure that those staff who do not work directly with children read either Part one or Annex A (a condensed version of Part one) of this guidance. This is entirely a matter for the school or college and will be based on their assessment of which guidance will be most effective for their staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure that mechanisms are in place to assist staff to understand and discharge their role and responsibilities as set out in Part one (or Annex A if appropriate) of this guidance."

A link to the guidance can be found here [Keeping children safe in education 2023](#) and contains Annex F with a list of all the changes.



The main changes are around filtering and monitoring of IT systems. The guidance states that:

- All staff need to be aware of filtering processes and their role with monitoring. The aim is to block harmful and inappropriate content without unreasonably impacting teaching and learning and important to review at least annually.
- Staff should recognise the rapid and ever-changing risks with modern day technology and the impact on children and young people.
- Staff to know that the monitoring is in relation to school devices and networks and why it is there.
- Staff to refer to Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 which provides additional information and support for schools and parents to keep children safe online.

Other updates in the guidance include:

- Seeking assurance of safeguarding policy and procedures from other services or activity providers.
- To be able to signpost for children with additional needs to external support services.
- As part of safer recruitment, it is good practice to inform short listed candidates of online searches.
- Revised terminology to reflect wording within behaviour in schools' guidance.
- The document includes the changes to the Forced Marriage changes which came into effect from February 2023.
- Multi-agency practice referring to child exploitation.

### **Senior Mental Health Training.**

The Department for Education (DfE) is offering a grant of £1,200 for eligible state-funded schools and colleges in England to train a senior mental health lead to develop and implement a whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing. This training is not compulsory, but it is part of the government's commitment to offer this training to all eligible schools and colleges by 2025.

Eligible schools and colleges are now able to apply for a senior mental health lead training grant to commence training by 31 March 2024. Grants will be provided to cover (or contribute to) the cost of attending a quality assured course and may also be used to hire supply staff while leads are engaged in learning.

For more information, please click on the link:

[Senior mental health lead training - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)



## **Workforce Reduction in Schools in England.**

The Education Development Trust (EDT) conducted a survey of more than 1,000 school leaders and teachers in England asking about the time they spent on unnecessary tasks and how engaged their schools were in workload reduction activities.

The report covers:

- the main findings of the survey
- the benefits of workload reduction activities and responsibilities
- problems that persist around workload

You may be interested in reading the report which can be found by clicking on the link below:

[Workload reduction in schools in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/workload-reduction-in-schools-in-england)

## **Workload Reduction Taskforce.**

A new taskforce has been set up by the government to tackle teacher workload and to help support the government's wider ambition to reduce working hours for teachers and leaders by 5 hours per week within 3 years. The Workload Reduction Taskforce was launched following the 6.5% pay award that was announced in July, when the Education Secretary committed to reducing teacher and leader workload.

This taskforce comprises of unions, teachers, and sector leaders. The variety of expertise within the group will provide insight from across all parts of the education sector, from on the ground perspectives to those in positions of management and leadership. The first meeting will take place during the week of 25 September 2023.

Alongside measures to tackle workload, the Department for Education is also planning an update to its teacher recruitment and retention strategy to continue to attract, support and develop the highly skilled teachers needed to inspire the next generation.

Further information can be found by clicking the link here below:

[Workload reduction taskforce - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/workload-reduction-taskforce)

## **Croydon Education Partnership.**

The next board meeting will be on 12 October 2023 and representatives from all Croydon educational settings will determine the Education Partnership's priorities.

To find out more, click on the link below:

<https://www.croydoneducationpartnership.org/meeting-information/>



## Early Career Teachers (ECTs).

The changes to the ECT provision are as follows:

- From September 2024 Teaching School Hubs (TSHs) will become the main provider of appropriate body (AB) services (except for specialist ABs for some independent and overseas schools).
- Local authorities (LAs) will withdraw from their AB role in two stages:
  - From September 2023 they will not take on any new ECTs.
  - From September 2024 they will cease operating as ABs.
- Schools who access AB services through a LA will need to ensure that from September 2023 they register all new ECTs with a TSH AB.
- Schools will also need to ensure that any ECTs who are registered with an LA AB and who do not complete their induction by September 2024 are then transferred to a TSH AB.

## SWLSEP (South West London School Effectiveness Partnership).

The SWLSEP Leadership Programme has been specifically designed to complement the suite of NPQ courses currently available. Please contact Christine Lonsdale on [christine.lonsdale@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:christine.lonsdale@croydon.gov.uk) for further information.

### **Audience: those looking for their next step into senior leadership**

Topics	Date	Venue
Launch	10 November 2023	Chessington Safari Hotel
HR & Challenging Conversations	2 February 2024	Wandsworth PDC
Finance & Recruitment	22 March 2024	Chipstead Valley Primary School
Governance & Wellbeing	26 April 2024	Warren House Hotel, Kingston

The programme is available at value of **£350**, which includes the above 4 full-day sessions and access to an experienced headteacher mentor.

