

Post:	Employee Relations Advisor.
Line Manager:	Group HR Director
Hours of Work:	37.5 hours per week
Salary:	£35,500 per annum
Start Date:	As soon as statutory checks are complete
Location	Dean Close Foundation, Cheltenham

The Role

The HR Department is responsible for all HR matters affecting staff in all schools and nurseries and is based in Cheltenham. The team consists of a HR Director, HR Manager (Administration), Learning & Development Manager, Recruitment Manager, 3 HR Administrators and 1 HR System Administrator. The Employee Relations Advisor reports to the HR Director and will work closely with the other managers within the HR function.

The Employee Relations Advisor will provide HR advice across the Foundation and strategic HR guidance, support, and solutions aligned with the organisation's ethos, values and goals. This role will serve as a trusted advisor to managers and employees across all of its sites based in England Wales, offering expertise in employee relations, performance management, talent development, and change management. The primary function of this role is ER advice and to ensure managers are fully equipped to manage the changing nature of work and employment law. The successful candidate will contribute to creating a positive work culture, support organisational development, and ensure HR best practices are applied throughout the organisation.

Duties

Employee Relations Expertise and Support:

- First line support is offered by the HR administration team and passed to the Employee Relations Advisor when it is of a more complex nature. The Employee Relations Advisor provides in-depth guidance to managers and employees on grievances, disciplinary actions, conflict resolution, consultations and workplace behaviour in line with company policies and relevant employment laws.
- Serve as a subject matter expert on employment law and HR best practices, staying current with legislation changes and interpreting how they impact organisational policies and procedures.
- Provide coaching to managers on effective handling of employee relations matters to promote fair and consistent treatment across the organisation.

Compliance with Employment Law.

- Ensure HR policies and practices are in full compliance with the latest employment laws, including areas such as working hours, minimum wage, discrimination, health and safety, and redundancy procedures.
- Regularly review and update employee policies to align with changing legislation, such as the Equality Act, GDPR, TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment), and ACAS guidelines.
- Conduct regular risk assessments and audits to identify potential areas of non-compliance, providing proactive recommendations and action plans to senior management.

Strategic HR support:

- Collaborate with Foundation leaders to understand their operational objectives and workforce needs, helping to design and implement HR strategies that align with business goals.
- Utilising data and reporting, provide insights on workforce planning, succession planning, and help inform talent management to support the growth and retention of top talent.

**Managing Grievances and Disciplinary Actions:**

- Handle all formal grievance and disciplinary cases, including conducting investigations, collecting evidence, and preparing reports with recommendations, ensuring all processes are fair, impartial, and compliant with ACAS codes of practice.
- Work closely with legal advisors on sensitive or high-risk cases, providing insights into potential outcomes and maintaining thorough documentation for any tribunal processes or potential legal disputes.

Conflict Resolution and Mediation:

- Facilitate mediation sessions between employees or between employees and managers, using active listening, empathy, and neutrality to address conflicts and reach mutually agreeable solutions.
- Provide early intervention strategies to managers to prevent issues from escalating and ensure a healthy, collaborative working environment.

Policy Development and Training:

- Develop and conduct training for managers and employees on employee relations topics, such as managing grievances, anti-discrimination, handling harassment complaints, and fostering a respectful workplace.
- Keep the organisation informed of changes in employment law through updates, briefings, and workshops, ensuring all levels of management understand their responsibilities and are well-equipped to handle employee relations concerns.
- Actively engage in knowledge-sharing networks, staying connected with industry trends, case law updates, and legislative changes to maintain subject matter expertise and ensure best practices within the organisation.

Proactive Relationship Building:

- Build strong, trust-based relationships with employees and management, promoting open communication and encouraging early reporting of issues.
- Provide regular, proactive support to the business, identifying and addressing potential issues that could impact employee morale, productivity, or compliance.

Performance Management and Development:

- Partner with managers to develop performance management processes, ensuring that objectives are set, reviews are conducted, and feedback is effectively communicated.
- Identify training and development needs and work with the Learning & Development team to create programs that enhance employee skills and support career growth.

Change Management:

- Support the organisation through periods of change, providing coaching, support, and resources to leaders and teams during reorganisations, restructuring, or acquisitions.
- Facilitate effective communication and engagement strategies to maintain a positive work culture during times of transition.

HR Analytics and Reporting:

- Analyse HR metrics, such as turnover rates, employee satisfaction, and engagement scores, to identify trends and make data-driven recommendations for improvement.
- Present insights and reports to senior leadership to inform strategic decision-making.

Policy Development and Compliance:

- Oversee the development, implementation, and review of HR policies and procedures to ensure they meet legal requirements and support organisational goals.
- Stay updated on employment laws and HR best practices, ensuring compliance across all HR activities.

Person Specification

- A relevant CIPD qualification is preferred.
- Resilient, able to manage competing priorities, pragmatic and proactive.
- A positive attitude and friendly collaborative approach
- The ability to remain calm under pressure.
- Solid experience as an HR/ER generalist with excellent knowledge of best HR practice
- Excellent people skills – an excellent communicator, influencer and relationship builder who can gain trust quickly.
- Proven organisational skills.
- A significant level of IT literacy is required with knowledge of HR Databases
- Able to work with the minimum of supervision.
- Attention to detail is essential.
- Ability to interact positively with all levels of staff within the Foundation.
- A 'can-do' attitude and willingness to be flexible when required.
- Used to working to extremely tight deadlines.
- An ability to uphold the standards of the School and to be a positive example to other staff.
- Strong employee relations skills and experience and the desire to continue to develop those skills.

Terms and Conditions

- 25 days annual leave and the usual 8 days Bank Holidays. Three/Four days holidays must be retained for the period between Christmas and New Year.
- Health cash plan
- Community events
- Free three course lunch, during term time
- Free onsite parking
- Use of the gym and swimming pool, at specified times
- Discounted Bacon Theatre tickets
- Company sick pay entitlement
- Company pension scheme
- Discounted golf fees at Brickhampton Golf Club
- Salary sacrifice electric/hybrid car scheme
- Company life assurance 3x salary
- Cycle to Work scheme

All staff are expected to

- Work towards and support the Dean Close Foundation stones/values of love, courage, contribution allowing pupils and staff to flourish.
- Demonstrate and develop the following skills:
 - Critical Thinking
 - Compassion
 - Creativity
 - Collaboration
 - Communication
- Support and contribute to the Foundation's responsibility for safeguarding pupils.
- Work within the Foundation's health and safety policy to ensure a safe working environment for staff, students and visitors.
- Promote equality of opportunity for all students and staff, both current and prospective.
- Undertake any other reasonable duties required that are related to the job purpose from time to time.

The post holder may be required to perform duties other than those given in the job description for the post from time to time. The particular duties and responsibilities attached to posts may vary from time to time without changing the general character of the duties or the level of responsibility entailed.



How to Apply

Applicants must complete a Dean Close Foundation application form in order to be considered.

The Dean Close Foundation is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Applicants must be willing to undergo child protection screening appropriate to the post, including checks with past employers and the Disclosure and Barring Service.