



Job Description

JOB TITLE	HR Consultant
JOB FAMILY	Thinking Personnel
PHASE	Thinking Solutions for Education
REPORTING TO	Head of HR
SALARY GRADE	Pay Group 6

Job Purpose

- The HR Consultant will undertake responsibilities as a member of Thinking Personnel, providing high-quality, specialist HR consultancy support across the Trust and external clients.
- The role will provide dedicated capacity for complex employee relations casework, investigations, formal processes, external contract delivery, policy implementation, project work and service improvement.
- The postholder will not hold a fixed regional caseload of internal schools. Instead, they will be deployed flexibly across internal and external priorities, supporting areas where additional senior HR capacity, independent casework support or specialist consultancy input is required.
- The role will support complex HR matters across the full employee lifecycle, ensuring that cases are managed in a timely, fair, consistent and professionally robust way, in line with Trust policy, employment law, education sector practice and agreed service standards.
- The postholder will help protect HR Partner capacity by taking responsibility for complex casework, investigations and defined project activity, enabling HR Partners to focus more consistently on strategic school support, development work, central initiatives, policy development, workforce planning and operational improvement.
- The role will support Thinking Personnel's traded service offer, working with external clients as part of the wider integrated HR team. This may include employee relations advice, formal meeting support, bespoke documentation, leadership coaching, workforce planning, change management, policy review and HR best practice guidance.
- The role will be remote-first. However, both fixed-hours and flexible-hours role holders may be required to work at any Trust academy, central office, hub or external client site, and should expect to travel between sites as required.
- The additional two weeks outside term time will be used flexibly to support service priorities, including case preparation, hearings, appeals, external contract requirements, September readiness, policy work, project delivery and urgent complex casework.



- The fixed-hours HR Consultant will provide planned, integrated capacity for complex casework, external contract support, internal Trust priorities, project-release activity and service improvement.
- The flexible-hours HR Consultant will provide additional capacity on an as-needed basis, with no guaranteed hours and no promised work. This role variant will be used for sudden, urgent, critical or high-risk work, including complex investigations, formal hearings, appeals, safeguarding-related HR matters, external contract pressure, absence cover or work requiring independence from the usual HR Partner.

Duties and Responsibilities

Complex employee relations and casework

- Provide specialist HR advice, guidance and support to school leaders, managers, central teams and external clients on a wide range of employee relations matters.
- Manage and support complex employee relations casework, including disciplinary, grievance, capability, absence management, probation, conduct, performance, restructures, redundancy, change management, consultation and other formal HR processes.
- Undertake and support formal investigations, including scoping allegations or concerns, preparing investigation plans, reviewing evidence, interviewing witnesses, drafting investigation reports and advising investigating officers.
- Support line managers, senior leaders and panels through formal HR processes, ensuring that appropriate procedure, documentation, timescales and risk considerations are followed.
- Attend and support formal meetings and hearings, including investigation meetings, disciplinary hearings, grievance meetings, capability meetings, formal sickness absence meetings, consultation meetings, redundancy meetings and appeals.
- Prepare high-quality HR documentation, including case timelines, management guidance, investigation reports, hearing packs, scripts, action plans, consultation documents, outcome letters, appeal documentation and bespoke correspondence.
- Provide advice on the application of Trust policies, external client policies and relevant employment law principles, escalating high-risk or legally complex matters as appropriate.
- Support the management of sensitive or high-risk cases, including those involving safeguarding concerns, trade union involvement, senior staff, multiple stakeholders, reputational risk or significant organisational impact.
- Ensure that complex casework is delivered with appropriate time for preparation, reflection, drafting, checking and quality assurance.

Internal Trust support

- Provide flexible HR consultancy support across the Trust where there is a peak in complex casework, short-term capacity pressure, absence, vacancy, urgent school need or service priority.



- Work with HR Partners to identify cases or workstreams where dedicated consultant support would improve quality, timeliness, risk management or leadership support.
- Support internal schools and central teams with complex people matters while maintaining clear communication with the relevant HR Partner.
- Provide short-term targeted support to schools, regions or central departments where additional senior HR capacity is required.
- Support Trust-wide people priorities, including workforce planning, attendance management, employee relations improvement, leadership capability and consistent application of HR policy.
- Identify themes arising from casework and share learning with HR Partners, HR Officers and senior colleagues to support service improvement.

External contract and traded service delivery

- Support the delivery of Thinking Personnel's external HR contracts, working as part of the wider integrated HR team.
- Provide advice, guidance and casework support to external clients in line with agreed service levels, service descriptions and contractual expectations.
- Support external clients with employee relations matters, formal meetings, investigations, hearings, policy interpretation, bespoke letters, management guidance and leadership coaching.
- Assist with external contract mobilisation, handover, onboarding of new schools or clients, and the development of consistent ways of working.
- Support external client relationships by providing professional, responsive and solution-focused HR advice.
- Work with the Head of HR and HR Partners to ensure external contract work is appropriately prioritised, recorded and delivered.
- Contribute to the reputation and growth of Thinking Personnel by delivering high-quality HR consultancy that reflects the Trust's values and service standards.