### **Training.**

We still have spaces available for our Difficult Conversations Training at Croydon Clocktower on 4 October and for the Safer Recruitment Refresher online course on 2 November.

For booking details for all courses, please refer to the Croydon Education Partnership website.

[Courses | Croydon Education Partnership](#)



## HR Hot Topic - Flexible Working Reforms 2023.

The Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Bill reached Royal Assent on 20 July 2023. This means that employees across the UK will be given even more flexibility over where and when they work.

Expected to come into force in 2024, the Act will require employers to consider and discuss any flexible working requests made by their employees relating to working hours or patterns including part-time, term-time, flexi-time, compressed hours, adjusting start and finish times, or where someone works.

The following table summarises the current legislation and the forthcoming changes.

Currently	Change
<b>26 week</b> qualifying period for being eligible to apply for flexible working	Able to make a request for flexible working from <b>day one</b> of employment
<b>One request</b> /application per year/12-month period	<b>Two requests</b> /applications per year/12-month period. Note the second request cannot be made if a current request is still being considered/appealed.
Requirement for employee to explain what effect their request will have on their employer.	No longer have to explain the impact their request will have on their employer.
Default rejections	Open consideration and meaningful dialogue and no default to refuse.
<b>3 months</b> to respond to request/handle request	<b>2 months</b> to respond to requests, which includes appeals
No obligation to consult with the employee if refused.	Employers are specifically obliged to consult with the employee before rejecting a request.
Right to be accompanied	Companion now extends to a union representative, or an official employed by a union.
	More transparency is recommended to help explain the decision to reject the request.
Current policies do not always offer the right of appeal.	Policy needs to clearly spell out the right of appeal if the request is rejected in whole or in part.

### Flexible working requests - permissible reasons for rejection.

Under the Employment Rights Act 1996, an employer's refusal to accept an eligible employee's application for flexible working must be based on one or more specific grounds. These grounds, which are staying the same despite the other legislative changes, are:

- the burden of additional costs.
- a detrimental effect on the ability to meet customer demand.





- an inability to reorganise work among existing staff or recruit new staff.
- a detrimental impact on quality or performance.
- insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work; and
- planned structural changes.

For further details of the forthcoming legislation, please click on the link below:

[Employment Relations \(Flexible Working\) Act 2023](#)

[Get help for flexible working in schools.](#)

Aside from the forthcoming changes in legislation, the Department for Education (DfE) recognises the challenges of implementing flexible working in schools. They have appointed ambassador schools and multi-academy trusts (MATs) to provide bespoke support school leaders. They have contracted Capita to oversee delivery of the flexible working programme from 2023 to 2025.

For further information, please click on the link below:

[Get help with flexible working in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)



## HR Checklist things to do in the Autumn Term.

### 1. Teacher Resignation Dates

Please note that for teachers resigning their appointments with effect from the end of the Autumn Term, will need to do so by 31 October 2023. They will be paid salary to 31 December 2023.

### 2. Annual Performance Appraisal for Support Staff

For those schools whose performance appraisal cycles for support staff operate from September to August, please remember to set new objectives at the start at the Autumn Term.

### 3. Teacher Pay Award

Please process the teachers' pay award in early November when it is anticipated that the final, updated School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) 2023 will be published. The pay award will need to be backdated to 1 September 2023.

### 4. Teacher Pay Statements

In relation to the teacher pay award, the pay statements for teachers need to be issued by 31 October 2023.

### 5. Safer Recruitment

The Autumn Term is a good time to review your safer recruitment procedures and to ensure that you are using up to date forms. The Self Disclosure Form has been recently updated and is on our website for you to use. This can be found along with the current application forms and reference request form in the Resources Section under HR.



## Contact Details

Advice Line: 020 8241 5483  
[educationhr@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:educationhr@croydon.gov.uk)

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020 8726 6000, extension 22609.

Recruitment Queries:

Teach in Croydon website: [www.croydoneducationjobs.org](http://www.croydoneducationjobs.org).

Adverts on Croydon Council website: 020 8667 8337;  
[vacancies@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:vacancies@croydon.gov.uk)

DBS Queries: [schoolsdb@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:schoolsdb@croydon.gov.uk)

Occupational Health: Ritika Singh  
[Ritika.Singh@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:Ritika.Singh@croydon.gov.uk)

Teachers Pensions: Vicki Langston  
020 8604 7190 (DDI); 020 8726 6000, extension 27014

Julia McDougall  
0208 604 7383 (DDI), 020 8726 6000, extension 27056

[teacherspensionsteam@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:teacherspensionsteam@croydon.gov.uk)

Local Government Pension Scheme: 020 8726 6000, extension 44034;  
[pensions@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:pensions@croydon.gov.uk)

## Liberata Payroll

Technical support: [LiberataSchoolsTechnicalSupport@liberata.com](mailto:LiberataSchoolsTechnicalSupport@liberata.com)



Team:

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