Project work, policy and service improvement

- Undertake HR project work as required, including central initiatives, tactical group activity, service improvement projects, policy development and process review.
- Support the review, drafting and implementation of HR policies, templates, guidance documents and standard operating processes.
- Contribute to the development of consistent HR documentation, including template letters, investigation guidance, management toolkits, process maps and casework resources.
- Support operational improvements that improve the quality, consistency, responsiveness and efficiency of HR service delivery.
- Assist with the development and delivery of HR training, briefings and CPD for school leaders, managers, internal colleagues and external clients.
- Support HR Partners and senior leaders with workforce planning, organisational design, change management and consultation activity.



- Provide feedback and recommendations to improve HR systems, case tracking, quality assurance, communication and workflow management.

Leadership support and professional advice

- Coach and advise school leaders, managers and investigating officers to support confident, fair and consistent people management.
- Provide clear, practical and solution-focused advice that balances policy, employment law, operational realities, risk and the needs of pupils and staff.
- Support leaders to prepare for difficult conversations, formal meetings, investigations and decision-making processes.
- Work constructively with trade union representatives, professional associations and employee representatives where appropriate.
- Maintain professional relationships with internal colleagues, external clients and stakeholders, ensuring a trusted and collaborative approach.
- Escalate high-risk, sensitive or complex matters to the Head of HR, Head of Thinking Personnel, People Director or other senior colleagues as appropriate.

Administration, records and compliance

- Maintain accurate and appropriate records of advice, casework activity, meetings, decisions and outcomes.
- Ensure HR casework documentation is clear, professional, timely and stored appropriately.
- Liaise with HR Operations, Payroll, Recruitment, Safeguarding, Governance, Legal, Finance and other teams as required.
- Ensure that all work is undertaken in line with Trust policies, data protection requirements, confidentiality expectations and safeguarding procedures.
- Monitor deadlines and ensure that formal HR processes progress in a timely manner.
- Contribute to casework reporting, workload monitoring and service evaluation where required.

Service standards and customer focus

- Support a HR service that is trusted, solution-focused, approachable and timely.
- Respond to internal and external stakeholders professionally and within agreed timescales.
- Prioritise workload effectively, balancing urgency, risk, contractual commitments and organisational need.
- Demonstrate flexibility in responding to changing priorities, including urgent casework, formal meetings, external client needs and Trust-wide priorities.
- Represent Thinking Personnel positively and professionally in all internal and external interactions.



Generic Duties relevant to all members of Staff

The Trust

- The ethos of our Trust is “Transforming Life Chances”. All staff are expected to be committed to this aim in everything they do.
- It is expected that all staff work collaboratively as members of the Trust to share good practice, resources and ideas and realise the Trust’s visions and aims. All staff should act with professional integrity at all times, following the “Code of Conduct”.
- You will be based at one site. However, you may be asked to work at any of the other academies within the Trust or partner schools and you should expect to travel between sites as required.

Teaching and Learning

- This is our core business and therefore it is an absolute priority. You are expected to support all teaching staff, irrespective of seniority, to ensure they concentrate on the core business. This may mean undertaking tasks outside of your area of responsibility where required.

ICT

- It is expected that all teaching and support staff follow the ICT Vision of the Trust.
- All staff will be expected to utilise ICT and to improve communication and reduce paper use. Security procedures must be followed when using ICT systems.
- All staff are expected to follow (and ensure students follow) the procedures as laid out in the Trust’s Acceptable Use Policy. Staff are also expected to ensure that they follow Trust policies with regard to professional conduct when using ICT systems or Trust ICT equipment.

Health and Safety

- Employees are required to work in compliance with the Academy’s Health & Safety Policies and under the Health and Safety At Work Act 1974 (as amended), ensuring the safety of all parties they come into contact with, such as members of the public, in premises or sites controlled by the Trust.
- In order to ensure compliance, procedures should be observed at all times under the provision of safe systems of work through safe and health environments, including information, training and supervision necessary to accomplish those goals.

Safeguarding

- The Thinking Schools Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and all staff must ensure that the highest priority is given to following the guidance and regulations to safeguard children and young people. All staff are to have due regard for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and to follow the child protection procedures adopted by the Thinking Schools Academy Trust. Any safeguarding or child protection issues **must** be acted upon immediately by informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead.



Equal Opportunities

- To actively promote the Trust's Equal Opportunities Policy and observe the standard of conduct which prevents discrimination taking place, maintaining awareness of and commitment to Equal Opportunity Policies in relation to both employment and professional relationships.

Data Protection

- Ensure confidentiality of personal data at all times by sharing, processing, obtaining and advising on data in line with Trust Data Protection policies and procedures. Having due regard for the high level of personal and special category data processed within your role.
- The Thinking Schools Academy Trust takes the responsibility of protecting and securing the data of Pupils, Staff, Parents and all associated individuals very seriously. The Trust requires all staff to complete data protection training and to adhere to its Data protection policies and procedures. All staff must ensure that if they suspect a data breach they must inform the Trust Data Protection officer immediately.

This job description forms part of the contract of employment of the person appointed to the post. The duties, responsibilities and accountabilities highlighted in this job description are indicative and may vary over time at the discretion of the Trust. This job description will be reviewed annually and is an integral part of the Appraisal and line management process.

The duties and responsibilities in this job description are not restrictive, and the post-holder may be required to undertake any other duties that may be required from time to time. Any such duties should not however substantially change the general character of the post.

I understand and agree to the job description of a HR Consultant

Name:

Signed:

Date: